

# Spiritual distress and resilience in people undergoing fertility treatment

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## Background

Infertility is defined as a failure to achieve a clinical pregnancy in one year of having regular and unprotected sexual intercourse. It is additionally described as an impaired ability of a person and/or a couple to reproduce. An urge to conceive has led couples to pursue fertility treatments as well as advanced reproductive technologies. Resilience has been previously found to be crucial for coping with infertility-related stress, emotional stability, and quality of life by individuals or couples and a way to cope with fertility treatment.

## Aim

To clinically validate the NANDA-International, Inc. nursing diagnosis “Spiritual distress (00066)” and “Impaired Resilience (00210)” in people under assisted reproductive technologies.

## Methods

### Descriptive cross-sectional study

- Approved by The Ethics Committee of The Institute of Health Sciences of Universidade Católica Portuguesa
- 104 participants in the process of engaging or at any stage of a fertility treatment
- Health-related online forums and social (in)fertility-related websites (Associação Portuguesa de Fertilidade)
- Online questionnaire
- Statistical analysis based on Rasch’s model

### Questionnaire:

Sociodemographic characterization;

Characterization of the health profile and clinical information;

Defining Characteristics:

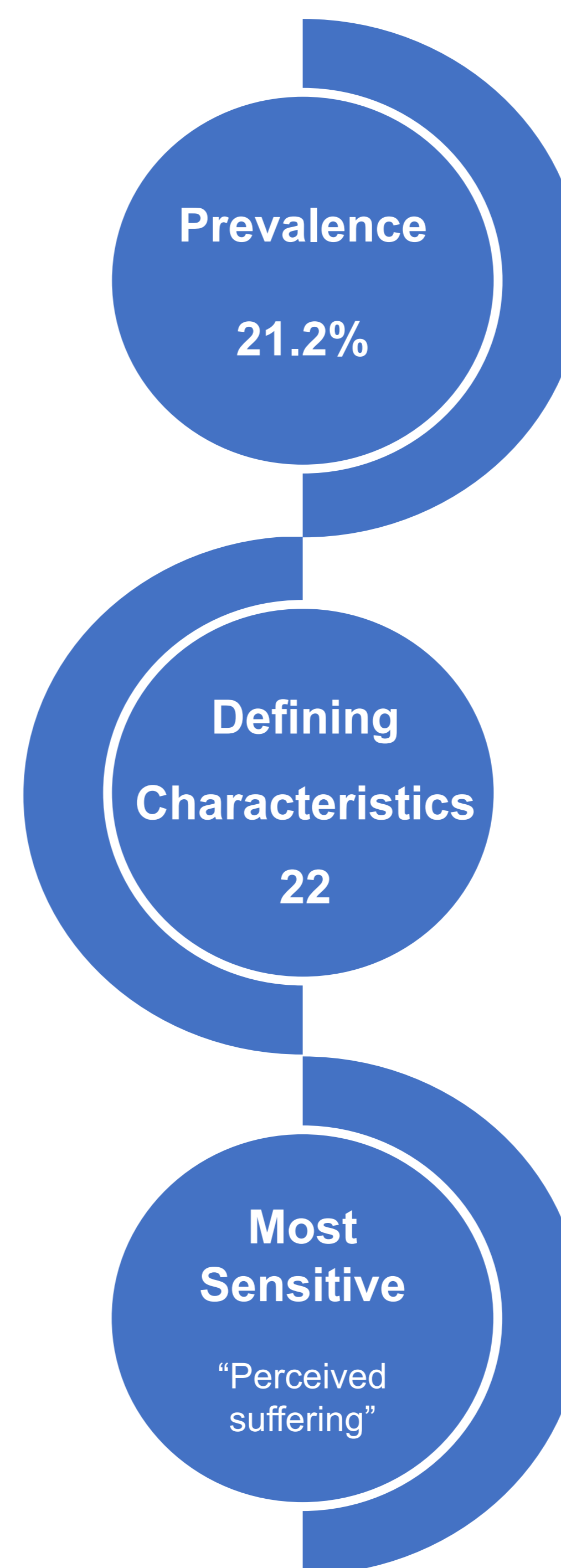
- “Spiritual Distress (00066)”
- “Impaired Resilience (00210)”

Instruments:

- Portuguese version of the Spiritual Wellbeing Questionnaire (Gouveia et al., 2009; Gomez & Fisher, 2003);
- Portuguese version of the Meaning in Suffering Test (Kraus, 2014; Starck, 1985);
- Portuguese version of the Resilience Scale for Adults (Deep & Pereira, 2012; Wagnild & Young, 1993);
- Fertility Adjustment Scale (Lopes & Leal, 2010; Lopes, 2008; Glover et al., 1999).

## Results

### “Spiritual distress (00066)”



#### Defining characteristics validated:

- Perceived suffering
- Questioning meaning of life
- Alienation
- Decrease in expression of previous pattern of creativity
- Hopelessness
- Inadequate acceptance
- Anger
- Insufficient courage
- Inability to participate in religious activities
- Ineffective coping strategies
- Inability to pray
- Perceived insufficient meaning in life
- Refuses to interact with spiritual leader
- Disinterest in reading spiritual literature
- Inability for introspection
- Disinterest in nature
- Feeling abandoned
- Inability to experience the transcendent
- Refuses to interact with significant other
- Anger toward power greater than self
- Feeling unloved
- Separation from support system

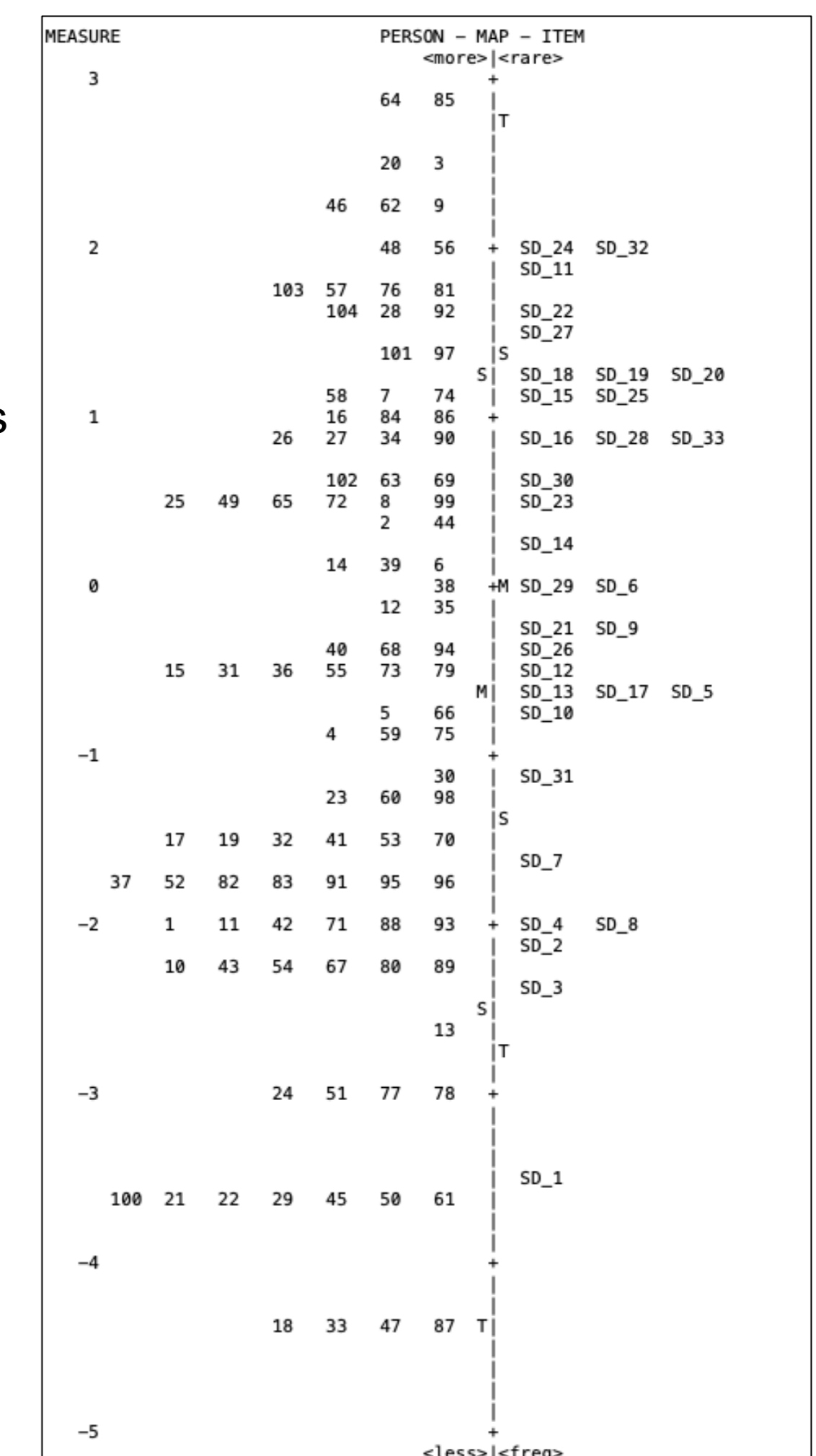
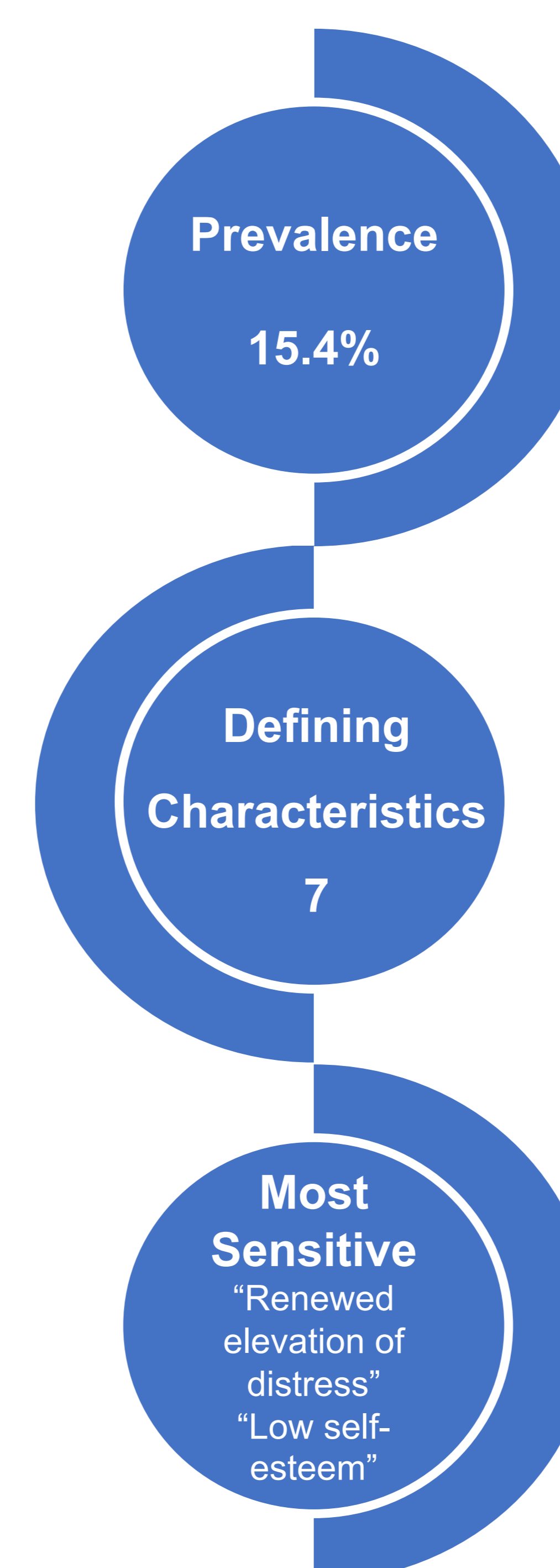


Figure 1 - Wright map representing in a single scale person-item location, identifying patients' ability along with DC's difficulty.

LEGEND: SD = Spiritual Distress; M = mean of ability or mean of items difficulty; S = one Standard Deviation in relation to the M; T = two Standard Deviation in relation to the M. The left side of the map displays the number of the respondent and its distribution; on the right side of the map the defining characteristics are represented and distributed on the map.

### “Impaired resilience (00210)”



#### Defining characteristics validated:

- Decreased interest in vocational activities
- Depression
- Impaired health status
- Ineffective coping strategies
- Low self-esteem
- Renewed elevation of distress
- Social isolation

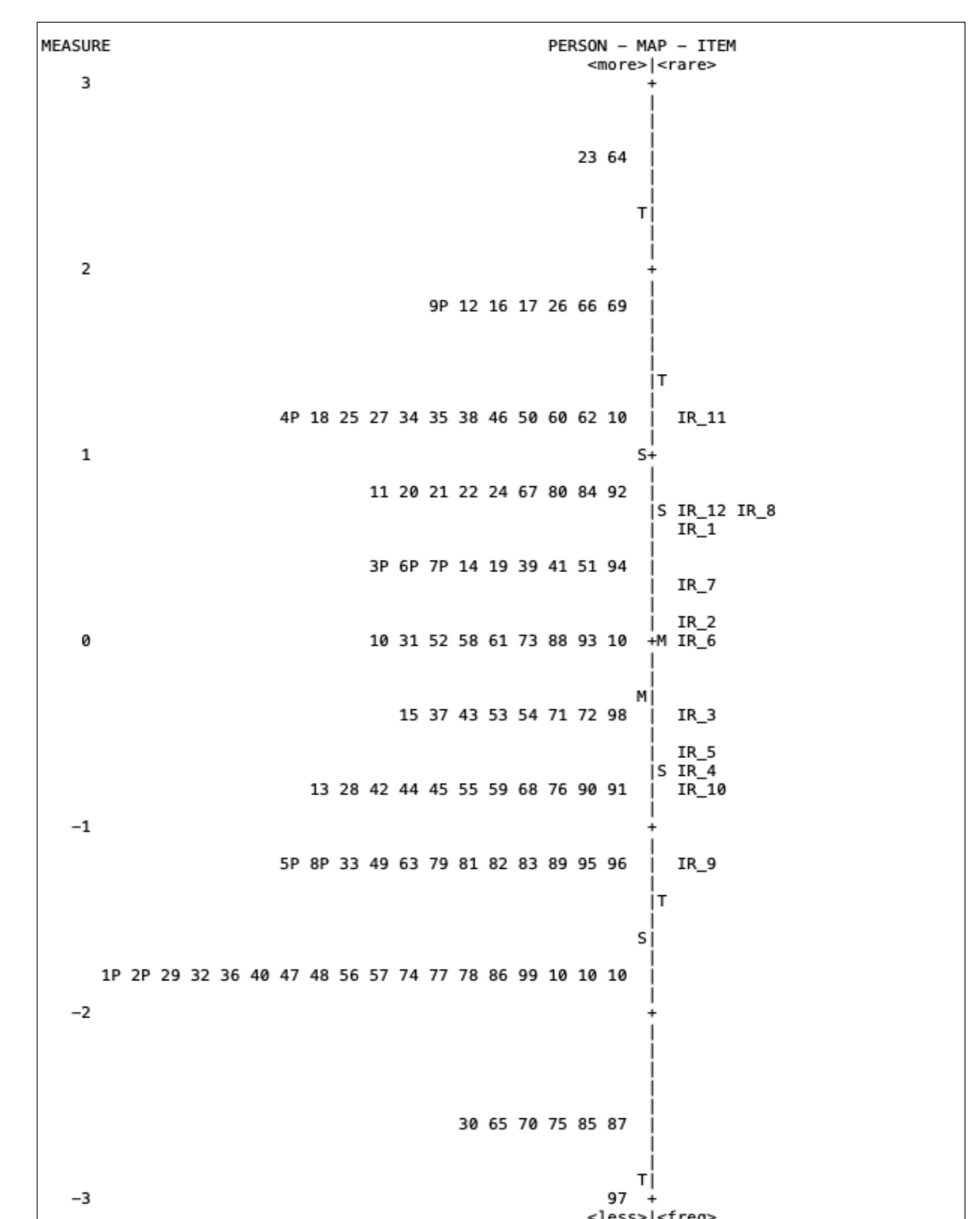


Figure 2 - Wright map representing in a single scale person-item location, identifying patients' ability along with DC's difficulty.

## Conclusion

Results validated the presence of the spiritual distress and impaired resilience in a Portuguese sample going through assisted reproductive technologies. This study contributed to raise the quality of nurse's critical judgement and clinical reasoning and allow an early holistic and personalized patient-centered intervention in the reproductive field.

## References

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