

THE IMPACT OF ANCHOR TEST DEVELOPMENT ON EQUATING CHAINS

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A common recommendation for equating test forms with a non-equivalent anchor test (NEAT) method is that the anchor test be representative of content and statistical properties of the whole test. Statistically, anchor tests should have a similar mean and variance of item difficulties as the whole test. Sinharay and Holland (2007) suggested that the mean be equal but that the variance requirement can be relaxed. This has important implications for test development practices, costs, but most importantly for interchangeability of scores from different forms administered to different students at different times. This study extends previous research examining the effect of limiting the variance of anchor item difficulty on scale drift, which as the AERA/APA/NCME Standard 4.17 indicates should be monitored regularly.