

Measurement

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PSY 3500

Measurement

“Measurement is the assignment of scores to individuals so that the scores represent some characteristic of the individuals,” (pg. 64).

“The important point here is that measurement does not require any particular instruments or procedures. It does not require placing individuals or objects on bathroom scales, holding rulers up to them, or inserting thermometers into them. What it does require is some systematic procedure for assigning scores to individuals or objects so that those scores represent the characteristic of interest.”

Psychological Constructs

Attitudes, emotions, personality traits, abilities that are difficult to measure

Psychological constructs *cannot be observed directly*

- They often represent tendencies to think, feel, or act in certain ways.

An **operational definition** is a definition of a variable in terms of precisely how it is to be measured.

Measurement error occurs when we don't measure the construct perfectly

Levels of Measurement

Level of Measurement	Category Labels	Rank Order	Equal Intervals	True Zero
Nominal	X			
Ordinal	X	X		
Interval	X	X	X	
Ratio	X	X	X	X

Reliability and Validity

the consistency
of the measure

does it measure what
we think it measures?

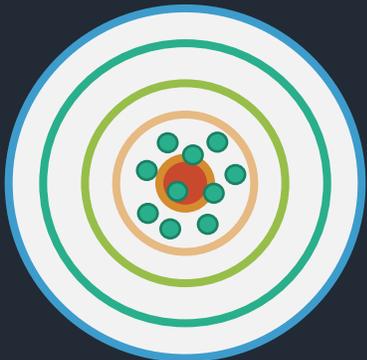


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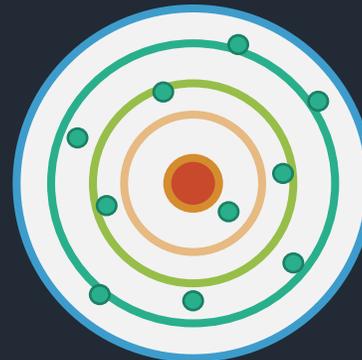
Reliable
Valid



Reliable
Not Valid



Not Reliable
Valid



Not Reliable
Not Valid



Practical Suggestions for Measurement

Use an existing measure, when possible

Create your own, when necessary

1. Try out the measure – in as controlled environment as possible (increases reliability and validity)
2. Keep instructions brief and clear
3. Evaluate the measure after use (check reliability and validity)

Example: Job Satisfaction

Think about your job over the last three months when answering the following questions.

- | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|---------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-------------|
| 1. | miserable | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | enjoyable |
| 2. | empty | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | full |
| 3. | boring | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | interesting |
| 4. | useless | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | worthwhile |
| 5. | discouraging | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | rewarding |
| 6. | dissatisfying | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | satisfying |