

Pankratz, M., Morrison, A., & Plante, E. (2004). Difference in standard scores of adults on the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (Revised and Third Edition). *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research, 47*, 714-718.

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Summary: Analysis of the data from of data from the PPVT-R and PPVT-III tests from 76 adult participants revealed significant score differences. Participants with poor language skills scored significantly higher on the PPVT-III than on the PPVT-R. The control group showed no significant difference between the PPVT-R and PPVT-III scores. The results suggested that the two tests should not be considered interchangeable.

Assumptions

- Differences in the standard scores for the PPVT-III and PPTV-R are known to exist.
- The Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-Third Edition (PPVT-III) is widely used for assessing vocabulary skills.
- Poor language skills are considered to be familial.
- Several features of the test make it an attractive substitute for the PPVT-R. The similarities in the test format and the number of shared items may lead one to believe that the two tests elicit comparable performance

Results:

- In general, the PPTV-III and PPVT-R measured vocabulary in a conceptually similar manner. The high correlation between the tests indicated that a high score on one test did correspond to a high score on the other test.
- The control group showed no significant difference between the standard scores from the two tests.
- Both groups of research participants, who were selected from populations characterized by weak language skills, scored significantly higher on the PPVT-III than on the PPVT-R.
- Score differences between the two tests appeared to be disproportionately larger for groups who were most likely to take this test for clinical reasons.
- When the PPVT-III was substituted for the PPVT-R, fewer individuals were identified as having poor language skills.

Conclusions:

- Despite the score differences, the PPVT-III was found to be a better measure of vocabulary skills than the PPVT-R.
- Administration of the two tests did not result in comparable scores for a noteworthy proportion of individuals in the research group who had poor language skills.
- Clinicians need to evaluate whether the higher scores achieved with the PPVT-III undermine the research or diagnostic purposes of the test.

Suggestions for Teachers:

- Re-evaluate instructional choices after using the PPVT-R / PPVT-III.
- Be prepared to assist students in areas where you find skill weaknesses.

Suggestions for Literacy Leaders:

- Assist educators with evaluating test formats and the similarities and differences between PPVT-III and PPVT-R.
- Provide resources for teachers to obtain balanced information relative to the differences in the standard scores of adults.
- Assist teachers with ways to enhance learning with the information gleaned from the PPVT-R & PPVT-III.