Ethical and Unethical Testing: An Example

Sometimes, of course, a test is needed. Perhaps a psychometrist encounters a family that wishes to have their child tested. They explain the procedure, that there are no right or wrong answers, but they need to be honest and explain in a way that the family can understand. They reassure the parents about their child's intelligence and assure them that the child can manage at their current grade. As a result, the parents are less frustrated and can discuss the child's performance with their child with understanding and support. The psychometrist indeed discovers some learning difficulties, but succumbs to the parents' pressure and insists that the child be placed in a remedial class. The other children in the family are high achievers. The parents are frustrated with the child's performance and believe he has intellectual disabilities. The parents push their son harder, believing his poor performance must simply be because he isn't trying hard enough. Thus, testing has ultimately reinforced the problem.

By understanding this, the psychometrist can alleviate the parent's concerns and explain the results without judgment and encourage the parents to understand the bigger picture, and how best to support their son. It is wise by his questions.” - Naguib Mahfouz

“You can tell whether a man is clever by his answers. You can tell whether a man is wise by his questions.” - Naguib Mahfouz

The Ethics of IQ Testing and the Advent of “Intelligent Testing”

Lyndsay T Wilson

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