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The Factorial Invariance of the Satisfaction in Couple Relationship Scale (SCR) based on the variables sex, living together, and having children

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Abstract | **Background:** Research studies aimed at evaluating satisfaction with the couple relationship demonstrate that differences in satisfaction largely depend on three sociodemographic variables: sex (men/women), living together (yes/no), and having children (yes/no). The Satisfaction in Couple Relationship Scale (SCR) has shown great potential in measuring satisfaction in couple relationships. This study aims to demonstrate its factorial invariance to these three variables. **Method:** Confirmatory factor analyses were carried out on subsamples of women and men, people who live together and those who do not cohabit, and people who have children and those who do not have children. A multigroup factor analysis was also performed to test the factorial invariance of the SCR based on the variables mentioned above. **Result:** The obtained results showed factorial invariance, metric invariance, and strong invariance for all three variables, and strict invariance concerning the "sex" variable. It was also confirmed that men, people who do not cohabit, and people without children, are more satisfied with their relationships than women, people who cohabit, and people with children. **Conclusion:** The scale has demonstrated an adequate factorial invariance for the analysed variables, confirming the possibility of using it for different sample types.

Keywords: Instrument validation, scale, factorial invariance, couple relationship, marital satisfaction

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Invariancia factorial de la Escala de Satisfacción en la Relación de Pareja (SCR) en función de las variables sexo, convivencia y tener hijos

Resumen | **Antecedentes:** Los estudios de investigación sobre satisfacción con la relación de pareja demuestran que las diferencias en la satisfacción dependen en gran medida de tres variables sociodemográficas: sexo (hombre/mujer), convivencia (sí/no) y tener hijos (sí/no). La Escala de Satisfacción en la Relación de Pareja (SCR) ha demostrado un gran potencial para medir la satisfacción en las relaciones de pareja. Este estudio pretende demostrar su invariancia factorial en función de dichas variables. **Método:** Se realizaron análisis factoriales confirmatorios en submuestras de mujeres y hombres, personas que conviven y no conviven, y personas que tienen y no tienen hijos. También se realizó un análisis factorial multigrupo para comprobar la invariancia factorial de la SCR en función de las variables mencionadas anteriormente.

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Resultados: Los resultados obtenidos mostraron invariancia factorial, invariancia métrica e invariancia fuerte para las tres variables, e invariancia estricta respecto a la variable "sexo". También se confirmó que los hombres, las personas que no conviven y las personas sin hijos están más satisfechos con sus relaciones que las mujeres, las personas que conviven y las personas con hijos. **Conclusiones:** La escala ha demostrado una adecuada invariancia factorial para las variables analizadas, confirmando la posibilidad de su utilización para diferentes tipos de muestra.

Palabras clave: Validación del instrumento, escala, invarianza factorial, relación de pareja, satisfacción marital

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Every year, millions of new couples are formed across the globe, while others move in together, get married, or expand the nuclear family unit with the arrival of children. One of the most significant indicators in attempting to predict the maintenance and duration of these relationships is the satisfaction reported by both members of the couple. Thus, it is a key indicator in both individual well-being and the couple's well-being (Wang et al., 2019).

In this sense, satisfaction with the couple relationship can be defined as the degree to which both partners demonstrate intimacy, affection, and mutual support, or as an emotional state in which each member is content with the interactions, experiences, and expectations placed on the couple relationship (Collins et al., 2009; Ward et al., 2009). While studying satisfaction with the couple relationship is of interest due to the benefits and positive effects it has on personal well-being, for example, increasing happiness, life satisfaction, and better mental health (Braithwaite & Holt-Lunstad, 2017; Gustavson et al., 2016; Stack & Eshleman, 1998), one should also keep in mind that a deteriorated relationship has adverse effects on physical and mental health, couple dynamics, and the well-being of the rest of the family, especially when children are involved (Butt et al., 2014; Gambrel et al., 2016; Józefacka et al., 2023).

In order to achieve satisfaction with the couple relationship, there must be styles, strategies, and positive behaviours within the relationship based on adequate communication, the demonstration of affection, and a maximum reduction of negative events that could generate conflict (Álvarez & García, 2017; Valarezo-Bravo et al., 2024). In addition to these general issues, research studies focused on evaluating satisfaction with the couple relationship show that differences in satisfaction are largely dependent on three sociodemographic variables: sex, living together (cohabiting), and having children (Doss et al., 2009; Faulkner et al., 2005; Foran et al., 2022; Urbano-Contreras et al., 2018, 2019, 2021), these two latter strongly related to the stage of the relationship (Cassepp-Borges et al., 2023).

Several scales attempting to measure couple satisfaction have emerged in recent decades. Notable ones include The Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS; Spanier, 1976), made up of 32 items, and offering an overall dyadic adjustment score with four subscales (Consensus, Satisfaction, Cohesion, and Affectional Expression) with, in its original version, an internal consistency of between 0.50 and 0.96 (global and by subscales) (Santos-Iglesias et al., 2009); the Marital Satisfaction Scale (MSS; Roach et al., 1981), with 48 items, a single factor, and good reliability (Cronbach's alpha of 0.97); the Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale (KMSS; Schumm et al., 1983), a single-factor instrument that uses only 3 items and to which Graham et al. (2011), using a meta-analysis, attributed an internal consistency of 0.79; and the Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS; Hendrick, 1988), once again a one-dimensional structure, which provides an overall measure of satisfaction through 7 items (α = 0.86).

Currently, there is a scale used in the Spanish context, the Satisfaction in Couple Relationship Scale (SCR; Urbano-Contreras, 2017), that maintains a classic single-factor structure and offers excellent reliability (α = 0.93) with a reduced number of items (10). In addition to being used in research studies in Spain, it has already been used in other countries such as Lithuania, Russia, and China (Cepukiene, 2019; Okhotnikov & Wood, 2020; Wang et al., 2019).

Beyond its outstanding psychometric features, the selection of the SCR lies in two main points. On one side, the previously commented scales —many of which have been the source of many subsequent scales— still show good reliability, but they were designed more than three decades ago. Since then, the social changes that have taken place, and that also have an impact on the family context and, mainly, the couple relationships are remarkable (Yárnoz, 2006), emphasising issues such as the full incorporation of women into the workforce, the decrease of children per household, or the delayed pregnancy age (Fundación Foessa, 2014; Miret, 2016). These changes require the instruments to be updated and sensitive to the present couple relationships' current situation and features. On the other side, it is of interest to design instruments based on the specific characteristics of the population to be studied, since other scales not initially created in Spain, such as the DAS or MSI-R Spanish do not show high levels of reliability (Cuenca et al., 2013).

In light of the potential of this instrument to measure satisfaction in couple relationships, the objective of this study is to demonstrate the factorial invariance of the scale, taking relevant sociodemographic variables such as sex, living together, and having children into consideration. At the same time, in the course of studying these characteristics, the differences in this dimension can be investigated, as well as the impact that these three variables have in terms of differences in the couple relationship. In this regard, the measurement invariance is a statistical property of measurement that indicates that the same construct is being measured

across some specified groups. It assesses the (psychometric) equivalence of a construct across groups or measurement occasions and demonstrates that a construct has the same meaning to those groups or across repeated measurements. Finally, it should be noted that the selection of these variables, in addition to the aforementioned research on the variables used to calculate invariance, was based on a previous study with a similar population (620 subjects) and a total of 120 variables in which these features had the greatest impact on couple relationships compared to others such as geographical area, level of education, age of the participant, or duration of the relationship (Urbano-Contreras, 2018).

Method

Participants

A total of 1,039 people over the age of 18 and in a couple relationship at the time participated voluntarily and altruistically in the study. Of these, 62.8% were women and 37.2% were men; 62.1% were cohabiting (M = 6.92 years, SD = 3.65) and 37.9% were not (0.5% chose not to respond to this question); 40.9% had children and 59.1% did not. Specifically, those couples with children have 1.70 children on average (SD = 0.63) and a child's average age of 18.12 years (SD = 11.03). Regarding the age of the participants, 27.5% were between 18 and 24, 21.8% between 25 and 31, 16.7% between 32 and 38, 12.7% between 39 and 45, 10.7% between 46 and 52, and 10.5% were more than 52. As for the time they have been together, 24.1% of participants indicate less than 2 years; 19.3% have been together between 3 and 5 years; 18.9% between 6 and 10 years; 11.0% between 11 and 15 years, and 26.8% have been together for more than 15 years.

The sample was obtained using the non-probabilistic method known as 'Snowball Sampling' (Goodman, 1961), starting with a selection of couples (physically, those available in the researchers' environment, such as family, friends or work colleagues, and virtually, through social networks such as Facebook and Instagram) that, in addition to responding to the questionnaire, gave copies physically or sent it online to other couples in their immediate environment that, in turn, passed it on to others. Due to the data collection method, and in order to control the data dependence, each person was requested to write a code so the questionnaires where both members of the couple relationship answered could be identified and matched later. As a result, in 29.6% of the total sample, both members of the couple responded to the questionnaire.

Instruments

The Satisfaction in Couple Relationship Scale (SCR; Urbano-Contreras et al., 2017) was applied, which is made up of 10 questions with 4-point Likert-type scale responses (from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 4 = *strongly agree*, avoiding in this way the tendency to choose an intermediate value). The questions covered issues related to the satisfaction with the couple relationship. The scale has a single-factor structure determined by an exploratory factor analysis and a confirmatory factor analysis during its original design. In addition, this scale shows a Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of 0.93, in the present study being 0.90, very similar to that of other recently adapted scales (Moreno & Gutiérrez, 2023; Villagrán et al., 2023).

Procedure

The information-gathering process was carried out via two procedures. On the one hand, the questionnaire was distributed in person, giving each couple an envelope containing two questionnaires, a brief introduction letter and instructions for their completion, and an envelope in which each member of the couple could return the completed questionnaire. This procedure guaranteed that no other person, including their partners, could access the information facilitated, thereby ensuring anonymity. On the other hand, the questionnaire was digitalised using the Google Forms tool, and the link to this questionnaire was sent to close acquaintances, who were asked to complete it, share it with their partners, and distribute it via their social media networks so that more people could complete it. The questionnaire stated that participation was voluntary and anonymous, and participants ticked a box giving their consent to take part in the study. No financial compensation was offered to participants. The study was conducted in accordance with the ethical standards of the Helsinki Declaration and its later amendments and, at the time of data collection, there was no ethics committee at the university where the research was conducted.

Data analysis

The initial questionnaire on satisfaction with the relationship has been previously validated by Urbano-Contreras et al. (2017) through a cross-validation process with exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), dividing the sample into two subsamples at random; for the EFA, the maximum likelihood method followed by promax rotation was used; For the CFA, the maximum likelihood estimation and the covariance matrix between items were used as input for data analysis. The result was a scale composed of a single factor that explains 54.14% of the variance and that was made up of 10 items and a high degree of reliability (α = .932). Values obtained with the confirmatory factor analysis indicated a good adjustment of the proposed model. The indices obtained are as follows: χ^2 = 84.723 (35); p < .000; CMIN/DF = 2.421; RMSEA = .068; SRMR = .026; NFI = .96; GFI = .95; TLI = .97; CFI = .98. Factor values found in each factor were statistically significant (p < .01) with standardised values above .70. The model resulted as shown in Figure 1.

In order to test that the model remained stable concerning the variables "sex," "living together," and "having children" Confirmatory Factor Analyses (CFA) were carried out on the subsamples of women (n = 653) and men (n = 386), people who cohabit (n = 642) and do not cohabit (n = 392), and people who have (n = 425) and do not have children (n = 614). Given that the model was expected to demonstrate a good fit in all cases, Multigroup Confirmatory Factor Analysis (MGCFA) was used to test

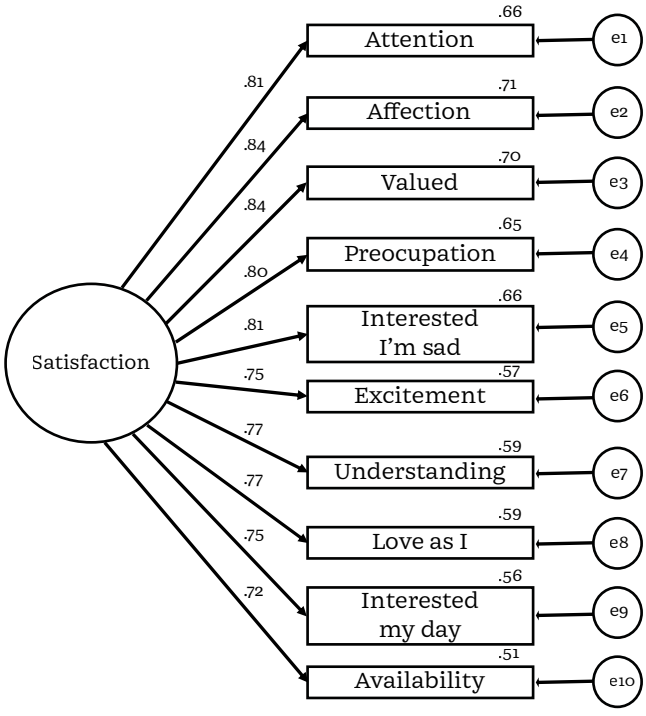


Figure 1. Confirmatory factor analysis

its factorial invariance based on said variables (Mesquita et al., 2022; Varela et al., 2023). The analysis was carried out via the successive addition of models, each one more restrictive than the previous one: first, configural invariance (the factor structure is the same across groups) was tested (M1); then, metric or weak invariance (factor loadings are constrained to be equal) was taken into consideration (M2); after which strong invariance (factor loadings and intercepts constrained to be equal) was evaluated (M3); and finally, a strict invariance model was tested (constraining factor loadings, intercepts and residual variances to be equal) (M4). The indicator used to confirm that the models remained invariant was that the difference between the CFI [Comparative Fit Index] remain equal or inferior to .01 between the successive levels of invariance (Cheung & Rensvold, 2002) and that the difference in the RMSEA [Root Mean Square Error of Approximation] be equal or inferior to .015 (Chen, 2007). The value of χ^2 was also calculated, but it was not considered due to its sensitivity to the sample size (Wu et al., 2007). Finally, if strict invariance exists, it will be concluded that the observed changes are due to the latent variables and not to a measurement bias (DeShon, 2004).

Subsequently, to check whether there were statistically significant differences between the answers given by the different groups to the different items of the resulting scale, comparisons of the means were performed using the statistical significance Student's *t*-test for independent samples, and the effect size was calculated using Cohen's *d* statistic (Ventura-León et al., 2024).

The AMOS 22.0 module of the statistical software package SPSS 22.0 was used to analyse the collected data.

Results

The obtained results show that the factorial structure of the SCR scale is invariant with respect to the variables "sex," "living together," and "having children" (Table 1), as it complies with the following criteria: the value of the GFI [Goodness of Fit Index] is above .95 (Hoelter, 1983); the CFI [Comparative Fit Index], NFI [Normed Fit Index], IFI [Incremental Fit Index] and TLI [Tucker Lewis Index], are all above .95 (although they should not be considered fixed cut-off points) (Markland, 2007); and that the values of the RMSEA [Root Mean Square Error of Approximation] and SRMR [Standardised Root Mean Square Residual] are below .08 (Browne & Cudeck, 1993).

Table 1. Fit indices for the whole sample, women and men, people living and not living together, and with or without children

	χ^2	*DF*	GFI	RMSEA	SRMR	CFI	NFI	IFI	TLI
Global	200.306	35	.965	.067	.024	.970	.964	.970	.961
Women	136.322	35	.961	.067	.025	.971	.962	.971	.963
Men	103.701	35	.953	.071	.030	.965	.948	.965	.955
Living together	160.419	35	.954	.074	.026	.966	.957	.966	.956
Not Living together	95.152	35	.956	.066	.034	.962	.941	.962	.951
With children	124.543	35	.944	.078	.029	.963	.950	.964	.953
Without children	119.888	35	.964	.063	.028	.970	.958	.970	.961

Note. χ^2 = Chi-Square; *DF* = Degrees of Freedom; GFI = The Goodness of Fit Index ($p \geq .90$); RMSEA = Root Mean Squared Error of Approximation ($p \leq .06$); SRMR = Standardised Root Mean Square Residual ($p \leq .08$); CFI = Comparative Fit Index ($p \geq .95$); NFI = The Normet Fit Index ($p \geq .95$); IFI = Incremental Fit Index ($p \geq .95$); TLI = Tucker Lewis Index ($p \geq .95$).

Given that the single-factor model shows an optimal fit for all the subgroups, a multigroup confirmatory factor analysis (MGCFA) was used to test its factorial invariance as a function of the three indicated variables. The results are given in Table 2.

The results of the configural invariance (M1) analysis show adequate fit indices (RMSEA = .048, CFI = .969 for the variable "sex"; RMSEA = .051, CFI = .964 for the variable "living together"; and RMSEA = .049, CFI = .967 for the variable "having children"), which indicates that the factorial structure of satisfaction with the couple relationship remained invariable in all the groups compared. This model was considered to be a starting point for further analyses with greater restrictions. The results of the metric invariance (M2) analysis show adequate fit indices (RMSEA = .046, CFI = .968 for the variable "sex"; RMSEA = .049, CFI = .962 for the variable "living together"; and RMSEA = .048, CFI = .964 for the variable "having children"). The values of the fit indices were remarkably similar to those obtained in M1, and they met the established criteria (ΔRMSEA < .015, ΔCFI < .01), indicating that there was no difference between the

Table 2. Goodness of fit indices of each model tested for factorial invariance with respect to sex, living together, and having children

Model	χ^2	*DF*	CFI	ΔCFI	RMSEA	ΔRMSEA
Sex						
M1	240.038	70	.969		.048	
M2	253.132	79	.968	-.001	.046	-.002
M3	258.290	80	.967	-.001	.046	.000
M4	289.435	90	.964	-.003	.046	.000
Living together						
M1	256.456	70	.964		.051	
M2	276.809	79	.962	-.002	.049	-.002
M3	315.154	80	.955	-.007	.053	.004
M4	394.061	90	.942	-.013	.057	.004
Having children						
M1	244.448	70	.967		.049	
M2	268.845	79	.964	-.003	.048	-.001
M3	295.619	80	.959	-.005	.051	.003
M4	377.080	90	.945	-.014	.055	.004

Note. M1 = Configural Invariance; M2 = Metric Invariance; M3 = Strong Invariance; M4 = Strict Invariance; χ^2 = Chi-Square; *DF* = Degrees of freedom; CFI = Comparative Fit Index, ΔCFI = Increase in CFI; RMSEA = Root Mean Squared Error of Approximation; ΔRMSEA = Increase in RMSEA.

baseline model (M1) and the restrictive model M2. For Model 3 (M3), in which strong invariance was analysed (factor loadings and intercepts constrained to be equal), the fit indices demonstrated an acceptable fit (RMSEA = .046, CFI = .967 for the variable "sex"; RMSEA = .053, CFI = .955 for the variable "living together"; and RMSEA = .051, CFI = .959 for the variable "having children"). Comparing the indices with those obtained in the baseline model (M1), the differences between the CFI and RMSEA values do not exceed the accepted criteria. In Model 4 (M4), residual or strict invariance was analysed (constraining factor loadings, intercepts, and residual variances to be equal), obtaining adequate fit indices in the case of the variable "sex" (RMSEA = .046, CFI = .964) and acceptable ones in the case of the variables "living together" (RMSEA = .057, CFI = .942) and "having children" (RMSEA = .055, CFI = .945). As a result, residual or strict invariance could be shown for the variable "sex," but the same cannot be said for the other two variables since the ΔRMSEA was below .015, but the ΔCFI above .01 in both cases.

Finally, the contrast statistics Student's t test was applied to check whether there were statistically significant differences between the answers given by the two categories of the three analysed variables to each of the items of the resulting scale (Table 3). The results indicate that men reported higher mean scores than did women for all the items, with significantly higher scores for 6 of the 10 items, despite the small effect sizes. People who were not cohabiting reported higher scores than those who were not, with a significant difference for all of the items, though the effect sizes were small. Persons without children also reported higher levels of satisfaction than those who had children for all items, with small effect sizes. These same results were confirmed when analysing the responses of the 308 persons (154 couples) in which both members of the couple responded to the questionnaire. The comparisons were made for each of the 10 items since the designed scale attempts to demonstrate the profile of each subject without attempting to give a global score.

Discussion and conclusions

The objective of this study was to obtain evidence of the equivalence of the structure of the Satisfaction in Couple Relationship Scale (SCR) for the two sexes, regardless of whether they cohabit or not, or whether they have children or not. As a result, the scale has demonstrated an adequate factorial invariance for the analysed variables, confirming the possibility of using it for different sample types. Complementarily, the obtained results are consistent with other studies, situating men, people who do not cohabit, and those that do not have children as being most satisfied with their couple relationships (Al-Darmaki et al., 2016; Bogdan et al., 2022; Boerner et al., 2014; Corra et al., 2009; Maureira, 2011; Urbano-Contreras, 2019).

As stated, and in agreement with previous studies, men report more significant satisfaction indices with their relationships. Nevertheless, it must be kept in mind that sex is the only variable of the three analysed that does not exhibit differences in any of the items studied and the one that shows the smallest effect sizes. Given the smaller influence of this variable, it is of interest to highlight other studies such as that of Jackson et al. (2014) in which, after a metanalysis with 226 samples and 101,110 participants, statistically significant but minimal differences were found between the sexes regarding satisfaction with their relationships, with women being less satisfied. These differences were not noticeable when clinical samples were eliminated, and only the general population was analysed.

As far as living together is concerned, it can be a positive element even regarding general health, compared to people who do not cohabit. However, in the event of a divorce, men are at greater risk of suffering from chronic depression, and women have a greater chance of developing both chronic anxiety and chronic depression (Simó-Noguera et al., 2015). Despite the positive elements of living together, and in line with Maureira (2011), living together is linked to a reduction in the satisfaction with the couple relationship, with highlighted aspects including a reduced interest in novelty, and dissatisfaction with aspects related to sexual satisfaction. Also, cohabitation is a symptom of economic and emotional strain (Perelli et al., 2019). However, research also points out that cohabitation is usually related to an increased well-being, especially in contexts where cohabitation is socially accepted as an alternative to marriage (Evans et al., 2023).

Regarding the well-studied variable of parenthood, results are similar to the studies already highlight-

Table 3. Comparisons of means between men and women, people who live and do not live with their partners, with and without children

Ítems	Sex						Living Together						Having Children					
	W		M		*p*	*d*	LT		LA		*p*	*d*	C		NC		*p*	*d*
	Mean	*SD*	Mean	*SD*			Mean	*SD*	Mean	*SD*			Mean	*SD*	Mean	*SD*		
I am satisfied with the attention I receive from my partner	3.38	.721	3.55	.663	.000	-.25	3.37	.743	3.55	.620	.000	.26	3.34	.757	3.51	.657	.000	-.24
I feel like my partner worries about me	3.59	.646	3.70	.554	.002	-.18	3.56	.661	3.75	.515	.000	.32	3.53	.680	3.70	.558	.000	-.27
My partner gives me the care and affection I need	3.41	.761	3.49	.699			3.34	.783	3.61	.630	.000	.38	3.26	.817	3.56	.652	.000	-.40
I feel valued by my partner	3.51	.730	3.58	.647			3.44	.751	3.69	.576	.000	.37	3.37	.787	3.65	.608	.000	-.40
When I am sad or worried my partner makes an effort to find out what's bothering me	3.60	.684	3.70	.596	.013	-.16	3.54	.725	3.79	.482	.000	.41	3.46	.760	3.75	.538	.000	-.44
My partner is available when I need them	3.47	.690	3.59	.651	.006	-.18	3.46	.706	3.60	.620	.002	.21	3.41	.715	3.59	.642	.000	-.26
I feel excited about my relationship with my partner	3.44	.736	3.54	.686	.023	-,14	3.39	.754	3.62	.636	.000	.33	3.35	.775	3.56	.664	.000	-.29
I feel like my partner loves me as much as I love them	3.49	.557	3.50	.627			3.52	.566	3.45	.610	.040	-.12	3.51	.590	3.48	.579	.047	.05
I feel understood by my partner	3.21	.749	3.27	.726			3.15	.754	3.37	.696	.000	.30	3.10	.760	3.32	.713	.000	-.30
My partner is interested in my day-to-day life	3.33	.776	3.40	.731	.012	-.09	3.25	.806	3.53	.642	.000	.38	3.19	.830	3.48	.684	.000	-.38

Note. W = Women; M = Men; LT = Living together; LA = Living apart; C = Children; NC = No children.

ed, and it seems that parents' satisfaction with the couple relationship tends to diminish (Martins et al., 2023; Urbano-Contreras et al., 2018). In the face of this reality, it is worth pointing out that those couples that have positive dynamics before becoming parents may experience a slight decline in satisfaction with the arrival of children, but they maintain satisfactory relationships, whereas if couples already had problems before becoming parents, these problems tend to worsen upon becoming parents (Doss & Rhoades, 2017; Hidalgo & Menéndez, 2009). This demonstrates the need to intervene and support couples so that their relationship is strengthened from the beginning, and they can confront, among others, the challenges that the transition to parenthood presents.

Finally, combining sex and parenthood, becoming parents is usually accompanied by a decrease in the satisfaction with the couple relationship, particularly in the case of women. This decrease can be explained by an increase in the conflicts that they experience (Huss & Pollmann-Schult, 2020). Along the same lines, women tend to put off sexual satisfaction in favour of child-rearing, mainly when the care of the children is not shared. Couples who share the care of their children in an equal fashion report higher quality indices in their relations (Carlson et al., 2016). Therefore, these results also steer couple interventions towards achieving more equal relationships with respect to the dynamics of interaction in the relationship itself and the everyday tasks of coexistence and the care of the children.

Finally, it should be noted that one of the advantages of using this scale is that it is a short instrument, unlike others with more items. Therefore, administration would take less time, scoring is simpler, which makes the SCR a more efficient test than the others.

Notwithstanding, this study has some limitations, such as the sample size and the voluntary nature of participation. Also, another limitation is that marital social desirability was not explicitly measured. This could influence the self-reported satisfaction in couple relationships, as individuals may tend to present their relationships more positively due to social norms (Schumm, 2015). Consequently, future research should increase the number of participants and select them using a random sampling method, in addition to considering the inclusion of a measure of social desirability to control for potential bias in self-reports. Eventually, future research should also test for invariance in the scale according to the variable 'duration of relationship'.

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Declaration of interests

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

Data availability statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author, upon reasonable request.

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