



Impacts of parents' and guardians' trust in confessional schools on student's perceived performance and spirituality

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Impacts of parents' and guardians' trust in confessional schools on student's perceived performance and spirituality

Purpose: This study analyzes the impacts of trust in the confessional institution of primary education on a student's spirituality and performance, and the moderating effect of the families' religion on the relationship between trust in the school and the student's spirituality as perceived by parents and guardians.

Design: This study takes the form on a survey with 346 parents and guardians from a Brazilian Adventist education network. We used partial least squares structural equation modeling by SmarPLS 4 to analyze the data.

Findings: The results reveal that parents' and guardians' trust in the confessional institution of primary education positively influences their perception of students' spirituality, which, in turn, has a positive impact on their performance. In addition, the family's religion does not strengthen the relationship between school trust and student spirituality. It does not matter to which religious group the family belongs—as their overall spiritual development that favors the student's academic performance.

Originality: The research contributes to the literature on school management, individual spirituality, and relationship marketing—particularly customer relationship management in schools, involving parents, guardians, and students.

Keywords: confessional institution; primary education; student's spirituality; student's performance; religion.

Introduction

Student performance in primary education is measured by intellect-based indicators, such as the Grade Point Average (GPA) applied in countries such as the United Kingdom and the United States (Hooshyar *et al.*, 2020). The Brazilian government applies the Primary Education Evaluation System, known as SAEB, the National Examination for the Certification of Skills of Young People and Adults, known as ENCCEJA, and the National High School Exam, known as ENEM (Ordinance n°. 458, 2020).

Non-intellective factors can also influence these indicators. GPA, for example, can be

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3 determined by indicators based on personality traits, motivational factors, self-regulatory
4 learning strategies, students' learning approaches, and psychosocial contextual influences
5 (Richardson et al., 2012). In Brazil, SAEB can be affected by the 'school effect', based on intra-
6 and extra-school factors affecting the student's cognitive performance, such as school, society,
7 family, and the student (Soares, 2007).
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13 We argue that factors not yet addressed in studies on school performance—such as trust in the
14 educational institution, involving parents or guardians (family), and the school—can also
15 influence student performance. Studies show that students' levels of trust (Romero, 2015) as
16 well as teachers, principals, and parents (Adams & Forsyth, 2009) affect student performance.
17 We then also argue that students' spirituality, based on personal values acquired in part from
18 their social world, such as in family and social contexts (Kolodinsky et al., 2008), is transposed
19 to the school environment and influences their performance. Spirituality intersects with the
20 motivational factors (Richardson et al., 2012), and the socio-cultural and religious values of
21 society, family, and school (Soares, 2007), correlate to intellect-based student performance
22 indicators.
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33 Studies have addressed workplace spirituality, and teacher self-efficacy, in the organizational
34 citizenship behavior of secondary school teachers in India (Mahipalan et al., 2019). However,
35 individual spirituality in schools still demands to be studied, particularly in the context of
36 primary education. There is also little exploration of family's perceptions of their children's
37 school performance in education and school management literature. Given that, our research
38 analyzes the impacts of trust in the confessional institution of primary education on the
39 spirituality and performance of the students (their children), from the perspective of parents and
40 guardians.
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48 Confessional educational institutions are those that are linked to, or belong to, some religious
49 group. They have a curriculum grid that contributes to developing a sense of belonging to a
50 social group (Liu & Robertson, 2011), cultivating values such as altruism (Elkins et al., 1988),
51 knowledge sharing, mutual trust (Khari & Sinha, 2018), and will to improve as a human being
52 (Cassar & Shineboume, 2012; Elkins et al., 1988). In these institutions, religious principles
53 govern teaching. The focus is on developing religious feeling and morals beyond a simple focus
54 on pedagogy (Menezes & Santos, 2001).
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3 Thus, this study also argues that family religion can strengthen the relationship between the
4 parents' or guardians' trust in the educational institution and their children's (students)
5 spirituality. Religion differs from spirituality in facets such as formality, organization, focus,
6 visibility, measurability, orientation to behavior, and suitability for the work environment
7 (Cassar & Shinebourne, 2012; Liu & Robertson, 2011). Adolescents who uphold and practice
8 religious beliefs perform better in the school environment (Marcus & McCullough, 2021).
9 Therefore, this study aims to analyze the moderating effect of family religion on the relationship
10 between trust in the school and student spirituality.
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19 This investigation contributes to the literature on school management, spirituality at the
20 individual level, and relationship marketing, particularly that which considers customer
21 relationship management, being in this paper, parents, guardians, and students. It also discusses
22 practical implications for school managers and educational policymakers.
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27 **Theoretical Framework and Hypothesis**

28 ***Student Performance***

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32 In the literature, student performance (Hooshyar et al., 2020) is also referred to as academic
33 performance (Richardson et al., 2012), school performance (Soares & Alves, 2013), educational
34 performance, cognitive performance (Soares, 2007), or the student's proficiency. It is a
35 multidimensional concept, with various performance measurement models using different
36 indicators, which, in turn, vary between countries (Nunes et al., 2022; Garira et al., 2020).
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43 The leading indicators of educational performance in primary education in Brazil are SAEB
44 and ENEM (Ordinance n°. 458, 2020). These are measures based on the student's intellect, and
45 are widely used in academic research, such as that of Rocha and Funchal (2019), which
46 evaluated the relationships between direct school costs, the organization of school supply, and
47 the performance of public schools, as measured by ENEM. In addition, the study by Araújo *et*
48 *al.* (2020) identified the influence of socioeconomic, demographic, budgetary, and management
49 factors on student performance based on the Southeast region's Primary Education
50 Development Index (IDEB). There are also indicators such as performance rates (approval,
51 failure, dropout, and evasion), age/grade distortion, the proportion of students learning, number
52 of student hours, school infrastructure, distribution of students by proficiency level, and others
53 (QEDu, 2021).
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5 In countries such as the United Kingdom, the United States, and Canada, one of these
6 measurement models is the Grade Point Average (GPA), an indicator of the average points of
7 weighted courses in the curriculum per student at the end of the course. It is also considered an
8 indicator based on the student's intellect, used in several studies. For example, Weston et al.
9 (2020) assessed the impact of extracurricular activities, school attitudes, and demographics on
10 black students' mental health and physical education grades in the United States. Negru-
11 Subtirica et al. (2019) analyzed the mutual influence between GPA and student personality
12 traits in Romania.
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20 Through a systematic literature review, Richardson et al. (2012) identified five non-intellective
21 correlates of GPA, grouped by distinct research domains: personality traits, motivational
22 factors, self-regulatory learning strategies, approaches students use to learn, and psychosocial
23 contextual influences. The findings revealed that psychosocial contextual factors have small
24 correlations with GPA. Academic self-efficacy, grade goal, and effort regulation have medium
25 correlations with GPA. Performance self-efficacy strongly correlates with this indicator.
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32 In Brazil, Soares (2007) proposes a model that relates intraschool and out-of-school factors that
33 affect a student's cognitive performance – school, society, family, and the student himself. In
34 other words, in addition to the student's characteristics such as his or her race, gender, health,
35 and school trajectory, whether there is innate or acquired talent, and their attitudes toward
36 school, other factors can also impact the student's proficiency. First, the school, with its
37 teachers' knowledge, experience, skills, resources (human, financial, technological, physical,
38 methodological, informational, culture, reputation, school brand), and the school community
39 and the management practices adopted by the principal. Second, is the society a student finds
40 his or herself in, with its associated socio-cultural and religious values, educational policies,
41 and legal frameworks. Third is the student's family, with its economic and cultural resources,
42 structure, and the involvement of parents and guardians.
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52 Given the above, this study proposes that factors not yet addressed in studies on school
53 performance, such as trust in the educational institution, a factor involving parents or guardians
54 (family) and the school, may also influence student performance. We also propose that
55 spirituality intersects with the motivational factors proposed by Richardson et al. (2012) and
56 with the socio-cultural and religious values of society, family, and school (Soares, 2007), which
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3 correlate to the intellect-based student performance indicators. Additionally, it suggests that
4 student performance be measured by non-intellective indicators based on self-regulatory
5 learning strategies and motivational factors (Richardson et al., 2012).
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10 ***Trust in the organization***

11 In the context of relationship marketing, trust, for Doney and Cannon (1997, p. 35), means
12 “objective credibility (an expectancy that the partner's word or written statement can be relied
13 on) and benevolence (one partner is genuinely interested in the other partner's welfare and
14 motivated to seek joint gain) of a target of trust”. Garbarino and Johnson (1999, p. 71)
15 conceptualize it as “customers' trust in an organization, captured as customer confidence in the
16 quality and reliability of the services offered”. This understanding is the same as Nyadzayo and
17 Khajehzadeh (2016, p. 263), who determined that trust was “conceptualized as customer's
18 confidence in the quality and reliability of the services offered by a firm”. Trust in the
19 organization can indicate information sharing and, thus, contribute to developing the
20 relationship between customers and suppliers (Ponder et al., 2016). For Balaji (2015), customer
21 confidence levels increase when they receive competent service over time, effectively
22 impacting the long-term relationship with the organization. Trust can also be understood as the
23 consumer's willingness to trust a brand's ability to deliver the intended benefits (Chaudhuri &
24 Holbrook, 2001). All the authors cited above show that the development of social ties with the
25 service provider depends on the level of trust in the latter. Trust in the organization also
26 contributes to increasing customer loyalty (Nyadzayo & Khajehzadeh, 2016) and has both
27 positive, direct, and indirect effects (Chek & Ho, 2016; Samuel et al., 2015; Yu et al., 2015), as
28 well as negative, regarding online purchase intention (Beldad et al., 2010).
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44 In the context of educational service delivery, Romero (2015, p. 219) understands that “schools
45 are social systems and the level of trust and quality of the relationships in them is dynamically
46 intertwined with learning. Trust plays a vital role in student achievement. Students who lack
47 trust in their teachers and schools are less likely to demonstrate high levels of learning”. Poole
48 (2017) showed a positive relationship between market-oriented behaviors (affective
49 commitment, attitudinal loyalty, and advocacy) of primary education schools in the United
50 States, mediated by trust in the brand. Benkeet et al. (2020) showed that trust in the school
51 positively impacts students' loyalty to 16 Brazilian private primary education institutions. Trust
52 was measured in terms of the competence of educational institutions (competence in educating,
53 superior performance to competitors), benevolence (institutions are not concerned only with
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3 their interests; there is mutual recognition between the parties), and integrity (institutions are
4 honest in dealing with parents and students and the promises made by these schools are
5 trustworthy).
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10 According to Romero (2015, p. 216), several studies (Tschannen-Moran *et al.*, 2013; Gregory
11 & Ripski, 2008; Mitchell *et al.*, 2008; Seashore Louis, 2007) have shown that trust among
12 teachers, principals, and parents affects student performance. Adams and Forsyth (2009, p. 145)
13 showed that “the effect of trust on the normative conditions (contextual factors and social
14 conditions) underlying effective performance is stronger than its direct effect on school
15 performance”. Furthermore, these authors showed that parent, student, and teacher trust directly
16 influence school performance, “but its indirect effect through collective efficacy is large” in 79
17 public schools in the United States. Romero (2015) also showed that high school students in
18 the United States who trust their educational institution have fewer behavioral incidents and
19 better academic results, regardless of their socioeconomic status, school size, or past
20 performance.
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30 We argue that parents and guardians feel that they can trust the system of confessional primary
31 education when the school is honest and truthful with the family and truly sincere in its
32 premises, which may affect the student performance measured by non-intellective indicators
33 (Bansal *et al.*, 2004).
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39 Hypothesis (H1): Parents' or guardians' trust in the institution of primary education institution
40 positively influences their perception of their children's (student's) school performance.
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45 ***Individual Spirituality***

46 Organizations that create an environment fostering spirituality positively impact their
47 employees' performance, creativity, commitment, and productivity (Fry & Slocum Jr., 2008).
48 At the individual level, Liu and Robertson (2011, p. 37) understand that the idea of a
49 "continuum of spirituality" proposes that different stages of spirituality exist, which indicate
50 various levels of self-concept. A lower degree of spirituality implies a more autonomous self-
51 concept, with a higher feeling of differentiation between oneself and others. In contrast, a higher
52 level of spirituality indicates a more connected self-concept, with a stronger sense of
53 interdependence between oneself and others. There are four distinct levels to the idea of self-
54 identity. The first pertains to personal identity based on one's unique traits and connections. The
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3 second level focuses on relational identity, formed through associations with others. The third
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5 level involves collective self-identity, based on a shared identification with a group rather than
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7 personal relationships among members. Finally, the highest level of self-identity transcends the
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9 boundaries that typically separate the self from others. It expands beyond individual and
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11 interpersonal connections to encompass a sense of interconnectedness with all living things,
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13 nature, and a higher power.

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15 The results of the spirituality continuum development are visible through speech and attitudes.
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17 Altruism, idealism, how one deals with material possessions, and the belief in the sacredness
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19 of life are ways to analyze a person's spiritual growth (Elkins et al., 1988). The search for
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21 meaning in life and purpose increases curiosity and the need to discover a vocation and live it
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23 out (Elkins et al., 1988). Spirituality directly influences an individual's satisfaction and
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25 commitment to discovery and vocation (van Dyke et al., 2009; Elkins et al., 1988; Veselska et
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27 al., 2018).

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29 As for the student's spirituality, although he or she is not a school employee but a customer, he
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31 is in a school environment, which, in turn, is the working environment of teachers and other
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33 staff. Thus, the student brings the personal values he or she acquired as part of his or her social
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35 world, from family or social contexts, to the school environment. Moreover, since spirituality
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37 is derived from a social interrelationship among employees who bring their spiritual values to
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39 the workplace, influencing their interactions and outcomes (Kolodinsky et al., 2008), the
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41 student's spirituality is also derived from a social interrelationship among peers, teachers, and
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43 other employees.

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45 As a social system (Romero, 2015), the social and relational environments within schools
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47 impact the levels of motivation within student groups; groups which are, in turn, shaped by the
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49 social constructions of motivation (Adams & Forsyth, 2009). Furthermore, spirituality assists
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51 in the development of the pre-requirements for successful knowledge sharing—mutual trust
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53 (Khari & Sinha, 2018), the openness of the receiver to absorb shared knowledge, and,
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55 especially, the willingness to improve as a human being and evolve continuously (Cassar &
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57 Shineboume, 2012; Elkins et al., 1988). In other words, the student's spiritual development is
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59 related to school performance. Thus, we suggest the second and third hypotheses:

60 Hypothesis (H2): Parents' trust in the confessional system of primary education positively

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3 influences their perception of their children's (student's) spirituality.
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6 Hypothesis (H3): Parents' and guardians' perceptions of their (student's) children's spirituality
7 positively influence their perceptions of their (student's) children's school performance.
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10 11 ***Matrix of religiosity***

12 Spirituality and religion are deeply related (Cassar & Shineboume, 2012; Elkins et al., 1988).
13 Religion determines rites and dogmas that form barriers to the expression of spirituality. While
14 spirituality is open to celebrating the various ways of being and expressing oneself, each
15 religion has its own code of conduct (Elkins et al., 1988; Quatro, 2004; Rocha & Pinheiro,
16 2021). This possibility of anticipating expected behaviors in each religion may increase trust in
17 religious-based institutions. For Liu and Robertson (2011, p. 35), spirituality is a larger
18 construct than religiosity, and there are differences:
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27 Religiosity is formal, organized, dogmatic, institutional, intolerant, negative, community-focused,
28 more observable, measurable, objective, behavior-oriented with an emphasis on external practices,
29 more authoritarian, more doctrine-oriented (especially that which distinguishes good from evil), and
30 unsuitable to be expressed in the workplace. Spirituality, on the other hand, is the privatization of
31 religion, informal, personal, universal, non-denominational, inclusive, tolerant, positive,
32 individualistic, less visible and quantifiable, subjective, emotionally oriented and inward-looking,
33 less authoritarian, little external accountability, and suitable to be expressed in the workplace.
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39 Religiosity in the contemporary world is evident in four main matrices (UNdata, 2021;
40 Bittencourt, 2003; Eliade & Fernández, 1981). The Western matrix includes Christian churches
41 such as the Roman Catholic Apostolic Church, the Orthodox and Eastern (Russian) Church;
42 Protestantism (Lutheran, Adventist, Evangelical, Calvinist, Methodist, Baptist, Pentecostal,
43 Presbyterian, Anglicanism); Judaism; and Islam. These are monotheistic visions based on
44 sacred texts, such as the Bible, the Quran, and the Torah. The eastern matrix includes Buddhism,
45 Hinduism, Sikhism, Jainism, Muism, Juche in North Korea, Confucianism, Mohammedanism,
46 Taoism, other traditional Chinese religions, Shintoism, and other traditional Japanese religions.
47 It is a vision that is very focused on meditation connected with nature. The African matrix
48 involves spiritualism, Umbanda, Candomblé, animism, Cuban Santería (Voodoo), and
49 Rastafari, as well as other traditional African religions. It is a vision focused on specific rituals
50 and natural phenomena, giving them distinct identities, such as the gods who are focused on
51 human practicality. They do not have sacred texts, such as the Bible, the Quran, and the Torah.
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The fourth matrix encompasses indigenous religions, like African ones, connected to the natural sacred and ancestors, such as aboriginal and shaman spirituality.

According to Marcus and McCullough (2021, p. 167), based on studies by Wu et al. (2015), Yonker et al. (2012), and Gubbels and van der Put (2011), “people, including adolescents, who espouse religious beliefs and practice religion stay out of jail, perform better in school, study harder, avoid drugs and risky sexual practices”. Since spirituality and trust (Romero, 2015; Adams & Forsyth, 2009) also impact student performance, this study argues that a family religion can strengthen the relationship between parents' or guardians' trust in educational institutions and their (student's) children's spirituality. Thus, we propose the fourth hypothesis:

Hypothesis (H4): Family religion moderates (strengthens) the relationship between parents' or guardians' trust in the institution of confessional primary education and their perception of students' spirituality.

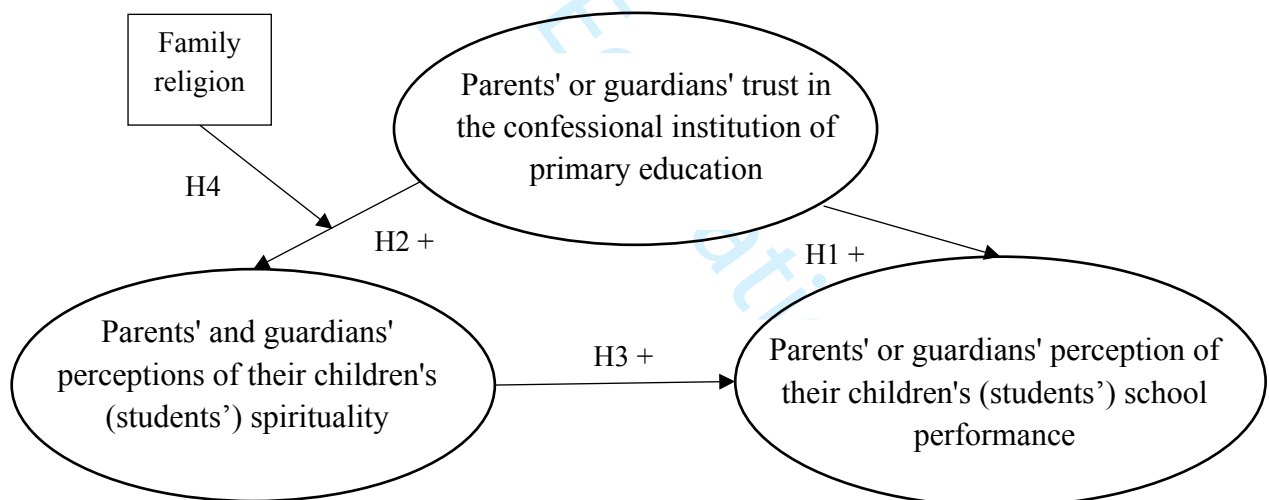


Figure 1: Theoretical framework.

Methods

Sample

Given that the objective is to collect primary data from parents' and guardians' perceptions of their children's (students') spirituality, school performance, and trust in the confessional institution of primary education, we sent surveys in order to achieve a large sample from Brazil.

We argue that these perceptions can vary, considering these social actors' experiences regarding beliefs, opinions, attitudes, and lifestyles (Hair et al., 2015).

The sample includes parents and guardians from the Adventist education network in 14 Brazilian cities in the states of Bahia (Juazeiro and Salvador), Rio de Janeiro (Bom Jesus, Campos, Itaboraí, Itaguaí, Macaé, Niterói, Nova Iguaçu, Petrópolis, Rio de Janeiro, and São Gonçalo), and Espírito Santo (Cachoeiro do Itapemirim and Vila Velha). Data were collected in March and October 2020. The Adventist education network general manager authorized the research.

The questionnaire was created in the Google Forms application, and the link was sent by WhatsApp, one of the formal communication channels between the school and the parents and guardians. Three hundred and forty-eight (348) parents and guardians accessed the link, but two did not agree to participate in the research. So, the final sample was comprised of 346 valid answers. According to G*Power analysis, version 3.1.9.7, for a F-test linear multiple regression, the minimum sample size to yield a statistical power of at least 0.95 and a medium effect size (f^2) of 0.15 is 107. Therefore, this sample is adequate to test the conceptual model in this research. Table 1 shows the parents' or guardians' profiles.

Table 1. Sample profile

		n	%	
Profile of parents or guardians	Religion	Evangelical	273	79
		Catholic	42	12
		Other religions	16	4,5
		We have no religion	10	3
		Spiritist	4	1
		Jewish	1	0,5
	Education	Up to high school/technical	155	45
		Higher education complete	93	27
		Post-graduation (specialization)	81	23
		Master's/PhD	17	5
	Family income	Up to one minimum wage	43	12
		Between R\$ 1,045.00 and R\$ 3,135.00	135	39
		Between R\$3,135.00 and R\$5,225.00	96	28
		Between R\$ 5,225.00 and R\$ 15,675.00	61	18
		More than R\$15,675.00	11	3
	Age	Between 18 and 29 years old	16	5
		Between 30 and 39 years old	122	35
		Between 40 and 49 years old	167	48
		Between 50 and 59 years old	31	9
60 years and older		10	3	
School in which the student is enrolled	Elementary School I	210	61	
	Elementary School II	103	30	
	High School	33	9	

Measures

We adapted the scale of Bansal et al. (2004) (trust in the organization) to measure parents' or guardians' trust in the confessional primary education institution with six indicators. Examples include 'I feel that I can trust in this educational institution completely', 'This educational institution is truly sincere in its promises', and 'This educational institution is honest and truthful with my family.'

We used Yilmaz's (2015) scale with four items to measure student performance. Measuring a professional's performance intersects with motivational factors and self-regulatory learning strategies, two non-intellectives that correlate with GPA, according to Richardson et al. (2012). Examples include: 'As a parent or guardian, I have noticed that my child completes the tasks on time and meets/exceeds the goals'.

To measure parents' and guardians' perceptions of their children's (students') spirituality, we used Kolodinsky et al. (2008) validated scale with twenty items, which addresses the student's connection to sacred things and perception of good things in the world. We used a five-point Likert scale for all three constructs: 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Finally, to measure the moderating effect of the family's religion, respondents were asked, 'What is the family's religion?' The questionnaire also addressed socio-demographic information to get to know the profile of the parents and guardians who participated in the survey: age, monthly income, and education. There is also a question about which school the student is enrolled in.

We used partial least squares structural equation modeling by SmartPLS 4, version 4.0.9.6, to analyze the data (Ringle et al., 2022), observing 300 iterations and 10,000 subsamples. We followed mainly the procedures by Ringle et al. (2023).

Results analysis

Analysis of the measurement model

To evaluate the indicators' reliability, we checked the outer loadings in each construct, as shown in Table 2. Thus, one variable from the 'trust in school' (TRU6) and five variables from the 'individual spirituality' construct (SPI13, SPI15, SPI16, SPI17, SPI19, and SPI20) were

carefully excluded because they had outer loadings below 0.60. Variables SPI2, SPI3, SPI6, SPI14, and SPI18, even with outer loadings below 0.708, were maintained to ensure the construct content validity, as recommended by Devellis (2016), Netemeyer et al. (2003), Bido and Silva (2019). According to these authors, the replicability of results in new samples and the comparability of studies may be impaired by excluding too many variables.

Table 2. Outer loadings, mean and standard deviation of the variables,

Constructs and variables			Outer loadings	Mean	Standard deviation	Coefficient of Variation
Parents' or guardians' trust in the school	TRU1	I feel that I can trust in this educational institution completely	0.947	4.465	1.052	0.236
	TRU2	This educational institution is truly sincere in its promises	0.945	4.436	1.073	0.242
	TRU3	This educational institution is honest and truthful with my family	0.965	4.503	1.061	0.236
	TRU4	This educational institution treats my family fairly and justly	0.958	4.535	1.010	0.223
	TRU5	I feel that this educational institution can be counted on to help my family when I need it	0.898	4.419	1.042	0.236
	TRU6	I feel that this educational institution does not show enough consideration for my family. (r)	*	4.017	1.525	0.379
Student performance	PER1	As a parent or guardian, I have noticed that my child... Complete the tasks on time	0.849	4.136	1.069	0.259
	PER2	Meet/exceed the goals.	0.920	4.145	1.051	0.253
	PER3	Make sure that developed activities meet/exceed quality standards	0.869	4.191	1.084	0.259
	PER4	Respond quickly when problems come up.	0.872	4.072	0.113	0.028
Parents' and guardians' perceptions of their children's (students) spirituality	As a parent or guardian, I have noticed that my child...					
	SPI1	Experience a sense of the sacred in living things.	0.810	4.312	0.855	0.198
	SPI2	Experience a sense of connection with other living things.	0.634	4.124	0.109	0.026
	SPI3	Set aside time for personal reflection and growth.	0.686	3.922	1.053	0.269
	SPI4	Value the relationship between all living things.	0.799	4.442	0.840	0.189
	SPI5	Being truthful is important to a successful life.	0.813	4.526	0.792	0.175
	SPI6	Find meaning in life by creating close relationships.	0.649	4.090	1.098	0.269
	SPI7	Should give to others in need.	0.848	4.639	0.714	0.154
	SPI8	Realize that it is important we be sensitive to pain and suffering.	0.844	4.590	0.776	0.169
	SPI9	Experience a feeling of being whole and complete as a person.	0.801	4.185	0.969	0.232
	SPI10	Realize that it is important that each of us find meaning in our lives.	0.831	4.321	0.947	0.219
	SPI11	Realize that all forms of life are valuable.	0.854	4.610	0.754	0.164
	SPI12	I feel sad when I see someone in pain.	0.792	4.566	0.815	0.178
	SPI13	Find the world of nature boring.	*	2.500	1.302	0.521
SPI14	Listen closely when people tell me their problems.	0.682	4.127	0.955	0.231	
SPI15	Read articles on health and inner peace.	*	3.020	1.407	0.466	
SPI16	Share my private thoughts with someone else.	*	3.590	1.225	0.341	
SPI17	Put the interests of others before my own when making a decision.	*	3.439	1.179	0.343	
SPI18	I actively seek a sense of purpose in my life.	0.684	3.908	1.131	0.289	
SPI19	I feel guilty when I do not tell the truth.	*	4.182	1.063	0.254	
SPI20	Enjoy guiding young people.	*	3.581	1.398	0.390	

The Coefficient of Variation shows more variation between the standard deviation and the mean for the variables TRU6, SPI13, SPI15, SPI16, SPI17, and SPI 20. As discussed above, these variables were excluded from the model.

Concerning the internal consistency reliability of the constructs, Table 3 shows that the composite reliability rho_c and rho-a, as well as Cronbach's Alpha, are above 0.70. Regarding the convergent validity, the average variance extracted is above 0.50. In addition, three criteria support the discriminant validity of the proposed theoretical model. First is the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) criterion, the dark-shaded elements in Table 3, where the correlations between the constructs are below 0.85 because they are conceptually different. The selected threshold falls into the confidence intervals: PER-TRU [0.620 – 0.811], SPI-TRU [0.289 – 0.576], SPI-PER [0.401 – 0.659]. Second, in the diagonal in bold, the Fornell & Larcker (1981) criterion is also shown in Table 3, indicating that the square root of the mean-variance of the constructs (AVE) is greater than the correlation between the constructs.

Table 3. Convergent and discriminant validity

	Mean	STDV	CV	Cronbach's Alpha	CR rho_a	CR rho_c	AVE	TRU	PER	SPI
TRU	4.395	0.881	0.379	0.969	0.970	0.976	0.890	0.943	0.729	0.443
PER	4.136	0.951	0.230	0.901	0.905	0.931	0.770	0.685	0.878	0.540
SPI	4.034	0.667	0.165	0.946	0.955	0.953	0.593	0.434	0.506	0.770

TRU: Parents' or guardians' trust in the school; PER: student performance; SPI: parents' and guardians' perceptions of their children's (students) spirituality; STDV: standard deviation; CV: Coefficient of Variation; CR: composite reliability; AVE: average variance extracted.

The third criterion is the cross-loadings, as shown in Table 4, which indicates that the outer loadings of the variables on their respective latent variables (constructs) are more significant than those distributed on the other latent variables.

Table 4. Discriminant validity – cross-loadings criterion

	Parents' or guardians' trust in the school	Student Performance	Parents' and guardians' perceptions of their children's (students) spirituality
TRU1	0,947	0,658	0,412
TRU2	0,945	0,628	0,408
TRU3	0,965	0,652	0,401
TRU4	0,958	0,670	0,426
TRU5	0,898	0,620	0,399
PER1	0,519	0,849	0,400
PER2	0,598	0,920	0,461
PER3	0,639	0,869	0,457
PER4	0,636	0,872	0,454
SPI2	0,248	0,214	0,634
SPI3	0,213	0,348	0,686
SPI4	0,368	0,365	0,799

SPI5	0,379	0,436	0,813
SPI6	0,240	0,293	0,649
SPI7	0,446	0,408	0,848
SPI8	0,412	0,375	0,844
SPI9	0,317	0,480	0,801
SPI10	0,300	0,456	0,831
SPI11	0,405	0,423	0,854
SPI12	0,368	0,373	0,792
SPI14	0,243	0,349	0,682
SPI18	0,209	0,366	0,684

Structural model analysis – hypothesis testing

According to Table 5, the hypothesis (H1) – parents' or guardians' trust in the institutional confession of primary education positively influences their perception of their children's (student's) school performance – is supported ($\beta = 0.573$ and $p\text{-value} = 0.000$). Furthermore, the perception that the educational institution is sincere in its promises and honest with their family, treating them clearly and fairly, and is willing to help them when they need it also influences the perception that their children's complete assignments on time, exceed goals, and respond quickly when a problem arises.

Table 5. Hypotheses test

	Hypotheses	Structural coefficient	t-value	p-value	f ²	VIF	
	TRU → DES	H1 (+)	0.573	8.895	0.000	0.559	1.232
	TRU → SPI	H2 (+)	0.463	2.784	0.005	0.232	1.000
	SPI → DES	H3 (+)	0.259	5.104	0.000	0.113	1.232
	Moderating effect Dummy_REL x TRU → SPI	H4 (+)	-0.048	0.238	0.812		
R ² adjusted: (DES = 0.520); (SPI = 0.186)							

TRU: parents' trust in the educational institution; PER: student performance perceived by parents or guardians; SPI: student spirituality perceived by parents or guardians; REL: student's family religion; Dummy REL: (1) Evangelical; (0) other religions; R² = Coefficient of determination; f²: Cohen's effect.

Hypothesis (H2) is also supported as parents' trust in the confessional system of primary education positively influences their perception of their children's (student's) spirituality positively influences their perception of their (student's) children's spirituality ($\beta = 0.463$ and $p\text{-value} = 0.005$). In addition, parents' or guardians' perception that the educational institution is sincere in its promises and honest with their families influences the students' perceived spirituality. That is, the perception that their children feel connected to other things, value relationships among all living things, perceive that being sincere is essential for a successful life, and perceive that they should help those in need, among others.

The evidence also shows that hypothesis (H3) – that parents' and guardians' perceptions of their

(students) children's spirituality positively influence their perceptions of their (students) children's school performance – is supported ($\beta = 0.259$ and $p\text{-value} = 0.000$). Parents' or guardians' perceptions of students' spirituality – that their children must be sensitive to pain and suffering, that they feel a sense of being whole and complete as people, that it is essential that they find meaning in their lives, and that all forms of life are valuable, also influences the student's perceived performance by their parents or guardians.

As for the moderating (strengthening) effect of family religion on the relationship between parents' or guardians' trust in the confessional institution of primary education and their perception of their children's (student's) spirituality, the hypothesis (H4) was not supported ($\beta = -0.048$ and $p\text{-value} = 0.812$), as it is not a statistically significant relationship.

The Variance inflation factor (VIF) (Table 5) values are below 3, indicating no collinearity issues among the latent variables. In contrast, for the significance and relevance of path coefficients, the effect size of the coefficients is large, medium, and small for hypotheses H1, H2, and H3, respectively, according to Cohen (1998).

Finally, the predictive power using the Cross-Validated Predictive Ability Test (CVPAT) for all endogenous constructs, Table 6 shows that the model meets the minimum standards of predictive validity (IA $p\text{-value} = 0.002$) and has a strong predictive validity (LM = 0.009)

Table 6. Predictive power analysis

Cross-Validated Predictive Ability Test (CVPAT)							
	Indicator average (IA)			Linear model (LM)			
	Average loss difference	t-value	p-value	Average loss difference	t-value	p-value	
All endogenous constructs	-0.120	3.179	0.002	0.035	2.645	0.009	

Endogenous constructs are student performance and parents' and guardians' perceptions of their children's (students) spirituality.

Discussion

From the perspective of parents or guardians, the evidence shows here that their trust in the institution of confessional primary education positively influences their perception of their children's performance and spirituality (of the student). Thus, findings indicate that the trust of parents or guardians in the denominational institution positively influences their perception of

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3 their children's (student's) school performance. Thus, it corroborates the findings of several
4 studies (Benke et al., 2020; Poole, 2017; Romero, 2015; Tschannen-Moran *et al.*, 2013; Adams
5 & Forsyth, 2009; Gregory & Ripski, 2008; Mitchell *et al.*, 2008; Seashore Louis, 2007) finding
6 a positive relationship between trust in the educational institution and parental loyalty of
7 students and that trust between teachers, principals, and parents affects student performance.
8 So, the evidence indicates that parents and guardians *trust a* religious school. The school, in
9 general, is a social system in which the relationship between the level of trust, the quality of
10 relationships, and student learning is very intertwined; trust in the educational institution acts
11 as a triggering factor for high student proficiency, as stated by Romero (2015).
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20 This trust in the confessional institution, in turn, positively influences the spirituality of
21 students, as perceived by their parents and guardians, which also plays a positive influencing
22 role on the student's school performance, as well as having a partial mediating role in the
23 relationship between the trust of parents or guardians and the student's performance. Thus, this
24 study corroborates Kolodinsky et al. (2008) findings that employees carry their cultural values
25 into their work environment. Furthermore, this research indicates that the student brings the
26 personal values acquired in their social world to their school environment—in both family and
27 social contexts.
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36 Therefore, as far as parents or guardians perceive, a student's spirituality stems from the social
37 interactions with the administrative and technical staff and teachers, who, in turn, also bring
38 their values to the work environment. Social interaction also derives from the trust between
39 teachers, principals, and parents, according to some researchers, such as Benke, Veiga,
40 Marchetti (2020), Poole (2017), and Romero (2015).
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46 Confessional educational institutions already have a curriculum grid that contributes to
47 developing a sense of belonging to a social group (Liu & Robertson, 2011). The Adventist
48 school network curriculum has two disciplines that contribute to the difference in this school
49 environment. First, religious education, based on the Bible's principles and ethical and moral
50 values, is anchored in special weeks, such as Holy Week, Courtesy Week, and Friendship
51 Week. Second, the discipline of a general culture focused on developing short-term projects
52 with specialized speakers (psychologists, theologians, dentists, finance, public safety, speech
53 therapists, nurses, etc.), family, and school.
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3 Finally, the evidence showed that the religion of the family does not strengthen the relationship
4 between the trust of parents or guardians in their children's spirituality (of the student). This
5 result is relevant because, on the one hand, the research was done in a confessional educational
6 institution which had religious education as part of the curriculum, with most respondents
7 belonging to the Western religiosity matrix of Protestantism—specifically, to the evangelical
8 religion. On the other hand, considering the four matrices of religiosity discussed in this study,
9 this result reinforces that religion is different from spirituality, although related (Cassar &
10 Shineboume, 2012; Elkins *et al.*, 1988) does not matter what matrix of religiosity the family
11 belongs to. More important is an ongoing spiritual development that positively influences an
12 individual's satisfaction and commitment to discovery and vocation (Elkins *et al.*, 1988; van
13 Dyke *et al.*, 2009; Veselska *et al.*, 2018); outcomes in their environment (Kolodinsky *et al.*,
14 2008), particularly the student's school performance, the focus of this study.
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25 **Implications**

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27 Our research has implications for practitioners and researchers, confessional educational
28 institutions, and researchers, as they indicate the importance of measuring parents' and
29 guardians' perceptions of their children's education and spirituality. These perceptions can
30 ultimately impact the success and overall well-being of the students. Therefore, researchers and
31 professionals in educational institutions should strive to foster trust and honesty with families,
32 encourage student performance, and promote a sense of spirituality and connection to the world.
33 Accordingly, the implications of our findings carry significant weight in both management and
34 individual spirituality literature and should not be ignored. It is imperative that we take the time
35 to fully comprehend and reflect on these implications, as they hold practical applications with
36 potential benefits for confessional schools.
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46 ***Implications for Management Literature***

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48 This study contributes to the broader management literature by delving into the dynamics of
49 primary education within a confessional context. It addresses under-researched social systems
50 and presents several implications: (i) The study broadens the scope of management research by
51 examining non-intellective factors such as parents' and guardians' perceptions, family religion,
52 and spirituality in the context of primary education. This highlights the need for a more holistic
53 approach to school management beyond traditional academic metrics. (ii) The research
54 emphasizes integrating non-intellective factors (associated with the family, the school, and
55 society) into management strategies. Educational institutions should consider these factors
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3 when formulating policies and practices to enhance student performance and spirituality.
4 Concerning performance, these are non-intellective factors associated with self-regulatory
5 learning strategies and motivational factors (Richardson et al., 2012). Thus, this study discusses
6 student school performance beyond traditional intellect-based indicators. (iv) Insights from this
7 study can also be applied across different sectors within management literature. For example,
8 it contributes to the relationship marketing literature by presenting a determining factor in
9 relationship management with students, parents, and guardians by developing the student's
10 spirituality, which is not yet considered in this literature. Hence, the focus on trust, spirituality,
11 and the influence of family religion can inform management practices in various organizational
12 settings where relationships and spirituality play a significant role.
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Implications for Individual Spirituality Literature

22 This research contributes meaningfully to studying individual spirituality, particularly within
23 the primary education context. The implications for individual spirituality include the
24 following: (i) The study recognizes the significance of spirituality at the individual level,
25 emphasizing its role as a precursor to feelings and attitudes. This perspective contributes to the
26 growing research exploring spirituality beyond organizational or collective contexts. (ii) The
27 research fills a critical gap in the literature by addressing spirituality within primary educational
28 management. It highlights the importance of considering spirituality as a fundamental aspect of
29 a student's development and well-being. (iii) Educational institutions and practitioners should
30 consider incorporating collective and individual spiritual activities into primary education. This
31 can include mindfulness exercises, ethical discussions, and values-based education to nurture
32 students' spiritual growth.
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Implications for Practice in Confessional Schools

44 This research provides valuable insights for practitioners in confessional schools, particularly
45 those in the primary education sector. The study underscores the pivotal role of trust in the
46 institution of confessional primary education in shaping parents' and guardians' perceptions of
47 their children's spirituality and school performance. Confessional schools can consider the
48 following implications: (i) Schools should prioritize building trust and transparency with
49 parents and guardians. This can be achieved through open communication, regular student
50 progress updates, and involving families in school activities. For example, hosting regular
51 parent-teacher meetings or workshops on the school's educational philosophy and values can
52 enhance trust. (ii) Recognizing the positive influence of spirituality on student performance,
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3 confessional schools may consider incorporating spiritual development programs into their
4 curriculum. These programs can be designed to align with the school's religious values and
5 beliefs, fostering a sense of spirituality among students. (iii) The finding that family religion
6 does not significantly impact the relationship between school trust and student spirituality
7 suggests that schools should embrace diversity. Rather than focusing solely on the religious
8 affiliation of families, schools can emphasize shared values and principles that promote
9 spirituality and a sense of community. (iv) Schools should continually monitor and evaluate the
10 trust-building efforts and the impact of spirituality programs. This includes seeking feedback
11 from parents, guardians, and students to ensure that these initiatives effectively enhance
12 spirituality and academic performance.
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22 **Conclusions**

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24 Our study evaluated parents' and guardians' perceptions of their children's primary education
25 institution across six indicators of student performance and spirituality. The implications of this
26 research extend to management literature, the understanding of individual spirituality, and
27 practical implications to confessional schools. Our study contributes to the broader
28 management literature addressing under-researched social systems, expanding the management
29 research, integrating non-intellective factors, and rising cross-sector learning. Furthermore, the
30 implications for individual spirituality include the recognition of individual spirituality, filling
31 a gap in primary educational management, and promoting spiritual activities. In addition,
32 confessional schools should consider fostering trust and transparency with parents and
33 guardians, advancing spiritual development programs, addressing diverse family religions, and
34 monitoring and evaluating the trust-building efforts and the impact of spirituality programs.
35 These insights provide a foundation for researchers and practitioners to enhance educational
36 practices, particularly in primary education settings, where spirituality and trust are integral to
37 student development and performance.
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50 The study's main limitation is that the sample covered only the Adventist (denominational)
51 school network in the private sector of primary education, which may have favored biased
52 results. Further research is needed to better understand the relationship between these constructs
53 and how they can be optimized to improve student outcomes. Thus, for future studies, we
54 suggest research that includes comparing public and private schools, regardless of the school's
55 religiosity matrix. Also, we leave a suggestion for future studies to consider other factors based
56 on Richardson et al. (2012) and Santos's (2007) models that may impact student performance.
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3 Finally, studies that address non-intellective school performance indicators and studies related
4 to public education policies, spirituality, and student proficiency will be suggested.
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