



How to Mitigate Misdiagnoses Using Additional Alternative Assessment Methods to Inform Interventions

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Purpose of study:

The purpose of the study is to emphasize the importance of viewing each child as a unique individual when carrying out Educational Psychological assessments. This study focuses on considering a child as more than just percentiles and numbers, taking on a holistic perspective in assessments to inform interventions. The holistic perspective includes Hils' in-house Pillars of Learning which focuses on memory, listening, attention, sequencing, social skills and gross/fine motor skills. In addition to these pillars, it also considers biological and environmental factors such as, diet and nutrition, eyes, ears, sleep and screen time.

Methodology:

A sample of 400 children between the ages of 6-18 were assessed using the Hils Learning Screening. 7 of these children were also assessed using the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children, fifth edition (WISC-V), and Wechsler Individual Achievement Test, third edition (WIAT-III) assessments. The sample was obtained from parents who came for an initial chat to determine their child's concerns. Following that, the Hils Screening was conducted in a 1-1 setting with the child over a span of 2 hours, including parental feedback. In unique cases, where formal assessments were necessary, the WISC-V and WIAT-III were paired with the Hils Screening.

A mixed method design involving quantitative and qualitative methods was utilized as the research design. Quantitative data was obtained from test scores in the WISC-V and WIAT-III, and findings from the Hils Screening, whereas qualitative data was obtained via semi-structured parent interviews and behavioural observations in various settings (e.g. schools and at Hils). The data was analyzed separately using a correlational design for quantitative data on the SPSS program. Additionally, qualitative data was analyzed using open and axial coding on the Nvivo program.