Seeing the Self: portraits and self-concept among Ghanaians with varying visual capacity

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Importance of Self-concept

Critical Domains

– general competence
– role in the family
– physical self/beauty
Ghana and Self-concept

- Traumatic life events correspond with changes in global self-concept
- Loss of sight and blindness
Central Questions

• To what extent does poor sight impact each of the self-concept domains?

• Does self-concept within each domain vary with…
  – Age?
  – Visual Capacity?

• Do the self-concept domains vary in relation to each other?

• What cultural differences exist from the academic definition of self-concept domains created in ‘developed’ countries?
Self-Concept Interview

- Competence
  - *When I have to ask for help, it makes me feel that I am not good enough*

- Role in the Family
  - *No one else could do the things that I do for my family*

- Physical/Beauty
  - *I like my body the way that it is now*
Methods

• Interview on self-concept in 3 categories:

• Brief patient history, visual acuity and demographic information
Participants

• Population: patients of Crystal Eye Clinic and Unite For Sight outreaches

• Mean Age=49.2, SD=22.1

• 35 females, 40 males
Variables

- Visual Acuity Category (VAC)
  1. Poor
  2. Mediocre
  3. Good

- Age

- Score on self-concept agreement statements (rated 1-3: higher score = more agreement)
Results

Correlation of VAC with Interview Items

- Pos Competency
- Neg Competency
- Pos Family
- Neg Family
- Pos Physical/Beauty
- Neg Physical/Beauty

Correlation Strength

-0.3 -0.2 -0.1 0 0.1 0.2 0.3 0.4 0.5
Results

- Age negatively correlated with VAC (-0.567**)
Results

• Despite negative correlation of Age and VAC
  – When control for Age, and look at VAC…
    “It is easy for me to learn new things”
  – When control for VAC, and look at Age…
    “When I have to ask for help it makes me feel that I am not good enough”
    “There are things about my body that I wish I could change”
The Goodenough Harris Draw A Person (DAP) Test

Adapted for cultural factors of population, and ease of instruction

- Head
- Legs
- Arms
- Trunk
- Length of trunk > breadth
- Arms and legs attached to trunk
- Legs and arms attached to trunk at correct point
- Neck
- Eyes
- Nose
- Mouth
- Hair
- Ears

Score: 13 points
Mental age: \(3 + (13 \div 4) = 6\frac{3}{4}\) years

Drawing courtesy of Flinders Twartz
DAP Portrait Scoring

3 domains of scoring
- Head Detail
- Motor Coordination
- Fine Detail
Results

- Positive Correlation: VAC and Portrait Score (PS)
- Negative Correlation: Age and PS
- Best Scoring Cohort: younger, male, better VAC
- High PS =
  - Positive feelings about competency in self-concept
  - Positive feelings about physical/beauty in self-concept
  - Negative feelings about role in the family
References


6. All photographs by Rebecca Burger-Caplan unless otherwise noted.