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ORIGINALES

Spiritual Intelligence Profile in Peruvian Health Sciences Students

Perfil de Inteligencia Espiritual en estudiantes peruanos de Ciencias de la Salud

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https://doi.org/10.6018/eglobal.565581

Received: 13/04/2023 Accepted: 20/05/2023

ABSTRACT:

Introduction: Health science students have a duty to care for human health; therefore, it is necessary to ensure a humanistic education based on the development and cultivation of Spiritual Intelligence.

Objective: To know the Spiritual Intelligence profile and its associated factors in Peruvian health science students.

Method: A cross-sectional study was conducted, including 418 randomly selected students from nursing, medicine, dentistry, obstetrics, and pharmacy programs. A virtual survey was used to collect socio-educational and religious-spiritual variables. The profile of Spiritual Intelligence was assessed using the Spiritual Intelligence in Healthcare Practice Scale. Descriptive and multivariate analyses were performed using generalized linear models of the Poisson family to evaluate certain factors associated with a healthy profile of Spiritual Intelligence.

Results: 21.1% of participants maintain a healthy profile of Spiritual Intelligence; also, in the dimensions of Spiritual Experience in Practice (14.1%), Existential Thinking (18.9%), Transcendental Awareness (15.3%). Considering oneself a spiritual person (RPa = 4.77; 95% CI: 1.98-11.4) and daily prayer practice (RPa = 3.02; 95% CI: 1.54-5.92) and weekly (RPa = 2.30; 95% CI: 1.12-4.72) were associated with a higher healthy profile of Spiritual Intelligence. However, several variables were identified that presented an unadjusted association with a healthy profile of Spiritual Intelligence.

Conclusions: The proportion of health science students with a healthy profile of Spiritual Intelligence is low; there are certain modifiable associated factors that could enhance Spiritual Intelligence.

Keywords: Intelligence; Spirituality; Consciousness; Health Science Students.

RESUMEN:

Introducción: Los estudiantes de ciencias de la salud tienen el deber de cuidar la salud humana, por tanto, se debe garantizar una formación humanística basada en el desarrollo y cultivo de la Inteligencia Espiritual

Objetivo: Conocer el perfil de Inteligencia Espiritual y sus factores asociados en estudiantes peruanos de ciencias de la salud.

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Método: Estudio transversal, que incluyó 418 estudiantes de las carreras de enfermería, medicina, odontología, obstetricia y farmacia, seleccionados de manera aleatoria. Mediante una encuesta virtual se recogieron variables socioeducativas y religiosas-espirituales; el perfil de Inteligencia Espiritual fue valorado con la Escala de Inteligencia Espiritual en la Practica Sanitaria. Se realizó un análisis descriptivo y multivariado mediante modelos lineales generalizados de la familia Poisson para evaluar ciertos factores asociados al perfil saludable de Inteligencia Espiritual.

Resultados: De los participantes el 21,1% mantienen un perfil saludable de Inteligencia Espiritual; asimismo en la dimensión Vivencia Espiritual en la Práctica (14,1%), Pensamiento Existencial (18,9%), Consciencia Trascendental (15,3%). Se asociaron a mayor perfil saludable de Inteligencia Espiritual, el considerarse una persona espiritual (RPa = 4,77; IC95%: 1,98-11,4) y practicar la oración diaria (RPa = 3,02; IC95%: 1,54-5,92) y de manera semanal (RPa = 2,30; IC95%: 1,12-4,72). No obstante, se identificaron diversas variables que presentaron asociación no ajustada con el perfil saludable de Inteligencia Espiritual.

Conclusiones: La proporción de estudiantes de ciencias de la salud con un perfil saludable de Inteligencia Espiritual, es baja; existen ciertos factores asociados modificables que podrían mejorar la Inteligencia Espiritual.

Palabras clave: Inteligencia; Espiritualidad; Conciencia; Estudiantes del Área de la Salud.

INTRODUCTION

Spiritual Intelligence (SI), also referred to as Consciousness Intelligence by Becerra-Canales et al., has been scientifically studied for the past two decades and is gaining importance due to its direct link to health, well-being, happiness, humanization, learning, and improved performance in all aspects of life and work (1).

SI is the individual's capacity to reflect upon and properly manage their social qualities and competencies for personal, emotional, intellectual, and professional development. It is considered as "the intelligence of the soul, the intelligence of the deep self, the intelligence with which we ask fundamental questions and reconsider our answers" (2, 3). It involves the ability to give profound meaning to life and reality, always connecting with feelings, values, and universal principles (3-5). In line with these arguments, SI falls within the theory of multiple intelligences (6, 7).

The ninth multiple intelligence is not necessarily linked to religiosity, as its importance lies in being superior to specific beliefs or religions, becoming a spiritual dimension and the ultimate transcendent goal of an individual ⁽⁸⁾. In this sense, there is a consensus that individuals with an appropriate profile of SI are more likely to improve their interpersonal, occupational, social, emotional, and spiritual relationships, contributing to success in their personal, professional, academic, social, affective, and emotional lives, as well as their overall well-being and personal fulfillment ⁽¹⁾.

Health science students (HSS) have a duty to care for human health, which entails deep reflection on their pre-professional health practice, learning processes, and interpersonal relationships. In the field of health sciences, a true holistic and humanistic education involves developing and nurturing SI in students (9-11).

Therefore, within the university context, a person's professional training should encompass a humanistic educational project, understood as the comprehensive or holistic development in its deepest and perfectible sense, focusing on their human condition and their deepest values (culture, justice, freedom, goodness, love, respect, hope, beauty, nobility, virtue, etc.), as well as their capacity for autonomous reflection, self-realization, and personal transcendence. This can be achieved by introducing SI as a cross-cutting strategy in the educational curriculum (12-14). However, in today's

society and educational environment, SI is not well developed due to the dominance of materialism, perfectionism, lack of meaning, and lack of commitment.

Very little research has been conducted on the spiritual dimension of HSS, making it necessary to study the behavior of this variable. For these reasons, this research aimed to identify the profile of SI and its associated factors in Peruvian health science students.

METHOD

Study Design and Population

Cross-sectional study conducted from June to November 2022. The population (N=4,262) consisted of health science students from the National University San Luis Gonzaga in the province of Ica, Peru (Figure 1). Using the mathematical formula for finite populations, a sample size of 353 participants was estimated with a confidence level of 95%, population proportion of interest at 50%, and a margin of error of 5%. Accounting for a potential 18% loss to follow-up, the final sample size was determined to be 418 individuals, selected through random probability sampling. Both male and female health science students were included, while those with mental or organic pathologies that impeded expressing their opinions and those with a history of psychoactive substance abuse were excluded.

Figure 1. Geographical location of Ica province on the coast of Peru.



Variables, Instrument, and Procedures

The variable Spiritual Intelligence was assessed using the Scale of Spiritual Intelligence in Health Practice (SSIhp) (15). It consists of 18 items and three dimensions: Spiritual Experience in Practice (SEP) (Items 2, 5, 8, 11, 14, and 17); Existential Thinking (ET) (Items 1, 4, 7, 10, 13, 16, and 18); and Transcendental Consciousness (TC) (Items 3, 6, 9, 12, and 15). Since the instrument was not validated for health science students, minimal modifications were made to items 5 and 8 to improve students' understanding. "When I am engaged in the noble mission of my work practice (profession), my strength multiplies" was changed to "When I am engaged in the noble mission of my student and/or pre-professional practice, my strength multiplies" and "I believe that caring for my body and patients is a sacred duty" was changed to "I believe that caring for my body and/or the health of my patients is a sacred duty." Additionally, the response options were changed from "not at all true for me, somewhat true for me, mostly true for me, definitely true for me" to

"Don't know/not at all/probably not/probably yes/definitely yes," with a scoring range of 0 to 4

This proposed version was reviewed by a group of three professionals who were experts in the field. Subsequently, a pilot test was conducted with 42 students, and no additional modifications to the questions were made as a result of these procedures. The SSIhp scale, in its version for health science students (SSI/hcs), demonstrated adequate internal consistency for the overall scale with McDonald's Omega (ω = 0.901) and its dimensions: SEP (ω = 0.759), ET (ω = 0.769), and TC (ω = 0.756). A threshold was set using the mean global score + 1.5 standard deviations, where scores \geq 64 points indicated a healthy or adequate Spiritual Intelligence profile, while lower scores indicated an unhealthy or inadequate profile. The same procedure was applied to the dimensions $^{(15)}$.

Socio-educational variables were included: gender, age (years), occupation, marital status, faculty of study, and religious-spiritual variables: religion, participation in religious activities, self-identification as a religious person, self-identification as a spiritual person, and prayer practice.

The information was collected through an online survey using a Google Forms questionnaire. Prior to data collection, the list of students was obtained, and coordination was made with the deans of the faculties involved in the study. With the support of secretaries, communication was established with the students through virtual means (emails, Messenger, WhatsApp, among others) to inform them about the purpose of the study, obtain informed consent for participation, and provide the URL where the instrument was located. They were instructed to complete the questionnaire and submit their responses electronically. Reminders were sent during the availability of the survey to follow up and motivate participation in the research.

Statistical Analysis.

The descriptive statistical analysis included measures of absolute and relative frequencies, means, and standard deviations. Differences were evaluated using the chi-square test, and generalized linear models from the Poisson family with a logarithmic link function were employed to assess the association between the main variable categorized as Healthy Spiritual Intelligence Profile (yes/no) and the socioeducational and religious-spiritual variables, previously dichotomized. Crude prevalence ratios (PRc) and adjusted prevalence ratios (PRa) with their respective 95% confidence intervals (CI) were calculated. In the adjusted model, any variable with p < 0.05 in the crude model was included, taking into account the criteria of interest and availability (16). Data processing was performed using the statistical software "Statistical Package for the Social Sciences" for Windows version 25.0 in Spanish. A p-value of <0.05 was considered statistically significant.

Ethical Considerations.

The research was endorsed by the Ethics Committee of the San Luis Gonzaga National University (CEI-UNICA No 001/02-2023). Informed consent was obtained prior to enrolling participants in the study, and students in the health sciences were informed that their participation was voluntary and anonymous.

RESULTS

Among the participants, the majority were female (77.0%), aged 21 to 25 years (65.8%), full-time students (58.9%), single (90.9%), enrolled in the dentistry faculty (26.6%), identified as Catholic (73.7%), did not participate in religious activities (59.3%), considered themselves religious (63.9%), considered themselves spiritual (66.7%), and practiced prayer on a weekly basis (31.8%). (Table 1)

Table 1. Distribution of socio-educational and religious-spiritual variables among health science students.

Variables	n=418	%
Sex		
Female	322	77,0
Male	96	23,0
Age (years)	-	•
≤ 20	90	21,5
21-25	275	65,8
26-30	35	8,4
> 30	18	4,3
Occupation		
Full-time student	246	58,9
Student and employed	172	41,1
Marital status		
Single	380	90,9
Married	13	3,1
Cohabitating	25	6,0
College faculties		
Dentistry	111	26,6
Obstetrics	67	16,0
Nursing	77	18,4
Pharmacy	73	17,5
Human Medicine	90	21,5
Religion		
Catholic	308	73,7
Christian	48	11,5
Evangelical	18	4,3
Jehovah's Witness	20	4,8
Atheist	24	5,7
Do you participate in religious activities?		
No	248	59,3
Yes	170	40,7
Consider yourself a religious person?		
No	151	36,1
Yes	267	63,9
Consider yourself a spiritual person?		
No	139	33,3
Yes	279	66,7
Do you pray?		

Never	73	17,5
Daily	100	23,9
Weekly	133	31,8
Monthly	112	26,8
Age, Mean (SD) 22,7		
(4,69)		

n=sample; %=Relative frequency; SD=Standard deviation.

The healthy profile of Spiritual Intelligence (SI) was reported by 21.1% of health science students, with higher proportions found among students who study and work simultaneously (27.9%), married individuals (76.9%), Jehovah's Witnesses (50%), those who participate in religious activities (31.2%), consider themselves religious (24.7%), consider themselves spiritual (29.4%), and practice daily (42.0%) or weekly (24.8%) prayer, respectively. These differences were statistically significant (p<0.05). Additionally, among female students (21.9%), obstetrics students (34.3%), and those over 30 years of age, the differences were not statistically significant (p>0.05). (Table 2)

Table 2. Descriptive and bivariate analysis of socio-educational and religious-spiritual

variables according to the healthy profile of Spiritual Intelligence.

	ibles descraing to the		Hea	Ithy Profile of	of Spiritual Intelligence YES				
	Variables	No							
		n	%	CI 95%	n	%	CI 95%	p- Value*	
Se	Х								
	Female	255	79,2	74,7-83,6	67	20,8	16,3- 25,2	,822	
	Male	75	78,1	69,7-86,5	21	21,9	13,4- 30,3		
Ag	e (years)								
	≤ 20	75	83,3	75,4-91,1	15	16,7	8,8- 24,5	,207	
	21-25	217	78,9	74,0-83,7	58	21,1	16,2- 25,9		
	26-30	27	77,1	62,5-91,7	8	22,9	8,2- 37,4		
	> 30	11	61,1	36,1-86,0	7	38,9	13,9- 63,8		
O	ccupation								
	Study and work	124	72,1	65,3-78,8	48	27,9	21,1- 34,6	,004	
	Full-time student	206	83,7	79,1-88,3	40	16,3	1,16- 20,9		
Ma	arital Status								
	Single	308	81,1	77,0-85,0	72	18,9	14,9- 22,9	,000	
	Married	3	23,1	3,4-49,5	10	76,9	50,4- 10,3		
	Cohabiting	19	76,0	58,0-93,9	6	24,0	6,0- 41,9		

ollege faculties							
Dentistry	90	81,1	73,6-88,4	21	18,9	11,5- 26,3	,073
Obstetrics	44	65,7	54,0-77,3	23	34,3	22,6-	
Nursing	62	80,5	71,4-89,5	15	19,5	10,4-	
Pharmacy	60	82,2	73,2-91,1	13	17,8	8,8-	
Human Medicine	74	82,2	74,1-90,2	16	17,8	9,7-	
eligion						,	
Catholic	253	82,1	77,8-86,4	55	17,9	13,5- 22,1	,000
Christian	32	66,7	52,8-80,5	16	33,3	19,5- 47,1	
Evangelical	12	66,7	42,5-90,7	6	33,3	9,2- 57,4	
Jehovah's Witness	10	50,0	25,9-74,0	10	50,0	25,9- 74,0	
Atheist	23	95,8	87,2-99,4	1	4,2	4,4-	
	religious	}					
No	213	85,9	81,5-90,2	35	14,1	9,7- 18,4	,000
Yes	117	68,8	61,7-75,8	53	31,2	24,1-	
-	eligious						
No	129	85,4	79,4-91,1	22	14,6	8,8- 20,2	,014
Yes	201	75,3	70,0-80,4	66	24,7	19,5- 29,9	
	piritual						
No	133	95,7	92,2-99,1	6	4,3	0,9-7,7	,000
Yes	197	70,6	65,2-75,9	82	29,4	24,0- 34,7	
o you pray?							
Daily	58	58,0	48,1-67,8	42	42,0	32,1- 51,8	,000
Weekly	100	75,2	67,7-82,6	33	24,8	17,3- 32,2	
Monthly	103	92,0	86,8-97,0	9	8,0	2,9- 13,1	
Never	69	94,5	89,1-99,8	4	5,5	0,1- 10,8	
Scale Dimensions	,					,	
Spiritual	359	85,9	82,5-	59	14,1	10,7-	
	Obstetrics Nursing Pharmacy Human Medicine eligion Catholic Christian Evangelical Jehovah's Witness Atheist Oo you participate in activities? No Yes Consider yourself a reperson? No Yes Consider yourself a secon?	Dentistry 90 Obstetrics 44 Nursing 62 Pharmacy 60 Human Medicine 74 Teligion 253 Christian 32 Evangelical 12 Jehovah's Witness 10 Atheist 23 Do you participate in religious activities? No 213 Yes 117 Consider yourself a religious person? No 129 Yes 201 Consider yourself a spiritual person? No 133 Yes 197 To you pray? Daily 58 Weekly 100 Monthly 103 Never 69 Scale Dimensions	Dentistry 90 81,1 Obstetrics 44 65,7 Nursing 62 80,5 Pharmacy 60 82,2 Human Medicine 74 82,2 eligion 253 82,1 Christian 32 66,7 Evangelical 12 66,7 Jehovah's Witness 10 50,0 Atheist 23 95,8 Do you participate in religious activities? 95,8 No 213 85,9 Yes 117 68,8 Consider yourself a religious across 86,9 No 129 85,4 Yes 201 75,3 Consider yourself a spiritual across? 95,7 No 133 95,7 Yes 197 70,6 o you pray? 94,5 Daily 58 58,0 Weekly 100 75,2 Monthly 103 92,0 Never	Dentistry 90 81,1 73,6-88,4 Obstetrics 44 65,7 54,0-77,3 Nursing 62 80,5 71,4-89,5 Pharmacy 60 82,2 73,2-91,1 Human Medicine 74 82,2 74,1-90,2 eligion 253 82,1 77,8-86,4 Christian 32 66,7 52,8-80,5 Evangelical 12 66,7 42,5-90,7 Jehovah's Witness 10 50,0 25,9-74,0 Atheist 23 95,8 87,2-99,4 Do you participate in religious verson? 81,5-90,2 No 129 85,4 79,4-91,1 Yes 201 75,3 70	Dentistry 90 81,1 73,6-88,4 21 Obstetrics 44 65,7 54,0-77,3 23 Nursing 62 80,5 71,4-89,5 15 Pharmacy 60 82,2 73,2-91,1 13 Human Medicine 74 82,2 74,1-90,2 16 eligion	Dentistry 90 81,1 73,6-88,4 21 18,9 Obstetrics 44 65,7 54,0-77,3 23 34,3 Nursing 62 80,5 71,4-89,5 15 19,5 Pharmacy 60 82,2 73,2-91,1 13 17,8 Human Medicine 74 82,2 74,1-90,2 16 17,8 eligion	Dentistry

experience in			89,2			17,4	
practice							
Existential	339	81,1	77,3-	79	18,9	15,1-	
thinking	339	01,1	77,3- 84,8	79	10,9	22,6	
Transcendental	354	84,7	81,2-	64	15.2	11,8-	
awareness	334	04,1	88,1	04	15,3	18,7	
Total scale	220	70.0	75,0-	88	21.1	17,1-	
Total Scale	330	78,9	75,0- 82,8	00	21,1	24,9	

n=Sample; %=Relative frequency; Cl95%=95% Confidence Intervals; *Chi-square tests for frequency distribution and proportion difference.

Due to the significant differences found in certain variables, an adjustment was performed using generalized linear models. In the adjusted regression model, considering oneself a spiritual person (aPR = 4.77; 95% CI: 1.98-11.4) and practicing daily prayer (aPR = 3.02; 95% CI: 1.54-5.92) and weekly prayer (aPR = 2.30; 95% CI: 1.12-4.72) were associated with a higher healthy profile of Spiritual Intelligence. However, being over 30 years of age, studying and working simultaneously, being single or married respectively, being an obstetrics student, having Catholic, Christian, or Jehovah's Witness religion, participating in religious activities, and considering oneself a religious person showed an unadjusted association with the healthy profile of Spiritual Intelligence. (Table 3)

Table 3. Unadjusted and adjusted regression models to evaluate the association between socio-educational and religious-spiritual variables with the healthy profile of

Spiritual Intelligence.

PILI	uai iiileiliyeiice.							
		Healthy Spiritual Intelligence Profile						
	Variable		Unadjusted	d	Adjusted			
	variable	uPR CI 95%		p- Value	aPR	CI 95%	p- Value	
S	ex							
	Female		Reference	,				
	Male	0,95	0,61-1,46	0,821	-	-	-	
Α	ge (years)							
	≤ 20		Referencia	1				
	21-25	1,00	0,67-1,48	0,979	-	-	-	
	26-30	1,09	0,57-2,07	0,782	-	-	-	
	> 30	1,92	1,04-3,53	0,036	0,70	0,36- 1,38	0,314	
	Occupation							
	Full-time student		Reference	;	Reference			
	Study and work	1,71	1,18-2,48	0,004	1,18	0,81- 1,73	0,382	
N	/larital Status							
	Cohabiting		Referencia	ì	Referencia			
	Single	0,45	0,29-0,69	0,000	0,76	0,35- 1,66	0,501	
	Married	3,99	2,79-5,71	0,000	1,54	0,53- 4,48	0,427	
С	ollege faculties							
	Dentistry		Reference	!		Reference		

	Obstetrics	1,85	1,24-2,75	0,002	1,29	0,87- 1,92	0,198	
	Nursing	0,91	0,55-1,49	0,710	-	-	-	
	Pharmacy	0,81	0,48-1,39	0,462	-	-	-	
	Human Medicine	0,81	0,49-1,32	0,398	-	-	-	
R	eligion							
	Evangelical		Reference			Reference		
	Catholic	0,59	0,41-0,86	0,006	0,69	0,36- 1,33	0,278	
	Christian	1,71	1,09-2,68	0,019	0,85	0,43- 1,70	0,663	
	Jehovah's Witness	2,55	1,57-4,12	0,000	1,04	0,53- 2,03	0,897	
	Atheist	0,18	0,02-1,29	0,090	0,24	0,02- 2,49	0,237	
	o you participate in ctivities?	•						
	No		Reference		Reference			
	Yes	2,20	1,51-3,22	0,000	1,31	0,90- 1,92	0,150	
	Consider yourself a re	eligious	person?					
	No		Reference					
	Yes	1,69	1,09-2,63	0,018	0,84	0,53- 1,33	0,457	
	Consider yourself a s	piritual p						
	No		Reference			Reference		
	Yes	6,80	3,04-15,2	0,000	4,77	1,98- 11,4	0,000	
D	o you pray?							
	Monthly		Reference			Reference		
	Weekly	1,28	0,88-1,87	0,194	2,30	1,12- 4,72	0,022	
	Daily	2,90	2,04-4,13	0,000	3,02	1,54- 5,92	0,001	
	Never	0,22	0,08-0.59	0,003	1,29	0,37- 4,44	0,686	
	a. a=a/ a.							

95% CI: 95% confidence intervals; UPR: Unadjusted Prevalence Ratio; APR: Adjusted Prevalence Ratio.

DISCUSSION

This study aimed to understand the profile of IE and its associated factors in students of Health Sciences (HSS) in the fields of nursing, medicine, dentistry, obstetrics, and pharmacy at a public university in Peru. The findings from the studied sample revealed that two out of ten university students have a healthy SI profile, while a high proportion (78.9%) showed an unhealthy profile. Similar results have been reported by other researchers (11,17-19), who found low, moderate, or unhealthy levels of SI with significant inverse correlations with variables such as perceived stress, academic achievement, depression, anxiety, and work stress in university students studying HS and other

disciplines. These findings are concerning as SI is associated with the socio-humanistic competence required by these students ⁽²⁰⁾. To achieve socio-humanistic competence, it is necessary to promote the development of SI as a cross-cutting strategy in health professional education ^(19-,21). SI connects a student's mental and spiritual life with their performance and functioning, influencing psychological variables that can be improved in students ⁽²²⁾. Additionally, SI can impact nursing students' competence in providing spiritual care to patients. Therefore, appropriate plans are recommended to promote SI and increase levels of critical thinking and spiritual self-awareness ⁽²³⁾.

The unhealthy or inadequate profile of SI was predominantly observed in the dimension of "spiritual experience in practice" (85.9%). This indicates that students have deficiencies related to their own principles, student or pre-professional practice, sacred duty, professional service and vocation, belief in a higher divinity, and life mission. These findings are consistent with a study conducted in the region ⁽¹⁾ and may reflect the dystopian society of today. In this regard, Gonzales et al. ⁽²⁴⁾ found a lack of presence of values such as respect, solidarity, tolerance, cooperation, and justice, which are benefits generated by SI, as well as primary values like honesty, responsibility, and coexistence.

In this study, a higher proportion of students with an adequate SI profile was found among those who study and work simultaneously, are married, belong to the Jehovah's Witness religion, participate in religious activities, consider themselves religious and spiritual, and engage in daily and weekly prayer. These findings are similar to those of a Peruvian study ⁽¹⁾. However, they differ in reporting higher SI scores among older adults aged 60 years and above, divorced individuals, and those with an evangelical religious affiliation. These discrepancies could be explained by the differences in the average age of participants between the two samples. The reported statistical differences may be attributed to various factors that influence spiritual intelligence and contribute to its development, such as age ⁽²⁵⁾, spiritual experiences in life ⁽²⁶⁾, and spiritual therapies ⁽²⁷⁾.

Furthermore, a statistically significant association was found between an adequate SI profile and the variables "participates in religious activities," "considers themselves religious," "considers themselves spiritual," and "engages in daily prayer." These findings align with the results of another recent local study ⁽¹⁾, indicating that these factors influence the level of SI as shown in the literature concerning spiritual variables ⁽²⁸⁾. Possessing SI contributes to professional practice and workplace competencies and has been found to be beneficial for nurses and nursing students ⁽²⁹⁾. It also enhances the clinical competence of students, especially in the fields of medicine and nursing, among others ⁽³⁰⁾, and improves empathy and mental health. Therefore, it is suggested to incorporate and develop this modality of intelligence in training programs and governmental decisions ⁽³¹⁾. Additionally, it is effective in enhancing the communication skills of nurses ⁽³²⁾.

As limitations of the research, it should be noted that there are few studies that quantify the variable studied in a population of HSS, which made comparisons difficult. Moreover, a cause-and-effect relationship was not established. However, describing, comparing, and associating the analyzed variables is pertinent and necessary, as it allows for the detection and intervention of specific findings in the analyzed groups. Consequently, further research is needed, including explanatory variables mainly

related to unhealthy or inadequate SI. Nonetheless, the study is important as it provides an approach to the ninth multiple intelligence in HSS.

CONCLUSIONS

Spiritual intelligence is predominantly unhealthy in HSS, and there are variables that can be modified to enhance SI. At the same time, there is an urgent need to cultivate and develop it within the academic realm so that it can fully flourish, given its potential benefits.

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APPENDIX

SCALE OF SPIRITUAL INTELLIGENCE Health Science Student Version (SSI/hcs)

Nº	Preguntas	Does not know	Not at all	Unlikely	Likely	Definitely
1	I believe that everything in life has a deep meaning.					
2	Regardless of the place or circumstance, I always act according to my principles.					
3	My moments of spiritual practice renew my physical strength.					
4	When I think about the miracle of my existence, it fills me with joy.					
5	When I am dedicated to the noble mission of my student and/or pre-professional practice, my strength multiplies.					
6	In my free time, I enjoy nature.					
7	My mind becomes calm when I reflect on spiritual texts.					
8	I believe that taking care of my body and/or the health of my patients is a sacred duty.					
9	Even when I experience failure, I can still find meaning in it.					
10	I frequently reflect on the meaning of events in my life.					
11	When a patient needs me, I always make time to help.					
12	I define myself by my deeper being rather than my physical being.					
13	I am capable of deeply reflecting on what may exist beyond death.					
14	Beyond the human plane, there is a higher Being with whom we can relate.					
15	I often see situations and options more clearly when I meditate, pray, or engage in religious practices.					
16	I am aware that there is a deeper connection between other people and myself.					
17	I am certain that helping others or being compassionate towards patients is my mission in this life.					
18	It is difficult for me to think of anything beyond the physical and material world.					

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