

https://dspace.org/

Working memory : is it associated with socioeconomic status?

Moolla, Azra

2013-01-07
http://hdl.handle.net/10539/12249

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/

Abstract

It is well known that crystallized measures of intelligence are highly susceptible to educational, resource, language and socio-economic influences, and that the implications of using these kinds of measures are manifold affecting school and university entrance as well as employment opportunities. In South Africa, wherein tests are regarded with suspicion as a consequence of test misuse during the Apartheid era, there is an urgent need for the development of measures which are resilient to these influences. In answer to this, working memory measures have been identified as possible measures which minimize these biases. Consequently the following study investigated whether working memory tests were less susceptible to socioeconomic influences than the more traditional, crystallized measures of vocabulary and non-verbal IQ in a volunteer sample of 60 grade one learners from schools identified as high and low in socioeconomic status. The results demonstrated that working memory measures were consistently less affected by socio-economic status as compared to the traditional vocabulary and non-verbal IQ measures. However, socioeconomic status and language were found to be so closely correlated that it is not clear whether test performance in the vocabulary measures, was related one or both of these variables. In light of the fact that this study was correlational in nature, it is recommended that future studies focus on limiting the impact of extraneous variables to better understand the impact of socioeconomic status on test performance. Furthermore future studies should test children in their home language to avoid language contamination effects.