

TESTING TIMES

ASSESSMENT SECTION OF DIVISION 12 QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

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Special thanks to Dr. Sara Lowmaster for all her work on the Assessment Section website! New resources for teachers, students, and telehealth practices can be found [here](#)

If you would like to become a member, please visit the website. If interested in joining the Board, please contact Dr. McCord at mccord@email.wcu.edu

[Pay Your Dues Here!](#)

COMMENTS FROM THE PRESIDENT

I hope everyone is enjoying tele-assessment, as this is still probably the dominant issue in our sub-field. Continuing the efforts we initiated early in the pandemic last spring, our group in the Assessment Section, along with other colleagues, will offer a panel discussion at the Society for Personality Assessment Convention and a major symposium at the APA Convention in August, both focused on various aspects of tele-assessment. My copy of *Essentials of Psychological Tele-Assessment*, by Jordan Wright and Susan Raiford, just arrived today, hot off the press. By the way, the Board has designated Jordan as a permanent member of the Assessment Section, a status he is powerless to change.

Division 12 has made the decision to eliminate the use of section numbers, so we are no longer “Section IX.” Terminology may evolve as we have ongoing discussions with the Division and the other Sections, but for now we will identify our organization as the Assessment Section of Division 12 of APA.

I know you will enjoy reading about Dr. Abby Mulay in our Member Spotlight this issue. She is an early-career psychologist in the forensic assessment unit at the Medical University of South Carolina. Our plan is to intentionally span career levels for our Member Spotlight feature, and we welcome suggestions from the membership at large. Based on the first two issues, it appears that the accompanying photo should not be a traditional professional headshot.

You’ll get more details later, but I want to provide a heads-up here regarding our 2021 Award for Distinguished Contribution to Assessment. At the 2021 APA Convention, Dr. Elena Grigorenko, this year’s winner, will give a talk entitled “Spreading the Wealth: Developing Assessments of Cognitive Abilities in Non-WEIRD Countries.” Stay tuned for more details.

Important: We have three key positions on our Leadership Board to fill during our spring election this year: President-Elect, Treasurer, and Graduate Student Representative. Please submit nominations for yourself or others to Dr. Martin Sellbom (martin.sellbom@otago.ac.nz).

--- David McCord

Abby L. Mulay

By Emily Gottfried, Ph.D.

Abby received her Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from Long Island University (Brooklyn Campus). At first, Abby says she was only interested in therapeutic work with forensic and correctional populations and had a strong dislike for assessment. However, she then began working on assessment-focused research projects after encouragement by her graduate school mentor, Nicole M. Cain, Ph.D., and she changed the trajectory of her training opportunities and interests. Abby feels especially lucky to have trained in New York City where she was exposed to diverse patient populations and unique clinical and research experiences. She completed her predoctoral clinical internship in clinical forensic psychology at the University of North Carolina School of Medicine/Federal Correctional Complex (Butner, NC) and her postdoctoral fellowship in forensic psychology at the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC). She stayed on as a Clinical Instructor at MUSC, where she primarily conducts forensic evaluations (e.g., competency to stand trial, criminal responsibility, pre-employment law enforcement, fitness for duty, psychological autopsy). In addition to her evaluation duties, she maintains a small psychotherapy clinic through MUSC's outpatient services. Abby is integrative in her approach to psychotherapy and preserves an allegiance to her relational psychodynamic roots.



Abby's commitment to and passion for conducting research is palpable. She frequently collaborates with psychologists from around the world and is an active member of the Society for Personality Assessment. She enjoys arguing about the problems with categorical diagnoses and will talk about this issue with anyone who is willing to listen (including her poor husband, who has zero interest in the topic). She recently co-edited a book with Mark H. Waugh, Ph.D., ABPP and Christopher J. Hopwood, Ph.D. that highlights the clinical utility and empirical support of the Alternative DSM-5 Model for Personality Disorders (AMPD). She remains grateful to have collaborated with Mark and Chris, who she considers important career mentors. Abby continues to publish scholarly work related to the AMPD, issues related to forensic evaluation, and correctional mental health. Around the MUSC office, Abby is known for her quirky sense of humor, funky fashion choices, and warm interpersonal style.

Prior to her career in psychology, Abby was a professional singer in New York City. She received her Bachelor of Music in Jazz Voice Performance from the Manhattan School of Music, which she argues, in retrospect, is a pretty useless degree. Abby used to audition for all types of music projects, commercials, television shows, and movies; in fact, she was featured in television commercials and music videos, which continue to haunt her online. Her claim to fame occurred when she landed a gig touring with the Trans-Siberian Orchestra (you might remember them for their rock and roll Christmas carols and the commercial with synchronized holiday lights). She had the opportunity to sing for audiences of 15,000 or more per night, have pyrotechnic fire almost burn her hair off on a nightly basis, and live the rock star life on a fancy tour bus for a few months. She quickly learned that the music and acting industry was not for her, and she left the business in 2010 to pursue clinical psychology. Abby has long since hung up her microphone and no longer performs, but pre-COVID-19, you could occasionally catch her singing her signature karaoke song, Black Velvet by Alannah Myles, at local establishments. She hopes one day in the near future it will again be safe to sing karaoke with her friends.

I would be remiss to not highlight Abby's passion for animals. She has two tattoos on her arms devoted to her beloved Jack Russell terrier, Pickles, who passed away in 2018 after 17 amazing years. She has since

transitioned into a cat person and has three rescues, OliveKitty, Trash (named for his love of trash cans), and Yaas (as in the popular phrase, “Yaas, Queen”). In addition to her cats, she has two ball pythons, Kracken and Gator. She enjoys subjecting her friends and family to holding her snakes in an effort to decrease their bad reputation. You can also catch Abby at the South Carolina Aquarium as a volunteer Exhibit Educator. She is asked a lot of questions about the fish and marine life on display that she sometimes struggles to answer (e.g., “Does that eel ever come out of its burrow?”), given she evaded biology classes throughout her schooling, but she is learning more every time she volunteers.

OTHER NEWS AND UPDATES

Dr. Kasey Stanton selected to receive the 2020 *Assessment* Annual Reviewer Award

Our official journal, *Assessment*, announces the establishment of an annual award process for manuscript reviewers. Key criteria include the number of reviews conducted, the average turnaround time, and the thoroughness and quality of the review. The top reviewer receives a formal certification of recognition as well as a \$250 cash award. The 2020 winner of the *Assessment* Annual Reviewer Award is Kasey Stanton, an assistant professor in the Department of Psychology at Virginia Tech University. In the calendar year 2020, Kasey provided 13 reviews for *Assessment*. He did so with incredible speed, with an average of only 6 days from accepting the request to submitting the review. Further, he did so with excellent quality as rated by the AEs at *Assessment*. We extend grateful appreciation to Kasey for his service to our field! Two additional reviewers were identified for Honorable Mention: Christopher Conway and Thomas Fergus. The selection committee consisted of Douglas Samuel, Editor, with Martin Sellbom and Paul Ingram.

<https://apadiv12secix.com/awards/>

Honoring Dr. Scott Lilienfeld

“Dr. Scott O. Lilienfeld was the Samuel Candler Dobbs Professor of Psychology at Emory University and served on the Buros Center for Testing’s National Advisory Council (NAC). His career overlapped the mission of the Center in aiming to improve the science and practice of testing, and his contributions as a council member were exceedingly valuable. Our respect for Dr. Lilienfeld coupled with our sense of loss brought by his passing inspired us to organize the Lilienfeld Honorary Webinar to recognize him and his work in psychological assessment.

Join us for this complimentary webinar from 1:30-3:30 p.m. CST on Tuesday, March 2 to hear presentations from four of his distinguished colleagues, Drs. Lee Anna Clark, Martin Sellbom, Irwin Waldman, and James M. Wood. Presentations will address Dr. Lilienfeld’s research

UPCOMING EVENTS

February 23rd-26th, 2021

National Association of School Psychologists Virtual Convention

[Register here](#)

March 10th, 2021

Collaborating with an Interpreter During Bilingual Assessments Webinar – presented by Shannon Wang, MA, CCC-SLP & Patricia Ibarra, MS, CCC-SLP (2-3:30pm ET).

[Register here](#)

March 16th, 2021

Evaluating Language Skills and Early Signs of ASD with the Bayley-4 Webinar – presented by Anise Flowers, Ph.D. and Shannon Wang, MA, CC-SLP (1-2pm ET)

[Register here](#)

March 17-20th, 2021

Society for Personality Assessment Virtual Convention

[Register here](#)

April 27th, 2021

Use of the MMPI-3 in Forensic Settings Webinar – presented by Martin Sellbom, Ph.D. (4-5:30pm ET)

[Register here](#)

interests in the assessment of personality disorders and psychopathology and the validity of psychological test interpretations. Dr. Lilienfeld's co-author and widow, Ms. Candice Basterfield, will provide introductory remarks.

APA CE and NASP CPD credits are available. We do encourage all attendees to consider donating to a fund in Dr. Lilienfeld's name. For more information, visit <https://buros.org/lilienfeld-honorary-webinar>. For questions, contact Dr. Jessica Jonson at jjonson@buros.org - *Buros Center for Testing*

QUICK LEARNING: ASSESSMENT

By Cassie Boness, MA

Title: *Social Determinants of Alcohol and Cigarette Use by Race/Ethnicity: Can We Ignore Measurement Issues?*

Background: The role of contextual and social factors (e.g., education, experiences of discrimination) in the development of substance use are known to be important, particularly when it comes to substance-related disparities. For example, socioeconomic status (SES) is a notable contextual factor because higher SES correlates with increased levels of alcohol use and lower levels of tobacco use, with these effects often varying by race/ethnicity. However, when assessing contextual factors, researchers often assume that the items measure the construct of interest equivalently across groups. Importantly, though, little research actually tests whether or not items are culturally equivalent. Before research can meaningfully analyze group differences, it is first important to establish that the items are indeed invariant across groups.

Research Question(s): Does measurement invariance exist for assessing SES, discrimination, alcohol and tobacco use across racial/ethnic groups who identify as current smokers?

Methods: Secondary data analysis of a sample recruited online. Eligibility criteria included: self-identifying as non-Latinx Black, non-Latinx White, or Latinx; having smoked at least 100 lifetime cigarettes; smoking for at least 1 year; smoking at their current rate for at least 6 months; being at least 25 years of age; and speaking English. Exclusion criteria included: participating in smoking cessation treatment in the past 30 days; and being pregnant or breast-feeding. In the final sample (N = 2,376), 794 participants identified as non-Latinx Black, 786 participants identified as Latinx, and 796 participants identified as non-Latinx White.

Participants completed the 5-item Everyday Discrimination Scale and quantity/frequency measures of alcohol and tobacco use. Authors used multigroup confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to test for configural, metric, and scalar invariance. Next, they (a) evaluated mean differences at the latent level (after accounting for bias in measurement) and (b) conducted multigroup structural equation modeling (SEM) to evaluate the relationship between social determinants (i.e., SES and discrimination) and alcohol and tobacco use. Last, they conducted parallel analyses at the manifest level using classical measurement theory and assuming equivalent psychometric properties of items across groups.

Results: For perceived discrimination, there was evidence for configural and metric, but not scalar, invariance across race/ethnicity. For SES, there was evidence for configural, but not metric or scalar, invariance across race/ethnicity. For alcohol use, there was evidence for configural and metric, but not scalar, invariance across race/ethnicity. For tobacco use, there was evidence for configural, but not metric or scalar, invariance across race/ethnicity. After accounting for bias in measurement, there were some differences across mean differences between racial/ethnic groups on SES, discrimination, and alcohol use. For tobacco use, no mean differences across groups were identified. The multigroup SEM demonstrated that the associations between SES and perceived discrimination, and alcohol and tobacco use (after accounting for measurement bias) were sometimes similar across racial/ethnic groups and sometimes different. When the measurement invariant analyses were

compared to analyses with the observed scores (which, as demonstrated, exhibited some measurement bias), results demonstrated that 22% of the inferences were distinct in the model that accounted for bias in measurement relative to the model that did not.

Summary: Quantitative approaches to investigating similarities and differences between racial/ethnic groups rest on the statistical assumptions that measurement instruments have the same meaning across groups (i.e., measurement invariance!), that testing such assumptions is methodologically feasible using established guidelines in latent variable modeling, and that failing to test such assumptions may impede progress in cross-cultural research. *Readers interested in the specific outcomes related to the contextual and social determinants of substance use should see the full manuscript.

Learning Points:

1. We cannot assume measures assess equivalent constructs across groups without first establishing invariance.
2. Without testing for measurement invariance, it is impossible to know if observed group differences represent “true” groups differences, or if they are measurement artifacts related to measurement bias.
3. Failing to account for measurement bias may lead to difference inferences and, thus, may impede progress in cross-cultural research.

Reference: Lopez-Vergara, H. I., Rosales, R., Scheuermann, T. S., Nollen, N. L., Leventhal, A. M., & Ahluwalia, J. S. (2020). Social determinants of alcohol and cigarette use by race/ethnicity: Can we ignore measurement issues? *Psychological Assessment*, 32(11), 1075–1086. <https://doi.org/10.1037/pas0000948>.

Want to Learn More? Watch this video for a practical example of measurement invariance and related issues using the Barratt Impulsiveness Scale: <http://www.isuma.tv/en/arnaitvideo/charlie-pisuk>.

We are looking for student members to contribute to future Quick Learning columns! If you'd like to contribute to the May issue, please email Cassie Boness (clmkdb@mail.missouri.edu) and propose an assessment-related publication. The leadership board will approve publications ahead of time and review the subsequent “Quick Learning” draft editorially prior to publication.

RESEARCH TRACKER

Assessment

Bakun Emesh, T., Garbi, D., Kaplan, A., Zelicha, H., Yaskolka Meir, A., Tsaban, G., Rinott, E., & Meiran, N. (2021). Retest Reliability of Integrated Speed–Accuracy Measures. *Assessment*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1073191120985609>.

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Ober, T. M., Cheng, Y., Jacobucci, R., & Whitney, B. M. (2021). Examining the factor structure of the Big Five Inventory-2 personality domains with an adolescent sample. *Psychological Assessment*, 33(1), 14–28. <https://doi.org/10.1037/pas0000962>.

Tylicki, J. L., Rai, J. K., Arends, P., Gervais, R. O., & Ben-Porath, Y. S. (2021). A comparison of the MMPI-2-RF and PAI overreporting indicators in a civil forensic sample with emphasis on the Response Bias Scale (RBS) and the Cognitive Bias Scale (CBS). *Psychological Assessment*, 33(1), 71–83. <https://doi.org/10.1037/pas0000968>.

REQUEST FOR FEEDBACK

With the launch of this quarterly newsletter, we aim to succinctly provide you with new information and upcoming events regarding assessment and recognize our members' valuable contributions to the field. We would love to hear about news and accomplishments you would like to share with other members. To make improvements for the May issue, we welcome any feedback you may have.

[Please submit questions, concerns, and suggestions here](#)

Testing Times is a quarterly newsletter for the Assessment Section of the Society of Clinical Psychology (APA Division 12).

[Assessment Section website](#)

