The Development of the Filipino Spirituality Scale

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SUMMARY

Spirituality is currently widely studied in the field of Psychology; and Filipinos are known for having a deep sense of spirituality. In terms of measuring spirituality however, researchers argue that measures or scales about it should reflect greater sensitivity to cultural characteristics and issues (Hill & Pargament, 2003). The study aimed to develop a measure of Filipino spirituality. Specifically, it intended to identify salient dimensions of spirituality among Filipinos. The study had two phases in the development of the scale, namely: focus group discussion (FGD) on the Filipino conceptions of spirituality as a basis for generating items; and test development, which included item construction based on the FGD and the literature, pilot testing, establishing reliability and validity of the scale. Qualitative results showed that spirituality has 3 main themes: connectedness with the sacred, sense of meaning and purpose, and expressions of spirituality. In the test development, the Filipino spirituality scale yielded two factors. The first factor—having a relationship or connectedness with a supreme being with a 53.13 % total variance; while the other factor of good relationship with others had a 7.196%. The reliability of the whole measure yielded cronbach alpha of 0.978, while the factors also obtained good reliability of indicators of 0.986 and 0.778 respectively. The results of the study are discussed in the broader conceptualization of spirituality in the Philippines as well as in mainstream Psychology.

INTRODUCTION

There has been growing interest in recent literature to take into account the distinctiveness of spirituality to religiosity. Current researchers highlight that there is no generally agreed definition of spirituality and religiosity (Zinnbauer, Pargament, Cole, Rye, Butter, Belavich, Hipp, Scott, Kadar, 1997; Hill, Pargament, Hood, Mccullough, Swyers, Larson, & Zinnbauer, 2000). This trend of emphasizing the importance of distinguishing spirituality from religiosity is critical because the interchangeable use of the two hinders the growth of psychological research and applications (Del Rio & White, 2012). Researchers consider spirituality as a complex subjective concept which may or may not contain religiosity (Torskenaes, et al., 2015) or totally separate from religion (van Rensburg, et al., 2015). In some studies, they argue that main peculiarity is that spirituality is separate from social influence and is not associated to negative terms unlike religion or religiosity (Baumsteiger & Chenneville, 2015). As such, most studies assert that we can measure an individual's spirituality, in isolation (Hermannsdóttir & Ægisdóttir, 2016; Piedmont, 2007). It can be inferred from current research undertakings in spirituality that the point at issue is a universal measures and indicators.

Some literature argues the universal nature of an individual's spirituality. Spirituality was taken from the Latin root *spiritus* meaning breath or life. The term is always referenced in the context of religion and is still both experienced and expressed by many through typical religious understanding (Bibby, 1995 as cited in

Hill et al, 2000; Zinbauer et al., 1997). Spirituality is also defined as the intrinsic source of motivation that impels individuals to create a broad sense of personal meaning for their lives (Piedmont, 2007). It is considered to be a complex, multidimensional, multifaceted, construct that manifest in the process of an individual's behavior, beliefs and experience (Hill et al., 2000; Miller & Thoresen, 1999 in Gall, Charbonneau, Clarke, Grant, Anjali & Shouldice 2005). It is also usually referred to as the personal, subjective side of religious experience (Hill & Pargament, 2003). Many researchers refer to spirituality as the personal or subjective experience of the sacred (Zinnbauer et al., 1997, Hill et al., 2000, Cornish et al., 2011; Wade, & Post, 2011).

However, recent studies provide empirical evidence to cultural and context-based nature of spirituality (de la Peña & Ouano, 2015; van Rensburg, et al., 2015; Torskenaes, et al., 2015). These literatures suggests that the varying features of every individual's spirituality which could be emphasize or not separate with connectedness (Hermannsdóttir & Ægisdóttir, 2016), type of profession (de la Peña & Ouano, 2015), involvement in religious institutions (Baumsteiger & Chenneville, 2015), family and nature (Torskenaes, et al., 2015), or the psychological functioning (Abe Kim et al., 2014). Thus, some studies argue that existing spirituality measures could contain items that do not directly measure the strength of spirituality an

individual (Baumsteiger & Chenneville, 2015). For this reason, the localization of definition and individualized measurement of spirituality is proposed to be included in a tool to measure spirituality (van Rensburg, et al., 2015).

The challenge remains for Psychologists to have conceptual clarity about spirituality and to develop measures, which would measure it. Many empirical studies done before on the relationship of spirituality and mental health posits some cautions in terms of cultural factors especially in terms of measures (Hill & Pargament, 2003). In spite of the popularity of spirituality, it is still challenging to come up with measures about it (Kapucinzki & Masters, 2010). This research aims to develop a scale on Filipino Spirituality. Since Filipinos are known to be religious and spiritual people, it would be very important to come up with a measure of spirituality to make further process and outcome researches that can advance the field of research in Filipino spirituality.

METHODOLOGY

Sample and Sampling Design

First phase

The first phase of the study utilized non-probability based purposive sampling. It also used chain-referral method to identify respondents for the focus group discussions. The researcher conducted 4 focus group

discussions with 8-10 participants for each. The four focus group discussions mostly comprised of adolescents and young adults.

Instruments

First Phase

The researcher conducted 4 focus group discussions. The researcher asked the respondents about their descriptions of a spiritual person, non-spiritual person, what spirituality brings to a person and how they define spirituality. A team of experts from different fields was asked to review the validity of the focus group discussion guide. A researcher who is an expert in qualitative research was asked to validate the interview guide. An expert in Filipino Psychologist was also asked to validate the FGD guide.

Procedure

First Phase

The first phase involved focus group discussions with four different groups composed of 5-10 participants for item generation. The researcher focused on the main questions using the focus group discussion guide. The researcher mentioned to the respondents that the focus group discussion was intended come up with a scale about Filipino spirituality. Confidentiality was ensured to the participants and were allowed to discontinue if they declined to participate in the FGD.

Data Analysis

First Phase

The first phase of the research utilized basic qualitative analysis. Based form the focus group discussions conducted, themes and categories were extracted to address the research problems. The researcher analyzed the data qualitatively to capture the experiences of spirituality.

RESULTS

Connectedness with the Sacred

This first theme, connected with the sacred, is about developing and maintaining a connection with the Sacred. This can be manifested through a connection with a Supreme being, with people, or with nature. This includes harmony, interpersonal relationship, and sense of faith or belief to God and the people.

Relationship with a Supreme being

The salient theme of *relationship with a Supreme being* was an emerging trend in most of the responses of the participants when they talk about spirituality as well as when describing a spiritual person. They highlighted that a spiritual person values this relationship with a Supreme being that is why this is manifested in most facets of their life.

For me spirituality, it's between you and your God. it's not about pleasing other people but pleasing God. You're doing this because you want to please God. (Win)

The individuals who are spiritual do not only believe in a Supreme Being but rather also do different activities and rituals that can strengthen this relationship. One of the central activities that people does in order to express this spirituality is prayer. This is an important activity which makes a person more connected to God regardless of the religion. It makes them more spiritual through praying.

You feel at peace, I think that's spirituality. I converse with my God. Yung nagigising ka sa umaga. You feel good, you feel blessed, that is spirituality for me. (Wendy)

Spirituality is deeper than religion
Part of this connectedness with the sacred is the importance of religious rituals as vehicles in order for a person to be spiritual. Most participants admit that religion provided them many opportunities and venues in order to be more spiritual in their lives.

Well for me, a spiritual person is somebody who has strong relationship with God. Somebody who practices what I think the bible says. Somebody who is not, does not necessarily go to church so often but he practices what he learns about his religion. That for me is a spiritual person. (Jojo)

Faith
The other theme under Connectedness with the Sacred is *faith*. It is strong belief in a supreme being. This theme is about the deep belief of the respondents that God will always take care of them and at the same time guide them in their everyday life. Furthermore, the respondents believe that whenever there problems arise, God will be with them as they face the different challenges of these problems. They viewed their spirituality, as manifested in their faith in God, as something that gives them strength. This shows that their faith makes them hopeful too in facing different challenges and trials in their lives.

For me a spiritual person is somebody who is a strong faith, and then he walks what he talks. And then, stands for what he believes in. (Dianne)

The respondents highlighted also that they make sure that they find time to communicate with God either through established religious rituals like mass or by praying on their own. It is in this communicating with God that they manifest their deep faith on Him by showing their gratitude for everything that happens in their lives.

Sense of Meaning or Purpose
The second theme for Filipino Spirituality is related to having a sense of meaning or puropose in life. This sense of direction or purpose is personal and can be phenomenological but it is in general related to

developing a purposeful sense of self, identity, morality, conscience, and values. This theme about spirituality is goes beyond the religious dimension. Spirituality is something that completes the life of a person. It gave the respondents a sense of direction in life as well as purpose. It is something that made their life complete. Included in this completeness of life is a sense of peace that they felt in their life. It is a feeling that exudes in their life.

Spirituality for me yun yung kumbaga spirituality ang kukumpleto sa buhay ng tao. Spirituality ang nagbibigay ng direksyon at purpose sa buhay ng tao.

Spirituality also helped them to be good persons to others. They also were able to establish good relations to their kapwa since their beliefs helped to be good persons in relation to their kapwa. Because of these things related to sprituality, ultimately, it can lead to one's sense of well-being. As one takes care of his or her spirituality, well-being also increases. It is a peace of mind that one hopes to attain in spite of the various stressors faced in life.

Bali, spirituality para saken, yung spirituality para saken bali yun yung mga ano, yung isang katangian na makakapagpasaya sayo, yung tipong wala kang iniisip na iba, may peace of mind ka. Tapos isinasaalan-alang mo yung ano yung magiging reaksyon ng iba. Tapos yung Binebase mo yung ginagawa mo sa tama.

Parang nakaguide sa kung ano yung tama. (Ken)

Morality
Spirituality is very important in a person's ability to make moral decisions. It helps them discern in knowing what is the right thing to do – whether what do will do is good or bad. A person is being reminded from time to time if what they will is in line with their moral beliefs that emanates from their being spiritual. In times that something wrong was done, it reminds them that these wrongdoing should be corrected.

Kaya maipapakita yung ispiritwalidad ng tao sa panahon ng pagsubok. Base po sa decisions mo. Decisions po na mas inclined sa righteousness. (Lina)

Spirituality as a Passion or Expression in life

The last theme for spirituality is related to passion or expression in life. Being spiritual is actionable. One can act out his/her spirituality by living out the values. It is manifested in one's actions like in one's relationships and activities. It can be different ways but it can also be expressed through one's relationships with family, friends or loved ones. In the Filipino culture, relationship with kapwa is valued.

For me, spirituality is an expression of passion for life. So your way of expression of your passion for life is by repeating certain behaviors that you like I don't see anything wrong with that, that's spiritual. (Ronald)

DISCUSSION

The results of the first phase of the study validates the broader conceptualizations of spirituality as well as religion. Most researchers conceptualized Spirituality personal or subjective experience of the sacred (Zinnbauer et al., 1997, Hill et al., 2000, Cornish et al., 2011; Wade, & Post, 2011). The first theme of this research connectedness with a sacred, affirms the consistency or cross-cultural definition of being sacred. Sacred for Filipinos though is usually related to religious activities or rituals. Results showed that spirituality is something deeper and greater than religion. One theme which is connected with this sacred thing is faith. In the Filipino context, faith is translated as *pananampalataya* which is related to taking risks and trusting God (Miranda, 1987). It is also through spirituality through these religious activities or not that they nourish their well-being and they have peace of mind. There can be different expressions of spirituality but it is recurring that these expressions are anchored on a relationship with a supreme-being and because of this,

people respond and try their best to become good persons by having good values and morals. In the Filipino culture, the relative importance of our relationships with our kapwa is considered as a core value (Enriquez, 1994). In the study of Yabut (2013) among key informants about spirituality, this ugnayan sa kapwa was already highlighted as very important to understand Filipino spirituality.

METHODOLOGY

Sample and Sampling Design

Second phase

For the second phase, the generated items based form literature and focus group discussions were pilot tested to 315 participants. This phase employed purposive sampling. It will include adolescents, young adults and adults in the pilot-testing. A more elaborated discussion of pilot testing is discussed in data gathering section

The participants of the study were 315 undergraduate and graduate students as well as those who are already working. The respondents came from different universities and companies in Metro Manila. The age range of respondents is 17-35 (M= 21.37 years, SD = 3.64). In terms of their age categorized by gender, the average age for females was slightly lower (M= 21.17, *SD* = 3.65) compared to males (M=22.44, *SD* = 3.29). Two hundred

sixty nine (85.4%) respondents were females while 46 (14.6%) were males. Majority of the respondents were students 183 (58.10 %) while 132 (41.9 %) of the respondents were working.

Instruments

The second phase focused on establishing the psychometric properties of the scale constructed by the researcher. Items were generated based from the salient features of the literature as well as on the results of the focus group discussions. For convergent validity, there were 4 questionnaires administered namely the Spirituality Questionnaire, Theistic Spiritual Outcome Survey, Religious Commitment Inventory for Adolescents, and Satisfaction with Life Scale. Meanwhile, the Brief Measure of Dark Personality Traits was utilized to measure the dark triad of personality for divergent validity. The reliability indices after the data gathering are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. *Reliability of Measures*

Scale	Reliability
Theistic Spiritual Outcome Survey (TSOS)	0.90
Spirituality Questionnaire (SQ	0.85
Religious Commitment	0.92

Inventory for Adolescents (RCI-A)	
Machiavellian	0.74
Narcissism	0.51
Psychopathy	0.65
Life Satisfaction	0.76

For the discriminant validity, the Dark Triad Brief Measure of Dark Personality Traits was administered. This instrument measures socially aversive traits namely Machiavellianism, Narcissism and Psychopathy (Jones & Delroy, 2014). It has 3 subscales measuring the 3 traits. Cronbach alphas for this scale ranged from .68-.74.

Procedure

The second phase of the study focused on the scale development part. The research used both inductive and deductive methods which are in line with the recommendation of Kapucinzki & Masters (2010) of integrating both approaches in measuring spirituality.

Different schools and companies were contacted for the pilot-testing of the questionnaire. Several schools and companies within Metro Manila were targeted to have a more diverse and representative sample. Participants from different age groups like

adolescents, young adults and adults as well as gender were included to attain representativeness of sample.

Data Analysis

Second Phase
The second phase of the study focused on the establishment of the different psychometric properties of the Filipino spirituality scale. To establish reliability, the researcher analyzed the items using internal consistency through cronbach alpha. To establish validity, exploratory factor analysis, convergent and divergent analyses were used.

RESULTS

Exploratory factor analysis (EFA)

Responses of 315 participants on 46 items of the FSS were subjected to EFA to determine the scale's underlying structure. As shown in Figure 1, the scree plot of the EFA yielded two distinct factors with eigenvalues of 24.44 for factor 1 and 3.31 for factor 2. Forty-three out of 46 items have significant factor loadings (i.e., ≥ .4) that ranged from .40 (item 44) to .90 (item 3). Items have low factor loadings and were not included in the final form of the FSS. Items with low factor loadings include *"Hindi ko alam ang hangarin ko sa aking buhay", "Ako ay tumutulong sa aking kapwa na may hinhintay na kapalit.", and "Hindi ko alam ang hangarin ko sa aking buhay."*

Thirty five items loaded on factor 1 that accounted for 53.13% of the variance of spirituality as measured by the FSS. These items generally describe beliefs and attitudes related to *ugnayan sa Diyos* (e.g., *Ako any nniniwala na may Diyos*). The remaining eight items loaded on factor 2 that accounted 7.20% of the variance of spirituality. These items generally describe beliefs and attitudes related to *ugnayan sa kapwa only* (e.g., *Mayroon akong pananagutan sa aking kapwa*).
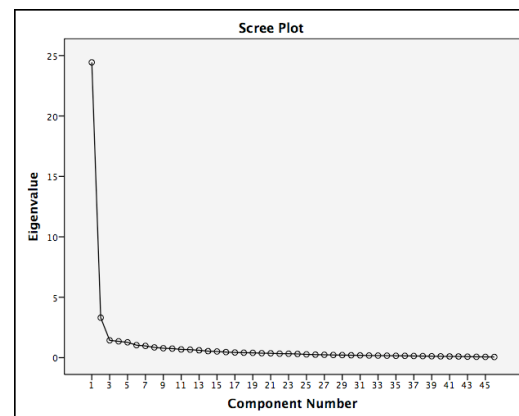

Figure 1. *Scree plot showing eigenvalues and explained variance of Filipino Spirituality Scale*

The overall reliability of the revised Filipino spirituality scale is .88. The original 46-item spirituality scale was reduced to 43 after removing items which loaded below .3. Reliability of the final form of FSS was assessed through Cronbach alpha (α) as an index of internal consistency of responses within a dimension or factor. As reported in 4, connection with God

subscale yielded a very high alpha of .99 and connection with other people subscale yielded a moderate alpha of .77. Overall, the FSS yielded an adequate alpha of .88.

Convergent and discriminant validity

Validity of the FSS was further examined through convergent and discriminant validity. In convergent validity, it was hypothesized that FSS will correlate at least moderately with other similar measures of spirituality or religiosity. In discriminant validity, it was hypothesized that FSS will not correlate with latent constructs that are theoretically different from spirituality.

Convergent validity was determined by correlating FSS with TSOS, RCI-A, SQ, and LS. Resulting correlation of FSS with TSOS ($r=.78$) and RCI-A ($r=.76$) were both high, indicating that these three measures share a common underlying construct of spirituality. However, correlations of FSS with SQ ($r=.28$) and LS ($r=.26$) were almost moderate. Thus, convergent validity of FSS was confirmed.

Discriminant validity was determined by correlating FSS to the three scales of the Dark Triad Brief Measure of Dark Personality Traits (SD3): Machiavellian, Narcissism, and Psychopathy. These scales are considered malevolent qualities that are thought to be associated with a desire to do evil or cause harm. Correlations of FSS with Machiavellian ($r=-.17$), Narcissism ($r=.15$), and Psychopathy ($r=-.19$) were all very low indicating that FSS and the SD3 are measuring different or dissimilar latent constructs. Thus, discriminant validity of the FSS was confirmed.

DISCUSSION

Results indicate that the Filipino Spirituality scale has favorable psychometric properties. The high reliability indicators of the scale has shown the consistency of the responses for the said construct. In accordance with the results of the first phase of the study, there are only two factors obtained for the scale. Most of the items of the scale all converged to factor 1 which is ugnayan sa Diyos. In this first factor, the search for the sacred as well as the internal effects of spirituality converged. It seems like the first two themes of the qualitative results which refer to relationship with a supreme being and the second one which refers to having a sense of meaning and purpose in life. This shows that Filipino spirituality is mostly internal. Religiosity can just be a vehicle and there can be different ways to attain this spirituality which happens inside or the *loob* of a person.

It was highlighted in the first phase of the study that in expressing spirituality, expressing it in the context

of our relationships is very important. In fact, this is valued in our context as Filipinos. Kapwa is considered as our core value in our relationships. Spirituality can also be expressed in our relationships. To sum it up, the Filipino Spirituality Scale (FSS) sums up a common saying among Filipinos, *Makadiyos at Makatao*. When we talk of makatao, it is already assumed that this person also knows how to be *makakapwa*. This means having care, concern and compassion for others not and not only to his or her loved ones but even to people not close to him. Those who are spiritual should be guided by the values they have learned to be good and moral individuals. Those who are high then in the FSS will have low manifestations of the dark triad of personality. This means that those who exhibit Machiavellianism, Psychopathy and Narcissim are usually not the spiritual.

In terms of broader conceptualizations of spirituality, results are consistent with the claim of most researchers that spirituality is related to something personal, subjective side of religious experiences (Hill & Pargament, 2003). It is usually defined by most researchers as referring to the sacred. The present results are consistent with the study of Yabut (2013) about the Filipino spirituality and religion wherein spirituality was discussed as

having a connection with a supreme being and this happens in your loob and it also happens or expressed in our relationships with our kapwa. In a nutshell, Filipino spirituality is about loob and kapwa. In order for us to Filipinos attain spirituality, religion is a common vehicle since it is in religion that cultural activities and traditions are embedded but for some people religion is not the way.

CONCLUSIONS

Spirituality is currently widely studied in the field of Psychology; and Filipinos are known for having a deep sense of spirituality. This study aimed to develop a measure of Filipino spirituality. Specifically, it intended to identify salient dimensions of spirituality among Filipinos. Qualitative results showed that spirituality has 3 main themes: connectedness with the sacred, sense of meaning and purpose, and expressions of spirituality. In the test development, the Filipino spirituality scale yielded two factors. The first factor refers to a relationship or connectedness with a supreme being while the other factor having good relationship with *kapwa* or *uganyan sa kapwa*. The reliability of the whole measure yielded favorable alphas for the total and the two subscales.

The results are very much relevant in the broader study of spirituality as well as to the Filipino context. Future studies should continue validate the

Filipino Spirituality Scale and perform confirmatory factor analysis in another sample and cross validate with other similar and dissimilar measures. Validation in Psychometrics is a process that should be performed to constantly check the validity of a scale.

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