

Title: Validity of the School Setting Interview: An Assessment of the Student-Environment Fit

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Major Finding: The results of this study support evidence of the construct validity of the SSI.

Participants:

- 87 students in Sweden:
 - Ages 8-19 years
 - 62% attended a regular classroom and 38% attended a special education classroom.
 - About 56% used either a manual or powered wheel chair.
 - Diagnoses include: 36 participants with cerebral palsy, 15 with spina bifida, 9 with muscle diseases, 6 with arthritis, and 21 with other diseases.

Method: Data collected from three different studies using the SSI were used. The SSI interview was carried out at each student's school. 48 students were assessed using the SSI version 1.0, and 39 students were assessed by the SSI version 1.1.

Analysis: Rasch analysis using Minifac software.

Findings:

- The order of the difficulty of the items was in congruence with the theoretical basis for item development. "Taking breaks" and "Assessing the localities" were the most difficult items, and "Speaking" & "Interacting with staff" were the least difficult items.
- All SSI items measured the construct of student-environment fit, as given by acceptable fit statistics.
- The items were relatively easy for the students included in the study, and range of student-environment fit measures was not fully covered by range of items.
- 94% of students were validly measured by the SSI.

Conclusion: This study supports evidence of the construct validity of the SSI for measuring student-environment fit among students with physical disabilities in the school setting.

Implications for future research: The SSI needs new items that are more challenging in order to more effectively measure student-environment fit. Also, the manual should be refined to make the scoring procedure more precise, and further evidence of validity among samples from different cultural contexts should be evaluated.

Evidence-based practice implications:

- **This study demonstrates that the SSI is a valid measure of student-environment fit when used with students with physical disabilities.**
- **Students may indicate a need for adjustments only for school activities that are a high priority or most urgent. Clinicians should use a client-centered approach to help students identify where further adjustments are needed or where adjustments have already been made.**

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