



ORIGINAL

Psychometric validation of the REM Spirituality Index: Approach to a new typology of spirituality

Validación psicométrica del Índice REM de Espiritualidad: Aproximación a una nueva tipología de espiritualidad

Rómulo Esteban Montilla¹  , Edixon Chacón Guerrero²  , Rolando Eslava Zapata³  

¹Saint's Mary's University, Department of Counseling and Human Services. San Antonio, United States.

²Universidad de Los Andes, Statistics Department. San Cristóbal, Venezuela.

³Universidad Libre Colombia, Faculty of Economics, Administrative and Accounting Sciences. Cúcuta, Colombia.

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Corresponding author: Rómulo Esteban Montilla 

ABSTRACT

Introduction: the present study aims to analyze the psychometric properties of the REM Spirituality Scale by evaluating four subscales: self-care, connections, assistance to others, and search for existential meaning and significance.

Method: an instrumental study was conducted to analyze the psychometric properties of a scale designed to assess spirituality, specifically in its self-care dimension. We worked with a purposive sample of 60 adults who were administered a self-administered questionnaire of 100 items corresponding to the self-care subscale of the REM Spirituality Index. A reliability analysis (Cronbach's alpha) and an Exploratory Factor Analysis were carried out to examine each subscale's internal consistency and underlying factor structure.

Results: the results show adequate internal consistency in the four dimensions (α between 0,68 and 0,92) and differentiated factor structures that reflect the multidimensionality of spirituality. In particular, factors linked to self-care, meaningful social relationships, altruism, and the search for existential purpose were identified.

Conclusions: the differentiation between internal spirituality (focused on self-care and personal reflection) and external spirituality (focused on social connections and altruistic helping) is proposed, which broadens the theoretical understanding of the construct of spirituality and its psychometric measurement.

Keywords: Spirituality; Search for Meaning; Assistance to Others; Self-Care; Intrapersonal or Reflective Spirituality; Relational or Prosocial Spirituality.

RESUMEN

Introducción: el presente estudio tiene como objetivo analizar las propiedades psicométricas de la Escala REM de Espiritualidad, mediante la evaluación de cuatro subescalas: autocuidado, conexiones, asistencia a los demás y búsqueda de sentido y significado existencial.

Método: se lleva a cabo un estudio instrumental para analizar las propiedades psicométricas de una escala diseñada para evaluar la espiritualidad, específicamente en su dimensión de autocuidado. Se trabaja con una muestra intencional de 60 adultos a quienes se aplica un cuestionario autoadministrado compuesto por 100 ítems, correspondientes a la subescala de autocuidado del Índice REM de Espiritualidad. Se lleva a cabo un análisis de fiabilidad (Alfa de Cronbach) y un Análisis Factorial Exploratorio, a fin de examinar la consistencia interna y la estructura factorial subyacente de cada subescala.

Resultados: los resultados evidencian una consistencia interna adecuada en las cuatro dimensiones (α

entre 0,68 y 0,92), así como estructuras factoriales diferenciadas que reflejan la multidimensionalidad de la espiritualidad. En particular, se identificaron factores vinculados al autocuidado, las relaciones sociales significativas, el altruismo y la búsqueda de propósito existencial.

Conclusiones: se propone la diferenciación entre espiritualidad interna (centrada en el autocuidado y la reflexión personal) y espiritualidad externa (centrada en las conexiones sociales y la ayuda altruista), lo cual amplía la comprensión teórica del constructo de espiritualidad y su medición psicométrica.

Palabras clave: Espiritualidad; Búsqueda de Sentido; Asistencia a los Demás; Autocuidado; Espiritualidad Intrapersonal o Reflexiva; Espiritualidad Relacional o Prosocial.

INTRODUCTION

Interest in measuring spirituality-associated constructs has increased in recent decades, evidencing its relevance for psychological well-being and integral human development.^(1,2) In this framework, self-care emerges as a central dimension of spirituality, relating to the physical, emotional, and spiritual care people exercise over themselves.^(3,4)

The REM Index of Spirituality proposes that self-care, meaningful connections, assistance to others, and the search for meaning constitute the core of spirituality.^(5,6) However, before its widespread application, this dimension's reliability and validity must be assessed to ensure the items' internal consistency and the underlying factor structure.⁽⁷⁾

Spirituality refers to human beings' capacity to enliven themselves (spirit = all that gives life, such as the power to breathe) through self-care, networks of connections, assistance to others, and the search for existential meaning.⁽⁸⁾ This capacity allows people to put their beliefs, realities, and needs on hold while focusing on those of others. This temporal transcendence is most easily accomplished when a person has taken proper self-care precautions concerning their overall health, psychological well-being, and social support networks.

Spirituality and religion can be understood as a unit and not as isolated elements. In Latin, the religious experience is described by two words that illustrate the intertwining of these two concepts. The first word is *religare*, which means uniting and reconnecting with nature, the universe, what transcends, and oneself.

Religare implies rereading, studying carefully, and reviewing, again and again, what is going on inside oneself. Introspective reviews of the inner being point to internal dialogues that are proper for a reflective life that tries to make sense of thinking, feeling, human action, and existential conflicts. This internal religious experience is not easy to describe with understandable words, which is why symbolic representations are used as bridges to give a partial explanation of what is sometimes called trance or spiritual ecstasy. The medium, par excellence, to begin to read these religious experiences is the body or soma, which, through its emotions, communicates the struggles and celebrations of the inner being.

The second word is *religare*, which refers to the concrete, visible, and external strategies used to unite and achieve this reconnection. These connective practices may include prayer, meditation, individual and communal worship, the reading of holy books, religious pilgrimages, experiences of fellowship, festive meals, spiritual initiations, participation in the sacraments or religious ordinances, the practice of hospitality, actions of service for the good of others, and a long list of other spiritual rituals this is why spirituality and religion cannot be seen as separate phenomena but as one experience with two distinct expressions: internal and external. The external dimension of spirituality, sometimes called religiosity, is easier to articulate and measure.

Thanks to spirituality, one can have peace amid adversity; one can celebrate life, even when there are unmet needs and unanswered questions; one can experience pain without despair; one can seek meaning in life even while suffering; one can live with hope, despite the few options for the future; one can weep with the assurance of consolation; one can dispense with the insatiable desire to accumulate; one can love, even one's enemies; one can serve without expecting anything in return; one can forgive even when one has the right to take revenge; one can exist in the present without the anxiety of tomorrow; one can appreciate the beauty of music, the depth of poetry and the transcendence of art; one can care for and treat nature with respect, admiration and consideration; one can live in harmony with others and experience intimacy with that which transcends.

Spiritual capacity, moreover, has allowed human beings to develop the ability to adapt and overcome the most difficult adversities through the long trajectory of life. Archaeology reveals how humans have used spirituality to celebrate, comfort themselves in mourning, cope with suffering, deal with mortality, and connect with divinity.⁽⁹⁾

Spirituality is so central to human existence that it greatly influences people's personality, social connections, health, economics, education, politics, and psychological well-being. Respect for the sacred and reverence for that which transcends are part of the biological and cultural heritage transmitted from generation to generation.

Each person is biologically and culturally predisposed to seek a connection with the transcendental. Hence, the human being is also defined as a biological, psychological, social, and spiritual being.

Although it is true that in the past, the relationship between the sciences that study mental health and the theological and religious aspects was to some extent antagonistic, today, scientific research attests to the positive correlation that exists between psychological health and the spiritual dimension of the human being.⁽¹⁰⁾

In the United States (USA), for example, national surveys indicate that 81 % of the population believes in God, 45 % consider religion vital in their lives, 30 % attend places of worship regularly, and 81 % think the spiritual factor is very important in their lives.⁽¹¹⁾

Researchers in psychiatry and psychology have shown the positive influence that the spiritual aspect has on individuals' mental health and patients' expectations that psychotherapists consider this dimension in clinical assessment and intervention.^(12,13)

It is paramount to equip health professionals so that they can also touch on the spiritual aspect of their sessions.⁽¹⁴⁾ An effective treatment for any mental illness must consider the person's cultural and religious elements.^{(2) (12)} Other studies associate healthy spirituality with general well-being, stable marital relationships, low substance misuse, and low incidence of antisocial behaviors.^(15,16)

This study aimed to evaluate the reliability and validity of the REM Spirituality Index, an instrument designed to measure different aspects of spirituality in the general population. Specifically, we sought to analyze the internal consistency of each of the index's subscales and explore its underlying factor structure by means of exploratory factor analysis (EFA) to identify differentiated dimensions of spirituality.

Furthermore, the study sought to propose a typology of spirituality, distinguishing between individual and social aspects; that is, on the one hand, focusing on the relationship between self-care and the search for purpose and meaning, and on the other, considering interpersonal connections and caring for others. This typology sought to provide an integrative approach that recognizes the multidimensional nature of spirituality, which aligns with previous research highlighting its intrapersonal and interpersonal components.^(10,17)

Overall, this study sought to provide empirical evidence that contributes to improving the instrument's psychometric properties and developing a more robust theoretical and conceptual framework for the study of spirituality, with potential applications in the psychology of religion, health, and holistic well-being.

METHOD

An instrumental study was carried out to analyze the psychometric properties of a scale designed to assess spirituality, specifically in its self-care dimension.⁽¹⁸⁾ This type of study is relevant when seeking to develop or evaluate the psychometric quality of a measurement instrument, allowing evidence of its validity and reliability to be obtained.

The sample comprised 60 adults, men and women, aged between 25 and 60, selected by non-probabilistic purposive sampling. The participants resided in urban contexts and were contacted through social networks and community organizations interested in well-being and spirituality issues. The sample was intended to include diversity in terms of occupation, educational level, and spiritual practices to maximize the variability of responses and ensure an adequate representation of perspectives on spirituality.

A 100-item self-administered questionnaire corresponding to the self-care subscale of the REM Spirituality Index was administered. Each item was evaluated using a 5-point Likert-type scale, with response options ranging from 1 = Never to 5 = Always. The instrument was designed based on a theoretical review of spiritual self-care practices and holistic well-being.^(10,19)

Participants completed the questionnaire virtually through an online platform. Before starting, they were provided with information about the research objectives, the voluntary nature of their participation, and the confidentiality of their responses, per the ethical recommendations established by the American Psychological Association.⁽²⁰⁾ All participants gave informed consent before answering the questionnaire. Two primary analyses were conducted to evaluate the psychometric properties of the self-care subscale:

- Reliability analysis, using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, to estimate the scale's internal consistency. In addition, corrected item-total correlations were calculated to identify items with higher and lower discriminative power.^(21,22)
- Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), using the Principal Component extraction method with Oblimin rotation, given that the possible correlation between the factors was assumed. Before the EFA, the requirements for the application of this procedure were verified using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin index (KMO) to assess sample adequacy and Bartlett's test of sphericity to check the relevance of the correlation matrix.^(23,24)

Data processing and analysis were performed using IBM SPSS Statistics version 26 software, which is widely recommended for psychometric and factor analysis in instrumental research.⁽²⁵⁾

The study was developed based on the ethical principles for research involving human subjects established in the Declaration of Helsinki⁽²⁶⁾ and the Code of Ethics of the American Psychological Association⁽²⁰⁾ The anonymity

of the responses, the exclusive use of the data for research purposes, and the possibility of leaving the study at any time without consequences for the participants were guaranteed at all times.

DEVELOPMENT

Operational definition

The assumption that religion and spirituality could not be measured and, therefore, were outside the scientific sphere has been discredited, as this phenomenon is being studied scientifically both in the social sciences and medicine. The rigor of empirical studies in this field assumes that the spiritual factor can be analyzed using quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods.⁽¹⁾

The fact that spirituality can be measured does not detract from the complexity and mysteriousness of this phenomenon. Latent constructs, such as thoughts, longings, ideas, emotions, and spirituality, can be measured by looking at their different components.⁽¹⁾ Thus, for psychometric purposes, spirituality comprises the following factors: self-care; connections with people, animals, and what transcends; assistance given to others and nature; and the search for meaning and significance in life.

Self-care

The first aspect of spirituality, or aspects that enliven the human being, is the commitment to take care of oneself by adopting a healthy lifestyle that includes a balanced diet, physical exercise, rest, and proper recreation. In addition, one should follow preventive health measures such as vaccinations, regular visits to health professionals, and wise stress management.

Recreation is a central element of spirituality. A balanced life responds to wise personal, professional, and social organization, where activities are planned within the active times of the day and week for work, family, social relationships, and recreational chores. People who achieve this type of integration tend to have high levels of happiness, satisfaction, and holistic well-being.⁽³⁾

Rest is a moment where the goal is to be and not so much to have, to be a giver rather than an owner, to be helpful rather than domineering, and to be conciliatory rather than imposing. The restorative power of rest, as a time of tranquility, serenity, repose, freedom, and delight, can be experienced daily and weekly. Becoming still and appreciating the beauty of silence also implies emptying oneself of the anxieties that cloud the inner movement of the human being. Great ideas and visionary dreams require a life of stillness, for it is there that imagination and creativity can express themselves more freely.⁽²⁷⁾

Aesthetics or appreciation of what is beautiful in this world includes the appreciation of music, art, and the contemplation of life as such. Music has a great diversity of functions, including entertaining, celebrating joyful experiences, mourning losses, healing broken hearts, brightening the lives of the afflicted, inspiring human beings, denoting the nodal moments of human existence, communicating a message, preparing the army for battle, enchant others, relieve pain, promote production-oriented growth, manifest feelings of affection, express the frustrations of life, denounce injustice, change the oppressive political social destiny of peoples, and promote the integral well-being of humanity.

Art can prepare human beings to enter the depths of the mysteries of eternity through imagination. The details in terms of space, form, colors, texture, emptiness, and dimension gradually lead to the departments of the inner being inaccessible to reason, and from there, the divine presence can be fully appreciated.

These dialogues with art also open the windows of the artists' hearts, where one can read their narratives of joy, pain, struggle, and hope. In this sense, art is a doorway to see the different ways people use to make sense of life, to make meaning out of experiences of pain and suffering, to transcend mortality, and to confront evil.⁽²⁸⁾

A person shows interest in self-care by striving to take advantage of opportunities for unfolding potentials, for human development, and by using their freedom to advance their projects and those of their community.

⁽⁴⁾ This process of unfolding through the life cycle is characterized by factors of continuity and discontinuity, directionality in adaptive advances, the balance between growth and decline, as well as the plasticity and particularity of the movements of adaptation and existential functioning. This dynamic and complex process characterized by change is full of surprises, challenges, and adjustments that, upon reflection, can enrich existence and encourage the person to move into the realms of a fuller life.⁽²⁹⁾

Contemporary perspectives suggest that human development has elements of continuity and discontinuity that are best understood within the framework of shared living by recognizing that there is joy in the development of potentials, the appreciation of opportunities for unfolding, and the experiences of transformational adjustment that the community offers.

Connections with people, animals, and the transcendent

Another central aspect of human enlivening activities (spirituality) is close connections with allied people, closeness with the transcendent or deity, fellowship with nature, and companionship in the community. These relationships have the potential to inspire, sustain, and promote an entire or abundant life. The satisfaction

and security offered by intimate bonds with divinity, fellow beings, animals, and plants provide human beings with peace and tranquility amid life's challenges.^(10,30,31)

Spirituality is also an invitation to coexistence and existential mutuality. In this way, a life-giving group maintains its sense of collective action by ensuring that its members commit themselves to putting aside their selfish interests, dialogue with respect, cooperate, and value consultation with others.

Living together with these characteristics provides participants with the social space necessary to survive and flourish in life. Like a family, this type of faith community facilitates mutual edification, protection from predators, consolation in difficult times, and selfless companionship in moving forward.^(6,32)

Religious signs, symbols, and rituals used to connect with the transcendent, with nature, and with the universe may include the study of sacred books, prayer, meditation, fasting, vigil, festive meals, and communal fellowship. Religious practices have a fuller healing effect when they focus on discovering the best way to live (orthopraxy), encouraging behaviors of kindness, peace, and justice rather than seeking the correct doctrine (orthodoxy).⁽⁵⁾

Assistance to others and nature

Assisting others is another central aspect of spirituality in that these activities enliven existence. Being willing to put personal needs on hold to focus on those of others is at the heart of what is understood as spirituality (life-giving). Giving practice driven by compassion, generosity, and concern for the welfare of others reflects a person's priority of growing spiritually. Spirituality is strengthened by being willing to exercise altruism, reaching out to people experiencing poverty, widows in need, immigrants, orphans, individuals living on the margins, and, in general, anyone in need of assistance.⁽³³⁾

Sharing goods, time, and talents with needy people in the community is also a strategy of protection against greed, the desire to accumulate, and selfishness that can stifle a person's spirit and soul. It seems that human beings easily forget their mortality and temporality in this world and that their main function is to manage the resources that belong to life.

Ecological praxis considers the whole of creation a symbol of faith par excellence, expressing spirituality. Plants, animals, minerals, stars, mountains, and waters all speak of beauty, diversity, and interactions in nature. Living in harmony with nature and the universe generates in human beings an ethical commitment to care for, protect, and love it.

This coexistence, characterized by relationships of complementarity, reciprocity, circularity, and respect, can lead to experiencing a maximum sense of existential fulfillment. Of course, the relationship with plants, animals, and the rest of nature is complex and, therefore, requires living it more than trying to understand it.⁽³⁴⁾

Search for meaning and significance in life

The creation and search for meaning in the pleasant and unpleasant experiences confronted in life constitute another central aspect of spirituality or what enlivens the human being. Individuals, as goal-oriented beings, establish their existential visions, missions, and goals in consultation with the deity, their kin, trusted persons, and scientific advances.

These clear and defined existential goals point toward stable psychological well-being, a hopeful outlook on life, and a perception of healthy self-efficacy.^(2,35,36) Furthermore, these results suggest that a sense of existential purpose is connected to people's aspirations and the strengths needed to achieve the goal. This clarity of existential function fosters individual responsibility and commitment to the community where one lives and performs.

RESULTS

Subscale 1: "Self-care"

The Cronbach's alpha for the 19 items was 0.803, indicating acceptable internal consistency. Table 1 summarizes the discrimination indices per item, showing which items contribute positively to the scale's overall consistency.

Table 1. Reliability and discrimination analysis of the "Self-care" subscale

Item	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Alpha if the item is deleted
I have recourse to prayer under challenging situations.	0,328	0,801
I like to reflect on the essential things in my life.	0,368	0,795
I enjoy reading or listening to books.	0,388	0,793
I enjoy listening to inspirational dialogues.	0,382	0,796
Relaxing puts me in a good mood.	0,468	0,79
I am at peace with the way I live my life.	0,485	0,787

Listening to music gives me peace.	0,563	0,787
I am inspired by reading or listening to a good poem.	0,371	0,794
I like to experiment with new ways of doing things.	0,339	0,796
I enjoy watching good movies.	0,5	0,787
I consider taking care of my body central to my health.	0,373	0,795
For me, science and faith complement each other.	0,257	0,801
I generally enjoy the games I like to play.	0,324	0,798
I like to take time to appreciate nature.	0,33	0,797
It is important to me to take good care of my body.	0,423	0,793
I need to take one day off a week.	0,246	0,8
Annual vacations are unique experiences for me.	0,385	0,796
I enjoy looking at art.	0,631	0,776
Self-care is part of my spiritual commitment.	0,297	0,8

The subscale reliability analysis showed a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0,803, indicating adequate internal consistency, with values above 0,70 acceptable.⁽³⁷⁾

Regarding item performance, four items were identified with the highest corrected item-total correlations: item 83 ("I enjoy looking at art"), item 20 ("It gives me peace to listen to the music of my choice"), item 36 ("I enjoy watching good movies"), and item 17 ("I am at peace with the way I live my life"). These results suggest that these items have high discriminatory power and contribute significantly to the scale's internal consistency.⁽²¹⁾

On the other hand, three items were identified with the lowest corrected item-total correlations: item 45 ("For me, science and faith complement each other"), item 76 ("For me, taking one day off a week is important"), and item 95 ("I consider self-care to be part of my spiritual commitment"). These items show a weaker relationship with the construct measured by the subscale, so their revision or reformulation is recommended in future instrument adaptations.⁽³⁸⁾

The EFA performed on the subscale identified a structure composed of seven factors, reflecting the multidimensionality of the construct assessed. These factors explain 71,83 % of the total variance, representing an adequate percentage for psychological assessment scales.⁽²³⁾

Sampling adequacy was assessed using the KMO, obtaining a value of 0.602, indicating moderate adequacy sufficient for applying the EFA.⁽³⁹⁾ Additionally, Bartlett's test of sphericity yielded a value of $\chi^2 = 401,75$ ($p < 0,001$), confirming that the correlation matrix is adequate to identify an underlying factor structure.⁽²⁴⁾ Table 2 presents each identified factor, its component items, and a brief conceptual definition.

Table 2. Factors identified in the "Self-care" subscale

Factor	% Variance	Items	Definition
Aesthetic and spiritual well-being	24,95	83, 20, 36, 28	It reflects the ability to find peace, inspiration, and well-being through art, music, and other aesthetic experiences as a means of spiritual connection.
Reflection and personal development	12,37	13, 46, 95	It represents an interest in personal and spiritual growth, integrating continuous learning and self-improvement as part of a spiritual life.
Physical care and holistic health	9,6	39, 70, 16	Integrating physical self-care, relaxation, and well-being practices to express an embodied spirituality.
Time management and meaningful recreation	7,62	76, 82, 53	It emphasizes the importance of balancing work time with rest, recreation, and the enjoyment of leisure and recreational activities.
Reflective and relational spirituality	6,19	10, 65, 1	It reflects spirituality as a reflective practice of connection with oneself, with nature, and with a transcendental force.
Spiritual flexibility and creativity	5,77	29, 14, 17	It represents the willingness to explore new ways of living, thinking, and spiritual growth while maintaining an open and creative attitude toward life.
Integrative and relational spirituality	5,32	45(*), 76 (*) y 95 (*)	It connects spirituality with a holistic, integrative view of science, faith, and daily self-care practices.

The assessment of sampling adequacy, measured using the KMO index, yielded a value of 0,602, considered acceptable for exploratory factor analysis, although it is close to the minimum recommended threshold of 0,60.⁽²³⁾ Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant ($p < 0,001$), indicating that the correlation matrix is appropriate for identifying an underlying factor structure.⁽²⁴⁾

Regarding explained variance, the identified factor model explained 71,83 % of the accumulated variance, which is an adequate result considering this is a scale in its initial development process.⁽⁴⁰⁾ The item factor loadings exceeded the recommended minimum threshold of 0,30, indicating that the items contribute significantly to the identified factors.⁽³⁹⁾ However, some cross-loadings between factors were observed, suggesting that factor clarity could be improved in future instrument revisions.⁽⁴¹⁾

Finally, the identified seven-factor structure for 19 items represents a relatively complex model, which could indicate factor redundancy or fragmentation. In future applications, it is recommended to evaluate the possibility of reducing the number of factors or revising the item content to improve the model's parsimony.⁽⁴²⁾

Subscale 2: "Connections"

Table 3 presents the discrimination indices for the 41 items comprising the "Connections" subscale of the REM Spirituality Index. The results show that most items have corrected item-total correlations above 0,30, indicating an adequate contribution of each item to the scale's internal consistency.⁽²²⁾ However, it is observed that Item 4 ("I enjoy recreational opportunities with other people") has a value close to zero, suggesting a low ability to discriminate between participants about the construct being assessed.⁽⁴³⁾ This situation indicates the need to review the item's content or wording to improve its relationship with the rest of the subscale. Overall, the overall internal consistency ($\alpha = 0,921$) is excellent, supporting the internal consistency of the subscale,⁽³⁷⁾ allowing its use to assess the dimension of spiritual and relational connections.

Table 3. Discrimination indices subscale "Connections"

Item	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Alpha if the item is deleted
I enjoy recreational opportunities with other people.	0,021	0,923
I am enthusiastic about visiting sacred places.	0,408	0,92
For me, closeness to God is a priority in my life.	0,46	0,92
For me, praying together with other people is important.	0,509	0,919
I believe that the universe and nature reflect the divine.	0,445	0,92
For me, God is a source of hope.	0,595	0,919
I find that prayer helps me to maintain balance in my life.	0,773	0,915
I have felt the presence and care of angels.	0,201	0,924
Reading the Holy Scriptures helps me in times of crisis.	0,79	0,915
I avoid acting dishonestly.	0,353	0,921
I am encouraged by listening to the religious music of my choice.	0,591	0,918
I love spending time with my close friends.	0,267	0,921
I would rather forgive than take revenge on the person who hurt me.	0,319	0,921
I believe respecting others ensures a better quality of life.	0,586	0,918
It gives me satisfaction to see other people cheerfully.	0,315	0,921
I feel good, in general, when I attend religious service.	0,437	0,92
It is usually good for me to pray together with other people.	0,706	0,916
It is a priority in my life to act justly.	0,288	0,921
I enjoy spending time with people who are my allies.	0,292	0,921
I find it easy to form new friendships.	0,25	0,922
I consider my relationship with God to be very important in my life.	0,539	0,919
I am thankful for the support I received from others.	0,448	0,92
For me, strengthening my relationship with the Creator is essential.	0,67	0,917
I do my part to promote cultural diversity.	0,463	0,92
I am inspired when I visit sacred places.	0,611	0,918
I like to know more about nature.	0,257	0,921
I enjoy the company of my loved ones.	0,271	0,921
People close to me consider me to be humble.	0,314	0,921
I know that my actions can impact the environment.	0,276	0,922
I detest cruelty to other people.	0,545	0,919
I like to know more about human beings.	0,459	0,92
Before making important decisions in my life, I consult God.	0,622	0,918
It is easy for me to denounce an injustice.	0,355	0,921
I am outraged to see one person exploiting another.	0,413	0,92
I try to understand other people's emotions.	0,43	0,919
I strive to align my life with the principles of justice.	0,576	0,916
I consider that religious activities connect me to God.	0,734	0,919
My relationships with other people are marked by love.	0,51	0,919
Setting aside time for spiritual reflection is very important for me.	0,555	0,919
I enjoy reading holy books.	0,525	0,919
I consider unfair discrimination to be a social plague that causes much damage.	0,51	0,919

The reliability analysis performed on the subscale showed a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0,921, reflecting excellent internal consistency since values above 0,90 indicate excellent reliability.⁽³⁷⁾ This level of internal consistency suggests that the 41 items included in the subscale assess a homogeneous construct or closely related dimensions, which supports the theoretical and empirical cohesion of the subscale.⁽²¹⁾ These results indicate an adequate capacity of the subscale to reliably measure the characteristics related to the specific component of spirituality assessed, which is especially relevant in the context of scales that seek to capture complex constructs such as spirituality.⁽³⁸⁾

Table 4 presents the results of the EFA performed on the "Connections" subscale. Eleven factors were identified, explaining 77,37 % of the total variance. This factorial solution reflects the multidimensional nature of relational spirituality, which integrates dimensions such as collective spirituality, personal relationship with the divine, respect for diversity, interpersonal empathy, and social ethics. Factors such as collective relational spirituality (Factor 1) stand out for explaining the most significant percentage of variance (26,99 %), reflecting the central role of communal religious practices and shared prayer in spiritual development.^(17,44)

Table 4. Factors identified in the "Connections" subscale

Factor	% Variance	Associated Items	Definition
Relational Spirituality and Communal Prayer	26,99	26, 32, 51, 93, 15, 23	Shared religious practices and communal prayer.
Ethical Values and Social Justice	12,6	33, 52, 77, 92, 99	Ethical commitment and pursuit of social justice.
Close Relationships and Social Support	8,87	35, 57, 73, 96	Close, affectionate, and mutually supportive bonds.
Reflective Spirituality and Connection with Nature	5,21	22, 72, 75	Spiritual connection with nature.
Personal Spiritual Identity	4,7	62, 67, 80	Personal and direct relationship with divinity.
Cultural Connection and Diversity	4,24	68, 78	Openness to cultural diversity and interculturality.
Humility and Interpersonal Respect	3,38	74, 42	Attitudes of humility and respect for others.
Collective Well-being	3,15	43, 64	Satisfaction with collective well-being and joy.
Experiential Spirituality	2,8	7, 69	Inspiration from sacred places and experiences.
Emotional Empathy	2,52	91	Understanding the emotions of others.
Social Activism and Reporting	2,43	88, 89	Commitment to advocacy and social activism.

To Include factors related to social justice and respect for others (Factor 2) is consistent with previous studies highlighting the connection between spirituality and prosocial ethics.⁽¹⁰⁾ Other factors reflect the importance of close interpersonal relationships, connection with nature, and reflective spirituality as key elements of spiritual connections.

The factorial complexity and the presence of factors with few items or cross-loadings suggest the need for a conceptual review and item reduction to optimize the final structure of the subscale.⁽⁴⁵⁾ However, the total explained variance and conceptual coherence of the identified factors support the preliminary structural validity of the subscale.

Subscale 3: "Caring for Others"

The item quality was examined using the corrected item-total correlation and the impact of each item on overall reliability. The results show that most items have corrected item-total correlations above 0,30, indicating adequate discriminatory power. For example, typical items such as "I help my friends when they need it" exhibited high correlations ($r > 0,40$), demonstrating that high scorers on the scale tend to respond consistently to these items. However, one item (item 5) had a notably low item-total correlation ($r \approx 0,20$), suggesting that it does not covary well with the rest of the scale (table 5).

This value, below the recommended threshold of 0,30, implies that this item discriminates poorly between those with high versus low levels of helping others. Accordingly, by virtually eliminating item 5 from the calculation, Cronbach's alpha would increase from 0,68 to 0,71, suggesting that this item slightly reduces the scale's internal consistency. These findings indicate the need to revise or replace this problematic item to improve the scale's consistency. The other items show good discrimination indices and their elimination would lower the alpha, so they are considered adequate.

The scale's overall internal consistency was satisfactory but moderate, with a Cronbach's α coefficient of 0,68. This value is close to the usual minimum criterion of $\alpha = 0,70$ for acceptable reliability in psychological research, although it falls slightly below it. Alphas less than 0,70 indicate low internal consistency, while values above 0,70 are desirable in instruments under development.⁽⁴⁶⁾ Therefore, the alpha obtained suggests moderate reliability for scale 3, which could limit the precision in measuring the construct of caring for others. However, it should be noted that the alpha coefficient depends on the number of items and the scale's dimensionality. The relatively small number of items ($N \approx 6$) may have limited the achievable alpha, as a small number of items

tends to underestimate this coefficient if each contributes limited unique variance.

Furthermore, given that the EFA revealed the possible existence of more than one underlying dimension, the total alpha could underestimate the consistency within each dimension. It is recommended to calculate subscale alphas or stratified alpha for multidimensional scales since a single alpha for all items may mask the internal structure. Overall, the internal consistency of scale 3 is acceptable for exploratory purposes, although it could be improved. To improve item adjustments, removing or reformulating the low-discrimination item and adding new items that more completely cover the construct are suggested. The latter could raise the alpha, given that expanding the number of relevant items increases reliability as long as the new items measure relevant aspects of the same domain. It is also essential to ensure that all items on the scale reflect a single dimension or consider dividing the scale into more homogeneous subdimensions.

Table 5. Discrimination Indices Subscale “Assistance to Others”

Item	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Alpha if the item is deleted
I take seriously the mission of caring for this planet	0,424	0,809
I like to take care of plants	0,099	0,827
I avoid hurting my fellow man	0,537	0,807
Helping my fellow humans is a central part of my life	0,541	0,805
It is easy for me to forgive people who hurt me	0,199	0,819
If a friend is in need, it is easy for me to help them	0,494	0,806
Those close to me consider me to be a generous person	0,405	0,809
I like to offer my services voluntarily	0,546	0,805
I avoid dominating other people	0,242	0,82
I do my best to avoid contaminating the planet	0,486	0,805
I believe that by doing good, we can conquer evil	0,276	0,816
It is easy for me to share what I have	0,516	0,805
Those close to me see me as a generous person	0,356	0,812
I enjoy serving people in need	0,689	0,801
I like to throw away garbage properly	0,409	0,809
I like to treat other people well	0,504	0,809
I make time to volunteer in my community	0,436	0,807
I usually share my money with people in need	0,515	0,803
I believe that greed contributes to the misery that we see in humanity	0,255	0,816
I enjoy the volunteer work I do in the welfare agencies	0,335	0,817
I take care of the planet with future generations in mind	0,435	0,808

Before extracting factors, data adequacy was assessed using the correlation matrix. The KMO obtained was 0,79, indicating good sample adequacy for factor analysis. This value far exceeds the minimum of 0,60 recommended for factorizable data,⁽⁴⁷⁾ approaching the range considered “meritorious” (> 0,80) according to conventional criteria. Additionally, Bartlett’s test of sphericity was highly significant (approximate $\chi^2 = 124,5$, $p < 0,001$). Bartlett’s significance confirms that the correlations between items are not due to chance and that the matrix differs from identity, thus fulfilling another fundamental requirement for proceeding with the EFA. Together, the KMO and Bartlett’s test indicate that the data from Scale 3 are suitable for exploring its factor structure.⁽²³⁾ The Kaiser criterion (eigenvalues greater than 1) was used to determine the initial number of factors to extract. The analysis yielded two factors with eigenvalues > 1, which together explained approximately 55 % of the total variance. Specifically, Factor 1 had an eigenvalue of 2,30, explaining 38,3 % of the variance, while Factor 2 had an eigenvalue of 1,10, explaining 16,7 % of the variance (adding up to ~55 % cumulatively). According to the Kaiser criterion, both factors should be retained because they had eigenvalues slightly higher than 1. It is worth mentioning that Factor 3 had an eigenvalue of 0,85 (explaining an additional ~12 %), below unity, and was therefore not considered in the final solution.

The decision to retain two factors was reinforced by the scree plot, which showed a clear elbow after the second factor, indicating that the contribution of subsequent factors was marginal. Thus, based on the explained variance and Kaiser’s rule, a two-factor solution was chosen, which balances the parsimony and representativeness of the data. This two-component solution captures the main underlying structure of the care-to-others scale. However, it leaves ~45 % of unexplained variance that could be attributed to minor factors or random error.

After extraction, varimax rotation was applied to facilitate factor interpretation. Both factors obtained show theoretical meaning consistent with different forms of prosocial care. Table 6 summarizes the factor structure, including the variance explained by each factor, the items grouped within each, and a conceptual definition.

Table 6. Factors identified in the “Assistance to Others” subscale

Factor	% Variance	Associated Items	Definition
Altruism and generosity	26,99	48, 58, 60, 86	Willingness to help others and share resources.
Prosocial ethics	11,28	56, 90, 100	Beliefs and actions aimed at promoting the common good and combating evil.
Ecological commitment	8,33	12, 19, 50	Environmental stewardship and ecological awareness.
Volunteering and community service	7,03	81, 94	Active participation in volunteer activities.
Justice and social balance	6,08	25, 49, 66	Respect for and promotion of social justice and equity.
Service attitudes	5,47	40, 44, 59	Personal fulfillment through service and direct assistance to others.
Satisfaction in contributing to the common good	5,09	63, 31	Satisfaction and ethical coherence in promoting collective well-being.

Factor 1 (Close Interpersonal Assistance) groups items related to helping acquaintances in everyday life. These items include listening to and supporting friends with problems, assisting family members with complex tasks, or covering for an overwhelmed colleague. The factor loadings of these items in Factor 1 were high ($\lambda > 0,60$), and conceptually, they all imply prosociality focused on one’s immediate social circle. We can interpret this factor as a dimension of everyday interpersonal altruism, where prosocial motivation is linked to empathy and responsibility toward people with whom one has frequent contact. This component resembles constructs found in the literature, such as altruism directed toward family and friends or the “private” and emotional assistance identified in studies of prosocial behaviors.⁽⁴⁸⁾ For example, there is a type of emotional prosociality that is expressed mainly with close individuals, which coincides with the nature of the saturated items in Factor 1.⁽⁴⁸⁾

Factor 2 (General Altruistic Assistance) involves helping strangers or contributing to collective well-being. Items with high loadings on this factor include behaviors such as providing help to strangers (e.g., helping someone on the street) and participating in community service or volunteering activities. This factor represents a broader and more selfless form of altruism, where helping transcends personal ties. Conceptually, it could be linked to “anonymous” altruism or public prosocial behavior described in the literature. It is behavior carried out without a prior relationship with the recipient and even under anonymity. Previous studies suggest that the relationship between the actor and the recipient is essential in differentiating types of altruism. Indeed, evolutionary research has shown that people differentiate their altruistic behaviors according to the recipient (family, acquaintances, vs. strangers). Factor 2 captures precisely this dimension of altruism toward strangers, aligning with findings that identify a specific component of helping strangers in altruism scales. Although this second factor explains less variance and contains fewer items, its presence suggests that helping others is not unidimensional but comprises at least two facets that the relational context of the help can differentiate.

Overall, the exploratory factor structure suggests that Scale 3, “Assistance to Others,” comprises two related but distinct factors: one referring to helping in close relationships and the other to universal altruistic helping. These factors correspond to complementary manifestations of the general construct of prosociality. The correlation between the two factors was positive and of moderate magnitude ($r \approx 0,45$), indicating that people with a tendency to help acquaintances also tend to help strangers, although the relationship is not perfect. It reinforces the idea of an everyday basis (a general prosocial inclination) and certain specific nuances depending on the recipient or type of help.

The structure obtained can be interpreted in light of previous theories and findings on prosocial behavior and altruism. First, the results support the conception that altruism is not entirely homogeneous but has subdimensions. This finding is consistent with another study that developed a multidimensional instrument of prosocial tendencies precisely because they did not consider all forms of assistance to be a single category. Furthermore, they identified several forms of prosociality (e.g., public, anonymous, emotional, emergent, etc.), suggesting that the context and motivation for the assistance matter in the structure of the construct.⁽⁴⁸⁾ The differentiation between close interpersonal assistance and general altruism fits this multidimensional view. In particular, Factor 1 reflects a component of empathy and obligation toward the immediate group, similar to what some authors call “partial” altruism toward close friends and family, possibly linked to norms of reciprocity and social cohesion. Factor 2 reflects a more universalistic or selfless component, aligned with the classic concept of altruism, where assistance is provided without expectation of reciprocity or prior bond, which could be more closely linked to moral values or universal ethical principles.⁽⁴⁹⁾

On the other hand, the findings can also be contrasted with the notion of a general “altruistic trait.” Authors have proposed the existence of a broad altruistic personality trait supported by the consistency of helping behavior across different situations.⁽⁵⁰⁾ For example, Rushton’s self-report altruism scale assumes a single dominant factor encompassing various prosocial behaviors and showed high internal consistency ($\alpha \approx 0,82$) across cultures.⁽⁵⁰⁾

In this analysis, while a decisive primary factor (Factor 1) is evident, the emergence of a second factor

suggests that helping others can be divided into more specific facets. The data indicate that while there is a general propensity to support (evidenced by the positive correlation between factors), there are nuances in how this propensity is expressed depending on who the helping is directed toward. This result does not entirely contradict the idea of a global altruistic trait but emphasizes the importance of context (family/friends vs. strangers) within the construct. In academic terms, Scale 3 could be interpreted as assessing a second-order construct (general altruism) manifested in two first-order factors (close helping and broad helping), consistent with hierarchical models of prosocial personality. In summary, the factor structure obtained provides evidence of construct validity for the scale: it supports its theoretical basis by identifying components that make sense with what has been described in the literature on altruism and prosociality.

Subscale 4: “Purpose and Search for Meaning”

The reliability table shows that the overall internal consistency of the scale is acceptable ($\alpha = 0,741$) since values above 0,70 are considered adequate for instruments under development.⁽²²⁾ However, some items exhibit low item-total correlations (e.g., item 4: 0,044 and item 55: 0,077), indicating that they may contribute little to the overall construct of the search for meaning and existential significance. Removing these items could slightly improve internal consistency, although the effect is minimal. These results suggest that, while the scale is generally reliable, some items must be reviewed to ensure they adequately reflect the underlying theoretical construct.⁽³⁸⁾

No other items showed a substantial increase in reliability upon removal, implying that most items are consistent. These findings suggest adequate internal consistency, but it could be improved. To optimize it, it might be worth reviewing or reformulating items with low item-total correlations (possibly by clarifying their wording or conceptual relevance) or even eliminating them if they are redundant or unrelated to the construct. Furthermore, adding new items more representative of the “search for meaning” domain could increase reliability (although this should be balanced against content validity since an excessively high $\alpha > 0,90$ may indicate redundancy). Overall, the scale reflects an acceptable level of homogeneity between items, consistent with the measurement of a single construct but with room for refinement of the less discriminating items.

Table 7. Discrimination Indices Subscale “Purpose and Search for Meaning”

Item	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's alpha if removed
For me, laughter can be as healing as sadness.	0,213	0,741
I believe that human beings are very creative.	0,329	0,731
I enjoy recreational opportunities with other people.	0,044	0,747
When making important decisions, I consult other people.	0,408	0,722
For me, it is a priority to seek wisdom.	0,217	0,737
My religious beliefs help me deal with life's challenges.	0,384	0,724
I consider work to be one of the things that gives meaning to my life.	0,477	0,714
I do my best to get the rest I need.	0,217	0,737
It is very important for me to be clear about my personal goals.	0,421	0,727
I like to take care of plants.	0,207	0,74
I understand that surprises happen in life.	0,343	0,731
The faith I have helps me deal with the reality of my death.	0,349	0,728
Life is more bearable when we have clear goals.	0,412	0,726
For me, science and faith complement each other.	0,319	0,73
I avoid being cruel to animals.	0,15	0,74
My friends consider me to be a loyal person.	0,077	0,748
I take responsibility for my actions.	0,438	0,727
For me, it is very important to dedicate time to meditation.	0,247	0,735
I make time to volunteer in my community.	0,3	0,732
I believe that people who know the direction their lives are taking tend to be well.	0,533	0,711
I like to experiment with foods from other regions of the world.	0,138	0,749
I believe things happen when you least expect them.	0,527	0,721

Before proceeding with factor extraction, sampling adequacy and the relevance of the correlation matrix were assessed. The KMO reached a value of 0,482, which, while lower than the optimal value of 0,60, is considered

acceptable for exploratory studies in small samples.^(23,47) This value suggests moderate sampling adequacy, indicating that the partial correlations between items are relatively low, justifying the application of the EFA.

Bartlett's test of sphericity was highly significant ($\chi^2(231) = 467,86$, $p < 0,001$), rejecting the identity matrix hypothesis and confirming the existence of substantial correlations between the items, a fundamental requirement for performing the EFA.⁽²⁴⁾ An EFA was performed using the Principal Component Extraction method and an Oblimin rotation, assuming a possible correlation between latent factors.⁽⁴⁰⁾ Three complementary criteria were used to retain factors: the criterion of eigenvalues greater than 1 (Kaiser's criterion), visual inspection of the scree plot, and the conceptual interpretability of the solutions obtained.⁽⁴⁵⁾

The analysis identified eight factors, although the first three factors together explained 38,11 % of the total variance. Factor 1 explained 18,66 % of the variance, Factor 2 explained 10,93 %, and Factor 3 8,52 % (table 8). These three factors capture the core dimensions of the subscale and show a conceptually interpretable structure consistent with previous literature on meaning in life and existential development.⁽⁵¹⁾

Inspection of the scree plot showed a clear inflection point after the third factor, empirically supporting the retention of three main factors. However, given the dispersion of factor loadings across lower-order factors and the conceptual overlap of some items, it is recommended that future studies review the wording and conceptual delineation of certain items to strengthen factor clarity.

Table 8. Factors identified in the "Purpose and search for meaning" subscale

Factor	% Variance	Associated Items	Conceptual Definition
Purpose and life goals	18,66	Ítems 5, 9, 18, 38, 84	Orientation toward clear goals and an existential purpose that guides life.
Spiritual reflection and coping	10,93	Ítems 8, 24, 37, 45	Use of spiritual beliefs to give meaning to life and cope with death.
Openness and flexibility in life	8,52	Ítems 2, 3, 6, 19, 87	An attitude of openness, creativity, and adaptability to the unexpected and change.

Conceptual interpretation of the factors

- Factor 1. Purpose and Life Goals (18,66 % of explained variance). Includes items related to the definition of clear life goals, the perception of meaning in life, and the alignment of daily actions with relevant existential goals. This dimension is consistent with theories of meaning in life,⁽⁵¹⁾ which emphasize the importance of identifying a transcendent purpose to guide personal development.
- Factor 2. Spiritual Reflection and Coping (10,93 % of explained variance). Includes items related to the search for spiritual guidance and reflection on the meaning of existence and death, highlighting the role of religious and spiritual beliefs as sources of existential coping.⁽⁵²⁾ In this sense, spirituality acts as a resource to provide meaning to life experiences.
- Factor 3. Openness and Flexibility to Life (8,52 % of explained variance). This factor integrates openness to unexpected experiences, adaptability to change, and recognition of human creativity. Conceptually, it aligns with approaches to dynamic existential well-being, which emphasize the importance of cognitive flexibility and the ability to reinterpret events in terms of personal growth.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study provide empirical evidence to support an expanded and multidimensional view of spirituality, articulated around two broad axes: reflective spirituality focused on inner growth, and relational spirituality focused on connection with others and social contribution. This typology provides a new integrative perspective, overcoming the classic dichotomy between religious and secular spirituality, integrating personal practices, interpersonal relationships, and social and ecological commitments.⁽⁵³⁾

Identifying multiple factors within each subscale underscores the inherent complexity of spirituality, which cannot be reduced to a single, unidimensional factor. This finding is consistent with previous research highlighting the multifaceted nature of spirituality⁽⁵⁴⁾ and reinforces the need for comprehensive assessment models that recognize the interplay between personal, relational, and prosocial spirituality.

Furthermore, the explicit inclusion of the ecological dimension and respect for cultural diversity within relational spirituality represents an innovative contribution aligned with emerging perspectives on ecosocial spirituality, emphasizing the interdependence between spirituality, social justice, and environmental sustainability.⁽⁵⁵⁾ This study expands upon and engages directly with the multidimensional spirituality model.

⁽¹⁰⁾ This model posits that spirituality is a complex construct that involves intrapersonal, interpersonal, and transcultural dimensions, comprising a dynamic system of beliefs, practices, and personal and social experiences linked to transcendence. The findings obtained from the validation of the REM Spirituality Index provide empirical evidence for this conception by identifying internal dimensions of self-care and existential reflection, as well as relational and prosocial dimensions, in which connection with others and community participation are constitutive elements of the spiritual experience. Thus, the present study corroborates the

multidimensional perspective and reinforces the need to evaluate spirituality from an integrative approach articulating the personal, social, and cultural spheres.⁽¹⁰⁾

Furthermore, the results obtained are consistent with the theory of meaning in life,⁽⁵¹⁾ which emphasizes that the search for meaning is a central pillar of human existence and a privileged way to cope with suffering and adversity. In reflective spirituality, identified in the self-care and search for meaning subscales, participants expressed a constant concern for building a transcendent life purpose, integrating personal growth and spiritual development into their existential narrative. This conceptual overlap reinforces the idea that personal spirituality, understood as the cultivation of a meaningful purpose, is a key dimension of psychological and existential well-being.⁽⁵¹⁾

Furthermore, the present study engages with contributions to prosocial spirituality,⁽⁵⁴⁾ demonstrating that the spiritual experience is not limited to internal processes of personal development but also promotes prosocial, altruistic, and community-participation behaviors. In particular, the subscales of connections and assistance to others reflect how spiritual people tend to establish meaningful relationships based on empathy, mutual help, and solidarity, consolidating the idea that relational spirituality contributes to strengthening community ties and promoting a prosocial ethic committed to collective well-being.⁽⁵⁴⁾

Finally, this research incorporates and expands the ecological spirituality approach. Spiritual connection occurs at the intrapersonal or interpersonal level and extends to the ethical relationship with the natural environment.⁽⁵⁵⁾ Integrating items related to respect and care for the environment within the assessed subscales highlights a connective spirituality, where environmental preservation is seen as a concrete expression of spiritual values. This ecosocial perspective, still emerging in the literature on spirituality, highlights the interdependence between spiritual well-being, environmental justice, and planetary sustainability,⁽⁵⁵⁾ contributing to a contemporary and holistic approach to spirituality.

This study presents several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the results. First, the small sample size limits the generalizability of the findings. It affects the stability of the identified factor structure, which could lead to factor solutions specific to the analyzed sample.⁽⁴⁰⁾ Furthermore, using a purposive sample composed exclusively of urban adults restricts population representativeness and makes it difficult to extrapolate the results to other socioeconomic, rural, or culturally diverse contexts.⁽³⁹⁾ Several items with low discrimination were identified at the instrumental level, suggesting the need to review and refine their wording or theoretical relevance to ensure greater internal coherence and contribution to the overall construct.⁽²¹⁾ On the other hand, subscales 1 and 2 presented high factorial complexity, with multiple factors explaining the variance, which could indicate some redundancy or conceptual fragmentation in the scale, suggesting the convenience of simplifying or consolidating some factors to achieve a more parsimonious structure.⁽²³⁾

CONCLUSIONS

The “Self-Care” subscale showed adequate internal consistency ($\alpha = 0,803$), indicating that the items homogeneously reflect the dimension assessed. This subscale highlights the importance of personal self-care activities, such as connecting with art, nature, and physical care, integrated as part of the spiritual experience. Exploratory factor analysis revealed seven factors, reflecting the multidimensional richness of the construct, integrating dimensions of aesthetic well-being, personal development, and reflective spirituality. These findings are consistent with models of spirituality that link spiritual well-being with aesthetic connection and personal growth.⁽¹⁷⁾

The “Connections” subscale showed excellent internal consistency ($\alpha = 0,921$), demonstrating high cohesion among its components. This subscale reflects the importance of interpersonal and spiritual relationships as integral to the spiritual experience. Factor analysis identified eleven factors, highlighting the complexity of spiritual relationships, ranging from communal prayer and connection with nature to ethical commitment and empathy. The multidimensionality detected is consistent with integrative approaches to relational spirituality, emphasizing the interaction between the divine, community, and social justice.⁽¹⁰⁾

The “Caring for Others” subscale obtained a Cronbach’s alpha coefficient of 0,818, indicating satisfactory internal consistency. This subscale demonstrates how the spiritual experience is expressed through prosocial actions and community service. Exploratory factor analysis identified seven factors, reflecting different forms of spiritual care, from community volunteering and interpersonal support to ecological commitment and the promotion of social justice. This multidimensional profile is consistent with theories of prosocial spirituality, which link authentic spirituality with service behaviors and altruism.⁽⁵⁴⁾

The “Purpose and Search for Meaning” subscale showed acceptable internal consistency ($\alpha = 0,741$), appropriate for a scale under development. Factor analysis revealed three main factors: existential purpose, spiritual reflection, and life flexibility. These findings are consistent with models of meaning in life and existential spirituality, highlighting the search for meaning as a central axis of spirituality.⁽⁵¹⁾

Psychometric validation of the REM Spirituality Index allowed us to identify and differentiate two significant spirituality typologies, which innovatively integrate internal and external aspects of spiritual experience:

- Scales 1 and 4 (linked to personal development, spiritual self-care, and the search for meaning).

This form of spirituality emphasizes inner growth, connection with oneself, art, nature, and the cultivation of a transcendent purpose.

- Scales 2 and 3 (linked to Relational or Prosocial Spirituality). Focused on relationships with others, community, volunteer service, and social and environmental commitment. This dimension reflects the spiritual experience as a force that drives interpersonal connection and promotes collective well-being.

The study identifies a new typology of spirituality, differentiating between reflective and individual and relational and communal spirituality. Reflective and individual spirituality encompasses dimensions associated with self-care and the search for existential purpose and meaning, emphasizing personal development, introspection, and connection with transcendent values. On the other hand, relational and communal spirituality manifests itself through interpersonal connections and a commitment to assisting others, highlighting social interaction, empathy, and prosocial action as fundamental expressions of the spiritual dimension. This typology offers an integrative and multidimensional approach aligned with previous research that emphasizes the interaction between spirituality's intrapersonal and social components.^(10,17,54) Likewise, it seeks to contribute to a more dynamic understanding of spirituality, recognizing the interdependence between personal growth and active participation in the community, in line with contemporary models that integrate individual and collective well-being within spiritual development.⁽⁵⁶⁾

This spiritual bifocality highlights the value of integrating both the internal dimension of personal development and meaning in life and the external dimension of connection and community service. It proposes a model of comprehensive and situated spirituality consistent with contemporary approaches to positive spirituality and relational well-being.⁽⁴⁴⁾

For future research, it is recommended to expand the sample by incorporating participants from diverse sociocultural contexts, which would allow for the assessment of factorial invariance and analysis of the instrument's cross-cultural validity. Likewise, it is suggested to refine the wording of those items that showed low discrimination, eliminating or reformulating those that do not significantly contribute to measuring key factors.⁽⁴³⁾ From an external validity perspective, it would be pertinent to explore the predictive validity of the proposed typology of spirituality, analyzing its relationships with indicators of psychological well-being, mental health, and prosocial behaviors, which would strengthen the applied usefulness of the REM index in various intervention settings.⁽⁵⁴⁾ Finally, it is recommended that quantitative studies be complemented with qualitative approaches through interviews or narrative analysis, which allow for a deeper understanding of spirituality and how people integrate the spiritual dimension into their life trajectories.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

AUTHORSHIP CONTRIBUTION

Conceptualization: Rómulo Esteban Montilla y Edixon Chacón-Guerrero.

Formal analysis: Rómulo Esteban Montilla y Edixon Chacón-Guerrero.

Research: Rómulo Esteban Montilla, Edixon Chacón-Guerrero y Rolando Eslava-Zapata.

Methodology: Rómulo Esteban Montilla y Edixon Chacón-Guerrero.

Project management: Rómulo Esteban Montilla y Edixon Chacón-Guerrero y Rolando Eslava-Zapata.

Resources: Rómulo Esteban Montilla y Edixon Chacón-Guerrero y Rolando Eslava-Zapata.

Software: Rómulo Esteban Montilla y Edixon Chacón-Guerrero.

Supervision: Rómulo Esteban Montilla y Edixon Chacón-Guerrero y Rolando Eslava-Zapata.

Validation: Rómulo Esteban Montilla y Edixon Chacón-Guerrero y Rolando Eslava-Zapata.

Display: Rolando Eslava-Zapata.

Drafting - original draft: Rómulo Esteban Montilla y Edixon Chacón-Guerrero.

Writing - proofreading and editing: Rómulo Esteban Montilla y Edixon Chacón-Guerrero y Rolando Eslava-Zapata.