

From Assessment to Analysis: Retaining Validity and Reliability in the Transition from SPOT to INSIGHT

Mr. Satish Narni^{1*}, Dr. Somasekhar Naraganti

ABSTRACT

The transition from the Screening Psychosocial Stressors Objectively Test (SPOT) to the Identifying Needs Strengths and Inner Growth Harmony Tool (INSIGHT) makes a significant shift in purpose from psychological assessment tool to psychological analysis tool. While INSIGHT is a part of the longitudinal study initiated during SPOT development, the core framework and methodologies remain intact. This article explores how modifications in the name, approach, and data collection methods affect the validity and reliability of INSIGHT while retaining SPOT's foundational constructs. By comparing SPOT and INSIGHT, the article highlights the implications of this evolution for both psychological assessment and analysis.

Keywords: SPOT, INSIGHT, psychological assessment, psychological analysis, longitudinal study, validity, reliability, coping mechanisms, psychosocial stressors

Psychological assessment involves the systematic evaluation of an individual's mental health, behavior, and cognitive abilities, often leading to diagnosis and treatment planning.

In contrast, psychological analysis focuses on uncovering underlying processes, motivations, and behavioral patterns. Analysis tools provide qualitative insights into a person's needs, strengths, and coping mechanisms, extending beyond mere diagnosis.

This article examines how the transition from SPOT to INSIGHT affects the tool's validity and reliability. INSIGHT, though part of SPOT's longitudinal study, reflects an evolution from a narrow screening tool to a more comprehensive self-exploration and analysis framework. The continuity of foundational constructs and methodologies ensures the tool remains robust, despite the expanded focus.

LITERATURE REVIEW

History of Spot

The Screening Psychosocial Stressors Objectively Test (SPOT) was developed as a free associative projective test designed to identify psychosocial stressors of parents having

¹Ph.D. (Psychology) Scholar, Bharatiya Engineering Science and Technology Innovation University, Gownivaripalli, Gorantla, Andhra Pradesh, India

²Assistant Professor in Psychology, Bharatiya Engineering Science and Technology Innovation University

*Corresponding Author

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children with intellectual disabilities. The tool was established during the user's M.Phil. program in Rehabilitation Psychology, where it was rigorously tested through a longitudinal study involving a 60-sample pilot phase.

The primary objective of SPOT was to provide a structured method for assessing psychosocial stressors and their impact on mental health. By utilizing free association techniques, SPOT allowed clients to express their thoughts and feelings freely, providing insights into their psychological states and stressors. The tool's design aimed to enhance understanding of how various stressors influence psychological well-being, thereby facilitating targeted interventions.

During the longitudinal study, it's found that SPOT is psychometrically a sound tool with high content validity, internal consistency and reliability.

- The Content validation of the SPOT tool was done by the Experts of the concerned field which have minimum 5 years of experience and in this process, experts selected 20 items as quality of indicators out of 100 total items.
- When Validated with the scores of perceived stress scale (PSS) and screening psychosocial stressors objectively test (SPOT) for validation, researcher got a SPOT score for Pearson Correlation was 0.724 which suggested that it has strong positive correlation with PSS.
- When Inter-rater Validation was performed with the scores of screenings psychosocial stressors objectively test for SPOT_R and SPOT_S using Pearson Correlation, researcher found that the SPOT_S score is .990** when compared with SPOT_R for a sample size of N=60 and the resultant score suggest that the Inter-rater reliability of both SPOT_R and SPOT_S are very strong.
- When Validated with the scores of perceived stress scale (PSS) and screening psychosocial stressors objectively test (SPOT) for finding Convergent validity, researcher found that the SPOT score for Pearson Correlation is 0.734 which suggests that it has strong positive correlation with PSS.
- When validated for Parallel form reliability using Test for Goodness of Fit, researcher found Chi-Square Value to be 25.082 with a Df of 1 whereas Log of Determinant of Unconstrained Matrix is 7.687 and Constrained Matrix is 8.123
- When validated for Inter-Rater Correlation Matrix, researcher found that the values of both SPOT and PSS are very High.

Despite its initial success, further evaluation revealed that the scope of SPOT was too narrowly focused on stress alone. As it provided valuable insights into clients conscious and unconscious thoughts patterns which are causing the psychosocial stressors, so the need for a more comprehensive tool that facilitated self-exploration and identified areas of psychological growth became apparent. This realization led to the evolution of SPOT into a broader tool, by changing the tool's name to INSIGHT (Identifying Needs Strengths and Inner Growth Harmony Tool), While SPOT served as a screening tool, INSIGHT expanded its focus to a broader self-exploration process that facilitates psychological analysis without diagnostic aims.

Justification for the Transition

The transition from SPOT to INSIGHT reflects a broader purpose while maintaining continuity in methodology. The key justifications for this shift include:

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1. Broader Purpose

SPOT's focus on screening stressors in a specific population (parents of children with intellectual disabilities) limited its application. INSIGHT expands this scope to explore unconscious processes and organize client data for deeper analysis, making it more applicable in therapeutic contexts.

2. Analysis Vs. Screening

SPOT was primarily a screening tool, focused on detecting psychosocial stressors. INSIGHT, however, goes beyond screening by analyzing personality traits, coping mechanisms, and personal growth areas. INSIGHT's broader focus aligns with personal development rather than just stress detection.

3. Continuity of Methodology

The core methodology of the tool has remained the same. Like SPOT, INSIGHT uses structured free association and predefined word responses to gather insights from clients. The shift in focus was not in the mechanics of the tool but in its purpose. The collection of client responses has also moved from paper-pencil to a more efficient Excel-based format, but the essence of the approach remains unchanged.

4. Retaining Spot's Strengths

Although the name has changed, INSIGHT still retains SPOT's strength in uncovering relevant psychosocial stressors. The word "screening" was dropped because it did not fully encompass the broader applications of the tool. By removing "screening" from the title, INSIGHT now reflects the expanded objectives of not just identifying stressors but also promoting self-reflection and growth in clients, which SPOT had already been doing indirectly.

5. Modernization of Data Collection

The shift from a paper-pencil format to an Excel-based data collection method responds to technological advancements and the growing demand for efficient data management. This change enhances accuracy, reduces human error, and allows for easier analysis and interpretation of client responses.

6. Why Insight?

The name INSIGHT (Identifying Needs Strengths and Inner Growth Harmony Tool) was chosen to better represent the tool's ability to go beyond screening psychosocial stressors. It allows clients to explore their unconscious processes, needs, and growth opportunities, capturing a more holistic picture of their psychological landscape. This new name emphasizes the tool's analytical and reflective dimensions, without limiting it to mere detection of stressors.

In summary, INSIGHT is a continuation of SPOT with a broader and deeper application. The change in name reflects the shift in focus from a narrow screening tool to a more comprehensive analysis tool, but the underlying methods and objectives remain consistent.

RETAINING VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY IN INSIGHT

1. Continuity Of Foundational Constructs

The core constructs of SPOT—needs, stressors, pressures, aspirations, coping mechanisms, and defense mechanisms—are retained in INSIGHT. This continuity ensures that the underlying

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theoretical framework remains consistent, thereby supporting the tool's validity. By focusing on the same constructs, INSIGHT can continue to accurately capture the psychological landscape of clients, allowing for meaningful analysis.

2. Consistency in Methodological Approach

Although the name has changed and the focus has shifted from assessment to analysis, the methodologies employed in SPOT, including free association, are preserved in INSIGHT. This consistency ensures that the data collection techniques remain familiar to both practitioners and clients. The use of free association facilitates an exploration of unconscious thoughts, which is vital for understanding the complexities of client responses. By maintaining these methodologies, INSIGHT builds on the empirical foundations laid by SPOT.

3. Impact of Data Collection Changes

The transition from a manual paper-pencil format to an Excel-based data collection method enhances the reliability of INSIGHT. Digital data collection minimizes potential human errors associated with manual input and streamlines the process of organizing and analyzing client responses. This transition allows practitioners to focus on interpretation and analysis rather than data entry, ultimately contributing to the reliability of the tool.

4. Validity Through Established Correlations

SPOT was previously validated through its correlations with established measures of psychosocial stress. INSIGHT can leverage this existing validation framework by aligning its analytical approach with established psychological assessments.

5. Iterative Feedback and Research

To uphold the validity and reliability of INSIGHT, incorporating practitioner feedback and ongoing research is essential. Continuous evaluation of the tool's performance in real-world settings allows for necessary adjustments and improvements. This iterative process ensures that INSIGHT remains relevant and effective in addressing the needs of clients and practitioners alike.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF SPOT AND INSIGHT

| Aspect | SPOT | INSIGHT |
|--------------------------|---|---|
| Purpose | Screening tool for psychosocial stressors. | Self-exploration and psychological analysis tool. |
| Origin | Developed during M.Phil. as part of a longitudinal study. | Evolved from SPOT; part of the same longitudinal study in Ph.D. |
| Target Population | Parents of children with intellectual disabilities. | Clients seeking self-exploration and personal growth. |
| Focus | Stress screening. | Self-reflection, coping mechanisms, personality analysis. |
| Data Collection | Manual (paper-pencil). | Digital (Excel-based). |
| Structure | 4 phases: free association, structured response analysis. | Same structure, but expanded for deeper psychological analysis. |
| Methodology | Free association, word responses. | Same methodologies, but with broader applications. |
| Application | Screening specific stress-related issues. | Applied in therapy for exploring growth and coping mechanisms. |
| Time Requirement | 30-45 minutes. | Same time frame (30-45 minutes). |

IMPACT OF CHANGES ON VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

Change In Name and Purpose

The transition from a screening tool to a non-diagnostic analysis tool alters the perception of INSIGHT's utility in clinical practice. By framing itself as an analysis tool, INSIGHT encourages practitioners to explore deeper psychological constructs rather than solely identifying stressors. This broader purpose enhances its relevance in therapeutic contexts, allowing for a more comprehensive understanding of client issues.

Digital Data Collection

The move to an Excel-based format for data collection increases the efficiency and accuracy of client responses. Digital collection minimizes transcription errors and allows for real-time data organization and analysis. This change enhances the reliability of the responses obtained, ultimately supporting the validity of the insights derived from the tool.

Depth of Analysis

While SPOT primarily focused on identifying stressors, INSIGHT provides a framework for exploring the interplay between various psychological constructs. This expanded analytical depth enables practitioners to develop targeted interventions that address not just immediate stressors but also underlying needs and coping strategies. This holistic approach can lead to improved therapeutic outcomes, reinforcing the validity of the tool.

Complexity of Implementation

Although INSIGHT offers richer analytical insights, the increased complexity may require practitioners to have more training and expertise for effective administration and interpretation. This necessity for enhanced skills can be viewed as both a strength and a weakness. While it allows for deeper exploration, it may also limit accessibility for some practitioners, potentially impacting the reliability of outcomes if not implemented correctly.

DISCUSSION

The evolution from SPOT to INSIGHT illustrates a strategic shift in psychological tools. While SPOT served effectively as a stress screening tool, INSIGHT's broader focus allows for a more nuanced understanding of client psychology. By exploring coping mechanisms, unconscious thoughts, and personal goals, INSIGHT offers richer insights, facilitating more tailored therapeutic interventions.

For example, in a hypothetical case study of a 30-year-old client, Sarah, SPOT identified job-related stressors, while INSIGHT uncovered deeper unmet aspirations and inadequate coping strategies, leading to more effective interventions.

CONCLUSION

INSIGHT represents a natural evolution of SPOT, maintaining validity and reliability while offering a broader and deeper tool for psychological analysis. As part of the same longitudinal study that validated SPOT, INSIGHT enhances therapeutic practice by expanding the scope of analysis and promoting self-exploration. The modernized data collection and analytical depth ensure INSIGHT remains a robust, relevant tool for understanding clients' psychological landscapes. Furthermore, INSIGHT retains the strong validity and reliability of SPOT by preserving its foundational constructs and methodological consistency, ensuring that the transition does not compromise the tool's psychometric strengths.

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Conflict of Interest

The author declared no conflict of interest.

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