

Relationship between Psychological, Subjective and Social Well-Being of Victims of the Armed Conflict in the Municipality of Chalán-Sucre

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Abstract

The objective of this research was to determine the relationship between psychological, subjective and social well-being in victims of the armed conflict in the municipality of Chalán, Sucre. A quantitative approach was used within the positivist paradigm, with a non-experimental design of transversal cohort and correlational scope. The sample consisted of 75 participants, aged between 19 and 80 years, to whom the scales of psychological well-being, subscale of subjective well-being and social well-being were applied. Data analysis included descriptive, frequency and Pearson correlation statistics. The results indicate that autonomy (18.51) is the dimension with the highest mean in psychological well-being, while for social well-being it was social acceptance (20.28). For its part, subjective well-being presents a mean of 74.53. Regarding the relationship, the results show very low correlation values between the three variables, suggesting that there is no significant relationship between them.

Keywords: *Psychological Well-Being, Social Well-Being, Subjective Well-Being, Victims of the Armed Conflict.*

Introduction

The armed conflict in Colombia is configured as a socio-political problem that, throughout history, has generated multiple social, psychological and political affectations. Its consequences have had a significant impact on the physical infrastructure, the permanence of institutions, economic stability and the integral well-being of the victims (García, 2020). This conflict has its roots in the weakness and absence of the State, due to its limited or non-existent presence in different regions of the Colombian territory. Likewise, there is evidence of institutional fragility to channel and mediate social conflicts (Díaz, 2018).

Internal confrontations in Colombia originate from deep socioeconomic inequalities, the exclusion of certain population groups and the discrimination of vulnerable sectors. Which is widely related to the insufficient provision of public goods, the rancor generated by the mismanagement of resources and government policies, which prevent certain sectors from benefiting equitably from the country's wealth; what has been described above has been a determining factor in the persistence of this conflict (Chambers, 2013).

Now, there are countless affectations caused due to internal wars in Colombia, however, the most representative are the psychosocial ones, according to the transcendence of the impact on the mental health of direct and indirect victims (Gómez, 2017; Cuartas Ricaurte, 2019; Bachelot Aceros et al., 2023); at the social level, in the course of post-conflict the repercussions of traumatic events are manifested, which hinders the acquisition of resources and tools for the reconstruction of the social fabric (Salas et al., 2019).

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According to Martínez (2020), exposure to situations of violence, forced displacement and adaptation to new communities, constitute predisposing factors for the individual to possess a low level of social well-being. Along the same lines, previous studies in communities with similar characteristics have identified a lack of cooperation, teamwork, order and participation in social activities; which are elements that limit the development of collective well-being (García, 2020; Gómez, 2018; Vergara et al., 2023)

On the other hand, the armed conflict has a negative impact on the psychological well-being of the victims, because there are affectations in personal growth, coping strategies and the construction of goals. Likewise, there are deficiencies in the construction of the life project, self-knowledge, autonomy and the absence of life purpose from the affective, economic and/or sentimental axis (Arias, 2017; Cudris et al., 2019; Garcia et al., 2020).

Some research identifies the vulnerabilities and negative psychological experiences of women victims of the armed conflict (Gonzalez-Uribe et al., 2022; Monsalve et al., 2022), highlighting them as the population with the highest prevalence of deficiencies in psychological well-being. These difficulties are reflected in the complexity of their personal growth and the positive performance of their lives, which leads to isolation, problems in interpersonal relationships and dissatisfaction with life (Bustos León et al., 2023; Díaz, et al., 2006).

In turn, alterations in subjective well-being are reflected in the emotions and self-assessment made by the individual according to feelings, mood and experiences; in the case of victims of the armed conflict, when estimating their satisfaction with life, they experience feelings of frustration and dissatisfaction (Zubieta et al., 2012). Alterations in the subjective well-being of victims highlight the complex interrelationship between past traumatic experiences and the subjects' perceptions of satisfaction with life today (Cowden et al., 2023; Monroy-Sánchez, 2020; Quintero-González et al., 2020).

People who experience situations of violence have considerable difficulty in making a positive estimation of their life and experiencing feelings of life satisfaction (Henriquez et al., 2024). This is related to the findings of studies conducted by Díaz, 2018; Garcia, 2020; Patiño, 2015, who investigated communities with similar particularities and determined that being exposed to a context of armed conflict negatively impacts the valuation that individuals can make about their lives.

Considering the above, the objective of this article focuses on determining the relationship between the psychological, subjective and social well-being of the victims of the armed conflict in the municipality of Chalan. This work is developed in the framework of the research project Psychological, subjective and social well-being of victims of the armed conflict in the municipality of Chalan - Sucre, carried out with the support of IOM-USAID through the program Hilando Vidas y Esperanza en el Territorio (Spinning Lives and Hope in the Territory).

Theoretical Framework

Psychological Well-Being

It refers to the effort made by human beings to improve and reach their potential. Ryff and Keyes (1995) postulate that psychological well-being is the individual experience of a subject based on psychological development and the ability to relate positively to the eventualities experienced. In other words, it focuses on the coping strategies that human beings possess in the face of life challenges, on the dedication and effort they make to achieve their goals, the evaluation of their conditions and their role in society (Díaz et al., 2006).

Psychological well-being is considered a process that develops throughout the life cycle, represented as a support that contributes to the development of the individual's real capacities. This strengthens self-perception, timely management of the environment, positive relationships and the effective search for life purpose (Ryff and Singer, 2001).

Subjective well-being

It refers to everything that the individual thinks and feels in relation to his or her life, the affective and cognitive conditions identified when performing a self-analysis of his or her existence (Diener et al., 1999). Subjective well-being is composed of three main elements to be taken into account: the subjective character, which is based on the person's own experience; the global dimension, because it includes an assessment of the components of his or her life; and the inclusion of positive factors, taking into account that its nature goes beyond the simple absence of negative aspects (Diener, 1993).

Likewise, subjective well-being is defined by Veenhoven (1994) as the intensity in which an individual judges his or her life globally, based on positive factors. That is, at what level the person feels satisfied and at ease with his or her own life. Now, according to the author, to carry out this type of assessment or judgment, the person makes use of the affective and cognitive components, the latter being understood as the level of satisfaction with life represented in the triumphs and goals of the human being.

Social well-being

Social well-being is a state of satisfaction of the individual in relation to basic needs and to the conditions that make his or her development possible in the context. According to Keyes (1998) it refers to the valuation that the human being makes about the situations, conditions and performance in society. Likewise, this type of well-being is related to the subject in the socio-historical factors, since he/she is immersed in a system restructured by a common denominator of group and interpersonal relationships; in which the experiences of daily life are not far from the circumstances of the world where he/she is located (Blanco and Díaz, 2004).

Methodology

Type of research: This study is framed within the positivist paradigm, with a quantitative approach, a non-experimental cross-sectional cohort design and correlational scope. Its objective was to determine the relationship between psychological, subjective and social well-being, without manipulating the variables. In this sense, the variables were assessed at a single point in time, and which allowed for subsequent analysis of the relationship between them (Hernández et al., 2014).

Participants: The sample consisted of 75 people, aged between 19 and 80 years, of which 30 were men and 45 women, all direct victims of the armed conflict and residents of the municipality of Chalán, Sucre. The selection of participants was carried out by means of non-probabilistic convenience sampling, considering the defined inclusion criteria and the willingness of the subjects to participate in the research.

Instruments

Ryff Psychological Well-Being Scale: assesses psychological well-being in six dimensions: Self-Acceptance, Positive Relationships, Autonomy, Environmental Mastery, Purpose in Life, and Personal Growth, which should act together to achieve maximum well-being. This scale was adapted by Van Dierendonck in 2004, reducing the items from 120 to 39, with an internal consistency of α between 0.78 and 0.81 and an adequate fit (CFI = 0.88). Subsequently, Díaz et al. (2006) adapted it to Spanish and reduced it to 29 items, maintaining the same internal consistency. The scale is divided into six Likert-type subscales, with 6 response options, ranging from “totally disagree” (1) to “totally agree” (6).

Subjective Psychological Well-Being Subscale - Sánchez Cánovas: measures satisfaction with life, happiness, and positive and negative affect. This subscale is part of the Psychological Well-Being Scale of Sánchez Cánovas, which measures the general well-being of a person through subjective information about his or her level of satisfaction in different areas of his or her life. This scale was evaluated in Colombia by Arana and collaborators (2017), who reported a Cronbach's alpha of 0.89.

Keyes Social Well-Being Scale: It assesses how the circumstances and functioning of society are perceived (Zubieta and Delfino, 2010; Paez, 2008), covering five dimensions: social integration, social acceptance, social contribution, social actualization and social coherence. In this study, the version adapted to Spanish by Blanco and Díaz (2005) will be used, consisting of 25 items with response options ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

Data Collection and Analysis

Once informed consent was obtained from the participants, the assessment scales were applied. The researchers conducted personalized application sessions to ensure that the participants adequately understood the instructions and responded accurately to the items. Subsequently, the data were tabulated and organized in a database for analysis. To analyze the relationships between the study variables, the SPSS statistical program was used, applying Pearson's correlation. This method made it possible to evaluate the strength and direction of the linear association between the variables, providing a detailed view of the interactions between the different aspects of the participants' psychological and social well-being

Results and Discussion

Psychological well-being

The dimension with the highest mean is autonomy (18.51), suggesting that participants, in general, perceive themselves as independent individuals capable of making decisions without external pressure. However, its standard deviation of 3.573 indicates that there is considerable variability in this perception, reflecting important differences in the way each person experiences his or her degree of autonomy. In contrast, the dimension with the lowest mean is purpose in life (8.73), suggesting that many people find it difficult to define a clear meaning in their lives. This low score, together with a standard deviation of 3.134, reflects both a general tendency toward purposelessness and a notable variability, indicating that for some this aspect is more defined than for others.

Table 1. Psychological well-being

	N	Range	Mín	Máx	Mean	Desv. Desviation	Varian ce
Self-acceptance	75	12	5	17	10,03	2,852	8,134
Positive relationships	75	15	4	19	11,95	3,332	11,105
Autonomy	75	18	8	26	18,51	3,573	12,767
Mastery of the environment	75	12	5	17	10,24	2,880	8,293
Purpose in life	75	11	5	16	8,73	3,134	9,820
Personal growth	75	17	4	21	10,40	3,665	13,432
N válid (per list)	75						

Social well-being

The analysis of social well-being shows that the dimension with the highest mean is Social Acceptance (20.28), indicating that participants, on average, feel valued and recognized by others. However, the high standard deviation (5.567) suggests that this perception varies significantly among individuals, with some feeling fully accepted and others less integrated. In contrast, the dimension with the lowest mean is Social Coherence (13.97), reflecting that participants find it more difficult to perceive their social environment as comprehensible or coherent. The standard deviation of 3.009 in this dimension indicates a lower variability

compared to other areas, suggesting a more homogeneous perception in terms of the clarity and meaning of the social environment.

Table 2. Social well-being

Social Well-being	N	Range	Mín	Máx	Mean	Desv. Desviación	Variance
Social Integration	75	22	5	27	17,21	4,150	17,224
Social Acceptance	75	26	9	35	20,28	5,567	30,988
Social contribution	75	23	5	28	15,11	4,052	16,421
Social actualization	75	25	6	31	19,61	4,037	16,294
Social Coherence	75	16	6	22	13,97	3,009	9,053
N válid (per list)	75						

Subjective well-being

Subjective well-being has a mean of 74.53, indicating relatively high levels on average, although with a wide dispersion of scores, from a low of 3 to a high of 99. The standard deviation of 23.024 and variance of 530.117 reflect considerable variability among individuals, suggesting that experiences of subjective well-being are diverse in this population, with some participants reporting much lower or higher levels than average..

Table 3. Subjective well-being

	N	Mín	Máxo	Mean	Desv. Desviación	Variance
Subjective well-being	75	3	99	74,53	23,024	530,117
N válid (per list)	75					

Correlation Between Variables

The results show very low correlation values between the three variables, suggesting that there is no significant relationship between them. In particular, the correlation between psychological well-being and social well-being shows a coefficient of 0.063, while psychological and subjective well-being shows a value of -0.007. Both values, close to zero, indicate a practically null connection between these aspects.

Furthermore, the p-values associated with each correlation (which are 0.592, 0.955 and 0.318) are significantly greater than 0.05, confirming that they are not statistically significant. In other words, these results indicate that there is not enough evidence to claim that these well-being variables are relevantly connected in this sample. This could be interpreted as meaning that, in this population, psychological, social and subjective well-being are independent of each other.

Table 4. Correlation between Variables

		Psychological well-being	Social Well-being	Subjective well-being
Psychological well-being	Pearson correlation	1	,063	-,007
	Sig. (bilateral)		,592	,955
	N	75	75	75
Social Well-being	Pearson correlation	,063	1	-,117
	Sig. (bilateral)	,592		,318
	N	75	75	75
Subjective well-being	Pearson correlation	-,007	-,117	1
	Sig. (bilateral)	,955	,318	
	N	75	75	75

According to the results, the absence of significant correlation between psychological, social and subjective well-being in the victims of the armed conflict in the municipality of Chalán may indicate that the three types of well-being do not depend directly on each other. As indicated by García (2020), stating that in contexts of high vulnerability and trauma, social, psychological and subjective constructs are widely influenced by other factors, such as previous mental disorders, level of individual resilience, community integration and access to human, economic and material resources (Mercado, 2015).

The results obtained in this research differ significantly from those reported in previous studies, which have found positive and significant correlations between psychological, social and subjective well-being in populations affected by the armed conflict. For example, Díaz (2018) and Gómez (2018), Vergara, et al. (2023) report a significantly positive correlation between the three dimensions of well-being mentioned, which coincides with other research analyses that determined that, in conflict contexts, social well-being has a direct impact on psychological and subjective well-being (Blanco and Rodríguez, 2007; Diener and Diener, 1995).

However, in contrast to these studies, the findings of this research indicate that, in the sample studied, there are no significant correlations between the three types of well-being. These differences may be due to various factors, such as the methodological design, the characteristics of the sample, the social-political context and the nature of the conflict in which the victims find themselves. In particular, research such as that of Patiño (2015) and Cárdenas Montoya (2022) has shown that, in some specific subsamples (displaced women), the correlations between the dimensions of well-being may be weaker or even nil.

On the other hand, more recent studies, such as those of Vergara et al. (2023), have identified a significant correlation between psychological well-being and social well-being in women victims of the armed conflict, which supports the idea that the correlation between the dimensions of well-being may vary depending on the population and the context.

Conclusion

The results obtained in this research show significant variability in the dimensions of psychological, social and subjective well-being among the victims of the armed conflict in the municipality of Chalán, suggesting that these types of well-being are not necessarily interrelated in this population. In terms of psychological well-being, autonomy was the most valued dimension, reflecting a greater perception of independence

among participants. However, the purpose in life dimension presented the lowest scores, indicating a generalized lack of meaning in life, especially in a context of vulnerability.

Regarding social well-being, social acceptance was the dimension with the highest values, reflecting that, on average, participants feel valued by their environment. However, the high dispersion in this area suggests that some individuals experience weaker social integration than others. In contrast, social coherence showed lower scores, indicating that participants have difficulty perceiving their social environment as clear and coherent.

The analysis of subjective well-being also revealed a dispersion, indicating that experiences of subjective well-being vary considerably among individuals in the sample, with some reporting low levels and others very high. This highlights the diversity of emotional and psychological experiences in this group.

On the other hand, this study evidenced the lack of significant correlation between psychological, social and subjective well-being in this population. Despite previous findings suggesting a positive relationship between these dimensions in contexts of armed conflict, the results of this study do not support this relationship. This suggests that, in this particular context, the three types of well-being are relatively independent, and may be due to factors such as individual resilience, methodological differences, sample characteristics, and the social-political context of the conflict.

This study provides a valuable perspective on how dimensions of well-being may not always be interrelated in contexts of high vulnerability. In the future, it would be relevant to explore how individual and collective factors, such as resilience, community integration, and access to resources, may influence perceptions of well-being in populations affected by armed conflict. It is also recommended that future research use more specific and contextual approaches to better understand the dynamics between these dimensions of well-being in complex context.

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