

“A Sense of Community at School and the Subjective Well-being of Chilean Students”

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Abstract

Thematic importance: More and more research has been conducted on the social interactions that take place in everyday life at school and the important role this plays in child and adolescent development.

Introduction and objectives: The concept of a Sense of Community at School has been developed through these lines of research, defined as a sense of belonging at school that results from the perceptions and experience of emotional connection and satisfactory bonds with other students. The concept of Classroom Sense of Community is another related development, it describes the feelings of a school classroom group's members in terms of the degree to which they share group norms and values and how much their educational goals and expectations are met specifically by being a member of a particular classroom group. The objective of this research is to understand to what extent a sense of community in school and in the classroom, can predict life satisfaction for Chilean fifth and seventh grade students. The classroom and school components will be presented separately.

Method: The research was designed as a descriptive study through a survey with a probabilistic sample made up of 1,959 students (52.6% men and 47.4% women) of fifth and seventh grade of primary schools in the cities of Concepción and Santiago de Chile. A multiple linear regression analysis was carried out using the Multidimensional Scales of the sense of school community (SOC-S) and the sense of community in the classroom (SOC-C) as predictors of satisfaction with life

measured with the Scale of satisfaction with life. Student Life (SLSS). A multigroup analysis was performed to make comparisons by sex and grade.

Results: The results show that the dimension of "sense of belonging and emotional connection" of the SOC-C and the dimension of "belonging" of the SOC-S predict the satisfaction with life of fifth grade students. The additional "emotional connection" dimension of the SOC-S scale was included for seventh grade students.

Conclusions and implications: This allows us to conclude that the feeling of being part of the school community is a dimension that affects Satisfaction with Child Life. Their level of contribution varies according to age, being the variables of sense of belonging and emotional connection the most relevant.