

**Construction and standardisation of a suitable academic
aptitude test for grade nine students**

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The research expects to identify the constructs essential to identify the scholastic aptitude of pupils completing their basic education at the end of year nine. Scholastic aptitude is a set of traits used to predict the learning potential. The purpose of measuring the aptitude is to obtain implications about the way in which the student may act successfully in the future. Scholastic aptitude tests are used to investigate the academic potential of pupils during schooling years and also to select students at the university entrance. Only the standardised psychological tests should be used for this purpose. Although several standardised aptitude tests are available in Sri Lanka, no tests have been constructed and standardised to measure the academic potential of pupils at the end of year nine. In the preparation of this test, special consideration was given to abilities used in Sri Lanka and internationally. Five abilities: vocabulary, perception, reasoning, identification of relationships and problem solving were identified and each was resolved in three aspects: verbal, number and spatial. Finally a testing package was designed with five sub-tests consisting of fifteen parts. During the preparation of the test, items were constructed and tested twice. The items were then revised on indicators prescribed by two theories, the classical theory and item response theory. Special attention was paid on the reliability value (KR 20) of the test. The prepared test was standardised using a sample of 100 Sinhala Medium schools in Sri Lanka representing provinces, districts, school types and sex of students. Data collectors were given training in administering tests. As there was an objective to prepare age norms, the sample was selected in two age groups. All the sub tests showed a high reliability value of KR 20. The calculation of the correlation among the sub-parts of the test and the value not exceeding 0.5 is a standing out feature. A difference of values was observed in median, mean and standard deviation between the low age group. Usage of the standardised marks was emphasised in order to reduce the error of the raw score which is currently used in schools. The importance of this test is the ability to calculate either intelligence quotient or aptitude level of pupils using the raw mark obtained for each test. These packages can also be utilised to support the learning process through diagnosing the current status of him or her in relation to the abilities measured. This testing package is of immense use for guidance and counseling needed for the school for reliably predicting the future scholastic potential of a grade nine pupils.

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