

# Constructing the human figure drawing continuum: One scale is good enough

Content Area: Education

Room: 2W404

Time: 11:30 – 12:00

Presenters: Claire Campbell, Trevor Bond

## Background

Florence Goodenough's doctoral student, Dale Harris, augmented the original Goodenough Draw-a-Man Test (DAMT) (Goodenough, 1926) to create the Goodenough-Harris Drawing Text (GHDT) (Harris, 1963). The revised GHDT required children to draw an adult female as well as a self-portrait, which is scored against the sex-appropriate DAM or DAW scoring criteria in addition to a drawing of a man.

## Aims

The aims of this study were to examine: (1) the psychometric properties of the GHDT from a modern test theory perspective and verify the level of test unidimensionality; (2) the developmental nature of young children's HFD; and (3) the effectiveness of each of the four GHDT sub-tests (DAM, DAW, SPM and SPF) to determine the extent to which each one contributed towards the understanding of the construct.

## Methods

All children's drawings were collected, examined and scored in accordance with the GHDT scoring guides (Harris, 1967). The cross-sectional aspect of the project facilitated the gathering of a broad range of HFD produced by children of different ages and abilities in each phase of data collection. The longitudinal aspect involved three phases of data collection over a 12-month time frame, which was useful for checking the results from the phase one analysis and for investigating the development of children's HFD over time.

## Sample

Children ( $n = 107$ ) were recruited from a large Preparatory to Year 12 school in Queensland, Australia (Preparatory, or "Prep," is the name used to describe the first year of full-time schooling prior to Year One in Queensland, Australia). All children were aged within 4 to 10 years, the most appropriate age range for the GHDT (Goodenough, 1926; Harris, 1963), and had informed parental consent to participate in the study. The sample size, whilst comparatively small, was considered sufficient to reflect trends in the data.

## Results

Results indicated that the GHDT components were generally psychometrically sound. Consequently, in the interests of parsimony and lessening test-load, a more culturally, socially and educationally relevant prototype Human Figure Drawing Continuum (HFDC) was constructed and examined.

## Conclusions

Rasch analysis results revealed that the researcher-developed 45-item HFDC was just as effective as the three component GHDT (217-items in total) and yielded an easier, after and more child-friendly approach to testing.

## Future Directions

Future research could involve: replication to investigate whether similar results can be achieved; a larger sample size including children from diverse backgrounds and with diverse needs; and an extended longitudinal aspect that spans longer than 12 months.