

СЕКЦІЯ «ПСИХОЛОГІЯ СУЧАСНОСТІ»

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ONLINE TESTING IN PSYCHOLOGY: PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Psychology as a science has always strived for objectivity and precision. The transition from paper forms to digital interfaces is not merely a change in format, but a fundamental shift in methodology. Today, online testing covers everything from recruitment processes in IT companies to the clinical diagnosis of depressive conditions.

It is now recognized that psychodiagnostics, as a field of psychological knowledge, develops methods for identifying individual psychological characteristics of a person. Importantly, psychodiagnostics deals not only with tests but also with qualitative assessments of personality. Diagnosis (from the Greek “dia” and “gnosis”) literally means “differentiating cognition.” The term “diagnostics” is widely used in various fields of science and practice (education, medicine, engineering, etc.). It refers to the identification of a certain state of an object or system by registering its essential features and subsequently classifying it into a specific diagnostic category in order to predict its behavior and make decisions about necessary interventions.

In the modern information society, psychology actively utilizes digital technologies to study and analyze human mental processes. One of the most widespread tools is online testing, which has become an important component of psychodiagnostics. Thanks to the development of the internet and digital platforms, psychological tests have become accessible to a wide range of people regardless of their place of residence, social status, or level of education.

Online testing in psychology is not only a method of collecting information about psychological characteristics through electronic tests, questionnaires, and surveys, but also includes automated processing and analysis. This makes it possible to assess various aspects of the psyche: intelligence, emotional state, personality traits, level of anxiety, motivation, abilities, and other characteristics. Such tests can be both professional (scientifically validated) and popular, created for self-exploration.

One of the key reasons for the popularity of online testing is its simplicity and convenience. A person can take a test at any time without leaving home, which is especially relevant in conditions of limited access to specialists or during кризис situations. Online testing also significantly reduces the time required to process results, as the system automatically analyzes responses and provides conclusions.

At the present stage, adaptive testing (CAT) is used, which allows selecting the next question depending on the previous answer and avoids unnecessary clarifying questions. This makes the test much shorter and more efficient.

Among the advantages of online testing, the first to note is its high accessibility. Tests can be taken from any device — a computer, tablet, or smartphone. This opens opportunities for large-scale participation in psychological research and increases the validity and reliability of testing, which is especially important for science.

Another important advantage is the speed of obtaining results. Under traditional conditions, processing tests may take considerable time, whereas online systems do this instantly. This is convenient both for users and for psychologists, who can quickly obtain data for analysis.

Anonymity is also important. Many people feel more comfortable answering questions openly, and sometimes even more thoughtfully, when they do not have direct contact with a psychologist. This increases the sincerity of responses, especially when dealing with personal or sensitive topics.

Another advantage is standardization. Online tests usually provide the same conditions for all participants, which increases the objectivity of results. In addition, the absence of a human factor in data processing reduces the risk of errors.

Modern testing increasingly incorporates multimedia elements such as video, which expands possibilities for application, analysis, and interpretation.

Online testing also promotes self-knowledge. People can independently explore their psychological characteristics and receive basic information about their emotional state or personality type. This can become the first step toward seeking professional help.

Despite numerous advantages, online testing also has a number of serious disadvantages. One of the main issues is the reliability of results. The lack of control by a specialist means that respondents may answer carelessly, randomly, or deliberately distort information.

Another problem is the quality of tests. The internet contains many unverified or pseudoscientific methods that lack proper validity and reliability. Such tests can mislead individuals and create a distorted self-image.

There is also the issue of identification: there is no guarantee that the test is taken by the intended person or that they are not using prompts or external help.

Moreover, many individuals take tests on their own and assign themselves “diagnoses,” which can lead to unnecessary anxiety or improper self-treatment.

An important limitation is the restricted interpretation of results. Automated conclusions are usually generalized and do not take into account individual characteristics, life context, or specific situations. Without the involvement of a qualified psychologist, results may be misunderstood.

Technical issues may also affect the testing process. Unstable internet connections, software errors, or inconvenient interfaces can reduce the quality of test completion and influence results.

Ethical issues should also be highlighted. Online testing involves the collection of personal data, which requires ensuring their protection. Not all platforms comply with confidentiality standards, which may pose risks to users.

Another important aspect is the lack of direct contact with a psychologist. In traditional psychodiagnostics, a specialist can observe behavior, reactions, and emotions, which are essential for analysis. The online format does not provide this opportunity.

Online testing is widely used in various fields. In education, it helps determine the level of knowledge, abilities, and professional inclinations of students; game-based testing formats are especially well received by children and adolescents. In HR (human resource management), such tests are used for candidate selection, assessment of competencies, and psychological compatibility with a team.

In clinical psychology, online tests can be used for primary screening of mental states such as anxiety, depression, or stress. However, a final diagnosis must always be made by a specialist.

Online testing is also actively used in scientific research. It allows collecting large volumes of data in a short time, contributing to the development of psychological science.

With the advancement of technology, online testing is becoming increasingly accurate and adaptive. The use of artificial intelligence makes it possible to create personalized tests that adjust to user responses. This increases accuracy and efficiency.

In the future, we can expect the integration of online testing with other digital tools such as mobile applications, wearable devices, and behavioral analysis systems. This will allow for a more comprehensive understanding of a person's mental state.

Thus, online testing is an important tool of modern psychology that has both significant advantages and notable disadvantages. It provides accessibility, speed, and convenience, but requires a critical approach and careful use. The most effective approach is combining online testing with traditional methods of psychological assessment. This format does not replace a psychologist but frees them from routine tasks. Only under such conditions can the most accurate and useful results be obtained.

The future lies in game-based testing. Instead of monotonous questions, individuals will face scenarios where they make decisions. This helps overcome social desirability bias (the tendency to appear better), as reactions in a game become more automatic.

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