

UPDATE: Differences in Canadian and U.S. norms using the WAIS-IV.

The earlier published paper by Harrison, Armstrong, Harrison, Lange, and Iverson, 2014, has been followed by another article to be published in the Journal of Psychoeducational Assessment (JPA; Harrison, Holmes, Silvestri & Armstrong, 2015) and available now online. In response, a paper by Miller, Weiss, Beal, Saklofske, Zhu, and Holdnack, also to be published in JPA, presents a different interpretation that supports the use of Canadian norms. Harrison et al. 2014 & 2015 report that a large percentage of Canadian postsecondary students obtained scores below the average range on the WAIS-IV FSIQ when using the Canadian norms. They consider this finding to be highly unexpected for a sample of college students, and questioned the validity of the WAIS-IV Canadian norms. However, the authors have not adequately taken into account that 75% of their sample have clinical diagnoses.

The in press paper by Miller, Weiss, Beal, Saklofske, Zhu and Holdnack, illustrates that the nature of the sample must be acknowledged when interpreting the results by Harrison et al. The expected rate of below average performance on the WAIS-IV in a “normally distributed population” does not apply to a “clinically-referred sample” such as that published by Harrison et al. which had a full-scale sample mean of approximately 90 points and more than two-thirds of participants had some type of diagnosed cognitive, neurocognitive, or learning disorder.

To demonstrate the impact of clinical status on the distribution of IQ test scores, Miller et al. drew a sample of American participants matched to the Harrison et al. sample on clinical status, age, and educational level. They then scored the American sample on U.S. norms, and found that the percentage obtaining below average FSIQ scores was nearly identical to that reported by Harrison et al. using Canadian norms.

This demonstrates that the Harrison et al. findings are not unique to the Canadian norms, but are due to the mixed clinical status of their sample.

Details of our matched sample analyses will be published in the upcoming 4th issue of the Journal of Psychoeducational Assessment and available through the journal's [OnlineFirst](#) publications in the coming weeks.

Article reference: Miller, J.L. Weiss, L.G., Beal, L., Saklofske, D.H., Zhu, J., & Holdnack, J.A. (in press). Intelligent use of intelligence tests: Empirical and clinical support for Canadian WAIS-IV norms. Journal of Psychoeducational Assessment.