PATNA UNIVERSITY
M.A(PSYCHOLOGY) SEMESTER-2
PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT(CC9)
TOPIC: MEASUREMENT SCALES

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Types of Measurement scales- There are four types of measurement scales.

1. Nominal or Classificatory scale

2. Ordinal or Ranking scale

3. Interval Scale

4. Ratio Scale

1. Nominal or Classificatory scale- This is the most basic scale available. It is used for naming or describing things. Nominal scales simply classify people into categories by labelling and are a convenient method of describing them as individuals or groups. Each subgroup has a characteristics or property which is common to all classified within that subgroup.

Example, Gender- Male, Female, Marital status- Single, Married, Widowed, Divorced

The problem with nominal scales is that only a limited number of transformations and statistics can be conducted on data. The Chi-square test may also be used to understand any association between categories.

2. Ordinal or Ranking scale- It has all the characteristics of a nominal scale.

Individuals, groups, characteristics classified under a subgroup have a common characteristics. Subgroups have a relationship to one another. Arranged in ascending or descending order. These scales indicate an individual's position regarding some variable where this can be ordered, for example from low to high or from first to last as in a competition. This can help decide whether one person is equal to, greater than, or less than another person based on the attribute concerned. The problems with this are that the scale does not indicate the absolute position of individuals on what is being measured and that there is no way of knowing the actual difference between them. Statistical analyses available for ordinal data include the median and the mode.

Example, Income- Above average, Average, below average.

3. Interval Scale- It has all the characteristics of ordinal scale. It has a unit of measurement with an arbitary starting and terminating point. It is divided into equally spaced units or intervals. Interval scales do not have a true zero, for example a person's level of anxiety, intelligence or of psychopathy. Like ordinal scales, interval scales assign numbers to indicate whether individuals are less than, greater than or equal to each other, but also represent the difference between them. Means, variance, standard deviation and Pearson product-moment correlations can be calculated on interval scale data. Interval scales use constant units of measurement so that differences on a characteristic can be stated and compared.

4. Ratio Scale- It has all the properties of interval scale. It has a fixed starting point means a zero point. On this basis measurement can be interpreted in a meaningful way since the ratio scale is an interval scale in which people's distances are given relative to a rational zero. It is the highest level of measurement. Ratio scale represents the actual amounts of variables. Measures of physical dimensions such as weight, height, distance, etc. are examples. Generally, all statistical techniques are usable with ratio scales. Geometric and harmonic means can be used as measures of central tendency and coefficients of variation may also be calculated.

- Example, Age- years/months
- Weight-kg
- Height-cm