

Brief Report

Construction and Validation of a Brief Spanish Version of the Coming Out Growth Scale: A Brief Report

Construcción y Validación de una Versión Breve de la Escala de Crecimiento tras la Salida del Clóset en Español: Un Breve Reporte

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Received: December 16, 2025 | **Accepted:** September 1, 2026 | **Published:** September 7, 2026

WWW.REVISTACARIBENADEPSICOLOGIA.COM

Cite as:

Esteban, C., & Hernández-López, E. (2026). Construction and validation of a Brief Spanish Version of the Coming Out Growth Scale: A brief report. *Revista Caribeña de Psicología*, 10(1), e16875. <https://doi.org/10.37226/rcp.v10i1.16875>

ABSTRACT

The coming out process can foster resilience and personal growth among sexual minority individuals. However, few culturally adapted tools exist to assess this growth, particularly for Spanish-speaking individuals. This study aimed to construct and validate a brief, Spanish-language version, of the Coming Out Growth Scale (COGS). Secondary data from two independent studies with Puerto Rican sexual minority participants ($N = 237$) were combined. An exploratory factor analysis (EFA) using principal axis factoring and oblimin rotation was conducted on the original 35-item scale, applying a strict loading criterion ($\geq .70$). This iterative process resulted in a 13-item unidimensional structure that explained 60.55% of the total variance. The resulting scale (COGS-B) demonstrated excellent internal consistency ($\alpha = .95$; $\omega = .95$; $\lambda = .92$), strong item-total correlations ($r > .69$), and significant loadings across all items. A confirmatory factor analysis supported the one-factor model with good fit indices. The COGS-B retained core aspects of coming out growth, authenticity, resilience, and self-acceptance, while improving efficiency and cultural inclusivity. These findings highlight the scale's utility in clinical and research settings and address the ongoing need for validated psychological instruments in Spanish for LGBTQ+ populations.

Keywords: coming out growth; psychometric validation; Spanish translation; sexual minorities; LGBTQ+

RESUMEN

El proceso de salir del clóset puede fomentar la resiliencia y el crecimiento personal en personas de minorías sexuales. Sin embargo, existen pocas herramientas culturalmente adaptadas que evalúen este tipo de crecimiento, particularmente para personas hispanohablantes. Este estudio tuvo como objetivo construir y validar una versión breve en español de la *Coming Out Growth Scale* (COGS). Se utilizó un análisis secundario de datos combinados de dos estudios independientes con participantes de Puerto Rico de minorías sexuales ($N = 237$). Se realizó un análisis factorial exploratorio (AFE) utilizando extracción por ejes principales y rotación oblimin sobre la escala original de 35 ítems, aplicando un criterio estricto de carga factorial ($\geq .70$). Este proceso iterativo resultó en una estructura unidimensional de 13 ítems que explicó el 60.55%

de la varianza total. La escala resultante (COGS-B) demostró excelente consistencia interna ($\alpha = .95$; $\omega = .95$; $\lambda = .92$), fuertes correlaciones ítem-total ($r > .69$) y cargas factoriales significativas en todos los ítems. Un análisis factorial confirmatorio respaldó el modelo unifactorial con buenos índices de ajuste. La COGS-B retiene aspectos clave del crecimiento asociado a salir del clóset, como la autenticidad, resiliencia y autoaceptación, y mejora la eficiencia y la inclusividad cultural. Estos hallazgos respaldan su utilidad en contextos clínicos y de investigación, y responden a la necesidad de instrumentos psicológicos validados en español para poblaciones LGBTQ+.

Palabras Claves: crecimiento tras salir del clóset; validación; traducción al español; minorías sexuales; LGBTQ+

INTRODUCTION

Coming out is a multifaceted process of disclosing one's sexual orientation and/or gender identity, often occurring repeatedly across various social, familial, and institutional contexts (Coleman, 1981). While this experience can involve risks such as discrimination, stigma, and psychological distress, it may also foster positive psychological changes. These beneficial outcomes are captured by the concept of coming out growth, a construct that refers to the personal development, resilience, and identity integration that can emerge through navigating the coming out process (Vaughan & Waehler, 2010). According to Vaughan and Waehler (2010), individuals may experience growth in domains such as authenticity, self-esteem, mental health, social connectedness, and community involvement, particularly when they are supported in their disclosure experiences.

The importance of measuring coming out growth lies in its potential to highlight resilience among sexual minority individuals, especially in the face of minority stressors. Traditional models, such as the Minority Stress Model (Meyer, 2003; Frost & Meyer, 2023), emphasize the adverse consequences of stigma and discrimination. However, the coming out experience also presents opportunities for identity affirmation, emotional strength, and prosocial engagement, outcomes that are crucial for psychological well-being and quality of life. Research suggests that individuals who report growth during or after coming out tend to exhibit greater self-acceptance, improved mental health, and stronger community ties (Pistella et al., 2016; Solomon et al., 2015). These findings underscore the need to assess not only stress-related risks but also growth-related capacities, especially in diverse cultural and interpersonal settings.

To capture these positive dimensions, Vaughan and Waehler (2010) developed the Coming Out Growth Scale (COGS), grounded in Eriksonian identity theory and stress-related growth frameworks.

The original scale comprises 35 items across five domains: authenticity, identity integration, resilience, relational growth, and advocacy. Although early conceptualizations of coming out growth identified five domains, empirical analyses of the original scale supported a more parsimonious two-factor structure consisting of individualistic growth and collectivistic growth. Psychometric evaluations of the COGS demonstrated robust validity and reliability in samples of lesbian women and gay men. However, its length may limit its utility in research and clinical settings that require brief and accessible tools, especially when used alongside other instruments in multivariate studies.

Despite its conceptual strengths, no brief version of the COGS has been psychometrically validated to date, and its adaptation to Spanish-speaking populations remains limited. To address this, the original scale was recently translated into Spanish and culturally adapted to be inclusive of plurisexual individuals by Esteban et al. (2025). This bi-inclusive version ensures broader applicability and cultural sensitivity, particularly for populations often underrepresented in LGBTQ+ research. However, even in its adapted form, the full 35-item scale may pose practical limitations in research and applied settings. Long instruments increase the risk of participant fatigue, response bias, and attrition, especially when administered alongside other measures in multi-scale protocols. In contrast, brief scales have been shown to reduce survey abandonment rates, improve response quality, and maintain measurement reliability and validity when properly constructed (Smith et al., 2000).

A short, psychometrically version of the COGS in Spanish would enhance its utility across diverse settings, allowing for efficient yet rigorous assessment of positive psychological outcomes associated with the coming out process. It would also facilitate large-scale data collection, longitudinal research, and inclusion in brief screening batteries where time and

attention are limited (Smith et al., 2000). This study addresses this gap by developing and validating a brief version of the Coming Out Growth Scale, providing a efficient tool to assess identity-related growth in sexual minority populations.

Current Study

To address these gaps, the present study aims to: (1) construct a brief version of the Spanish-language Bi-Inclusive Coming Out Growth Scale (COGS), and (2) evaluate its psychometric properties, including internal consistency and factor structure, in a Spanish-speaking sexual minority sample.

METHOD

Research Design

This study employed a secondary data analysis with an instrumental design (Boateng et al. 2018), using datasets from two separate research projects. Both studies followed Bernal and Domenech-Rodríguez's (2012) model for translation and cultural adaptation, ensuring linguistic and contextual relevance of the instruments. Participants across both projects were Hispanic Puerto Rican individuals who identified as sexual minorities. The first project ($n = 100$) utilized a quantitative method, cross-sectional, exploratory design to examine predictors of coming out growth and coming out acceptance (Esteban et al., 2023). The second project ($n = 161$) applied a mixed-method approach with a cross-sectional and instrumental design to support the development and validation of the Coming Out Physical Symptoms Scale (Hernández-López et al., 2025). Recruitment procedures were conducted online through the distribution of digital flyers on various social media platforms, including Facebook and Instagram. Additionally, targeted Facebook Ads were used to increase reach and participant engagement. In both studies, data collection was conducted using the SurveyMonkey platform, which included the informed consent process and self-administered questionnaires. All participation was voluntary and anonymous.

Participants

The initial combined dataset included 261 participants. Following data cleaning procedures, cases were excluded if they did not complete the Coming Out Growth Scale (COGS), presented uniform or incomplete response patterns, or were identified as potential duplicates based on overlapping demographic

characteristics and response patterns. The final analytic sample included 237 Hispanic Puerto Rican individuals who self-identified as sexual minorities. The majority of participants identified as either gay or lesbian (59.5%) or bisexual (34.6%), with most identifying their gender as cisgender men (54.4%) or women (40.1%). A small portion of the sample identified as transgender or non-binary (5.5%). Participants ranged in age from 21 to 67 years, with a mean age of 32.09 years ($SD = 11.79$). Most were young adults between the ages of 21 and 30 (65.4%). Just under half of the sample (49.8%) reported currently having a partner. In terms of socioeconomic status, a substantial proportion (44.3%) reported an annual individual income of less than \$10,000 and 64.6% of participants reported having no religious affiliation (See Table 1).

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

Characteristics	<i>n</i>	%
Gender Identity		
Men	129	54.4
Women	95	40.1
Trans Men	5	2.1
Non-Binary	4	1.6
Trans Women	3	1.3
Trans Non-Binary	1	0.5
Sexual Orientation		
Gay or Lesbian	141	59.5
Bisexual	82	34.6
Pansexual	9	3.8
Asexual	2	0.8
Other	3	1.3
Age		
21-30	155	65.4
31-40	38	16.0
41-50	18	7.6
51-60	16	6.8
61-70	10	4.2
Partner/s		
Yes	118	49.8
No	119	50.2
Annual Income		
Less than 10,000	105	44.3
10,001 – 30,000	65	27.4
30,001 – 50,000	43	18.1
50,001 – 70,000	13	5.5
More than 70,001	11	4.6
Religious Affiliation		
Yes	84	35.4
No	153	64.6

Note. Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding. Data represent the combined sample from two independent research projects with Hispanic Puerto Rican sexual minority participants.

Instruments

Sociodemographic Questionnaire. Participants completed a sociodemographic questionnaire designed to collect relevant background information. The variables included gender identity, sexual orientation, age, relationship status, geographic location, individual annual income, and religious and/or spiritual affiliation.

Coming Out Growth Scale (COGS) – Spanish Version. The Coming Out Growth Scale (Vaughan & Waehler, 2010) is a 35-item self-report instrument designed to assess positive psychological changes associated with the coming out process. Items are rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (not at all) to 5 (a lot), with higher scores indicating greater perceived growth. The scale includes two subscales: Individualistic Growth (IG), which reflects intrapersonal development and authenticity, and Collectivistic Growth (CG), which captures interpersonal growth, social advocacy, and community engagement. In the original validation study, the overall scale demonstrated acceptable internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = .72$). A Spanish-language version of the scale was developed and adapted by Esteban et al. (2025) using a culturally responsive and inclusive approach. This adaptation addressed monosexist assumptions present in the original items to ensure the measure was affirming and relevant to plurisexual individuals (e.g., bisexual, pansexual). Linguistic revisions included replacing the term “straight” with “heterosexual” to avoid value-laden or stigmatizing language, and the use of gender-neutral phrasing throughout the instrument to better reflect the lived experiences of individuals across the gender spectrum, including non-binary and agender persons. These changes were made to enhance the cultural, linguistic, and identity-based inclusivity of the scale while maintaining fidelity to its original theoretical framework.

General Procedures

After obtaining the necessary approvals for secondary use, both datasets were extracted and reviewed. The data were then merged into a single database to allow for unified analysis. Prior to analysis, the combined dataset underwent a series of data cleaning steps. First, participants who did not complete the Coming Out Growth Scale (COGS) or had any missing data on this measure were excluded from

the analytic sample. The remaining data were reviewed for potential duplicate cases using the SPSS software package, applying checks based on demographic variables. Some exact or similar duplicates were identified. Following this cleaning process, the final sample consisted of 237 valid cases with complete data on the COGS and relevant demographic variables.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed in two stages to develop and validate a brief version of the Coming Out Growth Scale (COGS-B). All preliminary and exploratory analyses were conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics version 28, while the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed using STATA version 19. To identify a reduced set of items with strong psychometric properties, an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted using principal axis factoring with oblimin rotation, consistent with recommendations for identifying latent structures in psychological scales. Sampling adequacy and suitability for factor analysis were assessed using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure and Bartlett's test of sphericity. A repeated item-reduction procedure was implemented, applying a conservative factor loading cutoff of $\geq .70$, as suggested by Worthington and Whittaker (2006), to retain only items with strong representation of the underlying construct. Items failing to meet this threshold were iteratively removed across multiple rounds of EFA. Internal consistency of the final reduced scale was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha (α), McDonald's omega (ω), and Guttman's split-half coefficient (λ) to ensure reliability across different indices. Following the EFA, a CFA was conducted to evaluate the factorial validity of the resulting 13-item brief form (COGS-B). A one-factor model was specified based on the EFA findings. Model fit was assessed using the chi-square test (χ^2), and all standardized factor loadings were examined for statistical significance.

RESULTS

Prior to initiating the item reduction process, preliminary analyses were conducted to evaluate the descriptive properties, distributional characteristics, and item-level performance of the 35-item Spanish version of the Coming Out Growth Scale (COGS). Descriptive statistics (i.e., mean, standard deviation,

skewness, and kurtosis), normality tests (Kolmogorov–Smirnov and Shapiro–Wilk), and corrected item–total correlations were examined for all items (see Table 2). These initial analyses confirmed adequate variability and internal consistency within the full scale, providing empirical justification for proceeding with the construction of a shorter form. In addition, correlations between the full scale, its original subscales, and the prospective brief version were explored to assess theoretical and empirical coherence (see Table 2).

An Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) using principal axis factoring with oblimin rotation was conducted to develop a brief version of the Coming Out Growth Scale (COGS-B). The initial pool consisted of 35 items. A repeated-step item reduction process was implemented, using a robust factor loading cutoff of $\geq .70$ to identify items with the strongest representation of the latent construct of the coming out growth (Worthington & Whittaker, 2006).

Table 2

Descriptives Statistics and Distribution for the Items of the COGS-B

	Items	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Skew</i>	<i>Kurt</i>	<i>K-S</i>	<i>S-W</i>	<i>r_{bis}</i>
8	I am more comfortable with being lesbian/gay. <i>[Siento más comodidad siendo LGB.]</i>	3.77	1.25	-0.677	-0.589	0.237	0.839	0.709
15	I have more happiness and/or joy in my life. <i>[Tengo más felicidad y/o alegría en mi vida.]</i>	3.74	1.22	-0.691	-0.425	0.204	0.854	0.724
16	My lesbian/gay identity feels like a more important part of who I am. <i>[Mi identidad LGB se siente como una parte más importante de quien soy.]</i>	4.01	1.19	-0.986	-0.129	0.285	0.787	0.691
18	I feel more complete or whole as a person. <i>[Me siento una persona más completa o entera.]</i>	3.92	1.21	-1.030	0.139	0.245	0.808	0.797
21	I believe I cope better with stress related to my lesbian/gay identity. <i>[Creo que puedo manejar mejor el estrés relacionado a mi identidad LGB.]</i>	3.68	1.17	-0.614	-0.464	0.217	0.874	0.768
22	My self-confidence has increased. <i>[Mi autoconfianza ha aumentado.]</i>	3.72	1.16	-0.738	-0.219	0.238	0.864	0.784
23	Overall, my life feels less stressful. <i>[En general, mi vida se siente menos estresante.]</i>	3.17	1.25	-0.134	-0.887	0.158	0.908	0.732
25	I have become a stronger/more courageous person. <i>[Me he convertido en una persona más fuerte y valiente.]</i>	3.68	1.17	-0.539	-0.609	0.198	0.875	0.763
27	My lesbian/gay identity feels more real/valid to me. <i>[Mi identidad LGB se siente más real/válida para mí.]</i>	4.03	1.21	-1.141	0.300	0.275	0.775	0.783
29	I have a stronger lesbian/gay identity. <i>[Tengo una identidad LGB más fuerte.]</i>	3.89	1.23	-0.903	-0.199	0.246	0.816	0.798
30	I have become more honest with important people in my life. <i>[Me he vuelto una persona más honesta con las personas importantes en mi vida.]</i>	4.12	1.08	-1.227	0.860	0.273	0.777	0.713
31	I am more free to be myself. <i>[Soy más libre para ser realmente yo.]</i>	4.08	1.11	-1.042	0.156	0.282	0.788	0.781
33	I feel more genuine or authentic as a person. <i>[Siento con más genuinidad o autenticidad como persona.]</i>	4.16	1.03	-1.189	0.834	0.286	0.777	0.793

Note. *n* = 237. *M* = Mean; *SD* = Standard Deviation; *Skew* = Skewness; *Kurt* = Kurtosis. *K-S* = Kolmogorov–Smirnov test; *S-W* = Shapiro–Wilk test; all *p* < .001. *R_{bis}* = Corrected Item. **Bold** = Original Item; *Italic* = Spanish version. English items correspond to the original Coming Out Growth Scale (Vaughan & Waehler, 2010), which was developed using terminology centered on lesbian and gay identities. Spanish items are derived from a previously translated and bi-inclusive adaptation of the scale (Esteban et al., 2025). The present study focused exclusively on psychometric item reduction; therefore, no additional modifications to item wording were introduced.

In the first round, all 35 items were entered into the analysis. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure verified sampling adequacy ($KMO = .944$), and Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant [$\chi^2(df = 595)$, $p < .001$]. Items loading below .70 on the primary factor were removed. A total of 20 items were eliminated in this round due to insufficient loadings [i.e., 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 17, 19, 20, 26, 28, 32, 34].

A second EFA was conducted with the remaining 15 items. The factor structure remained stable, The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure verified sampling adequacy ($KMO = .942$), and Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant [$\chi^2(df = 105)$, $p < .001$]. Two additional items were excluded for failing to meet the $\geq .70$ loading criterion [i.e., 24, 35].

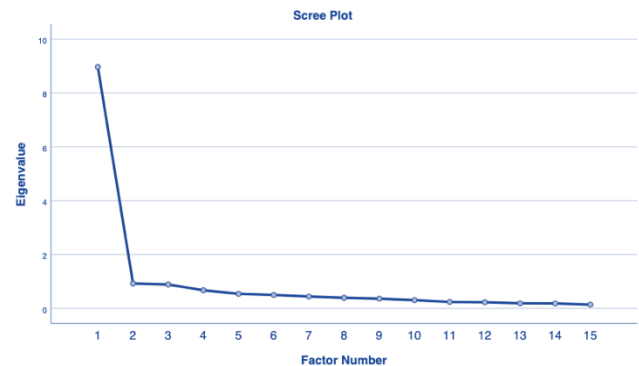
A final EFA was conducted with the remaining 13 items. The factor structure remained stable, The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure verified sampling adequacy ($KMO = .937$), and Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant [$\chi^2(df = 78)$, $p < .001$]. All items loaded $\geq .70$ on the single extracted factor, with loadings ranging from .709 to .821. All items demonstrated strong communalities ($>.50$) and item-total correlations ($>.69$). The one-factor solution accounted for 60.55% of the total variance, indicating a robust underlying structure (see Figure 1).

The resulting 13-item of the COGS-B demonstrated excellent internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = .95$; 95% CI [.94, .96]; Omega's $\omega = .95$; 95% CI [.94, .96]; Guttman Split-Half's $\lambda = .92$) suggesting high reliability despite the scale's reduced length. The items retained captured the core aspects of personal growth associated with the coming out process, including

increased authenticity, resilience, and relational depth (see Table 3).

Figure 1

Sedimentation and Variance Explained



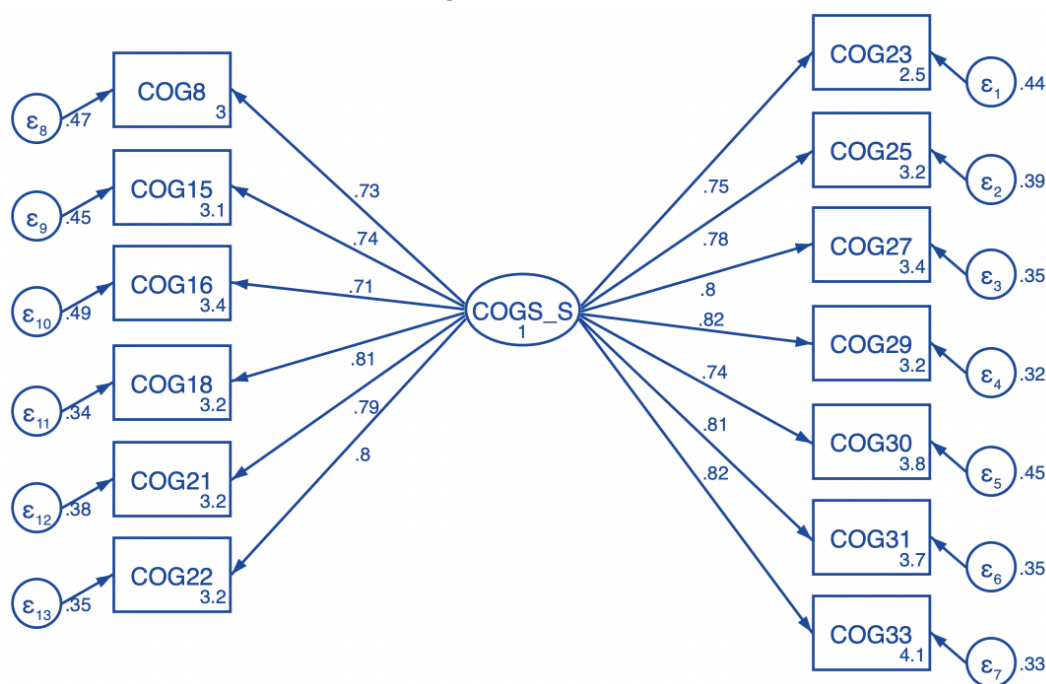
To evaluate the factorial validity of the final 13-item brief form of the Coming Out Growth Scale (COGS-B), a CFA was conducted in STATA using maximum likelihood estimation with robust standard errors. A one-factor model was specified based on the results of the exploratory factor analysis. Model fit was evaluated using multiple indices, including the chi-square test, Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) with 90% confidence interval, and Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR). The model showed mixed fit to the data, $\chi^2(65) = 398.71$, $p < .001$, CFI = .87, TLI = .84, RMSEA = .15, 90% CI [.13, .16], and SRMR = .06. Although the SRMR indicated acceptable fit, the CFI, TLI, and RMSEA suggested suboptimal model fit. While the one-factor structure is supported by the exploratory analysis and item performance, the confirmatory model may not fully capture the complexity of the data (see Figure 2 and Table 4).

Table 3

Cronbach's Alpha, Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations Between the Spanish-COGS and the COGS-B

Scales	# Items	α	95% CI (α)	ω	95% CI (ω)	λ	M	SD	1	2	3
1. COGS	35	.95	[.94, .96]	.95	[.94, .96]	.93	129.30	26.60	-		
2. COGS-IG	21	.94	[.93, .95]	.94	[.93, .95]	.94	78.04	17.41	.97	-	
3. COGS-CG	14	.86	[.83, .89]	.85	[.82, .88]	.79	51.26	10.43	.93	.82	-
4. COGS-B	13	.95	[.94, .96]	.95	[.94, .96]	.92	49.97	12.16	.95	.97	.80

Note. $n = 237$; α = Cronbach's Alpha; ω = McDonald's Omega; λ = Guttman Split-Half Coefficient; COGS = Coming Out Growth Global Scale; COGS-IG = Coming Out Growth Scale-Individualistic Growth (Subscale); COGS-CG = Coming Out Growth Scale-Collectivistic Growth (Subscale); COGS-B = Coming Out Growth-Brief Scale. All bivariate correlations were statistically significant at $p < .001$.

Figure 2*Confirmatory Structural Model with One Factor Loading (13-Items)***Table 4***Item Reduction Process for the Brief Spanish Version of the Coming Out Growth Scale (COGS-B)*

Step	Analysis	Items Included	Criteria Applied	Items Removed	Items Retained
Step 1	Initial EFA (PAF, oblimin)	35 items	Factor loading $\geq .70$	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 17, 19, 20, 26, 28, 32, 34	15 items
Step 2	Second EFA	15 items	Factor loading $\geq .70$	24, 35	13 items
Step 3	Final EFA	13 items	All loadings $\geq .70$; stable structure	None	13 items
Step 4	Reliability Analysis	13 items	Internal consistency	None	13 items
Step 5	CFA (STATA)	13 items	Model fit evaluation	None	Final model

DISCUSSION

This study aimed to shorten and validate a brief, Spanish-language, bi-inclusive version of the Coming Out Growth Scale (COGS), addressing the need for culturally sensitive and efficient tools to assess positive psychological outcomes in the context of sexual identity disclosure. Using a psychometric process, including item reduction, factor analyses, and reliability testing, a 13-item version (COGS-B) was developed and demonstrated strong psychometric performance.

The final 13-item COGS-B emerged through a conservative and theory-informed item reduction

strategy. Items were retained only if they met a high loading threshold ($\geq .70$), following recommendations for developing brief but conceptually sound measures. The resulting one-factor solution explained 60.55% of the total variance and demonstrated strong internal consistency across multiple indices supporting the scale's reliability even in its reduced form. Each item also showed strong item-total correlations and acceptable distributional properties. Normality tests (Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk) indicated that all items deviated significantly from normality, which is common in psychological data of this kind and supports the use of robust estimation methods (Boateng, 2018).

CFA provided partial support supported the one-factor structure, with all standardized factor loadings statistically significant; however, global fit indices indicated mixed model fit. Although SRMR suggested acceptable fit, the CFI, TLI, and RMSEA values were below recommended thresholds, suggesting that the unidimensional model may not fully capture the complexity of the data. These results should be interpreted with caution and highlight the need for further model refinement or alternative structural specifications. Notably, strong correlations between the brief version and the original full scale and its subscales suggest that the COGS-B retains the integrity of the full instrument while improving brevity and usability (Rolstad et al., 2011; Wise & Sidarus, 2025).

Taken together, the findings provide preliminary empirical support for the psychometric soundness of the COGS-B as a concise and pluri-inclusive tool to assess coming out-related personal growth. The retained items capture the multidimensional nature of this construct, ranging from authenticity and emotional resilience to identity integration and social connectedness, within a coherent unidimensional structure. By demonstrating high internal consistency, robust item performance, and strong correspondence with the original scale, the COGS-B offers an efficient alternative for researchers and clinicians seeking to measure growth processes among Spanish-speaking sexual minority individuals (Rolstad et al., 2011; Wise & Sidarus, 2025).

Strengths and Limitations

One key strength of this study is the rigorous psychometric methodology, including the use of both exploratory and confirmatory analyses, strict factor loading thresholds, and multiple reliability indicators. Additionally, the adaptation of the scale using pluri-inclusive, gender-neutral, and non-monosexist language ensures cultural and identity relevance for Spanish-speaking sexual minorities individuals.

However, some limitations should be acknowledged. First, the cross-sectional and non-probabilistic nature of the sample limits generalizability. The sample was largely composed of younger adults (65.4% aged 21–30) and participants from Puerto Rico, which may not reflect the diversity of experiences across other age groups or Hispanic communities. Second, the scale's one-factor structure, while statistically sound, does not differentiate between the

individualistic and collectivistic dimensions of growth included in the original version, which may limit its theoretical nuance. Third, self-report data may be subject to social desirability bias, although this risk is mitigated by the use of anonymous online data collection.

Implications for Clinical Psychology

The COGS-B represents a practical, affirming, and psychometrically sound tool for use in clinical and community-based settings. Its brevity and cultural inclusivity make it particularly well suited for assessing strengths and resilience in gay and lesbian individuals, especially plurisexual persons who have historically been marginalized in psychological research and practice (Esteban, 2014). In therapy, the COGS-B can help clinicians track client progress related to identity development, resilience, and self-acceptance. It can also guide culturally competent interventions, particularly those focused on empowerment and authenticity, aligning with affirmative therapy models that emphasize client strengths and identity integration rather than pathology (Ginicola et al., 2017). Furthermore, the tool's validated use in Spanish expands the availability of evidence-based measures for Spanish-speaking populations, a critical contribution given the shortage of psychometrically validated LGBTQ+ measures in languages other than English.

Future Research Directions

Future research should explore the temporal stability of the COGS-B through longitudinal designs to assess how coming out growth evolves over time or in response to interventions. Cross-cultural validations across other Spanish-speaking countries or Hispanic populations would enhance its generalizability and support comparative studies. It will also be important to examine convergent and discriminant validity with related constructs such as distress, minority stress, resilience, self-esteem, and mental health outcomes. In addition, future work may explore item response theory (IRT) methods to further refine item performance and differential item functioning across gender, orientation, and other demographic characteristics and determinants.

CONCLUSION

The current study developed and validated a 13-item brief version of the Spanish-language, bi-inclusive Coming Out Growth Scale (COGS-B), providing

a reliable and culturally responsive instrument to assess positive psychological outcomes associated with coming out. The COGS-B demonstrated excellent internal consistency, a clear unidimensional factor structure, and strong correlations with the original full-scale, supporting its utility as an efficient and inclusive measure. This tool offers valuable applications for both research and clinical practice, reinforcing the importance of strength-based frameworks in understanding sexual minorities mental health, well-being, and quality of life.

STATEMENTS AND DECLARATIONS

Originality Statement: The authors confirm that this manuscript is original, has not been published previously, and is not currently under consideration for publication elsewhere. All authors have approved the final version of the manuscript and agree to its submission.

Authors' Contributions: CE: conceptualization, literature search, research design, preparation of the data, statistical analyses, drafting and editing manuscript; EHL: literature search, preparation of the data, statistical analyses, and drafting manuscript.

Funding: No funding was received to support the conduct of this study or the preparation of this manuscript.

Acknowledgments: We are deeply grateful to the participants of both studies for sharing their time and experiences, and to the broader LGBTQ+ community for their ongoing support and insight, which enriched our work in meaningful ways.

Competing Interests: The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

Ethics approval and consent to participate: The parent studies were approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the Ponce Health Sciences University (#2104061049; #2403190571). All methods were carried out in accordance with relevant guidelines and regulations. Informed consent was obtained from all the participants.

Availability of Data and Materials: The datasets used and/or analyzed during the current study are available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

Review Process: This study has been reviewed by external peers in double-blind mode.

Statement of the use of Generative Artificial Intelligence: Portions of the manuscript were supported by the use of artificial intelligence tools for language editing and writing assistance. These tools were used solely to improve clarity and readability. All conceptualization, data analysis, interpretation of results, and final content were conducted and verified by the authors, who take full responsibility for the integrity of the work.

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