

Coping Strategy Represented in the Draw-a-Person-in-the-Rain Test by Japanese University Students

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Background: The Draw-a-Person-in-the-Rain Test (DPRT; Figure1; Hemmer, 1958) measures examinee's self-image and defense ability in stressful situations by their drawings of a person in the rain. This DPRT expresses conscious self-image, frustration and affection and is accepted as a suitable non-verbal self-expression. For this reason, this test is considered to be useful in assessing the features of the examinee's self-image and adjustment in stressful situations. The aim of this study was to consider that the relationship of the drawing characteristics would be projected during the test and the psychological scale concerning stress.

Method: The DPRT was conducted on 286 female university students. The tester instructed participants to "please draw one person (or yourself) in the rain" on an A4 size paper with a frame. Following this, we requested them to answer the Bidimensional Resilience Scale (Hirano, 2010) and Coping Measure Scale Based on a 3D-model (Kamimura, 1995). In the analysis, we classified the drawing characteristics as "Rain," "Umbrella," "Person," "Cloud," and "Other." Then, each drawing characteristic was determined with a t-test that provided a score difference by drawing or not.

Results: How one draws rain can be an indicator of how a person faces stress from its relation to the avoidant stress coping score [avoidant thinking](dotted line: $t(265)=-2.20$), [leaving/desertion](dotted line: $t(265)=-2.09$; darkening: $t(265)=-2.26$). The group who drew themselves with an umbrella that was not shielding them from the rain was considered to represent desertion and an avoidant tendency toward stress (rain) and had a low score [information gathering]($t(265)=2.02$). The group that drew only a face were considered to have a defensive reaction of not confronting at all to stress and their negative coping score was high [avoidant thinking]($t(265)=-2.53$) and [leaving/desertion]($t(265)=-2.37$). Drawing clouds throughout the sky had a high score [passing the buck]($t(264)=2.28$) and low score [self-understanding]($t(176)=-2.22$), as it was considered to be an indicator that defense capability does not exert stress over the whole body. Additionally, drawing black clouds had a low score of negative stress coping [leaving/ desertion]($t(265)=-2.08$) and a high score [problem solving]($t(177)=-2.06$), because such drawings were considered to be representations of a conflict that the examinees could not solve even if they wanted to.

Conclusions: Over all, the DPRT has shown to be useful for assessing the degrees of recognition and coping with stress among students.



Figure1 The Draw-a-Person-in-the-Rain Test

References:

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