

INTERNATIONAL HISTORIES OF  
PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

To look forward, it is necessary to look back and learn. History is more than just facts about the past; it is a narrative told from a particular perspective. A proverb from Africa, “Until lions have their own historians, tales of the hunt shall always glorify the hunter,” captures this best. Most of the scholarship about psychological assessment comes from very specific nationalities and cultures, which does not truly reflect the diversity and breadth of histories pertaining to the field. Covering 50 countries, this collection gives voice to those that have previously been under represented and sometimes marginalized. This book not only describes important moments in psychological assessment from around the globe, but also equips readers with the tools to map the future of psychological assessment across nations. It advocates for a more globally inclusive science of assessment that holds promise for enhancing creativity and innovation in the field.

SUMAYA LAHER is Professor of Psychology and the Head of Department of Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa. She serves as founding Editor of the *African Journal of Psychological Assessment*, and Associate Editor of the *South African Journal of Psychology* and editorial board member for the *International Journal of Testing*.

EDUCATIONAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL TESTING IN A  
GLOBAL CONTEXT

EDITOR

Neal Schmitt, *Michigan State University*

The Educational and Psychological Testing in a Global Context series features advanced theory, research, and practice in the areas of international testing and assessment in psychology, education, counseling, organizational behavior, human resource management and all related disciplines. It aims to explore, in great depth, the national and cultural idiosyncrasies of test use and how they affect the psychometric quality of assessments and the decisions made on the basis of measures. Our hope is to contribute to the quality of measurement and to facilitate the work of professionals who must use practices or measures with which they may be unfamiliar or adapt familiar measures to a local context.

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# INTERNATIONAL HISTORIES OF PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

EDITED BY

SUMAYA LAHER

*University of the Witwatersrand*



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## *Contributors*

### **Editor**

Sumaya Laher, Department of Psychology, University of the  
Witwatersrand, South Africa

### **Section Editors**

**Africa:** Sumaya Laher, Department of Psychology, University of the  
Witwatersrand, South Africa

**Americas:** Kurt F. Geisinger, Buros Center for Testing, University of  
Nebraska–Lincoln, United States of America

**Arab-Levant:** Pia A. Zeinoun, Psychological Assessment Center and  
Psychiatry Department, American University of Beirut, Lebanon

**Asia:** Yiqun Gan, School of Psychological and Cognitive Sciences, Peking  
University, China

**Europe:** Dragoş Iliescu, Psychology Department, University of Bucharest,  
Romania

**Oceania:** Peter Macqueen, Griffith University & Compass Consulting,  
Australia

### **Contributing Authors**

Adote Anum  
University of Ghana, Ghana



*List of Contributors*

ix

- Suresh Arumugam  
Defence Institute of Psychological Research, India
- Dave Bartram  
University of Kent, United Kingdom
- Janet F. Carlson  
University of Nebraska–Lincoln, United States of America
- Regis Chireshe  
Zimbabwe Council for Higher Education, Zimbabwe
- Jan Corstjens  
Ghent University, Belgium
- Karma El Hassan  
American University of Beirut, Lebanon
- Melem L. Fangwi  
University of Buea, Cameroon
- Yiqun Gan  
School of Psychological and Cognitive Sciences, Peking University, China
- Kurt F. Geisinger  
University of Nebraska–Lincoln, United States of America
- Fei Huang  
Central China Normal University, China
- Dragoş Iliescu  
University of Bucharest, Romania
- Andrei Ion  
University of Bucharest, Romania
- Sumaya Laher  
University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa
- Michael Canute Lambert  
University of North Carolina, United States of America
- Jonas W. B. Lang  
Ghent University, Belgium
- Ivan M. H. Lee  
Singapore Psychological Society, Singapore

José Livia

Federico Villarreal National University, Peru

Peter Macqueen

Griffith University & Compass Consulting, Australia

Krunoslav Matešić

University of Zagreb, Croatia

Asangha N. Muki

University of South Carolina, United States of America

Sverre L. Nielsen

University of Bergen, Norway

Kayi Ntinda

University of Botswana, Botswana

John O’Gorman

Griffith University, Australia

Seth Oppong

University of Botswana

Kwaku Oppong Asante

University of Ghana, Ghana

Jaime Pereña Brand

National Distance Education University, Spain

Janelle N. Robinson

John Jay College of Criminal Justice, United States of America

Asoke Kumar Saha

Jagannath University, Bangladesh

Marion K. Schulmeyer

Universidad Privada de Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia

Robert Serpell

University of Zambia and University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa

Ross St George

Massey University, New Zealand

Suresh Sundaram

Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development, India

*List of Contributors*

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Fatemeh S. Tarighat  
University of Tabriz, Iran

Therese M. S. Tchombe  
University of Buea, Cameroon

Eugenia V. Vinet  
Universidad de La Frontera, Chile

Solange Muglia Wechsler  
Pontifical Catholic University of Campinas, Brazil

Lambert S. Wirdze  
University of Buea, Cameroon

Ndzetar E. Wirmum  
University of Buea, Cameroon

Mostafa Zarean  
University of Tabriz, Iran

Pia A. Zeinoun  
American University of Beirut, Lebanon

Mingjie Zhou  
Central China Normal University

N. Sheereen Zulkefly  
University of Putra Malaysia

## *Series Editor's Foreword*

In the last several decades, globalization has influenced the lives of all people. Business and education, as well as scientific disciplines, have all experienced the need to understand and work with people whose political, social, cultural, and linguistic origins are often very different. This has been true of psychology, education, and other social science disciplines. These developments also have important implications for the development and use of measures of human individual differences. Business and educational institutions using tests and institutions interested in certifying or accrediting test users have all experienced the challenges and opportunities generated by increased globalization.

Recognizing the need for the education of psychometricians and users of tests, Jean Cardinet spearheaded the formation of the International Test Commission (ITC) in the late 1960s and early 1970s. It was formally established in 1978. Current members include scholars and institutions from most of the European and North American countries as well as some countries in the Middle and Far East, Africa, and South America.

The major goals of the ITC are the exchange of information among members and furthering cooperation on problems related to the construction, distribution, and use of psychological measures and diagnostic tools. To accomplish these goals, the ITC has initiated a number of educational activities. The ITC has also developed and published guidelines on quality control in scoring; test analysis and reporting of test scores; adapting tests for use in various linguistic and cultural contexts; test use in general; and computer-based and internet-delivered testing; as well as a test taker's guide to technology-based testing. The ITC publishes the peer-reviewed journal *International Journal of Testing*, which seeks to publish papers of interest to a cross-disciplinary international audience in the area of testing and measurement. In 2016, the ITC led the effort to produce the *International Handbook of Testing and Assessment*.

In 2013, the ITC proposed to Cambridge University Press a series of books on issues related to the development and use of tests. The goal of the series is

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to advance theory, research, and practice in the areas of international testing and assessment in psychology, education, counseling, organizational behavior, human resource management, and related disciplines. This series seeks to explore topics in more depth than was possible in the *Handbook* or in any single volume. The series will explore the national and cultural idiosyncrasies of test use and how they affect the psychometric quality of assessments and the decisions made on the basis of those measures. As such, we hope the series will contribute to the quality of measurement, but that it will also facilitate the work of professionals who must use practices or measures with which they may be unfamiliar or adapt familiar measures to a local context. We have asked both ITC members and other scholars familiar with a topic, and who are also familiar with the global situation related to various topics, to be the editors and contributors to individual volumes.

We are especially pleased to see this series develop and are confident that the books in the series will contribute to the effectiveness of testing and assessment throughout the world. Since the initiation of the series, we have hoped to produce a volume on the history of testing in various parts of the world. With the publication of this volume, we have realized that goal. It was a monumental effort and, thanks to the perseverance and vision of Sumaya Laher, I believe it is a really significant contribution to our understanding of how testing technology and practice have developed in various parts of the world. Most history “buffs” credit the Chinese civil service exams begun around 200 BCE as the first high-stakes examinations. These tests were discontinued in 1905 just as the rest of the world was beginning to develop and use standardized measures of human characteristics. This book details the efforts of scientists in various countries to develop tests and assessments during the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first century. There are certainly commonalities across these efforts, but there have also been many unique approaches to testing embedded in local cultures as well. This book should be helpful to those scientists and practitioners who seek to understand differences in testing across countries and cultures, to adapt their practices to those cultures when appropriate and desired, and to benefit from the new ideas extant in various parts of our planet. It is our hope that this volume will contribute to the efforts of the ITC to promote good testing practices worldwide.

We hope to publish a book at least biennially and encourage scholars who might be interested in developing a book proposal that addresses assessment in an international context to talk with the series editor, the ITC president, or other ITC leaders.

**Neal Schmitt**