

Peer Review

Review of: "Validation of the Young Schema Questionnaire (YSQ-S3) in Mexican University Students"

Jonas Michel Wolf¹

1. Hospital Moinhos de Vento, Porto Alegre, Brazil

This study presents a robust and timely effort to adapt and validate the Young Schema Questionnaire – Short Form, Third Edition (YSQ-S3) for Mexican university students. One of its major strengths is its clear justification: the absence of a culturally adapted and psychometrically tested tool for assessing Early Maladaptive Schemas (EMS) in Mexico. The authors correctly highlight the relevance of EMS in psychotherapy and schema-focused interventions and frame the YSQ-S3 as a key clinical and research instrument. The manuscript establishes a solid theoretical foundation based on Young's original schema model, lending scientific credibility to the project.

The methodology demonstrates a thoughtful and rigorous approach. The authors selected a large and diverse sample ($n=772$) from various academic disciplines and geographic regions across Mexico. The sampling followed classical psychometric standards, referencing Nunnally and Thorndike, and incorporated best practices in translation-back translation processes, expert review, and pilot testing. These steps reflect a commendable level of methodological precision and ethical diligence, including appropriate informed consent and institutional approvals.

The study is particularly notable for the comprehensiveness of its statistical analyses. Multiple layers of psychometric validation were performed, including descriptive statistics, reliability analysis (Cronbach's alpha), exploratory factor analysis (EFA), and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) via Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The internal consistency achieved ($\alpha = .959$) is excellent, and the use of multiple validation techniques strengthens the credibility of the results. The exploratory factor solution yielding 17 factors and the elimination of problematic items based on factorial loading thresholds are clearly documented and well justified.

However, the confirmatory factor analysis presents more nuanced results. While several fit indices (e.g., RMSEA = .042, RMR = .080) indicate an acceptable model fit, others (e.g., GFI = .826, CFI = .881, NFI = .813) fall short of conventional thresholds. The authors are commendably transparent about these limitations and provide a balanced discussion of the implications, citing literature on the limitations of the Chi-square test and the variability of model fit indices with large samples. Nevertheless, the manuscript could benefit from a deeper reflection on how these borderline results affect the practical applicability of the scale in clinical or research contexts.

One notable concern is the absence of the *Unrelenting Standards* schema in the final factor structure. The authors suggest several possible explanations, including item phrasing, cultural differences, or overlapping constructs. While plausible, these interpretations remain speculative. Future studies could benefit from qualitative or mixed-methods approaches to explore how Mexican populations conceptualize and experience perfectionism and internal pressure—core features of the missing schema.

Another area for improvement relates to sample characteristics. The sample was disproportionately composed of female psychology students from Mexico City. This introduces a demographic skew that may limit the generalizability of findings. Although the authors acknowledge this limitation, it would be valuable to report any exploratory subgroup analyses (e.g., by gender or academic major) to evaluate whether the factor structure is stable across different subpopulations. Additionally, some outliers were not controlled, which may have influenced results.

The study would also be strengthened by a clearer discussion of clinical implications. While the psychometric performance of the YSQ-S3-MX is the central focus, its potential utility in psychological assessment, diagnosis, and therapy planning is only briefly mentioned. How might this tool be used differently in Mexican therapeutic settings? Are there particular EMS profiles that appear more frequently in this population? Addressing such questions could enhance the practical significance of the findings.

In terms of scientific communication, the manuscript is generally well-written, but there are opportunities for improved clarity. Some sections—particularly in the Results and Discussion—could benefit from more concise synthesis and less repetition. Additionally, the use of acronyms and technical terms is appropriate for an academic audience but might require clearer definitions when first introduced. The tables are rich and informative, though they could be better integrated into the narrative with more interpretation of their key insights.

In conclusion, this study makes a valuable contribution to the literature on schema theory and psychometric evaluation in Latin American contexts. Despite some limitations—particularly regarding CFA fit indices and the absence of one EMS—the study provides a well-substantiated, culturally adapted instrument with strong psychometric foundations. The YSQ-S3-MX stands as a promising tool for both research and clinical practice in Mexico. Future studies should aim to replicate these findings in more diverse and clinical samples, investigate the cultural meaning of missing or altered EMS, and further assess the scale’s predictive validity and longitudinal stability.

Declarations

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.