



II INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP:

Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Global Strategies to Address school attendance problems

Proceedings book



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1. Impact of social media addiction on attendance and academic performance: Gender differences among secondary education students

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Introduction: Social media plays a major role in the lives of Spanish youth, being used by 90% of them. The objective of the study is to analyze the differences in social media addiction based on gender and its impact on failed subjects in the last evaluation and school attendance.

Method: The Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale (BSMAS) was applied to a sample of 641 Spanish adolescents, and the results were analyzed through ANOVA, Student's t-tests, Cohen's d, and frequency analysis.

Results: Significant differences were found between boys and girls, with girls having higher average scores. Similarly, higher averages in social media addiction were found among adolescents who had more absences and those with more failed subjects.

Discussion: The proposed hypotheses are confirmed; social media addiction influences academic performance and school attendance, and gender-based differences are found.

Conclusions: The need to implement strategies that promote healthy social media use and foster study habits is discussed.

Keywords: Secondary education; Addiction; Social media; Academic performance; School attendance; Gender; Adolescents; Spain.

2. School absenteeism protocol: Valencian Community approach to action and prevention

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Introduction: School absenteeism represents a significant challenge to educational equity and social inclusion. Chronic absenteeism is linked to academic failure, school dropout, and increased vulnerability to social exclusion, unemployment, and criminal behavior. Addressing this issue requires a coordinated and systemic approach.

Method: The Valencian Community has established a structured protocol, as defined in the Resolution of September 29, 2021, to identify, prevent, and address school absenteeism. The protocol categorizes absenteeism as low (under 20%), medium (20-50%), or high (over 50%) based on monthly absence rates. Early detection is facilitated through the regional ITACA platform, and coordinated actions involve educational institutions, families, and public administrations.

Results: The protocol assigns specific responsibilities to each party. Schools are responsible for developing preventive action plans, closely monitoring attendance, and promptly notifying families. Families are expected to value education, support school engagement, provide structure at home, and communicate absences clearly. Public administrations support multi-agency collaboration and ensure that all interventions prioritize the best interests of the child.

Discussion: This protocol highlights the importance of inter-institutional collaboration in tackling absenteeism. It reflects a proactive, holistic, and inclusive approach that goes beyond merely tracking attendance to fostering meaningful engagement and systemic support for students.

Conclusions: The Valencian model aims not only to reduce absenteeism but also to enhance educational engagement and improve life outcomes for students at risk. The slogan, “Together it’s easier,” encapsulates the shared responsibility and collaborative spirit that underpin the success of the strategy.

Keywords: Absenteeism; Prevention; Education; Inclusion; Collaboration.

3. Perceived social support of teachers and peers according to gender and other educational variables

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Introduction: This study analyzes the perception of support received by adolescents in Spain from teachers and classmates, also evaluating the differences according to gender, school attendance and academic results. The objectives consisted of analyzing the rates of support perceived by a group of adolescents over teachers and the group of their peers and, in turn, to check if there are differences in the support perceived according to three variables: gender, level of school attendance and results according to the last academic evaluation report.

Method: A total of 618 adolescents between the ages of 12 and 16 (51.6% boys) participated, completing an eight-item scale that measured the support of teachers and peers on a 5-point scale.

Results: Significant differences were found by gender: boys perceived greater support from peers, while girls stood out in an item linked to teacher support. Regarding school attendance, students with perfect attendance reported greater peer support compared to those who missed between 1 and 4 days or more than 5 days. In terms of academic results, students with complete passes perceived more support from teachers compared to those with 1-2 failures, or more than 3.

Discussion: These findings underscore the importance of fostering positive relationships in the school environment to improve well-being and academic outcomes. The relevance of committed teachers who motivate both the personal development and academic success of their students is highlighted, as well as the need for support systems that transcend the classroom.

Keywords: Teacher support; Support classmates; Gender; School attendance; Academic evaluation.

4. Validation of the SCREEN for the early identification of school refusal in the Italian educational context

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Introduction: School refusal is a complex form of absenteeism linked to emotional, anxiety-related and relational factors that hinder regular attendance at school, impacting students' well-being. SCREEN—based on Gallé-Tessonneau's descriptive theoretical model—is a valuable, multidimensional psychometric instrument for early identification of school refusal in preadolescents.

Method: A sample of 696 secondary school students was divided into two groups for validation: an exploratory sample ($n = 351$; $M_{age} = 15.9$; $SD = 0.99$) and a confirmatory sample ($n = 345$; $M_{age} = 16$; $SD = 1.00$). Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) identified and confirmed the factorial structure.

Results: A six-factor solution with 18 items was found and confirmed: Anticipatory Anxiety, School Avoidance, Transition Difficulties, School Well-being, Interpersonal Discomfort, and General School Discomfort.

Discussion: Regular attendance is crucial for student well-being and academic success. SCREEN enables early detection of school refusal, promoting targeted interventions to support school engagement.

Keywords: School refusal; Psychometric validation; Pre-adolescence; SCREEN instrument; School well-being.

5. From alienation to school attendance problems: A profile-based approach

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Introduction: Alienation is a significant issue affecting students' socio-emotional and cognitive development. As students progress through their educational journey, they may develop negative attitudes towards school, and a decreasing sense of belonging towards learning, teachers, and classmates. This might lead to negative consequences, such as poor academic performance, learning difficulties, school disengagement, behavioral problems, and school attendance problems (SAPs), a range of issues that prevent a student from attending or staying in school regularly. Despite the extensive literature on school alienation, few studies have systematically explored how distinct profiles of alienation are related to SAPs.

Method: In this study a latent profile analysis (LPA) based on measures of alienation from teachers, peers, and parents on a sample of 848 Italian students has been performed. Comparison of models using BIC and entropy (0.747) favored a three-class solution: Positive Relationships (65.9%), Selective Alienation from Peers (12.0%), and Generalized Alienation (22.1%). Subsequently, ANOVA was used to compare the profiles on the different reasons for school non-attendance (somatic symptoms, subjective health complaints, truancy, and school refusal).

Results: Students with the "Generalized Alienation" profile reported significantly more somatic symptoms ($F=8.89$, $p<.001$), more complaints ($F=14.10$, $p<.001$) and a higher truancy ($F=26.69$, $p<.001$) than their peers with "Positive Relationships" profile, as well as worse values than the "Selective" profile in somatic symptoms and truancy. School refusal was higher for both "Selective" and "Generalized" alienation profiles than the "Positive Relationships" profile ($F=19.22$, $p<.001$).

Discussion: These data underscore the urgency of personalized interventions to combat the different forms of alienation.

Conclusions: Understanding the relationship between alienation and SAPs is crucial for early identification and intervention, potentially mitigating the negative impacts on students' educational outcomes.

Keywords: School alienation; School attendance problems; Latent profile analysis; Student engagement; Socio-emotional development.

6. Coping with stress at school: The mediating role of emotions in predicting school refusal

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Introduction: For some students, school is a stressful environment tied to anxiety and emotional distress. Inability to cope adaptively may lead to school refusal.

Method: A Structural Equation Model (SEM) was used to examine the mediating role of positive and negative emotions between resilient coping and school refusal. Instruments included the Brief Resilient Coping Scale (BRCS), the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS), and SCREEN. Participants: 581 upper secondary students (Mage = 16.1; SD = 1.00).

Results: The model fit was good. Positive and negative emotions mediated the relationship between resilient coping and anticipatory anxiety (PE: $\beta = -.09$; NE: $\beta = -.05$) and interpersonal discomfort (PE: $\beta = -.07$; NE: $\beta = -.06$). Negative emotions also mediated transition difficulties ($\beta = -.02$).

Discussion: Enhancing adaptive coping and emotional regulation in schools is essential to reduce emotional distress and prevent school refusal behaviors.

Keywords: Coping; Resilient; School refusal; Positive and negative emotion; Stress; Pre-adolescent students.

7. Perfectionistic profiles and school non-attendance: An analysis of somatic symptoms and subjective health complaints

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Introduction: Perfectionism is linked to somatic symptoms and complaints in adolescents. This study used a person-centered approach to explore how perfectionistic profiles relate to health issues.

Method: 681 adolescents completed the Children and Adolescent Perfectionism Scale (CAPS) and the ARSNA (Assessing Reasons for School Non-Attendance Questionnaire).

Results: Latent profile analysis revealed three profiles: low, moderate, and high perfectionism. High-perfectionism adolescents reported significantly more somatic symptoms and subjective complaints. Differences between low and high profiles showed moderate effect sizes.

Discussion: Students with high perfectionism may express distress via physical symptoms due to pressure to succeed. Interventions should address perfectionism as a risk factor for school non-attendance.

Keywords: Perfectionism; School non-attendance; Somatic symptoms; Subjective health complaints; Adolescents.

8. Addressing School Attendance Problems: A Comparative Analysis of National Action Frameworks in Italy, Spain, and Türkiye.

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Introduction: School attendance problems (SAPs) encompass behaviors indicating student reluctance or refusal to attend school. This study reviews 40 official action protocols from Spain, Italy, and Türkiye to identify similarities and differences.

Results: The review found differences in terminology, conceptualization, and protocol design across countries. Common themes include the promotion of full attendance and interdisciplinary collaboration.

Discussion: National approaches vary in implementation guidance and stakeholder coordination. The review calls for adaptable, context-sensitive protocols and greater international cooperation to harmonize intervention criteria and strategies.

Keywords: School absenteeism; Action protocols; Comparative education; Spain; Italy; Türkiye.