The Adaptive Behavior Evaluation Scale, Home Version, Revised (J. McCarney, 1995a) is a norm-referenced scale designed to assess the adaptive behavior of individuals between the ages of 5 and 18 years. The 104 items on the ABE, H-R are arranged in ten subtests, intended to assess skill in (1) communication, (2) self-care, (3) home living, (4) social interactions, (5) community use, (6) self-direction, (7) health and safety, (8) functional academics, (9) leisure, and (10) work. Each item is scored on a 6-point scale: 0 (not developmentally appropriate), 1 (does not demonstrate behavior), 2 (is developing the behavior), 3 (demonstrates the behavior inconsistently), 4 (demonstrates the behavior most of the time), and 5 (demonstrates the behavior consistently).

Scores

Because the same item may be used in several different subtests, scores are based on 173 responses. Raw scores are converted separately for males and females. Given the significant mean differences between males and females, and given the highly skewed male distributions, separate conversions are most appropriate.

Subtest totals may be converted to standard scores with a mean of 10 and a standard deviation of 3. Subtest standard scores can be summed and converted to an

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1 McCarney is also the author of the Adaptive Behavior Evaluation Scale: School Version, Revised (ABE, S-R; J. McCarney, 1995b). With a few very minor rewordings, items on the ABE, S-R are identical to the ones on the home version. However, the respondents on the school version are teachers rather than parents. The technical characteristics of the school version are essentially the same as those of the home version.
adaptive skills quotient with a mean of 100 and a standard deviation of 15. Total scores can also be converted to percentiles, which appear to have been independently calculated, rather than simply inferred by using normal-curve equivalents. Because the total score distributions depart so greatly from a normal curve, percentiles are more interpretable than standard scores.

Norms

About 9,500 school districts (both public and private) were requested to participate in the development of norms. An unknown number of participating districts selected parents "at random" from each grade and from several disability categories. Overall, 4,740 usable protocols were returned from individuals in 26 states.

The resulting norms are poorly described. Although there are 24 age-by-sex comparison groups, the author compares only the total standardization sample against data from the 1990 census. Thus, the information of interest (that is, the representativeness of each age–sex normative sample) is missing. As a whole, the norms overrepresent European American individuals from rural areas and from the North Central region of the United States; African Americans, Hispanics, and individuals from urban/suburban areas and from the northeastern and western regions of the United States are quite underrepresented in the norms. Given the information in the technical manual, there is little reason to conclude that individual age groups are representative.

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2 The separate norms provided for males and females are appropriate, given the reported differences in male–female distributions (such as means and skew).
The author provides information about the ABE, H-R's stability, internal consistency, and interscorer agreement. Stability (30-day retest interval) was estimated from the performance of 83 individuals selected at random from the normative sample. Males and females were separately grouped in five age ranges. (While the number of students in an age-by-sex group is not reported, if the 83 individuals were distributed equally among the groups, there would be about 8 persons per group.) The stability of each subtest (but not the total score) is reported for each of the ten age-by-sex groups. Of these 100 coefficients, 15 equaled or exceeded .90, and 15 were less than .80.

The author reports a coefficient alpha for each subtest and for the total score. The alphas for five subtests equal or exceed .90; the remaining five alphas are in the .80s. The alpha for the total test is reported to be .95. However, the author provides no information about the individuals whose scores were used in the computations. If the scores are from the entire range of ages, these alphas are likely to be inflated. Moreover, these are not the alphas about which test users will typically be concerned. No estimates of internal consistency are presented for subtests at each age. The author does present the standard errors of measurement (SEMs) of each subtest for males and females at each age. However, insufficient data are presented in the test manual to interpret these SEMs.

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3 The author does present the SEMs of each subtest for males and females at each age. However, insufficient data are presented in the test manual to allow calculation of alpha from these SEMs. Clearly, the SEMs cannot refer to standard scores with a standard deviation of 3 unless the SEMs are incorrectly calculated. (Many SEMs are larger than 3, a mathematical impossibility if the standard deviation is 3.) We can only assume that raw-score standard deviations were used in the calculation of SEMs. However because raw-score standard deviations are not reported for males and females at each age for each subtest, we cannot either be sure of our hypothesis or calculate alphas from the SEMs.
To estimate interrater agreement, 60 pairs of parents each rated their child. Correlations between the raters are presented for 14 age groups. While the number of participants in each group is not specified, if they were divided equally among the groups, the resulting correlations would be based on about 4 pairs per group. The obtained correlation coefficients range from .75 to .82.

**Validity**

The ABE, H-R is intended to represent the ten areas of adaptive behavior proposed by the American Association on Mental Retardation (AAMR, 1992). To establish the content validity of the specific items, a panel of 43 diagnosticians and special education personnel (J. McCarney, 1995a) supplied a list of skills believed necessary for success in each area assessed by the ABE, H-R. These skills were collapsed into a pool of 128 skills and returned to panel members, 39 of whom reviewed and revised the items. The 110 remaining items were arranged in the ten content areas and then field tested in 14 Missouri school districts. Item–total correlations were also examined.

Construct validity was investigated through factor-analytic techniques. First, individual items were factor analyzed. The author identified three common factors.4 Next, the items in each of the individual subtests were factor analyzed. The number of factors identified for each subtest ranged from one to four and do not appear to

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4 The author used a skree plot to determine the number of factors. Eleven factors had Eigenvalues greater than one, but no information about the percentage of variance accounted for by each factor is presented. From the skree plot, it appears to us that the results yielded one very strong factor, one factor of moderate strength, and nine weak factors.
correspond to the factors identified when all items are simultaneously factor analyzed.
Frankly, we are confused by the presentation of factor-analytic results. It does not appear
to us that the subtests correspond to factor structure. Moreover, we are also unsure how
the factor-analytic results, as presented, provide evidence of construct validity.

Construct validity was also investigated by examining the protocols of previously
identified individuals with moderate to severe retardation who participated in the
standardization. As expected, these individuals earned standard scores on the subtests that
were at least one standard deviation below the mean.

Two studies examined the criterion-related validity of the ABE, H-R. In the first
study, ratings from the Adaptive Behavior Inventory for Children and ABE, H-R were
obtained for 47 children who ranged in age from 5 to 12 years. The correlations between
subtests on each measure were substantial, ranging from .59 to .91. In the second study,
ratings from the Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scales (classroom edition) and the ABE, H-
R were obtained for 31 children who ranged in age from 5 to 11. The correlations
between subtests on each measure were variable, ranging from .21 to .88. In each study,
the pattern of correlations was as would be expected: Subtests measuring similar behavior
correlated more highly than subtests measuring dissimilar behavior.

Summary

The ABE, H-R is a norm-referenced scale designed to assess the adaptive behavior of
individuals between the ages of 5 and 18 years. Although poorly described, the norms
appear unrepresentative of the United States as a whole. The number of students used to
estimate stability and interrater agreement is too small for confidence that scores earned by males or females at any age are stable or consistently evaluated. Evidence for ABE, H-R's internal consistency is incompletely reported. The ABE, H-R does correlate with other measures of adaptive behavior and does discriminate between individuals selected at random from the population and individuals with moderate to severe levels of mental retardation.