Convergent and Discriminant Validity

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In the previous section we demonstrated that a subset of APSI items as well MLQ-P both represented coherent factor structures that successfully tap into the construct of purpose and meaning in life. This section assesses convergent and discriminant validity. APSI items (Feeling Purpose Now and Future Goals) correlate well with happiness and with MLQ-P (see table 1). As was expected MLQ-P correlated well with happiness, life satisfaction, life engagement, global self esteem and Ryff’s purpose subscale. As was expected both APSI factors and MLQ-P did not correlate well with academic self concept (besides for English which correlated more highly (.30) with MLQ-P. It was surprising that optimism (LOT) was negatively correlated with MLQ-P and all APSI factors as well as with life satisfaction, life engagement and happiness and self esteem. This might have something to do with the LOT survey itself for which Smith (1989) found that LOT is virtually indistinguishable from measures of neuroticism and there is support in the literature for a negative correlation between neuroticism and purpose (Bond and Feather, 1989) and that neuroticism is positively correlated with depression and suicide ideation (Heisel and Flett, 2004).

Interestingly searching for purpose (MLQ-S) was not correlated with presence of purpose either for the APSI factors or for MLQ-P. Searching for purpose was also not correlated with happiness, life engagement, or life satisfaction. Goodness of fit measures for the convergent and discriminant validity test were also good (see table 2) indicating that overall these measure were a good fit for the data.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Factor | Factor | Correlation | Factor | Factor | Correlation |
| Feeling Purpose Now | Future Goals | 0.91 | MLQS | Subjects | 0.05 |
| Feeling Purpose Now | MLQP | 0.68 | LET | Happiness | 0.53 |
| Feeling Purpose Now | MLQS | 0.14 | LET | Life Satisfaction | 0.66 |
| Feeling Purpose Now | LET | 0.15 | LET | Self Esteem | 0.76 |
| Feeling Purpose Now | Happiness | 0.51 | LET | LOT | -0.52 |
| Feeling Purpose Now | Life Satisfaction | 0.18 | LET | PWB | 0.95 |
| Feeling Purpose Now | Self Esteem | 0.26 | LET | English | 0.18 |
| Feeling Purpose Now | LOT | -0.50 | LET | Math | 0.20 |
| Feeling Purpose Now | PWB | 0.17 | LET | Science | 0.14 |
| Feeling Purpose Now | English | 0.17 | LET | Subjects | 0.29 |
| Feeling Purpose Now | Math | 0.14 | Happiness | Life Satisfaction | 0.54 |
| Feeling Purpose Now | Science | 0.12 | Happiness | Self Esteem | 0.58 |
| Feeling Purpose Now | Subjects | 0.16 | Happiness | LOT | -0.66 |
| Future Goals | MLQP | 0.63 | Happiness | PWB | 0.43 |
| Future Goals | MLQS | 0.16 | Happiness | English | 0.13 |
| Future Goals | LET | 0.09 | Happiness | Math | 0.21 |
| Future Goals | Happiness | 0.41 | Happiness | Science | 0.12 |
| Future Goals | Life Satisfaction | 0.09 | Happiness | Subjects | 0.20 |
| Future Goals | Self Esteem | 0.21 | Life Satisfaction | Self Esteem | 0.67 |
| Future Goals | LOT | -0.43 | Life Satisfaction | LOT | -0.43 |
| Future Goals | PWB | 0.20 | Life Satisfaction | PWB | 0.52 |
| Future Goals | English | 0.16 | Life Satisfaction | English | 0.14 |
| Future Goals | Math | 0.14 | Life Satisfaction | Math | 0.22 |
| Future Goals | Science | 0.12 | Life Satisfaction | Science | 0.14 |
| Future Goals | Subjects | 0.16 | Life Satisfaction | Subjects | 0.27 |
| MLQP | MLQS | 0.16 | Self Esteem | LOT | -0.43 |
| MLQP | LET | 0.53 | Self Esteem | PWB | 0.63 |
| MLQP | Happiness | 0.53 | Self Esteem | English | 0.34 |
| MLQP | Life Satisfaction | 0.40 | Self Esteem | Math | 0.29 |
| MLQP | Self Esteem | 0.51 | Self Esteem | Science | 0.29 |
| MLQP | LOT | -0.50 | Self Esteem | Subjects | 0.45 |
| MLQP | PWB | 0.49 | LOT | PWB | -0.57 |
| MLQP | English | 0.30 | LOT | English | -0.13 |
| MLQP | Math | 0.18 | LOT | Math | -0.18 |
| MLQP | Science | 0.18 | LOT | Science | -0.17 |
| MLQP | Subjects | 0.27 | LOT | Subjects | -0.20 |
| MLQS | LET | -0.13 | PWB | English | 0.19 |
| MLQS | Happiness | 0.06 | PWB | Math | 0.22 |
| MLQS | Life Satisfaction | -0.06 | PWB | Science | 0.19 |
| MLQS | Self Esteem | 0.04 | PWB | Subjects | 0.29 |
| MLQS | LOT | -0.01 | English | Math | 0.24 |
| MLQS | PWB | -0.11 | English | Science | 0.40 |
| MLQS | English | 0.11 | English | Subjects | 0.68 |
| MLQS | Math | 0.00 | Math | Science | 0.52 |
| MLQS | Science | 0.08 | Math | Subjects | 0.69 |

Table 1: Correlations

Fit Measures Chisq DF P-Value CFI TLI RMSEA upper lower SRMR

Validity Fit 12142.767 2989.000 0.000 0.83 0.828 0.051 0.050 0.052 0.094

Table 2: Fit Measures

**Conclusion**

Discriminate and divergent validity analysis underscores that the purpose scales of MLQ-P and APSI (Feeling purpose Now and Future Goals) tap into the construct of purpose and meaning in that they correlate well with each other and at the same time correlate well with constructs that are known in the literature to correlate with purpose and meaning such as happiness, life satisfaction and life engagement while at the same time they do not correlate well academic self concept which is not know to correlate with purpose especially.