Feliciano H. Veiga
Assessing student Engagement in School: Development and validation of a four-dimensional scale.
Lisbon University –Institute of Education, Lisbon, Portugal.

Introduction

Purpose of the study: To measure these dimensions of engagement in Portuguese schools, a new 20-items scale was developed, entitled Students’ Engagement in School Four-dimensional Scale, SES-4DS.

Research questions: Does the dimensionality of the students’ engagement in school contains four dimensions, not just three? Does the supposed four-dimensional scale present good psychometric qualities, such as internal consistency and external validity?

Methodology

The sample frame was the Portuguese country. Participants in this study were 685 adolescents, 296 boys (43.2%) and 389 girls (56.8%). Each school year group had the following number of participants and percentage (in parentheses): sixth grade (138, 20.1%), seventh grade (170, 24.8%), ninth grade (197, 28.8%), and tenth grade (180, 26.3%).

It was administrative the questionnaires with anonymous answers.

Instruments
- SES-4DS Student Engagement in School-Four-Dimensional Scale. Scale (Lam et al., 2014).
- SES Student Engagement Scale (Lam et al., 2014).

Results

Research methods: Its psychometric properties were examined with data from 685 sixth, seventh, ninth, and tenth graders. The analysis allowed to find a scale with 20 items that, with a high percentage of variance explained and good levels of reliability. In the study of external validity, the results in the SES-4DS appeared significantly related to the academic achievement.

Using both EFA and CFA, the present paper offers psychometric evidence for the factor structure of a new short self-report scale designed to capture the dimensions of student engagement in school. Factor analyses revealed a well-differentiated four-factor model. Latent factors were identified as cognitive, affective, behavioral, and agentic engagement. The internal consistencies for all these dimensions were satisfactory. The correlations with scores on subscales of a previously well-validated measure of student engagement (i.e., SES) suggest that SES-4DS is a valid tool for measuring engagement in school.

In addition, significant correlations with grades in Portuguese and Mathematics were considered as evidence of criterion-related (concurrent) validity of SES-4DS.

Findings: The results permitted to find this scale presents psychometric qualities and can be used in research and psychoeducational practice, to assess the multidimensional students’ engagement in school. The future use of the SES-4DS is considered and proposed. This scale may be a useful opportunity for psychologists and teachers. The results we reported in the present paper suggest that the psychometric qualities of SES-4DS are consistent. Thus, the SES-4DS may provide researchers and practitioners the possibility to gather valuable information for their studies or interventions on student engagement in school.

References
