SELF PERCEIVED EMPLOYABILITY IN SPAIN. PRELIMINARY RESULTS

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Introduction

The concept of employability has undergone a historical development and has been addressed by numerous disciplines. The earliest conceptions in which responsibility for recruitment lay with the employer have given way to a shifting emphasis towards the person being responsible for the management of their own professional life.

From a psychological point of view, employability can be defined as the individual's perception of their possibilities of finding and maintaining gainful employment. Therefore the most employable people achieve higher scores in positive aspects such as emotional intelligence, self-esteem or self-efficacy, as well as usually they have a higher social capital (Berntson et al., 2008; Fugate, et al., 2004)

Emerging adulthood (EA) is the period in which begins the process that leads people to realize that they can manage their own professional life. EA is also the period which propels people towards economic independence, one of the most inter-culturally accepted criteria when it comes to considering the onset of adult status.

The study of employability among young people is especially important in cultural contexts like that of Spain, with over 45.26% 20 to 24 years old youth unemployment (Survey labour force, E.P.A 2015). Nevertheless, we have not found objective employability measures adapted to the younger Spanish population and those employability measures that are in use are usually aimed at people already in the labour market rather than those who are still in training.

This paper is a preliminary research over employability among emerging adults in Spain using the Self Perceived Employability Scale (Rothwell, Jewell and Hardie, 2009).

Methods

Framework:
Transition to Adulthood in Spain (TAE) project.

Sample:
N: 278 Emerging Adults. Age *range* 18 to 29 years .*Mean* age 22.03 years; *SD* 2,65; 70.9% female.

Instruments:
•Self Perceived Employability Scale (Rothwell, et al., 2009)

Self-perceived employability conceptual matrix

My University

Self belief

1. My engagement with my studies and academic performance.	2. My perception of strength of the university´s brand.	3. The reputation my university has within my field of study.
8. My confidence in my skills and abilities.	My ambition	4. The status and credibility of my field of study.
7. My awareness of opportunities in the external labour market.	6. My perception of the state of the external labour market.	5. The external labour market´s demand for people in my subject field.

My field of study

The state of the external labour market

The information indicated by a cross has been removed. It made no sense under the Spanish education system.

•Flourishing Scale (Diener, Wirtz, Tov, et al., 2010). M=47.85 SD=5.028 α = .792
•Emotional Intelligence Scale (Davies, Lane, Devonport and Scott, 2010) M=39.51 SD=4.361 α =0.642
•Brief Resilience Scale (Smith, Dalen, Wiggins et al., 2008) M= 20.73 SD=4.744   α =.827
•Depression subscale from Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale (DASS-21, Lovibond and Lovibond, 1995)   M=35.23   SD=11.664 α = .923
•Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (Zimet, Dahlem, Zimet, and Farley, 1988).   M= 49.98 SD=6.313 α=.823
•Additionally, they answered two items ranging from 1 to 6 in reference to their intentions with regard to setting up a business or to be a civil servant.

Results

Table1. Self perceived Employability: Mean, SD and Reliability

	Employability
Cronbach`s alpha	.73
Mean	38.5
Standar deviation	6.76

▪Employability scale showed an appropriate level of reliability.

Table2.Pearson correlations between Employability and Flourishing, Personal Resilience, Emotional Intelligence, Perceived Social Support and Depression.

	Employability
• Flourishing global punctuation	.44**
• Resilience global punctuation	.26**
• Emotional intelligence global	.24**
• Social support	.14*
• Depression-DAS	-.24**

*p=< .05; **p=< .01;

▪Employability was positively related to wellbeing variables such as flourishing, personal resilience and emotional intelligence and was also positively related to perceived family support, and negatively related with depression.

Table 3.Pearson Correlation between Employability and different kinds of jobs.

	Employability
•Own business	.15*
•Civil servant	.14*

*p=< .05;

▪Emerging adults who scored highest in employability were also more willing to set up their own business or to study for employment as a civil servant.
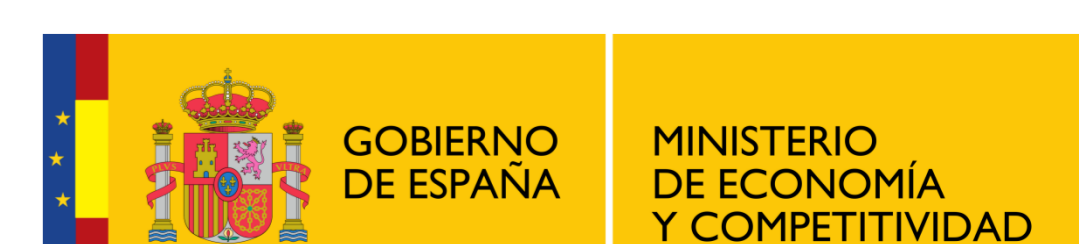
Conclusions

▪All these results point to the Self Perceived Employability Scale as a valid measure of employability. It seems to be a good way to value employability.

▪It could be a useful tool for university managers, employment guidance workers and researchers.

▪However more research with larger samples is necessary to statistically validate the Self Perceived Employability Scale and to explain the factors that influence employability during emerging adulthood.

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