

Testing International

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President's Letter
Dave Bartram, President (2014-2016)



Dear ITC Members and Friends,

I would like to start by expressing my thanks and those of the Council to Paula Elosua for leading such a great conference in San Sebastian in July. Thanks also to all those who supported her including her University and the Major's office in San Sebastian. Every ITC Conference seems to be better than the last. This poses an increasing challenge for those working on the next conference in Vancouver, 2016 – but I'm sure they are more than up to it. I'll not say more about San Sebastian as there is a separate report on this in TI.

I'd like to use my report this time to say 'thank-you' to people whose terms of office have ended and welcome to those who are just beginning. This also provides an opportunity to describe who is now on Council. This summer Council lost *Ron Hambleton, Tom Oakland, Fred Leong and David Foster*. However, all have agreed to continue serving and advising the ITC through its committees: *Fred Leong* joined the ITC Council in 2006 and has been chairing our publications committee. He will continue as the lead editor of the ITC Handbook – which we plan to have completed by 2016. *David Foster* joined in 2002 and has been influential in getting the ITC to consider more about the way it relates to its membership and how it can involve them more in its work. He led the development of the Test Security Guidelines which were approved by Council for release in July this year. *Tom Oakland* joined the Council in 1991 and worked with Ron to prepare the first ITC conference in Oxford in 1993. He was President in 1998, serving as a co-opted member from 2002 until he took over as IAAP liaison in 2010. He leaves the Council as his IAAP liaison role comes to an

end. Tom was instrumental in setting up the ITC as a formal 'not for profit' organization and has been a major contributor to Council policy developments as well as leading some recent guideline developments. Tom has always championed the need for ITC to become more involved in emerging nations. *Ron Hambleton* holds the record for the longest serving member of the ITC Council. He first joined the Council in 1982 - 32 years ago – a record that is unlikely to be beaten. His best known contribution was leadership of the development of the test adaptation guidelines – the first of a series of well-respected Guidelines from the ITC. He held the positions of President and Secretary as well as serving a term as IAAP liaison. He has always been a support and an inspiration to others on Council and respected for his knowledge and wisdom.

We were delighted to have sufficient interest to require an election for two vacant seats on Council at the General Meeting. I'd like to thank all those who stood and to congratulate Paula Elosua and Steve Sireci on being elected. The General Meeting also endorsed the nominations of Dragos Iliescu as President-Elect, Aletta Odendaal as Secretary-General and Kurt Geisinger as continuing his term as Treasurer. At the first meeting of the new Council following the General Meeting in San Sebastian we agreed on the need to retain Fanny Cheung and Solange Wechsler on Council through co-option and to co-opt Alina von Davier as a new member. We also welcomed Kazuo Shigemasu as the liaison for IUPsyS and Jacques Grégoire, a past ITC President, as the liaison for IAAP.

The ITC Committees are now as follows:

- Strategy and Policy, chaired by myself
- Research and Guidelines, chaired by Anna Brown
- Publications and Communications, chaired by Neal Schmitt
- Membership, Marketing and Involvement, chaired by Dragos Iliescu

- Conferences, chaired by Aletta Odendaal.

The chairs of the committees will be providing updates on their work to you through TI.

Prior to our Council Meeting in San Sebastian, we spent time considering the future direction for the ITC. What we agreed on was the need to develop ways of targeting support for capacity building projects such that we can use the ITC's expertise to leverage local potential talent and expertise. We also agreed on the need to review our membership structure to see if it remains the best way of supporting the work of the Commission.

We are also conscious of the need to spend the ITC's money wisely and have become concerned at the increasing costs of annual Council meetings. We agreed as a trial to hold a full Council Meeting biennially at our conference and to have a smaller meeting in the in-between years. This will consist of just the Executive, the Committee Chairs and the leader of the group preparing for the next conference. The meeting will be held in London, again for economy reasons, rather than being tied to the biennial EFPA Congress as in the past.

Finally, we plan to update and refresh our website for 2015. If you have any ideas or suggestions for improving the current website please get in touch: Dave Bartram. President, ITC President@InTestCom.org

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ITC Committee and Groups Reports

Research & Guidelines Committee Anna Brown, Chair

It is a busy year for the ITC Research and Guidelines Committee, as we are working on several ongoing projects and are setting important objectives going forward. It was clear from the ITC membership survey conducted in the previous year that our members prioritised involvement in education of new specialists above many other activities of the ITC. Another important priority, according to our members, remained our work on best practice Guidelines. In response to the first call, we are scoping a major update to the way the ITC fulfils its educational and knowledge sharing goals. "On-line Readings in Testing and Assessment" (ORTA) initiative was conceived before 2008 with an aim to provide a number of independent, yet integrated readings on aspects related to testing (www.intestcom.org/Publications/ORTA.php). It has become clear, however, that this ambitious goal cannot be achieved with the current approach – whereby original content is written for a "library" hosted on the ITC website.

Relying on our busy members and friends to create and maintain comprehensive and up-to-date content in such a fast-changing area as psychological testing is simply unrealistic. An alternative approach is needed. The R&G committee is looking into sustainable methods of sourcing information (e.g. approaching reputable academics and practitioners to share their existing materials) and managing content (e.g. in a self-editing format such as Wiki). Watch this space – we expect to share a proposal for the "revived" ORTA in the beginning of 2015. And **we seek your ideas. How would you create a sustainable resource for future experts in testing?**

Addressing the other core priority for the ITC, we are developing new guidelines, updating

the existing guidelines, and working to increase the impact of our guidelines on good testing practice around the world. We currently have four guidelines in development or consultation:

- *Guidelines on Practitioner Use of Test Revisions, Obsolete Tests and Test Disposal*. This guideline by Tom Oakland deals with the issues involved when a test becomes outdated or obsolete. The draft was sent for public consultation to the ITC membership in November 2014.
- *Guidelines on Testing in Non-native Language*. This is an exciting and ambitious project led by María Elena Oliveri with support from Alina von Davier and René Lawless, and many contributors. The guidelines are meant to promote fair and valid assessments for linguistic minorities around the world. These guidelines are intended to be far-reaching and apply to standardized educational achievement tests, licensure or certification tests and tests of skill mastery (such as those for driver's licenses) in high-stakes decision-making contexts. The team anticipate having a draft of the guidelines ready by June 2015. There are many challenges in measuring the knowledge and skills of test takers who are not proficient in the test language. The guidelines will summarise methodologies to address these challenges and will inform the stakeholders of the considerations to ensure fairness and score comparability for the linguistic and cultural minority test takers. An overview of the proposed guidelines was given in San Sebastian, within the symposium "Considerations and guidelines on the fair assessment of linguistically diverse populations" organized by María Elena Oliveri, Paula Elosua and Alina von Davier.

- *Assessment of Immigrants and Second Language Learners*. This white paper authored by Tom Oakland and Fons van de Vijver is intended to assist assessments of persons who are assimilating and acculturating to a new culture and are second language learners. Unlike the guidelines on Testing in Non-native Language, the recommendations here are most relevant for assessment specialists engaged in providing one-to-one clinical assessments. The statement is expected to be ready for review by the Council by the end of 2014, and to be distributed to our membership for public consultation in 2015.
- *Guidelines on Adapting Tests, Second Edition*. Ron Hambleton and Jacques Gregoire are working on the second edition of the ITC's most popular set of guidelines.

We are also making progress in translating our guidelines into additional languages. In October 2014, the Spanish Psychological Association requested and received approval for translating three guidelines into Spanish. In November 2014, we approved a Polish translation of the Statement on Using Tests for Research by the Polish Psychological Association. However, we feel that the Committee should pursue a strategic approach to translations. With this view, we agreed to solicit support for translating ITC guidelines systematically – and to approach national professional bodies to get involved, prioritising major languages, such as Chinese, Arabic, Spanish and Russian. The Committee is looking into other opportunities for obtaining translations.

As always, we welcome your views and feedback. Do you know how to make our existing Guidelines more impactful? Please forward your comments and ideas to: Anna Brown A.A.Brown@kent.ac.uk

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**Membership, Involvement & Marketing
Committee
Dragos Iliescu, Chair**

The Membership, Involvement & Marketing (MIM) Committee of the ITC Council is composed for the July 2014-July 2016 of the following: Dave Foster (USA), Ron Hambleton (USA), Peter MacQueen (Australia), Kazuo Shigematsu (Japan), Solange Wechsler (Brazil), Pia Zeinoun (Lebanon). The MIM Committee is chaired by Dragos Iliescu (Romania).

The MIM Committee has settled on *three objectives* until the next Council meeting in July 2015.

A first objective is a *major overhaul of the ITC website*. This is being done already and should be finished until Q1 2015, at the latest. The new website will bring changes in design, look and feel, but also in functionality. While these decision have not yet been made, it is possible that the new website will make the ITC more active in Social media, and will also likely provide a system for members who seek collaborations (e.g. for research) to find likeminded scholars.

A second objective is the *marketing of the ITC in a larger number of International and National conferences*, where the ITC can either have a dedicated ITC track, or where members of the ITC can have a workshop or another kind of presence in which to raise the awareness towards the ITC and towards what the ITC provides to the world of tests and testing.

A third objective of the MIM Committee is *enlisting more organizational members in the ITC*. Organizations can become Full or Affiliate members. Full members are national psychological associations who are also members in the International Union of Psychological Science (IUPsyS). Not all IUPsyS members are members of the ITC yet, and an important objective is to carry the word to such associations, raising their

awareness for the importance of tests and testing. Affiliate members can be any other organizations, e.g. national psychological associations which are not members of the IUPsyS, branch psychological associations (such as for work, clinical or educational psychology), test publishers, consultancy companies, university departments, research institutes etc.

The ITC will move in the following period more and more from a reactive towards a proactive approach to attracting members, by issuing invitations to organizations where we think that the work of the ITC could have a positive impact.

If any members have identified an international or national conference where an ITC track would be welcome, or if any members think they can carry the flag of the ITC in raising awareness for its contributions in such international or national conferences, or if any members have in mind an international or national organization which could become a Full or Affiliated members of the ITC, contact the MIM Committee Chair Dragos Iliescu dragos.iliescu@fpse.unibuc.ro.



**Publications and Communications
Committee
Neal Schmitt, Chair**

On June 30, the Publications and Communications chair (Fred Leong) provided his report to the Council on its activities the previous year. This is a summary of that report. Those interested in more detail can contact Neal Schmitt (schmitt@msu.edu) who is the current chair of the committee.

International Journal of Testing

In the past year, the editorial team has undergone a partial transition, with the resignation of Michael Nering and the subsequent appointment of Stephen Stark as

co-editor. The Associate Editor is April L. Zenisky. Avi Allalouf remains the editor.

From June 1, 2013 to May 31, 2014, the journal processed 113 unique manuscripts. There were no book reviews submitted. One hundred three of these manuscripts were new submissions which appears to be similar to those received in the last three years. The most common decision among manuscripts with decisions was “reject”, accounting for about 61% of decisions made, and this reflects a high number of manuscripts that were deemed inappropriate for IJT because they represent basic psychometric analyses for a specific psychological scale with no methodological or theoretical contribution. About 20% of manuscripts processed in this reporting period are at present in the revise-and-resubmit category; and about 13 percent of submissions processed were accepted.

Of concern to the Council, the editors, and submitting authors is the impact factor of the journal, which reflects the number of citations to the journal per paper published. Several steps to increase citations are being taken by the editors (see section below on the activity of the citation subcommittee). Also of concern to Council is the financial arrangement for publication of the journal with Taylor and Francis. Several steps are being taken to more fully understand the finances of the journal and a possible renegotiation of our contract.

The ITC International Handbook on Testing
Progress on the handbook has been slow because of its scope and the large number of authors involved and the time commitments of the authors and section editors. This project will continue to be directed by Fred Leong. Authors for all chapters have been contacted and most authors are committed to produce a chapter. The current deadline for submission of first drafts of the chapters is December 2014 and the hope is that the volume will be published and available at the next ITC conference in Vancouver.

Wikipedia

After the ITC Council meeting in Stockholm, it was decided to create an entry in Wikipedia about the ITC – its history, objectives, activities and membership. Anna Brown agreed to lead a subcommittee dealing with the Wikipedia entry. After two attempts, Wikipedia rejected the entry partly because ITC had not been referenced by outside sources and some concern that it was not “notable.” A much abbreviated entry is now being prepared that addresses (we hope) these concerns.

Book Series

The ITC sought publishers for a proposed book series that, like the Handbook, seeks to advance theory, research, and practice in the areas of international testing and assessment in psychology, education, counseling, organizational behavior, human resource management and related disciplines. We have contracted with Cambridge University Press to publish this series. Those interested in possibly contributing a volume in this series are urged to contact Neal Schmitt (schmitt@msu.edu) who is the first editor of the series. Several proposals are now being developed and considered.

Journal Citation Subcommittee

Because of the concern regarding the journal's impact factor mentioned above this subcommittee reviewed Thompson and Reuter's criteria for inclusion in the Thompson and Reuter's Citation Index. Based on their criteria and the results of similar efforts by other journals to increase their citation rate and recognition in the scientific area they represent, a number of recommendations were discussed including the following: Use of Invited reviews – on a regular basis by prominent people, use of special sections or issues, online access (we already have but should advertise), securing access to listservs (Division 5 of APA and SIOP, IAAP) and using this access to advertise coming issues or special papers, and consider expanding the number of

consulting editors and solicit a review paper from them.

This has been a very active committee with a variety of concerns that contribute to the mission and visibility of the ITC. **We encourage anyone interested in contributing to any of these activities to contact the Chair Neal Schmitt schmitt@msu.edu.**



Capacity Building and Outreach Task Group Aletta Odendaal

The Capacity Building and Outreach Task group operates within the Membership, Involvement & Marketing (MIM) Committee. For the period July 2014-July 2016 the following members are actively involved in the task group: Ron Hambleton (USA), John Hattie (Australia), Jacques Gregoire (Belgium), Anil Kanjee (South Africa), Per-Erik Lyren (Sweden), Kazuo Shigemasu (Japan), Happy Zulu (Zimbabwe), Solange Wechsler (Brazil). The task group is chaired by Aletta Odendaal (South Africa).

The main focus of the task group over the last year was twofold: Firstly, by focusing on

outreach and especially areas where the ITC does not have a major presence. Actions completed thus far have been on *involvement at regional conferences* in South America (especially Brazil), Africa (Mozambique) and Asia (Indonesia). Secondly, in **building capacity** we are pleased to announce that **seven early career scholars from developing and emerging economies such as Brazil, South Africa, Romania, Chile and China attended the ITC Conference in San Sebastian, Spain.**

The focus of the prestigious ITC Scholarship Program is not only to enable recipients from emerging and developing countries to attend the ITC conference but also to provide ongoing opportunities for scholarship recipients to network with each other and experts in the field. They had the opportunity to further their professional development and to collaboratively address problems related to psychological and educational testing in developing and emerging economies. The scholars participated with enthusiasm and their passion for testing and assessment was clearly evident. They departed as true ITC Ambassadors with clear action steps towards the development and dissemination of the work being carried out by the ITC.



ITC Scholars 2014 From left: Xiaolu Zhou (China), Andreea Butucescu (Romania), Lorena Wenger Amengual (Chile), Solange Wechsler (ITC Council), Aletta Odendaal (ITC Council), Juliana C. Pacico (Brazil), Byron Adams (South Africa), Cristian Zanon (Brazil), Brandon Morgan (South Africa).

To guide future capacity building activities Council prioritised the following regions: Middle East, Africa and South-East Asia. It was further evident from the last Council meeting that we have to move beyond outreach and presence at regional conferences towards a clear understanding of what we see as capacity building and to come up with a list of what is to be considered capacity building activities in the future. To capacity build it may be appropriate to also distinguish between short- and long-term goals, since the aim is for sustainable and cumulative effects over time and to build lasting relationships.

To shape future capacity building activities we value your views and feedback. In your specific region what do you see as major capacity building activities? Please forward your comments and ideas to: Aletta Odendaal aodendaal@uj.ac.za



2014 Scholar Conference Experiences

The Experience of an ITC Scholar at the San Sebastian Conference

Cristian Zanon

University of São Francisco Brazil



To participate at the ITC conference in San Sebastián was a great experience to me, and I really thank the ITC for this opportunity. During the conference it was possible to speak with known scholars who are key in the area and feel part of the scientific community devoted to the improvement of testing. Dr. Aletta Odendaal and Dr. Solange Wechsler stimulated scholars to think of actions to spread ITC materials around the world and discussed ways to take ITC guidelines to national and local institutions in our countries (Brazil, Chile, South Africa, China and Romania), we had lunch with some

professors (ITC members), who gave us some tips about how to be academically productive, strategies to write papers, trends in testing, and so on. This was a rich experience because each scholar had the opportunity to speak with at least 3 senior researchers for a while. Everybody was encouraged to share academic experiences and interests. I spoke with Kurt Geisinger, Fanny M. Cheung, Dragos Iliescu, David Bartram, and Solange Wechsler. Workshops, poster sections and conferences also promoted learning and networking experiences.

Workshops were activities that I liked very much because they were didactic and allowed me to learn about new techniques to improve measurement. For example, I learnt about an IRT non-ipsatized forced-choice model that takes into account response style on self-reports. After the workshop, I felt pretty confident to implement it in my current research on personality assessment through this IRT forced-choice model.

Poster sessions allowed me to meet international students with similar interests and have my poster evaluated by Dr. Alberto Maydeu-Olivares, one of the researchers who developed the model I was using - the random intercept model. This was another great opportunity to exchange ideas with an expert on response style who gave me lots of suggestions about how to address this topic on self-reports of personality, to better understand the process. I am pretty excited about developing research on experimental psychometrics.

In sum, to be at the conference provided me with the possibility of learning and connecting with people who are developing new research. The whole experience motivated me to keep developing research in the field of testing, and I hope other students and young researchers have similar opportunities at the next conference in Vancouver!



Morgan Brandon
University of Johannesburg
South Africa



Attending the ITC in San Sebastian, Spain, was an absolute privilege. Not only was I afforded the occasion to interact with eminent academics but had the opportunity to attend presentations by outstanding scholars from across the globe. What was immediately clear is that: (a) psychometric testing is a complex field requiring expertise in human behavior, ethics, law and statistics, and that (b) psychometric testing is becoming increasingly important and prevalent in many different contexts. It was the exposure to psychometric testing practices outside of South Africa that allowed me to appreciate the value and promise, but also the challenges, of psychometric testing. Thus, the conference has provided me with knowledge, experience, insight and understanding, for which I am extremely grateful.

Naturally the aforementioned has translated into my own research. I have derived new passion for best practices in psychometric testing and ensuring that people are protected from inadequate psychometric tests. At this stage in my career I have the exciting opportunity to continue with research in psychometric test development, adaptation and evaluation. I believe that my experiences at the conference will directly translate through the work that I do.

The workshop by Professor Iliescu on test adaptation was especially useful. His workshop clearly explicated the need for, and the process involved in, adapting tests, and it was made clear that it is insufficient to import psychometric tests from one country/context to another without adaptation. The lessons and skills learnt in his workshop will definitely translate into my

work with adapting tests for the South African context.

My future plans are to continue my focus on the construction of career interest inventories. By validating John Holland's model in the South African context, it is possible to extend the research of his theory and develop better instruments to measure important career related issues that impact on adolescents and young adult's career decision making process. Thus, in addition to the Holland based inventory that I have developed (i.e. the South African Career Interest Inventory), there are plans to develop a basic interest inventory that can be integrated with Holland's theory.

Together with the South African Career Interest Inventory, it is aimed that these two interest inventories can be directly linked to occupational and educational fields, hereby assisting people to make academic and occupation selection a more informed and pleasant experience, and hopefully promote person-environment congruence. At the same time, I will also be working on developing and validating other psychometric instruments, within the South African context.

Once again, I wish to thank the International Test Commission for the opportunity to attend to conference and the unique experience that I had. Lastly, allow me to praise the conference organisers and the brilliant venue for the conference. Throughout my travels in Europe, I have yet to find a location that is as beautiful, accommodating and has so many friendly people as San Sebastian. It was the perfect location for an excellent conference.

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Juliana Cerentini Pacico
Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul,
Brazil



I am Juliana Cerentini Pacico a doctoral student at the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil. I have attended to ITC conference in San Sebastian as a Young Scholar with a group of students of other nationalities. The result was the development of a schedule for good practice in psychological assessment in countries of origin. This agenda must be finished in the next two years.

In Brazil, we have some centers that concentrate the evaluation of professionals. However, there are universities in this area that does not receive much attention and investment. Both types of centers will be contacted in order to do proper dissemination of guidelines ITC. The main focus this time is to seek these centers and find out what are the challenges and difficulties in the use of tests to help them maintain good practice in the use, adaptation and construction of the tests.

Other strategies are being adopted to disseminate the guidelines of ITC and promote good practice in psychological assessment. This is the case of articles that are in production and will be published in national journals. Some lectures will also be held in the most prominent conferences in the country and the work of the ITC will be announced through the newsletter of related associations psychological evaluation in Brazil.

Importantly, this work also led to an approximation of people from different countries, which made them seek work as a team. We are receiving guidance from members of the ITC to perform these tasks, which puts us close to the work they develop.

The Yong Scholar Program called our attention to the ethical responsibility related to our countries of origin, even before we became professionals. On the one hand our knowledge of appropriate practices must be disseminated. On the other hand, it should be improved, with the help of mentors. This double settlement was offered to us, I hope that everyone can fulfill it in the best way.



San Sebastian 2014 Conference Report

Global and Local Challenges for Best Practices in Assessment 9th Conference of the International Test Commission

Paula Elosua, 9th Conference Chair
University of the Basque Country, Spain

After the very successful Conference in Amsterdam in 2012, the 9th International Test Commission Conference (ITC) went for the first time to Spain. Under the title "Global and Local Challenges for Best Practices in Assessment", ITC2014 took place between the 2nd and 5th of July, 2014. ITC2014 offered us the opportunity to combine the beauty and hospitality of San Sebastian with some of the outstanding work being done on the important topic of testing and testing practices, and to make easy contacts and relations among researchers from around the world. The delegates enjoyed San Sebastian "Donostia" (in Basque), and its top-quality foods and mouth-watering "pintxos".

The Conference was held at two of the most beautiful buildings in San Sebastian. The Victoria Eugenia Theater was the venue for the Opening ceremony. The Miramar Palace hosted the Conference. The palace was constructed as quarters for Queen María Cristina and her entire court after her decision to take up summer residence in San Sebastian in 1885. The building offers impressive views over the two beaches adjacent to the centre of town and Santa Clara Island, directly opposite in the Bay.



In total, 501 presentations were made in 82 sessions. The Conference was attended by more than 500 professors, graduate students, educators, policy-makers, testing company representatives, and researchers from more than 50 countries.

The four themes of the Conference were closely linked to the goals of the ITC:

- Challenges and Opportunities in International Assessment
- Application of New Technologies and New Psychometric Models in Testing
- Standards and Guidelines for Best Testing Practices
- Testing in Multilingual and Multicultural Contexts

In addition to the quality of the Scientific Program is noteworthy the warm atmosphere during the Conference. We had the opportunity to learn many aspects of the ancient Basque culture, to sample some local beverages and food, and to socialize! It has been a great honor for me to have the opportunity to organize this Conference and contribute to the development and dissemination of the work being carried out by the International Test Commission.

I would like to offer my personal thanks to the invited speakers, to the organizers of the Symposia and the Workshops, to the members of the Scientific Committee, to the reviewers of the proposals, to the session Chairs, to the authors of all contributions to the Conference, and to the sponsors, for making

the 9th International Test Commission Conference possible. Finally, we are greatly indebted to all of the attendees who came from more than 50 countries to participate.

See all you in 2016 in Vancouver for another great ITC Conference!



JOIN US IN VANCOUVER 2016

**July 1-4, 2016, Vancouver, Canada
The 10th Conference of
The International Test Commission**

**Improving Policy and Practice Opportunities
And Challenges In An International Context**

Further details will be announced shortly

Doctoral Thesis Review

In this new section we aim to publish thesis summaries – please submit to the to TI editor: jbogg@liverpool.ac.uk

**Cecilia Cesa
Federal University of Health Sciences of
Porto Alegre
Brazil**

Title: Positive Psychology attributes in patients with metabolic syndrome: relationship with healthy eating and adherence to a nutrition intervention

Overview: Metabolic syndrome (MS) is a group of inter-related factors that lead to cardiovascular diseases and diabetes, featuring as an important clinical and public health issue. The incidence of MS has been growing sharply in the entire world, mainly as a consequence of the growth of obesity and sedentary lifestyle, being the diet the most relevant environmental causing factor.

Moreover, recent studies have shown that psychological factors can also have an important role both in the onset and in the development of diseases, mainly cardiovascular ones. Positive psychological attributes seem to be associated with an increase of one's involvement with good behaviors, such as healthy dieting and the regular practice of physical activity. Besides this, positive psychological attributes seem to be connected to biological responses, like the lowering of cortisol and blood pressure levels, heart rate and inflammatory biomarkers.

However, it is not so far known which of these attributes play a bigger role in the healing process (DuBOIS et al., 2012). For this reason this line of study has been growing considerably in the academic field with the development of Positive Psychology since 1998, following the initiative of Martin Seligman. This new branch of psychology has focused on human development, specifically on personal strengths and virtues. Currently, the overriding theme that emerges in the research of positive psychology is Positive Health, that is, the ratio of positive psychology to physical health.

Therefore, in this project, attributes of positive psychology are being analyzed in patients who were in attendance at a Service of Endocrinology of a tertiary-level hospital in southern Brazil. The attributes that are being assessed are: optimism, hope, self-esteem, subjective well-being (through the assessment of life satisfaction and positive and negative affects), besides the Big 5 personality test. In addition, this study will evaluate the quality of patients' diet before and after an outpatient nutritional intervention through the Brazilian Health Eating Index. The study will assess the change in the measurement of the Index, as well as subjects' body mass index, weight and waist circumference, thus evaluating patient adherence intervention. It is hoped that the correlated data will shed light on the

influence of attributes of positive psychology previously collected. It is noteworthy that all instruments have been adapted and validated for the reality of the sample. This research is part of a doctoral project.

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## News

### **IAAP Distinguished Scientific Contribution to the International Advancement of Applied Psychology Award 2014**



Professor Fanny Cheung, of the Chinese University of Hong Kong, has been awarded the 2014 distinguished scientific contribution to the international advancement of applied psychology award.

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International Journal of Testing in Focus

In this new section, recent articles from the International Journal of Testing will be highlighted.

The International Journal of Testing (Volume 14, Issue 4) contains an interesting article on DIF analysis by Lee HyeSun and Kurt Geisinger and (Volume 14, Issue 3) features the ITC guidelines on quality control in relation to test scoring, analysis, and reporting (see abstracts below).

Abstract:
The Effect of Propensity Scores on DIF Analysis: Inference on the Potential Cause of DIF
HyeSun Lee & Kurt F. Geisinger,
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Differential item functioning (DIF) analysis is important in terms of test fairness. While DIF analyses have mainly been conducted with manifest grouping variables, such as gender or race/ethnicity, it has been recently claimed that not only the grouping variables but also contextual variables pertaining to examinees should be considered in DIF analyses. This study adopted propensity scores to incorporate the contextual variables into the gender DIF analysis. In this study, propensity scores were used to control for the contextual variables that potentially affect the gender DIF. Subsequent DIF analyses with the Mantel-Haenszel (MH) procedure and the Logistic Regression (LR) model were run with the propensity score applied reference (males) and focal groups (females) through propensity score matching. The propensity score embedded MH model and LR model detected fewer number of gender DIF than the conventional MH and LR models. The propensity score embedded models, as a confirmatory approach in DIF analysis, could contribute to hypothesizing an inference on the potential cause of DIF. Also, salient advantages of propensity score embedded DIF analysis models are discussed. www.tandfonline.com/toc/hijt20/14/4

Abstract:
ITC Guidelines on Quality Control in Scoring, Test Analysis, and Reporting of Test Scores
International Test Commission (ITC)

The Quality Control (QC) Guidelines are intended to increase the efficiency, precision, and accuracy of the scoring, analysis, and reporting process of testing. The QC Guidelines focus on large-scale testing operations where multiple forms of tests are created for use on set dates. However, they

may also be used for a wide variety of other testing situations and assessment techniques and for almost any situation in which assessment occurs.

The QC Guidelines are applicable in any form of test administration, including paper and pencil tests and the ever-increasing computerized assessments via the Internet or offline www.tandfonline.com/toc/hijt20/14/3



Readers Letters

The ITC and Assessment
John Raven, UK

In the course of reports to this year's AGM, there were several references to "assessment", primarily in connection with standards. These prompted me to comment that the ITC has, in the past, been preoccupied with tests and neglected the wider issues of assessment. Yet, more than a century ago, Spearman argued that neither measures of *g*, nor the tests from which *g* had emerged, had any place in schools. This was because the word "education" is derived from the same root as "educative ability", thus implying a process designed to *draw out* the diverse talents of all pupils. The use of "ability" tests diverts the attention of parents, teachers, and politicians away from this process. Egged on by testing enthusiasts and the "Educational Olympics" this process has become more and more horrifying. This may appear to be largely beyond our control ... with the implication that it is the responsibility of others to fix it. However, in an effort to induce the Commission to accept more of the responsibility, I should underline the appalling situation that exists in "education." About one third of pupils are seriously damaged by the current knowledge-focussed "educational" process. Norm referenced, "discipline" based, testing teaches many pupils that they are failures, just scum (Raven, 2012). Attempts to remedy this through "remedial" programmes

concentrating on “more of the same” tend to end up simply reinforcing this process.

It would therefore seem that we are caught up in a process which is highly unethical. How ethical, even professional, is it to offer people supposedly “objective” assessments which record that people are academic failures whilst failing to nurture or recognise their strengths? Actually, this is not the most serious of the ethical problems stemming from the role we are currently proud to embrace. These assessments contribute to the legitimisation and perpetuation of divided societies in which large sectors of the population are subject to demeaning treatment at the hands of the “welfare” services ... and worse. Worse, these social hierarchies more or less compel people to participate in the largely destructive activities of which modern societies are largely composed. Yet, while successful competition in these hierarchies contributes little to quality of life, the production and maintenance of these hierarchies *does* inflict enormous damage on our habitat, thereby contributing, at an exponentially accelerating rate, to our imminent extinction as a species (Raven, 2008). What could be less intelligent? What could be more unethical? There have, of course, been several efforts to broaden the basis of assessment, Gardner’s perhaps being the best known. But these attempts mostly still seek to reduce the variance in human talents and abilities to scores on a small number of “variables”. Even Spearman fell into this trap. But ask yourself where chemists or biologists would have got to if they had attempted to summarise the variance in substances, plants, animals, and habitats in terms of scores on a few “variables”. What was needed was a category-based, *descriptive*, framework which made it possible to describe the transformational interactions which take place between chemicals, plants, and animals and their “environments”. My point is that it is not only vital for ITC to promote more research on assessment as distinct from testing, it is also necessary for us to promote work which will contribute to a

transformation in the very way we think about abilities and assessment itself.

References

- Raven, J. (2012).
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What are your thoughts on this topic?

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