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**Measuring measurement; a psychometric assessment of a reading ability test**

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**Objectives/aims**

This paper aims to demonstrate the importance of assessing the measures used in a study. It will explore the psychometric properties of a popular, validated Irish measure of reading ability with a specific population. It will illustrate the potential pitfalls of using psychometric measures and illustrate how to check the construct validity and reliability.

**Methods**

This study uses secondary data from a randomised study (n = 464) of an after-school literacy intervention for poor readers in a deprived area of Ireland. Specifically, it focuses on four subscales (word recognition, picture recognition, sentence structure and word choice) from a widely used standardised and normed Irish reading ability test. Confirmatory factor analysis was used to check the structure of the subscales and reliability was assessed by internal consistency and test-retest measures.

**Main findings**

The confirmatory factor analyses demonstrated suboptimal fit for three out of the four subscales (corrected models and explanations are presented) and the measure appeared to demonstrate unacceptable reliability. This paper highlights the importance of assessing the psychometric properties of tests with specific populations. Failure to ensure appropriate, tailored measurement may mean any results and conclusion based on these findings are not reliable or accurate.