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Often when a person is being assessed for academic or occupational difficulties, the WAIS-IV will be administered amidst a range of psychological tests with similarly ambiguous acronyms. The aim of this article is to provide some clarity about the content and purpose of this commonly used assessment. The goal is to demystify part of the psychometric assessment process, which can be overwhelming at times.Psychologists are often asked to administer theWAIS-IV (Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale Fourth Edition). The WAIS-IV is the gold standard in cognitive assessment and claims to measure intellectual performance. The importance of conceptualising intelligence as a performance variable is that it does not really matter how much intelligence an individual has, to adapt to the environment. What really matters is how well they use their intelligence. Since intellectual capacity cannot be seen nor concretely verified, it cannot be reliably measured. However, intellectual performance can be measured and thus, should be the focus of testing. Most other major intelligence tests, (e.g. Stanford-Binet; the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test; Guilford Intelligence Scales), also view intelligence tests as performance measures.The WAIS-IV measures intellectual performance as a multidimensional construct. The test contains numerous scales (Indices) assessing qualitatively different types of intellectual functioning. Current intelligence tests view intelligence not as specific abilities emanating from a general intellectual capacity, but as different types of intelligence, each being of equal importance.Apart from providing IQ scores, the WAIS-IV integrates current conceptualisations and recent research to provide the most essential information about a participants strengths and areas of difficulty. When being revised, there is a lot of input from practitioners and experts in the field. Over time and after several reviews, the WAIS-IV is concluded to represent significant advances in the understanding of cognitive abilities. The WAIS-IV contains 10 core subtests and 5 additional optional subtests. These are summed to four indexes:Verbal Comprehension Index,Perceptual Reasoning Index,Working Memory Index, andProcessing Speed Index.One Full Scale IQ (FSIQ) is also calculated. These scores range from the lowest (40) to the highest (160) points. Subtests are given for additional examination of processing abilities. The age range for the WISC-IV is 16 years to 90 years and 11 months.WAIS-IV Indices (aka: indexes)The following are the four main indices of the WAIS-IV and what they measure:Verbal Comprehension Index (VCI)This Index assesses the participants ability to listen to a question, draw upon learned information from both formal and informal education, reason through an answer and express thoughts aloud. It can tap preferences for verbal information, a difficulty with novel and unexpected situations, or a desire for more time to process information rather than decide on the spot.Perceptual Reasoning Index (PRI)The PRI assesses the participants ability to examine a problem, draw upon visual-motor and visual-spatial skills, organise their thoughts, create solutions and then test them. It can also tap preferences for visual information, comfort with novel and unexpected situations or a preference to learn by doing.Working Memory Index (WMI)The WMI assesses the participants ability to memorise new information, hold it in short-term memory, concentrate, and manipulate information to produce some results. It is important in higher-order thinking, learning, and achievement. WMI can tap concentration, planning ability, cognitive flexibility, and sequencing skills, but is sensitive to anxiety. It is an important component of learning and achievement, and ability to work effectively with ideas as they are presented.Processing Speed Index (PSI)The PSI assesses the participants abilities to focus attention and quickly scan, discriminate between, and sequentially order visual information. It requires persistence and planning ability, but can be impacted by motivation, working under a time pressure, and motor coordination. Cultural factors seem to have little impact on PSI. It is related to reading performance and development too. PSI is related to Working Memory in that increased processing speed can decrease the amount of information a participant must hold in working memory.As an analogy, one can think of the thinking brain like the front entrance to a Victorian style home. There is a porch, front door, a foyer and, of course, the rest of the house. Guests (information) knock at the door and stand on the porch (i.e., teacher presents concepts). The host (i.e., the brain) lets the guest come into the foyer (i.e., brain perceives the information and registers that it is there). The host helps guests take off their coats and boots (i.e., the brain organises and clarifies the information for storage), and brings them into the house (i.e. encodes the information into longer term memory). If the host takes too long to perform hosts tasks and get the guests into the living room, some guests may become impatient and leave (i.e., some information is not encoded).Finding AssistanceAt Strategic Psychology in Canberra, we offer a comprehensive, individually-tailored assessment service that is suitable for children, adolescents and adults who are having difficulties with academic and work functioning. The WAIS-IV is just one of the numerous assessments our clinicians are trained to administer. If you would like to make an appointment for yourself or your child to discuss the possibility and usefulness of administering an assessment, please contact us on (02) 6262 6157 or email support@strategicpsychology.com.au.Related reading:How Do I Know if my Child has Learning Difficulties?Applied Psychometrics 101: What does the WAIS-IV Measure?None of the Above What IQ Doesnt tell you about race by Malcom GladwellHale, J. B., Kaufman, A., Naglieri, J. A., & Kavale, K. A. (2006). Implementation of IDEA: Integrating response to intervention and cognitive assessment methods. Psychology in the Schools, 43, 753770. Google Scholar Iverson, G., & Brooks, B. L. (in press). Improving accuracy for identifying cognitive impairment. In M. R. Schoenberg & J. G. Scott (Eds.), The black book of neuropsychology: A syndrome based approach. New York: Springer. Google Scholar Kaufman, A. S., & Lichtenberger, E. O. (2006). Assessing adolescent and adult intelligence (3rd ed.). New York: Wiley. 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Additionally, it addresses frequently asked questions and discusses nuanced considerations that arise in its clinical and educational use. Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale, Fourth Edition (WAIS-IV), is designed for individuals aged 16 to 90 years and represents a significant evolution in intelligence testing. Unlike traditional IQ tests that provide a singular intelligence quotient, the WAIS-IV adopts a multifaceted approach, capturing a broad spectrum of cognitive abilities. This diversification aligns with contemporary theories of intelligence, such as the Cattell-Horn-Carroll (CHC) theory, emphasizing the complexity and multidimensionality of cognitive functioning. The WAIS-IV consists of 15 subtests, from which 10 core subtests are used to derive the Full-Scale IQ (FSIQ) score. The FSIQ offers an overall estimate of general intellectual ability, while additional index scores provide detailed insights into specific cognitive domains. The WAIS-IVs versatility makes it invaluable for diagnosing learning disabilities, cognitive impairments, and neuropsychological conditions such as Alzheimer's disease and traumatic brain injuries. The WAIS-IV is organized around four major index scores, each corresponding to distinct cognitive domains. These indices collectively inform the Full-Scale IQ (FSIQ) and provide a nuanced understanding of an individuals intellectual strengths and weaknesses. Verbal Comprehension Index (VCI) The VCI assesses verbal reasoning, comprehension, and the ability to form concepts using language. Subtests include: Similarities: Identifying commonalities between paired concepts. Vocabulary: Defining words to gauge language development and knowledge. Information: Assessing general knowledge acquired from the environment. Optional: Comprehension, which evaluates understanding of social conventions and reasoning in real-world contexts. Perceptual Reasoning Index (PRI) The PRI measures non-verbal reasoning, visual-spatial processing, and problem-solving abilities. Subtests include: Block Design: Replicating geometric patterns using colored blocks. Matrix Reasoning: Identifying patterns and completing sequences. Visual Puzzles: Assembling visual components to form coherent images. Optional: Picture Completion and Figure Weights provide additional layers of perceptual analysis. Working Memory Index (WMI) The WMI focuses on the ability to hold, manipulate, and utilize information in short-term memory. Subtests include: Digit Span: Repeating sequences of numbers forwards, backwards, and in ascending order. Arithmetic: Solving mental math problems within a time limit. Optional: Letter-Number Sequencing, where examinees reorganize sequences of letters and numbers. Processing Speed Index (PSI) The PSI evaluates the speed at which individuals can process simple or routine information without errors. Subtests include: Symbol Search: Identifying matching symbols under time constraints. Coding: Transcribing symbols associated with numbers. Optional: Cancellation, which measures selective attention and concentration. The WAIS-IV scoring system reflects a shift from previous versions, emphasizing index scores over composite scores like Verbal IQ (VIQ) and Performance IQ (PIQ), which were discontinued. Instead, the Verbal Comprehension Index (VCI) and Perceptual Reasoning Index (PRI) now serve analogous roles, providing a richer, more differentiated cognitive profile. Full-Scale IQ (FSIQ) is derived from the combined performance across the four indices. The normative data, based on a representative sample, sets the mean FSIQ at 100 with a standard deviation of 15, categorizing cognitive functioning as follows: 130 and above: Very Superior 120129: Superior 110119: High Average 90109: Average 8089: Low Average 7079: Borderline Below 70: Extremely Low In addition to the FSIQ, the General Ability Index (GAI) provides an alternative composite score that minimizes the influence of working memory and processing speed, thus isolating core reasoning abilities. This is particularly valuable in cases where cognitive impairments may disproportionately affect WMI and PSI scores. Discrepancy analyses are facilitated through comparison of index scores, enabling clinicians to identify significant cognitive strengths and weaknesses. For instance, disparities between VCI and WMI may highlight language-based strengths alongside working memory deficits, often relevant in learning disability diagnoses. The WAIS-IVs broad scope lends itself to diverse applications across clinical, educational, and occupational domains: Clinical Diagnosis The WAIS-IV is indispensable in the diagnosis of cognitive impairments, including dementia, traumatic brain injuries, and neurodevelopmental disorders like ADHD and autism spectrum disorders. By evaluating cognitive patterns, clinicians can differentiate between psychiatric and neurological conditions. Educational Assessment In academic settings, the WAIS-IV aids in identifying students with learning disabilities or intellectual giftedness. The detailed cognitive profile informs the development of Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), targeting both strengths and areas needing intervention. Neuropsychological Evaluation The WAIS-IV is integral to comprehensive neuropsychological assessments, examining cognitive consequences of mental health conditions such as schizophrenia, major depressive disorder, and anxiety disorders. Its alignment with contemporary cognitive theories ensures its relevance in evolving diagnostic frameworks. Occupational Screening Employers may utilize the WAIS-IV in roles demanding high-level cognitive functioning, evaluating problem-solving skills, executive functioning, and processing speedparticularly in time-sensitive environments. WAIS-IV scores yield a multifaceted view of cognitive functioning. High Verbal Comprehension Index (VCI) scores suggest robust verbal reasoning and language comprehension abilities, while lower Processing Speed Index (PSI) scores might indicate difficulties with rapid information processing or motor speed, which could stem from neurological or psychological factors. Discrepancy analyses are particularly useful in tailoring educational and therapeutic interventions. For example, individuals with significantly higher Perceptual Reasoning (PRI) relative to Working Memory (WMI) may excel in visual-spatial tasks but struggle with tasks requiring sequential information retention. The WAIS-IV also facilitates diagnostic criteria for intellectual disabilities. To meet cognitive requirements, VCI, PRI, and FSIQ scores must typically fall below 70, consistent with diagnostic standards outlined in resources such as the DSM-5. While the WAIS-IV is a robust tool, it is not without limitations: Cultural and Language Bias Despite revisions aimed at minimizing cultural biases, some subtestsparticularly those assessing crystallized intelligencemay still reflect disparities linked to language fluency and cultural exposure. Test Anxiety and Performance Timed subtests, such as those assessing processing speed, may disadvantage individuals prone to anxiety, potentially skewing results and underrepresenting true cognitive capabilities. Snapshot of Cognitive Functioning The WAIS-IV provides a static view of cognitive functioning at a given time. As intelligence is influenced by factors such as health, mood, and motivation, longitudinal assessments may be required for a comprehensive evaluation. 1. How can the WAIS-IV diagnose intellectual disabilities without VIQ and PIQ scores? Although VIQ and PIQ are no longer components of the WAIS-IV, their roles are effectively supplanted by the Verbal Comprehension Index (VCI) and Perceptual Reasoning Index (PRI). For intellectual disability diagnoses, clinicians should examine whether VCI, PRI, and FSIQ scores fall below 70. These indices offer a more nuanced representation of cognitive domains relevant to diagnostic criteria. 2. Why is reliability lower in samples of gifted or intellectually disabled individuals compared to the normative population? Reliability, which refers to the consistency of test scores, can be diminished in these populations due to a restricted range of scores. The intellectually gifted often cluster at the upper limits of the scale, while individuals with intellectual disabilities cluster at the lower end. This lack of variability reduces the statistical reliability of the measurements. 3. Why are certain subtests not administered to individuals aged 7090? Subtests may be excluded for older adults due to concerns about fatigue and test burden. Extended testing periods can be mentally taxing, potentially affecting performance. Additionally, some subtests may lack normative validity for older populations, reducing their clinical utility. Additional Resources The WAIS-IV is a cornerstone of modern cognitive assessment, offering comprehensive insights into adult intelligence through its multidimensional structure. While its applications are far-reaching, its utility is best realized when interpreted by trained professionals who can contextualize scores within broader clinical, educational, or occupational frameworks. Deciphering the intricacies of your mind, the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale (WAIS) offers a fascinating glimpse into the complex tapestry of human cognition. Its like a mental treasure hunt, where each subtest is a clue leading us closer to understanding the unique landscape of an individuals intellectual abilities. But before we dive headfirst into this cerebral adventure, lets take a moment to appreciate the rich history and purpose behind this remarkable assessment tool. Picture yourself in the 1930s, a time when understanding intelligence was more art than science. Enter David Wechsler, a brilliant psychologist with a vision to revolutionize cognitive assessment. Frustrated with the limitations of existing intelligence tests, Wechsler set out to create a more comprehensive measure of adult intelligence. His brainchild, the Wechsler-Bellevue Intelligence Scale, first saw the light of day in 1939. This groundbreaking test laid the foundation for what would eventually become the WAIS we know today. Fast forward to the present, and the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale has become the gold standard in cognitive assessment. Its like the Swiss Army knife of intelligence tests, offering a multifaceted approach to measuring cognitive abilities. The WAIS doesnt just give you a single number and call it a day. Oh no, it provides a nuanced portrait of your cognitive strengths and weaknesses, painting a picture as unique as your fingerprint. Currently, were working with the fourth edition of this intellectual powerhouse, affectionately known as the WAIS-IV. Released in 2008, this version brought several improvements to the table, making it even more accurate and relevant in todays diverse world. Its like the test got a brain upgrade of its own! Now, lets roll up our sleeves and dig into the meat and potatoes of the WAIS-IV. This test isnt a one-trick pony; its more like a cognitive circus with multiple acts, each showcasing a different aspect of your mental prowess. First up, we have the Verbal Comprehension Index (VCI). Think of this as your brains linguistic gymnastics routine. It measures your ability to understand and work with language, including tasks like defining words, explaining concepts, and drawing connections between ideas. If youve ever enjoyed a good pun or found yourself lost in a captivating novel, you can thank the cognitive skills measured by the VCI. Next in line is the Perceptual Reasoning Index (PRI). This is where your mind gets to flex its visual-spatial muscles. Its all about how well you can analyze and manipulate visual information, solve non-verbal problems, and think abstractly. Ever assembled IKEA furniture without breaking into a cold sweat? Your PRI skills were probably hard at work. Then we have the Working Memory Index (WMI), which is like your brains mental juggling act. It measures your ability to hold information in your mind and manipulate it. This is crucial for tasks like mental math or remembering a phone number long enough to dial it. If youve ever kept track of multiple plot lines in a complex TV series, youve got your WMI to thank. Last but certainly not least, we have the Processing Speed Index (PSI). This is your cognitive sprint, measuring how quickly and accurately you can process information. Its like your brains reaction time, crucial for tasks that require rapid decision-making. If youve ever dominated in a fast-paced video game, your PSI was likely firing on all cylinders. These four indices come together to form the Full Scale IQ (FSIQ), which is like the grand finale of our cognitive circus. The FSIQ gives an overall picture of your intellectual functioning, but remember, its just one part of the story. The real magic lies in understanding how all these pieces fit together to create your unique cognitive profile. Now that weve got the lay of the land, lets dive into the nitty-gritty of WAIS scores. Buckle up, because were about to embark on a numerical adventure that would make even the most ardent mathophobe sit up and take notice. First, we have raw scores. These are the unprocessed results of each subtest, like the raw ingredients before theyre turned into a gourmet meal. Theyre useful for the test administrator, but on their own, they dont tell us much about how an individuals performance compares to others. Thats where scaled scores come in. These are like the raw scores after theyve been through a statistical makeover. They allow us to compare an individuals performance on different subtests and against a standardized sample of their peers. Scaled scores typically range from 1 to 19, with 10 being average. So if you scored a 15 on a subtest, you can pat yourself on the back youre performing above average on that particular skill. Composite scores are where things start to get really interesting. These are derived from combinations of scaled scores and give us a broader picture of cognitive abilities. The four index scores we talked about earlier (VCI, PRI, WMI, and PSI) are examples of composite scores. They typically have a mean of 100 and a standard deviation of 15. So if your Verbal Comprehension Index is 115, youre performing one standard deviation above the mean not too shabby! But wait, theres more! We also have percentile ranks, which tell us how an individuals performance compares to others in their age group. If youre in the 75th percentile, for example, youve performed better than 75% of people your age. Its like being in a very cerebral race and knowing exactly where you placed. Lastly, we have confidence intervals. These are the unsung heroes of psychological testing, acknowledging that no test is perfect. They give us a range within which we can be reasonably confident the true score lies. Its like saying, Were pretty sure your score is around here, give or take a bit. This humility in measurement is part of what makes the WAIS such a robust and respected tool. Making Sense of the Scores: A Cognitive Detective Story Now that weve got our score types sorted, its time to put on our detective hats and start interpreting these numbers. This is where the WAIS really shines, turning a collection of scores into a meaningful narrative about an individuals cognitive strengths and weaknesses. Lets start with the range of scores and their meanings. Generally, WAIS scores follow a bell curve distribution, with most people falling in the average range (between 85 and 115 for composite scores). Scores above 130 are considered very superior, while scores below 70 might indicate an intellectual disability. But remember, these are just guidelines. A score is a snapshot, not the whole movie of a persons cognitive abilities. Analyzing subtest scores is where things get really interesting. Its like looking at the individual pieces of a puzzle before stepping back to see the whole picture. Maybe someone scored particularly high on the Vocabulary subtest but lower on Block Design. This could suggest strong verbal skills but relatively weaker visual-spatial abilities. Identifying strengths and weaknesses is a crucial part of WAIS interpretation. Its not just about how high or low the scores are, but how they relate to each other. Someone might have an average overall IQ but show significant strengths in certain areas. This information can be invaluable for educational planning, career guidance, or developing strategies to overcome cognitive challenges. Comparing index scores can reveal fascinating patterns. For example, a significant difference between the Verbal Comprehension Index and the Perceptual Reasoning Index might suggest a learning disability or could be related to cultural or educational factors. Its like comparing apples and oranges, but in this case, the differences can be just as informative as the similarities. Understanding discrepancies between scores is where the real detective work comes in. Why might someone perform well on some subtests but poorly on others? Is it due to attention issues, anxiety, cultural factors, or something else entirely? This is where the expertise of a trained professional becomes crucial in interpreting WAIS results. As with any good story, the plot of our WAIS narrative has some twists and turns. Various factors can influence WAIS scores, adding layers of complexity to their interpretation. Age and cognitive development play a significant role. Our brains dont stay static throughout our lives. Some cognitive abilities, like processing speed, tend to decline with age, while others, like vocabulary, often improve. The WAIS takes this into account by using age-appropriate norms, but its still an important factor to consider when interpreting scores. Education level can also have a substantial impact on WAIS performance. This doesnt mean that more educated individuals are necessarily more intelligent, but certain subtests may be influenced by academic exposure. Its like having a head start in a race it doesnt guarantee youll win, but it certainly doesnt hurt. Cultural and linguistic background is another crucial factor. The WAIS strives to be culturally fair, but no test is perfect. Someone who grew up in a different culture or whose first language isnt the test language might perform differently on certain subtests. This is why its so important to consider an individuals background when interpreting their scores. Test-taking conditions can also play a role. Was the person well-rested? Anxious? Distracted? These factors can all influence performance. Its like trying to run a marathon with a pebble in your shoe even small discomforts can have a big impact on the outcome. Physical and mental health factors can significantly affect WAIS performance. Conditions like ADHD, depression, or even a simple headache can influence test results. This is why a comprehensive evaluation often includes more than just IQ testing. So, weve unraveled the mystery of WAIS scores, but what do we do with this information? As it turns out, quite a lot! In clinical settings, WAIS scores can be invaluable for diagnosis and treatment planning. They can help identify cognitive strengths and weaknesses, which can inform strategies for managing conditions like learning disabilities or neurodegenerative diseases. Its like having a roadmap of the mind to guide treatment decisions. In education, WAIS scores can assist with placement and support decisions. They can help identify gifted students who might benefit from additional challenges, or students who might need extra support in certain areas. Its not about labeling students, but about understanding their unique cognitive profiles to optimize their learning experiences. Career guidance and vocational assessment is another area where WAIS scores can be helpful. Understanding an individuals cognitive strengths can inform career choices and help identify areas where additional training might be beneficial. Its like having a cognitive compass to help navigate the complex landscape of career decisions. In forensic and legal settings, WAIS scores can play a crucial role. They might be used to determine an individuals competency to stand trial or to inform sentencing decisions. While IQ scores alone should never be the sole factor in such weighty decisions, they can provide valuable context. Finally, WAIS scores are widely used in research and population studies. They help us understand trends in cognitive abilities across different groups and over time. This research can inform educational policies, public health initiatives, and our broader understanding of human cognition. As we come to the end of our WAIS adventure, lets take a moment to recap the key points. The Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale is a comprehensive tool for assessing cognitive abilities, providing a nuanced picture of an individuals intellectual strengths and weaknesses. It gives us not just a single IQ score, but a range of scores that paint a detailed portrait of cognitive functioning. However, its crucial to remember that while WAIS scores are incredibly informative, they should always be interpreted by a qualified professional. These scores are complex and multifaceted, and their meaning can be influenced by a wide range of factors. Its like trying to understand a foreign language you might be able to pick out a few words, but to truly comprehend the message, you need an expert translator. Its also important to keep in mind the limitations of WAIS scores. They provide a snapshot of cognitive functioning at a particular moment in time, under specific conditions. They dont measure everything that makes a person intelligent or capable. Creativity, emotional intelligence, practical skills these are all important aspects of human capability that arent captured by the WAIS. Looking to the future, the field of cognitive assessment continues to evolve. Researchers are exploring new ways to measure intelligence, including nonverbal IQ tests and assessments that take into account cultural differences and multiple intelligences. The Wechsler Abbreviated Scale of Intelligence is one example of how these tests are adapting to meet different needs. As we close the book on our WAIS exploration, remember that these scores are just one chapter in the story of human intelligence. Theyre a powerful tool, but theyre not the whole story. Each mind is a unique and wonderful thing, full of potential that goes far beyond what any test can measure. So whether your WAIS scores are high, low, or somewhere in between, remember that theyre just one small part of what makes you, well, you. References: 1. Wechsler, D. (2008). Wechsler Adult Intelligence ScaleFourth Edition (WAISIV). San Antonio, TX: Pearson. 2. Lichtenberger, E. O., & Kaufman, A. S. (2009). Essentials of WAIS-IV Assessment. John Wiley & Sons. 3. Flanagan, D. P., & Harrison, P. L. (Eds.). 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A previous version of the test was known as the Wechsler-Bellevue Intelligence Scale (WBIS), which was published in 1939. This test was composed of elements of other intelligence tests such as the Binet-Simon scale which was the precursor to theStanford-Binet Intelligence Scale. This first true version of the WAIS Wechsler test was originally published in 1955 by its namesake David Wechsler. The first edition of the WAIS test included both verbal and non-verbal items within the test, with the non-verbal items known as performance scales. To an extent, this was new territory in intelligence testing, and by the 1960s the WAIS test had become the most popular intelligence test in use. The decades since its inception have seen the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale revised multiple times: WAIS-R.This revised version of the original WAIS test was released in 1981 and consisted of six verbal and five non-verbal subtests. The verbal sections included: Information, Comprehension, Arithmetic, Digit Span, Similarities, and Vocabulary. The Performance subtests were: Picture Arrangement, Picture Completion, Block Design, Object Assembly, and Digit Symbol. The results of the subtests were grouped to provide a verbal IQ score, performance IQ score, and full-scale IQ score.WAIS-III.The next edition of the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale was launched in 1997. has seen several revisions over the year the WAIS was updated most recently in 2008, and it is now available in a fourth edition. In addition to the verbal IQ score, performance IQ score, and full-scale IQ score, the WAIS-III provided scores for four secondary indices: Verbal comprehension, working memory, perceptual organization, and processing speed.WAIS-IV.The current version of the test and is comprised of the 10 core subtests and five supplemental subtests listed in the table below. In addition, a new index was added which was the General Ability Index, or GAI. This index consists of the scores from the Similarities, Vocabulary, Information, Block Design, Matrix Reasoning, and Visual Puzzles subtests. TaskIndexCore Subtest SimilaritiesVerbal Comprehensionx VocabularyVerbal Comprehensionx InformationVerbal Comprehensionx ComprehensionVerbal Comprehension Block DesignPerceptual Reasoningx Matrix ReasoningPerceptual Reasoningx Visual PuzzlesPerceptual Reasoningx Picture CompletionPerceptual Reasoning Figure WeightsPerceptual Reasoning Digit SpanWorking Memoryx ArithmeticWorking Memoryx Letter-Number SequencingWorking Memory Symbol SearchProcessing Speedx CodingProcessing Speedx CancellationProcessing Speed The Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale returns scores on four separate indexes of adult intelligence, each with its own subsets: The PRI contains several subsets. Block design tests an adults visual-motor construction, visual-spatial processing, and visual problem-solving. Matrix reasoning measures inductive reasoning and ones ability to solve problems in nonverbal, abstract ways. Visual puzzles reveal the subjects visual-spatial reasoning. Through picture completion, psychologists measure how quickly the subject can perceive visual details. And quantitative reasoning is tested using figure weights. For the VCI, test takers must describe how various concepts and words are similar. They also define vocabulary words and answer general knowledge questions. These tests are used to evaluate semantic knowledge, verbal comprehension, abstract verbal reasoning, and verbal expression. WMI essentially evaluates how well you can remember things. To measure WMI, participants will be asked to recall a list of numbers in the order that they were given (digit span) and a series of numbers and letters in order (letter-number sequencing). These tests evaluate attention, mental control, auditory processing, and working memory. The WMI also uses arithmetic to measure concentration, quantitative reasoning, and mental manipulation. PSI is essentially a measure of how fast your brain works. Through symbol search, cancellation, and coding, the test evaluates graphomotor speed, associative memory, and processing speed. Graphomoter skills combine perceptual, cognitive, and motor skills and enable a person to write. Scores are calculated on each of the four indices of the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale. They are then combined to create a Full-Scale IQ (FSIQ). Test takers will also be given a score on the General Ability Index (GAI), which uses the six subsets of the PRI and VCI: similarities, vocabulary, information, block design, matrix reasoning, and visual puzzles. The Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale is normed so that 100 is the median score for the adult population. Scores of 90-109 are considered to be in the average range, and the average IQ of all high school graduates is 105. College graduates have an average IQ of 115, which means that people in the high average range of IQ, 110-119, have a good chance of succeeding in college. Scores of 120-129 are considered superior, and this is the average IQ range for most successful Ph.D. candidates. A full-scale IQ score of 130 or above on the WAIS-IV will qualify you for Mensa, the high IQ society for people in the top 2% of intelligence. The low average IQ range is 80-89, and people in this range will likely struggle with academics. Those scoring in the 71-80 range tend to exhibit what is called borderline intellectual functioning. Moderate retardation occurs from about 50-70, and severe retardation at IQs below 50. The Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale is one of the most trusted intelligence testing apparatuses, and therefore, most commonly used IQ test in counseling practice. However, it is not perfect. The latest revision aimed to adjust the average score back to 100 to account for the fact that IQ tends to rise over time. (This is called the Flynn effect.) According to David W Loring and Russell M. Bauer in their paper Testing the limits, The WAIS-IV eliminated some subtests, modified others, and introduced new subtests. It decreased the emphasis on performance speed, and since psychomotor slowing is a component of various forms of brain injury, the WAIS-IV will probably yield fewer low-range scores than the earlier version. This will likely mean a decline in the number of students who qualify for disability services and special education and will make it difficult to make historical comparisons with people who tested on earlier scales.

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