

## **Measuring Absorption Capacity in Stricto Sensu Postgraduate Programs in Brazil: Proposal of a Scale**

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**Introdução**

Global trends demand graduate program improvement. Universities must integrate/apply diverse knowledge. This links to Absorptive Capacity (ACAP) - recognizing/applying external info. ACAP research in post-grad is vital, but scales for higher education (especially stricto sensu in Brazil) are lacking. This study adapts/validates an ACAP scale for this academic context.

**Problema de Pesquisa e Objetivo**

The problem: "What variables measure knowledge absorption in graduate programs?". Given ACAP's importance and limited higher education research, this study proposes a scale to evaluate knowledge absorption by professors in Brazilian graduate programs. Objective: adapt/validate an ACAP scale for stricto sensu Graduate Programs in Brazil.

**Fundamentação Teórica**

This study bases on Absorptive Capacity (ACAP): an organization's ability to recognize, assimilate, and apply external knowledge. We use Zahra and George's (2002) ACAP model, with Potential ACAP (acquisition, assimilation) and Realized ACAP (transformation, application). The Flatten et al. (2011) scale grounds our adaptation for its empirical validity and suitability for diverse contexts.

**Metodologia**

Quantitative, descriptive survey. 443 professors from Brazilian stricto sensu graduate programs (Public Admin, Business, Accounting, Tourism). Data from CAPES Sucupira Portal (2015). Non-probabilistic sample (convenience). Instrument adapted from Flatten et al. (2011) Reverse translation and 26 expert content validation. 5-point Likert scale. Two-stage SEM: CB-SEM (Amos 21.0) for scale validation; PLS-SEM (SmartPLS 3.3) for hierarchical model. Validity: AVE, CC, AC, cross-loadings.

**Análise dos Resultados**

Sample: 93 HEIs. Modality: Master's (40.9%), Doctorate (30.7%), Professional Master's (28.4%). Region: Southeast (45.6%), South (28.4%). Measurement model validated: convergent (AVE > 0.531), internal consistency (AC > 0.869, CC > 0.911), discriminant validity. ACAP dimensions grouped into a higher-order construct. Hierarchical ACAP model validated; high/significant factor loadings for Acquisition ( $\beta=0.952$ ), Assimilation ( $\beta=0.933$ ), Transformation ( $\beta=0.946$ ), Application ( $\beta=0.919$ ). Structural model validated: high  $R^2$  (>0.847), significant path coefficients, predictive relevance ( $Q^2 > 0.448$ ).

**Conclusão**

This research proposes and validates an ACAP scale for Brazilian stricto sensu postgraduate programs. Scale is reliable/valid. Key ACAP practices identified: research partnerships, extracurricular activities, info exchange, innovative projects. Theoretically, it extends ACAP to higher education, validating its multidimensionality. Practically, it's a diagnostic tool for managers to improve ACAP, optimize results, and gain competitive advantage. Provides a replicable methodological template.

**Contribuição / Impacto**

Significant contributions to literature and practice. Theoretically, extends ACAP to Brazilian stricto sensu post-grad, validating an instrument for this context. Provides empirical evidence for knowledge absorption routines. Practically, a diagnostic tool for program managers to improve ACAP, optimize results, and achieve competitive advantage. Offers a replicable methodological approach. Future research can explore ACAP antecedents/consequences.

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