

iWAM Validity Study

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The research question answered in this paper is: *“To what extent do test takers agree with the interpretive text generated about them in the basic end-user report?”*

This study is based on feedback given by 617 persons having completed iWAM in the Public Environment on the jobEQ website.¹ These persons used the “Feedback Sheet”, which allows for 3 possible feedback answers for each paragraph that is generated on the short end user report. Feedback can be:

- “yes”=Agree;
- “No”= Not agree;
- “Unsure”: Person does not understand pattern or is not certain about the interpretation.

In addition, users can leave a written comment that complements or explains further their feedback. Such comments included factors that were not taken into account in the analysis. Given the fact that the end-user report is an abbreviated report, only the operating factors, the work approach, and the Sorting Categories (especially clock-related information: the time people remain in the job) are addressed in this end-user feedback.

A potential limitation of this kind of study, especially if participants are presented a “fuzzy” or ambiguous explanation that has a positive undertone, is that the results might be biased. *The impression is that we may be getting a bias in the opposite direction for the iWAM end-user study.* The text in the end-user report is known to be quite blunt, so people who disagree (i.e., answer “No”) include those who are "diagnosed" or assessed correctly, but who do not like "the verdict."

The table below indicates, for each pattern, how participants responded to the question about the accuracy of the text of the end-user feedback (N = 617).

	BP1	BP2	BP3	BP4	BP5	BP6	BP7	BP8	WA	So1-3
“Unsure”	33	30	23	31	25	32	15	27	34	31
	5,35%	4,86%	3,73%	5,02%	4,05%	5,19%	2,43%	4,38%	5,51%	5,02%
“No”	69	43	100	102	45	52	47	53	58	59
	11,18%	6,97%	16,21%	16,53%	7,29%	8,43%	7,62%	8,59%	9,40%	9,56%
“Yes”	515	544	494	484	547	533	555	537	525	527
	83,47%	88,17%	80,06%	78,44%	88,65%	86,39%	89,95%	87,03%	85,09%	85,41%

no (adj.)*	11,82%	7,33%	16,84%	17,41%	7,60%	8,89%	7,81%	8,98%	9,95%	10,07%
yes (adj.)*	88,18%	92,67%	83,16%	82,59%	92,40%	91,11%	92,19%	91,02%	90,05%	89,93%

(*) The adjusted percentages (adj.) are those disregarding the persons who indicated that they were “unsure”

This table shows that, depending on the pattern, participants agree with the interpretation of the iWAM score on average in 85.27% of the cases and report that they are unsure about 4.55% of the statements. They disagree with the interpretation in 10,18% of the cases. When adjusting the data by removing the “unsure” or “unknowns”, this yields 89,34% agreement versus 10,66% disagreement. When the “unknowns” are included (“worst case” analysis), 78,44% of respondents still indicate they agree with the description they were given.

1

The database originally contained 647 feedback forms completed between December 2001 and November 2005– we deleted the doubles (people having submitted feedback more than one, often caused by pressing the submit button the website twice)

Year of feedback	n
2001	5
2002	241
2003	134
2004	122
2005	115

The predicted effect that people disagree more with culturally loaded patterns can indeed be found. When people are diagnosed as “reactive” (unable or too slow to act – BP1 low), “external reference” (unable to make decisions – BP3 low) or “procedures” (unable to be “creative” – BP4 low), they often don’t like the interpretative paragraph that is generated. It is, therefore, no surprise that the agreement ratio of those categories is the lowest.

Finally, the study answers the question: “*On average, with how many patterns do people disagree?*” The data indicate that, on average, persons disagree with 1 out of the 10 categories. Here is a summary of the key findings:

- 234 persons or 38% agreed with all patterns
- 28 persons (4%) felt unsure about 1 paragraph
- 136 persons (18%) disagreed with the paragraph for 1 pattern
- 124 persons (20%) indicated they were unsure or disagreed with 2 paragraphs.
- 55 persons (9%) felt unsure or disagreed with 3 patterns.
- The remaining 11% disagreed more or felt more unsure, of which 6 persons (1%) said they felt unsure about all the paragraphs.

Conclusion

This study in which iWAM respondents rated the accuracy of the interpretive text provides additional evidence in the direction of the validity of the Inventory for Work Attitude and Motivation, the iWAM. Depending upon the pattern and when we disregard the “unknown” and “unsure” feedback, at least 82% of the participants (N = 617) agree with the description of the pattern in their report. The average for all the patterns is 89%.

Also, when people disagree, on average they will only disagree with one or two patterns and this might be due to not liking the text, rather than the diagnosis being wrong.

Further, because of the nature of the cultural impact of certain interpretations, it appears that the potential limitation of such an approach is not only minimized, but perhaps even reversed in the case of the iWAM.