



Preliminary psychometric properties of the Spanish version of the self-as-context scale (SACS-Sp) in parents of young children

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Self-as-context—the invariant perspective-taking that characterizes the observing self—is potentially the most understudied dimension of the model of psychological flexibility on which acceptance and commitment therapy is based. The aim of this study is to develop and evaluate the psychometric properties of the Spanish version of the Self-as-Context Scale (SACS-Sp) in parents of children aged 0 - 6 years old.

Method: A total of 202 parents of young children completed a questionnaire assessing age, sex, parental stressors, psychological flexibility, personal values, self-compassion, and emotional outcomes (depressive symptoms, anxiety symptoms, and positive and negative affect). An exploratory factor analysis was conducted, along with correlation analyses and regression models.

Results: Two SACS dimensions were obtained, Centering ($\alpha = .81$) and Transcending ($\alpha = .91$), explaining 67.64% of the variance. The two subscales exhibited distinct predictive patterns across psychological outcomes. Centering was significantly associated with lower levels of depression, anxiety, and negative affect, as well as higher positive affect. Transcending predicted lower depressive symptoms and greater positive affect. These associations remained significant after controlling for sex, age, and stress, highlighting the unique contribution of SAC dimensions to parental emotional adjustment.

Discussion: This study supports the psychometric properties of the Spanish SACS, extends self-as-context research to parents of young children, and shows that self-as-context explains unique variance in parental wellbeing beyond effects of parenting stress. Findings indicate that Centering and Transcending show distinct predictive patterns for parental emotional outcomes. Finally, the study provides novel evidence linking self-as-context with values consistency and self-compassion.

1. Introduction

In recent years, the field of clinical psychology has increasingly emphasized the relevance of core processes from a transdiagnostic perspective (Dalglish et al., 2020). These processes, grounded in various therapeutic approaches, including acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT; Hayes et al., 2012), have been shown to influence emotional distress across both clinical and nonclinical populations (Gloster et al., 2020; Hsu et al., 2023). As research moves toward

process-based therapies and a new generation of evidence-based care targeting core mediators and moderators (Hofmann & Hayes, 2019), there is a growing demand to examine psychological flexibility not just as a global construct, but at more molecular level the functioning of its specific subprocesses. ACT (Hayes et al., 1999) proposes six such core subprocesses, collectively referred to as the hexaflex, that underlie psychological flexibility: cognitive defusion, acceptance, self-as-context, contact with the present moment, values, and commitment to action (Hayes, 2016). Among them, self-as-context (SAC) stands out as one of

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