

# **OSF Pre-Registration: Joint Psychometric Validation of the Shame and Release Scale (SRS) and the Fundamental Peace Scale (FP20)**

**Pre-Registration Template: OSF Standard Format (v2) Registration Date: 16 October 2026**  
**— before any data collection**

**Study Title:** Shame, Release, and Fundamental Peace: A Pre-Registered Joint Psychometric Validation of the SRS-40, SRS-12, and FP20 in Indian Organisational Contexts

**Short Title (for OSF):** SRS–FP20 Joint Validation — India 2026–2027

**Principal Investigator:** Prof. Luis Miguel Gallardo **Affiliation:** Yogananda School of Spirituality and Happiness, Shoolini University of Biotechnology and Management Sciences, Solan, Himachal Pradesh, India; World Happiness Foundation **Programme:** World Happiness Foundation — Shameless Institutions

**Co-Investigators:** None at registration (any co-investigators will be recorded as dated amendments) **IRB / Ethics Reference:** Shoolini University IRB — application submitted; approval pending (protocol number to be recorded by amendment; no data will be collected before approval)

**OSF Project Link:** <https://osf.io/ucj37/> **Corresponding Contact:** Prof. Luis Miguel Gallardo, [luismiguel@shooliniuniversity.com](mailto:luismiguel@shooliniuniversity.com)

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**Section 1. Have the Data Been Collected?**

**No.** Data collection has not begun at the time of this pre-registration. Baseline data collection is scheduled to begin in February 2027, after ethics approval, the expert content-validity review, cognitive interviews and the pilot EFA/IRT phase, and after is obtained from Shoolini University IRB and community-level consent is obtained from artisan community leaders participating in the WHF Shameless Institutions programme.

This pre-registration document covers all three data collection waves:

- **Wave 1 — Baseline: February 2027** (N = 400)
- **Wave 2 — Mid-point: May 2027** (expected N  $\approx$  350)
- **Wave 3 — End-point: September 2027** (expected N  $\approx$  300)

## **Section 2. Study Background and Rationale**

Shame is a universal but culturally modulated emotion associated with a wide range of adverse outcomes including depression, suicidality, social withdrawal, relational aggression, workplace withdrawal, and intergenerational transmission of psychological trauma. Existing shame measures (e.g., TOSCA-3, ISS, EISS) were developed primarily in Western contexts and do not capture the structural, inherited, and collective dimensions of shame that are central to the lived experience of populations in South Asian organisational and community contexts.

The **Shame and Release Scale (SRS)** is a new 40-item psychometric instrument developed specifically for Indian organisational and community contexts. The SRS addresses six theoretically distinct dimensions: (A) Inner Verdict — self-directed shame; (B) Others' Eyes — externally perceived shame; (C) Exposure at Work — occupational and institutional shame; (D) Inherited Shame — intergenerational and cultural shame; (E) Shame Loop — cyclical shame driving

hostility or aggression; and (F) Release — psychological healing and liberation from shame. The SRS was developed to capture both the wound (subscales A–E) and the pathway toward healing (subscale F) within a single instrument, reflecting the theoretical framework of the Yoga Vasishtha Hypnotherapy (YVH) model developed by Prof. Luis Miguel Gallardo.

The Fundamental Peace Scale (FP20) is a 20-item instrument measuring Fundamental Peace — integrated regulatory capacity under changing conditions, distinct from equanimity (affective neutrality) and from well-being (positive evaluation) — across four components: Flexible Attentional Control (items 1–5), Emotional Coherence (items 6–10), Reduced Self-Referential Rigidity (items 11–15), and Compassionate Self-Awareness (items 16–20). The construct was defined by Gallardo and Chetri (2026), *Behavioral Sciences*, 16(3), 395 (<https://doi.org/10.3390/bs16030395>), and is theoretically situated within the World Happiness Foundation framework.

This pre-registered study will establish the psychometric validity of both instruments simultaneously in a population of artisan community members, field staff, and head office employees participating in the WHF Shameless Institutions programme across India. The joint validation design allows testing of the predicted inverse relationship between shame burden (measured by SRS) and fundamental peace (measured by FP20), which is central to the theoretical rationale of the WHF Shameless Institutions programme.

### **Section 3. Research Aims**

**Aim 1:** To establish the psychometric validity of the Shame and Release Scale (SRS-40) and its brief version (SRS-12) in Indian organisational populations, including factorial validity, internal consistency, content validity, and convergent and discriminant validity.

**Aim 2:** To establish the psychometric validity of the Fundamental Peace Scale (FP20) in Indian organisational populations and to test the predicted inverse relationship between shame load (SRS Subscales A–E) and fundamental peace (FP20) in a joint nomological network.

**Aim 3:** To test measurement invariance of the SRS and FP20 across three occupational levels (artisan communities, field staff, head office) and across gender, and to document longitudinal change in shame burden and fundamental peace across three programme waves.

## Section 4. Instruments

### 4.1 Shame and Release Scale — SRS-40 and SRS-12

**Format:** 40 items (SRS-40 full version); 12 items (SRS-12 brief version). Five-point Likert-type frequency scale: 0 = Never, 1 = Rarely, 2 = Sometimes, 3 = Often, 4 = Almost Always.

**Total score range:** SRS-40: 0–160; SRS-12: 0–48.

#### Subscale structure:

| Subscale | Name             | Item Range | No. of Items | Construct                                                                            |
|----------|------------------|------------|--------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| A        | Inner Verdict    | 1–7        | 7            | Internalized self-blame and shame                                                    |
| B        | Others' Eyes     | 8–13       | 6            | Perceived external judgment and social shame                                         |
| C        | Exposure at Work | 14–20      | 7            | Occupational and institutional shame                                                 |
| D        | Inherited Shame  | 21–26      | 6            | Intergenerational, cultural, and structural shame                                    |
| E        | Shame Loop       | 27–32      | 6            | Cyclical shame expressed as hostility or withdrawal                                  |
| F        | Release          | 33–40      | 8            | Psychological release: kind humour, self-kindness, belonging, forgiveness and repair |

**Shame Load composite:** Mean of subscales A + B + C + D + E (higher = greater shame burden)

**Scoring direction:** Higher Shame Load scores = greater shame burden; higher Release scores = greater psychological liberation. Items are not reverse-scored; Release is treated as a conceptually distinct dimension from Shame Load.

**Administration languages:** English (written self-administration) and Hindi (oral administration with picture-based answer cards for low-literacy participants).

**SRS-12 item selection:** 2 items from A, 1 from B, 2 from C, 2 from D, 2 from E, 3 from F (provisional items 2, 6, 11, 15, 18, 21, 24, 28, 31, 33, 35, 38) — selected via Item Response Theory (graded response model) to maximise information across the full shame-release continuum.

**Authors:** Gallardo & Chetri (2026); © Prof. Luis Miguel Gallardo | Creator of the YVH Model

#### ***4.2 Fundamental Peace Scale — FP20***

**Format:** 20 items. Five-point Likert-type agreement scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree.

**Total score range:** 20–100 (higher = greater fundamental peace).

#### **Component structure:**

| Component | Name                         | Items | No. of Items | Construct                                                                                                    |
|-----------|------------------------------|-------|--------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1         | Flexible Attentional Control | 1–5   | 5            | Directing and sustaining attention without rigid fixation, compulsive distraction or effortful suppression   |
| 2         | Emotional Coherence          | 6–10  | 5            | Integration of emotion, appraisal and behaviour across self-states, rather than fragmentation or suppression |

| Component | Name                              | Items | No. of Items | Construct                                                                        |
|-----------|-----------------------------------|-------|--------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 3         | Reduced Self-Referential Rigidity | 11–15 | 5            | Loosening of compulsive self-focus and fixed self-narratives                     |
| 4         | Compassionate Self-Awareness      | 16–20 | 5            | Non-judgmental recognition of one's own experience with kindness toward the self |

**Administration languages:** English (written self-administration) and Hindi (oral administration).

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#### ***4.3 Comparison Measures (Concurrent Validity Battery)***

The following validated instruments will be administered to a 50% subsample ( $n \approx 200$  at baseline) for concurrent validity testing:

**External and Internal Shame Scale (EISS):** Measures external shame (perceptions of others' negative evaluations of the self) and internal shame (negative self-evaluations). Used as the primary convergent validity criterion for SRS Shame Load subscales.

**Transgression-Related Interpersonal Motivations Inventory (TRIM-18):** Measures revenge motivation, avoidance motivation, and benevolence/forgiveness following perceived transgressions. Used as the secondary convergent validity criterion for SRS Shame Load and SRS Shame Loop subscale specifically.

**Self-Compassion Scale Short Form (SCS-SF):** Measures self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness as components of self-compassion. Used as the convergent validity criterion for SRS Release and FP20, and as a discriminant validity marker.

## Section 5. Hypotheses

All hypotheses are directional and specify minimum effect sizes. Effect sizes represent minimum thresholds; higher values are considered confirmatory. All correlations are Pearson  $r$  unless otherwise specified.

### *Primary Hypotheses (Convergent and Discriminant Validity)*

**H1:** SRS Shame Load will correlate **positively** with EISS total score ( $r \geq 0.50$ ), establishing convergent validity of the SRS shame subscales with a validated measure of internal and external shame.

**H2:** SRS Shame Load will correlate **positively** with TRIM-18 revenge subscale ( $r \geq 0.40$ ), establishing convergent validity of the shame-aggression link operationalised in the Shame Loop subscale.

**H3:** SRS Shame Load will correlate **negatively** with SCS-SF total score ( $r \leq -0.40$ ), establishing convergent validity through the theorised inverse relationship between shame and self-compassion.

**H4:** SRS Shame Load will correlate **negatively** with FP20 total score ( $r \leq -0.45$ ), establishing the central nomological network relationship between shame burden and fundamental peace.

**H5:** SRS Release will correlate **negatively** with EISS total score ( $r \leq -0.35$ ), establishing convergent validity of the Release subscale through its theorised divergence from external and internal shame.

**H6:** SRS Release will correlate **negatively** with TRIM-18 revenge subscale ( $r \leq -0.30$ ), establishing the theorised inverse relationship between psychological release and hostility motivation.

**H7:** SRS Release will correlate **positively** with SCS-SF total score ( $r \geq 0.50$  but  $< 0.85$ ), establishing convergent validity while maintaining discriminant validity — Release and self-compassion are related but distinct constructs.

**H8:** SRS Release will correlate **positively** with FP20 total score ( $r \geq 0.45$ ), establishing the theorised positive relationship between psychological liberation from shame and fundamental peace.

**H9:** FP20 will correlate **positively** with SCS-SF total score ( $r \geq 0.40$ ), establishing FP20 convergent validity through the theorised relationship between self-compassion and fundamental peace.

**H10:** FP20 will correlate **negatively** with EISS total score ( $r \leq -0.35$ ), establishing that higher fundamental peace is associated with lower external and internal shame.

**H11:** FP20 will correlate **negatively** with TRIM-18 revenge subscale ( $r \leq -0.30$ ), establishing that higher fundamental peace is associated with lower hostility motivation.

**H12:** SRS Shame Load and FP20 will demonstrate **discriminant validity** (HTMT  $< 0.85$ ), establishing that shame burden and fundamental peace are related but empirically distinct constructs.

### ***Secondary Hypothesis (Measurement Invariance)***

**H13:** The SRS six-factor structure and the FP20 four-component structure will demonstrate **configural and metric invariance** across the three occupational levels (artisan communities, field staff, head office) and across gender ( $\Delta CFI \leq 0.01$ ,  $\Delta RMSEA \leq 0.015$  for the metric invariance constraint), allowing meaningful comparisons of latent factor means across groups.

## Section 6. Study Design

**Design:** Longitudinal multi-wave cohort study with cluster stratification across three occupational levels.

**Setting:** World Happiness Foundation — Shameless Institutions programme, India.

### Three Data Collection Waves:

| Wave      | Timing         | Expected N | Instruments                                                           |
|-----------|----------------|------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Baseline  | February 2027  | 400        | SRS-40, FP20, demographics; EISS + TRIM-18 + SCS-SF for 50% subsample |
| Mid-point | May 2027       | ≈ 350      | All measures repeated                                                 |
| End-point | September 2027 | ≈ 300      | All measures repeated                                                 |

### Stratification Clusters:

| Occupational Level  | n at Baseline | Administration Mode               | Language         |
|---------------------|---------------|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| Artisan communities | ≈ 200         | Oral (picture-based answer cards) | Hindi            |
| Field staff         | ≈ 100         | Oral or written                   | Hindi or English |
| Head office         | ≈ 100         | Written self-administration       | English or Hindi |

## Section 7. Participants

### *Inclusion Criteria*

Participants must meet ALL of the following: 1. Age 18 years or older 2. Currently participating in the WHF Shameless Institutions programme in India 3. Able to provide informed consent (oral consent with thumbprint accepted for low-literacy participants) 4. Sufficient Hindi comprehension for oral administration (artisan group) or English / Hindi reading literacy (field staff and head office groups)

### ***Exclusion Criteria***

Participants will be excluded if they meet ANY of the following: 1. Active psychotic symptoms or severe mental illness requiring immediate clinical treatment 2. Cognitive impairment preventing meaningful informed consent 3. Participation in fewer than 2 of the 3 programme waves (excluded from longitudinal analyses only; retained for cross-sectional analyses)

### ***Recruitment Procedure***

Participants will be recruited through the WHF Shameless Institutions programme coordinator network. All potential participants will be approached by a trained research partner (bilingual Hindi/English). Individual informed consent will be obtained before data collection. For artisan participants, community-level consent from community leaders will be obtained in advance.

## **Section 8. Sample Size Justification**

**Target baseline sample: N = 400.**

The sample size of N = 400 satisfies all analytic requirements:

### **Confirmatory Factor Analysis:**

- SRS-40 (40 items, 6 factors): Minimum n = 300 (10:1 subject-to-item ratio); N = 400 exceeds this by 33%.
- FP20 (20 items, 4 factors): Minimum n = 200 (10:1 ratio); N = 400 exceeds this by 100%.

### **Measurement Invariance Testing:**

- Minimum n = 100 per occupational group for metric and scalar invariance testing.

- Planned distribution: artisans  $n \approx 200$ , field staff  $n \approx 100$ , head office  $n \approx 100$  — all groups meet or exceed minimum.

#### **Item Response Theory (SRS-12 item selection):**

- Graded response model requires  $n \geq 200$  for stable parameter estimates;  $N = 400$  exceeds this requirement.

#### **Validity Testing (concurrent correlations):**

- For detecting  $r = 0.35$  with  $\alpha = .05$  (two-tailed) and power = .90: minimum  $n = 84$ . The concurrent validity subsample of  $n \approx 200$  substantially exceeds this requirement.

#### **Attrition buffer:**

- Expected 25% attrition by end-point yields  $N \approx 300$  at Wave 3 — still adequate for all planned analyses.

### **Section 9. Data Analysis Plan**

All analyses will be conducted in **R (version 4.3 or later)** using the following packages: ``lavaan`` (CFA and SEM), ``psych`` (EFA and reliability), ``mirt`` (Item Response Theory), ``lme4`` (longitudinal models), ``mice`` (multiple imputation), and ``semTools`` (measurement invariance).

All analysis code will be made publicly available on the OSF project page upon study completion.

**Missing data:** Multiple imputation ( $m = 20$  imputations) for item-level missingness  $\leq 10\%$ ; listwise deletion when missingness  $> 10\%$  per participant.

#### ***Phase 1 — Content Validity (Expert Panel Review)***

**Procedure:** 6–8 independent experts in shame, wellbeing, cross-cultural psychology, and organisational psychology will rate each SRS-40 and FP20 item on a 4-point relevance scale (1 = not relevant to 4 = highly relevant).

**Decision rule:**

- Content Validity Index (CVI) per item = proportion of experts rating 3 or 4.
- Items with  $CVI \geq 0.78$  (i.e.,  $\geq 6$  of 8 experts rating the item as quite or highly relevant) will be retained.
- Items below  $CVI = 0.78$  will be revised (qualitative feedback from expert panel) and re-rated, or removed if not improvable.
- The Scale Content Validity Index (S-CVI/Ave) should reach  $\geq 0.90$  for the final item set.

**Software:** Manual calculation; results reported as item-level CVI table.

***Phase 2 — Cognitive Interviews (Comprehension and Cultural Appropriateness)***

**Sample:** 15–20 participants per occupational group (total  $n = 45–60$ ).

**Procedure:** Think-aloud cognitive interview protocol. Research partner reads each item aloud; participant verbalises their understanding. Standardised probes: "What does this question mean to you?", "Can you give an example from your own experience?", "Is any part confusing?".

**Analysis:** Verbatim transcription; qualitative thematic analysis identifying comprehension problems, cultural inappropriateness, or emotional reactivity to specific items.

**Decision rule:** Items with systematic comprehension problems across  $\geq 20\%$  of participants will be revised or removed. This phase may occur before or alongside the Pilot EFA phase.

### ***Phase 3 — Pilot Exploratory Factor Analysis and IRT Item Selection***

**Sample:** n = 150 pilot sample (separate from the N = 400 confirmation sample).

#### **EFA procedure:**

- SRS-40: Oblique rotation (promax); test whether the theorised 6-factor structure emerges.
- FP20: Oblique rotation (promax); test whether the theorised 4-component structure emerges.
- Factor retention: Parallel analysis plus scree plot inspection.
- Item retention criterion: Factor loading  $\geq 0.40$  on primary factor; cross-loading  $< 0.30$  on all other factors.
- Reliability per subscale: McDonald's omega ( $\omega$ )  $\geq 0.70$  and Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$ )  $\geq 0.70$ .

#### **IRT — SRS-12 item selection (graded response model):**

- Graded response model (Samejima, 1969) estimated for all 40 SRS items.
- Items selected to maximise test information across the full shame-release continuum ( $\theta$  range approximately  $-3$  to  $+3$ ).
- SRS-12 subscale representation: 2 items from A, 1 from B, 2 from C, 2 from D, 2 from E, 3 from F.
- Items with low discrimination parameters ( $a < 0.50$ ) or floor/ceiling threshold parameters ( $b_1 < -3$  or  $b_4 > +3$ ) will not be selected.

### ***Phase 4 — Confirmatory Factor Analysis (Primary Model Testing)***

**Sample:** N = 400 (confirmation sample, separate from pilot EFA sample).

**Estimator:** Maximum Likelihood with robust standard errors (MLR), appropriate for ordinal data with five response categories.

**Models to be tested:**

*For SRS-40:*

- Model 1 (Primary): First-order 6-factor correlated model (subscales A–F as correlated latent factors)
- Model 2 (Alternative): Bifactor model (one general shame factor + six specific subscale factors)
- Model 3 (Null): Single-factor model (all 40 items loading on one factor)

*For FP20:*

- Model 1 (Primary): First-order 4-factor correlated model (Flexible Attentional Control, Emotional Coherence, Reduced Self-Referential Rigidity, Compassionate Self-Awareness)
- Model 2 (Alternative): Second-order model (four components loading on one higher-order Fundamental Peace factor)
- Model 3 (Null): Single-factor model

**Model fit criteria:**

| Index      | Excellent Fit                   | Acceptable Fit |
|------------|---------------------------------|----------------|
| CFI        | $\geq 0.95$                     | $\geq 0.90$    |
| RMSEA      | $\leq 0.06$                     | $\leq 0.08$    |
| SRMR       | $\leq 0.08$                     | $\leq 0.10$    |
| Chi-square | Reported but not sole criterion | —              |

**Model comparison:** Chi-square difference test (nested models); AIC and BIC (non-nested models).

***Phase 5 — Validity Testing (Concurrent and Discriminant)***

**Sample:** Validity subsample  $n \approx 200$  (50% of baseline who also completed comparison measures).

**Convergent validity criteria:**

- Average Variance Extracted (AVE)  $\geq 0.50$  per factor
- Composite Reliability (CR)  $\geq 0.70$  per factor
- Predicted correlations with EISS, TRIM-18, and SCS-SF confirmed (Hypotheses H1–H11)

**Discriminant validity criteria:**

- Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio (HTMT)  $< 0.85$  between SRS Shame Load and FP20 (Hypothesis H12)
- Fornell-Larcker criterion:  $\sqrt{\text{AVE}}$  for each factor  $>$  correlation with all other factors

**Hypothesis testing procedure:**

- For each of H1–H11: calculate Pearson  $r$  with 95% confidence interval; hypothesis confirmed if observed  $r$  meets or exceeds the pre-specified minimum effect size threshold in the predicted direction.
- For H12: calculate HTMT using the `semTools` package; hypothesis confirmed if HTMT  $< 0.85$ .
- All correlations corrected for measurement error using disattenuated correlations from the CFA model.

***Phase 6 — Measurement Invariance Testing***

**Groups:** Three occupational levels (artisan, field staff, head office); also tested across gender.

**Sequence of tests:** 1. **Configural invariance:** Same factor structure holds across all groups (baseline model) 2. **Metric invariance:** Factor loadings constrained to equality across groups 3. **Scalar invariance:** Item intercepts constrained to equality across groups

**Decision criteria (Vandenberg & Lance, 2000):**

- $\Delta CFI \leq 0.01$  between sequential models = invariance holds
- $\Delta RMSEA \leq 0.015$  between sequential models = invariance holds
- If scalar invariance fails: partial invariance tested by freeing intercepts for problematic items (Byrne, 2008); non-invariant items reported and justified

**Confirmatory threshold for Hypothesis H13:** Metric invariance confirmed across all three occupational groups ( $\Delta CFI \leq 0.01$ ,  $\Delta RMSEA \leq 0.015$  for configural  $\rightarrow$  metric comparison).

### ***Phase 7 — Longitudinal Change Analysis***

**Design:** Three-wave repeated-measures ANOVA.

**Dependent variables:** SRS Shame Load composite score; SRS Release score; FP20 total score.

**Factors:**

- Within-subjects: Time (3 levels: Baseline, Mid-point, End-point)
- Between-subjects: Occupational Level (3 levels: artisan, field staff, head office)

**Effect size:** Partial eta-squared ( $\eta^2$ ); small = 0.01, medium = 0.06, large = 0.14.

**Expected direction:** Shame Load decreases over time; FP20 increases over time; reflecting the programme's intended effect.

**Post-hoc comparisons:** Bonferroni-corrected pairwise comparisons between time points for each significant time effect.

**Attrition analysis:** Test whether Wave 3 completers vs. dropouts differ on baseline shame, FP20, and demographic variables using independent-samples *t*-tests and chi-square tests.

## Section 10. Primary and Secondary Outcomes

### *Primary Outcomes*

1. **Factorial validity:** Fit of the SRS-40 six-factor model and FP20 four-component model in CFA (CFI, RMSEA, SRMR) 2. **Internal consistency:** McDonald's omega  $\geq 0.70$  and Cronbach's alpha  $\geq 0.70$  per subscale for both SRS and FP20 3. **Convergent and discriminant validity:** Observed correlations meeting the thresholds specified in H1–H12

### *Secondary Outcomes*

1. **SRS-12 psychometric properties:** Internal consistency and correlation with SRS-40 total score ( $r \geq 0.85$ ) 2. **Measurement invariance:** Metric invariance across occupational levels and gender (H13) 3. **Longitudinal change:** Significant decrease in SRS Shame Load and increase in FP20 across three programme waves

## Section 11. Stopping Rules

Data collection will be terminated at the planned end-point (September 2027) regardless of results. The stopping rule is time-based (end of WHF programme cycle), not outcome-based. No interim hypothesis tests will be conducted on accumulating data to avoid inflated Type I error.

## Section 12. Exploratory Analyses

The following analyses are exploratory (not pre-registered as confirmatory) and will be clearly labelled as such in the manuscript:

1. Subscale-level differential validity: Do individual SRS subscales show distinct patterns of association with EISS, TRIM-18, and SCS-SF beyond the Shame Load composite?
2. Mediation analysis: Does SRS Release mediate the relationship between SRS Shame Load and FP20?
3. Moderation analysis: Does occupational level moderate the relationship between SRS Shame Load and FP20?
4. Qualitative thematic analysis of cognitive interview transcripts from artisan participants
5. Item-level endorsement patterns across occupational levels and gender

## Section 13. Known Limitations

The following limitations are acknowledged in advance:

1. **Convenience sample:** Participants are drawn exclusively from the WHF Shameless Institutions programme and are not representative of the Indian population as a whole. Generalisation to other Indian populations requires replication.
2. **Self-report bias:** All measures rely on self-report, and shame is a highly self-conscious emotion that may be underreported, particularly in collectivist contexts with strong norms around face-saving.
3. **Oral administration reliability:** Oral administration protocols for low-literacy artisan participants introduce research partner effects that cannot be fully controlled, despite standardised training and scripts.
4. **Attrition bias:** Participants who drop out between waves may differ systematically from completers on shame-related variables, and analyses of longitudinal change should be interpreted with this caveat.
5. **No clinical comparison sample:** The absence of a clinical comparison group (e.g., trauma survivors,

addiction recovery participants) limits assessment of known-groups validity. 6. **FP20 baseline data:** The FP20 has only 69 prior validation responses at the time of this pre-registration; the joint study provides the primary validation dataset for FP20 and should be treated as an initial validation rather than a confirmatory replication.

## **Section 14. Ethics and Data Management**

**Ethics approval:** Full IRB approval from Shoolini University before any data collection. Protocol reference number to be added after approval.

**Informed consent:** Written consent for literate participants; oral consent with thumbprint and audio recording for low-literacy participants. Community-level consent from artisan community leaders obtained in advance.

**Distress protocol:** Research partners trained to identify distress responses; standardised referral pathway to trained counsellors available within the WHF programme. Any participant showing acute distress will be offered to pause or withdraw from the interview.

**Data anonymisation:** All identifying information removed from research records within 48 hours of data collection. Participant codes only will be used in datasets.

**Data sharing:** De-identified data will be shared on OSF after publication, contingent on participant consent for data sharing and community approval from WHF programme partners.

**Right to withdraw:** All participants may withdraw at any time without penalty and without the need to provide a reason.

**Conflict of interest:** Prof. Luis Miguel Gallardo is the developer of the YVH Model and FP20 Scale. This potential conflict of interest is managed through the pre-registration of all hypotheses

and analysis decisions before data collection, independent peer review, and transparent reporting of all results including null and negative findings.

## Section 15. Timeline

| Milestone                                                                    | Target Date                 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Ethics / IRB application submitted                                           | October 2026                |
| Community-level consent from artisan leaders                                 | October 2026                |
| OSF pre-registration completed (this document)                               | October 2026                |
| Expert panel content validity review (Phase 1)                               | November–December 2026      |
| Cognitive interviews (Phase 2)                                               | November–December 2026      |
| Pilot EFA and IRT item selection (Phase 3)                                   | January 2027                |
| <b>Baseline data collection (Wave 1) begins</b>                              | February 2027               |
| SRS-40 and FP20 CFA (Phase 4)                                                | March 2027                  |
| <b>Mid-point data collection (Wave 2)</b>                                    | May 2027                    |
| Validity and invariance testing (Phases 5–6)                                 | April 2027                  |
| <b>End-point data collection (Wave 3)</b>                                    | September 2027              |
| Longitudinal change analysis (Phase 7)                                       | October 2027                |
| Paper 1 (SRS systematic review) — published, JHFP, doi:10.68220/whf.2026.004 | October 2026                |
| Paper 2 Stage 1 (protocol) — published, JHFP, doi:10.68220/whf.2026.005      | October 2026                |
| Paper 2 Stage 2 (full empirical results) — target submission                 | November 2027–February 2028 |

## Section 16. Author Contributions and Funding

**Principal Investigator / Instrument Author:** Prof. Luis Miguel Gallardo (Shoolini University)

— conceptualisation, instrument development, study design, overall oversight.

**Co-Investigators:** None at registration; any additions will be recorded as dated amendments.

**Data Collection Partners:** WHF Shameless Institutions programme field team

**Funding:** World Happiness Foundation — Shameless Institutions programme.

## Section 17. Pre-Registration Statement

By submitting this document to the Open Science Framework, the research team commits to:

1. **Transparency:** All pre-registered hypotheses, design decisions, and analysis plans are made publicly available before any data collection begins. 2. **Confirmatory–exploratory distinction:** All pre-registered analyses will be clearly labelled as confirmatory in the final manuscript; post-hoc exploratory analyses will be explicitly distinguished. 3. **Full reporting:** All hypotheses, including those not supported, will be reported regardless of statistical significance. Selective reporting of only significant findings is prohibited. 4. **Amendment protocol:** Any changes to this protocol after registration will be documented as dated OSF amendments with written justification. Amendments will be clearly reported in the manuscript. 5. **Open materials:** Analysis code (R scripts) will be made publicly available on OSF upon completion. De-identified data will be shared after publication, contingent on participant and community consent.

**OSF Registration Date:** 16 October 2026 **OSF DOI:** assigned by OSF on registration (shown on the registration page)

*This pre-registration template follows the OSF Standard Pre-Registration Format (v2) and the AsPredicted pre-registration framework. It should be uploaded to the OSF project as a PDF alongside the full Paper 2 protocol document.*

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