

Legal and ethic considerations in psychological testing

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Ethical considerations for carrying out testing and measurement, in any psychological context, from a participant perspective should include informed consent obtained from all the participants, voluntary participation and adhering to the confidentiality of participant information like identity. Legally, all psychometric tests and measurements have to be performed by competent test users according to the regulation. According to the International Test Commission (ITC), “ A competent test user will use tests appropriately, professionally, and in an ethical manner, paying due regard to the needs and rights of those involved in the testing process, the reasons for testing, and the broader context in which the testing takes place” (Dobbie & Fitzgerald, 2003). Abiding by the ethics codes such as confidentiality, right to informed consent, and voluntary participation are also covered under legal boundaries.

From a sociocultural perspective, biases in testing and measurement is the most common possibility. The psychologists involved in testing should have sensitivity, knowledge, and skills to work with individuals and groups with a diverse range of strengths and needs from a variety of racial, cultural, ethnic, experiential, and linguistic backgrounds. With this expertise, the psychologists will be able to reduce and/or eliminate possible biases caused by these socio-cultural norms, thereby helping participants of all backgrounds feel welcomed and appreciated in the group (NASP, 2000). The AMCD multicultural counseling competencies (Toporek et al, 1996) also advocates the counselor to educate their clients on the intention of psychological interventions such as goals, expectations, legal rights, and the counselor’s orientation.