

The Role of the New PISA Quality Standards to Promote Fairness

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The value of the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) in informing evidence-based policymaking relies on the degree of precision with which population-level statistics are estimated and reported. But also, the degree to which those aggregate statistics can be meaningfully compared (e.g., country-level mean scores) and the interpretations made based on those comparisons are valid for the intended purposes. Although validity, comparability, and reliability are important components of fairness, they do not address all issues of fairness in assessment. Fairness provides an important additional lens for ensuring the validity of research, policies, and all other aspects of a testing program to promote positive, intended outcomes and minimize negative ones. PISA Technical Standards serve as a set of criteria for post hoc data adjudication (decisions on whether the data for a specific country are of sufficient quality for inclusion in the international reports), but do not address aspects of assessment quality like fairness, validity, reliability, and comparability. This presentation will describe the principles behind the new PISA Quality Standards to deliver relevant, rigorous, and transparent information to policymakers through assessment instruments that provide fair, valid, and reliable data comparable across cultural settings, time, and groups. The presentation will focus on major threats and suggested guidelines for ensuring fairness, validity, comparability, and reliability. The presentation will stress the similarities and differences with other professional standards.

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