

MEASURING STUDENT ENGAGEMENT WITH SCHOOL ACROSS CULTURES: PSYCHOMETRIC FINDINGS FROM PORTUGAL AND ROMANIA^{1 2}

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Abstract

Student engagement with school activities has been conceptualized and operationalized through three dimensions: affective, behavioral and cognitive. Recent empirical evidence suggests that personal agency could be added as a fourth core dimension. To capture all these dimensions, a new measure (Student Engagement in School-Four-Dimensions Scale/SES-4DS) has been designed and validated in a sample of Portuguese middle and high school students. This paper examines the cross-cultural construct validity of the Portuguese SES-4DS. The SES-4DS was simultaneously administered to a sample of 377 high school Portuguese students and 365 high school Romanian students. In order to estimate factor structure congruence, the Tucker's ϕ coefficient was used. The exploratory factor analysis revealed a four-factor measurement model in both sample. Data also revealed reasonable values of ϕ coefficient for the cognitive and behavioral engagement, while values for affective and agentic engagement were good. Internal consistency ranged from .69 to .87 for the Portuguese sample and .73 to .78 for the Romanian sample. The results indicate that the SES-4DS is a measure that captures the same underlying dimensions of engagement in school across cultures. Implications in terms of using the scale for cross-cultural research purposes are discussed.

Keywords: student engagement in school; measurement; SES-4DS; factor structure congruence

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