Adolescent Students’ Perceived Social Support, Self-Concept and School Engagement

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Abstract
The study of school engagement is currently a topic of great interest in psychoeducational research, since it offers a new vision of students’ development. The aim of this study is to analyze the relationship between perceived social support, general self-concept and school engagement. Participants were 1,250 students (49% boys; 51% girls) aged between 12 and 15 (\(M = 13.72, SD = 1.09\)), who were selected randomly for the sample group. The study tests a structural model for analyzing the effects of perceived social support and general self-concept on school engagement. The results provide evidence in favor of the influence of family and peer support on school engagement, through the mediating variable general self-concept. Support from teachers and family was found to have a direct influence on school engagement. The results are discussed within the framework of positive psychology, along with the implications for future research.

Keywords: perceived support from teachers, perceived support from peers, perceived support from families, self-concept, school engagement.

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Introduction

The negative image of adolescence which prevailed in the field of education throughout the last century resulted in greater interest being shown in problematic behaviors and limitations than in research into and the fostering of adaptive, healthy behaviors (Oliva et al., 2010). Nevertheless, over recent years, those working in the field of educational psychology have increasingly preferred to study the positive qualities of adolescent students, rather than focus on their deficits (Froh, Huebner, Youssef, & Conte, 2011; Kristjánsson, 2012).

Of these qualities, school engagement is of vital importance for understanding positive development during adolescence (Li & Lerner, 2011), and has been identified as an index of adaptation in the school context (Libbey, 2004). It is also considered a key element for psychosocial development and academic success (Motti-Stefadini & Masten, 2013; Ros, Goikoetxea, Gairín, & Lekue, 2012). School engagement has been defined as the degree to which students are committed to school and are motivated to learn (Simons-Morton & Chen, 2009). The majority consensus within the scientific community acknowledges the multifaceted nature of the concept (Lewis, Huebner, Malone, & Valois, 2011; Wang, Willet, & Eccles, 2011), which is often divided into three dimensions: cognitive, emotional and behavioral (Appleton, 2012; Christenson, Reschly, & Wylie, 2012; Fredricks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004; González & Paoloni, 2015).

School engagement is therefore considered to involve the feelings, thoughts and behaviors manifested by students regarding their experiences in the school context (Veiga, Burden, Appleton, Taveira, & Galvao, 2014).

Recent research has provided empirical evidence indicating that psychological and environmental factors may influence school engagement (Christenson et al., 2012). The psychological variables involved include self-concept, understood as the set of perceptions that an individual has about him or herself, based on their own personal assessment and that of significant others (Shavelson, Hubner, & Stanton, 1976). Self-concept is vital to adolescent adjustment (Fuentes, García, Gracia, & Lila, 2011; Rodríguez-Fernández, Droguett, & Revuelta, 2012).

Over the course of the last decade, numerous studies have shown that self-concept is directly related to academic achievement (Marsh & Martin, 2011; Nagengast & Marsh, 2012; Preckel, Niepel, Seneider, & Brunner, 2013; Singh, Chang, & Dika, 2010). Less, however, is known about the role played by positive self-perceptions in school engagement. Some authors posit that self-concept is linked to educational variables such as students’
involved in the learning process (Inglés, Martínez-Monteagudo, García-Fernández, Valle, & Castejón, 2014), while others go one step further to claim that school engagement may mediate between self-concept and academic achievement (Green et al., 2012).

One contextual variable that predicts adaptive behavior during adolescence is perceived social support (Chu, Saucier, & Hafner, 2010; Danielsen, Wiium, Wilhemmsen, & Wold, 2010), understood as the individual’s feeling that their social network provides adequate support in moments of need (Lakey & Scoboria, 2005). This concept is a complex one which encompasses a series of elements that interact and evolve throughout the course of adolescence (Cohen, 2004). The relationship between this environmental factor and adolescents’ self-esteem is beyond any doubt (Marshall, Parker, Ciarrochi, & Heaven, 2014). In this sense, a close correlation has been found between family support and self-esteem (Salazar et al., 2004). It has also been observed that acceptance by one’s peers has a global protective effect on general self-concept (Birkeland, Breivik, & Wold, 2014). Teachers’ support and appraisal have been related to academic self-concept, which in turn is associated with academic achievement (Santana & García, 2011). Similarly, it has been found that adolescents who perceive a greater degree of support from their family, peers and school environment have a better self-concept (De-maray, Malecki, Rueger, Brown, & Summers, 2009). Finally, evidence exists of the direct influence of student-teacher relations on school adjustment (García-Bacete, Coll, Casares, & Perrin, 2014), as well as the impact of the most personal environmental systems (family, peers, school) on students’ engagement (Lam, Wong, Yang, & Lui, 2012).

In addition to the information reported regarding each of the study variables and their interrelations, empirical evidence also exists of the effect of social support on school engagement, with self-concept as a mediating variable of said effect (Fall & Roberts, 2012). Perhaps the most direct antecedents are those studies which demonstrate that self-concept mediates the relationship between context (support from teachers, peers and family) and school adaptation (Rodríguez-Fernández et al., 2012; Rodríguez-Fernández, Ramos-Díaz, Madariaga, Arribailaga, & Galende, 2016; Rodríguez-Fernández, Ramos-Díaz, Fernández-Zabala, Goñi, Esnaola, & Goñi, 2016; Tian, Liu, Huang, & Huebner, 2013). Specifically, Rodríguez-Fernández et al. (2012) measured family support and peer support, finding that only family support had a direct and indirect effect (mediated by self-concept) on school adjustment, whereas Tian et al. (2013) found that both family,
peer and teacher support affected self-concept, which in turn influenced school wellbeing. Whatever the case, there is no general agreement regarding what role peer support plays in school engagement, or what explanatory capacity perceived social support and self-concept may have in relation to that same variable. Moreover, despite the fact that the term school engagement is the most commonly accepted one today, no previous structural model has taken this variable as the focus of its analysis, with all prior works using other related terms such as school adjustment or school wellbeing.

In light of this, the present study aims to test a structural model (Figure 1), in which school engagement during adolescence depends on general self-concept, with perceived social climate (support from teachers, peers and family) having a direct effect on this second variable and an indirect one on engagement.

Method

Participants

Participants were 1,250 secondary school students from the Autonomous Region of the Basque Country (ARBC) in Spain, who were selected using a random sampling technique. Of these, 612 (49%) were boys and 638 (51%) were girls. All were aged between 12 and 16 \((M = 13.72; SD = 1.09)\). 9 schools were selected (4 private and semi-private ones and 5 public ones) from mid-level socioeconomic and cultural environments. The distribution according to school year (Table 1) was as follows: 1st grade of secondary school, 232 (18.6%); 2nd grade, 271 (21.8%); 3rd grade, 353 (28.2%) and 4th grade, 393 (32.4%). Pearson’s chi-squared test revealed no differences in the distribution of each sex between the different grades \((\chi^2(1) = 4.66, p > .05)\).
Instruments

The HBSC-2006 Questionnaire (Moreno et al., 2008) comprises ten factors which measure behaviors related to the health and development of adolescent students. The teacher support scale used in this study comprises 8 items and has a 5-point Likert-type response scale ranging from (1) totally agree to (5) totally disagree. Satisfactory indexes were obtained in the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), thus confirming the scale’s unidimensionality: \( \chi^2(18) = 85.55, p < .001; \text{CFI} = .979; \text{TLI} = .968; \text{SRMR} = .024; \text{RMSEA} = .055; \) RMSEA confidence interval 90% = .043-.067, with an internal consistency of .84, a composite reliability coefficient (CRC) of .88 and an average variance extracted (AVE) of .48.

The Family and Friends Support Questionnaire (AFA-R; González & Landero, 2014) consists of 15 statements which respondents rate on a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = never to 5 = always). The CFA of the two-dimensional structure revealed an acceptable fit (\( \chi^2(58) = 433.00, p < .001; \text{CFI} = .948; \text{TLI} = .930; \text{SRMR} = .045; \text{RMSEA} = .072; \) RMSEA confidence interval 90% = .066-.078), following the elimination recommended by the authors themselves of items 9 (family support: \( \lambda = .300; t = 9.71, p < .01 \)) and 10 (peer support: \( \lambda = .243; t = 9.32, p < .01 \)) and the incorporation of three error covariances justified by the semantic similarities detected in the drafting, with a change in the standardized parameter of .12, .23 and .21, respectively. The instrument has a high internal consistency index (.92) and in this study too, the internal consistency indexes obtained were acceptable: family support (\( \alpha = .84; \text{CRC} = .86; \text{AVE} = .48 \)) and peer support (\( \alpha = .82; \text{CRC} = .83; \text{VME} = .46 \)).

The multidimensional self-concept questionnaire (AUDIM; Fer...
nández-Zabala, Goñi, Rodríguez-Fernández, & Goñi, 2015) offers a 5-point Likert-type response scale ranging from (1) false to (5) true. It has an internal structure consisting of twelve factors, along with another factor for general self-concept. Only this last dimension was used for the analyses. It was found to have a good fit: \( \chi^2_{(15)} = 20.15, p < .001; \) CFI = .983; TLI = .966; SRMR = .021; RMSEA = .049; RMSEA confidence interval 90% = .028-.073. Although the authors report a general internal consistency of \( \alpha = .77, \) CRC = .83 and AVE = .50, in this study, the reliability indexes for the general self-concept dimension were \( \alpha = .66, \) CRC = .83 and AVE = .50.

The School Engagement Questionnaire (SEM; Fredericks, Blumenfeld, Friedel, & Paris, 2005) contains 19 items with a 5-point Likert-type response scale. It comprises three factors: behavioral engagement, emotional engagement and cognitive engagement. The CFA to which this three-dimensional structure was subjected revealed satisfactory fit indexes \( \chi^2_{(100)} = 676.93, p < .001; \) CFI = .906; SRMR = .058; RMSEA = .068; RMSEA confidence interval 90% = .059-.069), following the elimination of three items due to low factor loading and the establishment of an error covariance with a change in the standardized parameter of .16. The questionnaire has an adequate internal consistency in all three factors, with values of between .55 and .86 (Fredricks & McColskey, 2012), while in this study, the values found were: (a) behavioral engagement: \( \alpha = .74, \) CRC = .83; AVE = .55; (b) emotional engagement: \( \alpha = .81, \) CRC = .86; AVE = .55; and (c) cognitive engagement: \( \alpha = .77, \) CRC = .89; AVE = .53.

Procedure

A number of schools were randomly chosen from a list containing all schools in the ARBC, and the different year groups within each school were selected in accordance with the interests of the study. The management teams of the selected schools were contacted in order to explain the research project and ask for their voluntary cooperation. Two schools declined the invitation to collaborate in the project, and two new schools were selected to replace them, using the same method. The informed consent of the headmasters/mistresses and the participating families was obtained. None of the students refused to participate in the research project. The questionnaires were completed under the supervision of experienced researchers during class time. All students in the class completed the questionnaire at the same time, and the whole process took approximately half an hour. With the aim of mitigating the incidence of responses in keeping with the research hypothesis, the single blind criterion was employed. Both the confidenti-
ality of the responses given and the voluntary nature of the participation were guaranteed in order to reduce the effects of the social desirably bias. The study complied with the ethical values established for psychological research and assessment, and respected the basic principles laid out in the American Psychology Association’s ethics code and in current regulations (informed consent and the right to information, protection of personal data and confidentiality guarantees, non-discrimination, non-remuneration and the right to withdraw from the study at any time).

Data analysis

Missing values (2.1%) were inferred using the expectation maximization (EM) algorithm and the Markov chain Monte Carlo (MCMC), offered by the LISREL 8.8 program. Extreme values (1.3%) were eliminated using the SAS program. To ensure normality, the bootstrap method was applied, as offered by the AMOS 21 program (with 2000 repetitions and establishing a confidence interval of 95%). This method assumes that the results of the estimations are robust and are therefore not affected by a lack of normality (Byrne, 2001).

The Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) technique was used to confirm the hypothesized model. The maximum likelihood method (ML) was used. The indexes of fit taken into account were those proposed by Byrne (2001): chi-squared (χ²) and level of associated probability, CFI (Comparative Fit Index), TLI (Tucker-Lewis Index) (Barret, 2007), RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error of Approximation), with its confidence interval, and SRMR (Standardized Root Mean Square Residual) (Hu & Bentler, 1999), and the chi-squared test was included also to compare the estimated models.

Results

Descriptive statistics and correlations between the study variables

Prior to the analysis of the structural regression model, a Pearson correlation analysis was conducted, along with an analysis of the means and standard deviations. It should be noted (Table 2) that the level of behavioral engagement was low and the highest level recorded was for family support. With p < .01 or p < .05, significant interrelations were observed between all the variables except cognitive engagement and both peer support (r = .035, p > .05) and support from teachers (r = .324, p > .05). The highest direct interrelations were found between behavioral engagement and emotional engagement (r = .485, p < .01), as well as between support from teachers and emotional engagement (r = .447, p < .01).
Table 2
Means, Standard Deviations, Reliability and Bivariate Correlations between the Study Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. SSF</td>
<td></td>
<td>.343*</td>
<td>.322*</td>
<td>.350*</td>
<td>.298*</td>
<td>.328*</td>
<td>.260*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. SSP</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>.230*</td>
<td>.065*</td>
<td>.224*</td>
<td>.035</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. SST</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.208*</td>
<td>.326*</td>
<td>.447*</td>
<td>.324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. GSC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.249*</td>
<td>.345*</td>
<td>.160*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. BSE</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.485*</td>
<td>.390*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. ESE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.429*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. CSE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

M       33.04 28.32 26.40 20.25 19.30 21.82 22.84
SD      5.07  4.47  5.87  3.37  2.93  4.03  5.70
Alfa    .84  .82  .84  .66  .74  .81  .77
CFC     .83  .86  .88  .83  .83  .86  .89
AVE     .46  .48  .48  .50  .55  .55  .53

Note. * p < .05; ** p < .01. SSF = Social support from the family; SSP = Social support from peers; SST = Social support from teachers; GSC = General self-concept; BSE = Behavioral school engagement; ESE = Emotional school engagement; CSE = Cognitive school engagement; CRC = Composite reliability coefficient; AVE = Average variance extracted.

Global fit of the proposed model

The complete structural regression model tested here contains 5 latent variables whose indicators, in the case of the social support variables (family support, peer support and support from teachers) and general self-concept, are those items of the scales in the corresponding test. In the case of the school engagement variables (behavioral engagement, emotional engagement and cognitive engagement), the indicators are the scores obtained by participants in the different scales (parcels).

Two models were compared: the hypothesized model of complete mediation between social support and school engagement through general self-concept, and an alternative model which also includes direct pathways from the dimensions of social support to school engagement. The initial hypothetical model (Figure 1) posits that social support is positively related to general self-concept, which in turn has predictive power over school engagement and acts as a mediator between the three sources of social support and the school adaptation indicator. An initial analysis of the resulting parameters indicated that the initial model (Figure 2) has an acceptable fit: \( \chi^2_{(367)} = 1646.80, \ p < .001; \ CFI = .903; \ TLI = .835; \)
SRMR = .062; RMSEA = .053; RMSEA confidence interval 90% = .050-.055).

In addition to positing the indirect effect of contextual factors on school adjustment through general self-concept, the alternative model (Figure 3) also includes a series of direct pathways from the different dimensions of social support to school engagement. The goodness of fit indicators obtained are within accepted margins, thus suggesting a reasonable global fit ($\chi^2_{(364)} = 1399.81$, $p < .001$; CFI = .921; TLI = .912; SRMR = .044; RMSEA = .049; RMSEA confidence interval 90% = .045-.050).

Taking the difference between the two models as degrees of freedom, the chi-squared test on the discrepancy proved statistically significant ($\chi^2_{(3)} = 246.99$, $p < .05$), indicating that the two models are significantly different. This was also confirmed by the cross-validation index (ECVI). When studying the goodness of fit indexes of the tested models (Table 3), it was observed that both the hypothesized model (M1) and the alternative model (M2) provided acceptable results, with the alternative model having the better fit. It is therefore this model that constitutes the first choice for explaining school engagement on the basis of social support and general self-concept. According to the ECVI, the alternative model (M2) is the one that presents a better degree of replicability, since it has a lower value in this index than the complete mediation model (M1).
Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>$\chi^2$ (df)</th>
<th>CFI</th>
<th>TLI</th>
<th>SRMR</th>
<th>RMSEA (IC)</th>
<th>ECVI (IC)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M₁</td>
<td>1646.80 (367)</td>
<td>.903</td>
<td>.893</td>
<td>.062</td>
<td>.053 (.050-.055)</td>
<td>1.43 (1.33-1.53)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M₂</td>
<td>1399.81 (364)</td>
<td>.921</td>
<td>.912</td>
<td>.044</td>
<td>.049 (.045-.050)</td>
<td>1.23 (1.15-1.33)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\Delta$ M₁-M₂</td>
<td>246.99 (3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. M₁ = Hypothesized model; M₂ = Alternative model; CFI and TLI >.90 (acceptable fit); RMSEA and SRMR < .05 (good fit) or .05 ≤ .08 (acceptable fit).

Direct and indirect effects between the study variables

If the alternative model’s regression coefficients are analyzed individually (Table 4), it becomes clear that the majority of the direct pathways proposed obtained significance level ($p < .05$), with the exception of the support from teachers-general self-concept and the peer support-school engagement pairs. Thus, family and peer support were found to have a predictive capacity of 28% in relation to general self-concept, with family support being the contextual variable with the greatest predictive power ($\beta = .389$, $p < .05$). School engagement is directly explained by general self-concept ($\beta = .278$, $p < .05$), family support ($\beta = .153$, $p < .05$) and support from teachers ($\beta = .480$, $p < .05$).

As regards the standardized indirect effects on the school adjustment indicator, family and peer support were found to have a significant indirect effect mediated by general self-concept. If we compare these two types of social support (family and peer), we see that the one with the greatest indirect predictive power in relation to school engagement is family support ($\beta = .108$, $p < .01$).

In short, the most relevant findings are, firstly, that family support and peer support are associated indirectly with school engagement through general self-concept. However, when the interaction between the two variables is taken into consideration, the effect of peer support is notably reduced in comparison with that of family support. It therefore appears that the mediating function of general self-concept on school engagement is more important when this psychological variable is influenced by family support. The second relevant finding is that, when all three sources of social support are analyzed together, the effect of support from teachers on school en-
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Engagement was not observed to be mediated by general self-concept, yet this support is closely related to school adjustment and is indeed the factor which has the greatest direct effect on this indicator. It can therefore be affirmed that family and peer support activate general self-concept ($R^2 = .281$) as a mediator variable which in turn has a direct effect, along with support from teachers and family, on school engagement ($R^2 = .499$).

Discussion

In addition to providing academic training, the purpose of the education system is to foster students’ personal and social adjustment. Specifically, the active engagement of adolescent students in the school environment is a key protective factor which promotes their adaptive development as competent members of society (Li & Lerner, 2011; Van Acker & Wheby, 2000). Although the relationship between academic achievement and school engagement has yet to be fully clarified (Zimmer-Gembeck, Chipuer, Hanisch, Creed, & McGregor, 2006), some studies assert that this latter variable fosters academic success since it encourages and promotes social-personal adjustment (Li & Lerner, 2011; Van Acker & Wheby, 2000). The ability of some schools to foster their students’ positive development has had a strong impact on

Table 4

**Standardized Direct and Indirect Effects between the Study Variables**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Direct effects</th>
<th>Standardized Beta</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family support → General self-concept</td>
<td>.389**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer support → General self-concept</td>
<td>.177**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher support → General self-concept</td>
<td>.115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General self-concept → School engagement</td>
<td>.278**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family support → School engagement</td>
<td>.153**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer support → School engagement</td>
<td>.009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher support → School engagement</td>
<td>.480**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indirect effects</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family support → General self-concept → School engagement</td>
<td>.108**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer support → General self-concept → School engagement</td>
<td>.049**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher support → General self-concept → School engagement</td>
<td>.032</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. ** $p < .01$. $R^2$(General self-concept) = .28; $R^2$(School engagement) = .50.
the field of psychoeducational research, which has recently shifted its focus from the problems and deficits of adolescents to the study of school adjustment. Based on the ecological model (Bronfenbrenner, 2005) and positive psychology (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2014), this study empirically tested a structural regression model in which social support (support from teachers, peer support and family support) and general self-concept influence school engagement, understood as an index of adaptation within the school environment.

The results reveal that family support and support from teachers have a direct effect on school engagement, while family support and peer support affect it indirectly through general self-concept. Family support was found to have a greater impact than peer support on general self-concept, as well as a greater indirect influence on school engagement. However, the closest relationship was found between support from teachers and school engagement, while for its part, general self-concept was observed to be a decisive psychological factor in students’ engagement with their school environment during adolescence. Evidence was also found of the mediating role played by general self-concept between adolescents’ social-family context and their school adjustment. If we compare the weight of the different factors included in the model, it becomes clear that school engagement is mainly determined by the variables support from teachers and general self-concept.

Students’ adaptation depends, to a large extent, on the interaction between the individual and environmental characteristics of the context in which they live. Within this context, several authors have highlighted the importance of the most personal environmental systems, including family, peers and school (Estell & Perdue, 2013), in adolescents’ school engagement (Lam et al., 2012). Thus, previous studies (Rodríguez-Fernández et al., 2012; Tian et al., 2013) have demonstrated the importance of family support and support from teachers in students’ adaptation (school engagement and/or wellbeing), through self-perceptions. Nevertheless, an agreement has yet to be reached regarding the role played by peers in this process, since while some authors find that they have no influence whatsoever (Rodríguez et al., 2012), others have reported significant results (Tian et al., 2013). The findings of the present study partly confirm these results since (a) they corroborate the important mediating role played by general self-concept in the indirect influence of social support on school engagement; (b) they shed light on the different impact had by family, peers and teachers on school adjustment; (c) they confirm that family and peers influence school engagement through general self-
concept; and finally, and perhaps most importantly, (d) they fail to observe an indirect effect of support from teachers on school engagement through self-perceptions, meaning that all the influence of this social variable is direct, rather than mediated.

The results of this present study have interesting educational implications. One of the most important ones refers to the crucial relationship between teachers and students. Although family and peer support are significant, the results of this study suggest that teachers have the greatest impact on students’ school engagement at secondary level, which is why it is vital to foster psychoeducational interventions aimed at promoting positive teacher-student relations. The second implication refers to the mediating role of general self-concept between adolescents’ family and social contexts and their school adjustment. The fact that this intra-individual variable depends on social support systems and in turn has a key impact on school engagement points to the need for both schools and families to provide adolescents with a good social support network in order to ensure their adequate psychological functioning. Moreover, it is also important to foster positive self-perception and acceptance of oneself during secondary school education.

The study has a number of limitations. Firstly, the results presented refer to students aged between 12 and 15, which means that the results cannot be generalized to populations outside this age range and educational stage. Moreover, given the wide variations found in accordance with age in relation to self-concept-school motivation (Veiga, García, Reeve, Wentzel, & García, 2015), future research should try to analyze how the variables studied affect school engagement in different age groups and educational levels. Longitudinal studies are also required in order to specify the direction of the relationships which exist between the variables studied, including the mediating effect of general self-concept. With the aim of enabling the results to be generalized more widely and subjecting the model obtained to stricter testing, future research may wish to use a multi-sample analysis contemplating different years in Compulsory Secondary Education. This type of design will provide information about the weight of family and peer support in each sample group analyzed. Finally, future research could shed further light on the results obtained in this study by including other psychological variables, such as emotional intelligence or resilience, which have been linked to positive adolescent development, in their analyses, along with objective variables of academic achievement which, in conjunction with the self-report measure of student engagement, would provide a much more comprehensive analysis of school adjustment.
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