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Validation of the Psychometric Properties of the Conflict Resolution Styles Inventory in the University Population

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Abstract: This study aimed to validate the psychometric properties of the Conflict Resolution Styles Inventory (CRSI) within the context of the university population in Ecuador. The CRSI measures how individuals manage interpersonal conflicts, a critical skill for university students. A sample of 746 university students from various institutions across Ecuador participated in the study. The CRSI, which categorizes conflict resolution styles into five types (competing, avoiding, accommodating, collaborating, and compromising), was translated and culturally adapted for the Ecuadorian context. Psychometric analyses, including factor analysis and reliability testing, were conducted to assess the validity and reliability of the inventory. The factor analysis supported the five-factor structure of the CRSI, confirming that the inventory is suitable for measuring distinct conflict resolution styles in this population. The inventory showed good internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha values exceeding 0.70 for all subscales. Additionally, the test–retest reliability indicated stability over time. The validated CRSI provides a robust instrument for understanding and improving conflict resolution skills among university students in Ecuador, contributing to better interpersonal relationships and academic environments.

Keywords: validation; reliability; Conflict Resolution Styles Inventory

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1. Introduction

Within romantic relationships, it is necessary to mention that various factors influence the quality and happiness of the relationship (Gomez-Pulido et al. 2024). These factors include, among others, stress levels, childhood experiences, attitudes, romantic myths, adverse life events, and victimization (Arrojo et al. 2024; Cano-Lozano et al. 2023; Marcos et al. 2023), which provide individuals with the tools to handle problems (Lapierre et al. 2023).

Moreover, conflict resolution may have a significant impact on the quality of the relationship (Bisht and Mani Tripathi 2023; Lapierre et al. 2023; Marcos et al. 2023), including critical adverse effects (Cano-Lozano et al. 2023). Based on this assertion, it is important to understand that individuals adopt different tools and behaviors when resolving conflicts. This research referenced Kurdek, whose 1994 research created a specific Conflict Resolution Styles Inventory (CRSI) with 16 items using a self-report method (Rojas et al. 2019).

According to Kurdek (1994), five fundamental themes in the study of intimate heterosexual relationships were highlighted: women define themselves in terms of their relationships, men place more importance on autonomy than women, the contribution of men and women to the relationship is not equitable, men and women have difficulty

resolving their relationship conflicts constructively, and institutional barriers are necessary to stabilize affective interpersonal relationships (Bonache et al. 2016; Rojas et al. 2019). Subsequently, the same author defined the existence of four types of conflict resolution in couples: (1) positive, related to commitment, and negotiation; (2) conflict engagement, involving personal attacks and loss of control; (3) withdrawal, occurring when a person prefers to isolate themselves and refuses to discuss; and (4) compliance, evident when a person does not defend their own opinion and yields to the other (Bonache et al. 2016).

Initially, these four types of conflict resolution were distributed into 16 items and applied as a self-report through a five-option Likert scale (Bisht and Mani Tripathi 2023). However, as the research continued, Bonache et al. (2016) proposed a model with three types: (1) positive (combined with compliance), (2) conflict engagement, and (3) withdrawal. The authors removed three items, resulting in a total of 13 items.

To address the topic of conflict resolution, one study used the Spanish adaptation of the Modified Conflict Tactics Scale on a population of 985 adolescents aged from 13 to 19. The results highlighted the following points: in adolescent dating, the most used technique to resolve conflicts was reasoning and argumentation; psychological violence was the most employed technique by the majority of adolescents; unidirectional use prevailed; boys reported a significantly higher probability of victimization; girls exerted more psychological and mild physical violence; and although severe physical violence was used infrequently, the prevalence rate was significant. These results are in line with the work of Martínez-Gómez et al. (2023), supporting their validity.

The Conflict Resolution Styles Inventory (CRSI) has been validated and assessed for psychometric properties across diverse populations, including adolescents (Costa et al. 2023), university students (Kovaç and Ceyhan 2022), and married individuals (Delatorre et al. 2017), and within various cultural contexts such as Brazil (Costa et al. 2023), Mexico (Rojas et al. 2019), and Germany (Herzberg and Sierau 2010). The CRSI has demonstrated content validity, internal validity, and reliability, confirming its suitability for evaluating conflict resolution strategies in these populations (Rojas et al. 2019).

Based on the above, the objective of this research was to validate the psychometric properties of the Conflict Resolution Styles Inventory in a university population in Ecuador.

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Design

An instrumental research study was conducted in two phases, adhering to the current standards for validating educational and psychological tests (Arias and Sireci 2021), as well as the guidelines for adaptation and translation of existing tests (Muñiz et al. 2013). In the first phase, a linguistic adaptation of the original test was performed through an iterative translation process using experts (Elosua et al. 2014). In the second phase, evidence of reliability and validity was examined for the Conflict Resolution Styles Inventory in a sample of university students in Ecuador.

2.2. Participants

The sample consisted of 746 university students who reported being in a dating relationship and was selected using a non-probabilistic intentional sampling method. Four higher education institutions from different regions of the country were included. Data collection took place between February and November 2023. Within this group, ages ranged from 18 to 26 years, with a mean age of 21.44 $\pm$ 2.075. Regarding sex, 353 participants were male (47.3%) and 393 were female (52.7%). In terms of gender, 353 individuals (47.3%) identified as male, 392 (52.5%) as female, and 1 (0.1%) as transgender; most couples in this study were heterosexual. Regarding ethnic self-identification, 88.7% identified as mestizo, followed by 6.8% identifying as indigenous, 1.5% as Afro-Ecuadorian, 1.2% as Caucasian, and the remainder as other.

The eligibility criteria for inclusion in the study required individuals to be in a dating relationship, aged between 18 and 26 years, and have met the ethical requirements outlined in the research.

2.3. Instrument

The instrument used for this study was the Conflict Resolution Styles Inventory formulated by Bonache et al. (2016), based on the Conflict Resolution Inventory created by Kurdek (1994), and consisting of 13 items organized into three dimensions (positive strategies, engagement in the conflict, and avoidance). Participants indicated how frequently they and their partners employed these 13 strategies using two subscales: self (CRSI-Me) and partner (CRSI-Partner). Responses ranged from one (never) to five (always). Reliability coefficients were adequate in the adaptation for Spanish adolescents, achieving Cronbach's alpha values of 0.76 (CRSI-Me) and 0.73 (CRSI-Partner). No improvement in alpha values was observed when items were excluded. Other researchers have also found evidence of good internal consistency when using CRSI in samples of adolescents, with Cronbach's alphas ranging between 0.77 and 0.84 (Bonache et al. 2016).

2.4. Procedure

The study protocols conformed to the ethical guidelines of the Declaration of Helsinki. The present research was approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the Pontifical Catholic University of Ecuador under Protocol No PV-14-2022. The research was carried out through the application of an in-person survey with pencil and paper following the self-report technique.

After obtaining the necessary permits from the educational institutions, participants were invited to partake in the study. The purpose and significance of the research were communicated to them, emphasizing the voluntary nature of their involvement. The possibility of withdrawing or changing their mind about their participation at any time during the research was confirmed. Each participant provided a signed consent form.

The answers obtained were transcribed into the data management system *OpenClinic* and were analyzed to present (a) sociodemographic characteristics, (b) the perception of the conflict resolution style by dimensions, (c) comparative conflict resolution style considering sex, and (d) confirmatory factor analysis.

2.5. Data Analysis

Analyses were performed using R version 4.4.2. (R Core Team 2022) with different statistical packages. Prior to the factor analyses, other analyses were performed to observe the distribution of the data. Descriptive statistics of the items, such as the mean value, standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis values, were analyzed. Normality was analyzed using the Shapiro–Wilk test.

To evaluate the factorial structure, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed using the lavaan statistical package (Rosseel 2022). The diagonally weighted least-squares estimator was used (DWLS) because the data did not present multivariate normality (Finney and DiStefano 2013). The benchmark criterion for evaluating the model's optimal fit was a Comparative Fit Index (CFI) of 0.95, and a Standardized Root Mean Square Residual of 0.08 (Cho et al. 2020; Hu and Bentler 1999; Shi and Maydeu-Olivares 2020). Reliability was analyzed using Cronbach's, Guttman's Lambda 6, and McDonald's (Revelle 2019).

Validity analyses of the scale were carried out using the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and heterotrait–monotrait ratio (HTMT). These two pieces of evidence allowed us to obtain information about the convergent and discriminant validity of a scale. The reference values for this study were AVE 0.500, and HTMT £ 0.950 (Cheung and Wang 2017; Henseler et al. 2015).

3. Results

The distribution of participants based on age showed a varied representation across the different age groups. The majority of participants fell within the 21–23 age bracket, comprising 43.164% of the total sample. This was followed by the 18–20 age group, which constituted 39.678% of the participants. The smallest proportion was observed in the 24–26 age range, accounting for 17.158% of the sample.

Regarding gender distribution, the study included a slightly higher proportion of females, who comprised 52.681% of the participants, compared to males who constituted 47.319% of the sample.

The participants were predominantly from a middle-class social background, comprising 66.086% of the sample. Lower middle-class participants accounted for 17.962%, while upper middle-class individuals represented 15.952% of the total.

In terms of the field of study, the largest group of participants were from "Other" fields, encompassing 29.893% of the sample. The next most represented fields were Psychology (20.107%), Nursing (12.601%), and Engineering (10.992%). Medicine, Education, and Pure Sciences had smaller representation percentages of 8.177%, 6.568%, and 0.402%, respectively.

The table presents data on conflict resolution styles across various dimensions (Self and Partner) among 746 participants. In terms of the implication in the conflict category, behaviors such as throwing personal attacks were rarely reported, with 72.52% of participants indicating they never engaged, 23.59% engaged sporadically, and 3.89% engaged repeatedly. Similarly, the getting angry and losing control category showed a pattern where 64.08% never exhibited this behavior, 27.21% did so sporadically, and 8.71% repeatedly. For behaviors such as letting emotions take over and saying things unintentionally, responses included 41.42% reporting sporadic occurrences, 41.02% reporting regular occurrences, and 17.56% reporting repeated engagement. In terms of using insults and sarcastic remarks, a significant majority (79.62%) reported never engaging, 14.75% did so sporadically, and 5.63% repeatedly. Moving to positive strategies, a substantial proportion (67.02%) consistently focused on the problem, 19.17% did so occasionally, and 13.80% never. Constructive discussion of differences was prevalent, with 49.87% always engaging in this activity, 27.88% sporadically, and 22.25% never. Finding mutually acceptable alternatives was common, with 44.10% always doing so, 32.44% sporadically, and 23.46% never. Negotiating and making compromises were frequent, with 53.35% always doing so, 26.68% sporadically, and 19.97% never. In terms of withdrawal, responses varied: remaining silent for extended periods was reported by 40.88% as always occurring, 28.15% sporadically, and 30.97% never. Closing off and refusing to talk further was observed in 51.07% as always occurring, 28.28% sporadically, and 20.64% never. Ignoring the other person was reported by 68.77% as always occurring, 24.53% sporadically, and 6.70% never. Acting distant and withdrawing into oneself was seen in 40.08% as always occurring, 38.61% sporadically, and 21.31% never. These results offered a comprehensive view of how participants perceived and engaged in various conflict resolution strategies, underscoring both constructive and avoidance behaviors within the study's demographic.

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics of the scales. The mean scores for the items ranged from 0.256 to 1.535. The kurtosis and skewness values are also presented. Tests were performed to analyze normality ($p_{Shapiro\text{-}Wilk} < 0.001$).

A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was independently performed for self-reporting and partner assessments. Model A between the PFA and CEA factors showed the following fit: χ^2 (53) = 2.737, p = 0.000, CFI = 0.987, TLI = 0.984, SRMR = 0.063, and RMSEA = 0.048 (0.039–0.058) for Model A, with reliability ratings of α = 0.79, Lambda = 0.82, and ω = 0.84. Model B between the PFB and CEB factors showed the following fit: χ^2 (53) = 4.982, p = 0.000, CFI = 0.977, TLI = 0.971, SRMR = 0.078, and RMSEA = 0.073 (0.064–0.082), with reliability ratings of α = 0.82, Lambda = 0.85, and ω = 0.87. Finally, the model was composed of four factors: two related to self-report and two equivalent factors showed the following fit: χ^2 (246) = 10.367, p = 0.000, CFI = 0.964, and TLI = 0.960, with reliability ratings of

α = 0.88, Lambda = 0.93, and ω = 0.91. These results are similar to those of previous studies on other populations.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics.

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis	Shapiro–Wilk	*p*-Value of Shapiro–Wilk
ITEM A2	1.479	0.796	−1.074	−0.567	0.637	<0.001
ITEM A5	1.220	0.854	−0.437	−1.492	0.741	<0.001
ITEM A8	1.117	0.868	−0.227	−1.635	0.757	<0.001
ITEM A12	1.267	0.854	−0.540	−1.417	0.723	<0.001
ITEM A1	0.314	0.542	1.518	1.370	0.595	<0.001
ITEM A3	1.028	0.769	−0.048	−1.306	0.807	<0.001
ITEM A4	0.446	0.650	1.157	0.155	0.672	<0.001
ITEM A6	0.696	0.791	0.597	−1.155	0.749	<0.001
ITEM A7	0.761	0.730	0.403	−1.049	0.788	<0.001
ITEM A9	0.379	0.608	1.367	0.771	0.633	<0.001
ITEM A11	0.260	0.553	2.036	3.089	0.515	<0.001
ITEM A13	0.812	0.761	0.329	−1.211	0.792	<0.001
ITEM B2	1.535	0.765	−1.247	−0.138	0.611	<0.001
ITEM B5	1.323	0.836	−0.665	−1.247	0.711	<0.001
ITEM B8	1.198	0.869	−0.395	−1.563	0.737	<0.001
ITEM B12	1.307	0.850	−0.632	−1.324	0.708	<0.001
ITEM B1	0.369	0.606	1.421	0.916	0.624	<0.001
ITEM B3	0.894	0.757	0.178	−1.236	0.804	<0.001
ITEM B4	0.501	0.711	1.063	−0.257	0.684	<0.001
ITEM B6	0.650	0.758	0.680	−0.954	0.746	<0.001
ITEM B7	0.763	0.755	0.423	−1.142	0.784	<0.001
ITEM B9	0.441	0.651	1.185	0.204	0.667	<0.001
ITEM B11	0.256	0.539	2.020	3.110	0.519	<0.001
ITEM B13	0.725	0.753	0.501	−1.087	0.775	<0.001

Note. Sample = 746.

Table 2 shows the standardized loadings of the items corresponding to the self-report and partner assessments, which were analyzed independently. It can be seen that the general behavior of the items is satisfactory. All standardized loadings exceeded 0.500, which explained the adequate variance in most cases. Reliability coefficients are also presented: Cronbach's, Guttman's Lambda 6, and McDonald's for each factor, being in all cases greater than 0.700. In addition, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) was greater than 0.500 in most cases. However, the CEA factor was lower than expected. The Heterotrait–Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) between the PFA factor and CEA was 0.214, and that between PFB and CEB was 0.295.

Table 3 shows the standardized loadings when analyzing the model according to the four factors, with two corresponding to self-report and the other two equivalent to the partner's evaluation. The factor loadings were greater than 0.500 in all cases. The reliabilities of the factors were the same as those reported in Table 2. The AVE presented slight improvements, and the CEA factor presented a value very close to 0.500. In addition, heterotrait–monotrait ratio values were examined (HTMT). Between the PFA and CE factors, the HTMT value was 0.214, between PFA and PFB the value was 0.997, and between PFA and CEB the value was 0.079. While between CEA and PFB the HTMT value was 0.179, but between CEA and CEB it was 0.803, and between PFB and CEB it was 0.295.

Figure 1 presents a structural equation model that examines the relationship between conflict resolution styles among Ecuadorian university students, focusing on four latent variables: CEB (commitment in couple conflict), CEA (commitment in self-managed conflict), PFB (positive couple factor), and PFA (positive self factor). These latent variables were measured by various observed indicators, such as A1 and B2, with standardized regression coefficients reflecting the strength of these relationships. CEB and CEA were highly correlated (0.918), indicating a strong connection between commitment in personal and couple conflicts. The other factors, PFB and PFA, also showed significant, albeit less intense, relationships with their indicators and each other. The asterisks denote statisti-

cal significance, with more asterisks indicating a higher significance, underscoring the relevance of these factors in conflict resolution.

Table 2. Standardized Factor Loadings, Reliability, and Average Variance Extracted self-report and independent partner assessment.

	Stand. Err	*z*-Value	*p*	Load	a	G6	w	AVE
PFA								
ITEM A2			<0.001	0.658				
ITEM A5	0.080	16.869	<0.001	0.886	0.78	0.73	0.80	0.620
ITEM A8	0.074	17.325	<0.001	0.841				
ITEM A12	0.071	16.075	<0.001	0.746				
CEA								
ITEM A1			<0.001	0.687				
ITEM A3	0.062	13.325	<0.001	0.567				
ITEM A4	0.064	17.182	<0.001	0.757				
ITEM A6	0.061	16.850	<0.001	0.708	0.81	0.80	0.85	0.488
ITEM A7	0.060	17.378	<0.001	0.711				
ITEM A9	0.065	16.727	<0.001	0.749				
ITEM A11	0.066	13.973	<0.001	0.630				
ITEM A13	0.063	17.414	<0.001	0.755				
PFB								
ITEM B2			<0.001	0.624				
ITEM B5	0.077	18.612	<0.001	0.898	0.78	0.74	0.81	0.627
ITEM B8	0.073	19.261	<0.001	0.877				
ITEM B12	0.065	18.260	<0.001	0.737				
CEB								
ITEM B1			<0.001	0.687				
ITEM B3	0.037	21.665	<0.001	0.556				
ITEM B4	0.046	24.749	<0.001	0.781				
ITEM B6	0.044	25.111	<0.001	0.757	0.83	0.83	0.87	0.534
ITEM B7	0.045	25.530	<0.001	0.791				
ITEM B9	0.046	25.219	<0.001	0.789				
ITEM B11	0.047	21.375	<0.001	0.690				
ITEM B13	0.043	25.733	<0.001	0.767				

Note. PFA = positive self factor, CEA = commitment in self-conflict factor, PFB = positive couple factor, CEB = commitment in couple conflict factor, Load = factor loadings, a = alpha ordinal, G6 = Guttman's Lambda, w = McDonald's, and AVE = Average Variance Extracted.

Table 3. Standardized Factor Loadings, reliability, and Average Variance Extracted for the four factors.

	Stand. Err	*z*-Value	*p*	Load	a	G6	w	AVE
PFA								
ITEM A2			<0.001	0.709				
ITEM A5	0.029	38.774	<0.001	0.788	0.78	0.73	0.80	0.633
ITEM A8	0.029	39.942	<0.001	0.820				
ITEM A12	0.030	40.321	<0.001	0.858				
CEA								
ITEM A1			<0.001	0.816				
ITEM A3	0.023	30.996	<0.001	0.585				
ITEM A4	0.025	35.126	<0.001	0.723				
ITEM A6	0.024	33.781	<0.001	0.666	0.79	0.82	0.84	0.499
ITEM A7	0.024	35.293	<0.001	0.684				
ITEM A9	0.026	33.957	<0.001	0.707				
ITEM A11	0.027	34.923	<0.001	0.783				
ITEM A13	0.024	34.229	<0.001	0.661				
PFB								
ITEM B2			<0.001	0.719				
ITEM B5	0.028	39.500	<0.001	0.805	0.78	0.74	0.81	0.645
ITEM B8	0.028	40.800	<0.001	0.829				
ITEM B12	0.029	41.153	<0.001	0.854				
CEB								
ITEM B1			<0.001	0.810				
ITEM B3	0.023	31.982	<0.001	0.584				
ITEM B4	0.025	37.333	<0.001	0.752				
ITEM B6	0.024	37.279	<0.001	0.734	0.83	0.83	0.87	0.539
ITEM B7	0.024	38.871	<0.001	0.761				
ITEM B9	0.025	37.536	<0.001	0.760				
ITEM B11	0.026	34.500	<0.001	0.725				
ITEM B13	0.024	37.800	<0.001	0.728				

Note. PFA = positive self factor, CEA = commitment in self-managed conflict factor, PFB = positive couple factor, CEB = commitment in couple conflict factor, Load = factor loadings, a = alpha ordinal, G6 = Guttman's Lambda, w = McDonald's, and AVE = Average Variance Extracted.

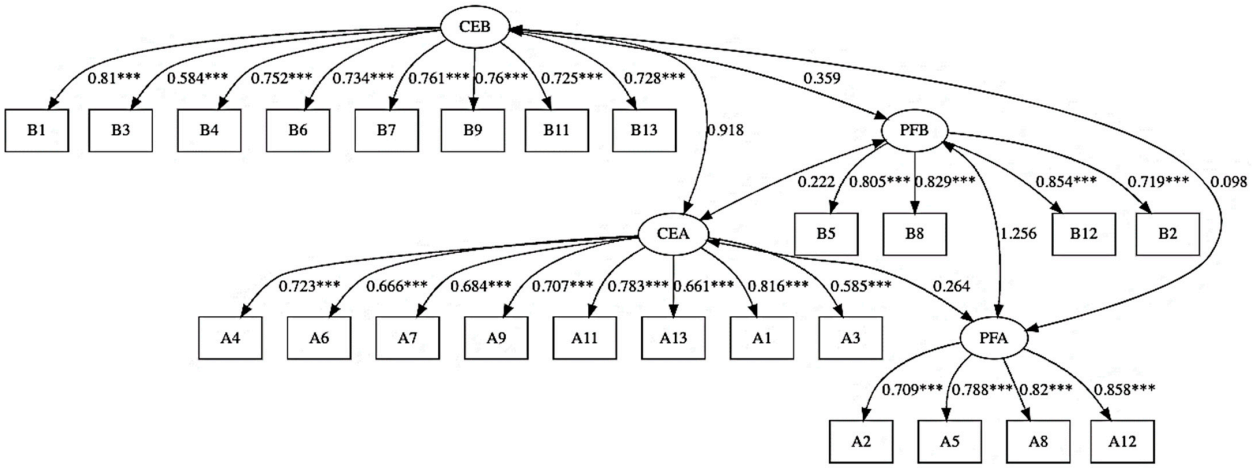


Figure 1. Model of the Conflict Resolution Styles Inventory in the university Ecuadorians. Note. PFA = positive self factor, CEA = commitment in self-managed conflict factor, PFB = Positive couple factor, and CEB = commitment in couple conflict factor. The *** signifies the load of the items.

4. Discussion

The results obtained in the validation of the Conflict Resolution Styles Inventory (CRSI) in the university population are consistent with previous studies, such as the one conducted by Bonache et al. (2016), which adapted the CRSI based on the original inventory by Kurdek (1994). In that study, the instrument consisted of 13 items organized into three dimensions: positive strategies, conflict engagement, and avoidance. Participants indicated how frequently they and their partners employed these strategies, using two subscales: self (CRSI-Me) and partner (CRSI-Partner), with responses ranging from one (never) to five (always).

The reliability coefficients in the adaptation for Spanish adolescents were adequate, with Cronbach's alphas of 0.76 for self-assessment (CRSI-Me) and 0.73 for the partner assessment (CRSI-Partner). These results are similar to those found in the university population, where no significant improvement in the alpha coefficients was observed by excluding any item. Additionally, other researchers have also found evidence of good internal consistency of the CRSI in adolescent samples, with Cronbach's alphas ranging between 0.77 and 0.84. These findings further support the validity and reliability of the CRSI as a robust tool for assessing conflict resolution styles across different age groups.

The Conflict Resolution Styles Inventory (CRSI) has been widely validated across diverse cultural contexts, consistently demonstrating robust psychometric properties and adaptability. Its high internal consistency has been a focal point in numerous studies. For example, Fortin et al. (2020) conducted a study with French–Canadian adolescents, reporting omega coefficients ranging from 0.76 to 0.86, which underscored the instrument's reliability within this specific demographic. Similarly, Tuna (2021) validated the Turkish version of the CRSI with coefficients between 0.74 and 0.85, emphasizing its stability across different linguistic and cultural groups.

In México, Rojas et al. (2019) conducted seminal research that highlighted the CRSI's utility in understanding conflict resolution styles among young Mexicans. Their study identified two primary factors—positive conflict resolution and conflict engagement—which not only validated the instrument but also linked it to important outcomes such as relationship satisfaction and subjective well-being. These findings suggest that promoting positive conflict resolution strategies can potentially reduce interpersonal violence and foster healthier relationship dynamics among youth (Domínguez and Portela 2024).

Fortin et al. (2020) contributed significantly by adapting the CRSI for French–Canadian adolescents, revealing a nuanced three-factor structure: positive problem solving, conflict engagement, and withdrawal. This adaptation addressed the specific challenges adolescents face in managing conflicts within dating relationships, emphasizing the importance

of constructive strategies to promote healthier relationship dynamics and mitigate adverse psychological outcomes.

Trifan et al. (2024) expanded the CRSI's applicability across different age groups and relationship types in the Netherlands, employing advanced statistical models such as bifactor analysis. Their longitudinal study provided nuanced insights into how conflict resolution strategies evolve across different life stages, linking specific strategies to psychological adjustment and social behavior over time. This research is crucial for understanding the developmental trajectories of conflict management and its implications for individual well-being (Domínguez and Portela 2024).

Ünal and Akgün's (2022) investigation into conflict resolution styles within marital relationships in Turkey using the Actor–Partner Interdependence Model offered further depth. Their study illuminated how individual conflict resolution styles impact both individual well-being and also marital adjustment and satisfaction for both partners. By highlighting the mediating role of effective conflict resolution in promoting marital harmony, their findings underscored the importance of these strategies in fostering long-term relationship stability and overall family functioning.

In contrast, Bonache et al. (2016) examined CRSI's role in detecting and addressing teen dating violence, demonstrating its effectiveness in distinguishing between constructive and non-constructive conflict resolution styles among adolescents. This validation underscores the instrument's potential for identifying at-risk behaviors and informing targeted intervention strategies aimed at reducing dating violence and promoting healthier relationship behaviors among young people.

In summary, the CRSI stands out as a versatile and reliable tool with broad applicability across diverse populations and settings. Its robust psychometric properties, validated through rigorous empirical studies and cross-cultural adaptations, underscore its pivotal role in advancing our understanding of effective conflict resolution strategies. By examining conflict resolution across different cultural contexts, age groups, and relationship types, researchers have provided valuable insights that contribute to promoting healthier relationships, reducing conflict-related stress, and enhancing psychological well-being across various stages of life (Domínguez and Portela 2024).

Validating the Conflict Resolution Styles Inventory (CRSI) in the university population of Ecuador offers valuable insights, yet several limitations should be acknowledged. Firstly, the study's sample representativeness is crucial. If the sample predominantly comprises students from specific universities or regions within Ecuador, the generalizability of the findings to the broader university population across the country may be compromised. Variations in cultural backgrounds, socioeconomic status, and educational experiences among different universities could influence how conflict resolution styles manifest and are measured (Trifan et al. 2024).

Secondly, the challenge of cultural specificity is significant. Despite efforts to adapt the CRSI to the Ecuadorian context, there may be nuances and regional differences within Ecuador that the inventory does not fully capture. Conflict resolution styles can vary significantly across regions, ethnic groups, and social contexts within the country. This diversity suggests that while the CRSI may demonstrate reliability within a particular sample, its applicability to all Ecuadorian university students, especially those from diverse cultural backgrounds, might be limited.

Thirdly, the process of translating and adapting the CRSI to the Spanish and Ecuadorian cultural context introduces potential challenges. Differences in language nuances, idiomatic expressions, and cultural interpretations could impact how respondents understand and respond to the inventory items. These translation and adaptation issues could affect the inventory's validity and reliability in accurately measuring conflict resolution styles among Ecuadorian university students.

Moreover, respondent biases pose another limitation. The self-report and hetero-report data may exhibit biases such as a positive bias (social desirability in self-reports) or a negative bias (exaggeration of the lack of conflict resolution tactics in hetero-reports),

which could influence the validity of the inventory's results (Ünal and Akgün 2022). In this sense, Arce et al. (2022) have found that response bias accounted for 5.8% of the variance in attitudes to conflict resolution.

Additionally, while validating the CRSI within the Ecuadorian context is valuable, direct comparisons with findings from other cultural contexts should be approached cautiously. Variations in cultural norms, societal expectations, and educational systems across countries could impact how conflict resolution styles are expressed and understood. Therefore, generalizing findings from Ecuadorian university students to global or cross-cultural contexts without additional validation studies could be problematic.

Finally, while the CRSI is a widely used instrument with established psychometric properties, it may have inherent limitations in capturing the complexity of individual and situational factors influencing conflict resolution. The inventory's structured format focuses on broad categories of conflict resolution styles, potentially overlooking subtle variations and context-specific dynamics that influence conflict management behaviors.

Addressing these limitations requires careful consideration of the study design, sample selection, translation and adaptation processes, and interpretation of results. Future research could benefit from broader and more diverse samples, comprehensive cultural validations, and methodological approaches that minimize biases to enhance the validity and applicability of CRSI in diverse cultural and educational settings, including Ecuadorian universities.

5. Conclusions

The validation of the Conflict Resolution Styles Inventory (CRSI) within the university population of Ecuador reveals significant insights into its psychometric properties and applicability in diverse cultural contexts. This study confirms the CRSI's high internal consistency and reliability among Ecuadorian university students, highlighting its effectiveness in measuring various conflict resolution styles with accuracy and consistency. The reported internal consistency coefficients demonstrate the inventory's robustness in capturing how individuals manage conflicts within this specific demographic. This reliability is crucial for ensuring that the CRSI can provide dependable data for research and practical applications aimed at improving conflict resolution skills and fostering healthier interpersonal relationships among students.

Moreover, the adaptation and validation of the CRSI in Ecuador underscores its broader cross-cultural applicability. By validating its effectiveness in distinguishing between conflict resolution styles within the Ecuadorian cultural context, the study enhances our understanding of how cultural factors influence conflict management behaviors. This cross-cultural validation not only validates the inventory's versatility beyond its original settings but also contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of human behavior across different cultural backgrounds. Such insights are essential for developing culturally sensitive interventions and educational programs tailored to the specific needs of diverse student populations.

In practical terms, validating the CRSI in Ecuadorian university settings emphasizes its utility in educational contexts. By identifying students' predominant conflict resolution styles, educators and administrators gain valuable insights into the potential sources of conflict among students. This knowledge can inform targeted interventions and initiatives aimed at promoting constructive conflict resolution strategies, thereby enhancing the overall educational environment and fostering a more supportive campus climate. Effective conflict resolution skills are crucial for reducing conflict-related stress, improving communication, and cultivating positive social interactions among students (Marcos et al. 2023).

Furthermore, the validation study underscores CRSI's implications for intervention and counseling practices within university settings. By using CRSI to assess and understand students' conflict resolution styles, counselors and practitioners can tailor their approaches to address specific needs effectively. Interventions aimed at enhancing conflict resolution skills can contribute to mitigating conflict escalation, enhancing interpersonal communi-

cation, and promoting personal growth and development among students (Marcos et al. 2023). This application highlights CRSI's practical significance in promoting positive social behaviors and enhancing student well-being.

For future research, we recommend that a Systematic Review and Meta-analysis should be conducted on the reliability and validation of the psychometric properties of the Conflict Resolution Styles Inventory (CRSI) in university populations (Burgos-Benavides et al. 2023). Such a study would offer a comprehensive evaluation of the instrument's reliability across various studies and contexts, shedding light on its consistency and applicability in higher education settings. Additionally, investigating the prevalence of conflict resolution styles (Burgos-Benavides et al. 2024a) could provide valuable insights into how these strategies are employed across different populations and cultural backgrounds, contributing to a deeper understanding of conflict dynamics in various social contexts.

Moreover, a promising direction for future research would be to explore factorial invariance (Burgos-Benavides et al. 2024b) within the CRSI. This type of analysis is essential to determine whether the measurement model remains stable across diverse groups, such as gender, age, or cultural contexts. Establishing invariance ensures that the instrument measures conflict resolution styles equivalently across different subgroups, thus enhancing the generalizability of the findings.

Further research could also delve into longitudinal studies that track changes in conflict resolution styles over time, especially in relation to life transitions such as entering the workforce or significant relationship changes (Bühler and Orth 2024). Investigating the role of individual differences (e.g., personality traits, emotional intelligence) and external factors (e.g., societal or organizational culture) on conflict resolution styles could offer a more nuanced understanding of the factors that influence how individuals approach conflict (McHale et al. 2024).

By expanding the scope of research in these areas, scholars can not only improve the psychometric robustness of the CRSI but also contribute to developing more effective interventions and training programs that foster healthy conflict resolution practices in diverse settings.

In conclusion, the validation of the Conflict Resolution Styles Inventory in the Ecuadorian university population contributes valuable data to the broader field of conflict resolution research. It reaffirms the inventory's reliability, cross-cultural applicability, and practical utility in educational and counseling contexts. By providing insights into conflict resolution behaviors specific to Ecuadorian cultural contexts, this study enriches our understanding of how cultural diversity influences interpersonal dynamics and conflict management strategies within higher education settings.

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