

Running Head: CRITIQUE OF THE BEERY DEVELOPMENTAL TEST OF VISUAL
MOTOR INTEGRATION

An Evaluation and Critique of the Beery Developmental Test of Visual Motor Integration (5th)



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Description

The title of the assessment that will be discussed and critiqued in this paper is the Beery Visual Motor Integration Test (Beery VMI). The Beery VMI was authored by Keith E. Beery, Ph.D., Natasha A. Beery, M.A., and Norman Buktenica (who designed four of the geometric forms in the test). The Beery VMI can be either group or individually administered, and is a norm-referenced assessment designed to assess the extent to which individuals can integrate their visual and motor abilities (eye-hand coordination). The Full Form booklet is designed for ages two through 18 years. The Beery VMI purports to measure eye-hand coordination through test items that require the examinee to copy particular shapes that are displayed in the test booklet. The authors note that because children with different backgrounds often have widely varying degrees of experience with alphabets and numbers, geometric forms are used instead of letter or numeric forms, and that this distinction makes the assessment virtually culture-free.

Content and Use

The Beery VMI is comprised of 30 items total, and can be administered in about 10 to 15 minutes. There is a Short Form (21-item) version available for children ages 2 through 7 years as well. Because the test can be administered to a group, the authors note that it is appropriate to use in a classroom setting for young children. The authors claim that the Beery VMI can be used as an early screener to help identify significant difficulties that some children may have integrating their finger and hand movement abilities, and that further difficulties can be prevented by appropriate interventions. Their rationale behind that claim rests on an unfounded assumption: that a test of visual-motor integration will help some children move toward fully integrating their

physical, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual parts with the whole of their selves and others (Beery & Beery, 2004, p. 9). The authors casually reference “Sherrington” (likely referring to the English physiologist and Nobel laureate Charles Scott Sherrington known for his work on neuron integration) in conjunction with one study conducted over 60 years ago, to justify they premise upon which the test was based. Their lack of specificity and clarity in their attempt to justify the rationale behind the assessment is a clear limitation. Furthermore, the test developers do not provide any evidence to support the claim that replicating geometric images is a satisfactory step to identify individuals with visual-motor integration difficulties.

The authors then state that another purpose of the test is to identify the need to bring services of various kinds to individuals who attain a low score, but do not specify what those various services might include. Their suggestion that the Beery VMI may be useful for evaluating the effectiveness of the services provided (educational, psychological, or medical) to a child who attained a low score, is also unsubstantiated.

The Beery VMI includes two optional standardized supplemental tests: Visual Perception and Motor Coordination. The authors note that these supplemental tests are provided for those who wish to statistically compare an individual’s Beery VMI results with relatively pure visual and motor performance. In the Visual Perception test, the first three items require young children to identify parts of their own bodies, picture outlines, and parts of a picture. For the remaining items, one geometric form that is exactly the same as each stimulus is to be chosen (by pointing to the appropriate image on the test booklet) from others that differ from the stimulus image. The examinees have three minutes to point to as many images as possible. In the Motor Coordination test, the first three items require young children to climb on a chair, hold a pencil with their

thumb and fingers, and hold the paper as they mark it. For the remaining items, the task is to trace the stimulus images with a pencil without going outside double-lines paths.

The complete Beery VMI kit includes only the 198-page manual and the 24-page test booklet itself. The manual is fairly well laid out in terms of its organization, but at times uses complex language (e.g. its detailed background in the phyletic and ontogenetic development of visual-motor integration) that makes it less approachable for the average reader. It includes administration directions for the examiner for both individual and group administrations. The manual includes sample responses (drawings) for the purpose of educating the examiner on how to score particular responses should they appear on the test booklet. It shows the reader what common responses look like for each of the 27 written items, and how to score each one of them. Additionally, it outlines procedures for further assessing the specific difficulties that examinees may have had on the test items. For children with low scores, the authors recommend techniques such as: tracing, discussing similarities between images, integration, imitation, motor guidance, and examiner verbalization to determine why, specifically, the child may have had difficulty with the test items. The manual provides a fairly straightforward explanation of concepts such as: the standard error of measurement, standard scores, scaled scores, stanines, NCE's, percentiles, and age and grade equivalents.

The manual also outlines specific criteria for each item to be scored correctly (i.e. “no more than 1/16” separation or overlap of forms”), however, the authors provide no justification or reasoning for the specific scoring criteria, other than noting what is a typical ability for the average child who falls within a particular age range. The authors’ use of norm-referencing to create peer comparisons among the examinees is a weakness, because the scores don’t tell us if

the examinees are capable or incapable of any particular academic skills, only how well they performed on the items of the test itself in comparison to their peers nationwide.

The test booklet provides includes only the test items themselves and spaces to record raw scores, standard scores, scaled scores, and percentiles for the Beery VMI as well as the Visual Perception and Motor Coordination supplemental tests. Values for the standard scores and percentile conversions are provided in the test booklet, while the raw score equivalents must be referenced in the appendices of the manual.

The Beery VMI is simple to administer in part due to the simplistic nature of the test. Items 1-3 are physical coordination tasks given via a verbal prompt from the examiner, while items 4-27 are simply copied/reproduced by the examinee after a verbal prompt.

Standardization Sample and Norms

The Beery VMI was originally normed in 1964 on 1,030 children in Illinois. It was cross validated in 1981 with 2,060 children in California, in 1989 with a national sample of 2,734 children, and in 1995 on 2,614 children from the five major regions of the United States. In the fifth edition of the Beery VMI manual, the authors do not disclose the characteristics of previous samples and whether or not they were representative. The authors noted that the test has also been normed in other countries, but fail to mention the names of the specific countries. More recently, the Beery VMI was normed in 2003 on 2,512 children from the four major census regions in the United States. Using a survey by mail, the test creators randomly selected school psychologists and learning disabilities specialists from all 50 states to inquire about their school populations and their willingness to serve as norming supervisors. To reflect the 2000 U.S. Census, samples were selected from classes with representative ranges of learning abilities in eight states. A total of 23 childcare, preschool, public, and private schools participated in the

study, and the authors state: “the 2003 norming samples were reasonably representative of the 2000 U.S. Census” (Beery & Beery, 2004, p. 96).

The authors fail to disclose which eight states were chosen in the 2003 normative sample, however, the sample percentages do closely resemble the U.S. Census percentages in the categories of gender, ethnicity, residence (urban/non-metropolitan), region (North Central, North East, South, or West), parent education, and age (1-18). The sample size is strong at over 2,000 participants, is nationally representative, and maintains an even gender split. However, the study does not include a Hollingshead index to represent various levels of socioeconomic status.

In addition to the normative procedures for the Beery VMI test itself, the authors comment that the focus of their time and other resources for this fifth edition has been on identifying the approximately 600 Stepping Stone precursors for pencil and paper visual-motor integration for children from birth through age six. An example of a Stepping Stone identified by the authors for a child aged 5 years and 5 months is: “copies own first name in print clearly enough to be read” (Beery & Beery, 2004, p. 157). The authors prefer the term *Stepping Stones* because “it seems to connote a more realistic teaching point of view than the term *milestone*, which can mistakenly suggest the existence of a rather fixed and universal developmental timeline” (Beery & Beery, 2004, p. 93). The normative process of these Stepping Stones was conducted through a literature review of several thousand milestones which was reduced to 600 by applying the following criteria: (1) at least two reliable sources reported an age norm for a given milestone, (2) at least one of the sources reported that age norm within the past 10 years, and (3) the developmental age norms were within a few months of each other. The authors fail to comment on how they determined if a source was reliable, even though this requirement is listed in their first criterion. In cases when reported age norms differed among the existing literature,

the authors admit, they “assigned a Beery VMI Stepping Stones age norm according to either what appeared to be the most valid age norm or the average of all norms reported for that behavior” (Beery & Beery, 2004, p. 93). It is unclear how the test creators determined what was the “most valid” age norm.

With regard to the item and format selection for the Beery VMI test, the author cites his own clinical experience and “an extensive review of the literature” without any concrete references to support his decisions on which geometric forms to select. This lack of evidence to justify the selection of the specific geometric figures to use for the Beery VMI is a clear limitation of the test. As mentioned earlier, geometric forms were chosen over alphabetic, numeric, or other forms in an effort to minimize cultural and educational influences. The test creators chose 72 geometric forms originally, and asked about 600 children (ages 2-15) to copy the items. From those 72 forms, the test creators narrowed the items down to a total of 30. The authors detailed their criteria for the figure selection process:

- (1) A form had to fit into the chronological age scale at a point where there was no form established for that age, (2) the chronological age at which reproduction of a form occurred had to be relatively clear-cut, (3) the chronological age at which substages of reproduction of a form occurred had to be clear-cut, and (4) there could not be a wide difference in the chronological age at which boys and girls reproduced a form (Beery & Beery, 2004, p. 94).

In essence, the authors were establishing a set of norms for what to expect from a given child within a particular age group. However, their sample size of 600 students is fairly small to be able to speak confidently about these norms. In order to standardize this information, we should strive for a sample size of at least 1,000 participants, ideally with a minimum of 100 participants

per age group. Furthermore, the authors fail to describe how the sample was chosen, and the representative characteristics (i.e. age, geographic location, race/ethnicity, sex, disability) of that sample. These are clear weaknesses in the construction of the overall test, as we cannot say with confidence that particular geometric shapes should be able to be copied by children at a particular chronological age.

The 30 geometric forms were then given to another sample of 600 children, again a sample size too small to base important test construction decisions on. The final 27 forms that were selected for the test were chosen using the criteria mentioned above, but also included more forms appropriate for the preschool/kindergarten level.

Scores and Interpretation

In the Beery VMI manual, the authors include a short but informative chapter on the interpretation of test results. They outline concepts such as: raw and derived scores, the normative population, standard scores, a standard error of measurement (SEM), scaled scores, stanines, NCE's, percentiles, and age and grade equivalents. The authors include helpful cautionary advice for those interpreting scores (e.g. age/grade equivalents and percentiles are misleading to many because they do not represent equal units of measurement). True as this advice may be, I was surprised to see the authors mention this information because of the nature of the test. The Stepping Stones that are intended to represent specific developmental abilities of children at specific age groups seems to run counter to the idea that one should avoid comparisons based on an individual's chronological age.

The test creators include a Profile box on the cover of the Beery VMI test booklet, which provides a convenient place to record and chart raw scores, standard scores, percentiles, and other scaled scores for easy reference. The authors note that the simplistic table can be an aid

when creating visual representations of the data for the purpose of communicating strengths and areas of improvement for the student, teacher, and/or parent. The authors recommend the use of standard scores when interpreting the results of the Beery VMI, and provide a table in the appendix for the conversion of raw scores to standard scores based on chronological age. In the following appendix, the authors provide a table for the conversion of standard scores to percentiles and other scaled scores (e.g. NCE's and T Scores). Because of the simplistic nature of the test, the conversion process for each of the scores is straightforward and can be done in a very short period of time.

Reliability

The Beery VMI's internal consistency has been evaluated numerous times since its creation in 1967. In this fifth edition, the authors note that the tests for reliability were not repeated because of the high consistency of scores that have occurred throughout time. The authors remind the reader that the majority of the time spent differentiating this edition from previous editions was in the form of creating the Stepping Stones mentioned above. They reference an earlier page in the manual that notes a correlation of internal consistency at .99. For the purposes of educational and clinical applications we should expect a value of at least .90, so this high measure of internal consistency is strong. The authors explain further:

The Beery VMI was normed in the United States five times during a period of 40 years on a total of more than 11,000 children with virtually no changes in mean raw scores for ages three through 18 for the 24 original forms between the first norming in 1964 and the fifth norming in 2003 (Beery & Beery, 2014, p. 93).

Content reliability. The test creators used a Rasch-Wright analysis to assess how well the test items consistently follow the direction of the author's test construct, how well the items are separated from each other, and how well they differentiate among individual examinees. They explain that a Rasch-Wright to measure content reliability is appropriate for *power* tests, (i.e. those that are not timed), which accurately describes the Beery VMI. However, the supplemental tests of the Beery VMI are timed, and therefore the correlations provided for those tests are merely for information purposes, as they are quasi-power tests. The authors provide a table that outlines the measures of internal consistency for each age group (3-17) as well as the mean correlations for both group-item separation (a range from .94-.99 across age groups) and group-person separation (a range from .75-.95 across age groups). There are three limitations of the data provided. First, although some of these correlations are high (above .90), others remain below a value of .80. An internal consistency correlation of .80 or higher is to be expected for tests that serve as screeners; the authors of the Beery VMI claim this test is should be used as a screener, and therefore should look to improve this measure of internal consistency. Second, the sample used for these data consisted of only 50 children per age group. A larger sample size for each age group (i.e. at least 100) should be used if we are to place much confidence in these measures of reliability. Third, these analyses were most recently conducted in 1995. As it has been almost 20 years since the last analysis was conducted, the procedure should be done again in order to provide the most up to date information for the reader.

Split-half method. A second method the test creators used to gauge the internal consistency of the measure was the split-half method, in which the children were assessed on how well they performed on half of the 24 directly copied forms compared with the other half of the forms. This technique (which determines how homogeneous the test items are) itself has

limitations, namely that it shortens the number of items on the test and therefore makes the data less reliable. This undermines the value of the measure of internal consistency of the Beery VMI in particular because the full test contains only 24-27 items (depending on the age of the examinee). The limited number of items on the *full* test is a limitation, and using the split-half method only further weakens the reliability of the measure. However, the authors did apply the Spearman-Brown (a formula that corrects for attenuation) for the same sample mentioned above and reported odd-even split-half correlations ranging from .82-.93 across ages 2-17. Although these correlations are strong, we should not place too much confidence in these values because of the small sample sizes used for the analysis. Moreover, full ability ranges of K-12 students prior to the fourth edition of the Beery VMI has yielded single-grade split-half correlations ranging from .53-.92. The correlation at the low end of this range, though the authors don't clarify which age group it applies to, is far too weak to base any research, educational, or clinical decisions on.

Coefficient alpha. The third measure of internal consistency the authors use is the coefficient alpha (also called Cronbach's alpha), which is correctly chosen because of the Beery VMI's multiple response format. The authors explain that "the measure splits and correlates items in every possible way and yields the same results as Kuder-Richardson formula 20" (Beery & Beery, 2004, p. 101). The alpha values are once again provided in a table for each age group with the mean: .82. This strong correlation is adequate for a measure that is to be used as a screener, as the Beery VMI is intended, but falls short of the .90 value expected for any educational and clinical applications. Again, the sample size per age group for the alpha was only 50, and should be increased to at least 100 if we are to place much confidence in these values.

Standard Error of Measurement. A fourth type of reliability evidence the authors provide is a discussion of the Standard Error of Measurement (SEM). They provide a clear explanation of the SEM in the manual, and note that there is typically some degree of error even in the most rigorous attempts at accurate measurement. The authors provide the SEM for each split-half reliability coefficient in each age group for the Beery VMI, as well as the supplementary tests. They provide these values in rounded terms for standard scores for easy comparison; each value has a mean of 100 and standard deviation of 15. The authors provide the SEM for these values using a 68% confidence level, but comment that in order to calculate the SEM using a 95% confidence level (which is preferred), the reader can double the SEM value provided in the table. Across the age groups in the sample (which we know includes only 50 participants per age group), the average SEM at a 95% confidence level is just over 10. This means that we can state with 95% confidence that when an examinee obtains a standard score of 100 on the Beery VMI, that his/her score falls within a range from 90-110. Typically, we expect a SEM of at least five for a reliable measure. The SEM value for the Beery VMI is appropriate for its purposes as a screener. One limitation of the test creators' discussion of the SEM is that they do not include any information about the Standard Error of the Estimate, which is similar to the SEM, but takes any regression into consideration.

Temporal stability. The fifth type of reliability evidence the test creators provide is their assessment of the temporal stability of the Beery VMI, which utilized a test-retest approach. The fifth edition of the test along with the two supplementary tests were administered in March of 2003 to a sample of 115 children between the ages of 5 and 11 in public school classrooms with proportionate numbers of children with disabilities. The time between the initial administration and the retest averaged 10 days, and the overall test-retest raw score coefficient for the Beery

VMI was .89. There are two limitations to the test creators' assessment of temporal stability. First, the sample size for each age group of administration should be at least 100, but the authors used far less. Second, the ages of examinees were between the ages of 5 and 11, while the Beery VMI is designed to test children ages 2-18. The omission of ages 2-4 and 12-18 is a clear weakness in the test-retest data. The coefficient value of .89 is quite a strong value for the temporal stability of the test, but its small sample size and incomplete representation of age groups limits the validity of this finding. The authors provide helpful information regarding test-retest coefficients for developmental tests, noting that individual scores are expected to change over fairly long periods of time because of maturation and/or learning. They conclude the section on time sampling with data regarding the temporal stability of the Beery VMI when administered to institutionalized emotionally disturbed children over a two-week period. The correlation was a mere .59, indicating that the test's temporal stability for atypical student populations could be much weaker than for typically functioning students.

Interrater reliability. The sixth and final piece of evidence to support the reliability of the Beery VMI is interrater/interscorer reliability. For this fifth edition norming study, two individuals independently scored 100 Beery VMI (and the two supplementary tests) of a random sample of the norming group. The interscorer reliability for the Beery VMI was .92. Prior to the fourth edition of the test, reliability coefficients ranged from .73-.99 for a variety of preschool through elementary-aged children. The authors commented that in some studies that yielded coefficient values near .73, an additional training workshop was provided to the appropriate teachers/school psychologists, and the coefficient values increased to .98. The large improvement in interscorer reliability in a short period of time is likely due to the limited number of items on the test. Although the overall correlation of .92 is strong, there are two limitations to

the information the authors provided. First, they do not describe the individuals who scored 100 Beery VMI tests. Because the strength of the expected correlation depends largely on the types of individuals (i.e. parent, teacher, child, adult), it makes it difficult to interpret the results. Second, the authors do not provide the ages included in the random sample chosen, again making it difficult to interpret the results which much specificity.

Validity

The authors begin their discussion of validity by referencing the content validity of the Beery VMI. They describe the concept as “the degree to which the content of a test provides a representative sample of the behaviors the test is designed to assess” (Beery & Beery, 2004, p. 105). They note that the content can be assessed by evaluating the item construction and selection procedures described earlier, and by analyzing the Rasch-Wright and other item analysis methods. To restate the earlier critique of the test’s item construction and selection procedures, the authors fail to provide citations for the literature that supported the decisions on which geometric forms to select. Furthermore, at 600, the sample sizes on which the two tests were administered were too small. To establish a valid representation of the population one can expect at least 100 students per grade (i.e. K-12 should consist of at least 1,300 participants). For these reasons we cannot say with confidence that the content on the Beery VMI was validly selected and should therefore be cautious in our interpretations of the test itself.

Criterion-related validity.

Concurrent validity. Also known as congruent validity, concurrent validity is evaluated by comparing the results of a test to those of other tests that were designed to measure similar constructs. During the fourth edition norming study of the Beery VMI, the test creators correlated the measure with the *Copying* subtest of the Developmental Test of Visual Perception

(DTVP-2) as well as the *Drawing* subtest of the Wide Range Assessment of Visual Motor Abilities (WRAVMA). Both tests were administered to 122 students from regular public school classrooms in grades K-5. The Beery VMI's correlation with the WRAVMA *Drawing* was .52, while its correlation with the DTVP-2 *Copying* was .75. There are two main concerns with this data. First, the Beery VMI was only administered to children in grades K-5, while the test is designed for children K-12. The sample that was administered the tests should be inclusive of these additional age groups to increase validity. Second, while the correlation between the Beery VMI and the DTVP-2 *Copying* was moderately strong at .75, the correlation between the Beery VMI and the WRAVMA *Drawing* was only .52, well below the .7 value that we should expect between tests that attempt to measure similar constructs. This weak correlation should lower our confidence in the Beery VMI's ability to measure what it attempts to.

Predictive validity. An assessment's predictive validity refers to whether or not a test predicts what it claims to predict. The authors of the Beery VMI claim that the test predicts academic achievement and can help to identify children who, if they remain without additional services and intervention, will have difficulty reading as they mature. The authors begin their section on predictive validity by referencing a report released by the National Research Council which shows "letter identification" and "reading readiness" had greater roles in predicting reading difficulties at school entry than other language skills (Snow, C.E., et al., 1998). However, there are three problems with the authors' assertion. First, the creators of the Beery VMI purposefully avoid using any letters on the test forms, so any comparison between the geometric shapes on the Beery VMI and letter identification in children is void. Second, the authors do not explain what is meant by the terms "letter identification" or "reading readiness" but still make the claim that both rely heavily on visual-motor skills. The reader is unable to

make any relevant comparisons between features of the test and these ill-defined concepts. Third, the authors note that the strength of the relationships between reading difficulties at school entry and “letter identification” and “reading readiness” are .52 and .57 respectively, and that they correlate more closely than other factors. While these concepts may correlate more closely than other factors, correlations of .52 and .57 are only moderate, and fall below the ideal value for criterion-related validity of .6-.7. For these reasons, the above claims from the authors about the predictive value of the Beery VMI are not supported by the data.

The authors state that the Beery VMI is a valuable predictor of academic achievement when used in combination with other measures, such as the Test for Auditory Comprehension of Language and the Florida Kindergarten Screening Test. However, they note that visual-motor predictive correlations appear to decline as children move up in grade levels, and were only able to predict academic achievement effectively up through the second grade. One possible reason for this phenomenon, the authors note, is the instructional shift from visual-spatial skills to language-based skills as grade level increase. The authors reference a study by Fletcher & Satz (1982) that found that inclusion of the Beery VMI with three other brief tests correctly predicted 85% of kindergarten children who were problem readers seven years later. Lastly, the authors cite the effectiveness of Beery VMI results when coupled with pediatricians’ ratings to predict school grade failures or retentions, as well as kindergarten teacher ratings to predict second-grade reading problems.

Despite the numerous claims made by the authors to support the predictive validity of the Beery VMI, there are several holes in their argument. Simply put, that data do not adequately support their claim that the Beery VMI is a good predictor of academic achievement and reading difficulties in children. First, the test creators admit they were only able to demonstrate any

predictive relationships at all with children in kindergarten through second grade. The reader is not provided with any information about children in grade levels outside of this range. Second, although the authors were able to cite research supporting the predictive capacities of the Beery VMI when paired with “three other brief tests”, we are not given the names of these tests or the specific skillsets they measure, making proper interpretation difficult. Third, the study that utilized these three tests was conducted in 1982, over 30 years ago. It should be noted that nearly all of the studies cited by the authors throughout their discussion of the measure’s predictive validity are more than 20 years old. The information being referenced throughout this section should be updated with more current research. Lastly, the authors’ discussion of the predictive validity of the test when paired with ratings of pediatricians or kindergarten teachers should be interpreted with caution, as we are given no specific information on how these ratings were conducted and with what criteria. For a stronger support of these claims, the authors should provide more concrete information about the research they choose to cite, and provide the reader with more current research than is currently provided in the manual.

Despite the authors’ assertion that the Beery VMI is a strong predictor of academic achievement and reading difficulties, research on the topic remains ambivalent. Goldstein & Britt Jr. (1994) found that when a child’s general intelligence (the measure in their study was the intelligence quotient) was accounted for, “visual-motor test scores may only predict achievement to the extent that they reflect [a student’s] general cognitive ability” (p. 822). In other words, reading difficulties and poor academic achievement in school are better more strongly correlated with a student’s general intelligence, rather than their visual-motor test scores. The authors of the study note that their findings also support previous research (Lesiak, 1984; McKay & Neale, 1985; Wright & DeMers, 1982) which showed no relationship between visual-motor

coordination and academic achievement.

Construct validity. The authors begin their analysis of the construct validity of the Beery VMI by outlining their process: first, they identify several constructs thought to underlie test performance, next, they generate hypotheses based on those constructs, and finally they verify the hypotheses using empirical data or logic. Five of the seven most relevant constructs analyzed by the authors are discussed below (the final two not discussed here are *Item and Person Separations* and *Disabling Conditions*).

Hypothesis 1: chronological age. Because the abilities measured by the Beery VMI are developmental in nature, it is hypothesized that results from the test should be related to chronological age. Because the test creators normed the test with a fairly large representative sample of students, we can interpret test scores confidently *for the purposes of peer comparison* based only on a student's chronological age.

Hypothesis 2: part-whole intercorrelations. The abilities measured by the Beery VMI and its supplemental tests are related to one another because each supplemental test (Visual Perception and Motor Coordination) measures a part of what the Beery VMI measures. It is reasonable to hypothesize that results from one test will correlate at least moderately well with results from another test.

Hypothesis 3: part-whole hierarchy. Because each of the supplemental tests measure a part, but not the entirety, of what the Beery VMI measures, the Beery VMI should be more demanding than either of the supplemental tests. The authors support this hypothesis with evidence from their norming study, stating that children made more correct responses on each of the supplemental tests than on the Beery VMI. The authors argue this information supports their claim that "the Beery VMI measures the integration factor in addition to visual perception and

motor coordination... [and that its] whole is greater than the sum of its parts" (p. 110). The authors continue to cite neurological research that posits separate visual perception and visual-motor neural pathways in the brain (Grafton et al., 1992; Ross et al., 1995).

Hypothesis 4: intelligence. The authors claim that the abilities measured by the Beery VMI and its supplemental tests are related to nonverbal aspects of intelligence. However, they provide no evidence whatsoever for this claim. Any further interpretation should be made with caution. In an attempt to demonstrate convergent validity (which tests that constructs that should be related, are in fact related), the test creators correlated the results of the Beery VMI with those of the Revised Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC-R) based on a sample of 17 children ages six and 12. The average correlation was .58, slightly below the .60 value that we should expect to demonstrate that these constructs (a measure of intelligence) are in fact related. Furthermore, the small sample of 17 children limits how confident we can be in that correlation value. Prior to the fourth edition, the Beery VMI was correlated with mental age on the Primary Mental Abilities test at .59 for first grade, .37 for fourth grade, and .38 for seventh grade. Again, we can see how the Beery VMI measures become less reliable as the grade level of the child increases and the correlation values decrease. Further correlations between the Beery VMI and the Stanford-Binet-Suzuki among Japanese children ranged from .38 to .45. Likely because the authors attempt to demonstrate convergent validity was met with mediocre correlation values, the authors maintain that the Beery VMI correlates more highly with chronological age.

Hypothesis 5: academic achievement. The authors claim that the abilities measured by the Beery VMI and its supplemental tests are related to academic achievement, despite extant literature that refutes this claim (Goldstein & Britt Jr., 1994; Lesiak, 1984; McKay & Neale, 1985; Wright & DeMers, 1982). Further interpretation should be made with caution. In another

attempt to demonstrate convergent validity, the test creators correlated the results of the Beery VMI with those of the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) based on a sample of 44 fourth and fifth grade students. The correlation values ranged from .40 to .60, indicating a slightly weaker correlation than is to be expected to demonstrate a test has strong construct validity.

Another limiting factor in the Beery VMI's construct validity is the omission of a demonstration of divergent validity (which shows that constructs believed to be unrelated, are indeed unrelated).

Factor analysis. The authors include a very brief paragraph regarding their factor analysis and how the variables relate to each other. They state only that the closed forms (those with acute and oblique angles) on the test accounted for the largest amount of variance [25%].

Conclusion

The Beery VMI and its supplementary tests of Visual Perception and Motor Coordination is an easy to use assessment of how effectively examinees can integrate their visual and motor abilities. Since its creation in 1967 the test has undergone rigorous norming procedures with large samples sizes of over 2,000 individuals that were part of a representative sample based on Census information at the time. This stringent norming procedures combined with the use of non-cultural geometric forms as test items, led to a culturally fair assessment with a low degree of bias. The Beery VMI is fairly easy to score, though it allows for some subjectivity. There are some concerns in regards to the test's reliability, namely its content reliability. Because some values from the Rasch-Wright analysis fell below the expected .80, we cannot say with confidence that the test items differ much from one another or how well they differentiate among individual examinees. Additionally, the test creators often used sample sizes that were too small to generalize their findings in their analyses, and failed to include all of the age groups as well.

Lastly, the small number of test items is a clear limitation to the measure's reliability. In terms of the Beery VMI's validity, there were some serious concerns. The test's content (item construction) was based largely on the test creator's own professional experience. He neither cited any evidence to support the geometric figures he selected, nor did he justify how the items were representative of the abilities he claimed they measured. The Beery VMI's poor demonstration of criterion-validity is the most damaging to the test. It shows weak values of concurrent validity, indicating that the test does not measure what it intends to (i.e. academic achievement, intelligence, and later reading difficulties) very well, and that other tests may be more appropriate. In the face of literature against the validity of the Beery VMI in its ability to predict academic achievement, intelligence, or later reading difficulties, the test creators fail to offer strong evidence in favor of its predictive ability.

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