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Article

My Life Values Test: Design, Construction, and Psychometric Validation of a Tool for Managing Values

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INFORMATION

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ABSTRACT

The relationship between personal values and emotional well-being is well-established in psychological literature. This study focuses on the development and psychometric validation of the *My Life Values Test* (MLVT) for the general Spanish population, aiming to assess the intensity and priority of personal values. Two samples were used (pilot phase n = 148, validation n = 372). The MLVT, consisting of 75 items on a 10-point Likert scale, underwent factor analysis and reliability and validity tests. The MLVT demonstrated high reliability (Cronbach's α = .914; McDonald's ω = .937) and confirmed structural validity, with excellent fit indices across three hierarchical levels (*RMSEA* = .03, 95% *CI* [.02, .04]; *SRMR* = .029, 95% *CI* [.02, .04]; *CFI* = .946; *TLI* = .951; R^2 = .423), consistent with Schwartz's Theory of Basic Human Values (BHV). The MLVT is validated as an effective tool for measuring both the intensity and priority of personal values. Its implementation could facilitate more precise and personalized interventions that promote well-being, group cohesion, and organizational effectiveness. Future research should replicate these findings with larger and more diverse samples to expand its applicability across different cultural and demographic contexts.

My Life Values Test. Diseño, Construcción y Validación Psicométrica de una Herramienta Para la Gestión de Valores

Palabras clave:
Valores personales
Bienestar emocional
Teoría de los Valores Humanos Básicos
Validación psicométrica
Elecciones personales

RESUMEN

La relación entre los valores personales y el bienestar emocional está bien establecida en la literatura psicológica. Este estudio se centra en el desarrollo y validación psicométrica del *My Life Values Test* (MLVT) en población general española, con el objetivo de evaluar la intensidad y la prioridad de los valores personales. Se emplearon dos muestras (fase piloto n = 148, validación n = 372). El MLVT, compuesto por 75 ítems en una escala Likert de 10 puntos, fue sometido a análisis factorial, así como a pruebas de fiabilidad y validez. El instrumento mostró una alta fiabilidad (α de Cronbach = .914; ω de McDonald = .937) y confirmó su validez estructural, con excelentes índices de ajuste en los tres niveles jerárquicos (*RMSEA* = .03, *IC* 95% [.02, .04]; *SRMR* = .029, *IC* 95% [.02, .04]; *CFI* = .946; *TLI* = .951; R^2 = .423), en coherencia con la Teoría de los Valores Básicos Humanos (BHV) de Schwartz. El MLVT se valida como una herramienta eficaz para medir tanto la intensidad como la prioridad de los valores personales. Su aplicación puede facilitar intervenciones más precisas y personalizadas que promuevan el bienestar, la cohesión grupal y la eficacia organizacional. Investigaciones futuras deberán replicar estos hallazgos en muestras más amplias y diversas para ampliar su aplicabilidad en distintos contextos culturales y demográficos.

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Introduction

Promoting happiness, developing positive emotions, and practicing mindfulness have been shown to have significant effects on emotional well-being and quality of life (Burke & Arslan, 2021; Carr et al., 2024; Gulliford, 2022; Lianov et al., 2020; Martín-del-Río et al., 2021). In this sense, do personal values play an equally predominant role in the study of positive psychology? The importance of personal values goes beyond mere perception; personal values influence psychological well-being and suggest that a fulfilling and meaningful life requires aligning our actions with our deepest values (Gangopadhyay, 2021; Kumar & Subramanian, 2012; Sagiv & Schwartz, 2000). Personal values shape our perception and experience of the world, affecting our ability to overcome adversity and find purpose in life (Sayer, 2011; Schneider, 2011).

Schwartz (2012), describes values as deeply ingrained and emotionally significant beliefs oriented towards desirable goals. These beliefs are fundamental, as they exert considerable influence on our attitudes and behaviours both personally and socially. The author emphasizes that values not only shape our actions and perceptions in individual and collective contexts but are also essential predictors of our responses and behaviours. His Theory of Basic Human Values (BHV) has been fundamental in contemporary values research, and its impact and importance are reflected in recent studies (Atif et al., 2022; Duelmer et al., 2023; Lechner et al., 2022; Russo et al., 2022; Wetzelhütter et al., 2020). Schwartz BHV (2012) represents values in a circular model, reflecting a motivational continuum where the proximity between two values indicates similarities in their underlying motivations. This model divides ten values into four higher-order categories: Openness to Change (Self-Direction, Stimulation), Conservation (Security, Tradition, Conformity), Self-Enhancement (Hedonism, Achievement, Power), and Self-Transcendence (Benevolence, Universalism). The relevance of this approach in various cultural contexts has been demonstrated through its cross-cultural stability of these motivational types (Belic et al., 2022; Duelmer et al., 2023).

The Revised Portrait Values Questionnaire (PVQ-RR) by Schwartz and Cieciuch (2022), represents the most current tool for assessing values based on Schwartz's BHV. It is designed to determine the hierarchy of personal values, evaluating the importance individuals assign to different values in their lives. The authors reveal that the PVQ-RR shows satisfactory reliability, with Cronbach's alpha coefficients above 0.70 for the ten main values, ensuring its applicability in various cultural contexts. While the PVQ-RR stands out for its empirical robustness, other initiatives have also aimed to assess personal values. For instance, *Global Values: Where Do You Fit?* (Van Der Linden & BBC, 2018) is an interactive public engagement project that uses scientifically grounded scales to help individuals identify their core values and compare them to national and European averages. Another notable contribution is the *Value Alignment Inventory*, developed by Simon Dolan (Dolan et al, 2006; Dolan, 2011, 2020, 2021), which focuses on the alignment between personal and organizational values as a central element in effective leadership, decision-making, and employee wellbeing in professional environments. The mentioned tools focus on identifying value priorities without assessing their intensity. In response to this limitation, the My Life Values Test (MLVT) was developed to provide a more comprehensive understanding of personal values. The MLVT aims to not only identify important values for individuals but also measure their degree of importance, offering insights into both the priority and intensity of personal values. This dual focus allows for a deeper understanding and management of personal values, which can drive development in personal and organizational domains.

The development of the MLVT was driven by the necessity for a tool capable of accurately assessing both the intensity and priority of values within the general Spanish population. Such a tool is essential for enabling more precise and personalized interventions aimed at enhancing well-being, fostering group cohesion, and improving organizational effectiveness. By systematically evaluating and interpreting values, the MLVT can identify alignments and misalignments, thereby strengthening cohesion, competitiveness, and emotional bonds within organizations.

Drawing on the work of authors like Bratu and Cioca (2019), Salas-Vallina et al. (2023), and Vveinhardt and Gulbovaite (2018), our research underscores the importance of actively managing personal and organizational values to encourage both individual and group growth. Systematic evaluation of values facilitates the identification of both alignments and discrepancies, allowing for more precise interventions and fostering greater understanding and connection between people. The development of shared values enhances cohesion, competitiveness, and emotional bonds within an organization.

In this context, psychometric tools such as Salas-Vallina et al. (2023) or Wetzelhütter et al. (2020) emerge as fundamental resources for measuring value congruence, essential for the effectiveness of these practices. The MLVT goes beyond merely evaluating values; it also promotes the active management of these values, aiming to drive development in both personal and organizational domains. Building on the cited research, the MLVT offers a uniform interpretation of values, facilitating the identification of alignments and discrepancies among individuals. This approach promotes the articulation of shared values, enhancing differentiation, credibility, and connection across various contexts.

The central objective of this study is to explore the psychometric properties of the MLVT scale in the general Spanish population and assess its potential as a tool for evaluating the intensity and priority of personal values. The process of designing and constructing the MLVT, along with the strategies used for its validation, will be precisely described, analyzing the fit and robustness of its psychometric properties. This analysis aims not only to confirm the utility of the MLVT in general contexts but also to explore its potential to provide significant insights in evaluation.

Method

Participants

Two independent samples from the general Spanish population (18 years or older) were recruited using convenience sampling: a pilot sample (N = 148) and a final validation sample (N = 372). The pilot sample comprised 148 adults (39.2% women, 60.8% men; M = 39.30, SD = 13.50; range = 18–77). The final validation sample comprised 372 adults (39.8% women, 60.2% men; M = 39.16, SD = 13.41; range = 18–77). Employment status in the validation sample was as follows: employed 55.5%, self-employed 12.9%, students 15.6%, unemployed 5.4%, other 10.6% (see table 1). Age-group frequencies are reported in table 2, and a cross-tabulation between gender and age group, along with its significance level, is provided in table 3.

Participants were primarily recruited via personalized email invitations sent to academic and professional networks within Catalonia and other regions of Spain, complemented by interpersonal outreach and social media dissemination. Recruitment communications included a clear explanation of research objectives, estimated completion time (10-20 minutes), instructions, and a direct link to the *Survey Monkey* digital platform. Participation was voluntary, anonymous, and conditioned upon digitally signed informed consent, which explicitly emphasized confidentiality and secure data management.

Table 1
Participant Characteristics

Variables	Plot Sample	Final Sample
	n = 148	*n* = 372
Age		
M (SD)	39.30 (13.496)	39.16 (13.406)
Range	18 -77	18-77
Gender		
Female	39.20%	39.80%
Male	60.80%	60.20%
Occupation		
Employed	40.54%	55.5%
Self- Employed	29.05%	12.9%
Students	19.59%	15.6%
Unemployed	4.05%	5.4%
Others	6.76%	10.6%

Table 2
Distribution of Participants by Age Group and Gender

Age Group	Women	Men	Total *n*	% of Sample
Under 25	45	27	72	19.4
25 to 39	81	39	120	32.3
40 to 55	76	55	131	35.2
Over 55	22	27	49	13.2
Total	224	148	372	100

Table 3
Significance Between Gender and Age Variables

χ^2	*df*	*p*	ϕ
7.879	3.000	0.049	0.146

Instrument

The MLVT, intended for people aged 18 and over, evaluates the intensity and priority of personal values according to Schwartz's BHV (2012). The items of the MLVT are based on the PVQ-RR by de Schwartz and Cieciuch (2022), as well as previous works by de Schwartz (2003, 2011). These items incorporate brief descriptions that reflect personal goals, aspirations, or desires, implicitly revealing the importance of specific orientations and motivations associated with the instrument's 31 factors, distributed across three hierarchical levels. For example, item 3, "It is essential that there is a naturalness to share ideals among a group of friends", is part of the Conservation (CRN) dimension, the Security (S) value, and the Personal Security (PL) value component. Table 4 presents the theoretical construct map of the validated version of the MLVT, outlining its hierarchical structure, whereas table 5 provides the complete item listing, including item numbers, stems, and associated statements.

This instrument is designed for digital administration; therefore, it was implemented in its pilot and validation phases using the Survey Monkey platform (Survey Monkey, 2024; Waclawski, 2012). This platform was selected for its simplicity, accessibility, ability to securely manage and store data, and proven effectiveness in psychometric research (Giromini et al., 2021; Singh & Sagar, 2021). The decision to use *Survey Monkey* is supported by recent literature confirming its appropriateness for collecting reliable psychometric data, offering comparable validity and reliability to traditional methods (El Tantawi et al., 2022).

The validated version consists of 75 items rated on a 10-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (Absolutely Disagree) to 10 (Absolutely Agree), with an estimated completion time of 15 to 18 minutes. A 10-point format was selected to increase response granularity and internal consistency, as empirical research demonstrates that scales with 7 to 10 categories yield higher reliability and greater discriminative power (Preston & Colman, 2000; Joshi et al., 2015). This response range also facilitates more nuanced expression of value intensity and is well suited for digital administration (Dawes, 2008). While Schwartz's original PVQ employed a 6-point scale, extended formats have shown enhanced sensitivity in capturing individual differences in specific value contexts (Bouman et al., 2018).

The norms use standardized scores and percentiles, adjusted by the participant's sex and age. The final result, termed the DNA of Values, ranks the 10 BHV values in descending order based on participant importance, with scores ranging from 0 to 999 (see table 4).

Procedure

MLVT items were generated through a literature review, following Schwartz's (2003, 2011) guidelines for personal value item construction, and incorporating recommendations from psychometric specialists (Lane et al., 2015; Muñiz, 2018). Initially, 272 items were developed, ensuring equitable coverage of each value dimension based on Schwartz and Boehnke's (2004) theoretical approach.

Eight expert reviewers evaluated item content validity, using a dichotomous scale (Yes/No) to assess item comprehension, adequacy, and wording clarity. Their evaluations provided critical input for refining and reducing items.

The MLVT was administered in Spanish during both pilot and final validation. Data collection for both pilot and validation phases occurred digitally using *Survey Monkey*, selected for its accessibility, ease of use, and established data-protection standards (Survey Monkey, 2024). To optimize response quality, a maximum completion limit of 20 minutes was established, and duplicate submissions were individually verified and resolved. The survey abandonment rate was approximately 10%, aligning with typical standards for online psychometric surveys (Zimba et al., 2023).

Prior to MLVT completion, participants reviewed detailed guidelines describing Schwartz et al. (2012) values conceptualization, item rating methods, and expected completion time. Participants provided informed consent electronically, ensuring anonymity, voluntary participation, and the ability to withdraw at any time without repercussions. Data privacy, confidentiality, and secure storage protocols were explicitly communicated, facilitating informed and conscious participation.

Data Analysis

In the pilot study, quantitative analyses included the Kappa coefficient, ranging from -1 to 1, to measure agreement among

Table 4
Theoretical Construct Map of the Validated Version of the MLVT

Dimension	Value	Value Components	Component Items
DOC (Openness to Change)	VSD (Self-Direction)	CTH (Thought)	9, 40, 49, 67
		CAC (Action)	34, 36, 54, 55
	VST (Stimulation)	CSM (Stimulation)	21, 25, 32, 56
	VHD (Hedonism)	CHD (Hedonism)	34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 64
DSE (Self-Enhancement)	VAT (Achievement)	CAT (Achievement)	65, 66, 71
	VPW (Power)	CDM (Dominance)	26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33
		CRS (Resources)	53, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 69
DCN (Conservation)	VSC (Security)	CPL (Personal)	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 62, 64, 65, 67
		CCV (Collective)	5, 22, 23
	VTR (Tradition)	CTR (Tradition)	1, 4, 6, 10, 11
	VCO (Conformity)	CNS (Norms)	33, 48, 50, 51, 52, 53
		CIL (Interpersonal)	15, 41, 63
DST (Self-Transcendence)	VBV (Benevolence)	CTT (Trust)	18, 69, 40, 57, 12
		CAS (Assistance)	11, 21, 68, 69
	VUN (Universalism)	CSC (Social Concern)	37, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 75
		CNT (Nature)	72, 73, 74, 75
		CTL (Tolerance)	18, 30, 32, 58, 67, 70, 71

evaluators (Sim & Wright, 2005). Given the involvement of Eight raters and a dichotomous (Yes/No) response format, Fleiss' Kappa was used to assess inter-rater agreement, as it allows for evaluating concordance among multiple raters. A first exploratory analysis identified items with low discriminatory power ($rxy < .30$) for elimination. Reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha and the Omega coefficient (Cascaes da Silva et al., 2015; Ventura-León & Caycho-Rodríguez, 2014).

In the final validation phase, the construct structure was first explored through a Principal Component Analysis (*PCA*) performed on the validation sample ($n = 372$) to maximize explained variance across three hierarchical levels. *PCA* was used exclusively as an exploratory step to identify potential dimensions and adjust the item structure if needed, without assuming an underlying latent factor model (Furr, 2021). This preliminary approach is considered acceptable in psychometric scale development when subsequently followed by a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (*CFA*) to validate the theoretical structure (Ho, 2023). Accordingly, a *CFA* was performed on the validation sample to confirm the construct validity and strengthen the theoretical model derived from the exploratory phase. The analysis employed robust maximum likelihood estimation with Satorra-Bentler corrections to account for non-normality. Model fit was assessed using the Comparative Fit Index (*CFI*), Tucker-Lewis Index (*TLI*), Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (*RMSEA*; 90% *CI*), and Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (*SRMR*).

To assess potential sample biases, four complementary statistical procedures were applied. First, independent-samples t tests were conducted to compare standardized factor scores (Z(F1)–Z(F33)) between men and women (see table S2). Second, Pearson correlations were calculated to examine the linear associations between participants' age and the factor scores (see table S3). Third, one-way analyses of variance (*ANOVA*s) were performed to evaluate differences across employment status categories (see table S4). Finally, chi-square tests were used to assess associations between categorical demographic variables, such as gender and age group (see Table 3). For all analyses, two-tailed p values and 95% confidence intervals were calculated, and in correlation analyses the Pearson coefficient (r) was also interpreted as an effect size indicator.

Given the complexity of the scale, norms were constructed using discriminant functions to create clearly distinct groups and evaluate the impact of variables such as gender, age, and professional status. Standardized scores and percentiles were generated as additional norms.

To address data quality, Z-score transformation (Aguinis et al., 2013) was applied to identify outliers, and Little's MCAR test (Kline, 2015) confirmed the randomness of missing values ($\chi^2 = 0$, $df = 0$, $p < .05$), suggesting minimal impact on validity.

Survey Monkey (Survey Monkey, 2024; Waclawski, 2012) was used to collect consents and data for both the pilot and validation tests. All analyses were conducted using *SPSS 27.0* (IBM, 2023), *RStudio* (RStudio, 2023), and *Jamovi* (Jamovi, 2021). Full statistical tables that exceeded the size limits for inclusion in the main text are provided in the supplementary materials and labeled with the prefix "S" (e.g., Table S1. Comparison by gender groups).

Results

Descriptive Statistics

Comprehensive item-level descriptive statistics for the 75 MLVT items (N, minimum, maximum, mean, and standard deviation) are provided in Supplementary Table S5, offering a detailed overview of item distributions in the validation sample. At the scale level, the mean total score was 538.40 ($SD = 58.08$, $Var = 3373.47$; 75 items).

Reliability of the MLVT

In the pilot test, the MLVT demonstrated excellent internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = .971$; McDonald's $\omega = .974$). In the final validation phase, high reliability was maintained (Cronbach's $\alpha = .914$, standardized $\alpha = .920$; McDonald's $\omega = .937$). Item-level

Table 5
Item Mapping of the My Life Values Test (MLVT)

Items
I consider that having education or training…
58. Allows you to have an open mind and understand the reasons behind many aspects of life.
59. Is essential: the more education and/or training you have, the greater your chances of success.
60. They provide a global vision and understanding of the world we live in.
61. It helps you find a job that allows you to build a future.
When I make plans with friends and/or my partner, I like to…
21. Contribute to the plan by sharing my knowledge and/or contacts.
25. Listen to the suggestions my friends or partner may make.
When I feel angry about a situation…
15. If it is due to a family problem, I try to make peace as soon as possible to preserve family harmony.
36. I do not like to remain stuck in that discomfort and try to find a way to change my mood.
When I need to ask someone for a favor, I will ask…
20. Someone who can fully understand me.
26. Someone who already owes me a favor.
32. Whoever is closest at hand; it is a matter of cooperation.
When I carry out a task, I consider it important to…
64. Make my greatest effort to give the best of myself.
66. Demonstrate my worth and personal potential to others.
Recycling is…
50. Necessary.
51. Essential, because we need to preserve the planet.
Being part of a family…
4. Makes you part of a group in which the whole is greater than the sum of its parts; the family enhances you.
10. Is very important for feeling at ease.
Family gatherings are useful for…
1. Continuing to foster family contact from one generation to the next.
12. Catching up on a wide range of topics.
30. Trying to please everyone.
I like making new friendships…
19. Within my immediate circle, the people around us should be cared for and taken into account.
37. Anywhere and at any time, finding interesting people to share experiences with is priceless.
41. To expand my circle of contacts, essential for my personal growth.
I like to think that, when it comes to solving a problem, my family…
5. Stays united until a solution is found.
22. Tells me the whole truth about the matter.
I would like my country to consider it important to…
52. Make the most of emerging new technologies, such as renewable energy.
53. Preserve its cultural and artistic heritage.
69. Provide protection against external threats, both physical and economic.
In my free time, I prefer to…
35. Try new hobbies and adventures; new things are always interesting and exciting.
43. Devote it to some form of social activity, contributing to the community.
To celebrate a party, I prefer to go to a place that is…
40. New, where new sensations can be experienced.
75. Surrounded by nature.
The ideal location for my home would be…
70. Anywhere: as long as basic services are covered, I can adapt to anything.
73. A quiet place where I can think and feel at peace with myself.
74. A calm place where everyone knows one another.
I want to rest, and someone is making a lot of noise…
54. I try to reason with them, for the common good.
55. I try to reach an agreement.
If I make a mistake and cause someone a difficult moment…
8. I realize that I have made a mistake and try to learn from it for another time.
9. I try to resolve it, but above all I am concerned about those affected.
11. I feel responsible for what happened and seek help from people close to me or my family to resolve it quickly.

When I stop to think about the future…

2. I am concerned about my well-being and that of the people I care about.

47. I see myself involved in actions that bring some benefit to the community.

If I organize a dinner, I consider it important to…

45. Surprise my guests with a very original, home-made meal.

67. Enjoy the conversations at the table while eating.

If I have the opportunity, I consider it important to have time to…

7. Devote it to spending time with those close to me.

34. Discover and venture into new hobbies that may be interesting or exciting.

38. Invest it in education or training that enriches me.

42. Devote it to social causes that benefit the community and help people who need it.

3. It is essential that, within a group of friends, there is openness to share ideals.

6. Someone is robbing an elderly person in the street. I call the police.

13. In life, it is important to have commitment and seriousness.

14. I feel admiration for someone who stands out for their honesty.

16. In a job interview, I consider it important to be polite and to present oneself as a disciplined person with good manners.

17. A friendship between two people exists when there is a certain degree of sincerity.

18. I like to celebrate my anniversary with family and friends.

23. In a place where food and water are limited, existing resources should be rationed.

24. In a family, respect is the most important thing.

25. When I have to deal with an elderly person, I consider it important that they do not bother me too much.

26. A friend confides a secret in me. I use it if necessary, while protecting my source's identity.

27.I feel forced to lie to help a friend—how do I feel about it? Indifferent, but they owe me one.

31. To a friend, I am willing to lend anything that has value to me, provided that the favor is returned.

33. I consider that listening to different opinions can be counterproductive.

39. I wish to spend Saturday night letting my mind wander, with sensations and company that bring me pleasure and a sense of magic.

44. If I give a birthday gift to a friend, I try to make sure it is made from recycled materials in order to respect the environment.

46. I like to devote part of my time to a social or charitable activity.

48. When I feel hungry, I prefer to eat locally sourced foods, to help the local economy and make the planet more sustainable.

49. The image of a humanitarian catastrophe makes me want to help with my knowledge.

56. I consider it important to learn from any source. Nowadays, quality information is just a click away.

57. I receive a significant amount of money from the lottery and invest it in my projects to improve them.

62. Taking care of oneself and being healthy is important in order to perform at one's best.

63. Cutting down a tree nowadays is an unjustifiable act.

65. When I achieve a long-pursued goal, I feel proud to have demonstrated my personal worth.

68. I prefer to stay informed through reliable, reputable media; not all media provide information that can be trusted.

71. The rules imposed by state authorities exist to have consensus among equals.

reliability indices (Scale Mean if Item Deleted, Scale Variance if Item Deleted, Corrected Item–Total Correlation, Squared Multiple Correlation, Cronbach's α if Item Deleted) for all 75 items are presented in Table S6.

Hotelling's T^2 test indicated significant multivariate differences across items, $ç^2 = 9865.012$, $F_{(74, 298)} = 107.080$, $p < .001$, suggesting substantial item-level variability contributing to the total score variance. Tukey's non-additivity test, $F = 35.246$, $p < .001$, also indicated significant non-additive effects, reflecting complex interactions between items. Together, these findings support the internal coherence of the scale while highlighting the multidimensionality captured by the MLVT.

Validity of the MLVT

The content validation of the initial 272 items yielded Kappa coefficients ranging from 0.72 to 0.99. According to Abad-García et al. (2011), these coefficients classify the degree of agreement as Adequate ($0.60 \leq r < 0.70$), Good ($0.70 \leq r < 0.80$), and Excellent ($r \geq 0.80$). The mean agreement indices among external evaluators on item adequacy, comprehension, and wording were 0.97, 0.98, and 0.93, respectively, supporting the inclusion of all items in the pilot test.

Following the pilot test, 34.6% of the items (94 out of 272) had homogeneity indices below 0.30, indicating the need for revision or elimination. The final version of the MLVT was consolidated into 75 items, selected for their contribution to construct validity and congruence with Schwartz BHV (2012). The dimensions, values, and value components of the MLVT were validated through factor analysis. A Principal Component Analysis (*PCA*) was conducted to confirm the theoretical construct structure in three levels: first with 17 components, then 10 second-order components, and finally 4 third-order components. Varimax rotation with Kaiser normalization was applied under the assumption of orthogonal, independent components. The first-order solution explained 66.50% of the variance, supporting the adequacy of the 17-factor model. Descriptive statistics for the latent factors at the first-, second-, and third-order levels are reported in Supplementary table S7, providing an overview of the observed score distributions across the 33 factors.

The adequacy of the instrument's dimensional structure was further supported by a Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (*KMO*) index of 0.849,

indicating high suitability for factor analysis, and Bartlett's test of sphericity, $\chi^2 = 11603$, $df = 2775$, $p < .001$, confirming item interdependence. For the 17-component model, the total variance explained reached 58.88%, with the first factor contributing 17.07% and progressively decreasing to 1.58% for the seventeenth factor.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (*CFA*) was conducted to examine the MLVT's multidimensional structure using Robust Maximum Likelihood (*MLM*) estimation with Satorra-Bentler corrections (Satorra & Bentler, 1994) to account for non-normality and obtain unbiased standard errors. Factor correlations were freely estimated, allowing for oblique solutions in line with psychological constructs. The analysis, performed across the MLVT's three hierarchical levels, demonstrated excellent fit indices: *RMSEA* = 0.03, 95% *CI* [0.02, 0.04]; *SRMR* = 0.029, 95% *CI* [0.02, 0.04]; *CFI* = 0.946; *TLI* = 0.951; and $R^2 = 0.423$. All values exceeded recommended psychometric thresholds (*CFI* > 0.90, *TLI* > 0.95, $R^2 > 0.35$; Kline, 2015), indicating robust model fit and supporting the instrument's multidimensional viability. The substantial explained variance and consistently high fit indices reinforce the MLVT's validity and reliability as a measure of the intensity and priority of personal values aligned with Schwartz's BHV model. Detailed factor loadings and component-level fit indices are reported in table 6.

Norm Construction and Sample Bias Analysis

With all 31 factors (across different hierarchical levels), a discriminant analysis was conducted to compare gender, age, and professional status groups. Given the complexity of the scale, preliminary norms were developed using standardized scores and percentiles, stratified by gender and age but not by professional status. General norms for first-, second-, and third-order factors are presented in tables S8-S10. The distribution of participants across gender and age groups is shown in table 2, while stratified norms by these groups are reported in tables S11-S18.

Analysis of potential sample biases revealed several statistically significant differences between men and women in standardized factor scores (see table S2), although the corresponding effect sizes (r) were consistently small, indicating limited practical relevance. Age showed both positive and negative correlations with certain factors (see table S3), but explained variance (R^2) remained low. Employment status was associated with a small number of factors in the one-way *ANOVA*s (see table S4), again with small effect sizes.

A Chi-square test indicated a marginally significant association between gender and age group, $\chi^2_{(3, 372)} = 7.879$, $p = .049$, $\phi = 0.146$ (see table 3). Women predominated in all age groups except the oldest, where the distribution was balanced. Although these results suggest some demographic variation, the small effect sizes indicate minimal practical impact on score interpretation.

Discussion

In the present study, the MLVT was psychometrically validated to assess the intensity and priority of personal values according to Schwartz's BHV (2012). With high reliability (Cronbach's α = .914, standardized α = .920; McDonald's ω = .937), the instrument demonstrates its applicability in the context of the general Spanish population. The analysis, performed across these three hierarchical levels, demonstrated excellent fit indices (*RMSEA* = 0.03, 95% *CI* [0.02, 0.04]; *SRMR* = 0.029, 95% CI [0.02, 0.04]; *CFI* = 0.946; *TLI* = 0.951; and $R^2 = 0.423$). All these values exceeded recommended psychometric thresholds (Hu & Bentler, 1999; Kline, 2015), indicating robust model fit and supporting the instrument's multidimensional viability.

The substantial explained variance and consistently high fit indices reinforce the MLVT's validity and reliability as a measure of the intensity and priority of personal values aligned with Schwartz's BHV model. Detailed factor loadings and component-level fit indices are reported in table 5. The MLVT result is presented as the "Values DNA" consisting of 10 values represented by scores ranging from 0 to 999. These values are organized in descending order, reflecting the relative importance of each value to the person, from the most significant to the least relevant. The findings confirm and expand Schwartz's BHV (2012), evidencing that the MLVT reliably measures the priority and intensity that people assign to values in their lives. This alignment, aside from highlighting the relevance of Schwartz's (2012) circular model and its ability to

Table 6
Model Fit Indices. Satorra-Bentler Method (1994)

Dimension	Goodness of fit	Value	Goodness of fit	Value Components	Goodness of fit
DOC (Openness to Change)	0.875	VSD (Self-Direction)	0.911	CTH (Thought)	0.877
				CAC (Action)	0.911
		VST (Stimulation)	0.861	CSM (Stimulation)	0.821
		VHD (Hedonism)	0.801	CHD (Hedonism)	0.799
DSE (Self-Enhancement)	0.835	VAT (Achievement)	0.941	CAT (Achievement)	0.803
		VPW (Power)	0.821	CDM (Dominance)	0.821
				CRS (Resources)	0.821
DCN (Conservation)	0.862	VSC (Security)	0.832	CPL (Personal)	0.743
				CCV (Collective)	0.799
		VTR (Tradition)	0.775	CTR (Tradition)	0.877
		VCO (Conformity)	0.799	CNS (Norms)	0.721
				CIL (Interpersonal)	0.901
DST (Self-Transcendence)	0.861	VBV (Benevolence)	0.844	CTT (Trust)	0.921
				CAS (Assistance)	0.843
		VUN (Universalism)	0.833	CSC (Social Concern)	0.772
				CNT (Nature)	0.821
				CTL (Tolerance)	0.899

capture the dynamic nature of human values, indicates that, beyond cultural variations, there is a common basis in how personal values are organized and affect our perception of the world and our actions, in agreement with Sagiv and Schwartz (2000).

The MLVT offers a complementary perspective in the evaluation of personal values by simultaneously considering both their priority and intensity, in contrast to most instruments that focus solely on priority. This dual approach opens a potential avenue for exploring more precise and personalized interventions aimed at fostering well-being, group cohesion, and organizational effectiveness. By identifying both alignments and discrepancies between individual and collective value systems, the MLVT may contribute to more conscious value management, with possible benefits for personal satisfaction as well as organizational commitment.

Grounded in Schwartz's (2012) theory, the instrument also has practical applications beyond the academic field, supporting personal and organizational development through reflective and intentional value alignment. It offers detailed insights into individual value preferences, enabling people and institutions to create environments that resonate with their core principles and foster enriching experiences. More than a measurement tool, the MLVT may serve as a catalyst for aligning decisions and actions with fundamental values, promoting overall coherence and well-being across personal and professional domains.

The "Values DNA" generated by the MLVT further expands these applications, providing a flexible framework for contexts such as personnel selection, training and development programs, change management, formative experiences, and even broader community settings such as social networks. Ultimately, the MLVT seeks to empower individuals and organizations to act in accordance with their principles, advancing toward more conscious and effective development.

Not least important are the study's limitations, which should be carefully considered when interpreting the findings. First, participants were recruited through convenience sampling, primarily within the Spanish population, and the validation sample was relatively modest in size. These aspects may restrict the generalizability of the results. Accordingly, this study should be viewed as an initial exploration of the MLVT's psychometric potential rather than a definitive validation. Replication with larger and more representative samples, including diverse regions of Spain and other cultural contexts, will be essential to confirm and extend the applicability of the instrument.

Second, although the MLVT demonstrated strong internal consistency and a robust factorial structure, this study focused primarily on content validity, internal consistency, and construct coherence. Criterion validity and predictive validity were not examined. While analyses of potential sample biases revealed some statistically significant associations between demographic variables (gender, age, and employment status) and MLVT factor scores, the effect sizes were consistently small, indicating minimal practical relevance. This suggests a relative stability of the instrument across basic demographic categories, but further studies should test predictive validity and assess the instrument's performance in more diverse populations.

Third, the preliminary norms provided in this study constitute only an initial reference framework for interpreting MLVT scores. While they facilitate a first approximation to applied use, they should be considered provisional and interpreted with caution until replicated in larger and more representative samples.

Finally, this study did not include multigroup factorial invariance analyses (e.g., across gender or age). Although complementary procedures were applied (t tests, correlations, ANOVAs, and χ^2 tests), and preliminary norms were stratified by gender and age, these do not substitute for a formal evaluation of metric and scalar equivalence. Given the complexity of the MLVT model -with multiple first, second, and third-order factors- it was not feasible to address this within the present work. Future research should examine measurement invariance using more flexible approaches, such as Exploratory Structural Equation Modeling (ESEM), which would allow for a more comprehensive assessment of structural robustness and equivalence across groups.

In sum, the present study provides initial evidence for the reliability and validity of the MLVT as a multidimensional instrument to assess the priority and intensity of personal values. While further research with larger and more diverse samples is needed to strengthen its psychometric foundation, the findings highlight the MLVT's potential as both a research tool and a practical resource for personal and organizational development.

Authors' Contributions

Dídac Membrives Barniol: was the principal developer of the *My Life Values Test*, responsible for conceptualization, methodology, research, data curation, formal analysis, visualization, writing the original draft, and general project administration.

Santi Trias Bonet: conceptualization (trigger idea and conceptual framework), resources, writing -review & editing.

Joan Guàrdia Olmos: supervision, methodology, validation, support in formal analysis, writing -review & editing.

María Carbo-Carreté: supervision, methodology, validation, writing - review & editing.

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Conflicts of Interest

We declare that none of the authors have any relevant conflicts of interest that could have influenced the execution or interpretation of this study.

Data Availability

The data and materials related to this study are not publicly available at this time. However, interested researchers may contact the corresponding author to request access to the data, which will be provided upon reasonable request and in compliance with ethical guidelines.

Supplementary Materials

The supplementary materials, including the full list of items of the *My Life Values Test (MLVT)* and additional documentation, are openly available at the Open Science Framework (OSF): https://osf.io/yacwd

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