

THE LEVICK EMOTIONAL AND COGNITIVE ART THERAPY ASSESSMENT: A NORMATIVE STUDY

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HYPOTHESIS:

Null Hypothesis 1: There will be no statistically significant difference between the chronological age and the age performance in the cognitive and emotional domains overall and on each task.

The two-tailed *t*-test, which assumes the two samples have been drawn from the same population, was utilized to test this hypothesis.

Hypothesis 2: There will be a statistically significant relationship between the chronological age and the age performance in the cognitive and emotional domains overall and on each task.

The Pearson *r* (two tailed) was utilized to test this hypothesis.

DESCRIPTION:

The LECATA was administered to 330 normal children, k-through 6th grade. These children were all students in six different public schools in the Palm Beach School District, Florida. This school district was chosen because the population is diverse, including Caucasian, African American, Hispanic, Haitian, and Asian. Permission from principals and school counselors was granted; consent forms from parents/guardians were obtained and stored with the school counselor; all subjects were coded with names known only to school counselor. "Normal" was defined as functioning on an average level in the classroom, absence of any known behavioral or emotional problems; and not on any medication.

The LECATA consists of five drawing tasks: a free drawing and a story; a picture of yourself as you are now; a scribble and something made from the scribble; a

place you would like to be (ages 3-5 years); a place that is important (ages 6yrs and up); a drawing of your family.

Theoretical constructs are based primarily on Piaget for cognitive development; Kellogg and Lowenfeld for artistic development; Anna Freud for emotional development based on her hierarchal scale of defense mechanisms of the ego. Tables identifying these developmental milestones and criteria for identifying defense mechanisms of the ego in drawings are included and discussed in the text.

The appended Administrative Manual includes the specific script for presenting each task to the test-taker; a list of specific art materials (12x18 white drawing paper and a box of 16 Craypas®), and score sheets for each task.

Data for the study was analyzed using SPSS. Concurrent validity is identified in assessment by school counselors and teachers that subjects were all normal children. Reliability, documented over the years, is also confirmed with consensus scoring of drawings by several art therapists.

Results indicated that Kindergarten, 1st grade, and 2nd grade children are performing age appropriate or better in both domains and supports both hypothesis. Beginning with third grade through 4th and 5th grade, the data indicates performance 1-3 years lower than chronological age in both domains. Further statistical analysis indicates both domains correlate significantly, developing in a parallel process, considered normal by all investigators in the literature. There is no evidence of any pathology.

Conclusion: Because of societal changes over the past two decades [divorce, television/media, “latch key” children, two parents working], a new norm may be emerging.