Review of the Draw A Person: Screening Procedure for Emotional Disturbance (DAP: SPED)
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General Information

Title: Draw A Person: Screening Procedure for Emotional Disturbance

Authors: Jack A. Naglieri, Timothy J. McNeish, Achilles N. Bardos

Publisher: PRO-ED, Inc., 8700 Shoal Creek Boulevard, Austin, Texas 78757

Date of Publication: 1991

Forms, groups to which applicable: The DAP: SPED has one form which is used for ages 6-17 and can be used in a group or individual setting.

General Type: The DAP: SPED is a personality assessment tool which is used to screen for emotional disturbance in children ages 6-17.

Practical Features: The DAP:SPED is a short test, consisting of three drawings, which will be completed in a total of 15 minutes (5 minutes per each drawing). This is a tool that can be utilized in one session’s time. The assessment and scoring are done by hand.

Cost: The complete kit costs $168 USD and included the examiner’s manual, 25 record forms and 10 scoring templates.

Time Required to Administer: Approximately 15 minutes; 5 minutes for each drawing.

Purpose and Nature of the Instrument

Stated Purpose: The DAP:SPED is used to aid in the identification of children and adolescents who may have emotional or behavior disorders.

Description of test items and scoring: The DAP:SPED consists of three subtests; the drawing of a man, the drawing of a woman and the drawing of a client. The client is given 5 minutes to draw each. The examiner then rates each drawing individually on 55 specific criteria; for example “tall figure, short figure, head omitted, arms omitted, multiple figures, nude figures”. The examiner gives one point for each criterion that is met, if it has not been met, a zero is given. The
maximum score for each drawing is 55. The examiner would then add the three raw scores from each drawing and use the appendix in the manual to convert the client’s standard score according to age of the client. If the standard score is less than 55 further evaluation is not indicated, 55-64 further evaluation is indicated, and above 65 further evaluation is strongly indicated.

**Practical Evaluation**

*Adequacy of directions, training required to administer:* This is designed for those in the helping professions, such as counselors, psychologists, social workers, etc. who have expertise in testing theories and development in individual and group assessment procedures. The qualifications of these professionals vary from state to state.

**Technical Considerations**

**Norms and Scoring:** The DAP: SPED was standardized with a sample of 2,260 students representative of the US Populations (age, race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sex, geographic region) from a 1980 US Census. In the scoring, there are two types of items: figure dimensions and items that rate content of item to detect shading, frowning, or erasure marks. One point is given for each item that has been completed. The examiner’s manual includes 10 scoring templates that are used based on age. There are three subsets of templates that are used based on age (6-8, 9-12, and 13-17). The tenth template is used for all ages; each drawing is scored utilizing four templates.

**Adequacy of Norms:** The sample population selected for standardization consisted of 2,260 students aged 6-17. These students were described as being in special education classes, as normal or as attending Day School. Additionally, some of the participants were adolescents who were or who had been in a psychiatric treatment facility. Participants were also described as being Black, White, Hispanic, Non-Hispanic, and Other, but with no definition of what the “Other” category consists of.

**Reliability:** The authors stated that internal consistency was determined using Cronbach’s Alpha. The results show an appropriate internal reliability for the topic being assessed. Inter-rater and intra-rater reliability are significant at p<.001 with a Pearson’s r at .94 and .91, respectively.

**Validity:** Four studies were completed to find validity; the first study, in which students were split into the categories of “Special Education and Normal”, was the only study to produce significant results. The other three studies were used to identify the categories in which further assessment was needed.
Cross-Cultural Fairness: This assessment tool could be used across cultures, but when the examiner interprets the drawings, they may have to take into consideration multicultural differences. This assessment tool could be used with clients who have limited verbal communication skills as the client themselves do not have to speak.

**Evaluation**

Practicality: This assessment tool has proven reliability and validity in screening for emotional disturbances in children and adolescents. This test is relatively inexpensive and simple to administer to clients. Additionally, it does not take much time and can be used with one client in one session or many clients in a group setting. This tool can be seen as a nonthreatening tool to use with children or adolescents as they do not have to speak to the examiner; they only have to draw three pictures.

Aids to User: With the complete kit, the purchaser will receive a detail examiner’s manual which include a self-instructional training module, examples of the drawings and comments, definitions of test items, description of how to use the templates and an appendix to help standardize the client’s score.
References
