

Ethics Approval Number: 2013/115

Study Title: Development and initial validation of the Need Satisfaction and Frustration Questionnaire (NSFQ)

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Summary of the study: This study was intended to develop a new measure of basic psychological needs. It has been suggested that three psychological needs are fundamental to satisfaction and motivation: 1. A sense of autonomy or independence, 2. A sense of competence or mastery, and 3. A sense of relatedness or belonging. A great deal of research in psychology, business, and education shows that the extent to which these needs are satisfied predicts motivation and satisfaction with many tasks and areas of people's lives. However, despite the clear interest in these needs as key motivators for students and workers, the questionnaires designed to measure the satisfaction of these needs have not been ideal. First, the measures often do not distinguish between satisfaction of needs (feeling that the needs are being met) and frustration of needs (feeling that there are impediments to the needs being met). We developed a questionnaire to measure satisfaction of, or frustration of, the three basic psychological needs: autonomy, competency, and belonging. This questionnaire was based on advice and feedback from experts and an earlier study. We asked 200 students at Murdoch University to complete the new questionnaire, answering questions about the satisfaction of their needs in the context of their university studies. In addition, we asked these students to complete existing measures of psychological needs and measures of their general well-being. We found that the new questionnaire predicted the outcomes that it was expected to, namely, that satisfaction of basic psychological needs predicted well-being and frustration of basic psychological needs predicted negative feelings such as stress and burnout. The new questionnaire performed better as a predictor of well-being and "ill-being" than previous measures of basic psychological needs.