SUMA PSICOLÓGICA

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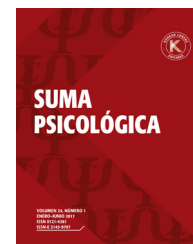
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Psychometric properties of the Multidimensional Students' Life Satisfaction Scale in a sample of Chilean university students

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ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

The Multidimensional Students' Life Satisfaction Scale is an instrument to assess life satisfaction in children and adolescents in five life domains. However, research on multidimensional life satisfaction in older students, such as those attending university, is still scarce. This paper undertook to evaluate the psychometric properties of the Multidimensional Students' Life Satisfaction Scale in a sample of university students from five state universities in Chile. The Multidimensional Students' Life Satisfaction Scale and Satisfaction with Life Scale were applied to 369 participants. Confirmatory factor analysis was used to evaluate the expected correlated five-factor model of the long version (40 items) and the abbreviated version (30 items) of the Multidimensional Students' Life Satisfaction Scale. The goodness-of-fit values obtained from confirmatory factor analysis revealed that the data fit better to the 30-items and five-factor structure than to the 40-item structure. The convergent, concurrent and discriminant validity of the 30-item version was demonstrated. The 30-item version of the Multidimensional Students' Life Satisfaction Scale may be a promising alternative to measure satisfaction in different life domains in university students, and a valuable tool for differential assessments that guide research and intervention on this population.

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Propiedades psicométricas de la Escala Multidimensional de Satisfacción con la Vida en Estudiantes en una muestra de estudiantes universitarios chilenos

R E S U M E N

La Escala Multidimensional de Satisfacción con la Vida en Estudiantes mide la satisfacción con la vida en la niñez y adolescencia en cinco dominios de la vida. La investigación sobre satisfacción multidimensional con la vida es escasa en estudiantes de mayor edad, como aquellos que asisten a la Universidad. El objetivo de este estudio es evaluar las propiedades psicométricas de la Escala Multidimensional de Satisfacción con la Vida en Estudiantes en una muestra de estudiantes de cinco universidades estatales de Chile. La Escala Multidimensional de Satisfacción con la Vida en Estudiantes y la Escala de Satisfacción con la Vida fueron respondidas por 369 participantes. Se utilizó el análisis factorial confirmatorio para evaluar el modelo esperado de cinco factores de las versiones larga (40 ítems) y abreviada (30 ítems) de la Escala Multidimensional de Satisfacción con la Vida en Estudiantes. Los valores de bondad de ajuste obtenidos revelaron que los datos se ajustaron mejor a la escala de 30 ítems y a la estructura de cinco factores. La validez convergente, concurrente y discriminante de esta versión fue demostrada. La versión de 30 ítems de la Escala Multidimensional de Satisfacción con la Vida en Estudiantes puede constituir una alternativa prometedora para medir la satisfacción de estudiantes universitarios en distintos dominios de la vida, así como una herramienta valiosa para la evaluación diferencial que guíe la investigación e intervención en esta población.

Satisfaction with life is defined as the overall assessment people make about their life and specific domains of it (Diener & Ryan, 2009; Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 1999). Much of its research has relied upon global measures, and while this one-dimensional perspective provides useful information, it may mask distinctions between life domains (Casas et al., 2014; Diener & Ryan, 2009; Rodríguez-Fernández, Ramos-Díaz, Ros, Fernández-Zabala, & Revuelta, 2016; Weber & Huebner, 2015). A multidimensional approach may provide richer, differentiated profiles (Brunner & Süß, 2005; Gilligan & Huebner, 2002; Tian, Zhang, & Huebner, 2015; Weber & Huebner, 2015; Yuen, 2013), indicating the relative importance of each domain for global satisfaction, and the correlates, predictors and outcomes of domain-specific satisfaction (González-Villalobos & Morrero, 2017; Jovanovic & Zuljevic, 2013).

The Multidimensional Students' Life Satisfaction Scale (MSLSS; Huebner, 1994) is a 40-item instrument for children and adolescents, aimed at measuring both overall life satisfaction and satisfaction across five domains: family, friends, school, living environment and self. The Family domain items refer to the respondents' satisfaction with their relationship with family members as well as the family members' relationships with each other. The School domain items look at the respondents' satisfaction with school life in terms of interest, learning, and educational activities. The Friends domain items aim to explore the adolescents' satisfaction with their peers. The self-domain entails the respondent's level of satisfaction with himself or herself and other people's opinion in that regard. Lastly, the Living environment domain items explore the satisfaction with the immediate community and people in the respondents' neighborhood (Galíndez & Casas,

2011). The MSLSS validation studies have been conducted in adolescent samples from the US and Canada (Bradley, Cunningham, & Gilman, 2014; Greenspoon & Saklofske, 1997, 1998; Weber & Huebner, 2015), Spain (Casas, Alsinet, Rosich, Huebner, & Laughlin, 2001; Galíndez & Casas, 2011), Korea (Park, Huebner, Laughlin, Valois, & Gilman, 2004), Ireland, China and South Korea (Gilman et al., 2008), Turkey (Irmak & Kuruüzüm, 2009), England (Sawatzky, Ratner, Johnson, Kopec, & Zumbo, 2009), Iran (Hatami, Motamed, & Ashrafzadeh, 2010), Serbia (Jovanovic & Zuljevic, 2013), Italy (Zappulla, Pace, Lo Cascio, Guzzo, & Huebner, 2014) and Hong-Kong (Yuen, 2013; Yuen, 2016; Yuen & Lee, 2016; Yuen, Lee, & Leung, 2016). Internal consistency for the total measure and for the domains has been tested in adolescents from Croatia (Huebner, Suldo, & Gilman, 2006), France (Fenouillet, Heutte, Martin-Krumm, & Boniwell, 2015), Brazil (Barros, Petribú, Sougey, & Huebner, 2014) and Chile (Chavarría & Barra, 2014).

However, the CFA model fit indices have been found to vary considerably across samples (Jovanovic & Zuljevic, 2013). Some studies provided good fit indices for the 40-item five-factor model (Gilman, Huebner, & Laughlin, 2000; Park et al., 2004), whereas others yielded fit indices that did not fall within the acceptable boundaries (Greenspoon & Saklofske, 1998; Hatami et al., 2010; Irmak & Kuruüzüm, 2009; Jovanovic & Zuljevic, 2013; Sawatzky et al., 2009). In light of interpretability problems regarding 10 negatively worded items, Huebner, Zullig, and Saha (2012) proposed an abbreviated 30-item version of the MSLSS that does not compromise the five-factor original structure (Huebner et al., 2012). The CFA conducted by Zappulla et al. (2014) provided support this abbreviated version.