

The Portuguese version of the Teacher Acceptance and Action Questionnaire: Preliminary data

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INTRODUCTION

Experiential avoidance (EA) can be defined as a process that occurs when people are unwilling to remain in contact with particular private experiences (e.g., bodily sensations, emotions, thoughts) and it has been pointed as being related to psychopathological symptoms. The development of self-report instruments for the assessment of EA has deserved the attention of researchers and specific versions of the Acceptance and Action Questionnaire (AAQ-II) are now available targeting different populations. The Teacher Acceptance and Action Questionnaire (TAAQ) is one of these specific instruments. The current study sought out to explore the factor structure and psychometric properties of the Portuguese version of the Teacher Acceptance and Action Questionnaire (TAAQ; Hinds, E., Jones, L. B., Gau, J. M., Forrester, K. K., & Biglan, A., 2015) in a Portuguese sample of teachers.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Participants: A total of 255 teachers (213 women and 42 men) took part in the study. All participants were employed in public schools. Participants presented a mean age of 47.57 years old ($SD = 7.30$) and have been teaching for 23.75 years ($SD = 7.83$).

Procedures: The TAAQ was forward-backward translated from English to Portuguese. Teachers' associations were contacted in order to present the study aims and invite their associates to participate. An email containing the aims and inclusion criteria was provided as well as a link to an online platform. Informed consent was requested and participants completed online a set of self-report measures.

Instruments: Teacher Acceptance and Action Questionnaire (TAAQ; Hinds, E., Jones, L. B., Gau, J.M., Forrester, K.K., & Biglan, A., 2015). In the original version the 10 items converged in a single-component. The TAAQ presented an excellent internal consistency and correlations with other mental health variables suggesting good convergent and discriminant validity. Test-retest reliability indicated that it is a relatively homogeneous scale that consistently measures the same construct.

Depression Anxiety Stress Scale (EADS 21; Lovibond & Lovibond.,1995; Portuguese version by Pais-Ribeiro, J. L., Honrado, A., & Leal, I., 2004). DASS-21 is a widely used instrument for assessing depression, anxiety and stress symptoms in clinical and community samples. In our study the Cronbach alpha for the depression subscale was .92, for the anxiety subscale .89 and for the stress subscale .92.

Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ; Baer, R. A., et al., 2006; Portuguese version by Gregório, S., & Pinto-Gouveia, J., 2011). FFMQ is a 39-item questionnaire encompassing 5 subscales: observing, describing, acting with awareness, non-judging of inner experience, and non-reactivity to inner experience. The Cronbach alpha found for observing subscale was .81, for the describing subscale .86, for the acting with awareness subscale was .91, for the non-judging of inner experience subscale .85 and for the non-reactivity to inner experience subscale .68.

Statistical Analysis: Factor structure was explored through a principal component analysis (PCA). The KMO was .929 and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was significant (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Internal consistency was studied through Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Convergent and discriminant validity were assessed by correlating the TAAQ with scores on the DASS-21 (depressive, anxiety and stress symptoms), FFMQ (Five Facets Mindfulness: observing, acting with awareness, non-judging of inner experience, and non-reactivity to inner experience).

RESULTS

Principal component analysis extracted a single component explaining 56.93% of the variance. Component loadings ranged from .44 to .86; communalities ranged from .19 to .74. The Cronbach's alpha estimate of internal consistency for the total scale was .91, the item-total correlations ranged from .37 to .81 (Table 1).

Correlation results (Table 2) indicated that the relationships between the TAAQ and DASS-21 and FFMQ were as expected.

DISCUSSION

The current study represents a first attempt to explore the factor structure and psychometric properties of the TAAQ in a sample of Portuguese teachers. The Portuguese version of the TAAQ demonstrated a single component structure easy to interpret, excellent internal consistency, convergent and discriminant validity. The TAAQ appears to be a reliable and valid measure of EA in teachers. This can be an easy to use self-report instrument for the assessment of EA considering that teachers are a professional group particularly exposed to psychological difficulties (e.g., depression, burnout, substance use).

Although these findings are promising, there are limitations that need to be acknowledged. Although the sample size was adequate (Mundfrom, Shaw, & Ke, 2005), assessment of test-retest reliability was not conducted due to practical impediments in sample recruitment and should be explored in future studies. Moreover, conducting confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) may contribute to a more robust conclusion regarding the TAAQ factor structure.

Table 1. Means, standards deviations, item-total correlations, Cronbach alpha if item deleted, component loadings and communality estimates

TAAQ item	M	SD	Item total correlation	Cronbach α if item deleted	Component loading	Communality estimate
1. After a difficult interaction at school, I have a hard time turning my attention back to my teaching responsibilities.	2.99	1.32	.74	.90	.81	.65
2. My worries about doing a good job keep me from working effectively.	2.57	1.33	.76	.90	.82	.67
3. My frustrations with teaching make it hard for me to do my job.	2.92	1.51	.81	.89	.86	.74
4. When I'm feeling down at work, I have trouble engaging with others.	2.96	1.52	.75	.90	.81	.66
5. I can't work effectively when administrators do things to upset me.	3.12	1.50	.63	.90	.70	.50
6. I can stay focused on my role in helping students even when I feel down.	2.71	1.38	.37	.91	.44	.19
7. When I am distressed by my co-workers, I find it hard to do my job.	2.97	1.40	.74	.90	.80	.64
8. I find myself being distracted at school by my worries.	2.78	1.23	.65	.90	.72	.52
9. I sometimes feel very distracted by my negative thoughts about students.	2.59	1.31	.72	.90	.78	.61
10. When I feel frustrated at work, I wonder why I ever went into teaching in the first place.	3.07	1.81	.63	.91	.71	.50

Table 2. Correlations between the TAAQ and DASS-21 (Depression, Anxiety and Stress Symptoms) and FFMQ (Five Facet of Mindfulness Questionnaire)

	DASS-21 Depression	DASS-21 Anxiety	DASS-21 Stress	FFMQ Observing	FFMQ Describing	FFMQ Acting with awareness	FFMQ Non-judging	FFMQ Non-reactivity
TAAQ	.69**	.64**	.70**	-.06	-.47**	-.59**	-.52**	-.21**

** $p < .001$

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