

Series Editor's Note

The term *psychometrics* has an almost mystical aura about it. Larry Price brings his vast acumen as well as his kind and gentle persona to demystify for you the world of psychometrics. Psychometrics is not just a province of psychology. In fact, the theory-to-practice orientation that Larry brings to his book makes it clear how widely applicable the fundamental principles are across the gamut of disciplines in the social sciences. Because psychometrics is foundationally intertwined with the measurement of intelligence, Larry uses this model to convey psychometric principles for applied uses. Generalizing these principles to your domain of application is extremely simple because they are presented as principles, and not rules that are tied to a domain of inquiry.

Psychometrics is an encompassing field that spans the research spectrum from inspiration to dissemination. At the inspiration phase, psychometrics covers the operational characteristics of measurement, assessment, and evaluation. E. L. Thorndike (1918) once stated, "Whatever exists at all exists in some amount. To know it thoroughly involves knowing its quantity as well as its quality." I interpret this statement as a callout to measurement experts: Using the underlying principles of psychometrics, "figure out how to measure it!" If it exists at all, it can be measured, and it is up to us, as principled psychometricians, to divine a way to measure anything that exists. Larry's book provides an accessible presentation of all the tools at your disposal to figure out how to measure anything that your research demands.

Thorndike's contemporary, E. G. Boring (1923) once quipped, "Intelligence is what the tests test." Both Thorndike's and Boring's famous truisms have psychometrics at the core of their intent. Boring's remarks move us more from the basics of measurement to the process of validation, a key domain of psychometrics. I have lost count of the many different kinds of validities that have been introduced, but fortunately, Larry's book enumerates the important ones and gives you the basis to understand what folks mean when they use the word *validity* in any phase of the research process.

Being a good psychometrician is a form of recession-proof job security. The demand for well-trained psychometricians is higher now than at any time in history. Accountability standards, evidence-based practice initiatives, and the like require that new measures for assessment and evaluation be developed, and they require that many of the “standard” measurement tools be revamped and brought up to the standards of modern measurement principles. Larry Price’s book provides you with all of the necessary tools to become a great psychometrician.

As always, “enjoy!”

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On the road in Corvallis, Oregon

REFERENCES

- Boring, E. G. (1923). Intelligence as the tests test it. *New Republic*, 36, 35–37.
- Thorndike, E. L. (1918). The nature, purposes, and general methods of measurement of educational products. In S. A. Courtis (Ed.), *The measurement of educational products* (17th Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Pt. 2, pp. 16–24). Bloomington, IL: Public School.