Published in final edited form as:

Hisp Health Care Int. 2009 ; 7(2): 72. doi:10.1891/1540-4153.7.2.72.

Spirituality and Cultural Identification Among Latino and Non-Latino College Students

Maureen Campesino, PhD, RN and **Michael Belyea, PhD**
Arizona State University

Gary Schwartz, PhD
University of Arizona

Abstract

The purposes of this study were to examine (a) differences in spiritual perspectives and practices of Latino and non-Latino young adults and (b) the cultural relevance of the Latino Spiritual Perspective Scale (LSPS). Studies indicate that spiritual perspectives are embedded within cultural group norms and vary significantly across ethnic groups. A cross-sectional survey design was used with a convenience sample of 223 Latino and non-Latino university students in the Southwestern United States. The Spiritual Perspective Scale (SPS), the LSPS, the Orthogonal Cultural Identification Scale, and a demographic questionnaire were used. Latinos scored significantly higher than non-Latinos in both measures of spiritual perspectives. Self-reported behavioral measures, such as frequency of personal prayer, were also higher among the Latino group. Latino cultural identification was the only significant predictor of LSPS scores. Findings from this study indicate that spirituality among Latinos has meanings specific to the cultural group context. These findings have implications for nursing research involving the conceptualization and measurement of spirituality among multiethnic groups.

Los propósitos de este estudio eran examinar: (a) diferencias en perspectivas espirituales y prácticas de jóvenes Latinos y no Latinos; y (b) la relevancia cultural de la Escala de la Perspectiva Espiritual Latina. Estudios indican que perspectivas espirituales están incrustadas entre normas culturales del grupo y varían considerablemente entre grupos étnicos. Un diseño transversal y de encuesta fue utilizado con una muestra de conveniencia de 233 estudiantes universitarios Latinos y no Latinos en el Suroeste de los Estados Unidos. La Escala de la Perspectiva Espiritual (EPE), la Escala de la Perspectiva Espiritual Latina (EPEL), la Escala Ortogonal de Identificación Cultural, y un cuestionario demográfico fueron utilizados. Los Latinos calificaron considerablemente más alto que los no Latinos en ambas medidas de perspectivas espirituales. Medidas de comportamiento auto-reportadas, como la frecuencia de oración, también estuvieron más altas en el grupo Latino. La identificación con la cultura Latina fue el único vaticinador de las calificaciones de la EPEL. Los resultados de este estudio indican que la espiritualidad entre Latinos tiene significados específicos al contexto del grupo cultural. Estas conclusiones tienen implicaciones para las investigaciones de enfermería que involucran la conceptualización y medida de la espiritualidad entre grupos multiétnicos.

© 2009 Springer Publishing Company

Correspondence regarding this article should be directed to Maureen Campesino, PhD, RN, College of Nursing and Healthcare Innovation, Arizona State University, 500 N. Third Street, Phoenix, AZ 85004-0698. maureen.campesino@asu.edu.

Publisher's Disclaimer: Copyright of Hispanic Health Care International is the property of Springer Publishing Company, Inc. and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.

Keywords

spirituality; religious practices; cultural identification; instrumentation

Spirituality is an inherent human quality that serves as an important resource throughout life transitions, during illness, and in maintaining wellness (Miller & Thoresen, 2003). The past two decades reflect a dramatic rise in the number of empirical studies in nursing and health science literature exploring links between spirituality and health (Idler, 2003). An important issue in this area of study is the conceptualization of spirituality, particularly as it applies to diverse racial, cultural, and ethnic groups. Among health and social science researchers, there is general consensus that spirituality refers to a universal human phenomenon that involves finding meaning in life, transcendence of self-boundaries, and connection with God, a Higher Being, nature, and others (Delgado, 2005; Hill & Pargament, 2003; Sawatzky & Pesut, 2005). Spirituality is often, but not necessarily, experienced within a religious context. Religion refers to an organized system of beliefs and practices associated with a particular faith tradition.

Religion and spirituality are shaped by and embedded within cultural norms (Johnson, Elbert-Avila, & Tulskey, 2005; Malinski, 2002). National studies have found that spirituality and religiosity vary significantly across racial groups even when controlling for sociodemographic variables including age, education, income, region, and marital status (Levin, Taylor, & Chatters, 1994). A limitation in the study of spirituality, however, is that the conceptualization and measurement of religion and spirituality in health science research reflects European American Christian perspectives, mainly because the majority of studies focus predominantly on White, middle-class, Protestant Christian samples (Hill & Pargament, 2003). When only dominant groups and theologies are considered, the faith experiences and perspectives of people from nondominant groups, such as Latinos and other minority communities, become relegated to the periphery. The absence of divergent perspectives entails a loss for everyone because “encountering diverse cultures invites us to perceive reality and to think about our theological interpretations of reality in new ways” (Burke, 2005, p. 44). Health care researchers and other social scientists emphasize that context-specific measurement tools of religiosity and spirituality that address unique cultural influences are needed in order to further develop this field of study (Hill & Pargament, 2003).

Spirituality Among Latinos

Latinos are the largest ethnic minority group in the United States, comprising more than 37 million people or 14.4% of the total U.S. population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007).

Approximately 25 million Latinos identify as Catholic, and another 9 million identify as Pentecostal or Charismatic (Espinosa, Elizondo, & Miranda, 2003). U.S. Latinos are not a monolithic group. Subgroup differences may exist related to class, immigration experiences, acculturation, and country of origin. There are, however, shared historical and contemporary experiences that link Latino subgroups together, such as a history of colonization and continued societal oppression.

A core cultural value shared among Latino subgroups is the importance of spirituality, though the expression of spiritual and faith experiences may vary (Cervantes & Parham, 2005). One cultural survival strategy that emerged from Christian colonization and evangelization of the Americas in the 16th century was the syncretism of indigenous religious worldviews and practices into what is now termed *religiosidad popular*, or popular religion (Broyles-González, 2002). In this perspective, events in the physical world are influenced by the interplay between human and divine actions, and an understanding of this fosters humility. The expression of popular religiosity may include close, loving relationships with God and various transcendent

beings, such as Our Lady of Guadalupe (Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe), Jesus, and saints (Elizondo, Deck, & Matovina, 2006; Rodriguez, 1994). Because Latino culture is collectivist in nature, the context for faith experiences is embedded within the family and local community. Popular religiosity among Latinos is recognized as being highly resistant to cultural imposition and may be a key protective health factor (Magaña & Clark, 1995).

While large numbers of Latinos identify as Catholic, their involvement and commitment to the Catholic Church varies greatly. Respect for the Catholic Church hierarchy and local priests are common, but church attendance may not necessarily be an integral component of Latinos' faith experiences or practices because Latino Catholicism is practiced most often in the home and local neighborhood (Goizueta, 2005). This is in contrast to non-Latino Catholics, who may rely more on religious congregations for spiritual support (Idler, 2003). Latino Catholicism is also influenced by historical and current contexts of oppression. A strong commitment to their faith and Christian teachings involves addressing injustices within their church and society. Enduring and confronting social inequities is part of *la lucha*, the struggle of daily life for many Latinos, and is an integral component of Latino theology (Isasi-Díaz, 2004).

This study was conceptually grounded in Latina/o theological perspectives. This framework posits that the spiritual lives of most Latinos are reflective of indigenous cultural roots and a shared history (see Campesino & Schwartz, 2006, for a review). Historical and current conditions of marginalization of Latinos in the United States are important contextual factors that shape Latino theology. In addition, traditional Latino cultural values, such as *personalismo* and *familismo*, also influence spiritual values and religious practices. *Personalismo*, which refers to warmth and closeness in relationships, is evident in the intimate and direct relationship with divine beings that many Latinos experience in their faith (Isasi-Díaz, 2004; Rodriguez, 1994). *Familismo* pertains to the integral role that the family relationships have in the everyday lives of Latinos. Faith experiences are often embedded within the context of family and community, rather than the individual (Elizondo, 2000).

The purposes of this study were to examine (a) differences in spiritual perspectives and practices among Latino and non-Latino college students and (b) the cultural relevancy of the Latino Spiritual Perspectives Scale (LSPS). Two spirituality measures and a cultural identification scale were used to test the hypotheses that (a) there would be statistically significant differences among Latino and non-Latino (non-Hispanic White) spiritual perspectives when using a general spirituality scale and one developed specifically for Latino participants and (b) participants with a stronger Latino cultural identification would have higher LSPS scores than those with a weaker Latino cultural identification.

Methods

Sample and Procedures

The study was conducted at a large public university in the Southwestern United States. After receiving approval from the university's institutional review board, a convenience sample of English-speaking Latino and non-Latino undergraduate students was recruited. Inclusion criteria required participants to be at least 18 years old and enrolled in a psychology or Mexican American studies class or to be a participating member of a Latino student campus organization. Participants were recruited through informational flyers presented at Latino student clubs, organizations, and classes. Two hundred twenty-three participants were recruited, and the majority (88%) were recruited from undergraduate psychology classes. Data were collected during a 6-month period in 2005. Two spirituality scales, one cultural identification scale, and a demographic form were administered.

Measures of Spirituality—Reed's (1987) Spiritual Perspective Scale (SPS) is a well-validated instrument in nursing and health sciences research. The SPS is a 10-item, six-point Likert scale, with a Cronbach's alpha above 0.90. In the current study, the Cronbach's alpha for the SPS was 0.89 for Latinos and 0.94 for non-Latinos.

The LSPS (Campesino & Schwartz, 2006), a relatively new scale that was developed specifically for use with Latino samples, assesses emotional and behavioral aspects of one's relationship with various divine beings and how spiritual perspective manifests in one's daily life. The LSPS is a 32-item Likert scale with six-point response options (1 = *disagree strongly* to 6 = *agree strongly*). Total possible scores range from 32 to 192. The development and initial validation testing of this measure has been described elsewhere (Campesino & Schwartz, 2006). Cronbach's alpha for the LSPS in the current study was 0.90 for Latinos and 0.93 for non-Latinos.

Measure of Cultural Identification—Cultural identification was measured using the Orthogonal Cultural Identification Scale (OCIS; Oetting & Beauvais, 1990–1991). This 30-item multidimensional tool measures identification with five racial and ethnic groups (African American, Asian American, White/Anglo, American Indian, and Mexican American). A strength of the OCIS is that it permits measurement of biculturality and multiculturalism, or the extent of identification with one's culture(s) of origin and the dominant culture. Thus, individuals may be independently identified with one or more cultures, or not be identified with any culture. Scores for each of the five cultural groups range from 1 (not at all identified) to 4 (strongly identified). Construct and factorial validity of the OCIS was demonstrated among studies of American Indian adults (Moran, Fleming, Somervell, & Manson, 1999; Venner, Wall, Lau, & Ehlers, 2006) and Mexican American and American Indian adolescents (Oetting, Swaim, & Chiarella, 1998). Internal consistency for each of the five cultural groups in the OCIS ranged from 0.76 to 0.91. In the current study, the OCIS had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.95 for the Latino subscale and 0.89 for the White/Anglo subscale.

Measure of Demographic Variables—Data regarding demographic characteristics and extent of involvement in religious and spiritual activities, such as frequency of church attendance and daily private prayer, were collected using a 15-item questionnaire. Demographic variables included cultural subgroup identification (Cuban, Mexican American, etc.), religious denomination, age, education, income, and immigration level.

Findings

Sample Characteristics

The sample contained 223 participants, which included 122 (54.7%) Latinos and 101 (45.3%) non-Latinos (non-Hispanic White). Among the Latinos in the sample, 83.6% identified as Mexican American, Mexican, or Chicana/o, and the remaining were Central American (5%), Puerto Rican (2.5%), South American (1.6%), and Cuban (0.8%). The mean age for the total sample was 21 years old (range 17–50 years old) and the majority (67%) was female. There was wide range in the immigration level of the total sample, with 13% being first generation (born outside the United States), 26% second generation (parents born outside the United States), 19% third generation (grandparents born outside the United States), and 42% being fourth and fifth generation. Forty-one percent of the Latinos reported speaking Spanish in the home most of the time or always. Twenty-five percent of the total sample reported a family income of less than \$10,000 per year.

Latino students tended to be more religiously involved. Slightly less than one-third (27%) of Latinos reported attending church services daily, compared to 7% of the non-Latinos. Latinos were also more likely to report engagement in personal prayer outside of church (38% prayed

once to a few times a week vs. 19% for non-Latinos). Discussion of religious or spiritual beliefs with others was reported to occur once a week or more among 35.2% of the Latinos and 27.8% among non-Latinos. Some of the differences in frequency of religious activities may be due to denominational characteristics. There were more Catholics (67%) among the Latino group than among the non-Latino White students (23%), with the latter identifying primarily with Protestant denominations.

SPS—The SPS mean total score among the sample was 39.1 ($SD = 11.8$; range 10–60). Latinos ($n = 122$) scored significantly higher than non-Latinos ($n = 101$) on SPS items (item $M = 4.3$ vs. 3.8 respectively, $F = 15.7$, $p = .000$). Catholics scored lower than other denominations, though it was not statistically significant. While age and gender were significantly correlated with SPS scores, further analysis using multiple regression revealed that Latino identification ($\beta = .226$, $p = .02$) and gender ($\beta = .151$, $p = .03$) were significant predictors of SPS scores. There was a robust significant correlation between the SPS and the LSPS among non-Latinos ($r = .84$; $p < .000$), indicating concurrent validity of the LSPS. The correlation between these two measures for Latinos was significant, but weaker ($r = .62$; $p < .000$), indicating possible differences in how the two measures of spiritual perspective were perceived in the Latino sample.

LSPS—The LSPS total scale scores showed good variability, with a mean total score of 111.5 ($SD = 26.9$; range of 42–175). Construct validity of the LSPS using confirmatory factor analysis will be discussed in a separate article. Among the total sample, LSPS scores were unrelated to age, gender, education, income level, and immigration level (first generation, second generation, etc). The frequency of speaking Spanish in the home, discussion of religious or spiritual beliefs, church attendance, and personal prayer were all significantly correlated with total LSPS scale scores. Scores for Latino students ($M = 122.4$, $SD = 21.5$) were significantly higher than for non-Latinos ($M = 98.1$, $SD = 26.9$) ($F_{[1, 221]} = 55.47$, $p = .000$). These findings confirm the first hypothesis, which stated that there would be a statistically significant difference in LSPS scores between Latinos and non-Latinos.

Catholics scored significantly higher on the LSPS (see Table 1). Since the majority of the Latino students (67%) identified as Catholic, we considered the possibility that the LSPS may simply be measuring Catholic religiosity. To further explore the potential relationship between Catholic denomination and spiritual perspective, LSPS scores were examined among Catholic/non-Catholic Latinos and Catholic/non-Catholic non-Latinos. A two-way ANOVA resulted in a nonsignificant interaction between being Latino and being Catholic ($F_{[1, 218]} = 2.74$, $p = .10$), indicating that each factor had an independent effect on the LSPS. While Catholics scored significantly higher on the LSPS than non-Catholics ($F_{[1, 218]} = 12.29$, $p = .001$), Latinos who were not Catholic scored higher ($M = 110.2$, $SD = 19.8$) than non-Latinos who were Catholic ($M = 103.2$, $SD = 32.7$). Further analysis using multiple regression revealed that only Latino identification significantly predicted LSPS scores ($\beta = .238$, $p = .01$). Thus, even though Catholics scored higher on the LSPS, identification as Catholic was not a predictor scores ($\beta = .140$, $p = .19$).

The second hypothesis stated that Latinos who felt a stronger identification with Latino culture would have higher LSPS scores. Cultural identification was measured by the OCIS, which was described earlier. Since the OCIS allows for measurement of identification with more than one cultural group, each participant had a score for the Latino subscale and the Anglo subscale. A two-way ANOVA resulted in a significant interaction between identification with Latino culture and identification with Anglo culture ($F_{[1, 213]} = 3.04$, $p = .018$), suggesting that the effect of Latino identification on the LSPS scores was conditional upon one's level of Anglo identification.

To further explore this significant interaction, simple effects of Latino identification within specific levels of Anglo identification were examined. Students with higher levels of Anglo identification had lower LSPS scores. There were also significant differences in LSPS scores between those with a low, medium, and high Latino cultural identification. Students with low OCIS Latino subscale scores (between 1 and 1.99) had a mean LSPS score of 94.9 ($p = .000$); those with medium OCIS Latino subscale scores (between 2 and 2.99) had a mean LSPS score of 115.3 ($p = .000$); and those with high OCIS Latino sub-scale scores (between 3 and 4.0) had a mean LSPS score of 123.9 ($p = .000$). These findings confirm the second hypothesis. A measure of OCIS construct validity was demonstrated by a significant positive correlation of the OCIS Latino subscale and speaking Spanish in the home ($r = .65, p = .000$), while the OCIS Anglo subscale correlated negatively with speaking Spanish in the home ($r = -.18, p = .004$).

To further assess the utility of the LSPS as a culturally sensitive tool, a comparative analysis of LSPS item mean scores among the Latino and non-Latino groups was conducted (mean item scores ranged from 1 to 6, higher scores indicating stronger agreement with LSPS items). There were statistically significant differences between Latinos and non-Latinos in all but four of the 32 LSPS items, as shown in Table 2.

LSPS items that resulted in the largest difference in means between the two cultural groups pertained to questions about one's relationship with God or religiously significant figures (e.g., Jesus, the Virgin Mary) and items pertaining to Latino cultural values, such as familism (*familismo*) and collectivism. For example, Latinos scored higher than non-Latinos in the items "I feel close to God" (4.6 vs. 3.9, $p = .000$); "I depend on God to help me with my problems" (4.3 vs. 3.2, $p = .000$); "Helping my family is an important part of my spirituality" (4.9 vs. 4.1, $p = .000$); "I work to help my church/community at least once a month" (3.1 vs. 2.6, $p = .012$); and "Doing something about injustice is an important part of my spirituality" (4.2 vs. 3.4, $p = .000$). There were no significant differences between Latinos and non-Latinos in questions pertaining to a negative relationship with God, such as "I feel angry with God when something bad happens" (3.7 vs. 3.6, $p = .781$) and "God punishes me when I do something wrong" (3.5 vs. 3.4, $p = .755$). There were also a few items in which one would expect Latinos to have higher scores because of their significance to Latino culture, such as "I feel close to Our Lady of Guadalupe" (3.0 vs. 1.5, $p = .000$) and "Talking every day to Our Lady of Guadalupe is important" (2.6 vs. 1.4, $p = .000$). Even though there may be some non-Latinos who are familiar with Our Lady of Guadalupe, as well as some Latinos who do not relate to this religious icon, she has prominence and cultural meaning among Latinos worldwide, particularly Mexicans and Mexican Americans (Campesino & Schwartz, 2006; Elizondo et al., 2006).

Discussion

The principle investigator for this study grounded the construction of the LSPS in Latina/o theological perspectives, with the aim of developing a measurement instrument that was relevant for Latino populations. The LSPS demonstrated good internal consistency among the total sample, and there was a normal distribution of LSPS scores. Thus, the tool was free of ceiling effects (clustering of high scores), which is a common problem among spirituality and religiosity scales (Slater, Hall, & Edwards, 2003).

The Latino students scored significantly higher than non-Latinos on both the SPS and the LSPS, supporting the first hypothesis. Those Latinos who more strongly identified with Latino cultural values, as measured by the OCIS, scored higher on the LSPS than Latinos with a weaker cultural identification, supporting the second hypothesis. The Latino students reported attending weekly church services three times more frequently and engaging in personal prayer outside church twice as frequently as the non-Latino students. Latinos also reported discussing spiritual or religious beliefs more often than the non-Latino group.

Because identification with Latino culture was a significant predictor of LSPS scores, we were interested in exploring how the two ethnic groups responded to individual LSPS items. As Table 2 illustrates, there were significant differences between Latinos and non-Latinos in all but 4 of the 32 LSPS items. The largest differences in mean scores between Latinos and non-Latinos related to participants' relationship with God or other religiously significant figures, as well as items pertaining to traditional Latino cultural values, such as the integration of family and community with one's spiritual life. For example, LSPS items 4 and 5 ("I feel close to God/Higher Power" and "Talking every day with God/Higher Power is important to me") were scored significantly higher by Latinos, as was LSPS 18 ("Doing something about injustice is an important part of my religion/spirituality") and item 21 ("Helping my family is an important part of my spirituality"). Interestingly, there were no significant differences in scores between groups for LSPS items 19 and item 24, which pertained to a negative relationship with God ("I feel angry with God when something bad happens" and "God punishes me when I do something wrong").

A key finding was that LSPS scores increased with Latino cultural identification and decreased with Anglo identification, as measured by the OCIS, suggesting that the LSPS was tapping into particular Latino cultural values. Construction of LSPS items were based on Latina/o theological perspectives, which highlight the close, intimate relationship many Latinos have with spiritually or religiously significant figures (such as God or Virgin Mary). An affectionate and loving relationship with these figures is often woven into the fabric of one's daily life, and is a relationship that may be just as vital (if not more so) as one's relationship with immediate and extended family members. The integration of a spiritual perspective into one's values is illustrated by significantly higher LSPS scores among Latinos for items 9, 30, and 32 ("My religion/spirituality guides me to do what is right," "My religion/spirituality helps me get through bad times," and "My religion/spirituality helps me to understand suffering in life," respectively). Many of the items in the LSPS pertain to relationships in one form or another (spiritual, familial, communal), which may have a heightened significance within traditional Latino cultural values.

Findings from this study indicate that spirituality is important to this sample of Latino college students, which has potential implications for health and well-being. Other studies have found that the role of spirituality in the lives of adolescents and young adults may be a key factor in high-risk behaviors, such as substance use. Nationally representative surveys of U.S. adolescents found that integration within a religious congregation was inversely related to illicit drug use (Bartkowski & Xu, 2007; Nonnemaker, McNeely, & Blum, 2003), while frequency of private prayer had protective effects against cigarette, alcohol, and marijuana use (Nonnemaker et al., 2003). Knight et al. (2007) examined relationships between spirituality and alcohol use among a sample of 305 ethnically diverse, mostly Christian adolescents. Nearly 80% reported attending church services in the past year. Although spirituality had a significant and negative association with alcohol use, in their multivariate model, only forgiveness was associated with less likelihood of alcohol use.

Religious activity may also have a role in the likelihood for engagement in sexual activity for some young adults. Church attendance was a determinant of delayed sexual activity among a national sample of high-risk adolescents, as long as the youth's friends attended the same congregation (Mott, Fondell, Kowaleski-Jones, & Menaghan, 1996). Another national, longitudinal study of ethnically diverse 15–16-year-olds found that religiosity was associated with delayed first sexual intercourse (Hardy & Raffaelli, 2003). The nature and extent of spiritual involvement among adolescents and young adults is a potentially important variable to consider when examining mental and physical well-being.

At a broader level, findings from the current study have implications for nursing and social science research projects that are related to conceptualization and measurement of spirituality among multiethnic groups. Although there is great utility in measurement tools that can be applied across cultures (the OCIS being a case in point), this approach necessitates that the construct being measured has equivalent meaning across cultural groups. Results from this study indicate that among Latinos, spirituality is a latent construct that has meanings and expressions specific to the cultural group context. Further research is needed in this area, since no other studies were found that explored the relationship between spirituality and cultural identification.

Additional testing of the LSPS will be conducted to assess the psychometric properties among a variety of Latino subgroups and among Spanish-speaking Latino populations. Even though a sizable portion of the sample in the present study was bilingual, testing the scale exclusively in English presents a limitation. In addition, the 32-item LSPS may be unwieldy for use among some populations, such as in health care research focusing on severely ill samples who may fatigue easily. The role of religious affiliation also needs further examination. While results demonstrated that identification as Catholic had an independent effect on LSPS scores, the comparison groups between Latino Catholics and non-Catholics were small. Replicating this finding among a larger and more representative sample of Latinos would further validate the cultural relevancy of the LSPS beyond Catholic religiosity.

Conclusion

Findings from this study support the culturally based theological perspective that guided the research project. The role of spirituality in maintaining mental and physical health has been examined extensively among Anglo populations and, to a lesser extent, among African American populations. Despite the recognized need for more inclusive assessments of spirituality, very little empirical research exists that focuses on the faith experiences of Latino people (Campesino & Schwartz, 2006). Given the importance of spirituality as a core Latino cultural value, further empirical investigations of the potential relationships between culture, health, and spirituality among Latino populations are warranted.

Acknowledgments

This research was supported in part by NIH grant P20 AT00774 (Gary E. Schwartz, PI) from the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM). Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of NCCAM or NIH. We thank Ms. Katie Reese, BA, for her assistance with data entry, Audrey Brooks, PhD, for assistance with data programming, and Kathie Records, PhD, RN, for her insightful review and comments of this manuscript.

References

- Bartkowski JP, Xu X. Religiosity and teen drug use reconsidered: A social capital perspective. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 2007;32(6 Suppl):S182–S194. [PubMed: 17543710]
- Broyles-González, Y. Indianizing Catholicism: Chicana/India/Mexicana indigenous spiritual practices in our image. In: Cantu, N.; Najera-Ramirez, O., editors. *Chicano traditions: Continuity and change*. University of Illinois Press; Chicago: 2002. p. 117-132.
- Burke, K. Thinking about the church: The gift of cultural diversity to theology. In: Phan, P.; Hayes, D., editors. *Many faces, one church*. Sheed & Ward; New York: 2005. p. 27-47.
- Campesino M, Schwartz G. Spirituality among Latinas/os: Implications in conceptualization and measurement. *Advances in Nursing Science* 2006;29(1):69–81. [PubMed: 16495689]
- Cervantes J, Parham T. Toward a meaningful spirituality for people of color: Lessons for the counseling practitioner. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology* 2005;11(1):69–81. [PubMed: 15727496]

- Delgado C. A discussion of the concept of spirituality. *Nursing Science Quarterly* 2005;18(2):157–162. [PubMed: 15802748]
- Elizondo, E. *Galilean journey: The Mexican American promise*. Orbis Books; New York: 2000.
- Elizondo, V.; Deck, A.; Matovina, T. *The treasure of Guadalupe*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers; Lanham, MD: 2006.
- Espinosa, G.; Elizondo, V.; Miranda, J. *Hispanic churches in American public life: Summary of findings*. University of Notre Dame's Institute for Latino Studies; Notre Dame, IN: 2003. Interim Reports, Vol. 2003.2
- Goizueta, R. Reflecting on America as a single entity: Catholicism and U.S. Latinos. In: Phan, P.; Hayes, D., editors. *Many faces, one church*. Sheed & Ward; New York: 2005. p. 69-82.
- Hardy S, Raffaelli M. Adolescent religiosity and sexuality: An investigation of reciprocal influences. *Journal of Adolescent Health* 2003;26:731–739.
- Hill P, Pargament K. Advances in the conceptualization and measurement of religion and spirituality. *American Psychologist* 2003;58(1):64–74. [PubMed: 12674819]
- Idler, E. Religion and physical health: From NIH research to practice; Paper presented at the Integrating Research on Spirituality and Health and Well-Being into Service Delivery Conference; Bethesda, MD. 2003; Apr. 2003
- Isasi-Díaz, A. *La lucha continues: Mujerista theology*. Orbis Books; New York: 2004.
- Johnson K, Elbert-Avila K, Tulsy J. The influence of spiritual beliefs and practices on the treatment preferences of African Americans: A review of the literature. *Journal of the American Geriatric Society* 2005;53(4):711–719.
- Knight J, Sherritt L, Harris S, Holder D, Kulig J, Shrier L, et al. Alcohol use and religiousness/spirituality among adolescents. *Southern Medical Journal* 2007;100(4):349–354. [PubMed: 17458392]
- Levin J, Taylor R, Chatters L. Race and gender differences in religiosity among older adults: Findings from four national surveys. *Journal of Gerontology* 1994;49(3):S137–S145. [PubMed: 8169348]
- Magaña A, Clark N. Examining a paradox: Does religiosity contribute to positive birth outcomes in Mexican American populations? *Health Education Quarterly* 1995;22(1):96–109. [PubMed: 7721605]
- Malinski VM. Developing a nursing perspective on spirituality and healing. *Nursing Science Quarterly* 2002;15(4):281–287. [PubMed: 12387224]
- Miller W, Thoresen C. Spirituality, religion, and health: An emerging research field. *American Psychologist* 2003;58(1):24–35. [PubMed: 12674816]
- Moran J, Fleming C, Somervell P, Manson S. Measuring bicultural ethnic identity among American Indian adolescents: A factor analytic study. *Journal of Adolescent Research* 1999;14(4):405–426.
- Mott F, Fondell M, Hu P, Kowaleski-Jones L, Menaghan E. The determinants of first sex by age 14 in a high-risk adolescent population. *Family Planning Perspectives* 1996;28(1):13–18. [PubMed: 8822410]
- Nonnemaker JM, McNeely CA, Blum RW. Public and private domains of religiosity and adolescent health risk behaviors: Evidence from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health. *Social Science and Medicine* 2003;57(11):2049–2054. [PubMed: 14512236]
- Oetting E, Beauvais F. Orthogonal cultural identification theory: The cultural identification of minority adolescents. *The International Journal of the Addictions* 1990–1991;25(5A 6A):655–685.
- Oetting E, Swaim R, Chiarella M. Factor structure and invariance of the Orthogonal Cultural Identification Scale among American Indian and Mexican American Youth. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences* 1998;20(2):131–154.
- Reed PG. Spirituality and well-being in terminally ill hospitalized adults. *Research in Nursing and Health* 1987;10:335–344. [PubMed: 3671781]
- Rodriguez, J. *Our Lady of Guadalupe: Faith and empowerment among Mexican-American women*. University of Texas Press; Austin: 1994.
- Sawatzky R, Pesut B. Attributes of spiritual care in nursing practice. *Journal of Holistic Nursing* 2005;23(1):19–33. [PubMed: 15665264]

- Slater, W.; Hall, T.; Edwards, K. Measuring religion and spirituality: Where are we and where are we going?. In: Hall, T.; McMinn, M., editors. *Spiritual formation, counseling and psychotherapy*. Nova Science Publishers; New York: 2003. p. 235-260.
- U.S. Census Bureau. U.S.A. quick facts. 2007. Retrieved April 8, 2007, from <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/00000.html>
- Venner K, Wall T, Lau P, Ehlers C. Testing of an orthogonal measure of cultural identification with adult mission Indians. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology* 2006;12(4):632–643. [PubMed: 17087525]

TABLE 1

LSPS Total Scores by Catholic Denomination

	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Latino Catholic	81	128.5	19.7
Latino non-Catholic	41	110.2	19.8
Non-Latino Catholic	23	103.2	32.7
Non-Latino non-Catholic	77	96.6	25.0
Total	222	111.4	26.9

TABLE 2
LSPS Mean Item Scores for Latinos and Non-Latinos (Non-Hispanic White) ($N = 223$)

Item		Latino		Non-Latino		<i>F</i>	<i>p</i> value
		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
LSPS1	Often think about meaning of life	4.92	0.97	4.70	1.15	2.27	0.13
LSPS2	God/Higher Power is loving and kind	5.41	0.91	4.94	1.40	9.05	0.00
LSPS3	Grateful for the gifts in life	5.60	0.64	5.41	0.85	3.72	0.05
LSPS4	Feel close to God/Higher Power	4.62	1.10	3.87	1.54	17.97	0.00
LSPS5	Talking every day with God/Higher Power is important	4.44	1.21	3.30	1.67	35.05	0.00
LSPS6	God/Higher Power teaches important lessons when bad things happen	3.67	1.42	2.73	1.55	22.02	0.00
LSPS7	Feel close to Virgin Mary	3.37	1.62	1.93	1.22	54.07	0.00
LSPS8	Talking every day to Virgin Mary is important	2.77	1.34	1.70	1.03	42.77	0.00
LSPS9	My religion or spirituality guides to do what is right	4.42	1.33	3.73	1.71	11.30	0.00
LSPS10	Feel close to my saints	2.68	1.30	1.94	1.21	18.87	0.00
LSPS11	Talking every day with my saints is important	2.39	1.12	1.71	0.98	22.96	0.00
LSPS12	Depend on God/Higher Power to help with problems	4.35	1.42	3.25	1.76	26.75	0.00
LSPS13	Work to help church/community at least once a month	3.11	1.71	2.56	1.49	6.43	0.01
LSPS14	Relationship with loved ones continues even after they die	4.43	1.19	4.04	1.41	5.12	0.02
LSPS15	Feel close to Our Lady of Guadalupe	3.04	1.63	1.46	0.79	77.97	0.00
LSPS16	Talking every day with Our Lady of Guadalupe is important	2.65	1.34	1.44	0.84	60.51	0.00
LSPS17	Depend on Jesus to help with problems	4.23	1.45	2.97	1.86	32.26	0.00
LSPS18	Doing something about injustices is an important part of my religion/spirituality	4.23	1.27	3.44	1.48	18.60	0.00

Item	Latino		Non-Latino		F	p value
	M	SD	M	SD		
LSPS19	3.66	1.55	3.59	1.76	0.77	0.78
Feel angry with God/Higher Power when something terrible happens						
LSPS20	2.70	1.36	1.62	0.98	43.51	0.00
Depend on Virgin Mary to help with problems						
LSPS21	4.88	1.16	4.14	1.59	15.82	0.00
Helping family is an important part of my religion/spirituality						
LSPS22	4.42	1.36	3.03	1.86	40.82	0.00
Feel close to Jesus						
LSPS23	4.11	1.43	2.79	1.82	36.50	0.00
Talking every day to Jesus is important						
LSPS24	3.53	1.56	3.60	1.84	0.09	0.75
God/Higher Power punishes me when I do something wrong						
LSPS25	2.58	1.35	1.48	0.81	50.65	0.00
Depend on Our Lady of Guadalupe to help with problems						
LSPS26	4.16	1.45	3.07	1.65	27.65	0.00
My well-being is in God's/Higher Power's hands						
LSPS27	3.06	1.75	3.46	1.72	2.93	0.08
It's pointless to try to figure out the purpose of life						
LSPS28	2.34	1.14	1.65	0.93	24.06	0.00
Depend on my saints to help with problems						
LSPS29	4.24	1.35	4.04	1.36	1.17	0.28
Still feel close to loved ones who are deceased						
LSPS30	4.75	1.23	4.01	1.57	15.45	0.00
My spirituality helps me get through bad times						
LSPS31	3.97	1.58	3.58	1.76	3.05	0.08
It is up to me to solve my own problems						
LSPS32	3.98	1.25	3.15	1.46	21.04	0.00
Religion/spirituality helps to understand life suffering						
LSPS Total Score	122.41	21.57	98.15	26.96	55.48	0.00