

Rasch Analysis of the Goodenough-Harris Drawing Test

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Time: 2008-05-04 07:00 PM – 07:00 PM

Last modified: 2008-05-04

Abstract

This paper presents the progress-to-date of the researcher's Doctoral Thesis titled 'A Cross-Cultural Examination of the Goodenough-Harris Drawing Test'. The Goodenough-Harris Drawing Test (GHDT) is a non-verbal assessment of children's intellectual development. Children's levels of intellectual development are inferred through the detail and concepts included in a human figure drawing. Originally known as the Goodenough Draw-A-Man Test, Harris revised and extended the test to include the drawings of women and self-portraits.

Whilst the validity and reliability of the GHDT has been primitively established by Goodenough (1926) and Harris (1963), it remains unexamined from a modern test theory perspective. The aim of this study is to apply the Rasch model for measurement to establish a sound psychometric base on which thorough examination of developmental dis/continuity and cross-cultural measurement in/variance of the GHDT - across an Australian / Hong Kong context - can be established.

Preliminary Rasch analysis of data from the Australian sample revealed strong evidence of unidimensionality and high reliability of both person ability (.96) and item difficulty (.97). Rasch analysis output indicated that Harris' inclusion of the Draw-A-Woman and self-portrait items contribute little beyond what can be inferred through the original Draw-a-Man item alone. Furthermore, the results revealed that boys were disadvantaged by Harris' inclusion of the Draw-A-Woman item. Criticism of the exclusion of drawings of women prompted Harris to include the item, however, the findings from this study appear to negate the intended benefit of creating greater 'equality' amongst male and female test participants.