

# Development and Validation of the Spirituality Questionnaire among University Students in Higher Educational Centers of Sanandaj in 2017

Ata Shakerian<sup>1</sup> , Yahya Maroofi<sup>2\*</sup> , Faezeh Nateghi<sup>1</sup> 

1- Department of Educational Sciences, Faculty of Science, Islamic Azad University, Arak Branch, Arak, Iran.

2- Department of Educational Sciences, Faculty of Humanities, Bu-Ali Sina University, Hamedan, Iran.

\*Correspondence should be addressed to Mr. Yahya Maroofi; Email: [y.maroufi@basu.ac.ir](mailto:y.maroufi@basu.ac.ir)

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## Abstract

**Background and Objective:** As universal concept that generally denotes a connection with a transcendental power and specifically defined as a search for finding a purpose in life, spirituality has gained attention in academic, educational, and cultural areas more than before. Therefore, it is a necessity to design and use the proper tools to measure this phenomenon. This study aims to develop and validate a questionnaire to “measure spirituality” among university students.

**Methods:** This is a descriptive-analytical study with a statistical society of 464 university students in Sanandaj province. The research tools include a demographic and a spirituality questionnaire. Data analysis involved a two-phase approach including an exploratory factor analysis using principal components analyses method via varimax rotation approach, and confirmatory factor analysis using structural equation modeling. In this study, all the ethical considerations were observed and the authors reported to conflicts of interest.

**Results:** The results of Exploratory factor analysis pointed to the existence of two main dimensions named spiritual experiences and religious experiences which explained 56% of the variance in the spirituality questionnaire. Cronbach alpha coefficient for the dimensions confirmed in factor analysis including spirituality experiences and religious experiences and for the whole questionnaire was 0/88, 0/90, and 0/92, respectively. Convergent validity of the spirituality questionnaire, measured by Parsian and Dunning Spirituality questionnaire, was 0/66.

**Conclusion:** The findings indicated that, Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) of this model is acceptable and could be used as a reliable tool in measurement of university students' spirituality scale, health psychology, and spirituality well-being.

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## Summary

### Background and Objective

The study of spirituality and religion has increased significantly over the past decades (1). Notwithstanding such advances in terms of scientific attention to this phenomenon, spirituality is still a vague and ambiguous term (2), which has different meanings for different people depending on their attitudes or worldviews (3). The attempts to define this

imprecise term, has turned spirituality into a general and universal term that can be found and felt in almost all stages and aspects of life (4-6). Spirituality in a broad sense includes a sense of connection to a superior force and typically involves a search for meaning in life (3). During the last two decades, spirituality has been a controversial issue within the academic community (7). Clear and convincing evidence shows that there is an increasing interest in religion and spirituality among students and the

younger generation and the scholars are inclined to identify and comprehend the inner and spiritual lives of students more than before (8-10). A large number of studies on spirituality in the field of higher education in recent years have shown that spirituality and spiritual growth are an important area in which students try to define themselves (11).

Spirituality and spiritual identity are the foundation of the search for meaning in life and world of students. They try to discover its complexity because spiritual identity is important and up-to-date concept to them nowadays, from which the principles, ethics, and perspectives by which student can see the world are drawn (4). Our country is a religious community with a rich spiritual Islamic-mystical background in which students pay much attention to spirituality and spiritual growth is of importance to them. For that reason, the link between spirituality and education is imperative as it should be incorporated into the educational process and activities of the universities in order to promote the development of spiritual and religious growth among students.

The biggest challenge in this field on the way to realizing a spiritual environment in scientific contexts is the lack of an appropriate means to measure the complex phenomenon of "spirituality". This paper aims to provide an appropriate, valid and effective tool for assessing the spirituality of students considering the cultural aspects of the society. It is hoped that the provided tool can be used in research and educational activities.

## Methods

**Compliance with ethical guidelines:** In the present study, all the principles related to ethical considerations, including confidentiality of questionnaires, informed consent of the research participants, and confidentiality of the participants' personal information were respected.

This study is applied in terms of purpose and correlational in terms of data collection and analysis. The causative modeling or structural equation modeling was used for this purpose. The statistical population of the study included all the students of state and private higher education institutions in Sanandaj in 2017. In this study, using cluster random sampling method, 464 students (247 female and 217 male) from different educational levels were selected. Cronbach's alpha, exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis and convergent validity were used for data analysis. To assess content validity, theoretical foundation of the research were studied, related literature was reviewed and interviews were conducted with 18 experts in the field. Finally, 36 items were developed as the primary items of the questionnaire. Based on the experts' views, seven questions were eliminated from the questionnaire in two stages. Finally, 29 items were included in two dimensions including the spiritual and religious experiences.

## Results

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(i.e., Research on Religion & Health)

The results of qualitative and quantitative analysis, the 29 items of the questionnaire were consistent with the purposes of the study. The results of exploratory factor analysis of the data using the principal components method were indicative of the existence of two factors including spiritual and religious experiences. The former consisted of 19 items. This factor incorporates the spiritual quest component, which emphasizes the importance of meaning, the purpose of life, finding the answer to the mysteries of life, and expanding the meaningful philosophy of life. The Ecumenical Worldview component is the attempt to understand other societies and cultures considering the issues of importance and interest in different religious traditions. The Compassionate Self-Concept and Ethics of Caring include such criteria as determining the level of talent of self for certain qualities such as compassion, caring, forgiveness and generosity, and the amount of commitment to certain values, such as helping people in trouble, reducing suffering in the world. It also assesses the transformation of the world into a better environment. The component of Equanimity includes such categories as sense of peace and tranquility, being at the center of attention, the ability to find meaning in difficult situations, and the feeling of a close association with human beings. The second factor, religious experiences, is comprised of 10 items that includes categories such as following religious instructions and teachings in everyday life and attending at the religious places and ceremonies, worship and reading religious scriptures.

## Conclusion

The results indicated that the questionnaire items had acceptable goodness of fit indices, which accurately assess the various aspects and dimensions of spirituality and can be used as a tool to assess the spirituality of students or in the field of psychology of health and spiritual health.

## Ethical considerations

This article is extracted from a doctoral dissertation by the first author with the code 12120617972013 in Arak Islamic Azad University.

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## Conflict of interest

The authors declared no conflict of interest.

## Authors' contributions

This article is taken from the first author's doctoral dissertation. Dr. Yahya Maroofi as the advisor and Ms. Faezeh Nateghi, as the supervisor helped the first author in the project.

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## الإنشاء والمصادقة على إستبيان قياس الروحانية عند طلاب مراكز التعليم العالي بمدينة سنندج الايرانية في العام ٢٠١٧ م

عطا شاكریان<sup>١</sup>، يحيى معروفی<sup>٢\*</sup>، فائزه ناطقي<sup>١</sup>

١- قسم العلوم التربوية، كلية العلوم الإنسانية، جامعة آزاد الإسلامية، فرع اراك، اراك، ايران.

٢- قسم العلوم التربوية، جامعة بوعلى سينا، همدان، ايران.

\* المراسلات الموجهة إلى السيد يحيى معروفی؛ البريد الإلكتروني: y.maroufi@basu.ac.ir

### الملخص

**خلفية البحث وأهدافه:** الروحانية هي مفهوم عالمي بمعنى الشعور بالارتباط والاتصال بقوة متفوقة وبالمعنى الخاص هي البحث من أجل العثور على معنى في الحياة، ويتم الإهتمام بها أكثر من الماضي في المجالات التعليمية والتربوية والثقافية. لهذا السبب يعتبر إنشاء وامكانية الاستفادة من أداة مناسبة لقياس هذه الظاهرة أمراً ضرورياً. هذا التحقيق تم التخطيط والقيام به بهدف الإنشاء والمصادقة على إستبيان من أجل "قياس الروحانية" عند طلاب الجامعات.

**منهجية البحث:** أسلوب العمل في هذا التحقيق هو توصيفي-تحليلي وتم بمشاركة ٤٦٤ شخصاً من طلاب مراكز التعليم العالي بمدينة سنندج الايرانية في العام ١٣٩٦ هـ.ش الموافق للعام (٢٠١٧ م). الأداة المستخدمة في هذا التحقيق هي الاستبيان الديموغرافي والاستبيان المخطط له للروحانية. تم تفسير المعلومات وتحليلها أيضاً عبر استخدام أسلوب ألفا كرونباخ، تفسير السبب الاكتشافي بطريقة العناصر الرئيسية بأسلوب الدوران من نوع وارماكس وتفسير السبب المؤيد لذلك عبر الاستفادة من نموذج المعادلات البنوية والسرد المتقارب. تمت مراعاة جميع الموارد الأخلاقية في هذا البحث وازدادة الى هذا فإن مؤلفي البحث لم يشيروا الى اي تضارب في المصالح.

**الكشوفات:** نتائج تفسير السبب الاكتشافي تدل على وجود بعدين رئيسيين تحت عنوان التجارب الروحانية والتجارب الدينية والتي شرحت ٥٦% من التباين في استبيان الروحانية. ضريب ألفا كرونباخ للأبعاد الموافق عليها في تفسير الأسباب تضمن التجارب الروحانية والتجارب الدينية وتم الحصول على النسب ٨٨/٠، ٩٠/٠ و ٩٢/٠ على التوالي. وبالنسبة الى السرد المتقارب لإستبيان الروحانية أيضاً تم الوصول الى ٦٦/٠ عبر استبيان الروحانية عند دوينغ وبارسيان.

**الاستنتاج:** ان كشوفات هذه الدراسة تشير الى ان مؤشرات لياقة الإحسان للنموذج تتمتع بمشروعية مطلوبة ويمكن الاستفادة منها كأداة مناسبة للقيام بالتحقيق في مجال قياس الروحانية عند طلاب الجامعات وفي مجال علم النفس الصحي والسلامة الروحانية.

### معلومات المادة

الوصول: ١٦ جمادي الثاني ١٤٣٩

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النشر الإلكتروني: ٢٥ رجب ١٤٤١

### الكلمات الرئيسية:

إستبيان الروحانية

الإنشاء والمصادقة

طلاب الجامعات

يتم استناد المقالة على الترتيب التالي:

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## ساخت و اعتباریابی پرسش‌نامه سنجش معنویت در دانشجویان مراکز آموزش عالی شهر سنندج در سال ۱۳۹۶

عطا شاکریان<sup>۱</sup>، یحیی معروفی<sup>۲\*</sup>، فائزه ناطقی<sup>۱</sup>

۱- گروه علوم تربیتی، دانشکده علوم انسانی، دانشگاه آزاد اسلامی، واحد اراک، اراک، ایران.

۲- گروه علوم تربیتی، دانشکده علوم انسانی، دانشگاه بوعلی سینا، همدان، ایران.

\* مکاتبات خطاب به آقای یحیی معروفی؛ رایانامه: [y.maroufi@basu.ac.ir](mailto:y.maroufi@basu.ac.ir)

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### واژگان کلیدی:

پرسش‌نامه معنویت

دانشجویان

ساخت و اعتباریابی

### چکیده

**سابقه و هدف:** معنویت مفهومی جهان‌شمول است که در معنای عام به معنی حس ارتباط و اتصال با نیرویی برتر و در معنای خاص به معنی جستجو برای یافتن معنی در زندگی، بیش از گذشته در عرصه‌های آموزشی، تربیتی و فرهنگی به آن توجه شده است. از این رو، ساخت و امکان بهره‌گیری از ابزاری مناسب برای سنجش این پدیده ضروری می‌نماید. این پژوهش با هدف ساخت و اعتباریابی پرسش‌نامه‌ای به‌منظور «سنجش معنویت» در دانشجویان طراحی و انجام شده است.

**روش کار:** روش این پژوهش توصیفی-تحلیلی است که با مشارکت ۴۶۴ نفر از دانشجویان مراکز آموزش عالی شهر سنندج در سال ۱۳۹۶ انجام شده است. ابزارهای استفاده شده در این پژوهش پرسش‌نامه جمعیت‌شناختی و پرسش‌نامه طراحی شده معنویت است. تجزیه و تحلیل داده‌ها با استفاده از روش آلفای کرونباخ، تحلیل عامل اکتشافی به شیوه مؤلفه‌های اصلی با روش چرخشی از نوع واریماکس و تحلیل عامل تأییدی با استفاده از مدل معادلات ساختاری و روایی همگرا انجام شده است. در این پژوهش همه موارد اخلاقی رعایت شده است و مؤلفان مقاله هیچ‌گونه تضاد منافی گزارش نکرده‌اند.

**یافته‌ها:** نتایج تحلیل عاملی اکتشافی گویای وجود دو بُعد اصلی با عنوان تجربیات معنوی و تجربیات دینی بود که ۵۶ درصد واریانس پرسش‌نامه معنویت را تبیین کرد. ضریب آلفای کرونباخ برای ابعاد تأیید شده در تحلیل عاملی شامل تجربیات معنوی و دینی و کل پرسش‌نامه به ترتیب ۰/۸۸، ۰/۹۰ و ۰/۹۲ به دست آمد. روایی همگرای پرسش‌نامه معنویت نیز با پرسش‌نامه معنویت دوینگ و پاریسیان ۰/۶۶ به دست آمد.

**نتیجه‌گیری:** یافته‌های این پژوهش نشان‌دهنده آن است که شاخص‌های نیکویی برازش مدل از مطلوبیت پذیرفتنی برخوردار است و می‌توان از آن به‌عنوان ابزاری مناسب برای پژوهش در زمینه سنجش معنویت دانشجویان و حوزه روان‌شناسی سلامت و سلامت معنوی استفاده کرد.

استناد مقاله به این صورت است:

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