

The Reliability of the Engagement with Beauty Scale with Iranian Participants

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The 14-item Engagement with Beauty Scale (EBS; Diessner, Solom, Frost, Parsons, & Davidson, in press; Diessner, Rust, Solom, Frost, & Parsons, 2006) is a measure of self-report concerning levels of cognitive and emotional engagement concerning natural, artistic, and moral beauty. The EBS uses a 7-point Likert scale ranging from “very unlike me” to “very much like me,” on questions such as, “When **perceiving beauty** in nature I **feel** changes in my body, such as a lump in my throat, an expansion in my chest, faster heart beat, or other bodily responses,” and “When **perceiving** an act of **moral beauty** I **feel** emotional, it “moves me,” such as feeling a sense of awe, or wonder or excitement or admiration or upliftment.”

The EBS provides a total scale score and also has three subscales tapping engagement with natural beauty (4 items), artistic beauty (4 items) and moral beauty (6 items). A study of the EBS with an American sample (N = 206; 58% female) yielded a total score internal consistency of $\alpha = .90$ and subscale alphas of .80 for Natural Beauty; .87 for Artistic Beauty; and .85 for Moral Beauty (Diessner et al., in press).

The study presented here examined the preconditions of the cross-cultural validity of the EBS scale by obtaining the internal consistency of the scale with an Iranian sample. A professional Persian–English translator¹ translated the scale from English to Persian. The scale was back-translated and compared very favorably to the English original.

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The N = 71 Iranian participants were 65.3% female, aged from 20 to 55 ($M = 30.5$; $SD = 10.6$). The sample was 77.8% Bahá'í, 5.6% Christian, 11.1% Moslem, and 5.6% Zoroastrian; ethnicity was 5.7% Armenian, 15.7% Azeri, 75.7% Fars, 1.4% Kurd, and 1.4% Lur; all were living in or near Tehran. These participants' responses yielded Cronbach's alphas of .90 for EBS total score; .80 Natural Beauty subscale; .87 Artistic Beauty subscale; and .85 Moral Beauty subscale.

The Iranians had an average score of 74.1 ($SD = 15.8$) on the EBS, which was significantly higher than the American participant's mean score of 68.7 ($SD = 15.5$; $t(275) = -2.68$, $p < .008$, two tailed; effect size small, $d = .36$). There was no significant difference between the Iranians ($M = 21.8$, $SD = 5.0$) and Americans ($M = 20.7$, $SD = 5.1$) on the Natural Beauty subscale, nor on the Moral Beauty subscale (Iranian mean of 33.1 ($SD = 6.8$) and American mean of 31.4 ($SD = 7.4$)); but there was on the Artistic Beauty subscale, with an Iranian mean of 19.3 ($SD = 5.2$), and American of 16.7 ($SD = 5.9$) ($t(275) = -3.33$, $p < .001$, two tailed; effect size small [near medium (Green & Salkind, 2005)], $d = .45$).

The EBS appears to have translated well into Persian: at least the Cronbach's alpha of .90 for total score shows that the Iranians responded to the items in such a way as to indicate that the EBS is consistently measuring one construct in the Persian version. Nunnally & Bernstein (1994) consider that an alpha of .80 is adequate for group research, and that .90 is high enough for making important decisions about individuals; thus the subscale alphas (ranging from .80 - .87) on the Persian EBS may be considered quite satisfactory, and the total score alpha fairly high.

References

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