Development of a Screening Checklist for Nonverbal Learning Disabilities

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ABSTRACT

Nonverbal Learning Disabilities (NLD) are one of the subtypes of learning disabilities. The purpose of this study was to develop a “Screening Checklist for Nonverbal Learning Disabilities” (SCNLD) in order to find which students have NLDs. The checklist was designed by analyzing 165 Grade 4-6 normal students and 7 analogue NLD clinical cases. Based on item analysis, factor analysis and correlation analysis, 52 items were selected for a checklist with 3 subscales or dimensions: social-interpersonal, motor-coordination, and perceptual-organization dimensions. In the reliability test, the Cronbach α coefficient was .88 to .96 and the test-retest coefficient was .74 to .83. As for test validity in terms of cut-off score, the normative data was established for 953 Grade 4-6 students, and the cut-off score was 41. 32 students with learning disabilities (17 verbal-type and 15 nonverbal-type) then participated in validation of the SCNLD. The mean score on the SCNLD, as well as the number of students who reached the SCNLD cut-off score, were higher for nonverbal-type learning-disabled students, and the receiver-operated characteristic (ROC) curve indicated that this SCNLD can be a good diagnostic tool. The reliability and validity of the SCNLD were satisfied, and the ROC curve supported the sensitivity and specificity of this Screening Checklist.

Keywords: learning disabilities, nonverbal learning disabilities, screening checklist, checklist design