



The Woodcock-Muñoz Foundation

RESEARCH BRIEF

DOCTORAL DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

TEACHERS' PREFERENCES FOR AND COMPREHENSION OF PSYCHOLOGICAL REPORTS: TEST-ORIENTED VERSUS CATTELL- HORN-CARROLL MODELS

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The Woodcock-Muñoz Foundation (WMF) is a private non-profit operating foundation that supports the advancement of contemporary cognitive assessment practices. The Doctoral Dissertation Abstract Project is part of the Foundation's efforts to disseminate research findings that bridge the theory-to-practice gap in cognitive assessment.

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Abstract

Psychological reports must be readable and understandable to communicate effectively. The literature suggests that effective reports avoid common writing problems. A domain-based report model has also been recommended. This study examined if utilizing CHC-theory based domains influenced teachers' preferences and comprehension. This author hypothesized that readers would prefer and better comprehend a CHC-based report over a test-based report.

Two reports were written about a fictional child with reading problems. The test-based report had results organized according to test instrument. In the CHC-based report, results were organized according to CHC theory and included these cognitive abilities: fluid reasoning; quantitative ability; visual processing; crystallized intelligence; processing speed; short-term memory; long-term retrieval; and auditory processing.

Forty teachers read either the test-based report (n = 22) or CHC-based report (n = 18). The two groups were comparable on demographic variables (i.e., gender, education, experience, grade taught, number of reports read). On a questionnaire created for this study, teachers rated their preferences and comprehension of the report they read.

When compared along preference items and comprehension questions, the results showed no differences between groups. Teachers did not prefer or better comprehend one report model over the other. The groups also did not differ in their responses on any preference item. However, Chi-square analyses examining relationships between the groups and comprehension questions revealed that the groups differed on one comprehension question. More teachers who read the test-based report answered this item correctly than teachers who read the CHC-based report. Finally, qualitative analyses of comments respondents wrote were performed.

Results were discussed in light of the literature on consumer satisfaction and guidelines for effective report writing. Sample characteristics may also have affected the outcome. Finally, teachers' comments were analyzed. Many remarks on the omission of a summary and recommendations reflect the importance of these sections. Several comments may also have reflected the school climate and adherence to a full inclusion model. Finally, some teachers noted hesitance in diagnosing students, perhaps due to a lack of familiarity with this role, concerns about labeling disability, or to Massachusetts' history as a noncategorical state when determining eligibility for special education services.

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