

Psychometric Properties

Ongoing research is being conducted on the psychometric properties of the SASSE to ensure that the measure is useful in the South African context.

The SASSE survey has been administered at the University of the Free State for 3 years prior to the national pilot. One of the aims of these local administrations was to investigate the psychometric properties of the survey in the South African context. Results show that the SASSE is a reliable and valid for the South African higher education context. The psychometric properties of the SASSE are discussed in an article entitled “Enhancing success in higher education by measuring student engagement in South Africa”.

Introduction to SASSE Reliability

The degree to which an instrument is reliable is an important indicator of an instrument’s psychometric quality. Reliability is the degree to which a set of items consistently measures the same thing across respondents and institutional settings.

Internal consistency of the SASSE benchmarks 2009

Benchmark	SASSE		NSSE	
	First-years	Seniors	First-years	Seniors
Level of Academic Challenge	0.66	0.69	0.73	0.76
Active and Collaborative Learning	0.55	0.57	0.66	0.66
Student-Staff Interaction	0.60	0.62	0.71	0.74
Enriching Educational Experiences	0.50	0.55	0.59	0.66
Supportive Campus Environment	0.71	0.72	0.79	0.80

Table 1: Internal consistency of the SASSE and NSSE benchmarks 2009.

Table 1 shows the SASSE and NSSE internal consistencies for the five benchmarks for first-years and seniors for 2009.

The groups of items that go into the construction of the benchmarks were created with a blend of theory and empirical analysis. Initially, principal components analyses with oblique rotations was conducted, and then theory was employed to crystallize the item groupings into the respective groups. The nature of this process may exert an influence on alpha coefficients.

To read more about the psychometric properties of the NSSE visit the following webpage: <http://nsse.iub.edu/html/researchers.cfm>