



## PSYCHODIAGNOSTICS AS A SCIENCE AND PRACTICAL ACTIVITY

Samarova Shokhista Rabidjanovna

is an Associate Professor at the Department of Psychology, Faculty of  
Pedagogy, Chirchik State Pedagogical University.  
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**Annotation:** This article introduces the meaning of the word “diagnostics,” the essence of psychodiagnostics as a science, and its core components.

**Keywords:** diagnostics, psychodiagnostics, subject, purpose, tasks, testing, function.

The term “diagnostics” originates from the Greek words *dia* – mutual, through, and *gnosis* – cognition. *Diagnostikos* means methods of determination. In literature, its interpretation varies. Based on these interpretations, psychodiagnostics can be defined as the study of methods for measuring and identifying individual psychological characteristics. It also focuses on developing and applying methods for examining the unique features of a person’s psyche in practice. These processes are carried out using psychodiagnostic methods. As a theoretical branch, **General Psychodiagnostics** addresses issues such as:

The principles behind drawing diagnostic conclusions with validity and reliability;

Rules for interpreting psychological states based on specific signs or indicators.

To achieve this, both complex and simple techniques may be employed, including comparative standards, interrelated calculations, specialized psychodiagnostic examinations, experiments, and expert evaluations. Hypotheses are formulated and tested.

Psychodiagnostics is closely connected with general psychology, medical psychology, developmental psychology, social psychology, and other psychological disciplines. The phenomena and characteristics studied within these fields are often examined through psychodiagnostic methods. Psychodiagnostic assessment also serves as a tool for verifying theoretical assumptions proposed in various branches of psychology.

The theoretical approaches to psychodiagnostics can be structured as follows:

**Psychodiagnostics** – a psychological discipline focused on making complete psychological diagnoses and qualification decisions about individual or multiple psychological conditions and characteristics of clients.

It involves the development of assessment and measurement techniques, including:

Psychological testing;

Projective methods for obtaining data about personality;

Practical evaluation and theoretical understanding of patients’ mental states through psychological testing.

As a modern science, psychodiagnostics should be approached as:

A specialized field developing methods and methodologies for assessing individuals' or groups' psychological maturity, development, and characteristics;

A branch that creates new psychological methods;

A field that assesses the potential of existing methods;

A discipline that reveals the level of development of personality traits;

A means to identify developmental dynamics over time;

A tool to detect real behavioral and psychological changes resulting from integrated educational influence;

A method to predict the future development of a person's qualities based on their past;

A system for categorizing individuals or groups for differentiated work based on their achievements;

A way to determine the suitability of individuals or groups for specific activities (e.g., professional aptitude);

A tool for organizing psychocorrectional work to check if an individual's behavior and psychology comply with social or medical standards;

A basis for giving recommendations to individuals or groups regarding life choices and personal development.

**Psychological testing** has emerged as a unique area in psychology, used for selection processes in schools, organizations, the military, and recruitment through standardized tools.

The function of psychological tests is to measure individual differences under any condition. Early tests addressed intellectual delays.

Clinical use of tests aimed at identifying behavioral deviations, psychological changes, or tendencies toward delinquency.

Educational development in testing focused on selecting students based on ability and detecting learning difficulties, aiding vocational guidance and selection.

Testing is also widely used in industry and production for personnel selection and distribution. In psychological counseling, testing is increasingly applied in narrow, specific areas of life. Emotional states and interpersonal relations have become central objectives in counseling. Tests help individuals better understand themselves and facilitate personal development. Recently, test results are often used in decision-making.

These applications show that psychological testing addresses a wide range of practical problems. It is also a critical tool in fundamental research, especially in differential psychology. For example, it helps explore individual differences, psychological characteristics, and behavioral responses to various influences, combining biological and cultural research perspectives.

As a standardized tool, testing is effective in studying developmental changes, the impact of educational environments, psychotherapy, and social programs.

Psychological tests provide objective and standardized assessments of behavior. Similar to how a biochemist examines blood or water content through lab tests, psychologists analyze behavior through representative samples using psychological tests.

The relevance of a test to the behavior being studied depends on the nature and quantity of tasks and the set of stimuli it uses. For instance, a five-question arithmetic test or one assessing only multiplication skills cannot reliably evaluate adults' math abilities. Likewise, using baseball terms in a vocabulary test cannot accurately reflect a child's verbal capacity.

The diagnostic or interpretive value of a test depends on its ability to measure a broad and significant domain of behavior. Therefore, psychologists must ensure proper control during testing.

For example:

"Can I use the Binet-Simon scale to test whether my nephew is ready for school next week?"

"To improve education quality, we need an intelligence test that is free from cultural influence."

"My neighbor gave me a personality test in English that measured neuroticism. As a result, I became anxious and stopped attending training."

"Yesterday, I took an IQ test in a magazine and scored 80. I think psychological testing is nonsense."

These reflections are common and often stem from the misuse or misinterpretation of tests. Incorrect applications can lead to the belief that psychological tests are useless or even harmful. However, when applied skillfully, tests can be very effective. Improper use by unqualified individuals, on the other hand, can cause serious harm.

Key principles include:

1. Psychological tests should be administered by professionals with adequate training to ensure correct use and interpretation.

2. Preventing prior exposure to test content is essential to maintain validity.

International standards and ethical codes guide the practice of psychodiagnostics and testing. Psychologists are responsible for interpreting results and may be held accountable if the individual being tested suffers harm due to the assessment. Thus, psychologists must understand their professional and legal responsibilities and adhere to ethical guidelines.

**Important ethical principles include:**

**Special training:** Professionals must have the necessary education and experience to select and apply appropriate methods and interpret results accurately.

**Confidentiality:** Test content must not be shared publicly or used unethically. Unqualified individuals using such methods may spread misinformation.

**Respect for rights:** Individuals must be informed about how their results will be used. Especially with minors, parents should be aware of test outcomes.

**Integrity:** Psychologists should not influence the test outcome by showing bias or giving hints. Instructions may be clarified if misunderstood.

**Confidentiality of results:** Test results must only be shared with appropriate individuals (psychologists, staff, parents) and with the subject's consent.

**Clarification rights:** If necessary, the tested person can explain or correct interpretations of their results.

In summary, psychologists conducting diagnostic work must:

1. Know the basics of differential psychometrics and theoretical-methodological principles.

2. Maintain databases of information and testing tools.

3. Take responsibility for the accuracy of conclusions based on valid methods.

4. Develop effective diagnostic techniques and conduct research to improve them.

5. Follow standardization requirements and properly process and interpret results.

6. Ensure confidentiality and proper use of psychological information in all educational and training contexts.

**Conclusion**

Psychodiagnostics is both a scientific and practical discipline aimed at understanding, assessing, and analyzing individual psychological characteristics. Its application spans education, healthcare, personnel selection, consulting, and more. Effective psychodiagnostics

depends on the psychologist's knowledge, appropriate method selection, and adherence to ethical standards. As such, it remains a vital and demanding area within modern psychology.

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