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Research Article

Psychometric Properties of the Internalized Homonegativity Scale in Adults

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Abstract

The main objective was to know the evidence of validity and reliability of the Internalized Homonegativity Scale. This theory is based on the stress of sexual minorities, which focuses on the psychological affectations of minority groups based on discrimination, prejudice and stigma. A total of 313 persons between the ages of 18 and 49 years were evaluated. The content validity, factor analysis and reliability were assessed. The content validity, to which it was subjected, yielded acceptable values. The CFA allowed maintaining the trifactorial structure and a McDonald coefficient of .84 was obtained for the general scale. Likewise, the Wagnild & Young Resilience Scale was used to determine the validity in relation to other variables and presents an inverse relationship of small magnitude. The study shows that the IHS has adequate psychometric properties, evidencing its usefulness for the measurement of internalized homonegativity.

Keywords: psychometric properties, internalized homonegativity, validity evidence

1. Introduction

Sexual minorities suffer from homophobic violence from schools, such as physical aggression, insults, inappropriate touching and sexual violations (Cuba & Osores, 2017). In this regard, homophobia is a term used equivocally to define the attitude of rejection that generates discriminatory behaviors that violate the rights of sexual minorities (Moral & Valle, 2019). This term allows homosexuality to be associated with a mental disorder (Peidro, 2021). In response to this, a more appropriate term is suggested to define the phenomenon, namely "homonegativity" (Cardozo *et al.*, 2021).

The stigma predisposes the heterosexual population to reject sexual diversity. Within the homosexual population, a phenomenon known as internalized homonegativity develops (Da Silva *et al.,* 2019). Homosexual people integrate the stereotypes to which they were exposed in their socialization process (Barrientos *et al.*, 2016; Pompeu & Cerqueira, 2019), their own value system and self-concepts, creating negative self-valuation, internal conflicts and deterioration in mental health (Orcasita, *et al.*,2020, Pineda *et al.*, 2020).

Internalized homonegativity directly affects individual, social and sexual well-being (Chavarría & Oviedo, 2021) and is associated with depressive symptoms and stress (Pakula, et al., 2016; Ávila *et al.*, 2017). Its high rates are linked to suicide attempts and ideation, anxiety and the intake of psychoactive substances linked to rejection of homosexuality and emotional exhaustion (Lozano *et al.*, 2017).

The internalization of negative attitudes impacts the way in which non-heterosexual people perceive themselves (Da Silva *et al.*, 2019). It is in this way that society is attributed to be the generator of the problem due to social stigmas and prejudices without failing to consider the fears of each person, which can become irrational (Berg *et al.*, 2015).

The Internalized Homonegativity Scale is an instrument designed by Moral and Valle (2013), who sought to assess rejection of homosexuality. This version was adapted for Mexican youth and is composed of 16 items with 5 response options.

These stigmatized beliefs are measured in three dimensions: the first, involved in the treatment of non-heterosexual people who deny their orientation even when they have already made their identity conscious; because of insecurity, fear, uncertainty due to the fear of acceptance by both their environment and family (Lozano *et al.*,2018). Added to this is the fear of being rejected for going against heterosexist norms (Thorsteinsson, *et al.*, 2017). The second manifestation is the rejection of homosexual fantasies and identity, attitudes and thoughts that express rejection of sex-affective relationships between people of the same gender, being considered inappropriate behaviors (Moral & Valle, 2015). As a third, the inability to intimacy of homosexual people: these are stigmas that accompany homosexuality, specifically the behavior within the relationships they establish with their partners, generalizing them as volatile and transient, in addition to not preserving traditional values and family (Valdez, *et al.*, 2018).

The general objective seeks to determine the validity and reliability of the Internalized Homonegativity Scale (IHS) in Trujillo. The specific objectives are to establish content validity, confirmatory factor analysis, and to verify the evidence of reliability through internal consistency.

2. Methodology

2.1 Participants

Non-probabilistic sampling was used, which consisted of 313 participants, aged 18 to 49 years. Also, 179 were university students, studying from the second to the ninth cycle in the careers of psychology, medicine, nursing and nutrition. At the same time, 134 were workers in public and private companies, all of them residents of the city of Trujillo. In addition, 52 participants of both sexes, including students and workers, affirmed to have had a same-sex partner.

The instrument used was the Internalized Homonegativity Scale (IHS) developed by Moral and Valle (2013), adapted to Mexico, which presents internal consistency, reaching .88. The 16 items are grouped into three groups according to their factors: rejection of the public manifestation of homosexuality, rejection of fantasies, homosexual self-identity, and the inability to intimacy of homosexual persons. We worked with the Resilience Scale adapted to Trujillo. The instrument has adequate construct validity and an overall reliability of .85 considered acceptable (Nunja, 2016).

For the achievement of the objectives, the validity of content was performed, for which six experts reviewed the document, checking the relevance of each of the items and considering a .50 to accept the representativeness of the domain (Merino, 2016).

The multivariate normality was assessed, reaching values below .70, thus fulfilling the assumption of the multivariate normality of the items (Mardia, 1970). The multicollinearity was calculated, obtaining values below .90 (Arias, 2008).

To determine the validity in the internal structure, we worked on the basis of the Confirmatory Factor Analysis, carried out based on the maximum likelihood estimates to evaluate the aik, and explaining the proportion of variability of the item presented by the factor. The adjustment indexes

indicate the non-equivalence among items to evaluate each factor, indicating a congeneric measurement model, defining the use of the McDonald coefficient to calculate the reliability of each factor and taking into account that the acceptable values are found between .70 and .90 (Campo & Oviedo, 2008).

In relation to validity based on the association with other variables, (Hernández *et al.*, 2018), normality was estimated, for which measures of M, SD, Me and R were used. Also, the K^2 index, which with values describe a distribution different from the normal distribution. (Hair *et al.,* 2006). To conclude, the Spearman's correlation (1909) was calculated based on Cohen's (1988) criteria, denominating a trivial effect size of [.00 - .10; in addition, small from [.10 to .30); moderate from [.30 to 50) and large [.50 to 1.0].

3. Results

Table 1: Validity of Content

Items	Clarity					Pertinence					Relevance				
	V of Aiken			CI 95%		V of Aiken			CI 95%		V of Aiken			CI 95%	
	V	*P*		Li	Ls	V	*P*		Li	Ls	V	*p*		Li	Ls
Mean	.97	<.001	**	.71	1.00	.98	<.001	**	.73	1.00	.98	<.001	**	.73	1.00
1	1.00	<.001	**	.76	1.00	1.00	<.001	**	.76	1.00	1.00	<.001	**	.76	1.00
2	.83	.002	**	.55	.95	1.00	<.001	**	.76	1.00	1.00	<.001	**	.76	1.00
3	1.00	<.001	**	.76	1.00	.83	.002	**	.55	.95	.83	.002	**	.55	.95
4	1.00	<.001	**	.76	1.00	1.00	<.001	**	.76	1.00	1.00	<.001	**	.76	1.00
5	1.00	<.001	**	.76	1.00	1.00	<.001	**	.76	1.00	1.00	<.001	**	.76	1.00
6	1.00	<.001	**	.76	1.00	1.00	<.001	**	.76	1.00	1.00	<.001	**	.76	1.00
7	1.00	<.001	**	.76	1.00	1.00	<.001	**	.76	1.00	1.00	<.001	**	.76	1.00
8	1.00	<.001	**	.76	1.00	1.00	<.001	**	.76	1.00	1.00	<.001	**	.76	1.00
9	1.00	<.001	**	.76	1.00	1.00	<.001	**	.76	1.00	1.00	<.001	**	.76	1.00
10	1.00	<.001	**	.76	1.00	1.00	<.001	**	.76	1.00	1.00	<.001	**	.76	1.00
11	.83	.002	**	.55	.95	1.00	<.001	**	.76	1.00	1.00	<.001	**	.76	1.00
12	1.00	<.001	**	.76	1.00	1.00	<.001	**	.76	1.00	1.00	<.001	**	.76	1.00
13	.83	.002	**	.55	.95	.83	.002	**	.55	.95	.83	.002	**	.55	.95
14	1.00	<.001	**	.76	1.00	1.00	<.001	**	.76	1.00	1.00	<.001	**	.76	1.00
15	1.00	<.001	**	.76	1.00	1.00	<.001	**	.76	1.00	1.00	<.001	**	.76	1.00
16	1.00	<.001	**	.76	1.00	1.00	<.001	**	.76	1.00	1.00	<.001	**	.76	1.00

3.1 Evidence based on the internal structure

Table 2: Descriptive statistics and evaluation of assumptions

Item	M	SD	K^2
1	2.63	1.04	8.34
2	2.32	0.93	21.52
3	2.69	0.97	5.99
4	2.11	0.93	34.70
5	3.18	0.85	10.89
6	2.66	0.90	1.00
7	2.72	0.93	3.24
8	2.70	0.98	2.63
9	2.51	0.96	6.85
10	2.22	0.93	10.60
11	2.41	0.97	15.12
12	3.11	1.07	4.82

Item	M	SD	K²
13	2.53	0.97	4.25
14	2.07	0.88	10.30
15	2.78	1.20	12.79
16	2.73	1.06	4.57
Multivariate kurtosis			10.1
Correlation among items			-.04 a .76

Table 2: The multivariate kurtosis level shows a value of 10.1 < 70 fulfilling the multivariate normality assumption. With respect to the correlations among items, values from -.04 to .76 < .90 are shown, confirming the assumption of absence of redundancy among the items, making possible the application of the CFA, calculating the structure coefficients using the maximum likelihood method.

Table 3: Standardized Coefficients for the Internalized Homonegativity Scale

Factor	Item	Model 1		IM	Model 2	
		a_{ik}	r^2		a_{ik}	r^2
First order						
F1. Rejection of the public manifestation of homosexuality	2	.64	.41	59.3	.56	.32
	4	.63	.40	156.0		
	9	.73	.53	32.2	.82	.67
	10	.76	.58	17.6	.84	.70
	11	.46	.21	71.4	.42	.18
	14	.77	.59	126.6		
F2. Rejection of fantasies, homosexual self-identity	1	.50	.25	149.4		
	3	.52	.27	99.9		
	12	.54	.29	37.2	.60	.36
	13	.62	.39	32.9	.62	.38
	15	.74	.55	133.1		
	16	.78	.61	11.7	.68	.46
F3. inability for intimacy of homosexual persons	5	.37	.13	124.4		
	6	.58	.33	41.1	.54	.29
	7	.74	.55	78.7	.71	.50
	8	.76	.57	39.3	.80	.64
Second order	FG -->F1	.83	.69		.72	.52
	FG -->F2	.95	.90		.99	.98
	FG -->F3	.74	.55		.73	.53

Table 3 shows the standardized coefficients of the factor loadings aik and squared multiple correlation coefficients r², showing values of aik between .37 to .78 and r² between .13 to .61. Also, the first-order factors presented aik of .74 to .95 and squared multiple correlations of .55 to .90 in model 1 with one general factor and three 1st-order factors with 16 initial items. High modification indexes were observed in items 1, 3, 4, 5, 14 and 15, which were eliminated, obtaining a structure with 10 items with aik values between .42 and .84 and r² values between .18 and .70. In addition, the first-order factors presented aik values from .72 to .99 as well as a squared multiple correlation from .52 to .98 in the second model with a second-order FG and three first-order dimensions with 10 items, represented graphically in Figures 1 and 2:
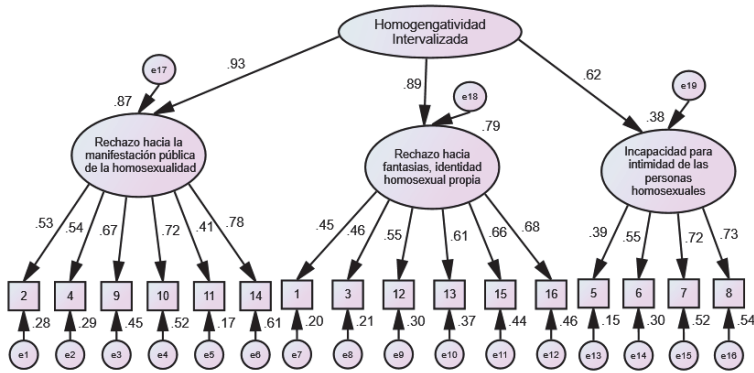
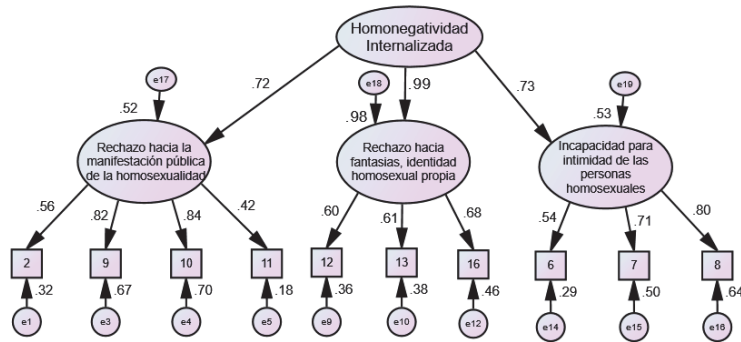**Figure 1.** Model 1 of the Internalized Homonegativity Scale.

Figure 2. Model 2 of the Internalized Homonegativity Scale.

Table 4: Internalized Homonegativity Scale Adjustment Indexes

Model	χ^2/gl	SRMR	RMSEA	CFI	TLI	PCFI
Model 1	3.68	.07	.11	.81	.77	.67
Model 2	2.27	.04	.07	.94	.92	.68

Table 4: Fit indexes of the internalized Homonegativity Scale.
They show values that indicate a good fit as in the X2/gl< 2, SRMR lower than .08, RMSEA< .08. In the comparative fit indexes, a CFI>.95 and TLI >.95 were reached and in the parsimonious fit index PCFI>.70 for the second model with 10 items.

Table 5: Reliability Indexes of the Internalized Homonegativity Scale

Factor	N	ω
F1. Rejection of the public manifestation of homosexuality	4	.76
F2. Rejection of fantasies, homosexual self-identity	3	.67
F3. Inability for intimacy of homosexual persons	3	.73
General factor	10	.84

Table 5: The Omega coefficient presents values from .67 to .76 in its dimensions and .84 in the general factor.

3.2 *Evidence of external validity*

Table 6: Descriptive statistics of the scales

Variables	M	Me	SD	R	K²
Internalized homonegativity	25.9	26	6.2	37	0.71
Rejection of the public manifestation of homosexuality	9.5	9	2.9	15	1.93
Rejection of fantasies, homosexual self-identity	8.4	8	2.4	13	1.02
Inability for intimacy of homosexual persons	8.1	8	2.3	12	1.87
Resilience	143.9	147	17.4	94	43.21
Equanimity	21.5	22	3.3	19	7.37
Personal satisfaction	23.2	24	3.5	17	18.67
Feeling well alone	17.9	18	2.8	14	59.72
Self-confidence	41.4	42	5.9	33	47.37
Perseverance	39.9	40	5.1	30	18.36

Table 6: Mean and median values with respect to the central tendency, dispersion in standard deviation and range. In addition, a measure of shape in the K² index that with values higher than 5.99 evidenced a distribution different from normal in the scores of the constructs and their factors, results that defined that the method for calculating the relationship would be the Spearman's Coefficient.

Table 7: Internalized Homonegativity and Resilience: Who did and did not have sex with people of the same sex

Spearman's Correlation	Internalized Homonegativity		RMP		RFI		IPH	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Resilience	-.21	.01	-.28	-.04	-.35	.01	.02	.06
Equanimity	.16	.07	.07	.08	-.04	.01	.31	.06
Personal satisfaction	-.28	-.05	-.32	-.13	-.39	-.01	-.02	.03
Feeling well alone	-.23	.00	-.34	-.06	-.30	-.02	-.09	.07
Self-confidence	-.11	-.02	-.21	-.08	-.24	-.01	.12	.04
Perseverance	-.04	.04	-.10	-.01	-.19	.05	.13	.11

4. Discussion

For the content validity analysis, the Aiken V method was used, assigning dichotomous values of "Yes" and "No" to the opinion of six experts selected for their knowledge in the area to be investigated, professional background and experience in relation to the construct (Urrutia *et al.*, 2014), indispensable characteristics to give greater support to the procedure (Pedrosa *et al.*, 2014; Robles, 2018). The results show that the sixteen items are valid, with an overall index of .97 achieving total agreement for the use of the scale. To achieve these values, modifications were made in the wording of items 1, 2, 4, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 8, 10, 11, 11, 12, 15 and 16 in order not to generate confusion in the reader (Muñiz & Fonseca, 2019) and to adapt the statements to the Trujillo context, considering that each item involves cultural, linguistic and conceptual elements and for its adaptation it is necessary to consider that the idiomatic characteristics, even being the same language, may vary and have different meanings from one culture to another (Chahín, 2014), for this reason, the universality of the constructs should not be assumed (Muñiz *et al.*, 2013).

In the descriptive analysis of the scale, adequate results were obtained regarding the values of central tendency (M: 2.07 to 3.18), dispersion (SD: 0.85 to 1.20), symmetry, joint kurtosis, where a normal distribution was found only in items 6, 7, 8, 12, 13 and 16, fulfilling the premise that in empirical research in psychology the distribution is rarely normal (Rodriguez & Ruiz, 2008).

After the responses to the items, testing the conformity of the assumptions of univariate normality, multivariate normality and absence of redundancy, the confirmatory factor analysis was carried out using the maximum likelihood extraction method, where two models were worked on according to the high values of the modification indexes in items 1, 3, 4, 5, 14 and 15. The results indicated that there were specifications that should be released in order to statistically improve the understanding of the structure and to consider the model optimal (Domínguez & Merino, 2018), leaving values between .42 and .84 in their factor loadings, which motivated the elimination of items allowing an acceptable adjustment, thus leaving a scale model made up of 10 items and three factors. In the factor rejection towards the public manifestation of homosexuality with items 2, 9, 10 and 11, the second factor rejection towards fantasies, homosexual self-identity with items 12, 13 and 16, and in the factor of inability for intimacy of homosexual persons with items 6,7 and 8.

Needles to say, we had to discard some elements from our project vision in order to get a better and more efficient investigation model. After the change applied for our project, we were able to understand the link between the opening of the society to the minorites, and the campaigns that wants to show how important is to understand and know more about minorities, in a way to create a better space in our society that allows everyone to be just like themselves, without being judged or discriminated.

The second model obtained values that indicated a good fit. The likelihood ratio was 2.27, which compared to the X2/gl of 3.68 of the first model, reaffirmed its relevance compared to the other. In addition, a CFL of .94 and a TLI of .92 were obtained, finding a relationship between the indicators and the factors of the scale, which indicated that it adjusts to the theoretical model proposed in the sample evaluated. Also, an SRMR of .04 and an RMSEA of .07 were obtained, which, being absolute fit indexes, suggested that the lower the result, the better the fit (Jordan, 2021).

After dispensing with 6 items, the reliability of the scale was identified by means of the McDonald coefficient for not having complied with the Tau Equivalence principle (Ventura & Caycho, 2017) obtaining values ranging from .67 to .76 in the factors and .84 in the general factor denoting adequate precision in the scores of the instrument. This means that the instrument measures the internalized homonegativity in each item indicating that the construct has been adequately operationalized and that it has measurement stability (Aragón, 2004).

Validity in relation to other variables was determined by using the Walding and Heather Resilience Scale applied to young people from Trujillo over 18 years of age who had and had not had sexual relationships with persons of the same sex. A small inverse association (.10 ≤ rs < .30) is evidenced between internalized homonegativity and resilience in population that indicated having maintained a homosexual relationship reaffirming what was postulated by Fonseca *et al.* (2017). They highlight the optimistic perspective of the LGTBIQ+ community, leaving aside cultural issues and traditions to achieve full development in society.

Likewise, the relationship between internalized homonegativity and personal satisfaction should be highlighted. Avila *et al.* (2017) argue that an adequate self-image allows them to cope with negative ideas related to personal tastes and interests. Similarly, the relationship between sexual orientation and the perception of subjective well-being in the non-heterosexual population is reaffirmed, even identifying the existence of rejection of what is different (Barrientos *et al.*, 2016). At the same time, the factor feeling well alone presents an inverse association of small magnitude with the general factor and the dimensions rejection of the public manifestation of homosexuality and rejection of fantasies, homosexual self-identity. This allows understanding that the autonomy of the non-heterosexual person favors the adequate self-concept that prevents the internalization of the social stigmas that accompany homosexuality, thus linking with the dimension of self-confidence, which involves the recognition of personal skills and abilities (Nunja, 2016). In addition, perseverance

shows an inverse relationship with internalized homonegativity, showing that both concepts are associated. In contrast, a direct relationship was obtained between the construct studied and equanimity.

Thus, it is important to mention and reflect on the limitations of the study, among them the use of a non-probabilistic sampling and the access to the population considering that there are some prejudices regarding the participation of people who belong to the LGTBIQ+ collective. Added to this is the limited bibliography with respect to the background of the construct studied in the Peruvian reality. Nevertheless, the objectives set have been rigorously fulfilled.

Finally, the research provided the first national antecedent that uses procedures in accordance with validity and reliability standards. In addition, it is an updated theoretical review of the foundations of the internalized homonegativity and contributes to the knowledge of the psychometric characteristics of the IHS.

5. Conclusions

Based on the stated objectives, it can be concluded that each of the values obtained for validity and reliability show that the test presents adequate benefits that make it a useful tool for measuring homonegativity in adults.

Ethics: Each participant signed an informed consent form explaining the objectives and scope of the study. At the same time, it was approved by the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Health Sciences - School of Psychology of the Universidad César Vallejo, with opinion number 143-CEI-EP-UCV-2022.

6. Recommendations

Taking into account the problems described above, it is important to continue analyzing the validity and reliability indexes in other contexts and population groups. At the same time, in future studies, it is important to carry out invariance based on population groups and sociodemographic characteristics.

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