

VA All Employee Survey (AES)

Support for Instrument Development, Reliability, and Validity



General AES Overview

The VA All Employee Survey (AES) is a “living document” originally developed in 2001 to meet VA needs in assessing workforce satisfaction and organizational climate. The instrument has been refined at several points since then in response to operational inquiries by VA leadership on organizational health relationships and VA culture.

To cite the VA AES in your work, please use this reference:

Osatuke, K., Draime, J., Moore, S.C., Ramsel, D., Meyer, A., Barnes, S., Belton, S., Dyrenforth, S.R. (2012). Organization development in the Department of Veterans Affairs. In T. Miller (Ed.), *The Praeger handbook of Veterans Health: History, challenges, issues and developments, Volume IV: Future directions in Veterans healthcare* (pp. 21-76). Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger

Reliability and Validity of the AES

The VA AES includes a series of multi-item scales and individual metrics, where each survey item represents a single concept.

Reliability is the degree of measurement stability or consistency when repeated under similar conditions. In the AES, we look at the reliability of our multi-item scales to determine if the items are internally consistent in measuring the concept of interest.

Validity is the extent to which an instrument (or survey item) is justified in measuring the concept that it intends to measure – for example, does the measure of *Respect* really assess or capture employee attitudes about “respect” in the workplace? Most AES items have this ‘face validity’ in being straightforward in what is asked: *Respect* = People treat each other with respect in my work group.

AES items come from a number of sources. Some items were adapted from published psychometric instruments, such as the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS: Gowing & Lancaster, 1996; US OPM, 2014) and the Maslach-Burnout Inventory Scale (Maslach et al., 1986), and others were developed upon review of the research literature (e.g., civility, psychological safety). Some items are included because of their organizational value to the field or leadership inquires (e.g., customer service and customer satisfaction). Over time, these AES items have been tested and refined across multi-year survey administrations, and some were validated with both employee-level job attitudes and facility-level employee and patient/organizational outcomes (Benzer & Meterko, 2010; Moore, 2009; Nagy, 2002; Warren et al. 2007).

As a ‘living document’, validating AES metrics is an ongoing process. Updated analyses and published reports are posted regularly to the VA Workforce Surveys Portal, *AES Research* link (direct link: <http://aes.vssc.med.va.gov/research/Pages/default.aspx>).

You Speak. VA Listens. Everyone Learns.

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Moore, S.C. (2009). *Civility and job satisfaction: Measurement and longitudinal relationships*. Electronic Dissertation. University of Cincinnati. <https://etd.ohiolink.edu/>

Nagy, M.S. (2002). Using a single-item approach to measure facet job satisfaction. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 75(1), 77-86.

Warren, N., M. Hodgson, T. Craig, S. Dyrenforth, J. Perlin, & F. Murphy (2007). Employee working conditions and healthcare system performance: The Veterans Health Administration experience. *Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine*, 49, 417–29.

U.S. Office of Personnel Management (2014). Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey Technical Report. Accessible at: http://www.fedview.opm.gov/2014FILES/2014_OPM_Tech_Report.pdf

Questions

If you have questions, please contact the VHA National Center for Organization Development and ask for a **Research Team member** at 513-247-4680 or vhancod@va.gov.

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