

Community Quality-of-Life and Well-Being

Graciela Tonon *Editor*

Quality of Life in Communities of Latin Countries

 Springer

Community Quality-of-Life and Well-Being

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Quality of Life in Communities of Latin Countries

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ISSN 2520-1093 ISSN 2520-1107 (electronic)
Community Quality-of-Life and Well-Being
ISBN 978-3-319-53182-3 ISBN 978-3-319-53183-0 (eBook)
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-53183-0

Library of Congress Control Number: 2017931999

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The registered company is Springer International Publishing AG
The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

*To my dearest husband Walter and my
dearest children Pedro and Erica for their
love and support and their understanding of
my work*

Preface

The general aim of this book is to rethink the concept of community in Latin countries and their quality of life and well-being, presenting unique experiences written by authors from Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru, Portugal and Spain.

It is organized in two parts and contains 14 chapters.

Part I is organized in seven chapters and dedicated to the study of theory and practice of community quality of life.

The aim of Chap. 1, written by me, is to rethink the concepts of community and community quality of life in Latin American countries, reflected by the voices of actual persons; considering the importance of conversation in the inter-subjective relations among people in the community and the construction of a collective scenario for the building of a common ground. Recognizing that the advent of the digital era makes the construction of virtual communities; thus, we should nowadays make reference to *communities* rather than *community*.

In Chap. 2, Helena Marujo and Luis Neto explore a collaborative action-research project whose aim was to generate new knowledge about well-being and happiness in higher education, which might result in improved outcomes for the school communities. The discussion draws upon data from a study conducted across ten schools of Universidade de Lisboa, Portugal, using focus group interviews, and the World Café methodology to engage and connect participants in conversation, and appreciative inquiry to construct meaningful and transformative questions.

Denise Benatuil and Walter Toscano present, in Chap. 3, the relationship between sports and community well-being, taking into account factors such as social bonds, social and cultural integration, health, improved quality of life, and the enhancement of personal and community well-being, providing a theoretical assessment based on the concepts of well-being, community well-being, and sports, distinguishing the latter from mere physical activity.

In Chap. 4, Claudia Mikkelsen and Sofia Ares study the quality of life and commuting in rururban communities of Argentina considering that the processes of urban growth, which spread population encourage the intensification of everyday commuting and the demands for new services, public passenger transport system

and the educational and health infrastructure. The results of the study illustrate the inequality of opportunities in commuting and the generation and consolidation of situations of vulnerability in the analyzed communities, in relation to their quality of life.

Mariano Rojas in Chap. 5 studies the negative impact of crime and safety concerns on satisfaction with community life in Mexico using a representative data set from 100 Mexican urban municipalities which show that satisfaction with safety in the neighbourhood is crucial for community satisfaction and that victimization has a very large impact on satisfaction with safety in the neighbourhood.

In Chap. 6, Karla Valverde Viesca and Enrique Gutiérrez Márquez provides a general overview on a successful citizen participation experience that emerged with the implementation of the Programa Comunitario de Mejoramiento Barrial (PCMB) *Community Program of Neighborhood Improvement in Mexico City*, which has a direct impact on the quality of life of its beneficiaries.

Cecilia Cadena-Inostroza and María Esther Morales Fajardo present, in Chap. 7, water governance as a topic linked to changes in the quality of community life due to the impact of water shortages and the decline in water quality in the locality, in terms of conflict. The aim of this chapter is to shed light on the difficulties of operating governance networks in independent potable water committees in Mexico.

The second part of the book comprises seven chapters and it is dedicated to the community quality of life of different groups: indigenous people, displaced persons, migrants, children, young people and older adults.

In Chap. 8, Lía Rodríguez de la Vega and Héctor Rodríguez presented the quality of life of one of the indigenous groups of South America, the guarani community.

Jorge Palacio, Isidro Maya-Jariego, Amalio Blanco, José Amar and Colette Sabatier examine in Chap. 9 the factors that affect the quality of life of displaced people in Colombia, presenting the results of three studies carried out in Northern Colombia, with quantitative and qualitative data on the process of restoration and adaptation of displaced communities.

In Chap. 10 Jaime Alfaro, Javier Guzmán, David Sirlopú, Denise Oyarzún, Fernando Reyes, María Victoria Benavente, Jorge Varela and José Fernández de Rota examine the association between life satisfaction with social-communitarian dimensions, and specifically the role that the sense of community plays in Chilean adolescents.

The aim of Chap. 11, written by Javier Martínez, Michael McCall and Isabel Preto, is to present an analytical framework that includes the concepts of community well-being/quality-of-life/risk together with the application of participatory mapping methodology. Studying cases in Portugal, the authors learned that participatory approaches stimulate children and young people to critically and actively involve with their community in the identification of problems as well as in the co-design of solutions.

Vicente Rodríguez-Rodríguez, Fermina Rojo-Perez and Gloria Fernández-Mayoralas, present in Chap. 12 that family and social networks are changing at all

ages and these networks are among the most important dimensions of domain-specific quality of life among older adults. Using the Ageing in Spain Longitudinal Study, Pilot Survey (ELES-PS), representative of people aged 50 years old or more in community dwelling in Spain, the survey pointed to the residential independence of older adults from their family network, and the further relatives lived from older adults' home, the more contact was kept by phone, letter or other not in-person forms.

In Chap. 13, Cristiano Codagnone, Pilar Cruz and Isidro Maya-Jariego present a case study of the digital practices of Ecuadorians residing in a small city of Spain. The ethnographic fieldwork showed that Ecuadorian immigrants use digital media to maintain ties to the homeland and also as a tool for inclusion in the host society. Compared to mobile phones and online communities, *locutorios* are behaviour settings for recent immigrants, where digital media usage and appropriation take place in the context of local interaction among individuals in an active process of acculturation and adaptation to the receiving country.

Finally, Chap. 14, by Carmen Rodríguez-Blázquez, Gloria Fernández-Mayoralas, Fermina Rojo-Pérez, Pablo Martínez-Martín and Maria João Forjaz, present a cross-sectional study to assess the quality of life of community-dwelling older people and to identify its associated factors. Working with a representative sample of 1106 people aged 60 years or older in Spain, and using EQ-5D and PWI, the results indicated that quality of life of community-dwelling older adults was influenced by age, health status, loneliness, social support and disability.

I want to thank all the authors that participated in this book with original chapters that study the quality of life of different Latin communities.

Buenos Aires, Argentina

Graciela Tonon

Acknowledgements

My profound gratitude to Rhonda Phillips, President of the International Society for Quality of Life Studies and Editor of the Series *Community Quality of Life and Well-Being* for giving me the possibility of editing this book.

My gratitude to Joe Sirgy, who wrote the prologue of this book, and his generous comments always make me continue learning.

My gratitude to all the professors that commented on the different chapters and allowed us to enrich their contents: Tobia Fattore, Irma Eloff, Drew Propson, Rocío del Carmen Canudas, Isidro Maya Jariego, Bobby Luthra Signa, Antonio López López, Javier Martinez, Jorge Palacio Sañudo, Lía Rodríguez de la Vega, Walter Toscano, Claudia Mikkelsen, Denise Benatuil and Rosa María Donatti.

My gratitude to Esther Otten and Hendrikje Tuerlings associated with Springer.

At Universidad de Palermo, Argentina, my gratitude to the Dean Elsa Zingman and the Academic Secretary, Luis Brajterman, who always supported my work.

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Prologue

It is with great pleasure to write this forward for Prof. Graciela Tonon's book on *Quality of Life in Communities of Latin Countries*. Dr. Tonon's book is an edited book involving 14 authored chapters about issues of community well-being in various Latin American (and European) communities. The chapters are divided into two major parts. The first part focuses on issues of theory and practice. Some chapters are more general than others. For example, Dr. Tonon has a chapter that addresses how community quality of life is conceptualized in Latin American cultures. This is a more general topic compared to a chapter authored by Professor Mariano Rojas who focused on a specific quality-of-life issue, namely safety and crime in Mexico. The second part of the book involves research on specific groups: indigenous people, displaced people, migrants, children, youth, and elderly. Thus the book contributes significantly to the science of community well-being with specifically emphasizing Latin cultures.

The book is part of a new book series of Springer called *The Community Quality of Life and Well-being*. The series is a collection of volumes related to community quality-of-life and well-being research. The series provides community planners and quality-of-life researchers involved in community and regional well-being a conduit for innovative research and application. The research published in the series involves a variety of research and practice topics related to community well-being, whether relating to policy, application, research, and/or practice. Example topics include societal happiness, quality-of-life domains in the policy construct, measuring and gauging progress, dimensions of planning and community development, and related topics.

This book series was formerly entitled *Community Quality of Life Indicators: Best Practices*. This was a series involving a collection of books, each containing a set of chapters related to best practices of community indicators projects. Many communities (cities, towns, counties, provinces, cantons, state regions, etc.), guided

by their local planning community councils and local government and other local organizations, develop community indicator projects. These projects gauge community well-being. The indicator projects involve the conceptualization of community well-being that is unique and fitting to the local culture. Community is typically articulated in terms of a set of well-being dimensions: economic, social, environmental, etc. The data involved primary and/or secondary data. Primary data is collected through survey research. The focus is typically on subjective indicators of quality of life such as community residents' satisfaction with overall life, satisfaction with various life domains (e.g., life domains related to social, leisure, work, community, family, spiritual, financial, etc.), as well as satisfaction with varied community services (government, nonprofit, and business services operating within the community). With respect to data collection from secondary sources, this is typically based on objective indicators capturing varied dimensions of economic, social, and environmental well-being of the focal community. The book series is intended to provide community planners and researchers involved with community indicator projects with prototypic examples of how to plan and execute community indicator projects in the most effective way possible.

The series contained the following titles:

Community Quality-of-Life Indicators: Best Cases VI, edited by M. Joseph Sirgy, Rhonda Phillips, and Don Rahtz (2013)

Community Quality-of-Life Indicators: Best Cases V, edited by M. Joseph Sirgy, Rhonda Phillips, and Don Rahtz (2011)

Community Quality-of-Life Indicators: Best Cases IV, edited by M. Joseph Sirgy, Rhonda Phillips, and Don Rahtz (2009)

Community Quality-of-Life Indicators: Best Cases III, edited by M. Joseph Sirgy, Rhonda Phillips, and Don Rahtz (2009)

Community Quality-of-Life Indicators: Best Cases II, edited by M. Joseph Sirgy, Don Rahtz, and Davide Swain (2006)

Community Quality-of-Life Indicators: Best Cases, edited by M. Joseph Sirgy, Don Rahtz, and Dong-Jin Lee (2004)

This series is published by Springer in partnership with the International Society for Quality-of-Life Studies (ISQOLS). ISQOLS is an academic and professional association whose mission is to promote and encourage research and collaboration in quality of life and well-being theory and applications.

For those who have a specific interest in community well-being research in a Latin cultural context, I am certain that you will find this book inspiring and highly informative.

Happy reading. Joe Sirgy

M. Joseph Sirgy
Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University

Part I
Communities' Quality of Life:
Theory and Practice

Chapter 1

Rethinking Community Quality of Life in Latin American Countries

Graciela Tonon

Abstract The community is a totality which is meaningful to the people that form part of it. In this sense community is more than a geographic concentration; it is a concept that implies the inclusion of diversities and their being allowed to share within it. It is related to social support, intersubjective, participation, consensus, common beliefs, and a joint effort which aims at a major objective: intense and extensive relationships. Quality of life is a multidimensional concept (Bramston 2002) and comprises objective and subjective components (Cummins and Cahill 2000). Quality of life in the community is a specificity of quality of life in general, and community well-being is also a predictor of general well-being (Sirgy et al. 2008). Community implies the existence of social cohabitation which is constructed by society in itself as a foundation of democracy and, in this sense, according to Lechner (2002) politics should also take care of people's subjective experiences. Collective space in communities has become essential to citizens' rights, as it should guarantee, in terms of equality, the appropriation of neighborhood space by different social and cultural collectives, genders, and age groups; it is the space of representation in which a society becomes visible and at the same time constitutes a physical, symbolic, and political space. The beginning of this century presents us with new models of community which imply that the traditional concept has changed, together with the way people participate in community spaces. Today, the place of residence is not necessarily the space people identify themselves with, and where they participate. The present social transformations have affected the community's distinctive traditional characteristic as contained within space limits, to the idea of being formed by a few members that daily meet each other face to face. On the other hand, it is necessary to acknowledge the advent of the digital era and the construction of virtual communities; thus, we should nowadays make reference to

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G. Tonon (ed.), *Quality of Life in Communities of Latin Countries*,

Community Quality-of-Life and Well-Being,

DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-53183-0_1

communities rather than *community*. The aim of this chapter is to rethink the concepts of community and community quality of life in Latin American countries, reflected by the voices of actual persons; considering the importance of conversation in the intersubjective relations among people in the community and the construction of a collective scenario for the building of a common ground.

Keywords Community · Quality of life · Well-being · Intersubjective · Collective scenario · Common ground

1.1 Understanding the Multiple Definitions of Community in the Latin American Context

The beginning of this century presents us with new models of community which imply that the traditional concept is changing, together with the way people participate in community spaces.

The present social transformations have affected the community's distinctive traditional characteristic as contained within space limits, to the idea of being formed by a few members that daily meet each other face to face. In fact, today, place of residence is not necessarily the space people identify themselves with, and where they participate.

On the other hand, it is necessary to acknowledge the advent of the digital era and the construction of virtual communities. In this respect, Maya Jariego (2004, p. 190) points out that it is possible to define a community on the basis of interpersonal relationships which, in turn, derive in a sense of belonging that goes beyond geographical boundaries. Quoting Cruz and García Ruiz (2013, p. 373) the term community, as many other terms, "is nowadays being put to scrutiny, or even deconstruction." Thus, we should nowadays make reference to *communities* rather than *community*.

The aim of this section is to revise the different enunciations of the concept of community that are found in everyday life and which lead to the conclusion that there is not a single definition of the aforementioned term; moreover, the latter has undergone changes and variations which go hand in hand with the subsequent changes in the lives of persons in our region.

Our challenge is thus to understand the multiple components of those definitions, and our starting point is the idea expressed by Arendt (2005, p. 32) regarding the fact that understanding is different from information and knowledge though they are related, since understanding is based on previous knowledge—yet it both precedes and prolongs it.

This leads to a revision of the words expressed by the persons regarding their conception of community which, followed by a process of interpretation, derives in a possibly new outlook on community which comprises elements detected in their discourse, thus allowing us to define community as a social construction. During the last semester of 2015 and the first semester of 2016, we asked university

students who are taking courses related to the theory and methodology of community and field work in communities to write their own definition of community. From the examination and revision of the different definitions (over 100), we can surmise that there is a unanimous conception of community as a group/set of people who cohabit and share different elements, namely: a territory, geographical space and/or place, life styles, daily events, customs, identity, language, culture, activities, social norms, history, social bonds, network of relationships; people who dissent with each other, who help each other when problems arise, who seek/share a common aim/the greater good.

The following are some significant testimonies:

To my mind, a community is the scenario where people's daily lives unfold—it has geographical boundaries—where people have things in common, such as habits and customs, as well as integrated institutions (Female, 49 years old).

The community is a group of people who live and cohabit in a territory whose members interact, play different roles, and make the social structure work, each person being an active member of the community and part of the institutions. (Male, 28 years old).

Community is the name given to the set of social relations established among people in a certain place and time, sharing realities, customs, traditions, norms—either consensual or in conflict among its various social actors (Male, 22 years old).

Community is a group of persons who act and work together, pursuing a common aim or the greater good. In this context there are norms which regulate the daily actions. (Female, 31 years old).

It is interesting to point out that, in Latin America, there is a strong tendency to associate the word community with the idea of sharing a certain geographical space. Moreover, though phrases such as “educational community” and “virtual community” have become popular, according to our interpretation there is an underlying idea of sharing some kind of territory: in the former case, the school and, in the latter, the virtual network.

We should, then, attempt at defining the concept Latin America—though it would be far beyond our expectations for this chapter to carry out such a difficult task. We will, however, attempt to recognize the elements present in the communities of the region in question and their characteristics, such as the importance of interpersonal relations—these daily face-to-face encounters which often turn into friendships, though not always—and spontaneous solidarity which arises when a neighbor is in need, that spontaneous need to become involved in other people's problems, according to White and Ramirez (2016, p. 134), the need to have something to share with the community.

Those principles which make a community of citizens legitimate should be rooted in people's daily cohabitation (Lechner 2003, p. 45). Thus, contemporary concepts of community are identified either as a mode of existence, a social bond, a mobilizing project, or a political space (Carrillo 2002, pp. 51–52).

The political character of social coexistence is related to the subjective experience of community and to our capacity to organize the manner in which we wish to coexist (Lechner 2003, p. 46); it must be added, however, that the notion of

community in Latin America is an outstanding feature of its political culture—which does not necessarily mean that it has always given way to democracy (Carrillo 2002, p. 56). Community implies the existence of social cohabitation, which is constructed by society itself as a foundation of democracy and, in this sense, failing to recognize ourselves as co-citizens sets limitations to the establishment of a firmly rooted democracy (Lechner 2003, p. 44).

The community is a totality that is meaningful to the people that form part of it. In this sense, community is more than a geographic concentration; it is a concept that implies the inclusion of diversities and their being allowed to share within it. It is related to social support, intersubjectivity, participation, consensus, common beliefs, joint effort aiming at a major objective, and intense and extensive relationships. It thus becomes necessary to “vindicate the community as an analytical category capable of describing, understanding, and channeling social bonds, life schemes, referent identities, and social alternatives” (Carrillo 2002, p. 43).

1.2 Community Well-Being and Community Quality of Life

In the past decades, different authors have reflected upon the definition of the concept of community well-being.

For Wiseman and Brasher (2008, p. 358) the community well-being is the combination of social, economic, environmental, cultural, and political conditions identified to flourish and fulfill their potential. For La Placa et al. (2013) the concept generally refers to the social, cultural, and psychological needs of individuals, their families, and communities. These authors (2013, p. 119) noticed that there is no universal definition of community well-being but it extends beyond solely subjective well-being, recognizing the influence of health, poverty, transportation and economic activity, and of environmental and ecological considerations. The importance of these definitions is that they acknowledge the multidimensional view of the concept and the relevant role of sociocultural contexts.

For White (2009, p. 14) well-being must be sought collectively and be identified at a community level rather than at an individual one; it is “produced through social and cultural (including political, economic and environmental) practice” (White 2016, p. 2) The author states that there are three possible interpretations of community well-being; namely, as the sum average of the levels of well-being of its members; as something inherent to the community, collectively considered; or as a social process in which there is a relationship between the collective and the individual aspects (White 2009, p. 15).

If we consider that well-being is the result of a social and cultural practice we agree with Atkinson et al. (2012) quoted in White (2016, p. 29) in the sense that relational well-being is socially and culturally constructed, rooted in a particular time and place. In this sense:

Well-being should not be regarded as a “thing” that people may “have”; constructions of well-being are intrinsically connected to the places in which they are produced, people’s personal accounts, and the methods of data generation and analysis. (White 2016, p. 38)

At this point it is worth considering the notion of well-being, not only from a personal perspective but also in social terms of collective groups, since the opportunities of a group are as important as those of each individual person (Royuela et al. 2003, p. 52). An initial conclusion may, thus, pose the central idea that any definition of well-being needs to be contextualized within communities of population and interest, as well as of place (Wiseman and Brasher 2008, p. 357) and that well-being analysis ought to be contextual (White 2009, p. 18). Taking this into consideration, it is not possible to assume the universality of well-being.

Since the edition of the pioneering book on quality of life by Campbell, Converse and Rodgers (1976) in which the authors considered quality of life as an equivalent of well-being, further studies on the person have demonstrated various theoretical positions, as in the case of Ryff (1989) who considered well-being as an aspect of quality of life, Vitterso et al. (2002, p. 82) who stated that “everywhere in the world the quality of people’s lives depends on their ability to have a positive outlook on their lives”.

Now, let us observe the evolution of the conception of quality of life—considering that advanced studies on this process show a coincidence among different authors regarding the fact that the latter comprises both an objective and a subjective dimension of people’s lives, rendering it equally important to be acquainted with what people “have” as with what people “feel and perceive.” Quality of life is a multidimensional concept “that comprises a number of domains which people evaluate differently according to the importance they have in their lives” (Bramston 2002, p. 47).

Satisfaction with life in a community implies satisfaction with a number of situations; namely, security in streets and public places, social service, interaction among neighbors, infrastructure and equipment, public transport, capacity to work as well as enjoy leisure time in public spaces together with other members of the community, exchange views and discuss mutual worries and problems (Tonon 2012). Likewise, according to Bramston et al. (2002), quality of life in the community requires two major elements: community cohesion and people’s sense of belonging in the community.

In relation with community quality of life, we agree with the study developed by Sirgy et al. (2008, p. 102) which revealed that satisfaction with many community services tends to have a direct impact on community well-being through satisfaction with various life domains. The authors concluded that community quality of life is a specificity of quality of life in general and is also a predictor of general well-being.

In a research study developed between 2013 and 2014, we constructed an instrument for the measurement of quality of life and social inequalities among young people¹ that included a dimension devoted to socio-community relationships

¹See Tonon and Rodriguez de la Vega 2016, pp. 3–17.

which makes reference to community well-being, regarded from the point of view of the characteristics directly observed in our communities. For this purpose we constructed six indicators:

Indicators

Satisfaction with life in the community

Satisfaction with neighbors

Participation in community organizations

Mutual help among neighbors in dealing with problems

The organization of the neighbors for the solving of community problems

Existence of public spaces for encounters among the members of the community

Satisfaction with life in the community consists of self-reports on the way people individually consider their lives in the communities they live in.

Satisfaction with neighbors implies that having friends or acquaintances among the members of the community is a source of social support (Laireter and Bauman 1992).

Participation in community organizations indicates the persons' levels of interest and commitment regarding community issues.

Mutual help among neighbors in the face of problems is different from the organization of the neighbors for the solving of community problems; in the former case, mutual aid is centered in face to face relationships, while the latter option is focused on community organizations aimed at solving shared problems.

Existence of public spaces for encounters among the members of the community makes allusion to the third places defined by Oldenburg (1989), i.e., the spaces which allow communication among people and constitute a public scenario of social interaction which provides persons with a context of sociability, spontaneity, community bonding, and emotional expression (Oldenburg and Brissett 1982, p. 280 quoted by Jeffres et al. 2009 p. 335).

To conclude, and in coincidence with Torres Carrillo (2002, pp. 44–47), we consider that the sense of community is a type of social relationship based on strong subjective bonds such as feelings, territorial proximity, beliefs and shared traditions, neighborhood, and friendship, all of which generate feelings of collective belonging.

1.3 Conversations and Interpersonal Relationships

In general one of the elements that come across as significant in Latin American communities is conversation between persons, which fulfills an outstanding role in interpersonal relationships.

However, as several authors point out, the world today is more concerned with images than with words (Bauman 2015, p. 116) and, the leading role of imagery, nowadays, is progressively restraining the former preeminence of the spoken word, thus altering the types of social conversations as well as individual arguments and those derived from citizens' participation in decision-making (Lechner 2003, p. 41).

It thus becomes instrumental to define conversation as playing the role of a kind of jargon, as well as a "social space which creates habits of public association through the coalescence of informative sequences" (Joseph 2002, p. 41). In other words, and coinciding with the aforementioned author, we believe conversation to be a typical social situation of interaction between persons (Joseph 2002, p. 71).

In everyday conversations, persons use the so-called common language, learnt during childhood, generally referred to as the mother tongue. This type of language does not generate concern about defining the words we use—which may give way to misunderstandings, since we take for granted that the meaning of the words we use are shared by our listeners. Sartori (2006, p. 20) defines everyday conversation as "an argument in which phrases are wielded, and which each part defends." It is the simplest and most vivid form of a language, though it is characterized by a reduced vocabulary in which the words remain undefined and the phrase links may be disorderly and arbitrary, and in which the conclusions to the arguments are prior to the attention focused on a demonstrative procedure (Sartori 2006, p. 20).

According to Schutz (1974, p. 41) the world we live in is intersubjective because the lives we lead in it are related to others. Interpersonal bonding presupposes shared understandings common significances, not a mere private communication between parties—moreover the social bond is inserted in a certain language and makes use of certain codes which are produced and reproduced in a public context (Lechner 2002, p. 57). Social bonds represent a heritage of knowledge and habits, of practical experiences and mental dispositions accumulated, reproduced, and transformed by a society for generations (Lechner 2002, p. 49); its development requires bonds of trust and reciprocity between citizens, as well as conversations related to common interests.

Yet, in each social space there is a subjective process called social subjectivation which is not merely constructed on the basis of the sum total of individual subjectivities, and which is defined by González Rey (2006) as:

The subjective process charged with subjective senses and symbolic processes which unfold in a set of social figures that inhabit those spaces: public speeches, representations, codes, norms, morality, which are instituted in social spaces and define their subjective charge (González Rey in Díaz Gómez 2006 p. 244).

And when referring to social subject we mean

a collective nucleus that shares a collective experience, and displays agglutinative practices (whether organized or not), around a project, thus becoming a force strong enough to exert an influence on personal decisions as well as on the society it belongs to (Carrillo 2006, p. 97).

Furthermore, in terms of communication and conversation, a public space also constitutes a space for communicative solidarity and a scenario where interactional

agreement and coproduced discursive conformation are not only possible but also necessary (Delgado and Malet 2007, p. 3).

In other words, the community allows individuals to be visualized as persons, with their individual subjectivities; moreover, “the act of transcending the inter-subjective frame of reference derives in access to the political scenario where viable future options are defined and confronted” (Martinez Pineda 2006, p. 97).

1.4 Public Space, Collective Scenario and the Building of Common Ground

Public space has been traditionally associated with the role of the State, though the present reality of our region calls for the citizens’ participation in community issues as well as in decision-making and in putting these decisions into practice—thus, public space has become a scenario of the citizens’ communal participation. Quoting Borja and Muxi (2000, p. 7) “public space is the space of representation in which society becomes visible”.

The public sphere is also characterized by differentiating itself from the domestic sphere and, in this sense it comes across as a scenario where citizens can exercise their rights and debate common issues. Public spaces have undertaken the strategic task of being the place in which nominally democratic systems confirm their egalitarian nature; it is the place which allows the citizens to exercise their freedom of speech and reunion to exert control over political powers, as well as a space in which those powers may be questioned regarding issues of general concern (Delgado and Malet 2007, p. 6).

Collective space is also reconfigured as a political concept, constituting a sphere of peaceful and harmonious coexistence of the heterogeneous community, thus confirming the fact that their members can be together (Delgado and Malet 2007, p. 2). In this context, politics may be regarded as the activity which unites people, in the sense that it makes their own world experiences meaningful, allowing them a space of construction of common senses and collective actions (Rabello de Castro 2007, p. 22).

The collective scenario is an active space for deliberation and construction. The collective space is one in which people mingle, and thus requires dealing with the differences between persons and the plural nature of human actions (Rabello de Castro 2007, p. 20). For Martinez Pineda (2006) it is.

an active space for imagination, deliberation, and construction; a place in which persons may express themselves without being afraid of making mistakes, a place of simultaneous consensus and disagreement, where they may create, criticize, deconstruct, reconstruct, and risk expressing their points of view (Martinez Pineda 2006, p. 138).

At this point, we consider it necessary to mark the difference between collective space and public space and, to that end, we quote Borja (2004, p. 114) when he states that “a broader conception of collective space is a more accurate way to

define the landscape, open or closed spaces in which collective life develops, independent from the patterns of its construction and management”. Following this idea, the aforementioned author comments about a dialogue on collective spaces, organized into five round tables and directed by Jean Louis Cohen, in which they discussed collective space analyzing it from different dimensions; namely, as a space of interaction of public and corporative strategies; as a scenario of urban mobility; as a space related to security; as a context of identity; and as a context of art within art itself (Borja 2004, p. 115).

Collective space in communities has become essential to citizens’ rights, as it should guarantee, in terms of equality, the appropriation of neighbourhood space by different social and cultural collectives, genders and age groups; it is the space of representation in which a society becomes visible and at the same time constitutes a physical, symbolic and political space. The building of common ground has become the concern of many—or we daresay, of all citizens.

1.5 Conclusion: The Way Forward

The title of this text refers to the possibility of rethinking community quality of life in Latin American countries and, on this point we coincide with Kohan (2003) who defines thought as an encounter, and also with Bauman (2015, p. 134) who has referred to thought in principle—coinciding with Arendt—by defining it as the loneliest of all activities, yet later acknowledging it as a dialogic instance.

Our decision to study and define quality of life in the communities of this region aims, among other things, at recovering and combining the specificities/peculiarities of the various scientific disciplines, thus proposing interdisciplinary work; quoting Dogan and Pahre (1993) by crossing the boundaries of each discipline, and generating exchange of methods, concepts, and theory.

Furthermore, our work is centered round the major role of the individuals in terms of person (person being researched and researcher person) in their space–time contexts. This implies taking an interest in the variety of relationships generated and developed—precisely between persons and the place and time in which their lives unfold, for it is through those relationships that they may recover their personal and life experiences, and their opinions.

In the pages above, we have revised and attempted to understand the multiple elements that present definitions of community are composed of—making special reference to Latin American communities—highlighting the concepts of: interpersonal relations, conversation, and the construction of collective spaces.

We have, further, pointed out the differences between collective space and public space, to conclude for the need of the construction of a common ground, a place in which the community members may interact and cohabit—a physical or even virtual space.

To sum up:

- The first requirement to work with communities is to understand its members' statements regarding their own communities, the constructions generated by each social group;
- any definition of well-being needs to be contextualized within communities of population and interest, well-being analysis ought to be contextual and, in this sense, it is not possible to consider the universality of well-being;
- “constructions of well-being are intrinsically connected to the context in which they are articulated and the research methods used to capture them” (Lorea-Gonzalez 2016, p. 243);
- the concept of community well-being varies with each culture;
- community well-being is also a predictor of general well-being (Sirgy et al. 2008);
- quality of life is a multidimensional concept that comprises objective and subjective components, and quality of life in community is a specific dimension specificity of quality of life in general;

The different definitions of community which emerge from the Latin American scenario are consistent with the idea that a community is a group of people who cohabit and share various elements; namely, a territory, a geographical space and/or place, lifestyles, everyday situations, customs, identity, language, culture, activities, norms, history, social bonds; people who construct a network of relationships, disagree and accept each other's peculiarities, people who are committed and help each other when in need, who seek/share a common aim/the greater good.

In view of the abovementioned, we may conclude that the study of community quality of life constitutes a theoretical possibility to recognize people's potentialities besides including a sociopolitical analysis of the context, which establishes a social and political reality based on respect of human rights, which allows for integrated work (Tonon 2012).

Acknowledgements The research project for the measurement of quality of life and social inequalities among young people was developed by UNI-COM, Faculty of Social Sciences of Universidad Nacional de Lomas de Zamora, Argentina, with the support of LOMASCyT Program.

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Chapter 2

Exploring the Concept and Practices of *Felicitas Publica* at Lisbon University: A Community-Based Relational Approach to Well-being

Helena Àgueda Marujo and Luis Miguel Neto

Abstract This chapter explores a collaborative action-research project, whose aim was to generate new knowledge about well-being and happiness in higher education, which might result in improved outcomes for the school communities. The discussion draws upon data from a study conducted across 10 Schools of the biggest Portuguese University—Universidade de Lisboa. The views and perspectives of 109 participants (students, teachers, chancellors and staff) have been sought through Focus-Group interviews, using the World Café methodology to engage and connect participants in conversation, and Appreciative Inquiry to construct meaningful and transformative questions. The study had multiple aims: to generate a genuine, collaborative and positive dialogic environment; to promote a sense of community through relational goods; to co-create a novel consciousness on the past and future of the collective and relational happiness processes inside these communities; to investigate the topic, in contributing with action-research methods; and to provide a framework for the science and application of well-being at the university level. Conversations addressed how each school and domain of science enrolled (Law, Humanities, Medicine, Social and Political Sciences, Physical Exercise and Human Movement, Dental Medicine, Agronomy, Architecture, Design and Arts, and Biology), defined Public Happiness, how the school members consider that they are promoting Public Happiness in everyday life, and how it can be developed and put into practice in the near future inside and outside every school community. Five major themes emerged in the images and written accounts across all school cohorts, associated with well-being, specifically concerning (1) quality of relationships; (2) school identity; (3) presence of virtuousness of the individuals and the community; (4) the vocation to learn and teach; and (5) contributions to the common good. Proposals for the enhancement of well-being in higher education

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© Springer International Publishing AG 2017
G. Tonon (ed.), *Quality of Life in Communities of Latin Countries*,
Community Quality-of-Life and Well-Being,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-53183-0_2

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through a community-based approach are discussed, in particular since such findings highlight the potential of more relational, democratic, reciprocate, virtuous and participatory approaches, beyond and besides academic learning.

Keywords *Felicitas Publica* · Community well-being · Appreciative inquiry · Relational goods · World Café · Well-being University · Action-research

2.1 Why Is There a Need to Address Happiness and Quality of Life from a Collective, Relational and Agentic Perspective?

The topics of happiness, well-being and quality of life have received amplified attention in the past decades and are emerging as a pulsating field of study across disciplines. Together with the drive coming from the burgeoning domain of positive psychology (for example, Biswas-Diener 2011; Huppert 2013; Rojas and Veenhoven 2013), the discipline of economics has also renewed its interest on these issues, even if only from peripheral groups of European scholars from Latin countries.

Both the concept of quality of life and that of happiness/well-being have evolved in recent years, and there is a current consensus on their multidimensional character (for example, Haworth and Hart 2007; Huppert 2013). In particular, in what concerns quality of life, since the time of its basically materialist origin, in which precedence was given to objective aspects of life, this concept moved to a perspective in which subjective aspects are considered essential. Even this group of academics from the economic sector consider that standard economic indicators and objective measures need to be reconciled with subjective components to track over time well-being and quality of life of communities and societies at large, in order to improve our lives and that of the planet (Bruni 2016).

Much of what emerged from the current and expanding well-being and happiness studies, either from psychology, sociology, philosophy, political sciences or economics, have helped subsidizing to the subjective components of quality of life.

In this paper, we contemplate quality of life as the general well-being of individuals and societies, therefore meaning that it points to different components/conditions for happiness. Well-being—or wellness—is a dynamic and active state of flourishing. It can be described as “both a positive and desirable state of affairs with life as a whole and with specific domains of life, such as health, economic situation, and relationships” (Prilleltensky 2013, p. 148). This author proposes six key domains, which include Interpersonal, Community, Occupational, Psychological, Physical, and Economical well-being. They all can and must be assessed with conjoint subjective and objective indicators. Alongside, it should be stressed that well-being actually involves a subtle, dialectical interplay between positive and negative phenomena (for example, Lomas 2016; Won and Tomer 2011).

Central to this paper is the relationships/community domain, and its dialectics and ambivalences. To be sure, the referred economists that are exploring connections among constructs associated with objective and subjective indicators of wellness, add that in the realm of immaterial resources—the ones that cannot get consumed like material goods, namely relational goods and the fulfilment of the need to belong—are central for well-being (Bruni and Stanca 2008; Gui and Stanca 2010).

The quality and quantity of non-instrumental social relations consequently appear as key drivers of welfare. This is particularly relevant since, until lately, the topic of interpersonal relations was, often neglected and ignored while studying well-being, even if recognized as important by most scholars (Pelloni 2016).

Albeit the terminological, conceptual and methodological complexities and limitations that still permeate the fields of quality of life, well-being and happiness, and that are not the focus of this chapter, there is an impressive accumulation of empirical evidence that shows that an intra-individual and psychologically hedonic perspective on well-being, that does not take into consideration social institutions, interpersonal relations, and eudaemonic elements, is considered not sufficient to understand and explain such multifaceted and complicated processes (Pelloni 2016; Prilleltensky and Prilleltensky 2006; Sen 2016).

In our current societies, our individual behaviour is frequently tackled as optimal, but our communal behaviour is considered suboptimal which, among other reasons, can contribute for current relational scarcity (Pelloni 2016). This is especially relevant when empirical studies convey an unambiguous conclusion: in large measure, genuine relationality (or relational goods) is the most influential component in people's happiness (Bruni 2013, 2016).

In fact, the prominent role of relationships and social connectedness as sources of meaning in life—and as a substantial source of well-being—have been proved in a variety of recent studies (for example, Delle Fave 2016; Helliwell et al. 2014). The fray of the social fabric is coming into place to explain some of the paradoxes inside the field, namely the Easterlin Paradox (Easterlin 1974).

One of those explanations considers that, in parallel with the most common models (Hedonic, Satisfaction and Positional Treadmill) used to elucidate why per capita income has risen sharply in most countries in recent decades, yet average happiness has stayed constant or has grown less than traditional economics claims, is that the accumulation of material goods lowers the consumption of relational goods (Stanca 2016). Nonetheless, and as a side note, just highlight that all those explanatory models include, somehow, a relational component (Bruni 2016).

The Latin American Paradox—the fact that people in Latin American countries report higher well-being and life-satisfaction levels than expected, taking into consideration objective indicators such as income, violence or corruption—also recently brought forward a relational and spiritual explanation (Rojas et al. 2016).

Other authors are including the social and relational dimension within the analysis of happiness, and with it, the intrinsic motivational needs. For instance, studies at city level have indicated that time spent with friends, active participation

in associations/volunteering and the frequency of going out for leisure activities, which are three basic indicators of relational amenities, is important enough so that individuals are willing to pay a positive and significant monetary price to live with better access to those amenities (Pelloni 2016).

This is particularly noticeable regarding the possibility of spending time with friends, and in terms of size, the monetary price of social relations is comparable to that of other relevant environmental and socioeconomic amenities (Stanca 2016). It is therefore possible nowadays to create a profile of a city with high or low Quality of Relational Life and to add to the studies of well-being the confirmation that relational variables account for substantial variations in quality of life. Both neo-positivism and behaviourism, that mostly disregarded social considerations and a systemic, collective outlook, combined with the reductionism of a utilitarian and pleasurable view on happiness, mostly excluded these variables and limited our vision (Bruni 2016).

Agentic perspectives on happiness (Bandura 2008) consider that we are not passive recipients of others actions toward us; we are dynamic and operating agents in the world, and the quality of our experiences activities affect how we experience others. It is not simply that the way we participate affect our experience: the quality of experience depends on the relationships in which we are participating, on what we are seeking, and what role we are playing (Gergen 2009).

Therefore, to be an agent is to influence intentionally one's functioning and the course of environmental events, and not only to depend on externalities (namely, in what "happens" to make us happy). This implies that people are essentially contributors to their life circumstances, and not just products of them (Bandura 2008).

But there might be a risk underneath this agentic perspective, unless it is integrated in a relational and social consciousness. Understanding persons and nature as separated realities—as circumscribed units or independent selves, attending manly to individual minds, even if considered motivated by beliefs of self-efficacy—can be disastrous in its consequences and impairments (Gergen 2009). Alienation, selfishness, separation, isolation, animosity, a sense of individual responsibility for social problems like poverty or injustice, that are in fact webbed in the ways we live together, bringing upfront individualistic instead of structural explanations, are such examples. If bonded relations are vital to our well-being, the process of bonding needs attention.

Accordingly, one focal concern are practices that invite productive co-creation of meaning—namely facilitating conversations that generate common understanding, and that break the barriers of separation and individual differences through an investment in inclusive participation (Marujo and Neto 2014). The spirit of community is co-created within dialogue, and we believe this is a path to serve local communities, championing community development and benefit society. Addressing and promoting a relational being point of view, and inviting people for common action and reflection, eventually creates a different social order and begins to tackle systemic inequality through the strengthening of human and social capital (Gergen 2009; Jackson 2009). Imagining together can free us to envision another and better conjoint future and stimulate more active citizenship.

Bringing forward a relational and communitarian perspective on the research and optimization of quality of life and happiness is, therefore, a tendency with consequences for the future of the field.

2.2 Why *Felicitas Publica*?

If we want to question the *homo oeconomicus* hypothesis, and dispute a purely utilitarian perspective on happiness, the model from the school of Civil Economy is a fundamental conceptual route to take. Based in an epistemic architecture and tradition of thought linked to the “Civic Humanism”, it can be traced as early as the fifteenth century, but continued up to the Italian Enlightenment (Bruni and Zamagni 2007). The Latin word *Civil* can be overlapped with the Greek word *Politics*, also stated as *Social*. It is inside this school of thought that the ancient concept of *Felicitas Publica* (FP) gets its complete meaning.

Differentiated from the British and the French views at the end of the eighteenth century, the conception behind it considers the market as based in principles of civic virtues and reciprocity, where the common good and the communitarian perspective (civil society organizations) are central, and the economic and the social are intertwined and not opponents (Bruni and Zamagni 2007).

The underneath proposal is to move from a rationality of universal selfishness of the economic agents toward a particular type of relationality and self-actualization of the persons. There are three principles portrayed in this new view: the principle of exchange of equivalents; the principle of redistribution; and the principle of reciprocity.

Bringing forward the complexity of the topic on how to transform economic goods into well-being, this movement argues that the standard economic theories do not address this problem (Bruni and Zamagni 2016). It retrieves from the past a Roman and classic Italian tradition, where relatedness is central to the vitality of both individuals and society. It also gives voice to the doubts that have arisen about the moral value of economic growth, alongside with the ethical base of progress (for example, Bruni, 2016; Jackson 2009).

Felicitas Publica has an important history in the Roman Empire, from as early as mid-second Century BC. *Felicitas*, from the Latin adjective *felix* and the prefix *fe*, has diverse meanings, in particular “*fecundus, femina, fetus, fruitful, blessed, fertile, generative, virtuous, full of nourishments*”, and evokes the concept of fecundity (e.g. Bruni and Zamagni 2016; Champeaux 1987; Marujo and Neto 2013, 2014; Neto and Marujo 2013). Differentiated from *Fortuna* (unpredictable in its effects and even potentially negative), FP was seen as a positive quality influencing life, namely throughout a fruitful cultivation of virtues. Bringing fruits—as opposed to being sterile—is substantially different from the Anglo-Saxon perspective on happiness, meaning the things that happen to us, in the sense of “good fortune”.

On the other hand, *Publica*, the feminine of *publicus*, is a word contracted from *populicus/populus*, and points to meanings of “belonging to the people;

community; state”. It directs to the common good, to the indivisible tie of the interest of the individual and the interest of others.

In the European Middle Ages, the Roman tradition of FP remained buzzing. The expression was common in Roman coins, and a woman with a cornucopia full of fruits is the most common symbol of FP. Interesting enough, from its previous nomination as *Olissipo*, during the subjugation of the Roman Empire, Lisbon was named *Felicitas Julia* (*Municipium Cives Romanorum Felicitas Julia Olissipo*) while integrated within the Roman province of Lusitania.

The concept, and associated model, experienced a profound revitalization during the Italian civil humanism of the fifteenth century (Bruni and Zamagni 2016). Its influence continued in Europe, and not only in Italy. It is still possible to found buildings in France and Germany with that inscription in their porticos or frontages, as much as paintings and sculptures originated in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

One of the key ideas of the Enlightenment was precisely that of *félicité publique*, claiming that economic growth was no more than a means to happiness, not its end. In England, Adam Smith also interprets happiness as the goal of human life, recognizing indirectly, in his moral theory, the importance of sociability through its *fellow-feeling* motto (Bruni and Zamagni 2016). The fact that he did not introduce these elements in his theory of wealth impacted all our history of economics, and it was the engine of all social and economic development the way we know it: the focus on wealth and the consideration that more wealth means more happiness. Bentham contribution also oriented the perspectives on happiness toward a hedonic view, namely the maximizing of pleasure (preferences) and the avoidance of pain (Bruni 2016).

The “horizontal” view of happiness as FP portrayed by one of the most prominent authors addressing the topic in the eighteenth century, Antonio Genovese, conveyed a revival of Aristotle’s conception, linking relationships with a citizen’s well-being and tackling the concept of happiness with the person as a social being. The model addresses happiness and economics as a path towards generation and cultivation of relational virtues—as Aristotle had done centuries before. His meaning for the currently resuscitated word *eudaimonia*, encompassed the relevance of the role of civil virtues and sociability for happiness. The North American philosopher Marta Nussbaum (2005) depicts “friendship, love and political commitment” as the three basic relational goods in Aristotle’s *Ethics*. This also implies that for Aristotle, the interpersonal relations lead to happiness only if they are genuine expressions of the practice of virtues. It is contemplated that happiness cannot be reached instrumentally, since it is the indirect result of virtuous actions, carried out for their intrinsic value.

Making others happy, as a route to be happy, was one of the concepts common to both Aristotle and Genovese, in an explicit conception of happiness quite distant from the one depicting self-interest perspectives (Bruni and Zamagni 2007). Happiness is thus social by nature, and synonymous of “social well” (*ben-vivere sociale*, Bruni and Zamagni, *op. cit.*). One of the basic concepts that is foundational for FP is, therefore, that of Relational Goods.

2.3 How Can Relational Goods Be Defined?

The recent economic literature on social interaction has been characterized as including two main groups of scholars—the ones who study social capital and the ones investigating relational goods.

The bigger group addresses social capital, which has been defined as “features of social organization, such as trust, norms, and networks, that can improve the efficacy of society facilitating coordinated actions” (Putnam 1993, p. 167). The smaller and more recent group investigates social relationships as relational goods. Both groups of scholars are interested in investigating and measuring the economic value of social connections, a truly new and challenging venue, including the monetary price of social relations.

The goods that can only be pursued as a function of a relationship with others are in themselves “relational”. These goods are, in a small scale, the outcomes of family and friend relationships, but can be experienced in so many other contexts, such as work and community. In the economic and political fields, Gui (1987) used the term relational goods for the first time while researching a communitarian economy, and two years later Ulhaner used it as a rationale for explaining the process of voting in the political context (cit. in Pelloni 2016). They are described as non-instrumental, personalized and intangible goods, and are simultaneously produced and consumed in an encounter with others, and characterized by reciprocity. They also do not have a price and cannot be sold on the market (Gui 2005; Pelloni 2016).

As Gui and Sugden (2005) put it, relational goods include the so-called affective components of social relations, perceived by people as having value through two main processes: genuinity and sincerity. They are characterized as experiences of companionship, fellow feelings, intimacy, sympathy, caring, compassion, empathy, and understanding. People tend to consider them as valuable contributors to their welfare and well-being (Pelloni 2016). Relational Goods are a central concept of the FP model.

2.4 What Is a Community?

Community is a challenging concept. Its density, diversity, ambivalent and context-driven character make a common and unique definition difficult, despite rigorous and concise theories. The honouring of diverse historical and scientific traditions has produced assorted and not easily articulate standpoints.

In fact, community can be addressed in a broad and comprehensive sense, embracing all scopes of human culture and society. Community can be discussed as an exclusive entity, with well-defined characteristics. One can speak of community when we want to cease social problems like injustice (Prilleltensky 2012), and when we want to enhance social and relational well-being (Khumalo 2014). It can also be discussed in less bounded ways, exalting its diversity, and mentioning

instead to “border-crossings” (McCarthy and Vickers 2013), *intersectionality* (Schmitz 2010), or “relational being”, envisioning the transcendence of units through relationships (Gergen 2009). One can attend to community as a positive human aim, as much as a place of ambivalence (Bruni 2012a; Tonon 2013).

In order to understand what is a community is, therefore, important to focus on the values, the functioning, the processes and the dimensions of interaction, negotiation, coordination and communication that surround and inform all dimensions of common life, while people relate to one another and to the world.

Community can consequently be referred as a value (e.g., to bring about cohesion, social justice, empowerment) or as a set of variables and descriptive categories (e.g., location, interest, identity, communion, risk, resources, organizations, diasporas). The meaning depends on aspects such as type, size, focus, ethnic and social composition, cultural history and the force of sense, projection or ethos. From the diverse classifications that emerged, the one presented in 1977 by Warren is still a far-reaching one, with six different operational definitions: (a) the community as space; (b) the community as people; (c) the community as shared values and institutions; (d) the community as interaction; (e) the community as a distribution of power; and (f) the community as a social system. Together, these definitions portray differing aspects of communities, but also a framework for understanding and comparing them.

Amidst all this range, there has been a common nostalgic feature in interpreting community: it is associated with a quality of completeness, and thus remains related with the aspiration of “reviving once more the closer, warmer, more harmonious type of bonds between people vaguely attributed to past ages” (Elias 1974).

2.4.1 Has Community an Ambivalent Nature?

Some authors claim that the early communities operated in basically hierarchical and unjust ways, and were not an aggregation of fraternal, liberated and equal human beings (Bruni 2012a; Esposito 2003). A glorified thought of community has been a powerful organizing ideal, but its inherent contradiction is supported in the etymological roots of the word. Community comes from the Latin *communitas*; in turn, *communitas* is a composed word: *cum-munus*, an expression that designates an ambivalent dimension, namely *cum* (together, joint) and *munus* (gift **and** obligation). This conceptualization of community is thus tied to a meaning of debt and duty. With the advent of modernity, that type of community draws back, and what came into view was an affirmation of the individual—now without community, and immune to the other, avoiding the vulnerability and the “wounds” attached to every relationship (Bruni 2012b). Accordingly, in 1972, in their conflict model, Bates and Bacon defined community as a complex social system with unique structural properties that function in terms of reciprocal (structurally supportive) or conjunctive (potentially conflictive) relationships. This dialectic ambivalence is fundamental for a deep understanding and promotion of community and social capital.

2.5 Why Consider Well-being and Quality of Life Approaches in Higher Education Communities?

Presently, education is starting to be addressed as a relevant instrument towards the promotion of well-being, rather than just a process focused on literacy and academic achievement. Research around specific and tangible ways to optimize happiness in the school community, in particular in Higher Education communities, is therefore relevant and up to date. Given the presence of relationships between some components of well-being and academic learning itself (for example, Dweck 2006), the incorporation of well-being/happiness as a target in education should be facilitated. The knowledge that will emerge can enrich theory on well-being and guide specific actions in University contexts.

Effective approaches to educational change, namely the projects that go beyond the goal of academic achievement and have as *foci* the ability of students, teachers and staff to live a full, virtuous and meaningful life, has been the topic of recent projects and research (Oades et al. 2011; Parks 2011). Some incorporate the design of programs based in positive psychology—advancing the so-called Positive Education that integrates education for happiness alongside with engaging with the academic traditional curricula. Others offer courses in positive psychology supported by the scientific literature, namely through Master of Applied Positive Psychology programs. Still others embrace the topic in a more comprehensive way, at the institutional level, permeating basic knowledge on happiness in all their organizational processes—from human resources management and leadership, to pedagogy, student’s competency assessment and even student’s dormitories (Bloom et al. 2013; Oades et al. 2011).

Universities are a special case of “enabling institutions” (Peterson 2006) that can and should create conditions to the conduct of a life at its best. Alongside, they have their own specific limitations and convolutions.

The complexities related with current student engagement, retention and learning; school success, graduation rates and the capacity to secure a good job; competition and cooperation matters in teachers and students; mental health issues; financial problems; employee professional and faculty well-being, quality of life and development, to name just a few, are particular challenges.

Some elite universities around the world are currently being criticized for being mainly a place where “Excellent Sheep” are trained for the work market, incapable of critical thinking, unable to be resilient when faced with life and work struggles, or inept for creating a meaningful life (Deresiewicz 2014; Saarinen and Ursin 2012).

For those reasons, approaches to successful educational change have increased in the past decades, and some Universities are becoming places defined by their capacity to intentionally cultivate, in its community members, the skills and the knowledge to prosper together. They have been moving into the direction of position all school stakeholders in debates and dialogues concerning improvement and reform, in matters of concern to everyone, in particular well-being and the fabric of mutual interrelatedness and shared human endowment (Saarinen and Ursin 2012).

To exemplify, there are recent initiatives, like the Healthy Universities Project (based on the World Health Organisation's settings-based approach) that recognize that health and well-being are important for university contexts (Pinkney 2016), and the Well-being in Higher Education Network (WiHE 2016), that connects scholars around the world whose interest is to research and endorse the practice of happiness in their universities. If, as presented, social factors have a profound influence on mental health, universities need to reform and adopt settings-based tactics to recognize the links between well-being and wider campus issues—those issues traditionally considered to be academic and the ones that are not (Pinkney 2016).

Included in the many ways of promoting FP in higher education there is an unprecedented interest of endorsing the cause of life-improving relational and meaningful processes through thinking and reasoning together. As Saarinen and Ursin (2012) and Gergen (2009) propose, if people are given the opportunity to reflect on their lives of free citizens through dialogue and mutual interrelatedness and interdependence, in an appreciative, accepting, broad-minded, emotionally exciting, encouraging, inspiring and respectful environment, a new consciousness and revitalization emerges. This is not always possible in the current Western academic culture, which supports the urgency to study and endorse universities for well-being.

2.6 *Felicitas Publica* at Lisbon University: Can a Community-Based and Relational Approach to Well-being and Quality of Life Be Fruitful in a Peripheral Country?

2.6.1 *What Are the Particularities of the Portuguese Context?*

In recent years, Portugal has faced several trials to the material well-being of its citizens. Life satisfaction is the second lowest in OECD (2015). Trust in other people, being as it is, an important component of social capital, lies also below the European OECD average level. Almost 80% of Portuguese students agree that most of their classmates are kind and helpful, which is one of the highest shares in the OECD, but at the same time, 14% of Portuguese children report that they have been bullied at least twice in the last 2 months, a higher result than the OECD average of 10.1% (op. cit). According to the same report, for Portuguese users of the Better Life Index, the three most important topics for a life with quality are health, life satisfaction and safety, while community and civic engagement are considered the less relevant.

In most contemporary societies there is an ongoing but widespread move from established forms of civic (and political) participation—such as associations' membership (civic, cultural, sports, recreational, voluntary) or church/religious groupings—towards more independent and random forms of participation (conscious consumer behaviour, raising funds or contributing financially for causes

considered relevant, signing petitions, participating in street demonstrations, or in virtual groups or forums...). This change has implications for interpersonal trust and reciprocity and has shown to bring a deterioration of bonding and bridging social capital, both internationally and in Portugal (Putnam 1993; Villaverde Cabral 2007, 2015).

Indeed, these tendencies on participation and voicing opinions in the public space have a special context in the Portuguese history. During the twentieth century Europe went through deep political transformations, and Portugal was no exception. Transformations have been clearly specific in the European Latin countries, in particular in the Iberian Peninsula. Both Portugal and Spain have gone through a democratic transition in the mid-seventies, after decades of dictatorship and fascism. In Portugal, the repressive regime was instituted in the late twenties, and followed an epoch of intense political, economic and social crisis. Both Iberian countries faced war during the dictatorship period. In Portugal, there was a colonial war in several countries in Africa, in its previous colonies, from 1961 to 1974, the year of the Carnation revolution when democracy was restored and this dark period of the history of the country ended (Azevedo and Menezes 2008).

The bans of freedom of association and speech, alongside with censorship, were therefore present for almost 50 years. Citizens' participation in the public sphere was severely reduced to cultural or recreational associations (Viegas 2004), leaving behind a legacy of ambivalence towards the public space and a fear for open contribution. Enhancing participatory citizenship seems, therefore, very important, even more than 40 years after the democratization of the political regime.

The referred data and the theoretical models previously mentioned, instigated the choice of methods.

2.6.2 What Were the Research Objectives, Methods and Strategies for Data Collection?

The two authors of this chapter guided a systemic participatory and collaborative action-research project on Public Happiness. The aim was to have the university of Lisbon communities congregating to have a voice and take action on the issue of public happiness. To do so, engaging the participants in conversation on common and affirmative issues, and creating conditions for a positive experience for the ones involved, was crucial. Upholding interpersonal trust in a fast and simple way was also a clear objective, so that people could feel free and enthusiastic about sharing their voices. This was particularly relevant due to the different backgrounds of the participants, and the fact that most of them had never met and belonged to very diverse groups inside each school.

Multiple aims were present: to generate a rich, genuine, collaborative and positive dialogic environment among the diverse participants; to promote a sense of community while enhancing relational goods; to co-create a novel consciousness on

the past and future of the collective and relational happiness processes inside these communities; to investigate the topic, in particular contributing with action-research methods; and to provide a framework for the science and application of well-being at the university level.

The choice of methods for data collection and analysis needed to be coherent with these aims, so the options fall into post-positivistic procedures. Theoretical, practical and ethical reasons supported those choices. The study incorporated an action-research method focus-group-type interviews—supported in both the Appreciative Inquiry framework and the World Café methodology.

Action research has an intricate history, because it is an approach to research that has emerged over time from an all-encompassing variety of fields—education, anthropology, Catholic Action Movements, liberation theology in Europe and Latin America, just to name a few. The movement was introduced by Kurt Lewin in the US in the 1940s, and underscored the notion of collaborative research with stakeholders with a liberating focus.

Action-research is defined as “a participatory, democratic process concerned with developing practical knowing in the pursuit of worthwhile human purposes, grounded in a participatory worldview which we believe is emerging at this historical moment. It seeks to bring together action and reflection, theory and practice, in participation with others, in the pursuit of practical solutions to issues of pressing concern to people, and more generally the flourishing of individual persons and their communities” (Reason and Bradbury 2001, p. 1). This method is the place where knowing and doing, studying and transforming, meet.

The selection for the use of Appreciative Inquiry (AI) was straightforward. Grounded in the theoretical framework of social constructionism, supporting systemic and affirmative points of view, and having language as the instrument of change, AI was the ideal method to guide the construction of the questions and offer an outline for the study. According to Cooperrider and Whitney (2001, p. 613) “Appreciative Inquiry is about the coevolutionary search for the best in people, their organizations, and the relevant world around them. In its broadest focus, it involves systematic discovery of what gives ‘life’ to a living system when it is most alive, most effective, and most constructively capable in economic, ecological, and human terms. AI involves, in a central way, the art and practice of asking questions that strengthen a system’s capacity to apprehend, anticipate, and heighten positive potential. It centrally involves the mobilization of inquiry through the crafting of the “unconditional positive question”.

The questions around what allows for a good collective life, what might and should be in an ideal situation, and how to empower, learn and improvise through appreciating, envisioning and dialoguing, were the backbone of the study. There were questions to focus attention, to connect ideas and find deeper insight and to create forward movement (Vogt et al. 2003).

Another fundamental component of the research structure was the World Café. The World Café is a twenty years’ old methodology that is a very simple, operative and plastic layout for hosting large group dialogue. It is mainly a structured conversational process intended to enable open and intimate discussion, to allow for

high level of diversity in conversations due to several small group rounds, and to address collective wisdom in the community that it gathers (Brown and Isaacs 2005). It provides a structure for connecting people in a secure and warm way, and offers tools that can convert analysis into profound change. In all cases, snacks were part of the method, with participants sharing food and drinks in a relaxed atmosphere of proximity.

At the heart of this method lies the human activity of engendering meaning through interdependence, with a concern with the social as opposed to the individual origins of meaning-making. The allegory of a real-life café is used since in a World Café session participants are encouraged to engage in a collaborative conversation within an environment typically modelled after such a café (i.e. a space equipped with small tables, tablecloth, snacks, light music, inspirational materials like paintings or pleasant books, flowers, etc.). As participants alternate between tables over the course of a session, conversations are co-constructed, and ideas “cross-pollinate”. A collective sense of purpose then emerges.

In our study participants were asked to define Public Happiness, how the school members consider that they are promoting it in everyday life, and how it can be developed and put into practice in the near future inside and outside every school community. Hence, prompt questions used during the focus-group interviews were operated through the World café methodology, and included “When did you experienced more public happiness in your school?”; “What is it about our community that supports public happiness for all of its citizens?”; “What can be done in the future to develop and support practices of public happiness?”; “How can the scientific area studied in your school help to subsidize to the happiness of all in this community, and also to the happiness of the university as a whole, and the city?”.

The way we participate in school systems will critically impact what and how we experience. This kind of welfare practice is created agenticly by and with the citizens, namely by offering relational possibilities. In this conversational research, participants connected with people from their faculty departments that, in most cases, have never met before, and they shared, explored and discussed practices that promoted communal well-being. This included meaning-making, cross-fertilization, understanding, synchrony and continuous co-learning. The small group method promoted occasions for conversations and initiatives to transform school communities.

The choice of methods—the Appreciative Inquiry to create the questions and the World Café to engage participants in conversations that matter for the common good—allowed collecting qualitative data that focused on relational, collaborative and positive practices.

2.6.3 Who Participated? Recruitment Methods

A program dedicated to fund special interventions at Universidade de Lisboa, and supported by the Rectorate, sponsored the study. An email was sent to all the chancellors of the 18 schools that integrate Lisbon University. Ten of those sent

back answers showing interest in participating, and were asked to designate a commission to prepare each meeting at every school. The authors of this chapter were co-organizers of those meetings and offered the theoretical and practical framework for the project and its methods. After two conjoint preparatory meetings, each institution publicized its own day event. This was done through emails in the intra-net, newsletters, posters posted around the school's grounds, and mouth-to-mouth in specific group meetings, such as student associations and administrative and scientific committee's board meetings. Focus-group sizes ranged from seven ($n = 7$) to thirty-eight ($n = 38$), with a mode of fifteen ($n = 10$). In total, 109 persons participated in the focus-group/world café (students, teachers, chancellors and staff). The discussion took approximately two and a half hours in each school and occurred in the University premises of each of the ten schools (schools of Law, Humanities, Medicine, Social and Political Sciences, Physical Exercise and Human Movement, Dental Medicine, Agronomy, Architecture, Design and Arts, and Biology). Age range of the participants was between 18 and 68 years old. Although being part of the same communities, the participants mostly did not know each other, mainly due to the fact that they come from different sub-groups inside each school, and frequently from different power positions. Therefore, the dialogues allowed for "improbable conversations", gathering around the tables people from the highest to the lowest position on the school social hierarchy.

2.6.4 Data Analysis: An Invitation to Change?

Since the focus-group interviews incorporated a mix of verbal, written and drawing activities, they generated extensive rich data. The findings presented in this chapter are solely from the 39 tablecloths that were collected and analyzed. All these data were transcribed, coded and analyzed for recurring themes to look for patterns, using the methodology of intuitive Hermeneutics (Anderson 1998) and Buckingham's (2009) approach to analysing visual data, and involved two stages. Both methods acknowledged the requirement of engaging researchers more reflexively rather than technically. The first stage comprised analysing transcripts of all the sentences, which were coded into themes, alongside those generated in the second phase. The second stage involved image-only analysis. This two staged analysis process allowed for a more comprehensive and accurate synthesis, and consequent understanding of the findings. All the information was collated into school cohorts.

2.6.5 Findings: What Part of the Dreamed Future Is Already Present?

Five major themes emerged in the images and written accounts across all cohorts, specifically concerning (1) quality of relationships; (2) school identity and shared

values; (3) presence of virtuousness in the individuals and the community; (4) the vocation to learn and to teach; and (5) contributions to the common good. Taking into consideration some of the nuances and differences in emphasis, depending on the school, the commonalities were, nevertheless, impressive.

In what concerns the first theme, relationships featured strongly across cohorts. Participants considered that social interactions that are positive, emotionally supportive, non-instrumental, and horizontal, help to build FP. Its affective component was underscored as vital for the experience of shared and reciprocated happiness. The participants discussed wanting practical ways to invest more in the relationships, namely through the creation and recreation of common rituals (celebrations, everyday greetings, collective meals...). We can therefore assume that “relational goods” are key elements to facilitate and contribute to collective happiness, confirming previous research on the topic.

While addressing the second theme, participants wrote, draw and talked about the fundamental appreciation and respect for the history of the school, in a way to maintain its own identity and specificity. The range of ideas and concepts that emerged from the participants across all cohorts also highlights the importance of space and the nuanced ways they link the aesthetic and physical environment with the social, emotional and physical well-being. There was a clear attachment and appreciation of the school physical environment, particularly when it potentiates opportunities—for relationships, for learning and growing, and for a common culture. Aspects such as access to resources, personal safety, hospitality, promotion of personal realization and purpose, sense of belonging and continuity, they all feed an attachment to the space of the school that helps to generate public happiness.

Regarding the third theme, participants identified particular virtues—addressed both in individual and collective terms that they consider intrinsically linked with FP in a university context. Using the Peterson and Seligman model (2004), we can make them coincide with humanity and justice, knowledge and wisdom, and transcendence. There were no references whatsoever to anything related to temperance as a virtue necessary or associated with FP in higher education. A particular virtuous identity profile emerged in some of the schools, depicting positive collective characteristics that are a cluster of virtue. This was addressed, in particular, signaling the relevance of shared implicit and explicit values, ethically and morally pro-social, for the basis of an interpersonal happiness.

The issue of the vocation for learning and teaching, the fourth theme that emerged, provided a reflection on the mission of the institutions. Public happiness can only be present at the university level if students and teachers do their best at learning and teaching, thus investing in the most imperative reason why there is a university. This is its calling, so it must be respected above all.

Finally, the fifth theme brings forward the issue of how public happiness is mainly a result of everyone’s contributions to the common good. Being fully present, engaged, connected, dedicated to public and civil causes, enmeshed in a web of relationships and conjoint interests, helps develop stronger, more trusting and purposeful relationships, and fosters the experience of belonging to a community. Being happy means making others happy or participating in dialogues to coordinate

meanings and find a shared happiness. Here, the school is positioned as a sanctuary where an awareness of community and interdependence can actually happen.

Some of the current pressing social problems, such as the socio-economic and political ones, were debated across the groups, exploring the potential of participative interventions and dialogue to address them in a more fertile way. What we can call the awakening of a “relational responsibility”.

After each meeting at each school, several of the schools involved in the study were motivated to self-organize themselves to continue working around the topic of well-being and public happiness. New research projects applied to the particular scientific area of study of each school, connecting it with well-being, conferences on topics around hedonic and eudaemonic happiness, and photography and lyrics contests on the theme, followed the world café meetings already described.

The findings from this study underline the importance of honouring and nurturing respect for the persons, the values, the identities, the sense of belonging, the communal goods, and the mission of the educational system.

2.7 Discussion: Gaining a Deeper Understanding?

This action-research project aimed at contributing to understand what is public happiness (*Felicitas Publica*) in the context of higher education, using a community-based relational approach. The findings reported might subsidize to the understanding of the cause of the good life at the university level, which might result in improved outcomes for the school communities.

Participants placed particular emphasis on relationships, namely into the importance of opportunities to relate in more equal, horizontal, affective and constructive ways, all considered imperative for the collective well-being. They also highlighted the need for the creation and recreation of common rituals and stressed the potential of more participatory, inclusive and democratic approaches, which will also endure a sense of community and instigate an interest to contribute to the common good. In a very competitive and stressed context, where mental health problems are pressing, and outcomes are more valuable than processes, these findings are particularly interesting. Alongside, they underscore the relevance of honouring the values and virtuousness of each person and institution, ensuring the strengthening of the identity of the school. This implies respecting the particularities of its past history, and the opportunities that its physical space opens to all. The mission of the universities is still to teach and to learn, so the accounts from the participants lend strong support to fully living this vocation.

The vitality and richness of the methods chosen indicates that research into well-being university needs to extend not just in the formal teaching environment but include the whole organization, and even the surrounding community (Oades et al. 2011). In a moment when our welfare needs to move away from transactional services towards an increased collaboration among citizens, we invite to bring

together more ambitious action-research projects for cross-pollination and shared visions.

To get there, the journey can have three complementary itineraries: (1) integration and differentiation, towards dialectic development (bridging different areas of knowledge, as happened here, for instance, positive psychology, sociology, economics, philosophy...) (e.g. Bruni and Porta 2003, 2007, 2016; Stanca 2016); (2) combining the approach to humane optimal functioning and well-being with the pressing social problems within a frame of relational responsibility (going “beyond self and community”, and approaching people as interdependent “relational beings”) (Gergen 2009; Sen 2016); and (3) incorporating quantitative indicators of quality of life with qualitative and transformative action-research of good collective daily life, namely investigating in the coordination of meanings (Marujo and Neto 2014, 2016).

Attending to the ambivalent dynamics of communities will help to understand and promote a positive sense and experience of community, and fructify social and community well-being. This will allow us to move from the present individualistic *imunitas*, where we isolate ourselves from others, to reciprocal *communitas*, where we regain a sense of bonded selves (Bruni 2012b).

2.8 Conclusion: A Window to New Horizons?

Exploring the potential of communities is currently considered vital for positive psychology and quality of life, due to promising data on social well-being and positive communities. It is important for the evolutionary development of those fields towards post-modernity.

This way, the increasing availability of findings and theorization, and the need for new integrative models, allows for a relational, collective and agentic standpoint that will make possible to measure the relevance and effects of relational goods on social welfare, and develop a framework that guides research and intervention. The model of *Felicitas Publica* (Public Happiness) is at that juncture, and allows for particular community-based and relational forms of practice. Higher education is a particular niche whose social impact needs to be tackled more than ever.

Launching the humanity of the participants as a platform for their personal and collective growth, in the service of better common lives, can not be deliver, we believe, operating from a deficit model. In contrast, if the starting point is one of abundance, the participants of these initiatives are welcome in their uniqueness and plenitude, and therefore, in their exclusive potential. Dialogic, inclusive practices that bring humans and their environments together, and move them beyond an ideology of self-gain—either when considering happiness or any other domain and goal of life—can renovate or even repair the stream of fecund effective collaboration and meaning-construction through additions in everyone’s potential for saying and transforming (Gergen 2009).

The well-being of our communities depends on our capacity to encourage civic organizations (Bruni and Zamagni 2007), as universities should be, where transversal, reciprocal and horizontal relational nets are generated. This implies fomenting the growth of civic virtues, which might guide people to invest in the public interest and the joy of communal happiness.

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Chapter 3

Sports and Community Well-Being

Denise Benatuil and Walter Toscano

Abstract This chapter explores the relationship between sports and community well-being, taking into account factors such as social bonds, social and cultural integration, health, improved quality of life, and the enhancement of personal and community well-being. Well-being is a concept with a long history and development. Originally used in the field of philosophy, it then spread to psychology. Community well-being is a relatively recent, little-explored term, which builds on the concepts of well-being and quality of life. This chapter provides a theoretical assessment based on the concepts of well-being, community well-being, and sports, distinguishing the latter from mere physical activity. Finally, the relationship between community well-being and sports—which few studies have explored—is analyzed.

Keywords Sports · Physical activity · Community well-being

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the importance of sport as a tool for the enhancement of social bonds, social and cultural integration, quality of life, and personal and community well-being. Well-being is a concept with a long history and development. It was initially used in the field of philosophy and it later spread to psychology. In 1967, Wilson presented a review of subjective well-being, and in 1969 Bradburn analyzed the structure of well-being. These were one of the first scientific publications and were directly related to happiness. In the field of social sciences,

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© Springer International Publishing AG 2017
G. Tonon (ed.), *Quality of Life in Communities of Latin Countries*,
Community Quality-of-Life and Well-Being,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-53183-0_3

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the term became known as “welfare” and has been widely used in politics, economics, and social issues. Community well-being, on the other hand, is a relatively recent term. It builds on the concepts of well-being and quality of life.

In this chapter, we first analyze the concept of well-being and its various definitions, and then go on to explore the concept of community well-being. In the next section, we provide a definition of sport and draw a distinction with physical activity. Finally, we analyze the relationship between community well-being and sport—a relationship that as yet remains under-researched.

3.2 Well-Being and Welfare

While well-being has been studied by the scientific community for more than four decades, there is still no consensus over its definition. However, some authors have pioneered and led significant research in this field.

According to Diener (2000), well-being can be defined as the cognitive and affective evaluation that an individual makes of his or her own life. It comprises the following components: life satisfaction (that is, a global assessment of one’s own life), satisfaction with the most important areas in one’s life (such as satisfaction with work or family), positive affect (experiencing positive emotions), and a low level of negative affect (experiencing a small number of unpleasant emotions).

According to Statham and Chase (2010), well-being is a dynamic state that is enhanced through an individual’s achievement of personal or social interaction aims.

It is important to distinguish between well-being and welfare. While in languages such as Spanish both terms translate as “*bienestar*,” they are still separate concepts.

Welfare can be defined as a social value aimed at making resources available to all members of society for the satisfaction of demands that are commonly accepted as needs (Muñoz 2006). It comprises aspects that are external to the individual and requires an assessment of objective variables such as the level of income, age, sex, access to health services and education.

The conceptualization of psychological well-being can be derived from two general coexisting traditions (Keyes et al. 2002). The first of such traditions, termed the hedonistic approach, centers on the study of subjective well-being and seeks to answer the questions of how and why people experience their life in a positive manner. This view takes account of both affective reactions—feelings of pleasure and pain—and cognitive judgments—interest, boredom, enjoyment, and sorrow. The hedonistic tradition is closely connected with the concept of happiness (Lyubomirsky 2008). According to this approach, subjective well-being entails judgments and comparisons with ideals, aspirations, other people, and with one’s own past. It involves a global evaluation of one’s life opportunities, the course of events one is confronted with and the resulting emotional experiences (Blanco and Díaz 2005).

The other tradition, termed the eudaimonic approach, revolves around psychological well-being and the development of human potential. It is concerned with the manner in which individuals face life challenges, and the efforts they make toward the pursuit of their objectives (Ryan and Deci 2001). This approach takes into account one's own evaluations of circumstances and functioning in society. Ryff (1989) has given further impetus to this line of research, and has proposed six dimensions of psychological well-being:

- (a) *self-acceptance or positive evaluation of self*. Individuals seek to feel good with themselves even if they are aware of their own limitations. This area comprises indicators such as self-esteem, and a positive personal attitude, which can value and integrate one's own good and bad qualities and look at past life in an understanding manner;
- (b) *positive interpersonal relationships*, or warm close relationships with others. People need to have stable social relationships and friends to count on;
- (c) *environmental mastery*, or the ability to manage and control challenges and the environment. This area is concerned with the ability to choose or create environments that fit personal wishes and needs. It relates to the feeling of control over the world and influence over the context, and comprises the concept of an internal locus of control and a perception of competence to master the environment;
- (d) *autonomy*, or self-determination to maintain self in different social contexts. People need to be self-determining and maintain their personal independence and authority. This dimension is related to the ability to resist social pressures and rely on independent judgments when making important decisions;
- (e) *purpose in life*, premised on goals and objectives that make life meaningful. This area is based on beliefs that the world is fair and on expectations that more positive things than negative ones will happen in the future;
- (f) *personal growth*, or a perception of continued personal development. This area relates to an interest in developing one's potentials, growing and expanding one's capabilities (Ryff and Keyes 1995).

At present well-being is considered to be a wide-ranging and complex construct that needs to be analyzed from a multicultural and multidisciplinary perspective. The concept of well-being should further take into account the opportunities provided by the community and society for personal development. Well-being includes subjective experiences and objective income, health and education indicators. It involves all of the members of the community: parents, children, educators, etc., their viewpoints, opinions, perceptions, evaluations, and aspirations. Well-being is necessarily related to culture and society. The attainment of personal goals is dependent on the values of each cultural context (Weisner 2015). Even within each cultural context, different groups have different values.

Over the past few years, well-being has been increasingly analyzed and assessed in relation to culture and society. While certain objective elements can be used to evaluate well-being, each culture, each society—through its system of values and

cultural imprints—allocates to well-being different characteristics and different degrees of importance to each of its components. This allows explaining why a given society with a higher level of welfare produced by a higher per capita income, improved access to education and health is not necessarily a society that defines itself as having a higher level of well-being or a higher degree of satisfaction with life. Similar objective conditions do not necessarily ensure the same degree of self-perception of well-being.

Diener and Suh (2000) undertook an empirical study of quality of life and compared the subjective well-being of societies. While the authors do not believe it is possible to determine whether a given society is better than another in terms of quality of life—given that quality of life is dependent on the values of each culture and society—they concluded which societies have greater subjective well-being, meaning that people in them evaluate their lives in positive terms. Kitayama and Markus (2000) confirms that an analysis of well-being must always take into account the culture or society to be studied. Well-being is necessarily defined in social terms in all societies.

All these developments gave rise to concepts such as social well-being and community well-being. Well-being, as conceived from a psychological and social perspective, led to a change in the concept of mental health, according to which mental health is not only defined as an absence of symptoms of anxiety, depression, or the presence of a high amount of positive feelings—known as positive affect balance—but as also entailing self-respect and self-regard—in other words, self-esteem—positive relations with others or a perceived satisfactory level of social support, a belief in mastery or control of the environment, a feeling of independence from—but also of connection with—the environment, and a purpose in, and meaning to, life, along with a belief of growth as a person (Bilbao Ramírez 2008; Ryff and Keyes 1995; Keyes and Lopez 2005).

The concept of social well-being has become increasingly prominent in the past few years, in part, due to its connections with public health and social capital (Bilbao Ramírez 2008; Keyes and Shapiro 2004). Social well-being was defined by Keyes (1998) as the evaluation one makes of one's own circumstances and functioning in society. It comprises the following dimensions:

1. Social integration, based on an appraisal of the quality of one's relationship with society and community. People with a high social well-being feel an active part of society, and build feelings of belonging and social bonds with family members, friends, neighbors, etc. (Keyes 1998).
2. Social acceptance: It involves trusting and accepting others, and developing positive attitudes toward others, such as believing that others are capable of being honest, good, and kind. It further entails accepting the positive and negative aspects of one's own life, and being and feeling part of a group or community. Both factors are indicators of mental health.
3. Social contribution, that is, a sense of value and of being a vital member of society with something valuable to offer. It includes a sense of worth, efficiency and contribution to the common good (Keyes 1998).

4. Social actualization, or the conception that society and its institutions are dynamic entities, and move in a given direction toward the attainment of goals and objectives that can benefit society as a whole. It is further based on feelings of trust in progress and social change, confidence in the future of society and in its growth and development potential and its ability to promote well-being.
5. Social coherence, premised on an ability to understand social dynamics. It is a perception of the quality, organization and functioning of the social world, and it includes a concern for knowing what is happening in the world, that is, a feeling that one is able to understand one's surroundings.

In addition, social well-being is closely related to general satisfaction with life, involvement in voluntary support activities and selfless cooperation in the solution of problems affecting and involving society as a whole, together with trust in others (Blanco and Díaz 2005; Bilbao Ramírez 2008). For this reason, well-being cannot be understood outside of the bonds that bind people together, or outside of participation and social contribution patterns.

3.3 Community Well-Being

As is the case with well-being, there is no consensus around the definition of community well-being. This is in part due to the fact that there are different conceptions about the meaning of community (such as that of a shared geographic space, values, religion) and also because different approaches are employed to understand and assess community well-being. These include the analysis of factors influencing well-being (such as poverty), the identification of factors that shape well-being in a community (how people perceive different aspects of their lives) and the use of social indicators (qualitative-subjective as unemployment, physical and mental health, education, suicide, divorce, and also quantitative-objective approaches).

Likewise, there is no agreement as to the concept of community; however, it may be stated that community refers to persons in social interaction. As a result of the changes produced by technology and virtual bonds, another debatable issue is whether communities must be geographically linked. Two main types of communities have been identified in this respect: geographic and functional communities, and they both encompass elements of face-to-face communication, exchange, and interaction (Lee and Kim 2015).

The most prominent definitions of community well-being are outlined below. According to one definition, community well-being comprises physical, geographic, cultural, economic, political, and psychosocial environments where community members can have their needs satisfied (Christakopoulou et al. 2001; Prilleltensky and Prilleltensky 2006). This conception centers on the needs of individuals as members.

More comprehensive or holistic definitions include a wider variety of components such as physical, psychological, political, social, cultural, and environmental

definitions. In 2010 the City of Calgary defined community well-being as comprising economic, social, and physical well-being (Lee and Kim 2015). Cox et al. (2010) on the other hand adopt a more comprehensive view that includes economic, social, environmental, cultural, and governance goals and priorities. Comprehensive approaches usually encompass individual and social aspects. For instance, in 1996 Hay defined community well-being as the attainment of the aspirations of individuals and groups in society (Lee and Kim 2015). Others identify the different conditions that individuals and the community describe as being part of community well-being (Wiseman and Brasher 2008). Ribova (2000) conceives the concept as a framework for community assessment that takes account of the psychological, cultural, and social requirements of people and their communities.

Community well-being is more than the sum of individual well-being, and it can be observed at the individual, organizational, and community level. Well-being focuses on both quantity and quality of factors and uses objective and subjective measurements (Lee and Kim 2015).

In 2008, the Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO), along with AECOM staff Stemeroff, Richardson and Włodarczyk, conducted applied research called “Context and Application of Community Well-Being” in order to work on the concept of community well-being in a given community.

The Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO 2009) considers that the term community well-being combines abstract ideas and human actions. Concepts of community well-being may mirror the interests of individuals in a given community and they may also reflect the interests of the collective of community interests. Concepts of well-being may comprise social, economic, spiritual, and cultural factors, along with individual health and security.

It follows from the NWMO research that community well-being is not a new concept and that the different approaches to, and practices in, the conceptualization of community well-being presents some elements in common, including:

- The enhancement of well-being as a primary goal, considering that the process of improvement is in constant change;
- The absence of a single definition of community well-being. It seems that each community establishes its own definition. However, most definitions often comprise elements related to health, security, spirituality, environmental and social conditions aimed at improving opportunities for individuals and the community;
- The fact that the community approach is based on a desire to enhance and work for well-being, by defining those elements in the community that can be improved through community well-being initiatives.

Along with the process of setting up community programs, the processes of defining and building community well-being indicators—such as citizen engagement, or local developments such as Community Indicators Victoria (Cox et al. 2010)—and adopting different measures seem to be an effective tool to keep people and organizations informed and involved. These processes facilitate the

identification of key issues, promote discussions about priorities, and further contribute to the generation of community programs and actions. The participation of citizens in the process leads to improved results. In addition, citizen involvement in the process facilitates adaptation to changes (NWMO 2009).

Some of the most common components of community well-being are: health; security; employment; culture and society; healthy environments; better and equal opportunities. However, the importance attached to the different components and indicators to evaluate community well-being differs from one community to another. In order to assess community well-being indicators, it is crucial to listen to the community members and find out how they are involved in their communities.

Ramírez et al. (2004) argue that the challenge does not lie in building more community well-being indicators but rather in asking the following questions: Who decides which indicators to use? In an ideal context, indicators are mutually developed in order to ensure they are meaningful for all involved. Who are the participants? Who decides which the relevant problems are? How is the community well-being measurement process set out?

It is important that the assessment of community well-being contemplates both emic and ethic components. This means that it should include relevant aspects for the community and also objective indicators of well-being, such as access to health, education, poverty, etc.

As has been shown, the concept of community well-being has gained importance in the past few years, both at a theoretical and empirical level. Community well-being is currently considered to be a multidimensional concept that includes at a minimum quality of life, community development, sustainability, and happiness (Lee et al. 2014).

The relationship between some components of community well-being—such as quality of life and happiness—and sports has been subject to study. It is well known that sport participation increases subjective well-being, stimulates flow (Lee et al. 2014), and brings physical and psychological enjoyment (Kimiecik and Harris 1996; Markland and Hardy 1993). Participating in sports is a natural form of intervention in life aimed at enhancing one's well-being (Declou et al. 2009). However, the link between community well-being and sports is not well-known yet. We will address such relationship in the following sections.

3.4 Sports and Physical Activity

The inclusion of physical activity in lifestyles and its impact on health were first addressed in the 1980s. According to Sánchez Bañuelos (1996), physical activity includes: occupational physical tasks, household chores, physical education at school, and leisure-time physical activity (such as sports, motor games, dancing, etc.).

From a functional and biological viewpoint, physical activity can be considered to be any corporal movement produced by muscular contraction that results in a substantial increase in energy expenditure. This traditional conception presents a

too narrow view of physical activity as a process and of physical condition as an outcome. A more comprehensive perspective allows distinguishing the quantitative and qualitative aspects of physical activity. Quantitative aspects are directly related to the consumption and mobilization of the energy needed for a given physical activity. Qualitative aspects are connected with the type of activity to be carried out, its purpose and social context.

Shepard (2003) argues that physical activity comprises all kinds of muscular activity that substantially increase energy expenditure and that exercise is a regular and structured subset of physical activity, one that is performed deliberately and for a specific purpose, such as athletic competition or exercise done to improve one's health.

There is a widespread belief that health is enhanced simply by doing physical exercise, which is not always the case. This notion does not consider or elicit the content, volume or intensity of such practice. This produces three sources of distortion regarding the effects and benefits of physical activity on people's health: the idea that it is some kind of panacea; the imprecision as to how exercise should be performed (type, content, volume, and intensity); and a basic unawareness regarding the reasons and the circumstances which cause the desired effects (Sánchez Bañuelos 1996).

It has now been proved that physical activity is a major driver of good health and a key element in disease prevention. However, it must be properly regulated and planned according to the individual's needs, so that it may allow him or her to improve vital functions (respiratory, cardiovascular, and metabolic). Moreover, and in connection with the relationship between physical activity and a person's diet, we will follow the Hippocratic Theory principles, which advocate for the right balance between food and physical exercise.

It is important to consider that for our body to benefit from physical activity, certain necessary and essential changes or adaptations should occur. These involve muscular, cardiac, and respiratory changes. In addition, for this adaptation to take place naturally and for the body to adapt to physical activity, certain conditions should be met:

- Synchrony and alternation between physical activity and recovery time, in accordance with the nature of the activity.
- The need to perform work in a progressive manner, moving from less to more, from simpler activities to the most complex ones, in order to gradually increase both the volume and the intensity of the activities performed and avoid fatigue during their course;
- Physical activity should be aimed at the harmonious development of an individual's different conditional capacities so as to improve his or her health.
- Any physical activity or exercise should be specific to the individual performing it; it should be suited to that individual's physical qualities, given that physical condition and characteristics vary from one individual to another and, therefore, the adaptation processes are different and unique to each individual.

Koukouvou et al. (2004) worked with patients with chronic heart failure under a rehabilitation exercise training program and concluded that there is a correlation between physical activity and subjective well-being, which is independent of aerobic work “gains” or advantages. This suggests that the positive relationship between exercise and subjective well-being derives from the physical experience of exercise rather than from the training level. Miller (2005) studied the relationship of healthy eating, exercise and sleep with subjective well-being and concluded that the healthy lifestyle well-being scale was correlated with the subjective well-being scale since a high level obtained in the first scale was linked to a high level in the second scale. This seems to be consistent with previous findings that general health is related to subjective well-being, as a correlation was found between certain indicators of general health and a positive conceptualization of health. Thus, healthy lifestyle experiences seem to be predictive of subjective well-being. In this sense, Miller’s study expands on previous studies in the field.

Physical activity and sport, however, are not synonymous. Sport was identified as a specific theoretical entity by Hippocrates twenty-five centuries ago (Toscano 2011). Since then, it has expanded and played a particularly prominent role from the twentieth century onwards.

Sport operates as a field of its own, as explained by Bourdieu (1984) three decades ago. As revealed by a review of all the traditional definitions of sport centered on its physical aspect as well as of the more social and anthropological definitions developed in the twentieth century, the concept of sport is highly polysemic. Sport is a temporal and topographic phenomenon, i.e., it is deeply rooted in a given time and place. The different definitions of sport share three common elements: its ludic nature, performance, and self-improvement (Proenca García 2005, pp. 94 and 100).

According to Velázquez Buendía (2002, pp. 319–321), sport is a sociocultural practice that has been constructed throughout history and its study requires a hermeneutic approach that allows understanding its meaning and purpose. The author also considers that sport refers to different bodily exercises ranging from high-level performance to aerobic training; therefore, none of the different forms sport can take has an exclusive legitimacy.

The different forms that sport can take as a social occurrence and as a personal practice are defined by a combination of several elements (rules, competition, physical activity, institutionalization) which combine in a higher or lower proportion, having more or less prominence in each case, and which may not all be present in a specific case (Velázquez Buendía 2002, p. 320).

3.5 Sports in Relation with Community Well-Being

As has been said, the relationship between community well-being and sport remains under-researched; however, there are several studies that associate sports with some of the components of community well-being, such as social bonds, reduced

high-risk and antisocial behavior, health, personal and social development, general well-being, etc.

Participating in sport, community, and cultural activities plays a central role in children's and adolescents' development (Bandy and Moore 2009; Eime et al. 2013; McGee et al. 2006). These activities tend to facilitate social and multicultural integration. While a wealth of studies have been published in this field, the results are not conclusive. These studies show important differences with regard to the characteristics of the samples under analysis, their configuration as longitudinal studies or not, the characteristics of the activities considered, the time invested in their practice and the influence of other coexisting variables. Some of these studies will be discussed in this section.

Some studies found a positive association between participation in sport activities during childhood and adolescence and higher health levels during adulthood (Sacker and Cable 2006). Furthermore, some studies report the benefits of practicing both individual and team sports (Harrison and Narayan 2003). Psychology and Physical Education students also believe there is a close association between sports and health, both at an individual and community level, as can be seen from the following statements:

Sports play an important role in community well-being since they favor an improvement in society's health level (male; finalizing sports undergraduate studies);

Sports can help to improve physical and psychic conditions in individuals and the community (female, finalizing sports undergraduate studies);

When you practice sports, through any type of activity, the body releases endorphins, relieving stress and creating a greater sense of well-being. Sports are also important for our health since they help to prevent obesity, diabetes and other diseases, and they, therefore, enhance health levels in the community (female, starting psychology undergraduate studies);

Other studies have found that participation in sport activities improves social skills, expands social bonds, and reduces shyness (Eime et al. 2013; Findlay and Coplan 2008; Holt et al. 2011; Howie et al. 2010). These findings are in line with the views expressed by the above-mentioned students, who gave the following answers:

Sports play a very important role in that they favor the development of social skills, promote comradeship, solidarity and team work (female, finalizing psychology undergraduate studies);

Sports can promote relationships and social bonds; they increase the subjective perception of a pleasant state within the group, establishing bonds and goals aimed at a common purpose (female, finalizing psychology undergraduate studies).

Other studies report the relationship between participation in structured—sport and non-sport—activities and the increase in self-esteem, resilience, and prosocial behavior (Bailey 2006; Eime et al. 2013; Fredricks and Eccles 2008). Another study conducted on the influence of sport participation on university students found

statistically significant differences in satisfaction with social life within sex and smoking groups (Bjelica and Jovanović 2016).

In this respect, the students made the following comments:

Sports are a means to teach values, habits and behaviors that shape the individual and favor his or her integration in the community (male, finalizing sports undergraduate studies);

Through sports, individuals may work on values, which are of great importance to community well-being (female, finalizing sports undergraduate studies);

Some studies also explore the relationship between sport activities—along with other organized extracurricular activities—and academic competence (Bailey 2006; Bjelica and Jovanović 2016; Holt et al. 2011). These studies suggest that young people that systematically participate in different extracurricular activities (including sports) show a higher academic performance.

Other studies have also shown a positive association between well-being and sports (Donaldson and Ronan 2006; Lee et al. 2014a, b; Steptoe and Butler 1996). In this respect, the students provided the following answers:

Sports help the community to search for common good (female, finalizing psychology undergraduate studies);

Sports are a means to improve, in a collective manner, the quality of life of people of all ages (female, starting psychology undergraduate studies).

Sports, when pleasant, increase the level of well-being (female, finalizing sports undergraduate studies).

While a significant number of studies have been conducted on this topic, the results differ widely depending on whether the studies focused on competitive or social sports, team or individual sports, and—in the case of children—on whether sports are taken as extracurricular activities or are performed at institutions such as schools or clubs (Eime et al. 2013). Results also vary depending on the characteristics of the sample: generally, participation in extracurricular activities (sports or other activities) is highly beneficial to children and adolescents coming from low-income households and receiving insufficient support and care. Results have also varied depending on gender, race, and culture. As stated by one of the students:

Sport has a positive impact on community well-being. Maybe to different degrees, depending on whether the community is more or less vulnerable (female, starting psychology undergraduate studies).

Most studies agree that team sports bring the greatest benefits, as well as the simultaneous participation in sports and other structured (social and cultural) activities and the practice of sports that people experience as enjoyable and pleasant. In the words of the students:

In order to access community well-being, it is important to take part in different activities such as sports, art (music, dancing, physical expression), practical tasks (cooking, sewing), prevention and first aid activities, among others. Sports constitute an important means to access community well-being as they have features that involve the body, rules, timing, organization and sharing (female, finalizing sports undergraduate studies).

Despite there being very few studies associating community well-being with sports, it can be concluded that for certain groups, sports have a positive result, mostly when performed as a systematic and group activity (Barber et al. 2001; Valois et al. 2004). With respect to children and young people, sports can provide a space where they feel protected and supported, and where they can socialize, with a resulting reduction in the amount of idle time and high-risk behavior. Sports usually help to build new social bonds and contribute to the learning of social skills and healthy behaviors. In this respect, the students added:

Sports create a space for recreation under certain rules, offering a different reality, a healthy way to recreate and build social networks (female, starting psychology undergraduate studies).

It is important to mention that sport is not always positive. Individual or highly competitive sports are often performed under pressure or in unpleasant conditions. They may also result in competition and rivalry at a group level and a high degree of self-criticism at an individual level, potentially increase anxiety and depression, and lower self-esteem. The students made the following comments:

Sports lead to well-being in those individuals who practice them willingly rather than out of obligation. Sports need to be a pleasant activity for them to contribute to well-being, otherwise they would reduce it (female, starting psychology undergraduate studies).

Recreational sports allow enhancing pleasure and well-being; therefore, it is only when sport retains the features of play that it creates a pleasant feeling that may be shared with society. If it loses its ludic character, it has no positive effect at all on the community's well-being (male, finalizing sports undergraduate studies);

Sports may be a dividing factor in the community since not all individuals may practice them in a competitive and professional manner (female, finalizing sports undergraduate studies);

If sport is not directed towards recreation and massive participation, it stops playing a positive role in the community and it turns into an exclusive and excluding practice (male, finalizing sports undergraduate studies).

3.5.1 A National Program: The Juegos Nacionales Evita

In our country, Argentina, there are some interesting examples of sport used toward the enhancement of social well-being. One example is that of the so-called *Juegos Nacionales Evita*, which consist of an inclusive sports and cultural event organized by Argentina's Ministry of Social Development. These games are intended to promote integration and training by creating equal opportunities in sport activities. They also seek to promote team work and respect, fair play, comradeship, effort and social inclusion.

The *Juegos Infantiles Evita* were first organized in 1948, as a means to promote social development and inclusion, and were supported by Eva Perón and the Head

of the Ministry of Health, Ramón Carrillo. Since the creation of this sports event and for the first time, many children across the country had access to medical examinations, which allowed children's health levels to increase significantly. In 1949, the event was well-attended and included the participation of one hundred thousand children from all across the country. This became the first experience of a massive social sports event in the continent. In 1955, the *Juegos Nacionales Evita* were canceled due to changes in the government regime and they were run again in 1973 with the return of democracy. In 1976, they were suspended again due to the interruption in the democratic system of government. In 2003, the *Juegos Nacionales Evita* were run again at a national level and sports became a state policy. Physical activity and recreation came to be regarded as rights that encourage social inclusion and participation at a national scale.

At present, more than a million boys and girls between 10 and 18 take part in this event from all across Argentina. Participants come from all the provinces representing their schools, sport clubs, nongovernmental organizations, community and municipal organizations, among others. The *Juegos Nacionales Evita* are aimed at promoting integration, training, and participation in order to ensure equal opportunities in sport.

The sports program includes 27 disciplines and people of 60 years of age or older may also participate in specific sports. Since this event promotes inclusion and participation in sports, certain disciplines for sportspeople with disabilities are also included.

As discussed above, community well-being includes quality of life, community development, sustainability, and happiness. The *Juegos Nacionales Evita* promote most of these components. They have made it possible for people from all across the country to participate without social class distinctions. The *Juegos Nacionales Evita* have set an example for building social inclusion and social development through sports. They have further helped to enhance at least a minimum of quality of life, through the access to medical examinations, and have created equal opportunities in sport activities and the possibility of generating a space to flow.

3.6 Final Remarks

Sports practiced under certain conditions, such as systematic participation in structured activities, may play a central role in the enhancement of community well-being. In the case of children and adolescents, it is important that sports have a ludic and inclusive role, where competition is not the central component and where team work, sharing, and the building of new bonds are favored. If these characteristics are present, sports will lead to the development of social skills, salutogenic bonds, and gratifying experiences.

In addition, sports may play a pivotal role in the transmission of rules, the incorporation of values and the dissemination of culture.

In certain groups, sports may constitute a space for socialization, integration, and support, favoring the development of healthy behavioral traits and reducing high-risk behavior.

As regards adults, sports may also have a ludic role and promote play, which is usually infrequent in adult life. If practiced avoiding extreme levels of competition, sports may be a highly healthy activity, with a positive impact both on physical health—by reducing twenty-first century diseases such as obesity, hypertension, and diabetes—and on psychic health—by favoring the creation of bonds, ties and spaces for enjoyment and flow.

Even if sport may promote equality and social inclusion, it should not be naively assumed that it always has a positive effect, promotes health and favors community well-being. As was discussed above, sport needs to meet certain conditions in order to have those positive effects.

For that reason, if sport is to become an important component of community well-being, impetus and focus should be given to the development of social sports and ludic and recreational sports. This should be promoted by means of appropriate social policies implemented by the different national governments. As was the case with the example presented here, the *Juegos Nacionales Evita*, sport has the potential to become a means to favor physical and psychic health, social inclusion, as well as to promote the building of social bonds, prosocial behavior and the healthy development of the individual and the community.

In recent times, studies have been conducted that analyze the impact of sport, community, and cultural activities to potentially favor social and multicultural integration in children and adolescents, for whom these activities play a central role (McGee et al. 2006). While there is a vast body of research on how sport benefits health and subjective well-being, there are still not sufficient studies on the potential benefits of sports on community well-being, the enhancement of social bonds, and social and cultural integration.

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Chapter 4

Quality of Life and Commuting. A Study in Rururban Communities of General Pueyrredon District, Argentina

Claudia A. Mikkelsen and Sofía E. Ares

Abstract Search for quality of life of the population becomes one of the explanatory causes of residential mobility. Residents move within the territory, use it, make it dynamic and, at the same time, it offers them possibilities or difficulties. In this sense, the processes of urban growth, which spread population centers around road networks, encourage the intensification of everyday commuting and the demands for new services, among which the public passenger transport system and the educational and health infrastructure are leaders (health centers, sewer, main water supply). Currently, in General Pueyrredon County (620,000 inhabitants, 2010) (Buenos Aires, Argentina), commuting becomes visible due to the expansion of the urban conglomerate headed by Mar del Plata and the growth of small towns, close to the access routes to the main town, where the population forms communities that are distinguished by their strong interpersonal links, meanings, values, and shared interests. The study area comprehends the whole of the district, but underlines localities having less than 10,000 inhabitants, as it is the area which, over the past three decades, has shown greater demographic and housing growth rate. Accordingly, our aim is to increase people's awareness over uneven regular movements of inhabitants of rural–urban communities of General Pueyrredon County, taking into account the design of the public transport network, the location of schools and health centers, with the aim of deepening the analysis of the well-being conditions of the people residing there. Methodologically, we use systematized and analyzed data of the national censuses of 1991, 2001 and 2010,

Departments are the second-level administrative units of the country, after provinces. But in the province of Buenos Aires they are called *partidos* (here translated as “districts”)

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© Springer International Publishing AG 2017
G. Tonon (ed.), *Quality of Life in Communities of Latin Countries*,
Community Quality-of-Life and Well-Being,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-53183-0_4

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attained by the National Institute of Statistics and Censuses (INDEC), with the purpose of studying demographic growth and the composition of households. We also exploit secondary data that allow characterizing public educational and health services in the studied communities. Similarly, we utilize primary data of commuting and geographic narratives linked to living in minor localities within General Pueyrredon County, evaluated as significant testimonies that allow interpreting and understanding the dynamics observed in the territory. We apply quantitative as well as qualitative analysis techniques, and a system of geographic information for the treatment of georeferenced data. Results will illustrate the inequality of opportunities in commuting and the generation and consolidation of situations of vulnerability in the analyzed communities, in relation to their quality of life.

Keywords Quality of life · Community · Commuting · Inequality · Southeast of Buenos Aires

4.1 Introduction

The search for quality of life of the population is considered as one of the explanatory causes of commuting (Faggian and Royuela 2010; Sili 2005; Ares and Mikkelsen 2010; Jacinto 2011; Pasciaroni et al. 2010, among others). People move around the territory, use it, make it dynamic and, at the same time, the territory offers them possibilities or difficulties. In this sense, processes of urban expansion, with dispersion of population centers around roads, promote the intensification of commuting flows and new services demands, among which the system of public passenger transport and the educational and health infrastructure (health centers, sewers, and water networks) are primary.

Nowadays, in General Pueyrredon District (620,000 inhabitants, 2010) (Buenos Aires, Argentina) commuting grows more visible due to the expansion of the agglomerate led by Mar del Plata and the development of small towns, close to access roads to the main city, where people establish communities that are distinguished by their strong interpersonal ties, and their shared meanings, values, and interests. As part of this process the growth of small towns takes place, with 5000 inhabitants or less, which, turning to the notion of rural–urban continuum (Hugo et al. 2003), can be described as rururban, that is, areas where rural and urban characteristics are detected. It is precisely in these locations where forms of communal life are established, with strong social ties and shared values, regarding the appreciation of nature, tranquility, and personal security.

The study focuses on the analysis of commuting and the inequalities involved, based on the different characteristics of the territory, as well as peculiarities of individuals, such as gender, age, socioeconomic characteristics, and available knowledge, both formal or academic, and informal (Lévy 2002; Urry 2007; Pérez Negrete 2015; Manderscheid 2016, among others).

The aim of this chapter is to provide knowledge about unequal commuting of inhabitants of the rururban communities of General Pueyrredon District based on the case of *Sierra de los Padres-La Gloria de la Peregrina*, taking into account the public transport network design, and the location of schools and health centers, in order to further analyze the conditions of welfare of resident there.

This chapter is divided into five sections. In the first two, the conceptual framework-build around the concept of community, territory and rururban areas and the methodology are addressed. The third and fourth sections are dedicated to the presentation of results. Thus, the third section focuses on the analysis of the dynamics and demographic structure of General Pueyrredon and its network of small localities. The fourth section, however, works with primary data to address the characteristics and inequalities of commuting, in connection with the characteristics of the people interviewed. It ends with the presentation of some conclusions and discussions of the results.

4.2 Fundamental Concepts

4.2.1 Community

The community concept as understood in the Middle Ages meant the place of belonging, a territory is understood as own in relation to neighborhood and to kinship ties (Tonon 2009b). By the late nineteenth century, Ferdinand Tönnies raises the conceptual distinction between community and society (Rodríguez Fernández 2007; Maya Jariego 2004), in a context of Fordist production, where industrial development was strongly linked with the growth of cities. As expressed by Graciela Tonon quoting Honneth (1999), Ferdinand Tönnies “defined community as that form of socialization in which residents, because of their common origin, local proximity and shared values, had achieved a certain degree of implicit consensus. Speaking of society, he referred to those fields of socialization where were consistent on rational considerations bound to ends, in order to obtain mutual maximization of individual benefits” (2009b: 3).

To reflect on the concept of community implies recognition that the context in which it was raised has changed, however, it is interesting to point out that community means having something in common, sharing, and it is a space-time perceived as usual, a scope of coexistence. What is shared in the community are values and perceptions, acknowledging “We are in a society that changes and moves at a speed which does not allow founding the notion of community on the permanence of neither spaces nor values” (Rodríguez Fernández 2007: 96). Therefore, it is not that the community is disappearing, but what happens is that new forms of community would emerge this time characterized by the rise of individualism and customizing practices of residents (Maya Jariego 2004).

Seymour Sarason (1974, in Maya Jariego 2004: 4) “conceived community [...] as [...] a network of mutually supportive relationships from which one may depend” (1974:1). This general concept can be applied to cities, neighborhoods, religious groups,

educational organizations, self-help groups, etc.” Communities can be classified as localities or as relational groups, the first is conceived as the traditional classification, associated with proximity, vicinity, and refers to the neighborhood, the city, the rururban communities. The second possibility is linked to ties and sense of belonging to a group of residents beyond certain spatial limits, for example, groups that make up virtually, members of NGOs, trade unions, religious groups, or international migrants.

The concept of community associated with the territory is under debate, since the place where residents live is not necessarily where they participate, interact, share, or establish links. Mobility of individuals makes their life cycles develop daily in various communities (Sancho 2009).

4.2.2 Community and Territory

As regards geography there is not much research taking the conceptual framework of community, of the communal. It is believed that the effort to place Geography within the scope of Social Sciences has contributed to the approaches' lack of interest on communities, often appealing to the use of this term arbitrarily, without adequate reflection and theoretical discussion. The followers of this line of work are mostly Francophone, or Latin American geographers, who have proclaimed during the past decades the need to overcome the social as a conglomerate toward the notion of a territorial social subject or inhabitant subject. Under these premises residents are treated as active agents. Yes, they are creative, but at the same time are socially, culturally, and spatially limited.

Thus it moves from the social as structure or population, to the subject-inhabitant, getting around the possibility of the communal approach, with rare exceptions. The review of geographic research that appeal to the concept of community shows the following thematic distribution: (a) examination of native communities and their relationship with economic or survival activities (mining, agriculture, hunting, fishing) (Erazo and Garay-Flühmann 2011; Ferreira 2012; Gavilán Vega 2015; Gombay 2010; Huiliñir-Curió 2015; Martínez Berrios 2015) or with the social environmental impact of infrastructure construction (hydroelectric dams) (Amorim and Jesus 2013); (b) the study of community mobilization and the results of community participation in the provision of water and pollution mitigation (Farhana 2009); (c) analysis of the “gated communities” where the idea of community is assimilated to the territory and shared demands, the territory being the gated community in all its forms (e.g., Pacione 2006); the quality of life differential along the rural–urban continuum (Millward and Spinney 2012).

Anglo-Saxon studies generally record higher theoretical reflection, probably influenced by early disciplinary advances as Morgan and Moss (1965), Moss and Morgan (1967) or more recently as Butz and Eyles (1997) and Tuan (2002). Instead, the revised Latin American works show a flaw around theoretical unfolding and warns that the idea of community becomes tacit and directly associated to coexistence; by sharing traditions, festivals, tasks, and lands.

John Eyles argues that the community has three key elements: (a) the place or area, (b) persons and institutions, and (c) a sense of belonging (Butz and Eyles 1997). This geographer suggests that the concept of community defined around the three elements previously stated: “can provide insights into the importance and role of place in social and material life” (1985: 63–64 quoted by Butz and Eyles 1997: 4). It also states that the assemblage between place and people is the process that constitutes the latter as a symbols matrix, including the ideological component of the community. In this regard: “Ideological structure constitutes community as an expression of collective sentiment and as a device for the protection and promotion of sectional interests” (Butz and Eyles 1997: 4).

4.2.3 Rururban Communities, Commuting, and Quality of Life

Moreover, the concept of rururban articulates with the notion of community and acknowledges the existence of rururban communities. The rururban qualifies the urban–rural conceptual opposition (Claval in Barros 2000: 1548). In this area, the field remains, but life forms are urban. Between the semi-urban space and the semi-rural space we find the rururban, where part-time jobs are related to agriculture, and the rest in urban activities, generating daily swings between area of residence (rural) and urban space production (García Ramón 1995).

Rururban communities of General Pueyrredon are formed and unified in small localities of the district, that is, those agglomerations (Lucero et al. 2016b) with less than 5000 inhabitants. These localities may be considered rural or urban, following the statistical criteria applied in Argentina. That is, the population is categorized as urban when living in agglomerations of 2000 inhabitants or more, and as rural when residing in the open field (dispersed rural) or in the agglomerations with less than 200 inhabitants (grouped rural).

The insufficient provision of services (education, health, supplies) and the existence of a small labor market are keys in localities, and in the communities that develop in them, so that commuting becomes a primary practice in everyday life. The commuting is part of a larger set called territorial or spatial mobility. The territorial mobility is demographically defined as the set of individuals or groups displacements in the territory, whatever the distance run and the duration (Courgeau 1990), that is including different forms, such as commuting and residential mobility (change of place of residence that does not involve the transfer of a political-administrative boundary).

Here, the focus is on daily mobility, habitual mobility, or commuting (Jiménez 2008) which takes place at certain intervals from the base residence, defined as the starting point of movements that make up the living space of people, to the places they attend daily.

Referring to commuting, everyday life space is mentioned taking into account that within the definition of everyday life, the relevancy of routine is remarkable and even exclusive for some authors (Lindón 2000). On this basis, it is estimated that daily life includes the following activities: work, education, health, shopping or catering, religious practices, social meetings, transactions (banking, administrative), and leisure (sports, field trips, cultural activities, holidays, others), all of them crossed by materiality, habitus, and sense of place.

Raising the idea of mobility as simple movements in the territory has led to Jacques Lévy (2002) to raise it as a social relationship, and to recognize three elements or potentialities in its treatment. The first element or potentiality is the *possibility*, which for example can be observed through the provision of transport. To this, the variety of choices of goods and services is added, and the places where these are provided. As indicated by the author, it is of interest to focus on the relationship interweaved between what is desired, what is achievable, and what is fulfilled (Lévy 2002).

To materialize these possibilities, it is necessary that the residents have mobility *skills*, defined as the relationship between the virtual space of offered mobilities and the actual space of mobilities made (Lévy 2002). Being mobile involves a variety of skills, most of them already incorporated (as space cognition), others linked to formal knowledge (understanding language, literacy) and finally expertise in the use of machines (e.g., know how to drive different vehicles) (Le Breton 2006; Urry 2007).

In skills various factors are intertwined: social and customary practices sites networks, money availability, knowledge, claims of displacement (connecting desires with needs) (Urry 2007). Finally, the assembly constituted by possibility, competition, and arbitrations that the second allows for the first, can be read as a capital that lets individuals better unfold their strategy within society (Lévy 2002)

Social, economic, and cultural events that make up the territories, design a heterogeneous, complex environment. The major processes of territoriality are accompanied by processes of territorial mobility of the population, many of them of inter-district nature, generating territoriality movements linked with changes in the composition of the population, new demands, and intensified flows of commuting, this last occurrence associated with the growing territorial dispersion of the population and its activities.

Through the three elements by Lévy (2002), as well as the reflections of Le Breton (2006) and Urry (2007), among others, it is possible to define operationally the concept of uneven mobilities, as people have a mobility potential, which is achieved through the interaction among possibilities, skills and capital. Through mobility, products, or services are accessed differentially, therefore this is undoubtedly linked to inequality.

Finally, it is important to remember that increased commuting largely has to do with the growth of the localities especially based on residential mobility. The residential mobility should follow a basic logic: the search for a better quality of life (Faggian and Royuela 2008). The category “quality of life” should be understood as a multidisciplinary and multidimensional concept, analyzed closely linked to a life

cycle, the predominant values in the society being studied, as well as the prevailing context.

As for quality of life, it has been traditionally defined in relation to the satisfaction of individual and multipersonal needs, whose diagnosis has been characterized by the appreciation of an external reality (noticeable), the fact of starting from “minimum,” indispensable considerations and the use of quantitative measures inclined to the search for the so-called “objectivity.” What has happened then is that the delimitation of these needs has traditionally been based on the opinion of the experts who study them, rather than the perception and opinion of the citizens who undergo them, Tonon (2009a, b).

Therefore, the quality of life concept refers to material conditions (social welfare) and psychosocial conditions (individual welfare), in relation to positive and negative experiences and evaluations made by residents of their own lives (Tonon 2015). For this particular perspective, the person, traditionally regarded as object, becomes appreciated as “subject and protagonist,” and this is so because quality of life poses a social and political reality necessarily based on respect for human rights (Tonon 2009a, b).

Thus, we perceive the rururban communities of General Pueyrredon through understanding that they are developing in relation to the territory, defining and redefining their places. These are communities with different degrees of cohesion, but where the existence of a homogeneous speech was identified when it comes to lifestyles and demands. Following Butz and Eyles (1997), the community is above all a set of social and cultural relations, based on shared meanings, values, and interests. Events occurring to individual residents that are part of different types of communities, are given in a territory, not conceived in the traditional way by its limits, but as a social and historical construction.

The rururban communities of General Pueyrredon are formed and unified in small localities of the district, that is, those agglomerations (Lucero et al. 2016a) with less than 5000 inhabitants. These locations may be, following the statistical criteria applied in Argentina, rural or urban. That is, to say the population is categorized as urban when living in agglomerations of 2000 inhabitants or more, and as rural when residing in the open field (dispersed rural) or in localities with less than 2000 inhabitants (grouped rural).

In the following section, materials and methods developed in the investigation are presented, highlighting features of the primary data source (type of instrument used and features, sample data) and analysis strategies.

4.3 Materials and Methods

To characterize General Pueyrredon and its locations, data from national censuses 1991, 2001, and 2010, surveyed by the National Institute of Statistics and Censuses (INDEC), are taken, systematized, and analyzed, as they allow for analyzing population growth, through the intercensal annual growth rate and the

socio-demographic characteristics of the locations. In addition, secondary data produced by the Municipality of General Pueyrredon were used to describe transport, educational, and public health services, existing in the designed communities and the rest of the district as well.

Faced with the lack of census data on commuting, ten semi-structured interviews were carried out in 2015 in households in *Sierra de los Padres-La Gloria de la Peregrina*, a community with an important demographic-housing growth, social heterogeneity and a variety of economic functions.

The semi-structured interviews were divided into two sections. The first seeks to obtain data on household head, as well as on its housing and social characteristics. Questions that would permit make up the family composition were included. Finally, it explored commuting and characteristics for each household member 14 years or older, present at the time of the interview.

The second section was called “uses and meanings of space,” this investigated the choice of place of residence, according to territorial practices and territory, from the perspective of the people. Through spatial practices observed on commuting, subjects constructed their experiences in the territory. According to Tuan (1976, 1983) experiences covers the various way through which person builds and knows his reality, ranging from the senses to symbolization. The experience, in turn, involves learning from his own experiences, and while learning the subjects first ventures into the unknown and only then into everyday life. Thus, aided by repetition, he is located within a universe that is already known but can always surprise us again and, therefore, propose a relearning process. In the task of describing the human experience of the world, of space and time, there is a tendency to emphasize human subjects as primary and determinant initiators of experience (Buttimer 1983)

Information on commuting was systematized in a relational database, essential for mapping, using arrays of origin and destination, travel for work, health care, consumption (purchases), or transactions (e.g., banking, taxes, legal, or other). Spatial narratives were transcribed and interpreted by marking, coding, and recoding.

4.4 Rururban Communities of General Pueyrredon District

On the demographic and social configuration process of General Pueyrredon, it should be noted that throughout the twentieth century the city of Mar del Plata was positioned in the country as a center of attraction for people of diverse backgrounds. Thus, until the 1980s, the contribution of net migration in its population growth was significant (Lucero 2004; Núñez 2000; Lucero et al. 2010).

Original economic functions and labor markets that emerged in this context were critical to understand the intense centrality of Mar del Plata (Ares and Mikkelsen 2010), as well as the growing proportion of population living in smaller towns of

General Pueyrredon, under the “urban” or “grouped rural” census population figures, a phenomenon made visible in the past three decades. Both processes were accompanied by the absolute and relative decline in dispersed rural population. Thus, the identification of a large number of localities around 1980 can be understood (Sagua 2004) and a progressive reduction as each agglomeration grew and, in some cases, joined Mar del Plata (*Mar del Plata-Camet*, since 2001) or *Sierra de los Padres-La Gloria de la Peregrina* (since 2010).

The year 1980 is identified as a turning point into the process of urbanization in General Pueyrredon district, with an emerging population and housing growth in the smaller localities, which were originally places of services for agriculture, or rather tourism-recreational dominions with second homes.

In that time locations with extraordinary growth rates and at the same time, a profound rate of decline (−64.3‰) of the dispersed rural population were distinguished (Table 4.1). So, situations related to agglomeration processes stand out, mainly fed by the change of residence from the “open field” to small towns, to Mar del Plata or Batán, a phenomenon widely studied in the context of dissemination of private motorized transport, the largest school enrollment and sociocultural changes spread among rural families that sustained migration from the dispersed rural (Fig. 4.2).

Between 1980 and 1991, a scenario with strong growth rates in external and internal boundaries of Mar del Plata is discovered, as well as in areas near Batán and Estación Camet. In the southern jurisdiction, the extension has a significant correlation with the existence of summer homes or second homes, which were gradually changing their condition.

Since 1980, within changes in population and intercensal growth rates (Table 4.1) the presence of socio-demographic change is seen, as well as clues about its magnitude and intensity.

With the publication of census data of 1980, some researchers conducted the first analyses of the fresh process of concentration of population in towns and on the outskirts of Mar del Plata (Barrio Belgrano, Camet, Punta Mogotes, for example) (Sagua 2004; Núñez 2000).

In some cases (Batán and Estación Chapadmalal), this process was complemented by attracting migrant population depending on specific markets work, in the area of industrial, horticultural, and mining production (brick and stone quarrying).

To the above mentioned, the arrival of population garden suburbs sums up, with the promise of a lifestyle without the unpleasantness of life in the big city, or rural life remoteness and lack of services. In this regard, Sierra de los Padres, Los Acanilados, La Florida, El Grosellar, Bosque Peralta Ramos, and Las Dalias are examples.

Between 1991 and 2001, the population rise in some localities took its course, being largely dependent on two processes. On the one hand, transfers in the direction from dispersed rural to urban or grouped rural; on the other hand, urban to grouped rural mobility. This latter phenomenon accompanies the valuation given to living in more natural (by antagonism with the artificiality of cities), peaceful and secure environments, already addressed by international literature, and analyzed in

Table 4.1 Population size, variations, and growth rates

Location name	Total population				Absolute change				Annual Growth Rate (%)			
	1980	1991	2001	2010	1980-1991	1991-2001	2001-2010	2010-2010	1980-1991	1991-2001	2001-2001	2001-2010
BATÁN	5120	6185	9597	10,152	1065	3412	555	555	17.9	41.9	6.3	6.3
EL BOQUERÓN	470	333	416	509	-137	83	93	93	-32.6	21.2	22.6	22.6
ESTACIÓN CHAPADMALAL	797	1238	1323	1633	441	85	310	310	41.7	6.3	23.5	23.5
CHAPADMALAL	1177	1239	1971	4112	62	732	2141	2141	4.9	44.2	82.3	82.3
EL MARQUESADO	90	86	200	196	-4	114	-4	-4	-4.3	80.4	-2.3	-2.3
MAR DEL PLATA	391,524	504,872	541,733	593,337	113,348	36,861	51,604	51,604	24.1	6.7	10.2	10.2
<i>La Florida-MdP</i>	277	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Estación Camet	612	2280	4070*	5241*	1668	1790	1171	1171	124.4	32.3	27.8	27.8
Los Zorzales-El Sosiego	-	424	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
El Casal	-	204	218	267	-	14	49	49	27.6	9.2	22.7	22.7
F. U. Camet	760	852	-	-	92	-	-	-	10.8	-	-	-
Camet	1322	4268	-	-	2946	-	-	-	110.9	-	-	-
<i>Pta. Mogotes-MdP</i>	2895	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Bo. Belgrano-MdP</i>	11,857	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SIERRA DE LOS PADRES-LA GLORIA DE LA PEREGRINA	-	-	-	4249	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sierra de los Padres	154	321	803	1672**	167	482	869	869	69.5	87.4	82.0	82.0
La Gloria de la Peregrina	-	732	1282	2010**	-	550	728	728	-	53.4	50.3	50.3
El Coyunco	-	453	356	427**	-	-97	71	71	-	-23.0	20.3	20.3

(continued)

Table 4.1 (continued)

Location name	Total population				Absolute change			Annual Growth Rate (%)		
	1980	1991	2001	2010	1980-1991	1991-2001	2001-2010	1980-1991	1991-2001	2001-2010
Colinas Verdes	-	106	115	140**	-	9	25	-	7.8	22.0
SANTA PAULA	-	475	568	644	-	93	76	-	17.0	14.0
DISPERSED RURAL	17,106	8668	5474	3742	-8438	-3194	-1732	-64.3	-43.8	-42.5
TOTAL	434,161	532,845	564,056	618,989	98.4	31,211	54,933	19.4	5.4	10.4

General Pueyrredon District. 1980-2010

*Values are disaggregated but Estación Camet totals are included in the volume of population of Mar del Plata in 2001 and 2010

**Values are disaggregated but the totals for each unit are included in the volume of population of Sierra de los Padres-La Gloria de La Peregrina in 2010
 Source Personal elaboration on the following data sources: Municipality of General Pueyrredon (1984), Sagua (2004, 2008), INDEC. National Censuses of Population and Housing 2001 and 2010, processed with REDATAM + SP

General Pueyrredon (Mikkelsen and Ares 2010; Ares 2011). In other districts of this province and the country, these ideals were expressed through the construction of gated communities, but in General Pueyrredon its development was delayed and the first venture dates back to 2004.

Based on the review of the 2001 census results, it can be established that an intense and external growth continued in Mar del Plata, especially in the area of Route 2, where two new regions emerged (Juan Carlos Castagnino and La Laura). Similar is the situation of Camet (on Route 11, north).

Continuity in the rate of decline of the dispersed rural population (-43.8%) is counterbalanced by the recognition of other grouped rural population centers (El Casal, Los Zorzales, La Gloria de la Peregrina, El Coyunco, Colinas Verdes, and Santa Paula).

It is evident that the rate of growth within the external and internal limits of Mar del Plata decreases, but it is still relevant. Within the city, neighborhoods of the south became more important, extending this condition toward the area formerly called Punta Mogotes¹ (Alfar, Faro Norte, San Jacinto, San Patricio, La Serena, and Acantilados neighborhoods). In addition, in order of notoriety, census fractions north stand out, near Mar del Plata and southern Estación Camet—close to Mar del Plata, Batán, and Miramar (General Alvarado district)—and finally the northwest, where Sierra de los Padres is located.

Lastly, between 2001 and 2010 population and housing promotion of some localities caused various spatial units were unified (Sierra de los Padres with La Gloria de la Peregrina, El Coyunco, Colinas Verdes). Thus, the set of towns and neighborhoods that make up Sierra de los Padres recorded another unprecedented growth stage² with a rate of 186.4% , therefore characterized as a city of high heterogeneity when congregating spatial units with different functions: a) permanent or holiday housing for groups of medium to high purchasing power, b) housing for groups with lower purchasing power and serving the primary sector of the economy, c) permanent housing for groups of lower purchasing power serving other areas (gardening, child caring, elderly caring activities, housework). Chapadmalal, in the southern coastal sector, corroborated its status as a recipient of population, with a growth rate of 82.3% .

With the 2010 data, it is possible to state that the decline of the dispersed rural population persisted (Fig. 4.1), though with a slight decrement in the rate of decline. It is believed that these people continued to contribute to the growth of the towns, as Estación Camet-Mar del Plata, Chapadmalal, and Sierra de los Padres-La Gloria de La Peregrina (Fig. 4.2).

With the 2010 data, it is possible to state that the decline of the dispersed rural population persisted (Fig. 4.1), though with a slight decrement in the rate of

¹In National Census for 1970 and 1980, Punta Mogotes was identified as a small locality of General Pueyrredon.

²For the period considered all space units incorporating Sierra de los Padres-La Gloria de la Peregrina were grouped to make the intercensal comparability.

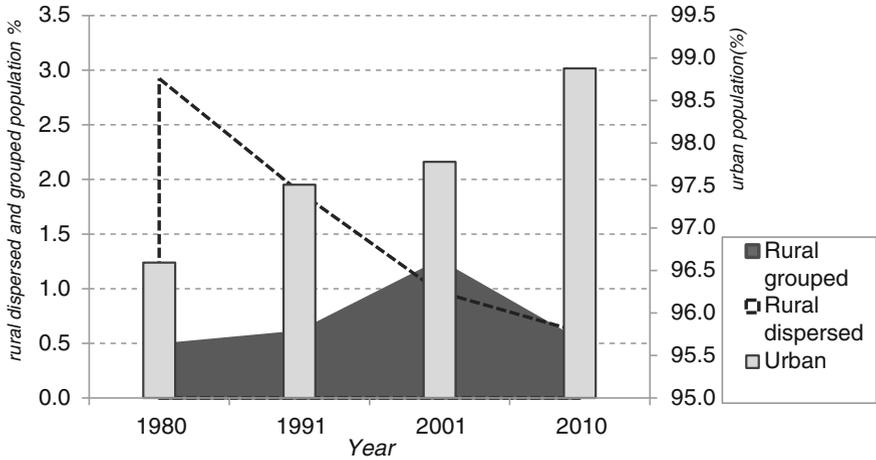


Fig. 4.1 General Pueyrredon district. Population by rural/urban condition. *Source* The Author’s design based on data provided by INDEC (1980, 1991, 2001, 2010). National Census Population and Housing 2001 and 2010, processed REDATAM + SP

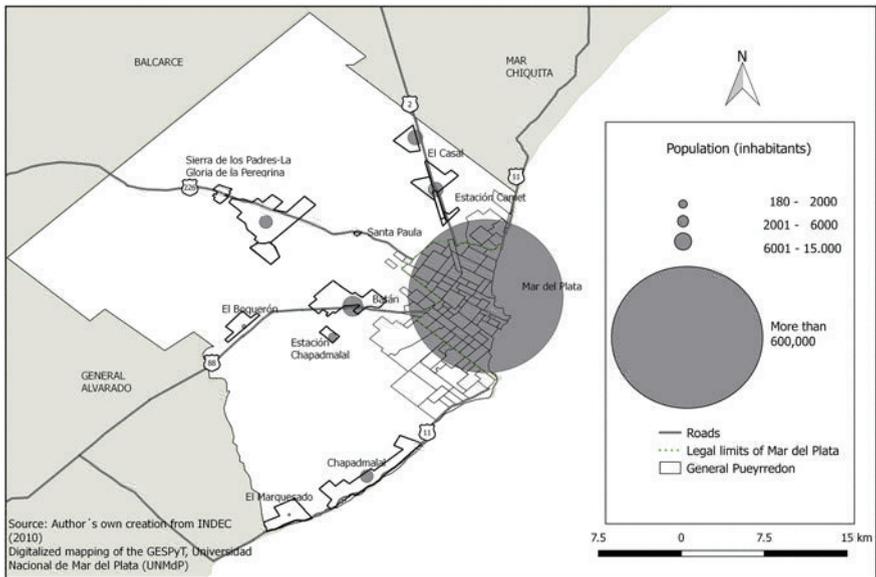


Fig. 4.2 Localities by population size in General Pueyrredon district, Argentina, 2010

decline. It is believed that these people continued to contribute to the growth of the towns, as Estación Camet-Mar del Plata, Chapadmalal, and Sierra de los Padres-La Gloria de La Peregrina.

Finally, it is important to highlight that the growth of these locations has a perceptible account of three decades, which also affected the slow but persistent redistribution and decentralization of population, still strongly clustered in Mar del Plata. Thus, while natural growth is gaining progressive relevance, contribution of mobility balances would still be predominant (international, provincial, from other or from the same district) in the development of agglomerations, and in some cases, in the notorious demographic aging and the progressive feminization of the population.

4.5 Commuting and Quality of Life in Rururban Communities

The emergence of small towns and places has to do with different political, economic, and sociocultural processes. Some of them are born with the railway lines (Estación Camet, Estación Chapadmalal); others as rest areas, first for coaches, later for trucks, as in the case of El Coyunco. Eventually, other localities have their genesis in the agricultural crisis of the twenties and thirties of the twentieth century, the subdivision by inheritance of large estates and the desire for property speculation accomplished with the design of areas for second homes, in countryside environments, emulating land lots divisions practiced in other countries. Thus, Colinas Verdes (1949), Sierra de los Padres (1950) Chapadmalal (1940), and some of the neighborhoods that make up Estación Camet (El Tejado, Los Zorzales, El Sosiego, Las Margaritas) were primarily intended for recreation and leisure, and are the result of divisions performed on land previously intended for agricultural production.

Most of the subdivisions took place mainly between the 1920s and 1960s, but it was not until the 1980s that settlements became evident and with it the process of census reclassification of spatial units, with transitions from the dispersed rural category to grouped rural, and from grouped rural to urban. In this context, Sierra de los Padres-La Gloria de la Peregrina, stands out for its intense pace of population growth, the strengthening of the functions associated with horticultural production and the sum of peculiar in coincidence urban culture activities, emerged along with the demands of the population and, on the other hand, the search for recreational-tourism alternatives. These features are critical for its selection as study area regarding the investigation of unequal mobilities.

4.5.1 *The Interviews at Sierra de Los Padres-La Gloria de La Peregrina*

Interviewed households mostly belong to a full conjugal nucleus family configuration with cohabiting minor children (7 cases), followed by complete conjugal nuclei without cohabiting unmarried minor children (3 cases).

In this set of households, adults surveyed average 44 years old, and children about 10 years old. Children and adolescents attend private schools in the city of Mar del Plata or state educational establishments in Sierra de los Padres neighborhood.

The relative statistic weight of highly educated persons is very important (full tertiary or university levels). Considering household members of 18 years or more, it shows that 10 of them completed secondary level, with one case of continuity at the university level. Moreover, in the same age group, 8 individuals with high educational level were identified (2 with tertiary degrees and 6 with full university level, in turn, within this group, 2 have completed postgraduate studies).

As for the economic activity of the interviewees and other contributors to the family budget (a total of 14 people), a marked predominance of the services sector is found, especially in the educational branch (5 residents). Regarding inactive adults in the labor market, three adults perceive retirement or pension, and two young women recognized themselves as homemakers.

Briefly reviewed characteristics are linked to the peculiarities of the settlement, and also with everyday house holding. About the time of settlement, it was mainly since 2000, consistent with Intercensal Annual Growth Rate measurements, half of respondents having settled in the area between 2000 and 2009.

Most contacted interviewees were born in Mar del Plata, or in another town in the province of Buenos Aires, but arrived at the district between childhood and the end of adolescence, accompanying their family or for academic reasons. Natives from dispersed rural locations or other General Pueyrredon localities were a minority.

It was confirmed that, in this area, households previously lived in the city of Mar del Plata (Fig. 4.3), some of them in garden suburbs or forest reserves (Alfar, Parque Luro, Constitución). Beyond these features, in most cases, the source has to do with neighborhoods whose housing and population density is low, between 48 and 215 people per hectare (Sagua and Sabuda 2015), but in some cases with industrial traces (Los Andes, Las Lilas).

Similarly, the most of the areas of origin of the interviewees are going through different stages of the population aging process, with high presence of older age groups (Sagua and Sabuda 2015: 40 and 41), and low to very low overall fertility rate.

Another feature of the areas of origin of interviewees has to do with their functionality and location in the context of Mar del Plata. The downtown area concentrates political, administrative, commercial, gastronomic, and tourism functions; it is also a center for passenger's public transport. Other neighborhoods, Las Lilas and Los Andes, add retail and wholesale trade, and industrial activities that do not require large areas, to the residential function Constitución, Parque Luro and Alfar are primarily residential, though some sections of these neighborhoods are tourist destinations, and along the seasons there are different dynamics. In short, the different areas of the city propose coexistence of activities, which are not always in harmony and establish, in such cases, discordant notes to the residential function.

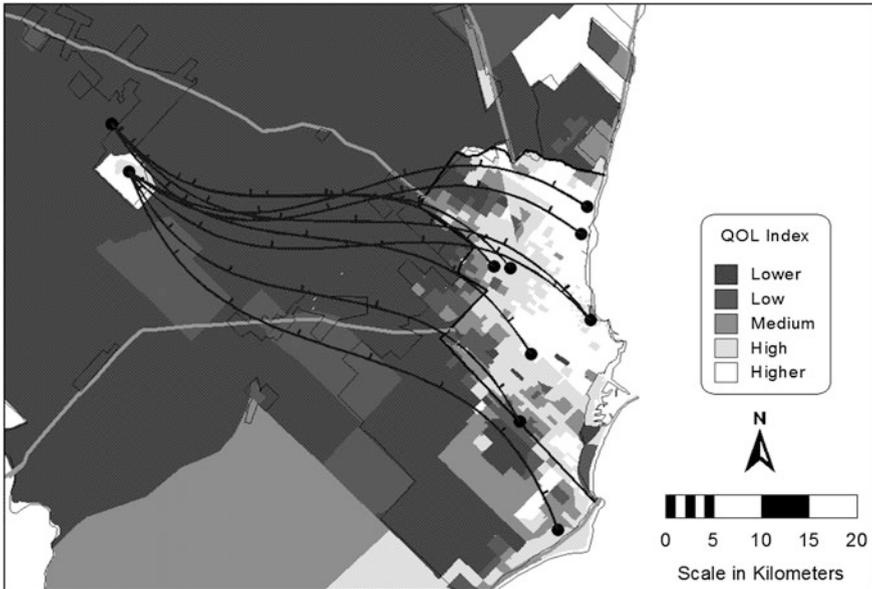


Fig. 4.3 *Sierra de los Padres-La Gloria de la Peregrina*. Quality of life index (This index is obtained from the weighted combination of socioeconomic indicators (education, health, and housing). The unit of analysis is census tracks of General Pueyrredon District. The results show clear high territorial inequality defined by rings where the quality of life decreases from the center of the city of Mar del Plata to its edges. Outside the main city are areas with a high quality of life, for example, Sierra de los Padres-La Gloria de la Peregrina, especially based on a medium high educational level, good quality of housing, and water supplied) (2010) and origin neighborhoods of interviewees. *Source* Own analysis based on primary data (2015) and Lucero et al. (2016b). Cartography. INDEC (2010) and GESPyT. UNMdP

As for levels of quality of life, it is noted that primary dynamics occurs between urban areas of high, or very high quality of life, and rururban areas of life quality between high and low, as it was identified in a previous work (Mikkelsen et al. 2011). These early findings show that, in the residential choice, satisfaction with life is related to issues that are not incorporated in the objective measurement of welfare (friendship, family harmony, closeness to nature environments, solidarity, among others).

Thus, interviewees show that the selection of the area of residence is based on the features of the place they associate with nature: green (even with some presence of native vegetation as thorns of the cross), afforestation (implanted), occasional wildlife watching (birds, hares, deer), or the chance to see the night sky without light interference. Serenity, silence, and personal security are complementary attributes in the definition of natural. Likewise, people underline the existence of community ties, using even the word community to describe the intensity of their relationships. These ties are evidenced, also, on shared values, solidarity, and

kindness in everyday life. We must add economic issue to these particularities, home ownership.

Quality of life index's highest value neighborhoods in Mar del Plata (Lucero et al. 2016a) correspond to the highest costs per square meter, greatly exceeding those identified in Sierra de los Padres-La Gloria de la Peregrina. The question of achievements (landowning, residing in a garden suburb, having infrastructure, quietness, low population density) can bring the decision to settle in a rururban area, resigning public services (water and gas mains, sewers, high frequency urban transport, range of educational, and health services, among others) and adding spatial distances to everyday practices.

Personal security is for many of them an advantage in the use of public spaces, compared to Mar del Plata. The lesser amount of crimes against persons and property is also an incentive to choose to reside in a smaller town. From the report on crime of October 2015 (Municipality of General Pueyrredon), and considering only theft in private homes, it is noticeable that, in the areas with the highest incidence of these events, some of the districts of origin of respondents are included: Los Andes, Peralta Ramos Oeste, and Cerrito Sur, in coincidence with the statements of these residents around insecurity that characterized his life before moving to Sierra de los Padres-La Gloria de la Peregrina.

4.5.2 *Commuting*

The analysis about where the fundamental activities of daily life take place, as well as the intensity of flows and preponderant transport modes, raises questions about the differential use of lands, interlacing possibilities, mobility skills, and financial capital of households.

The possibilities are offered to the population, but with limitations (Ares and Mikkelsen 2015). Thus, the use of public transport is regulated by traveling fares and frequencies; access to health care in private institutions requires social security or payment of fees. Meanwhile, public institutions (health and education) announce a variety of services, but they are sometimes difficult to materialize, because of budget shortages in the three governmental levels (national, provincial, and/or municipal) (for example, failure or malfunction of diagnostic equipment, lack of medical supplies, infrastructure deficit, wage claims).

Supplies are concentrated in the city of Mar del Plata, especially in the oldest and most established neighborhoods. The design of the routes of public transport helps reproduce social and territorial disparities because of difficulties (low frequency, linear paths, and monetary costs) to access certain areas of the district. Mobility capacities are dissimilar according to socioeconomic status and gender, and illustrate how it is possible or not to make expectations real. Concurrence between skills and possibilities indicates the availability of capital (Lévy 2002), and therefore results in different commuting strategies.

The different mobility scenarios relate to the cultural and economic capital of the individuals involved, incorporated in the evaluation of quality of life of General Pueyrredon (Lucero et al. 2016b), a condition that allows them to access different sets of options to meet their needs. Knowledge is a key constituent for greater efficiency in performing common tasks.

Possibility, skills, and capital meet what is desired, possible, and executed by individuals and families who make up the rururban communities, showing spaces created by mobility, energized by it, with overlapping stories of lives, knowledge, and land use.

Commuting features in Sierra de los Padres-La Gloria de la Peregrina are detailed below, a paradigmatic case of inequalities in the realization of spatial practices, which, however, have a low impact on the self-perception of welfare.

The study of the relationship between mobility *skills* and *possibilities* evidence greater access to opportunities by some people, closely linked to the dimensions of quality of life considered in constructing the index for the entire District. Thus, the best conditions of quality of life, marked by the educational level of the people, integration into the labor market, and housing characteristics, are fundamental when delineating mobility, knowing opinions, and taking advantage of them. Moreover, the degree of knowledge of the territory is a key asset for the organization and performance of common tasks.

In this sense, transport plays a leading role, especially public means, as it has a great influence on modes of mobility and on the construction of meanings related to freedom and travel options in the territory.

Concerning the study area, during the past decade, the Sierra and Colinas de los Padres neighborhoods, as well as La Gloria de la Peregrina, progressively incorporated a variety of shops, medical and dental private clinics, gyms facilities, and food markets in general, which not only alleviates daily work but also begins to set up a local labor market.

Thus, although some services are still scarce, it is detected how their presence affects commuting that combines the micro-local with the macro-local, taking advantage of the heterogeneity of supply and the adequacy of prices.

As for abilities that allow the development of commuting, whether in public or private transport, or by their own means (walking or cycling), all interviewees have their choice as they understand that it is associated with their literacy, physical abilities, and availability of economic capital—linked to income obtained through employment or retirement.

Greater differences are drawn upon recognizing the capabilities for the use of private motorized transport. In this sense, some people (5) have no driver's license, of these the vast majority is women. Half of them had a license in the past, but decided not to renew it for health and advanced age matters.

Regarding respondents who drive, there is slight predominance of men, who are often the priority household vehicle users, especially when the spouse is a homemaker and does not perform activities in the labor market. At least within the target population, only one household acknowledged having two cars. In the remaining

cases, vehicles are shared, although the prevailing practice was mentioned by the respondents as “block,” i.e., all the family together.

Among women, the highest propensity to resolve paths on foot is observed, in general micro-locally or within the city of Mar del Plata, taking advantage of “being there,” the relationship of proximity achieved many times with the aim of solving some activity, which then serves as a bridge for the realization of others.

When familiar skills are similar, large differences in the use of private cars are not established. As previously mentioned, block or family mobility paths are predominant, intended to save fuel (and money) and, in some cases, urged by a high dose of awareness of environmental care.

Finally, the use of public transport is vital in women and children for activities such as gymnastics, swimming, visits, or walks along Mar del Plata.

Mobilities associated with meeting the needs of resident individuals in the community under study are analyzed in the following paragraphs, aiming to daily shopping, education, leisure, formalities, work, and health.

About *public transport services*, residents issue makes an average qualification that helps reduce the feeling of remoteness. They emphasize how fast journeys can be made, provided they follow the schedule at the bus stop.

On *supplies or purchases* (Fig. 4.4), the role of Mar del Plata is central, although there are stores, butchers, pharmacies, supermarkets, and a variety of small shops that solve everyday needs in the same locations.

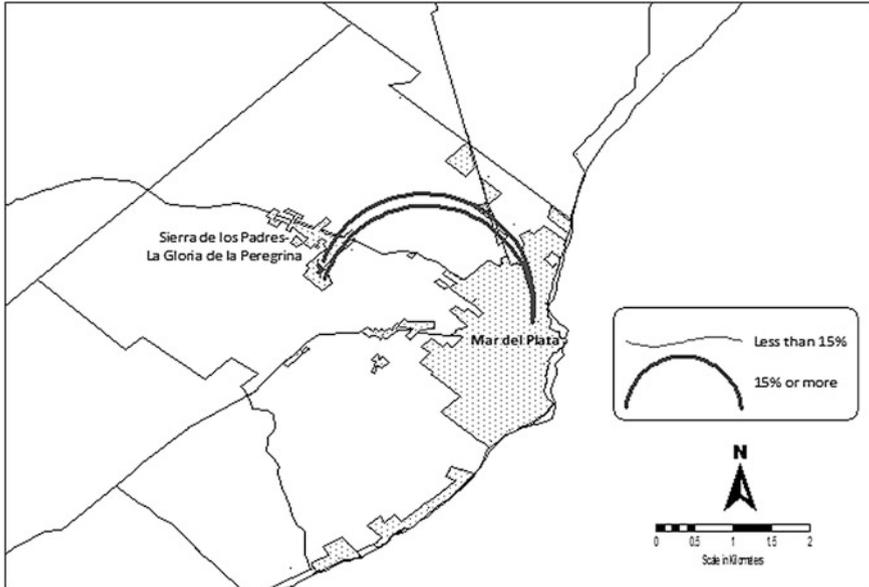


Fig. 4.4 Purchasing commuting. *Source* The author’s calculations based on primary data (2015)

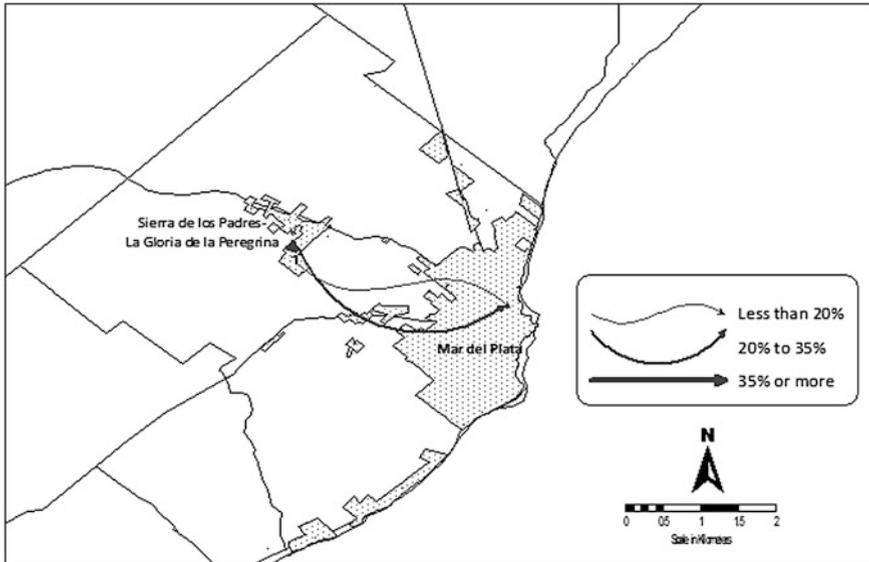


Fig. 4.5 Education Commuting. *Source* The author's calculations based on primary data (2015)

Regarding *attendance to educational institutions* (Fig. 4.5), Sierra de los Padres offers state education from preschool to high school. It was found that some households chose private institutions in the city of Mar del Plata, in some cases continuing the path of the children when they resided in the city. Others, however, chose the option of public school. Outstanding among these, some settled down in Sierra de los Padres when their children were already incorporated into the education system, and together with the change of place of residence, they made the transfer from private to rural schools. Others selected this last institution continuing the passage of their children through public kindergarten.

Referring to *employment* (Fig. 4.6), improvements occurred in 226 highways have increased the frequency of daily movements between Sierra de los Padres and other adjacent localities and the head city of the district. The existence of a local labor market is also noted, which requires shorter distance journeys. Thus we find rural jobs, teachers, professionals, and self-employed. Last two can manage their working hours with some independence, being associated with mobilities for unstructured work, where completely repetitive routines become rare (Lévy 2002).

Upon the *practices of leisure and recreation* (Fig. 4.7), the environmental location of the community is characterized by recreational use both of local residents and of Mar del Plata city residents, this as regards to the enjoyment of the landscape, hiking, biking, climbing, gastronomy, among other activities. However, recreations associated with attendance to cinemas, theaters, shopping malls, imply traveling to the city of Mar del Plata.

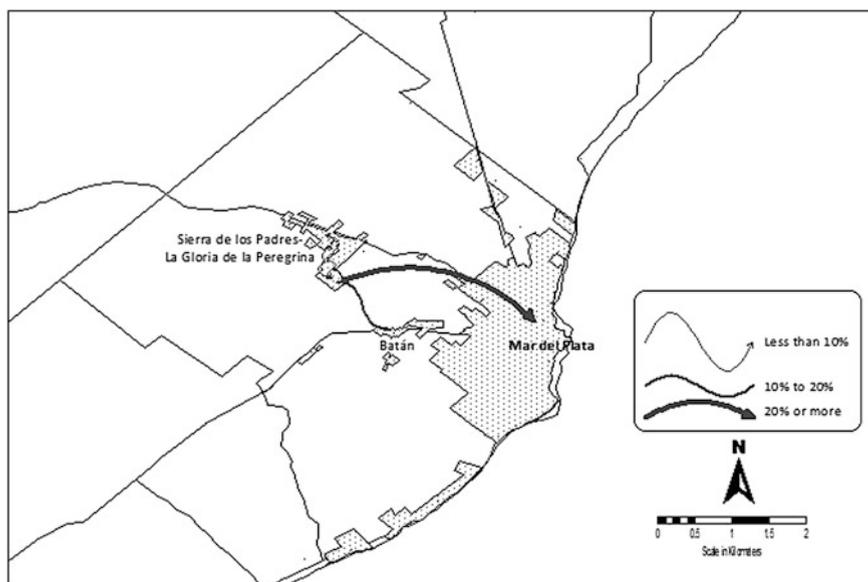


Fig. 4.6 Work Commuting. *Source* The author's calculations based on primary data (2015)

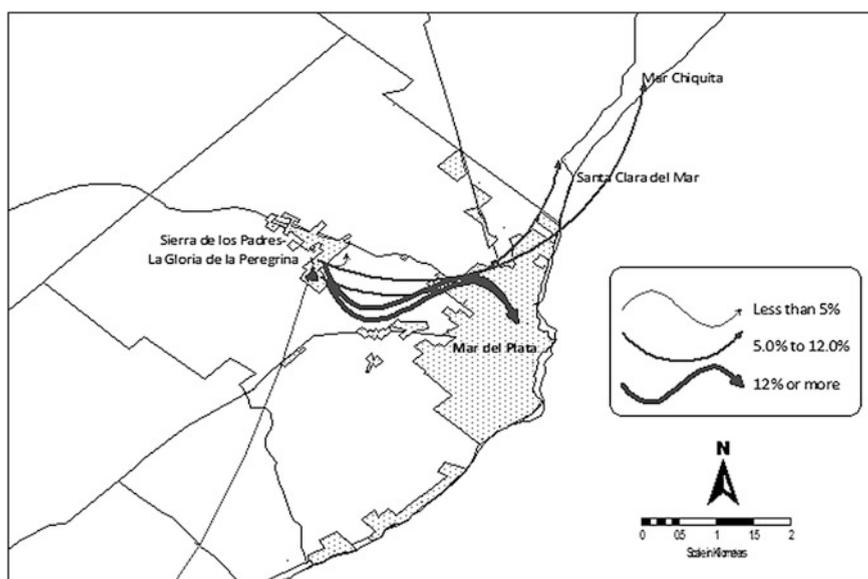


Fig. 4.7 Visits, recreation, and Sports Commuting. *Source* The author's calculations based on primary data (2015)

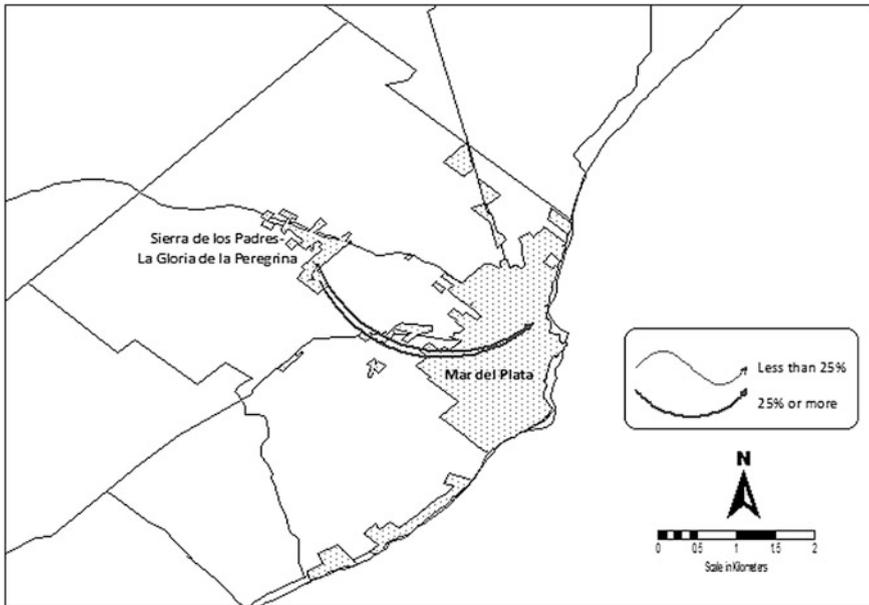


Fig. 4.8 Local government procedures and formalities Commuting. *Source* The author's calculations based on primary data (2015)

As for the tasks related to local *government procedures and formalities* (Fig. 4.8), Sierra de los Padres is home to a Municipal Delegation, a situation that allows decentralizing some payments and other district-related procedures. But in most cases Mar del Plata acts as a central node, with mobility flows in which the reasons for displacements are combined and overlapped as employment/shopping/procedures territorial strategies mobilities.

About *health care* (Fig. 4.9), it is important to mention the presence of a Health Unit in La Gloria de la Peregrina, with heterogeneous assessment by its users. Thus, the local residents receive medical services for both routine and emergencies care. As noted above, during the past 10 years Sierra de los Padres offered facilities for medical care in private clinics (pediatrics, general medicine, dentistry, psychology).

Lastly, it is interesting to refer to the difficulties of mobility, which have a connection with the physical and natural aspects and with ordinary weather phenomena. The physical and natural conditions, especially the green and undulating topography, can sometimes be hostile. There are areas where flooding occurs easily, making it difficult to get to local schools, to access routes or shops installed nearby.

In line with the natural aspects, the harshness of winter seems greater than what is suffered in other areas, because of the partial existence of a gas network infrastructure, which forces high expenditures on bottled gas or firewood. The remoteness of cities is a factor that helps you feel inside nature, but, at the same time, gives rise to certain territorial confinement, especially during the winter. During the summer, discomforts have to do with excessive heat and topography

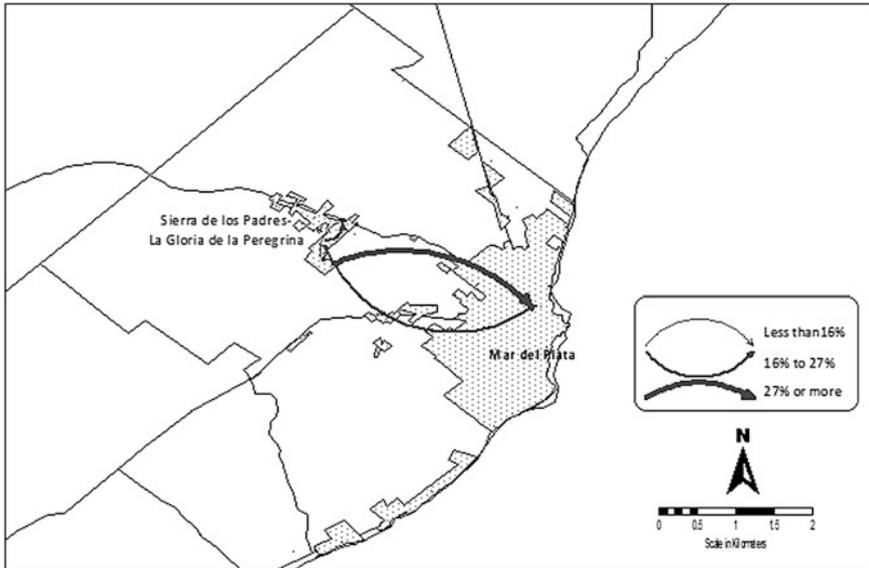


Fig. 4.9 Health Care Commuting. *Source* The author's calculations based on primary data (2015)

(this is a hilly area, some with steep slopes) especially for those who do not use own vehicle transportation.

The relationship between distance–quality of life–commuting is perceptible among the interviewees. Thus, there abound expressions of aversion to Mar del Plata in their testimonies, verbalized as “escaping from the city,” “I hate the city,” refusal to move back there and saying that they would not live in Mar del Plata again. There are few respondents who, despite their satisfaction with the hilly area, comment on the advantages of Mar del Plata, especially through the provision of services and recreational options (theaters, cinemas, shopping centers).

In concordance with animosity toward the city, they say that when living in Sierra de los Padres, people become hermits, with clear preference to minimize displacements.

Following the above analysis, it is envisioned that a central feature of hill dwellers lies in the meticulous organization of family life, both not to lose time in Mar del Plata and not to be found in inconvenient hours or days without certain supplies at home. Although they value the distance to Mar del Plata, some warn that, when choosing to reside in the hilly area, they must accept trips to the city without major problems.

None of the above considerations synthetically listed, however, conspires with their self-perception of well-being, focusing on the assessment and contemplation of nature, silence, slower times, the strength of social ties, and security.

4.6 Conclusions

It is of interest in this final section to review the proposed objective, to provide knowledge about common uneven mobilities of inhabitants of the rururban communities of General Pueyrredon, taking into account the service infrastructure linked to public transport, schools, and health centers. In this sense we have sought to further analyze the welfare conditions of inhabitants concerning commuting. In addition, the study of the commuting makes it possible to understand the spatial dynamics of the population living in small localities of the district, associated with overlapping transfers or trips for various reasons, such as supplying home, education, leisure, procedures, work, and health.

Unequal mobilities are a key factor in understanding the quality of life of the population and have been recovered from the survey of ten in-depth interviews in the rururban community of Sierra de los Padres-La Gloria de la Peregrina.

Methodologically, we interpreted the results as a contribution to studies on rururban communities and their quality of life in a qualitative key, therefore recovering the meaning and significance that for individuals has to choose rural territorial pieces of land as living geographical spaces. Their choice of these places is due to a multiplicity of causes, such as the ability to access home ownership, the value of land, proximity to natural environments, silence, the green areas. The progressive multiplication of the possibilities is shown on the territoriality processes, but these may be more accessible or elusive for residents depending, on their skills.

It is also necessary to consider the geographical space conditioning, related to 1—transportation costs (money, time), 2—lack of frequency with respect to public transport, and 3—restrictions of the offer in terms of educational or sanitary services that are supplemented by traveling to the city of Mar del Plata. The articulation of the three elements of mobility (possibilities, skills, and capital), suggests that the residents most exposed to the difficulties of mobility are women, children, and the elderly, especially with lower education or low income. It should be noted, however, that none of the surveyed cases is seen as a decline in self-rated quality of life due to the need to routinely travel outside the community. In any case it is important to mention that the quality of life goes along, to the study residents, more intangible or non-valuable issues in cost time or money, such as peace, family life, the enjoyment of nature, and the availability of spare time.

The possibility of complementing quantitative and qualitative views proposes a multiple approach to the concept of quality of life, promoting improvements of micro-geographical studies in combination with those of macro-geographic character.

Thus, the reading of the processes described at the local level has allowed recreate the residential expansion, coupled with the overlapping with existing uses, resulting in communities in which there is diversity, complexity, coexistence, and solidarity.

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Chapter 5

Crime and Failure of Community Life in Mexico

Mariano Rojas

Abstract The chapter studies the negative impact of crime and safety concerns on satisfaction with community life in Mexico. A large and representative data set from 100 Mexican urban municipalities is used. It is found that satisfaction with safety in the neighborhood is crucial for community satisfaction and that victimization has a very large impact on satisfaction with safety in the neighborhood. Crime has become a major driver for well-being deprivation in Mexico by reducing satisfaction with community life.

Keywords Happiness · Community well-being · Mexico · Crime · Safety

5.1 Introduction

Home sweet home. It is clear that home is much more than a house; it is a place where people interact with relatives and friends, where they arrange for the satisfaction of their needs and pursue their hobbies and pastimes. Beyond home, there is the neighborhood; neighborhoods are expected to be much more than mere collections of houses and apartments; they do constitute the immediate geographical space where people do perform many of the activities that are important in their life, such as: befriending neighbors, providing and getting emotional and economic support, playing with friends, accessing basic infrastructure such as parks, bars and temples, purchasing commodities and services at local stores, exercising and walking, enjoying relaxing moments, and so on. The neighborhood constitutes the adjacent habitat for all human beings, even in the present world of virtual-reality.

Like home, neighborhoods are expected to contribute to people's well-being. Satisfaction with the community one lives in is a significant factor explaining life satisfaction and, it is a domain where local and national governments can make an impact by providing the adequate amenities for the residents. Not all neighborhoods

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are identical; there are differences in the availability of infrastructure as well as in the characteristics of the residents. It is important to recognize that the contribution that the neighborhood can make to people's well-being does depend on each person's characteristics.

Some neighborhoods are friendlier while others may be unkind. During the past decade many neighborhoods in Mexico have seen their safety conditions worsening due to the drug-related increase in crime and violence in the country. Unfortunately robs, assaults, extortions, kidnappings, and even assassinations are frequent in some Mexican neighborhoods. This chapter follows sub-domains of life approach to study the importance safety-related concerns in the neighborhood have for community satisfaction.

The chapter also studies whether the socio-demographic characteristics of the persons matter for the importance of safety concerns. Are these concerns threatening community life in a generalized or in a population-focused way?

The empirical research is based on a large survey applied in 100 Mexican urban municipalities at the end of 2012. The survey has a total number of about 27,500 observations, and it is representative at the municipality level. The main purpose of the survey is to gather information regarding people's subjective well-being as well as to study the relevance of some municipality-level conditions.

Different proxies are used for safety concerns; in particular, the investigation works with information regarding satisfaction with safety in the neighborhood, confidence walking alone in the neighborhood at night, and victimization. The quantitative analyses section presents the main results from the econometric exercises; it deals with the importance of the safety in the neighborhood sub-domain and the impact of victimization. Some final considerations are made in the last section.

5.2 Theoretical Review

5.2.1 *Domains of Life. Community Satisfaction*

The literature on domains of life approaches life satisfaction as an overall assessment people make on the basis of their satisfaction in specific domains of life. The domains of life are understood as particular life areas where people perform and act as human beings; these areas must have meaning to people in the way they understand and structure their life. Common domains which are studied by researchers are: family relations, relationship with friends, health condition, economic situation, job, and community (Cummins 1996; Rojas 2006) There is an extensive literature on factors explaining satisfaction in each domain of life; for example, on the study of how divorce and work affect family relations.

The community domain makes reference to the nearest geographical area where people perform many relevant activities; it is not surprising for the community domain to have a statistically significant impact on life satisfaction. There are many

features in the neighborhood that may be relevant for community satisfaction and, of course, some of them may be more important than others. Sirgy and Cornwell (2002) point towards community amenities such as up-keeping of homes and yards, landscape, street lighting, noise, social interactions, clean air, outdoor play space, neighbors, crime, sense of privacy, cost of living, and others.

Ross and Jang (2000) and Ross et al. (2000) show that social disorder symptoms in the community significantly increase neighbor's fear and mistrust. Research by Stigsdotter et al. (2010), Ewing et al. (2003), Doyle et al. (2006) and Jackson et al. (2009) show that healthcare facilities, museums, theaters, cafes, pubs, shops, and sport facilities do have an impact on community satisfaction. Local governments do have some degree of control over the existence and quality of these amenities; thus, it is possible to think about designing and implementing local policy for well-being (Bovaird and Löffler 2003).

The study of community satisfaction in some Latin American cities received a boost in 2010 thanks to a research project carried out by the Inter-American Development Bank. Lora et al. (2010) present some case studies of housing satisfaction in main Latin American cities such as Bogotá, Buenos Aires, and Lima. These studies show the important role that neighborhood amenities play in determining rental prices and housing satisfaction. Some studies go even further in order to compute the monetary equivalent value of amenities such as access to running water, sewage system, drainage, street lighting, sidewalks in good condition, and trees in the street, finding out that the estimated value is important (Gandelman et al. 2012).

A serious problem with cross-sectional studies is that the amenities people have access to cannot be considered as exogenously determined. As a matter of fact, people have an incentive to move across neighborhoods in order to have access to those amenities they value more. Ludwig et al. (2008) take advantage of a randomized experiment in order to study the impact of some neighborhood amenities on subjective well-being; they find out that these amenities have an important impact. In addition, their research indicates that neighborhood safety is a major concern which has a larger impact on subjective well-being than improvements in housing quality.

Bayulken and Huisingh (2014) find out that neighbors' perceived quality of life not only depends on the particular amenities in the community but also on the way in which people interact with these amenities on a daily basis. Thus, community satisfaction is not only a matter of the attributes a neighborhood has but also of the characteristics and requirements each neighbor has. Their research is important because it points out towards the potential existence of asymmetries in the relationship between neighborhood amenities and neighbors' well-being. For example, the impact on an amenity such as playgrounds may not be the same for single people than for married people with kids.

5.2.2 Safety in the Neighborhood. A Sub-domain of Life

Satisfaction with the community can also be understood as an overall assessment which is made on the basis of satisfaction in specific sub-domains. This sub-domains-of-life approach is used by Sirgy and Cornwell (2002) to explain life satisfaction as a hierarchical model where life satisfaction is explained by community satisfaction—as well as by satisfaction in other domains of life—and community satisfaction is explained by satisfaction with the neighborhood's social, economic, and physical features.

The perception of safety in the neighborhood is a sub-domain that has attracted a lot of attention. Early studies show that it is of the highest relevance in explaining community satisfaction (Droettboom et al. 1971; Hartnagel 1979; Weidemann and Anderson 1982), while recent studies go deeper into the nature of the relationship. For example, Scarborough et al. (2010) find out that fear of crime depends both on personal characteristics as well as on particular amenities in the neighborhood. These two factors interact and, in consequence, the same amenities may have a larger or smaller impact on people's fear of crime depending on the demographic characteristics of the person.

Concerns about safety in the neighborhood constitute a main threat to community life; however, it is not so clear how people react to this threat. It seems reasonable to expect for people who are highly concerned about safety in the neighborhood to reduce their community participation, with a negative impact on community satisfaction.

Besides amenities and socio-demographic characteristics, satisfaction with safety in the neighborhood is explained by other life events. Of particular importance is being the victim of robbery, assault, or other kind of crime. Victimization can be considered as an extreme case where the threat to safety has been realized. Michalos and Zumbo (2000) found a negative relation between victimization and life satisfaction in a study in British Columbia, Kuroki (2013) works with a Japanese data set which contains information on burglary and robbery; the study finds that low-income people are greatly affected by victimization than high-income people. Kuroki also finds that burglary and robbery imply a non-pecuniary cost which is larger than pecuniary losses. Similar results about the negative impact of victimization on life satisfaction are found by many recent studies (Powdthavee 2007; Staubli et al. 2014; Ambrey et al. 2013; Davies and Hinks 2010; Cohen 2008).

5.3 Database, Variables, and Descriptive Statistics

About 27,500 questionnaires were applied in the year 2012 in the 100 largest urban municipalities of Mexico. This survey was applied by ImaginaMéxico A.C. with the purpose of gathering information about people's subjective well-being as

well as to explore the main municipality-level factors explaining it. The survey is representative at the municipality level.

The following information regarding satisfaction in the community domains was gathered:

Community satisfaction. The following question was asked: How satisfied are you with the community where you live? The response scale is ordinal, with seven response categories: extremely dissatisfied, very dissatisfied, somehow dissatisfied, neither dissatisfied nor satisfied, somehow satisfied, very satisfied, and extremely satisfied. This variable is treated as cardinal from 1 (extremely dissatisfied) to 7 (extremely satisfied). Table 5.1 presents the frequency distribution for this variable; it is observed that about 11% of people in the survey are dissatisfied—at different levels—with their community; while 46% are very or extremely satisfied.

Satisfaction with different services in the community. The following group of questions was asked: How satisfied are you with _____ in your community? The options under consideration are: Garbage collection, street lighting, recreational infrastructure (parks, green areas, and sport facilities), road conditions, and safety in the neighborhood. The response scale for each one of these questions is similar to that for the satisfaction with the community question. Table 5.2 presents descriptive statistics for these variables; it is observed that satisfaction is quite low in the road conditions and safety in the neighborhood sub-domains, with mean values beneath

Table 5.1 Community satisfaction frequency distribution Mexico, 2012

	Frequency	Percent
Extremely dissatisfied	320	1.17
Very dissatisfied	826	3.01
Somehow dissatisfied	1766	6.43
Neither dissatisfied nor satisfied	3199	11.65
Somehow satisfied	8702	31.70
Very satisfied	11,064	40.30
Extremely satisfied	1576	5.74
Total	27,453	100

Source ImaginaMéxico A.C. 2012 Survey

Table 5.2 Satisfaction in community sub-domains mean values, 1–7 scale Mexico, 2012

	Mean	Std. Dev.
Safety	3.91	1.61
Garbage collection	4.61	1.48
Street lighting	4.46	1.49
Recreational infrastructure	4.12	1.61
Road conditions	3.87	1.67
Community satisfaction	5.14	1.20

Note The response scale goes from (extremely dissatisfied) to 7 (extremely satisfied)

Source ImaginaMéxico A.C. 2012 Survey

Table 5.3 Satisfaction with safety situation in the neighborhood frequency distribution Mexico, 2012

	Frequency	Percent
Extremely dissatisfied	2405	8.77
Very dissatisfied	3952	14.41
Somehow dissatisfied	4670	17.03
Neither dissatisfied nor satisfied	4490	16.38
Somehow satisfied	7053	25.72
Very satisfied	4277	15.6
Extremely satisfied	572	2.09
Total	27,419	100

Source ImaginaMéxico A.C. 2012 Survey

Table 5.4 Victimization and confidence of walking alone in the neighborhood cross-tabulation, Mexico 2012

	No victim	Victim	Total
High confidence	4079	485	4564
Confident	11,406	1553	12,959
Not confident	7057	2585	9642
Total	22,542	4623	27,165

Source ImaginaMéxico A.C. 2012 Survey

the “neither satisfied nor unsatisfied”. Satisfaction is much greater—although not high—in the garbage collection and street-lighting sub-domains.

Table 5.3 presents the frequency distribution for the Safety sub-domain. As observed, almost 9% of people in the survey manifest being extremely dissatisfied with the safety situation in their neighborhood. In total, 40% of people in Mexico report being dissatisfied with safety situation in their neighborhood. Only 2% report being extremely satisfied, which is quite low.

Victimization. The following question was asked: Have you being a victim of crime during the last year? The response scale is dichotomous; with 17% of people responding “Yes” and 83% responding “No”. Victimization can be considered as an extreme-case variable that represents the realization of a probability, but the probability of being victimized may suffice to affect people’s well-being and to reduce their satisfaction with community life. A related variable which probably better represents this probability is the confidence people have of walking alone in their neighborhood at night. The survey does also contain this information.

Walking confidence. The following question was asked: How safe do you feel walking alone at night in the neighborhood? The response scale is ordinal, with the following three categories: Very safe (17% of people in the survey provided this answer), Safe (48% provided this answer), and Not safe (35% responded in this category). Table 5.4 shows that there is a correlation between walking alone and victimization, but a lot of people who have not being victim of crime do also have no confidence to walk alone in their neighborhood at night. 56% of those who have been victim of crime express no confidence at all of walking at night in the neighborhood; this figure is 31% for those who have not been victim of crime. On the other hand, only 10% of those who have been victim of crime express high

confidence, while the figure is 18% for those who have not been victim of crime. 31% of all people who have not been victim of crime still express no confidence of walking alone in the neighborhood. Thus, the “walking confidence” variable contains more information about safety concerns than the victimization one.

The survey also gathered the usual socio-demographic and economic information: Gender, age in years, education in categories, household per capita income, and marital status.

5.4 Quantitative Analyses and Main Results

5.4.1 *Importance of Sub-domains in Explaining Community Satisfaction*

The following regression analysis was performed in order to study the importance the five sub-domains under consideration have in explaining satisfaction with the community people live in.

$$CS_i = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 Saf_i + \alpha_2 Garb_i + \alpha_3 StrLig_i + \alpha_4 Recr_i + \alpha_5 Road_i + \mu_i, \quad (5.1)$$

where

- CS community satisfaction.
- Saf satisfaction with safety in the neighborhood.
- Garb satisfaction with garbage collection in the neighborhood.
- StrLig satisfaction with street lighting in the neighborhood.
- Recr satisfaction with recreational infrastructure in the neighborhood.
- Road satisfaction with road conditions in the neighborhood.
- μ error term which is assumed to be independent and identically distributed.
- i makes reference to person i .
- α_j parameters to be estimated, $j = 0, \dots, 5$.

An ordinary least squares (OLS) technique was implemented to estimate the parameters. Table 5.5 presents the results from the econometric exercise.

Safety is the sub-domain which shows the largest impact in community satisfaction; with an estimated coefficient of 0.11 it is possible to state that people who are extremely satisfied with safety in the neighborhood are almost one point more satisfied with their community than people who are extremely dissatisfied with safety in the neighborhood. Following the Safety sub-domain in importance are the Garbage collection and Street-lighting sub-domains. All sub-domains have a positive and statistically significant impact on Community satisfaction. However, the explanatory power of the five sub-domains under consideration is low, with an R squared coefficient of only 0.1; which suggests that many other community factors, as well as personality traits and family circumstances, do also contribute in the explanation of Community satisfaction.

Table 5.5 Explaining community satisfaction a sub-domains approach OLS regression Mexico 2012

	Coefficient	P > t
Safety	0.108	0.00
Garbage collection	0.068	0.00
Street lighting	0.058	0.00
Recreational infrastructure	0.033	0.00
Road conditions	0.050	0.00
Intercept	3.816	0.00
R^2	0.1	
N	26,995	

Note The response scale goes from (extremely dissatisfied) to 7 (extremely satisfied)

Regression on the basis of specification (1)

Source ImaginaMéxico A.C. 2012 Survey

Table 5.6 Importance of the safety sub-domain in explaining community satisfaction by socio-demographic and economic groups OLS regressions Mexico, 2012

	Coef.	P > t	Coef.	P > t	Coef.	P > t	Coef.	P > t
Age range ^a	18–25		26–40		41–60		61 and more	
Safety	0.117	0.00	0.105	0.00	0.104	0.00	0.108	0.00
Income range ^b	0–1000		1001–1500		1501–2000		2001 and more	
Safety	0.115	0.00	0.103	0.00	0.101	0.00	0.104	0.00
Gender	Men		Women					
Safety	0.106	0.00	0.110	0.00				

Regressions on the basis of specification (1)

Source ImaginaMéxico A.C. 2012 Survey

^aAge in years

^bMonthly household per capita income in Mexican pesos. Exchange rate was approximately MXN \$ 13 per US\$ 1

5.4.2 *Asymmetries in the Importance of the Safety Sub-domain by Socio-Demographic Characteristics*

A common argument in the literature points towards the importance of satisfaction in domains of life varying according to some socio-demographic characteristics of the person. This argument could also apply to the sub-domains of life situation in the community; satisfaction with safety in the neighborhood could be more important for some socio-demographic groups than for others. In order to explore this idea different regressions using specification (1) were estimated for subpopulations on the basis of gender, age, and household income. Gender is dichotomous, while income and age ranges were constructed. Table 5.6 presents a synthesis of the main results from these regression exercises. The main conclusion is that there are no significant differences in the relevance of the Safety sub-domain in Community satisfaction across age, income, and gender groups. Thus, it is possible

to state that satisfaction with safety in the neighborhood is equally important for men and women, young and elder, and rich and poor.

5.4.3 *Victimization and Satisfaction with Safety in the Neighborhood*

Victimization is a life event that changes people’s relation with their near habitat. The data set has information regarding whether the interviewed person was a victim of crime during the last year. 17% of people were victim of crime in Mexico.

The following regression analysis was performed in order to study the importance that victimization plays in explaining satisfaction with safety in the neighborhood:

$$Saf_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 Woman_i + \beta_2 Age_i + \beta_3 Age_sq_i + \beta_4 \log Yhpc_i + \beta_5 Victim_i + \theta_i, \tag{5.2}$$

where

- Saf satisfaction with safety in the neighborhood. 1–7 scale.
- Woman a dichotomous variable with value of 1 if woman and value of 0 if men.
- Age age in years.
- Age_sq squared age.
- logYhpc natural logarithm of household per capita income.
- Victim a dichotomous variable with value of 1 if person has been victim of crime during the last year and 0 otherwise.
- θ error term which is assumed to be independent and identically distributed.
- i makes reference to person i .
- β_j parameters to be estimated, $j = 0, \dots, 5$.

Table 5.7 presents the estimated coefficients from an OLS regression based on Eq. (5.2). Being a victim of crime substantially reduces people’s satisfaction with

Table 5.7 Explaining satisfaction with safety in the neighborhood OLS regression Mexico, 2012

	Coef.	P > t
Woman	-0.110	0.00
Age	-0.012	0.00
Age_sq	0.017	0.00
logYhpc	0.147	0.00
Victim of crime	-0.654	0.00
Intercept	3.211	0.00
N	19,272	
R^2	0.11	

Regression on the basis of specification (2)

Source ImaginaMéxico A.C. 2012 Survey

safety in the neighborhood; the estimated coefficient is -0.65 , which is quite large. One way of understanding the magnitude of this impact is comparing it with the impact of a rise in household per capita income; an increase of 100% in income would result in an increase of 0.147 (in a scale from 1 to 7) in satisfaction with safety in the neighborhood. Thus, an increase of about 440% in income would be required to compensate a person for her loss in satisfaction with safety in the neighborhood due to victimization. As it can be seen the cost in community satisfaction due to crime is substantial.

Satisfaction with safety in the neighborhood shows a U-shaped relationship with age; it declines with age up to about 35 years old and then rises. Women are less satisfied than men.

5.4.4 Asymmetries in the Impact of Victimization by Socio-Demographic Characteristics

Asymmetries in the impact of victimization by socio-demographic characteristics are expected. The previous econometric exercise of Eq. (5.2) is now implemented across age, income and gender groups. Table 5.8 presents the estimated values for the victimization coefficient.

It is observed that mid-age groups do experience a greater loss in satisfaction with safety in the neighborhood than young and elder groups. The impact of victimization is also higher for high-income groups than for low-income ones. No gender differences are observed. Even though some differences across income and age ranges can be observed, in general all groups are substantially impacted by victimization.

Table 5.8 Victimization and satisfaction with safety in the neighborhood by socio-demographic and economic groups OLS regressions Mexico, 2012

	Coef.	P > t	Coef.	P > t	Coef.	P > t	Coef.	P > t
Age range ^a	18–25		26–40		41–60		61 and more	
Victim of crime	-0.600	0.01	-0.697	0.00	-0.662	0.00	-0.589	0.00
Income range ^b	0–1000		1001–1500		1501–2000		2001 and more	
Victim of crime	-0.607	0.00	-0.651	0.00	-0.633	0.00	-0.748	0.00
Gender	Men		Women					
Victim of crime	-0.644	0.00	-0.667	0.00				

Regression on the basis of specification (1)

Source ImaginaMéxico A.C. 2012 Survey

^aAge in years

^bMonthly household per capita income in Mexican pesos. Exchange rate was approximately MXN \$ 13 per US\$ 1

5.5 Final Comments

The community is central to all human beings, it constitutes an extended home and it is influential in people's well-being. Most of the amenities at the community level can be influenced by local policy, but it is not clear whether these amenities are equally relevant to all socio-demographic groups. It is important to have good information about what people value and what makes them better off in order to implement appropriate policies for well-being.

This chapter presented the main findings from research that studies the role that safety in the neighborhood plays in community satisfaction in Mexico. Safety in the neighborhood has become a major issue as the crime rates have increased during the past decade not only as a consequence of drug-trafficking but also of organized groups. It was found that safety is a very important sub-domain of life and much more important than other community-level assessments such as satisfaction with street lighting, road conditions, availability of recreational infrastructure, and garbage collection. In addition, the importance that the safety sub-domain has in explaining community satisfaction is similar across socio-demographic and economic groups; there are no differences across age, gender and economic groups in the relevance safety satisfaction has for community satisfaction.

The investigation also found that victimization—being a victim of crime during the past 12 months—has an enormous impact on people's satisfaction with safety in the neighborhood. It reduces safety satisfaction in the equivalent of 440% increase in household income. It is important to state that about 17% of people in this representative survey manifest having being victim of some crime during the past month. Thus, the well-being impact of crime is substantial and it is destroying community life. The negative impact of victimization in people's satisfaction with safety in the neighborhood is large and it shows up across all gender, age and income groups. Crime constitutes a threat to community life and it has negative consequences for the well-being of people.

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Chapter 6

The Community Program for Neighborhood Improvement in Mexico City

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Abstract This chapter provides a general overview on a successful citizen participation experience that emerged with the implementation of the “Programa Comunitario de Mejoramiento Barrial (PCMB)—Community Program of Neighborhood Improvement—in Mexico City, which has a direct impact on the quality of life of its beneficiaries. Paper is divided into two sections. The first one presents a basic theoretical and methodological framework for understanding the construction of new spaces for social development in Mexico. The framework emphasizes three reflection scopes: (1) the contemporary debate over the construction of citizenship and the idea of community social capital; (2) the benefits derived in a joint effort between the government and citizenry; and (3) the contextual elements that identify Mexico City as an analysis unit to reflect on citizen participation in Mexico. In the second part, an overhaul on a successful experience of citizen participation is set forth. This previous experience emerged with the startup in 2007 of PCBM in Mexico City. After the review of some results of this Program, it is possible to identify a nascent construction of the Community Social Capital with coordinated efforts of the Federal District Government and organized civil society. In addition, the data encourage considering that, such program enable the organization of society to endorse the demands solutions that would have an impact in their quality of life.

Keywords Social development · Quality of life · Citizen participation · Community social capital · Civil society

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© Springer International Publishing AG 2017
G. Tonon (ed.), *Quality of Life in Communities of Latin Countries*,
Community Quality-of-Life and Well-Being,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-53183-0_6

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6.1 Development

Defining *development* and finding a method in order to achieve it continues being a debate in progress. Despite the existing lack of consensus, it is crucial to remark the insatiable quest that nations have eagerly undertaken so as to design mechanisms that counteract the contradictions of economic and political models implemented in several latitudes, primarily because these models seem incompatible with those referring social development. This lack of “consistency” is no minor thing, as due in the first instance, to critical factors preventing their affinity.

We have then the term *development*, which has been an adhered topic throughout the historical course of the twentieth century, without even having a common definition or a general acceptance on how to measure and calculate it, in more than sixty years of political and social praxis.

In view of this circumstance, various questions arise about the accompanying dissertation. On the international ambit, there have been inquiries regarding the emergence of a series of organizations that legitimized the development use for several years, boosted its speech, and imposed mechanisms to establish it as a world classification parameter.

At the local level, the adoption of *development* as a measure and the implementation of the recommended instruments in order to “achieve it” have had to avoid structural problems, which in most cases have turned into their exacerbation.

The case of Mexico is part of this double logic. Due its own historical course it was not a country that could take lead within the modern geopolitical division. Subsequently, it is placed as a viewer inside the group of nations that adopt the discourse on *development* as a goal to accomplish. Additionally, laying on fragile internal infrastructure and having the firm aspiration of inserting itself into the international leadership, Mexico adopts a social development speech, which is characterized by its diffusion and constant changes.

Since the historical course of the country is irreversible, different decisions that have been taken with the consequences that these implicate cannot be withdrawn. This is perhaps the main reason why studies regarding Mexican development in their first stages, offered a description on its economic, legal, or political administration foundations, aiming to help the comprehension of the background and its characteristics (Cordera and Tello 1981; Kaplan 1985; Ayala Espino 1988). On the other hand, recent endeavors from further disciplines such as political science and sociology have aimed to find more integral perspectives where the inclusion of new analytical outlooks could orient us towards distinct courses, which in turn imply new challenges (Farfán 2006; Valverde Viesca and Salas-Porrás 2005; Gutiérrez Márquez 2005; Valverde Viesca 2008).

With this framework, it is interesting to recover some elements to analyze the *development* as a set of ideas, speeches, processes, institutions, organizations, and actors that constitute a complex setup for society and therefore a support to accommodate it.

Thus, since historical institutionalism, it is possible to speak of *development* as an idea, a concept, a goal to achieve, even an ideal that through the historical occurrence structures and sorts both, societies and human beings that comprise them. From this point of view, development transformation is due to the institutionalization process by means of which different ideas established informal and formal rules in order to promote it. Also, a set of organizations applied these rules and made them possible.

The scheme has suffered alterations at various times of the historical course and during this progression, it has incorporated elements that have not been properly assessed yet (Valverde Viesca 2009). To analyze these and other components is a challenge for scholars on topics such as citizenship construction; quality democracy; social capital; subjective well-being; and quality of life, to name just a few.

This paper reflex about new spaces for social development with emphasis in the *Programa Comunitario de Mejoramiento Barrial* (PCMB)—Community Program for Neighborhood Improvement—in Mexico City. It is divided into two sections. The first one presents a basic theoretical and methodological framework for understanding the construction of new spaces for social development in Mexico. The framework emphasizes three reflection scopes: (1) the contemporary debate over the construction of citizenship and the idea of community social capital; (2) the benefits derived in a joint effort between the government and citizenry; and (3) the contextual elements that identify Mexico City as an analysis unit to reflect on citizen participation in Mexico. In the second part, an overhaul on a successful experience of citizen participation is set forth. This previous experience emerged with the startup in 2007 of PCBM in Mexico City. After the review of some results of this Program, it is possible to identify a nascent construction of the Community Social Capital with coordinated efforts of the Federal District Government and organized civil society. In addition the data encourage considering that, such program enables the organization of society to endorse the demands solutions that would have an impact in their quality of life. For the Mexican case and for purposes of these papers it is important to distinguish between civil society and organized civil society (OSC). This last one characterized for playing an active role in policy-making, government programs, public budget, goals and accountability. Since 2004 Mexico has a Federal Law for Promoting Activities of Civil Society Organizations (*Ley Federal de Fomento a las actividades realizadas por Organizaciones de la Sociedad civil*).

6.2 Construction of New Spaces for Social Development in Mexico

As a preamble, it is convenient to revise the reasons why it is necessary to construct new spaces for social development in Mexico. Moreover, why these different ambits are able to boost the construction of citizenship and improve the quality of life of its inhabitants.

In the past few years, Mexico just as most of Latin American countries has devoted much of its efforts to the process of democratic transition. In order to do so, the country has primarily driven two aspects of the liberalization phase: the one regarding the economy, focusing on trade liberalization and financial competition; and the one that concerns politics, which is limited to the electoral field. It is important to mention that in the beginning, this process did not include an opening in terms of building a new relationship between the Government and the citizenry, i.e., for several years it dropped the social reform impulse and thereby the yearnings of millions of people who assumed that the democratic arrival would bring a benefit in terms of quality of life.

While making reference to the relationship between democracy and development necessarily refers to a link under construction (BID/CEPAL/PNUD 1995; PNUD 2002, 2004; Boutros 2003) it seems to be more or less a coincidence in sustaining the need for more equitable societies in economic and social fields in order to consolidate the democratic model. This apparent interaction between the effectiveness of democracy and the achievement of development reveals some interesting lessons

1. *Consolidation of electoral democracies.* Apparently, in the majority of Latin American countries citizens are caught upon a deceptive speech about quality of democracy that currently invades national agendas, but whose results are far from being acceptable or sufficient, particularly in those countries as Mexico, that have been identified as electoral democracies (PNUD 2004). As an example, there are democracies where the holding of periodic elections is distinctive and at the same time, the income distribution in the mentioned societies is characterized for its inequity and inequality.
2. *Societies without citizens.* A decade ago, reference was made to the existence of “a vicious circle among more democratic, more unequal and less participative societies” (Boutros 2003). Nowadays, this paradox among societies that shifted towards democracy and managed to build an electoral political structure with the purpose of ensuring the periodic holding of elections cohabits with the presence of societies without citizens. That is, a group of the population who cannot exercise their political nor their social rights being subsumed in poverty, marginalization, and exclusion.
3. *The achievement of development is not restricted to democratic models.* Another lesson that arises in the current democracy and development debate is associated with the fact that during the 1990s, countries with democratic governments and outside the Latin America region, observed the raising of the destitution levels within their population, while authoritarian State achieved certain improvements in the quality of life of their societies (Wade 2003). Some studies show that in the year 2002, 140 countries of the world lived under democratic regimes but only 82 of them there was a full democracy since many democratically elected Governments tend to hold their authority with non-democratic methods (PNUD 2002). To reinforce the above, it is worth noting that in the past 25 years, China

managed to counter the poverty conditions among 600 million of its inhabitants (World Bank 2013).

4. *Monitoring community well-being before program design.* Social Policies and focus programs are not enough if people are not improving their well-being. This means that life satisfaction and quality of life are important factors for governability. Some authors (Diener and Suh 1997; Sirgy et al. 2008) by empirical research highlighted the impact of measuring and monitoring residents' perception of well-being in policy-making and programs design. Sirgy et al. (2010) developed a new measure of community well-being, commitment to the community and their overall life satisfaction. Studies are based on the notion that community residents perceive that the quality of life (QOL) impacts in community services and conditions in the context of 14 life domains: social life, leisure life, health life, safety, family/home, political, spiritual life, neighborhood, environmental, transportation, education, work, financial, and consumer life.

In view of the above, the current debate on the role of the society constitutes a substantive commencement to break the inertia that defines the governmental policies of traditional doctrine. The dismantling of the Latin American Model of Social Protection is a reality and the commitment to consolidate a democracy citizenship deepens every day. With regard to the relevance that day by day empowers society, on March 14, 2013 UNDP presented its most recent Report on Human Development in Mexico City. In this document, four areas in which the governmental agendas of developing countries should center are appointed

1. Social Equity guarantee.
2. Free expression and participation acceptance.
3. Environmental Pressures Addressing.
4. Managing demographic change.

As to the participation issue, document alludes to the Human Development Report by Mahbub ul Haq that signalizes collaboration as the only certain route that could guarantee the confluence between development and the actual needs of the population, as well as the sustainability of these results.

By means of analyzing the advancement possibilities that the Southern World has experienced and may experience in the future, the Report of 2013 concluded: "Policies also need to consider other forces influencing development, especially, the critical participation of the people in the processes that shape their lives. The participation demand grows as people are more educated and more entailed" (PNUD 2013: 103).

6.2.1 The Debate on Community Social Capital

The idea of People Participation being a determinative factor in terms of contributing to government policies success, and the fact that citizenship construction is

directly related to the acquisition of rights, has aroused a debate over the relevance of social capital in recent years. Thus, the current debate revolves around the analysis of social capital based on interpersonal relationships and the one depending on linkage among the members of society. In the first posture, authors as Putnam (1993) consider that social capital integrates the norms, institutions, and organizations that promote trust and cooperation between people, communities, and society as a whole. In the second standpoint, a particular form of social capital is emphasized, this outlook considers cultural norms of trust and interpersonal reciprocity networks as “precursors” of those institutions, which are more complex and guided by rules of common welfare (Durston 1999). This form is denominated community social capital on the basis that communities are

...Much more than networks; even more than “circumscribed” networks. The classical definition of community encompasses aspects of coordinated activity with certain common purpose, self-government, cultural superstructure, and notion of identity. The community social capital consists of the structures that form the institutionalization of community cooperation. It resides not only within the set of interpersonal dyadic relationships networks, but also in the socio-cultural system of each community, in their legal, administrative, and sanctioning structures. (Durston 2003: 160).¹

Under this perspective, the context of each country determines not only the relations between government and society, but the interaction between society, communities, and citizens (Tonon 2012). Thus, in political and social contexts where the relationship between democracy and development seems to be a smoke curtain instead of a concrete program, the consent of the citizenship and its fortification as a social right becomes relevant. Mexico is no exception.

As it has been remarked, the liberalization stage privileged the economic and political fields during the democratic transition process. However, in accordance with some recommendations established by international organizations and in response to a series of internal social pressures, in the middle of the 1990s a number of actions were promoted and resulted in the creation of the Citizen Participation Law for the Federal District (*Ley de Participación Ciudadana para el Distrito Federal*) in 1995. Subsequently these promoted the approval of two regulations in 2004. The General Law of Social Development (*Ley General de Desarrollo Social*) and the Federal Law for Promoting Activities of Civil Society Organizations (*Ley Federal de Fomento a las actividades realizadas por Organizaciones de la Sociedad civil*) from which a national regulatory framework was incorporated for the first time, to regulate the institutional agenda in order to achieve Mexican development and civil society participation.

Among other things, it included two crucial aspects to promote a new relationship between society and government, particularly, referring to the design of public policies and the pursuit for solutions to problems such as poverty and disparity growth. The first one correlates to the proposal of implementing various mechanisms of citizen participation as the social comptrollerships, which also

¹Is our translation.

legitimized the processes of accountability. The second one established measurement indicators and discussed terms of collaboration, coordination, and intergovernmental consultation. Also, intersectional, multilevel, and society entailment, through government agencies such as: the National System of Social Development; the National Committee on Social Development; the Interministerial Commission; the Advisory Council for Social development; the National Council of Social Development and the National Council of Evaluation on Social Development Policy (*Consejo Nacional de Evaluación de la Política de Desarrollo Social*, CONEVAL) (Valverde Viesca and Palma Delgado 2006).

To this date, although the implementation of the institutional scaffolding reveals lots of sharp edges, it has also launched innovative experiences that might transform into the seeds of future projects that turn into both government renovation, and society–government joints. At the same time, it is also a detonator in the consolidation of informal spaces that encourage the organization of the society in the aim of reaching the common good that the community agrees. Example of this effort is the Improving Neighborhood program in Mexico City. As a frame of reference, we see some recent socio-demographic data around the social indicators of the country and its capital city.

6.2.2 Mexico City as an Analysis Unit to Reflect on Citizen Participation in Mexico

According to the *Report of Human Development for Mexico* in 2011, some national socioeconomic status indicators stated that in the period between 2000 and 2010, 3.4% of the population lived with only 1.25 dollars a day, while the percentage of the population living below the national poverty line was of 47.4. In addition, only a 10% of the poorest population participated with the 1.8% of GDP while the richest 10%, with the 37.9%. Other indicators point to 6.6% of the population over 15 years old, in 2010 was illiterate; the percentage of the population without sustainable access to water supplies in 2009, was 9%; While the relation of improved sanitation was of 2%; 5% of children were born with low weight and 8% of children under 5 years of age, maintained a weight below average. Furthermore, 18% had a lower height, and the unemployment rate in April 2010 represented a 5.5% of the economically active population (PEA) (PNUD 2011). When contrasting these data with national measures, it is possible to find that the socioeconomic conditions in the country are not encouraging. With reference to the poverty and inequality context, official figures from the National Council of Poverty Evaluation unveiled through its *Report on Poverty in Mexico and in the Federal Entities 2008–2010* (CONEVAL 2011) that during the period there was an increase of 3.2 million people who entered the poverty conditions, having a total of 52 million with respect to the 112.3 million of the total population in 2010. Other figures from the same report reveal that the total of the population living in poverty conditions,

40.3 million people lived in moderate poverty, while the measurement of the population in extreme poverty, remained the same registered in 2008 with 11.7 million people, this is the 10.6% of the total population and in 2010 with the same number of people, 10.4% of the total population.

The data associated to the purchasing power of the population and particularly to the cost of the basic basket shows that during the period 2006–2013, the cost of the basic basket increased 55.42% in urban areas and 58.03% in rural areas (CONEVAL 2013). While it is true that in the same period, the international economy reached critical figures regarding the economic growth for the Mexican case, this resulted in a fall tendency, both in the real value of the income, as well as unemployment rates, being in the third and fourth quarters of 2011 5.15, and 4.91%, respectively. For the first quarter of 2013, the behavior is similar with a rate of 4.92% (INEGI 2013), this situation, in addition to contextual elements such as the global financial crisis in 2009, resulted in an income drop that has not yet recovered (CONEVAL 2012a, b).

The heterogeneity of the country is not only perceived in income or in the geographic distribution of its population but also, in terms of the demands and requirements that society reclaims and the ways through citizens assert their rights. In the center of the Republic and particularly in the Federal District, some traits are distinctive. In part, this could be due to the administrative and territorial structure that defines it, but we can also relate that it was the first entity that adopted a regulatory framework to promote citizen participation, which for more than one decade has generated innovative participation experiences that demonstrate new articulations between government and society.

6.3 Experiences of Citizen Participation: The Community Program for Neighborhood Improvement in Mexico City

On the Map 6.1 it is possible to recognize the 16 politic delegations in which the capital of the country is divided. As shown in Table 6.1 more than 30% of the total population in five of these 16 delegations, is living in poverty conditions, the delegations suffering these situation are: Milpa Alta; Tláhuac; Iztapalapa; Gustavo A. Madero, and Álvaro Obregón.

Compared to the rest of the country, Mexico City concentrates the largest level of national population with 8,851,000,080 inhabitants (INEGI 2010) and data of the *Poverty and Evaluation Report of the Federal District*, CONEVAL (2012a, b) placed Mexico City in the lower levels of poverty ranks (both poverty and extreme poverty). However, in relative terms the figures reveal that in comparing with national average 28.7% of its population is in a vulnerability situation and 2.2% lives in extreme poverty.



Map 6.1 Political division in Mexico City. Delegations. *Source* The Federal District Government page: <http://www10.df.gob.mx/virtual/NPciudadano/index.php/cultura-y-turismo/84-mapa-de-la-ciudad-de-mexico-con-nombres-a-color>

To these socio-demographic traits, it must be added the political context in which its population inhabits. Based on the structure of a Federal Republic, in the Federal District the Federal Branches of Government are settled and that is the reason why for many years, the residents had no right to choose their representatives. However, the political reform that was initiated during the 1990s, offered a new organization through the Legislative Assembly of the Federal District created in 1993 (Álvarez Enríquez 2006). From then on, greater autonomy is granted to the

Table 6.1 Political delegations in the Federal District, population living in poverty conditions

Political delegation	Population living in poverty conditions (%)
Milpa Alta	48.6
Tláhuac	38.5
Iztapalapa	37.4
Alvaro Obregón	31.3
Gustavo A. Madero	30.7
Tlalpan	26.8
Azcapotzalco	20.6
Coyoacán	20.0
Cuajimalpa de Morelos	19.7
Miguel Hidalgo	14.3
Benito Juárez	8.7

Source Own elaboration with data from the *Informe de Pobreza y Evaluación para el Distrito Federal 2012 (Poverty Report and Evaluation for the Federal District 2012)*, Mexico, CONEVAL (2012a, b), pp. 13–14

delegates and in 1995 with the launch of the first law of citizen participation option open to build a new relationship between Government and citizens. This regulatory framework was followed the Law of Citizen Participation of 1998 and, the still active, 2010 reform. It is important to note that the constant updating of standards has also incorporated citizen representation organizations of citizen representation in the territorial units of the Federal District (the Delegations) to the Citizen Committee and the Citizen Council.

While it is true, there is much still to be done, it is in the Federal District where there has been a noticeable effort to involve citizens in public decisions. Given the process of democratization that the entity promoted for almost two decades; the permanence of the Democratic Revolution Party (*Partido de la Revolución Democrática*, PRD) in the government; and the enormous plurality of its population composition, the participation of citizens in the Mexico City has become an indispensable element to consider in the exercise of the governmental work. The inclusion of citizens in public affairs represents a tool for the Government that allows generating both: new guidelines of political exercise, and the peaceful and organized funneling of the citizenship demands in order to find solution for the social problems (Valverde Viesca and Prieto-Martínez 2010).

It is worth noting that despite the fact that citizens in the Federal District were the last to participate in the election process for government representatives (compared with other states of the Mexican Republic). They can boast at the same time for being the first to have a regulatory framework that promotes from the formal level their participation in public decisions. As an example of this interaction, the Neighborhood Improvement Program of 2007 is discussed below.

6.3.1 *The Community Program for Neighborhood Improvement*

During the 2000–2006 period, the Federal District Government (GDF) prompted government actions that aimed to improve the citizenship spaces of development. Among them, the Housing Improvement Program on Individual Property (*Programa para el Mejoramiento de Viviendas en Lote Propio*) had a transcendent impact. Subsequently, other programs were carried out: the Housing Units Rescue Program (*el Programa de Rescate a Unidades Habitacionales*) and the Indigenous People Support Program (*Programa de Apoyo a Pueblos Originarios*).

In 2007, during the administration of Marcelo Ebrard (and deriving from an organized society proposal) the Community Program for Neighborhood Improvement (*Programa Comunitario de Mejoramiento Barrial*, PCMB) is created. This Program had the purpose of promoting public spaces as encounter places, which would strengthen community life. All this, based on social organization within popular sectors, as well as the counseling given by diverse civil society organisms (Ziccardi 2012). Under these guidelines, the overall objective of PCMB is to develop an integrated, sustained, and participatory process with gender equity which improves public spaces of towns, neighborhoods, and suburbs that conform the Federal District, particularly those with high levels of social unrest, urban degradation or medium, high, and very high levels of marginalization.

On this point, it is key to note that the obtainment of resources for projects development has as a frame of reference the call emitted by the Social Development Secretariat (*Secretaría de Desarrollo Social*) through the Citizen Participation Subsecretariat (*Subsecretaría de Participación Ciudadana*).

In the selection process, four elements are highlighted: the eligibility criteria; the Neighborhood Assemblies; the establishment of a Joint Technical Committee; and the Role of the Community Committees that oversee, coordinate, and administer the community development.

Just as other governmental programs both national and local, the enforceability criteria define specifications to homogenize the projects as well as to benefit vulnerable sectors. In this case, it is interesting to observe that a Local Assembly in coordination with the Delegation Citizen Participation Sub secretariat (*Subsecretaría de Participación Ciudadana Delegacional*) is established as a requisite, with the objective of allowing the community to expose their reasons to endorse the Community Improvement Project of their choice. Two types of projects are foreseen, those that are presented for the first time and those seeking to continue or that are looking forward to consolidate the objectives of a benefited project in the previous call.

In addition, projects must have as reference the Urban District Development Plan; as well as present a diagnosis of the problem, by specifying the physical space where they develop and define, a socio-territorial impact of its implementation. In their design, projects should consider the gender equity criteria and should be based on community participation. In other words, they must submit a description on the

participatory process, which will result in the project planning process, results, and percentage of women's participation.

Another aspect that is ought to be mentioned, is the technical and legal assistance given by the Sub Secretariat of Citizen Participation (*Subsecretaría de Participación Ciudadana*) and/or the Coordination of Neighborhood Improvement and Community Development Office (*Subdirección de Coordinación de Mejoramiento de Barrios y Desarrollo Comunitario*). Because due to this help, the projects gain urban feasibility; the possible development of ecotechniques as permeable soils, uptake of rainwater, green roofs among other environmental preservation factors; its technical feasibility; and the legal perspective to sustain it; Neighborhood Improvement Projects must revise for their conclusion at the end of the current fiscal year.

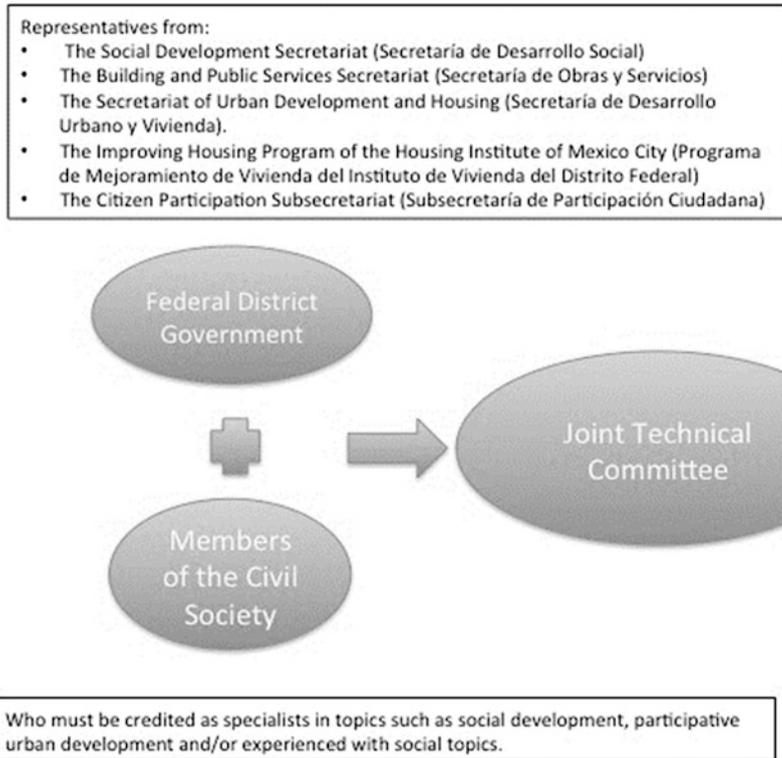
The role of the Neighborhood Assemblies has two primary objectives. The first is to give viability to the projects presented, and the second has to do with the follow-up to the implementation of the projects once they have been approved.

Validation of projects. The Joint Technical Committee is an organ in the PCMB which is responsible for determining the projects to be implemented in each call. In the Graph 6.1 it is noticeable that the Committee consists of ten representatives: five government officials of which one is a representative from the Social Development Secretariat (*Secretaría de Desarrollo Social*); one from the Building and Public Services Secretariat (*Secretaría de Obras y Servicios*); one from the Secretariat of Urban Development and Housing (*Secretaría de Desarrollo Urbano y Vivienda*). Another representative from the Improving Housing Program of the Housing Institute of Mexico City (*Programa de Mejoramiento de Vivienda del Instituto de Vivienda del Distrito Federal*) and finally a Citizen Participation Subsecretariat (*Subsecretaría de Participación Ciudadana*) representative.

The other five members belong to civil society and must be accredited as specialists on social development issues, participatory urban development and/or demonstrate experience in the social issues of the city.

Implementation. The Management Committee is the one who is responsible for the correct execution of the project, the correct administration of resources and the accountability. The Committee is obliged to have regular meetings of project monitoring, with the purpose of supervising the usage of resources. In terms of transparency, it must also publish the status of the implementation of the project and a report of expenses with respect to the total allocated, all this information must be easily available for the members of the community in order for them to review it. On the other hand, the Supervision Committee, has the function of monitoring the works and actions of the project to run correctly and the proper utilization of the resources, according to the conventions and operational rules. Then, the Community Development Committee has the objective of raising awareness, promote, develop, and consolidate the citizen processes through participative planning and citizen organization works. The idea is to achieve the sustainability of the projects and strengthen among the community the ideal of a constant community involvement.

If we take as a reference the idea of Durston (2003) in terms of considering the formation of community social capital as a consequence of a sociocultural system of

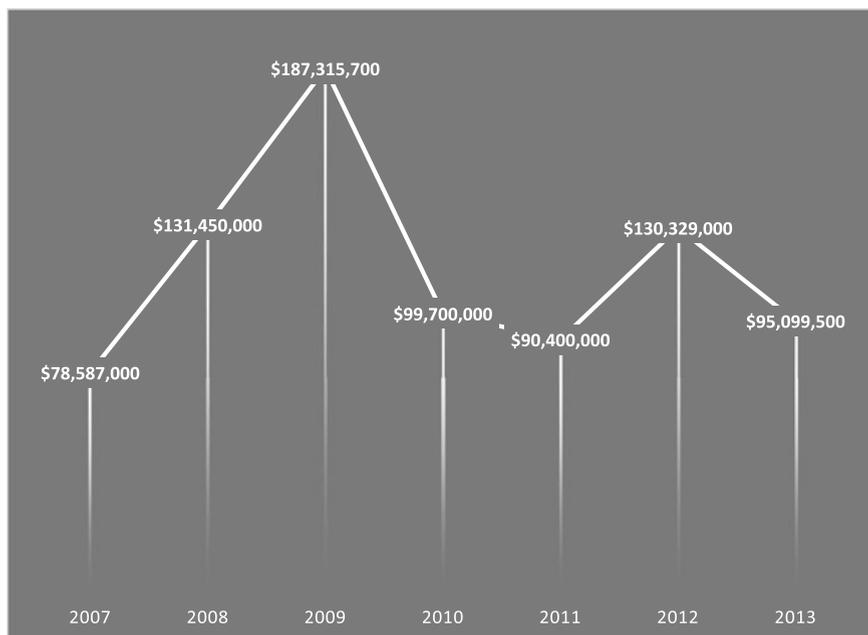


Graph 6.1 The comprising of the Joint Technical Committee of the Community Program For Neighborhood Improvement. *Source* Own Elaboration

each community, which defines legal, administrative, and sanctioning structures—which would reach the goal of a common good—it is possible to identify how the Neighborhood Improvement Program in Mexico City constructs through its different expressions the first steps regarding Community Social Capital. In other words, the encouragement towards the decision-making process of the community organization, the usage of public spaces in relation to the community development (accessibility, inclusion, opportunities, motivation to the improvement of competences); and a progress in terms of society life quality when making it a participant in the transformation process of a public space (Hernández-Sánchez 2012, Márquez-Zárate 2009).

6.3.2 *Some Results of the Community Neighborhood Improvement Program*

As shown in Graph 6.2 a review on the evolution of the resources devoted to the CNIP (PCMB) has shown an upward trend with a historical maximum of



Graph 6.2 Community Program for Neighborhood Improvement. Evolution of Allocated Resources 2007–2013. *Source* Own elaboration based on: Hernández-Sánchez (2012: 75) and the *Internal Evaluation of the Neighborhood Improvement Program Report in 2014*, p. 37

Table 6.2 Community Program for Neighborhood Improvement projects approved according to their registration type 2007–2013

Year	New	Continuity	Total
2007	9	0	49
2008	6	26	102
2009	23	68	191
2010	04	95	199
2011	25	88	213
2012	05	44	249
2013	36	64	200
Total	77	313	1203

Source Own elaboration based on: Hernández-Sánchez (2012: 77) and the Report on Internal Evaluation of the Neighborhood Improvement Program 2014. (*Informe de Evaluación Interna del Programa de Mejoramiento Barrial 2014*)

\$187,315,700 pesos in 2009 and a minimum of \$78,587,000 in 2007, the commencement year. This is consistent with the gradual rise in both the official presented projects as in the approval of the same as shown in Table 6.2. While 49 projects were approved in 2007 and by 2013 the figure has risen to 200.

Table 6.3 Delegational project distribution district of the Community Neighborhood Improvement Program 2007–2013

Political delegation	Approved projects							Total
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	
Álvaro Obregón	4	7	17	17	15	12	12	84
Azcapotzalco	1	1	1	5	7	2	13	30
Benito Juárez	1	3	10	8	7	23	3	55
Coyoacán	7	18	39	27	22	6	16	135
Cuajimalpa	1	1	1	3	3	10	2	21
Cuauhtémoc	1	4	9	10	8	32	9	73
Gustavo A. Madero	2	3	12	23	29	17	17	103
Iztacalco	3	5	6	8	11	61	15	109
Iztapalapa	14	30	48	39	48	24	54	257
Magdalena Contreras	1	1	7	6	5	2	12	34
Miguel Hidalgo	1	0	2	8	9	5	8	33
Milpa Alta	1	3	4	7	4	3	3	25
Tláhuac	3	5	5	6	8	19	6	52
Tlalpan	5	10	13	12	17	15	13	85
Venustiano Carranza	2	6	5	8	8	10	11	50
Xochimilco	2	5	12	12	12	8	6	57
Total	49	102	191	199	213	249	200	1203

Source Report of Internal Evaluation of Neighborhood Improvement Program 2014, p. 32

Furthermore, in the same period and in relation to the type of project funded, it is remarkable the increasing number of projects that seek to continue with the undertaken tasks, meaning that although the number of new projects is rising, more than 30% of the program resources are directed towards projects that were already approved in the previous call.

In relation to projects approved solely by Politic Delegations, Table 6.3 shows that in the period 2007–2013, the delegation with more approved projects is Iztapalapa with 257 and Cuajimalpa which exerted the less number of projects with 21.

Data from the Social Development Secretariat of the Federal District reveal that in three years, the program benefited 3,437,000 people. In what refers to the type of public spaces in which the projects were centered Table 6.4 shows that most of them were geared to three basic functions: urban image; construction of community centers, libraries, multiple usage rooms, houses of culture; and, the rehabilitation of common areas, parks, and gardens.

If we consider that government action is the external agent that may enable the construction and promotion of community social capital through the design of public policies, it is possible to argue that social programs can build citizenship when they include the participation of various actors.

Table 6.4 Community Neighborhood Improvement Program

Type of project, according to the intervention of public community space projects	Years			Total
	2007	2008	2009	
Construction of community centers: libraries, multipurpose rooms, and cultural center	14	16	47	77
Outdoor forums construction	1	2	2	5
Construction of greenhouses		1	–	1
Continuity in construction of auditoriums	1	2	–	3
Retaining walls	3	2	4	9
Ridges rehabilitation	4	3	3	10
Public places rehabilitation	3	4	4	11
Rehabilitation/construction of sports fields	9	6	6	31
Rehabilitation/expansion of community centers, libraries, multipurpose rooms, cultural houses	2	7	–	9
Rehabilitation Of common areas, green areas, parks, gardens, play areas	7	7	38	72
Urban image (fixtures, furniture, arrangement of facades, hallways placement)	4	32	77	113

Type of intervention in community public spaces 2007, 2008 and 2009

Source Own elaboration based on: Hernández-Sánchez (2012: 77) with data from the PCMB archives and completed in 2007 with data from the PCMB, Secretariat of Social development of the Federal District on: http://www.programabarrialsds.df.gob.mx/pdf/2010/resultado_numeralia1.pdf

The Community Program of Neighborhood Improvement which was launched during 2007 in Mexico City shows how to set bases in order to lead public policy towards community cooperation in order to rescue and seize the advantages of the public spaces. All these, under social capital schemes that encourage mechanisms of cooperation, participation and governance that included the population and promote their quality of life.

This program was recognized in 2009 on the Fourth International Contest *Distinción de Buenas Prácticas* promoted by the International Observatory of Participatory Democracy, with base in Barcelona city.

6.4 Final Thoughts

The process of democratic transition and state reform initiated in Mexico during 1980s left adrift the concept of social reform. Despite, the topic was not considered a priority at the time, it is possible to notice that economic and political reforms driven since the 1980s—managed to incorporate new actors and therefore, create various and different national political spaces. The consolidation of a competitive electoral political arena and the emergence of new actors for decision-making,

particularly in the executive and legislative fields, open the door to diverse demands and interests, which among other things, seek to establish new rules.

Some of these norms began with the Citizen Participation Law in 1995 (Palma Delgado 2003) and subsequently in 2004, with the General Law of Social Development and the Federal Law for Promoting Activities of Civil Society Organizations. The latter becomes a starting point in two senses. One, trying to regulate the national development with the establishment of guidelines that lead the design and the elaboration of public policies to coordinate as well as unify organizational and programmatic action in what social policies and development concerns. Two, construction of “autonomous” institutions as CONEVAL that are supposed to manage government action in public policies, programs, and budgets oriented to social areas. At same time, these institutions evaluated poverty situation and impact of government action in citizen’s quality of life.

As we have remarked above, Mexico City was the first entity that adopted a regulatory framework to promote citizen participation in the country and was the last to participate in the election process for government representatives (compared with other states of the Mexican Republic), which for more than one decade has generated innovative participation experiences that demonstrate new articulations between government and society.

With this framework, the debate on the construction of social capital can be expressed in projects and initiatives that recently have been fitted in the Capital City of the Mexican Republic. In this paper, a successful experience on citizen participation that arise from the Community Program for Neighborhood Improvement was analyzed, in this 2007 program, the endeavors of the Federal District Government are joined with the organized Society. Some of their important results are:

- The overall objective of PCMB is to develop an integrated, sustained, and participatory process with gender equity which improves public spaces of towns, neighborhoods, and suburbs that conform the Federal District, particularly those with high levels of social unrest, urban degradation or medium, high and very high levels of marginalization.
- In the selection process, four elements are highlighted: the eligibility criteria; the Neighborhood Assemblies; the establishment of a Joint Technical Committee; and the Role of the Community Committees that oversee, coordinate, and administer the community development.
- The role of the Neighborhood Assemblies has two primary objectives. The first is to give viability to the projects presented, and the second has to do with the follow-up to the implementation of the projects once they have been approved.
- It is possible to identify from its results, an incipient construction of Social Community Capital. While 49 projects were approved in 2007, by 2013 the figure has risen to 200.
- In the period 2007–2013, the delegation with more approved projects was Iztapalapa with 257 and Cuajimalpa which exerted the less number of projects with 21.

- Approval projects were oriented to three basic functions: urban image; construction of community centers, libraries, multiple usage rooms, houses of culture; and, the rehabilitation of common areas, parks, and gardens.

Citizen Construction Studies have a long-term history and therefore there is a challenge in terms of imagining mechanisms that articulate the actions that take place from various microspaces. This might motivate the society to organize in order to propel the search for solutions of demands that make a real impact on their quality of life.

If we consider that government action is the external agent that may enable the construction and promotion of community social capital through the design of public policies, it is possible to argue that social programs can build citizenship when they include the participation of various actors. By having opened this work line it is sought to strengthen the development studies, the Citizenship and quality of life in the quest to build new spaces for social development in Mexico.

Acknowledgements We thank the efforts of José Antonio Hernández Sánchez as an intern of the Consolidation Project SNI1 00000000011843 *New Rules for Social Development in Mexico: Inertia or Institutional Change*. In particular, the research that was conducted to develop his degree thesis *Community Social Capital: A Useful Tool in the Relationship Government-Society. Neighborhood Improvement Program in Mexico City*. His study is a point of reference for this reflection. The present article was elaborated within the settings of the PAPIIT Project IN308214-2 *Ciudadanía y calidad de vida: herramientas para el análisis del desarrollo social en México* (Citizenship and life quality: Analysis of Social Development Strategies in Mexico).

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Chapter 7

Community Water Management and Quality of Life: The Independent Water Governance Committees in Toluca, Mexico

Cecilia Cadena-Inostroza and María Esther Morales-Fajardo

Abstract Water governance is a topic linked to changes in the quality of community life due to the impact of water shortages and the decline in water quality in the locality, in terms of conflict. It also encompasses housing conditions and community participation in water management. Officials in Mexico have underlined the need to incorporate communities into this management. The aim of this chapter is to shed light on the difficulties of operating governance networks in independent potable water committees in Mexico, particularly in the community of San Felipe Tlalmimilolpan. The document shows that there is an independent operating committee responsible for the distribution of potable water, which provides a service, even though it is not responsible for other aspects of community life. However, this is not recognized by the legislation or government officials. In other words, there is a limited participatory management model, which prevents full community water governance, which in turn affects the quality of community life.

Keywords Water management · Governance of water · Community participation

7.1 Introduction

In the second half of the twentieth century, studies on the search for alternatives to economic growth indicators to measure well-being began to focus on the quality of life. In the 1960s and 1970s, interest in measuring human well-being (objectively and subjectively) was related to the quality of life. In the 1970s, the quality of life began to

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© Springer International Publishing AG 2017
G. Tonon (ed.), *Quality of Life in Communities of Latin Countries*,
Community Quality-of-Life and Well-Being,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-53183-0_7

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be constructed as a multidimensional concept to refer to the objective and subjective components of living conditions. A decade later, the theoretical and methodological use of the concept was introduced into analyses and academic research (Gómez and Sabe 2001). Since then, the concept has been widely employed, particularly to differentiate between traditional quantitative metrics for measuring economic development. Although this term does not have an unambiguous definition and is sometimes used interchangeably with well-being, it refers to studies on Sen's human development perspective (2000) regarding the set of possibilities available to a person and the freedom to choose from this set, called *human capabilities*. According to the Stiglitz-Sen-Fitoussi Report (2009), the quality of life includes a wide range of factors that influence how life is valued, beyond material elements. In fact, the concept is multidimensional because it depends on indicators that measure health, education, living conditions, participation in political processes, the social and natural environment and personal safety and economic factors.

Although all these factors are important, they two main ones for the purposes of this study are: living conditions and participation in political processes.

The former comprises decent housing conditions, including services, while the latter includes community participation (Stiglitz et al. 2009; CIW 2016). Both elements have led certain authors (Myers 1987, 1988; Sirgy et al. 2000) to develop a broader concept, based on the Quality of Community Life, emphasizing a broad range of community needs (Ko and Choi 2015), where citizens are continually reinterpreting and redefining desirable life circumstances according to what they have in their local conditions (Hening 1992).

The issue of water in communities undoubtedly reflects an interest linked to the quality of life of towns, since their management necessarily involves the adoption of consensual decisions and actions agreed between individuals. Internationally, interest has focused on participatory water management. Since the Dublin Statement (1992), it has been said that water use and management should be inspired by an approach involving users, planners, and decision makers at all levels. The Aarhus Convention (1998) began to encourage participatory management in environmental decisions, programs, and policies. In the twenty-first century, the Ministerial Declaration of The Hague on Water Security called for participation in water management by members of society, especially women. Subsequently, the International Conference on Freshwater (2001) stated that people should participate directly in decisions on management and good government in relation to water resources. It also said that local stakeholders should create mechanisms to address and manage collaborative needs and local water resources.

Within the United Nations (2000), the Millennium Development Goals (2000) contemplated sustainable access to safe potable water and sanitation services, and recently the Sustainable Development Goals (2015) also emphasized the water availability and sustainable management and sanitation for all.

Community participation in water management is therefore a topic that has been widely studied worldwide. Poricha and Dasgupta (2011) point out that participation and inclusive governance in water management are seen as tools for social transformation, which affects the population's quality of life. A review of the literature

shows that most of these studies are conducted in parts of Asia and Africa, where community participation mainly takes place through community-based natural resources management. Although Dewan et al. (2014) mention that various assessments conducted in these regions have shown that this approach has failed to achieve its objectives of efficiency, equity and sustainability, recent studies have highlighted the empowerment of local or gender communities (Katsi 2008; Yami 2013; Poricha and Dasgupta 2011; Dewan et al. 2015; Morinville and Harris 2014). In Latin America, current experiences include the community leader training programs in IWRM (MASAL Project, Peru), designed to provide skills for these actors to enable them to understand and promote integrated water management and the experience of community participation at a micro-basin in Salvador (VII Foro Mundial del Agua 2012).

In Mexico, unlike the international literature, studies link governance to the issue of conflict over water and the right to use this resource. Tagle-Zamora et al. (2015) analyzed the ability of actors and institutions to ensure good governance as regards wastewater management in the city of León, yet highlighted the social conflict that prevents water sanitation. Pineda et al. (2014) studied the management of the Sonora river based on the conflict over its management and the rights to this tributary. Rolland and Vega-Cárdenas (2010), Guerrero-De-León et al. (2010), Domínguez (2006, 2010), Ruiz-Meza (2011) and Vázquez-García et al. (2014) reviewed the management of water governance but from the perspective of the local right to this natural resource.

The literature on social participation in public policy decisions on water governance includes a study by Mussetta (2009), who criticized the fact that in water governance models in Mexico, social participation is problematic because they do not specify how society should participate, or else society lacks the maturity to be representative and plural. Moreover, participation is fictitious or restricted to a few citizens or confined to unimportant issues. Córdova et al. (2006) also criticized the citizen participation model in local water management, concluding that neither citizens nor civil society have incentives to participate in water governance.

The aim of this chapter is to shed light on the difficulties of operating governance networks in independent potable water committees in Mexico, particularly in the city of Toluca, in the community of San Felipe Tlalmimilolpan. It begins with the idea that governance is an element that influences the quality of community life today because of the impact that water shortages and the decline in quality cause in the locality, in terms of conflict. A case analysis was undertaken on the basis of the scientific literature available, while a semi-structured interview was carried out with the president of the water committee as empirical evidence.

In addition to this introduction, the document is divided into two sections. The first provides theoretical arguments on the formation of water governance networks based on the ideas of Rhodes (2007). The second describes the case study, beginning with a description of the framework and regulatory structure of water in Mexico. It then describes the way water committees in Toluca operate and subsequently analyzes the independent committee of San Felipe Tlalmimilolpan, where the conflict that prevents water governance in the community is evidenced.

The main conclusion is that the conflict between governmental and non-governmental actors creates risks for water sustainability and management. Moreover, the mechanisms in the legislation does not ensure the population's effective participation, which hinders the planning and management of a sustainable water model that guarantees the population's quality of life.

7.2 Water Governance and Community Quality of Life

The quality of life of the inhabitants of a country or region, as mentioned in another section, is not only linked to the immaterial conditions of well-being but also to health, education, and everyday conditions of participation (Stiglitz et al. 2009). In countries where the potable water supply is not guaranteed, citizens have sought mechanisms to provide this service. These participatory mechanisms are not always recognized by governments since they exceed the limits of formal rules. However, in cases where participation is recognized and formalized, in other words, where governance is manifested, results increase for public policy and the improvement of the quality of life (Córdova et al. 2006; Huynh and Peiser 2015; Rodriguez et al. 2015).

In the analysis of water management, it is therefore essential to consider the political, economic, and participatory dimensions. Because every actor takes into account the actions of others and institutional constraints, which is how they are positioned as regards water consumption. This positioning is closely linked to the well-being of communities and water sustainability.

The participation of governmental and nongovernmental actors in water management can provide an opportunity for the results of public policy distribution and water care to become a collective responsibility and affect the quality of life of the population through governance.

Governance is defined as the set of interdependent, formal, and informal relations between government agents and others around shared interests in the formulation of public policies and their implementation (Rhodes 2007). The interdependence of relationships is due to the resources each actor possesses and which others need to achieve policy outcomes in line with their interests and goals. Relationships are based on trust and diplomacy (Rhodes 1997).

In governance, the leading actor is not the government, although its presence in the network is crucial to its configuration. However, the presence of a metafacilitator helps clarify and establish operating rules within them because of their informal functioning, and this metafacilitator may be the government (Schaap and van Twist 1997; Kooiman 1993; Sørensen and Torfing 2007). The principle of collaboration in governance is that the actors comprising a policy network seek to achieve their goals by sacrificing part of what their maximum profit would be in exchange for other resources, with those who would not be able to maximize their profits either. Networks are self-regulating. They are based on trust and unwritten rules established by the relations between the actors involved.

Therefore, although the government actor has an interest in ensuring a more balanced distribution of resources, it must also provide opportunities for participation to the groups affected by policy decisions.

Governance by networks makes it possible to identify factors such as stakeholder participation in public policy management. It focuses on the complexity of the interactions of the various actors and the environment that constrains them (an environment of rules but also of processes that shape these interactions), which makes it easier to understand the problems and explore the alternatives (Eppel 2014). This is because relations between actors are based on formal and informal rules while the latter are determined by political power games that guide behaviors on the basis of the real or imagined expectations created in the exchanges.

Water governance has been a key issue at the various global forums. At the sixth World Water Forum, held in Marseille, France in 2012, governance played a key role because, after various forums and analyses, the attendees arrived at the conclusion that the problem was not one of the environment, or water or sustainability or simply management, but rather of governance, which would have to be addressed if one wished to advance problem solving.

Water governance was conceptualized by the World Water Forum as "... the interaction of political, social, economic... and administrative systems that come into play to regulate the development and management of water resources and the provision of water services at different levels of society..." (VII Foro Mundial del Agua 2012, p. 11). Eppel clarifies the actors' role by stating that water governance is the process whereby governmental and nongovernmental actors repeatedly interact to produce patterns of rules, practices and behaviors through which water is managed and objectives are achieved (Eppel 2014, p. 67).

The elements derived from these concepts are the existence of regulatory frameworks (institutional frameworks), interaction and stakeholder participation. The articulation of these and other features is coordinated by the government actor which, due to the complexity of the processes, ceases to be the leading actor to become the facilitator. Yet one should not lose sight of the fact that the government actor is not a neutral player in practice (although it is in the normative sense), as a result of which the games and interactions with other actors allow personal and collective preferences to be expressed (Arellano 2008). This feature explains why some government actions do not always correspond to a general idea of the "common good" or why certain groups are favored over others.

The idea of water governance derives from the concept of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM), which implies the inclusion of different actors, together with a variety of approaches and political and administrative structures. IWRM involves the decentralization, participation, and coordination of actions for the efficient use of water from an expanded, inclusive framework. It therefore has a coordination component that obliges one to consider the participation of social actors as an indispensable element for new governance (new relations) that includes access to information, consensus-seeking, accountability, recognition of community customs and ancestral knowledge and communal forms of water management (VII Foro Mundial del Agua 2012, p. 5).

IWRM as a governance process and government statements at the various World Water Forums encourage actions that are intended to make actions involving water care and management less discursive and more real. Water governance thus becomes an international criterion, as mentioned in the introduction, which conceives of this resource as finite and therefore, in coordinated management, would be the key to its conservation and conflict reduction. Even international agencies have made the delivery of aid and loans for water management programs contingent on the establishment of activities to promote good governance (VII Foro Mundial del Agua 2012, p. 11).

The institutional frameworks in the various countries correspond to the ideas of decentralized water and sanitation management, involving effective participation schemes. Water management based on governance implies that governments must adapt to the needs and demands of the environment and changes in the economic and social systems that affect the water system. Adaptation and participation are factors that influence the type of relations and institutional arrangements. Participation is not understood as a homogeneous process but depends on the sociocultural context, particularly the attention to local processes. What one observes in the local sphere is a set of contingent interactions between a large number of interdependent actors within a specific context. Each experience is different, because it depends on natural, economic, and social systems (Eppel 2014). Institutional frameworks should therefore consider these conditions so that IWRM is effective and prevents certain actors from operating informally, or even outside the law (VII Foro Mundial del Agua 2012).

Integral water management based on governance processes therefore involves planning processes that not only consider water-related aspects but also territorial and sectoral policies impacting the quality of life. This is the case of housing or urban and commercial development policies that would have to be planned around the possibilities and consequences on water use.

An analysis that attempts to go beyond social participation and governance by policy networks is adaptive governance (AG). It is a concept that tries to show the need to manage water use and conservation processes through gradual measures. It addresses the complexity and unbalanced nature of ecosystems through the process of governance that encourages dynamic learning and feedback through the constant evaluation and reevaluation of decision making. AG, like governance and water governance by policy networks, steers water management towards comanagement since it seeks to go beyond the decision-making process and include local populations. It involves the collaboration of a group of people with common interests, operating at different levels, often through local, national, municipal or international networks. Supported by international agreements, AG attempts to ensure that water policies are managed by consulting those it affects (Morinville and Harris 2014).

Consequently water governance through integrated management systems requires extensive coordination and adaptation. In order for coordination to be possible, it is essential to have information, produce it and make it available to all stakeholders. Therefore information, and accountability to all those responsible for coordinating actions not only fosters relations of trust in the interactions between

players, but also makes it possible to envisage the possibilities of the sustainability of actions and water itself.

On this point, in regard to Latin America, the Sixth World Water Forum cited information, transparency in management and accountability as key elements for participation and water sustainability as a strategy. The information is based on the need to have reliable data on various environmental and water issues, for information to be organized in such a way that it can be used by stakeholders, for performance assessments to be established for those responsible for operationalizing management actions, information validating mechanisms and for the information produced to be systematic, so that it can be used for planning purposes (VII Foro Mundial del Agua 2012, p. 48).

7.3 Independent Water Committees as Part of Water Governance Water Structure in Mexico

Mexico is a federal system comprising 31 states and the capital of the country, with similar characteristics to a state. States are sovereign and consist of municipalities, which represent the political and administrative division of territorial organization. Each order of government (federal, state, and municipal) has established powers and functions registered in the Constitution and other legal provisions. The municipality is an order of government with management autonomy, as established by the Constitution within the powers and competences assigned to it.

Yet despite Mexico's federal structure, centralist practices have prevailed that have weakened the municipal structure and attributions and even state ones (Aboites 2009; Aboites et al. 2010). That is why, in an attempt to empower these local spheres of government, constitutional amendments were undertaken in 1983, which included specifying the functions and responsibilities of municipalities to prevent the federal and state order from encroaching on their functions. However, as will be seen when the case of independent water committees is explained, the rule has been ineffective, mainly because it has come up against a different reality from the one conceived of at the time of the amendment.

Water management in Mexico is the responsibility of the federal government through the Environment and Natural Resources Secretariat (SEMARNAT), which in turn has an agency called the National Water Commission (CONAGUA) responsible for managing and preserving national waters. One of CONAGUA's main functions is to provide concession titles to various actors and agencies for the exploitation of wells and other water sources. Through this function, CONAGUA regulates water extraction and establishes conditions for its use and sanitation.

In Mexico, water management is organized by basins, of which there are 13 across the country. This organization allows water management to be more integral since the basin structure affords a broad view of the water cycle. Accordingly, CONAGUA is structured as follows: headquarters, basin organizations, and local

directorates. States and municipalities participate, according to this management structure, as members of the basin councils and depend on the region through which the tributaries flow. It should be noted that in basin organizations, where decisions are made on water management and sanitation are taken, state governors participate as members entitled to vote, whereas municipalities lack voting rights (Fig. 7.1).

CONAGUA regulations state that users' participation will be considered in administrative matters. These standards consider participation in three areas: basin organizations, groundwater (as distinct from surface water such as rivers and springs) committees and irrigation water committees (National Water Law (LAN) 2014). However, the participation of users does not refer to the population but to user structures, such as organizations which operate in municipalities, water companies or farmers' and landowners' organizations (*ejidatarios*). Nowhere in the water legislation does it mention independent or autonomous committees or water boards, the various names given to the community groups providing potable water service.

In the order of state government, there are public water administration bodies responsible for managing water works, potable water, sewerage, and sanitation at the state level, as well as for coordinating and supporting this type of public works in the municipalities.

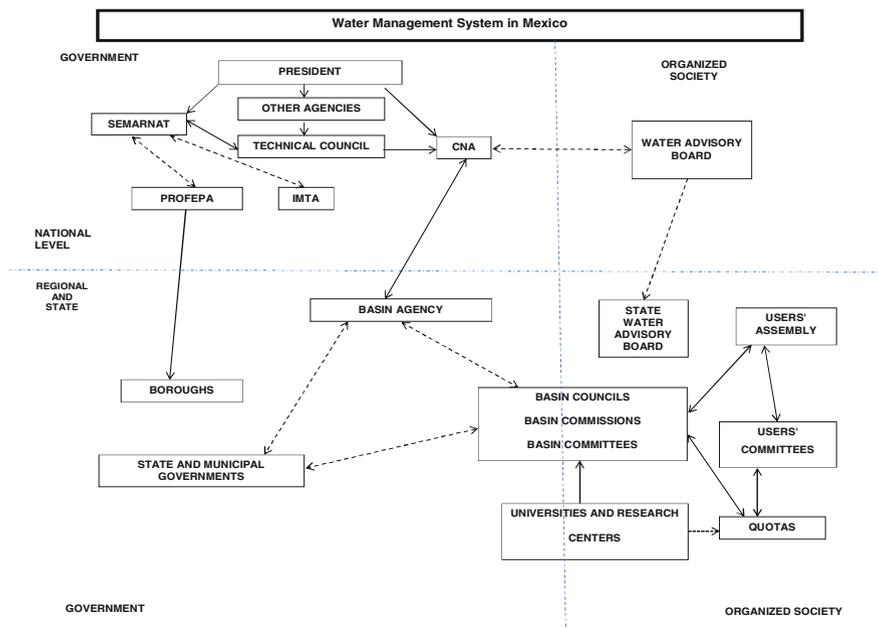


Fig. 7.1 Water management system in Mexico. Source Arreguín et al. (2010 p. 64)

7.4 Independent Potable Water Committees in Toluca

Independent potable water committees or potable water boards, as they are variously called, have historically existed in Mexican communities (Aboites 2009; Aboites et al. 2010; Cadena et al. 2012). These committees emerged in rural areas during the colonial era. Until the second half of the twentieth century, they were mainly found in rural areas, but due to the growth of cities, the committees gradually shifted to peri-urban and even urban areas. The various laws regarding the centralization or decentralization of water have meant that these committees have only been registered at certain periods. As mentioned earlier, from the Constitution to Municipal Organic Laws, Mexican law failed to recognize the existence of independent committees (Cadena et al. 2012; Sandoval-Moreno 2011; Pimentel-Equihua et al. 2012). Paradoxically, despite the absence of committees in the legal systems, CONAGUA (or other federal government authorities, prior to its creation) granted concession titles for the exploitation of wells to these same groups.

In 1983, the Federal Constitution introduced a reform of article 115, which governs the structure and functioning of the municipalities, the responsibility of local councils, and the authority of the municipalities, for the distribution of potable water, sewerage, and sanitation (concession titles, as stated earlier, are granted by CONAGUA, although the council is responsible for administering potable water in the municipalities); in addition to other functions (garbage collection, street lighting, etc.). Regarding participation, the law allows municipalities to make arrangements to allow private and social actors to take part in some stages of the water management process (in other areas of municipal responsibility such as garbage collection, private actors play an active role). However, although private companies already participate in certain municipalities in various processes involving potable water (such as water treatment plants), full recognition of the committees primarily responsible for distributing water has yet to be achieved. In short, the major constitutional amendment of 1983 (which was important because it outlined the functions for municipalities, which had previously been encroached on the states or the federation) failed to consider the existence of social organizations or community arrangements for water service.

In the years after that reform, various attempts were made to regularize the presence of committees. For example, in the 1990s, CONAGUA promoted measures to enable municipalities to incorporate committees into municipal water management. These efforts were unsuccessful, however, partly because these governments found that the water quality and infrastructure of most committees were below the standards set by the council itself. They also failed because municipal governments realized that they lacked the resources to support the committees if necessary (Cadena et al. 2012).

More recently, particularly before the submission of a bill to reform the March 2015 Water Act, CONAGUA undertook measures in various states to ensure that through the review of concession titles, the committees would be subjected to

conditions and their disappearance negotiated. However, most committees rejected the proposals. Other potable water committees exploit wells that have been drilled without a concession title, even though CONAGUA is aware of their existence and their committees. That is why one of the fears surrounding the possible passage of the new law is that the committees will disappear because they are not included in the bill and because one aspect that is included is the review of concessions, which opens up the possibility of their cancellation. It is assumed that this aspect of the law seeks to grant freedom to various consortia that distribute water, and allow them to disregard communities' traditional roles and rights (Expansión, March 9, 2015).

In the municipality of Toluca, potable water it is distributed through two systems: the municipal one (through the public water agency) and the independent one (through committees). Although the municipality of Toluca has 97 localities (see map for municipality zones), they all do not have a water committee, but those that do only have them were originally located in rural areas. In 2012, there were 29 independent committees catering to a combined population of 204,799 (compared with nearly 600,000 served by the municipal system). Of this combined population, the committees have 85.26% coverage (PDM 2013–2015: 153). It is possible to find two or three committees in a locality, as the case of San Pablo Autopan (Cadena et al. 2012). The variation between the larger and smaller number of committees can be explained by the disappearance of some of them due to internal conflicts or conflicts in communities, which led the council to take over water distribution in these areas and thereby assume responsibility for wells, charging and so on.

Independent potable water committees operating in Toluca have similar structures despite their different functions: a president, treasurer and secretary, in addition to other persons who provide plumbing services. Not all the committees are nonprofits (a requirement for a possible agreement with the city council), although there are some that despite being nonprofits, are not recognized by municipal governments. Members are paid a salary in some committees but not in others, in which case they also serve as the leaders of religious celebrations. Decisions are made in assemblies, usually held once a year. These assemblies, some with the presence of notaries public, deal with issues such as reviewing annual expenditure, electing new members, when required (committees last an average of three years), and setting water rates. They sometimes discuss other matters such as water supplies for new residents or drilling new wells (Fig. 7.2).

The 29 committees operate and provide water service in a variety of ways. Some have attempted to modernize operations by computerizing their user records (San Buenaventura), others have sought technical support from the state university to improve water use and sanitation and there are even committees that work in conjunction with CONAGUA, the state water agency or the city council and, despite the absence of written agreements, provide various forms of support, materials, or infrastructure. However, there are also numerous cases where, due to the lack of legal, administrative, political, technical, and negotiation capabilities, committees are isolated and inefficient service providers. In these cases, the likelihood of conflict in the community is extremely high. And the councils, aware of

the 2009–2012 administration in the municipality of Toluca argued that independent committees merely exploit water without administering it. However, incorporating this into their municipal functions would drive costs up since it would involve renovating the entire water network (Cadena et al. 2012, p. 234). In other words, the fact that these communities provide water service was recognized as an illegal act, yet taking over the service would entail difficulties for the council.

The next section presents the case of the independent potable water committee of San Felipe Tlalmimilolpan, a community belonging to the municipality of Toluca. The aim is to determine the conditions under which potable water service is developed and provided. It is interesting to note that despite the committees' difficulties in distributing water, they perform a public service that contributes to improving the quality of life, which many municipalities are unable to do, due, among other factors, to the cost of expanding the water infrastructure. This section also reflects on the benefits of regularizing committees in order to enable them to participate more actively not only in distribution but in sewerage and water sanitation, with formal rules and criteria known to all, yet particularly within an institutional framework of action offering certainty to all stakeholders. This would achieve better management, water sustainability, and better (and real) governance conditions that would contribute to improving the populations' quality of life.

7.5 The Independent Committee of San Felipe Tlalmimilolpan

San Felipe Tlalmimilolpan is a village located a few miles south of the capital of the municipality of Toluca (see map). According to INEGI (2000, 2010), it had 7232 inhabitants in 2000 and 9512 in 2010. Of the total employed population in the locality (2748) in 2010, the majority were engaged in the tertiary sector (INEGI 2000, 2010). The village is located in the aquifer area, and has a rural structure (PDM 2013–2015, pp. 29, 128).

In recent times, records have emerged of the existence of the committee for over 50 years, when this area was a rural village and had few communication routes with the municipal capital of Toluca. In San Felipe, like other localities in Toluca, the Potable Water Committee does not cooperate with the council. It is responsible for the distribution of potable water, but not for wastewater treatment or disposal. That is why, for example, water rates are the third or less of what is charged in places where the service is provided by the council water facility. Water service rates in this locality, as in almost all those with independent committees, are annually decided through an assembly.

The current potable water committee, calling itself the “Community Water Management Agency of San Felipe Tlalmimilolpan, Mexico,” is a nonprofit established three years ago as a result of a conflict with the former committee over

the granting of facilities to real estate developers, mainly for housing developments built on the road to the town of Santiago Tlacotepec (south of the town, see map). Real estate developers must comply with the facilities requirement to obtain permission to build housing developments. Despite being a building requirement, facilities subsequently become a service usually provided by municipalities but in a case such as this, outside the council water network, it is provided by the committee.

The committee consists of a president, a treasurer, and a secretary, in addition to unelected employees, a secretary and four field workers responsible for dealing with leaks and general maintenance (all of whom, including committee members, receive a salary). The committee serves a population of 15,000 people, has 3000 taps and an estimated average of five users per tap. Water is supplied by two wells drilled illegally, without the authorization of CONAGUA. Wells display the year when they were drilled. There was one, No. 68, which was drilled that year but ran dry, as a result of which No. 90 was drilled and in anticipation of its possible depletion, another one was drilled in 2003, in other words, No. 03.

Relations between the committee and the municipal government are nonexistent and the chairman of the committee justified the illegal drilling of wells in view of the municipal government's lack of response and inability to provide water service to the community of San Felipe, "We always requested it but it never came, which led to the need to create and drill a well, to drill a well we call Well Sixty-eight, because it was created in '68, it was made in '68," (interview with committee president, April 16, 2016).

Nor was a rapprochement sought because it was felt that the council wished to deprive the community of water. "No, no, we have never been able to talk to them because obviously if we go to the council and all that, they'll think we're going there so that we can administer the water. We wouldn't because, I repeat, quite simply, it would cost us three or four times as much... it would reduce our purchasing power" (interview with committee president, Arzaluz, April 16, 2016).

Committee members know the difficulties the council experiences in providing water for the municipal head town (in urban areas), which is why they confidently state that "... first of all, because Toluca would like to provide its own water supply, but it does not have the capacity to do so." They also know that the council itself has no interest in contacting them because it has failed to do so to date.

And it is true that the water facilities themselves (as the administrative areas of the municipalities responsible for water, drainage and sanitation are called) lack the technical and administrative capacities to ensure service coverage, which is why they do not approach the independent committees. In the interview mentioned earlier, the committee president said that even other committees in the same circumstances as them are forming an association to cope with any attempts to institutionalize water services in the municipality.

These communities, particularly the San Felipe committee, believe that water belongs to the place where it is found and refuse to give into the municipal authority for fear of running out of water or having to use lower quality water. However, as in

other communities, the urban sprawl has grown, turning it into a peri-urban area (which is neither classified as urban or rural, but experiences difficulties in both categories), while the demand for water has increased. With the growth of these areas and the arrival of new residents and housing developments, the city council, which should provide water service, refers new residents and housing developers requiring the service to the water committee. In other words, there is a paradox between the nonrecognition of the committees by the municipal authority, and the fact that the municipal authorities resort to these committees to provide the service to new residents.

The provision of potable water undoubtedly contributes to the quality of life of the community of San Felipe in that it has access to water, although the community could also improve its quality of life by actively and formally participating in forms of public management. Because what is actually happening is that the committee exists and operates, but is only involved in part of the water management process, i.e., its distribution, but not sewerage, drainage, sanitation, regulation of its use, the culture of water care and tax payment, which would enable it to perform all the above functions (as happens in more developed countries such as Norway, New Zealand, Eppel 2014).

Other problems caused by the nonrecognition of these committees include the lack of accountability, since providing an annual report at the assembly level obviously makes it impossible to know the details of the accounts, the incorporation of new users and the conditions of this incorporation. This is one of the reasons why allegations of corruption and conflicts in the community abound. It also explains the difficulty of creating capacities for the legal and administrative administration of water. For example, in the committee of San Felipe and despite the low rates (80 pesos a month, about \$4.3 USD), 40% of users do not pay for the service. The lack of payments creates conflict in the community because committee members suspend the service, or threaten users, although the last committee also sought solutions such as agreements or payment contracts, which users ignore since they know they lack legal validity. Another source of conflict is excess water use: Certain commercial locales and small businesses pay the same amount as domestic users yet use far more water.

However, one of the most pernicious consequences of this ambivalent attitude towards the committees, "Which are used but not recognized," is the low capacity for governance, government adaptation and therefore the inability to achieve coordinated management, which at various times threatens to reduce the provision of service and thereby decrease the quality of life. This decline in the quality of life has already been reflected in the inability to install infrastructure for water sanitation and the problems arising from the lack of a proper drainage system (the village is connected to the municipal sewer or else wastewater is poured into open channels). This is compounded by the difficulty of providing storm drains, which is a particularly serious problem since this area experiences rainfall seven months a year.

7.6 Water Governance and Community Potable Water Committees, Final Remarks

Community participation plays a key role in the quality of life. At the discourse level, governments advocate the need to involve citizens in the management of public affairs, as in the case of water in Mexico, where participation tends to take place on the basis of the legislative framework of CONAGUA, although in actual fact, there is a reluctance to recognize and effectively incorporate these social actors (Mussetta 2009).

In the case of the water committees in Mexico and particularly in the case of Toluca explored in this chapter, it is essential to acknowledge citizens' obvious interest in participating in the provision of a service and to create the conditions for this interest to translate into effective collaboration. Because it is clear that citizens are continually reinterpreting and redefining desirable life circumstances in keeping with what they have in their local conditions (Hening 1992); and in this case, people resort to informal mechanisms to provide themselves with a public service.

The conflict between the authority and the social groups that distribute water raises serious doubts about the sustainability of this essential resource. The solution should not be to "let the committees drown in their problems" and then eliminate them, but rather to find existing mechanisms in the current legislation and subsequent reforms, to legally strengthen these social groups and include them in the planning and management of sustainable water models. Thus, existing conflicts could become the engine for creating consensus.

Involving independent committees in water and sanitation management requires undertaking participatory assessments considering the particularities of local experiences, in order to identify the cases and degrees to which these groups are able to comanage water in the areas where they are present. These practices would make it possible to recover the experiences and customs of communities, and attempt to adapt them to the urgent need to conserve and protect water and its sources. Actions such as these will also make it possible to produce information that can subsequently be shared by the various actors and used to design new strategies. The point would be to undertake collaborative relationships in which each actor has different resources to share with others. They would consequently be interdependent and therefore the absence of dialogue between actors would lead to undesirable results in the present and future (Rhodes 1997). In governance networks, it is necessary for the governmental actor to facilitate exchanges, because although social actors may have more initiative about how to allocate water, the governmental actor is responsible for ensuring equity between the various population groups, which is why the legal frameworks grant it these powers.

Quality of life is a basic component in existing communities. However, an adequate level of community participation is linked to the existence of and access to effective, efficient and sustainable basic public services (Dewan et al. 2014). In Mexico, the analysis has prioritized the study of water governance from the point of view of conflict or the right to use water.

Governance of water or adaptive governance is a water management model, which would allow conservation, sustainability, rational distribution, and equity in service provision, because this model includes joint participation and comanagement between governmental and nongovernmental organizations.

The development of not only technical but also political capacities is a necessary condition for both the government and committees to undertake joint, institutionalized, responsible solutions focusing on service but from a sustainable perspective.

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Part II
Community Quality of Life of Different
Groups in Latin Countries: Indigenous
People, Displaced People, Migrants,
Children, Young People and Older Adults

Chapter 8

Quality of Life of the Guaraní Community

Lía Rodríguez de la Vega and Héctor Rodríguez

Abstract Toward the end of the nineteenth century, Ferdinand Tönnies distinguished two forms of clustering of base: community and society, defining the community as that form of socialization in which subjects, according to their common origin, local proximity or shared values, had attained a degree of implicit consensus. Currently, it can be understood as locality and as a group relationship, emphasizing the first a physical/geographical proximity and the second, interpersonal relationships. Furthermore, considering quality of life, Tonon (2007) points out that its study concerns the material and psychosocial environment, recognizing two areas of well-being: the social and the psychological, the latter referring to the experience and assessment that people make of their situation, including positive or negative findings and a global vision of their life called life satisfaction. Taking into account the above mentioned, the present work considers the Guaraní of Salta, self-proclaimed Ava-Guarani, which belongs to the linguistic family of the Tupí Guaraní, usually known as Chiriguano. Originated in the Amazonian jungles, have migrated and settled in the eastern slopes of the Andes, in the current Bolivian departments of Chuquisaca and Tarija, in the Bolivian Chaco (Izozo). It was a migrant population for centuries, in search of farmland for its main food source, corn and cassava. This population could not be conquered by the Incas, but neither exceeded the limits of its borders. Since the eighteenth century, the Franciscan missions settled in almost all their territory, with very few groups beyond their control. To 1919, the missions were secularized, clashed with the Bolivian army, and people were forced to seek work elsewhere while many increased their migration to Argentina where, toward the end of the nineteenth/early twentieth century there was an economic boom in the Northeast, primarily to work in sawmills and sugar mills. The Chaco War between Bolivia and Paraguay generated other migratory peak

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© Springer International Publishing AG 2017

G. Tonon (ed.), *Quality of Life in Communities of Latin Countries*,

Community Quality-of-Life and Well-Being,

DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-53183-0_8

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toward the Argentine provinces of Salta and Jujuy. Such migration would continue for a long time, corresponding both to individuals and families until recent, always in search of land for crops or different forms of access to monetary income. In this long migration, they were accommodating to various forms of activities as means for their survival. According to the above mentioned, this work intends to analyze the Guaraní's own sense of community and the characteristics of their notion of a good life.

Keywords Guaraní people · Community · Culture-well-being · Good life

8.1 Studies on Well-being, Quality of Life, and Ethnical Diversity

Numerous studies have examined the well-being of Aboriginal/Indigenous/Indian peoples from different disciplinary perspectives, focusing on various aspects as well as on quality of life.¹

Fox (2000) examines intergenerational communication and Aboriginal people's well-being, and points out that according to Aboriginal traditions, the health, and well-being of individuals depend in part on community health and social dynamics (Gathering Strength 1996, cited in Fox 2000). In her qualitatively oriented work, Fox interviewed members of the Blood Tribe—of which Fox herself is a member—living on and off reserve in Canada. The interviews comprised both elders and young people. Within this framework, Fox highlights the lack of communication of traditional ways of knowing, teaching, and being, and states that the teachings of the elders to young people have been lost due to colonization, assimilation, and segregation. Fox suggests different ways to foster the value of elders in the community.

Malin and Maidment (2003) address the concerns in the field of Indigenous education in the 1960s as compared with current concerns. The authors underscore the improvements that have been made in this respect, but observe that Indigenous aspirations remain unmet and that huge gaps continue to exist between the Indigenous and nonIndigenous populations on educational indicators. The paper shows that such gaps are further reflected in other areas of social and physical well-being, including life expectancy and employment. The authors describe two small-scale educational programs, which are tailored to Indigenous people's needs and intended to assist families through education, mentoring and community development so that their aspirations can be met. They also highlight the benefits of synchronized collaboration between government agencies and consider specific programs and their outcomes.

¹This work draws on the terms used by each of the authors cited to refer to Aboriginal/Indigenous/Indian peoples and does not discuss the specific issues that each term presents.

Cooke et al. (2004) measure the well-being of Aboriginal people by applying the United Nations' Human Development Index to registered Indians in Canada between 1981 and 2001. The authors conclude that, while the gap between Indians and other Canadians has decreased, Indians continue to have a shorter life expectancy than the rest of the population, as well as a lower educational attainment and a lower average annual income. In fact, the gap in average annual income increased during the period considered. The disparities between those living in reserve communities and those living off reserve have decreased somewhat; however, the gaps between men and women suggest that a growing disparity may exist within the Registered Indian population.

Godoy et al. (2005) review studies about how market economies affect the subsistence, health, social capital, and the traditional ecological knowledge of Indigenous peoples and their use of renewable natural resources. The authors state that exposure to such economies produces mixed effects on well-being and conservation.

Daly (2005) discusses a series of well-being indicators established in the literature to examine the risk of exclusion from Australian society for Indigenous Australian children. She concludes that Indigenous children continue to be among the most disadvantaged in the country, particularly in the most remote areas, and points to the possibility that such exclusion may have a negative effect on the ability of those children to participate in the Indigenous culture in the long run.

Kaur (2006) examines the links between the ecosystem services (food, medicine materials, wood, minerals, water, recreation, culture-related elements such as identity and values) and the well-being of people living in the tropical savannas of northern Australia. The author points out that both the Aboriginal and nonAboriginal communities of the area depend vitally on these services. However, the role of many of these services in the well-being of people is usually ignored given that they lack a monetary value.

Taylor (2008) describes the Australian social indicator frameworks in existence at the time and notes that the development of indicators in cross-cultural settings will always involve a degree of reductionism and a process of translation. Set within the framework of the United Nations' Program of Action for Indigenous Peoples, his paper addresses the implications for measures of well-being from an Australian perspective, and argues that one measure of success would be for Indigenous governing bodies to begin to assume some responsibility for the compilation of their own measurement indicators and progress in stages to their interpretation, presentation, replication, and dissemination, with a view to seeking their application for local planning.

Rodriguez and Rodriguez de la Vega (2006, 2008) explore the quality of life of the Guaraní community in Salta, by means of the application of the Well-Being Index among the Guaraní people. Among other issues, the authors point out that an initial analysis of the outcomes reveals that, across the board, men and women report similar average levels of personal satisfaction, while there are marked

differences between both sexes in the level of satisfaction with various aspects of the country, with men showing more satisfaction in this area. Likewise, group culture seems to have a strong influence on the maintenance of language and certain customs.

Cooke et al. (2007) argue that Canada, the United States, Australia, and New Zealand consistently place near the top of the United Nations Development Program's Human Development Index (HDI) rankings. However, all such countries have minority Indigenous populations with much poorer health, social conditions, and well-being than nonIndigenous peoples. The authors further highlight that the socioeconomic and health status of these populations has remained unclear in recent decades. The purpose of the study is to establish how the gaps between Indigenous and nonIndigenous peoples in such countries have widened or narrowed between 1990 and 2000. The study concludes that in such period, the HDI scores of Indigenous peoples in North America and New Zealand improved at a faster rate than the general population, closing the gap in human development. In Australia, the HDI scores of Indigenous peoples decreased while the general population improved, thus widening the gap. The authors add that while these countries are considered to have a high human development, their Indigenous populations have only medium levels of human development. Needless to say, all of this evidences the need to intensify efforts in order to improve the social, economic, and physical health status of Indigenous peoples.

Kelly et al. (2009) address social and emotional well-being, as well as risk and protective factors for psychological distress among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People (Australia). To this end, the authors review the current definitions of social determinants of health—taking due account of inequalities—and discuss the current views on Indigenous mental health and social and emotional well-being, with particular reference to the National Strategic Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' Mental Health and Social and Emotional Well Being 2004–2009. In addition, they analyze the high levels of nonspecific psychological distress reported by Indigenous Australians, consider risks and protective factors and discuss the lack of culturally appropriate services to meet the needs of Indigenous Australians. The paper concludes that further development of subjective social and emotional well-being is required, as well as culturally competent programs to deal with it and help to close the gap between Indigenous and nonIndigenous peoples.

Grieves (2009) discusses Australian Aboriginal spirituality and its connection with social and emotional well-being. The paper reviews aboriginal spirituality and the expressions of spirituality in cultural forms. It further defines the concept of Aboriginal well-being as having a strong dependence on spirituality and argues that it has also had a significant impact on the development of policies and programs on the needs of Aboriginal Australians. The paper concludes with a discussion of the concept of social and emotional well-being as a policy and program objective, in the light of the literature review of Aboriginal spirituality.

Sangha et al. (2011) argue that both the livelihoods and well-being of Aboriginal and nonAboriginal communities in remote and rural northern Australia depend on

ecosystem services. In addition, the authors state that while the well-being of all Australian citizens is measured by the Australia Bureau of Statistics (ABS) using socioeconomic indicators, their study looks at nonmarket benefits derived from ecosystem services for Aboriginal well-being. Through a case study with the Mullunburra-Yidinji people in the Wet Tropics, Queensland, the authors applied the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA) to identify the links between ecosystems services and the MA's six constituents of human well-being. Their study showed that cultural and provisioning services were determinants of community well-being. As these were not measured by the ABS, the authors adapted the MA to include the ABS indicators, and thus explored the strengths and weaknesses of the approach for measuring the well-being of remote and rural Aboriginal communities.

Taking account of the fact that social, economic, and environmental conditions have an impact on the health level of the population, Hasen Narváez (2012) explores the notion of *küme mogñen* ("good life") of the Mapuche people, through the case of the Mapuche communities living in the sectors of Neltume Lake and Choshuenco (in the Municipality of Panguipulli, in the Andean foothills). The author describes and analyzes how this human being/nature relationship is crucial to understanding the foundations of Mapuche life and well-being.

Rasmussen and Guillou (2012) develop, at the request of the Bureau of Women's Health and Gender Analysis (BWHGA) at Health Canada, Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada (Pauktuutit), a framework for an Inuit-specific culturally relevant gender-based analysis of health determinants. This showed that Inuit-specific health data needs to be considered separately from other data. The authors propose a listing of culturally relevant health determinants for Inuit. The framework was well received by Inuit in its first trial use in 2008.

Cabezas Corcione (2012) aims to establish the relevant aspects of the quality of life of Mapuche people. The author concludes that the integration of the subjective aspects with the objective components is insufficient to determine quality of life, and considers it imperative to design a quality of life construct that includes Mapuche components related to their own culture and identity, such as language, land, world-view, and spirituality.

Schnettler et al. (2013) sought to identify the variables influencing satisfaction with life among the Mapuche people, through the application of a survey of 400 Mapuche participants in the Santiago Metropolitan Region (Chile). The questionnaire included the SWLS/Satisfaction with Life Scale and SWFL/Satisfaction with Food-related Life scales, lifestyles, food, acculturation, and sociodemographic characteristics. Multinomial logit and probit models were proposed, and satisfaction with life was the dependent variable. The study shows the weight and impact of the material and subjective variables on the level of satisfaction with life, with a clear predominance of the latter. Among the material variables, the possession of goods, a steady job, and a solid house are the basis of vital satisfaction, while the subjective variables include the possibility of giving and receiving affection and sharing experiences in relationships with children or other adults. The study further points to the maintenance of Mapuche cultural traits (such as the importance the Mapuche place on extended families with a large number of children) as a source of

satisfaction and the relationship with cultural peers as a way of maintaining identity, and consider that the scarce value the Mapuche people attach to the maintenance of the language is a mutation to more efficient ways to maintain their identity and adapt to the requirements of the mainstream culture.

Rodríguez Murano (2013) looks at the cultural management actions with the Huarpe and Ranquel ethnic groups in the Province of San Luis, Argentina, and how such actions are regarded by the members of both communities. The study collects the views of the ethnic groups on the quality of their lives.

Godinho (2014) addresses the historical, cultural, and familial context of money as it flows through Indigenous households in remote, regional, and urban Australia and considers how this influences Indigenous views on financial capability and well-being. The author examines the different uses of money among Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, as well as the stress associated with its use. The author concludes that historical, cultural, and familial factors have an influence on Indigenous people's understanding of Indigenous money and their views on well-being and financial capability.

Loera-Gonzalez (2014) examines local perceptions of well-being, their underlying social and power relations and the resulting cultural resistance among the Rarámuri indigenous people in the Tarahumara region, Mexico. The article argues that the different understandings of well-being must be analyzed in conjunction with its sociocultural and political context, taking account of ethnic differences. In addition, the article shows how Rarámuri people hold discursive understandings of well-being that evoke differentiated ways of living.

McMillan and Glode-Desrochers (2014) develop a community-driven project based on the priorities of the Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre (MNFC) in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, and aim to assess culturally relevant needs in order to understand the characteristics of resilient communities that foster well-being and to facilitate and promote the creation of Indigenous frameworks and tools for mental resilience assessments and action plans for urban Indigenous populations. The participants in the study identified the centre, its staff and programs as significant sources of hope, healing and belonging, these elements being recognized as essential to their well-being and self-determination. The authors highlight the need to implement cultural competencies in the Western approach to health care so that service providers are receptive and understanding of cultural contexts of Indigenous peoples. In this sense, the participants agreed on the need for environments free of racism and stereotypes.

Sangha et al. (2015) argue that the role of natural resources in Indigenous well-being has been ignored in Australia to date, and this in turn has led to inappropriate well-being policies. The research addresses what the authors consider to be the need to develop an appropriate Indigenous well-being approach that incorporates Indigenous values in relation to natural systems. Focusing on Indigenous people in Australia, the research examines well-being frameworks from global and local (i.e., Australian and Indigenous) perspectives. It further assesses the role of natural systems in Indigenous well-being and shows how people's social,

economic, and cultural worlds, as well as their capabilities, relate to their natural systems.

Poppel (2015a, b) addresses the living conditions and perceived quality of life among the indigenous peoples in the Arctic, Inuit, Saami, and indigenous peoples of Chukotka and the Kola Peninsula, on the basis of the results of almost 8000 interviews collected in the survey of living conditions in the Arctic (SLiCA), conducted in the 2001–2008 period. The author points out that these groups have lived and survived in the Arctic through millennia as hunters, fishermen, and herders, and that, despite the rapid social changes in the past decades, many of them seem to prefer life in smaller towns and settlements than migrating to the larger centers in the south. Furthermore, the study found that the prevailing lifestyle of Arctic indigenous people is that of a mixed economy (i.e., a combination of traditional activities and cash employment). It takes money to develop traditional activities, and those with sufficient income choose to pursue such activities. Most indigenous people maintain their traditional subsistence activities and many even continue to speak their indigenous language. Despite the fact that most indigenous people are satisfied with life in their communities, they also acknowledge widespread social problems, such as unemployment, alcohol and drug abuse, family violence, and suicide. Indigenous people also recognize that climate change is a problem in the region.

8.2 Guiding Notions

8.2.1 *Community*

Toward the end of the nineteenth century, Ferdinand Tönnies made a distinction between two basic forms of social groups: community and society, and defined community as a form of socialization in which individuals, bound by ties of common origin, local proximity or shared values, had achieved a certain degree of tacit consensus. According to Sarason (1974, cited in Maya Jariego 2004), psychological sense of community is the subjective experience of belonging in a larger collectivity, coupled with the feeling that one is part of a dependable network of mutual support relationships. Such sense of community is given by the perception of similarity to others, an interdependence with others, the acknowledgment of such interdependence and a willingness to maintain it, as well as the feeling of being part of a larger structure.

It can thus be stated that sense of community is based on the social interaction of the members of a collective, a perception of attachment to a territory and a widespread feeling of mutuality and interdependence (Sánchez Vidal 2001).

However, new forms of community arise over time that are not necessarily related to an association with territory, thus giving rise to a new type of community: the network community (Rodríguez Fernández 2007, cited in Tonon 2009). Along

these lines, Maya Jariego (2004) argues that the community is not disappearing but that new community forms are arising that are characterized by a high degree of individualism and the personalization of social practices.

8.2.2 *Space and Territory*

When we refer to territory, we mean the space appropriated and valued—symbolically and/or instrumentally—by human groups (Raffestin 1980, cited in Giménez 1999). Every territory has three essential elements: the appropriation of a space, power, and frontiers.

The territory is in itself a “space for the inscription” of culture and is thus one of its forms of objetivization. It can function as a framework for the distribution of spatially located cultural institutions and practices and can be subjectively appropriated as an object of representation, affective attachment, and a symbol of socioterritorial belonging.

Socioterritorial belonging refers to the status of belonging to a collective group fundamentally defined in a territorial sense, as such dimension significantly characterizes the structure of the collective group and the roles assumed by the actors (Giménez 1999).

8.2.3 *Culture and Identity*

Giménez (2005) refers to the force of the symbolic conception of culture and conceives it “as a symbolic repertoire of action strategies” (p. 3). This notion of culture is closely intertwined with that of identity, the former having an impact on the latter.

Restrepo (2010) argues that identities are relational, and that they are expressed when differences are marked. However, identities also express inequality and domination; therefore, the practices of marking differences that help distinguish between individuals and groups are related to the conservation or confrontation of different hierarchies (at the social and political levels, among others), and thus identities acquire a sense both for those that assign them and for those that assume them.

8.2.4 *Collective Identity*

We thus conceive collective identity as a sociocultural construction that—according to Tajfel—has three characteristics: the subject’s perception that he or she belongs in the group, the consciousness that such belonging is qualified positively or

negatively, and a certain degree of affection derived from the consciousness of such belonging. Added to this is the configuration/reconfiguration of a collective memory, which is parallel to the biographical memory (that which belongs to the individual) (Giménez 1997).

Collective identity entails not only that the members of a collective group feel different from others, but also that they are recognized as such by others (hetero-ascription). Thus, collective identity implies sameness within the group and difference outside it, along with the need of social recognition for such identity to exist at a social and public level. (Giménez 1997, cited in Rodríguez de la Vega 2014).

Added to the features of distinguishability and difference is the persistence of identity over time and the value ascribed to it, as it is the central value around which the subject organizes his or her relationship with the world and with the other subjects (Lipiansky 1992; Giménez 1997). Identity is thus related to the subject's need to give sense to existence (Giddens 1995; Rodríguez de la Vega 2014).

8.2.5 Culture/Identity, Well-Being, and Quality of Life

According to Diener and Diener (1995), the conceptions on well-being may be grouped into three broad categories: (a) one that describes well-being as the individual's assessment of his or her own life in positive terms ("satisfaction with life"), (b) another related to the predominance of positive affect, or positive feelings, over negative ones, and (c) another that is closely related to philosophical and religious considerations having a normative character, according to which happiness is considered to be a virtue or grace.

Well-being is considered by many authors to be a component of quality of life, albeit not synonymous with it (Andelman et al. 1999). One of the key components of the traditional paradigm of quality of life studies is psychological well-being, also termed subjective well-being by some authors (Diener et al. 1999; DeNeve and Cooper 1998).

Tonon (2007) argues that the study of quality of life refers to the material and psychosocial environment, and recognizes two areas of well-being: a social and a psychological one. The latter is related to the experience and evaluation that individuals make of their own lives, which includes positive and/or negative assessments and a global view of their lives. This is known as vital satisfaction.

Identity and the values, rules, beliefs, etc., attached to it also entail specific ideas about what is a "good life" and, therefore, what is involved in well-being and quality of life, both in individual and collective terms. This encompasses both objective and subjective elements.

While Ryan and Deci (2001) point out that the definition of well-being raises cultural questions about the meaning and equivalence of constructs, Christopher (1999) argues that the definitions of well-being are inherently culturally rooted, as

the author considers that all understandings of well-being are based on moral visions that rely on judgements about what it means to be well.

In this vein, Grieses (2006, cited by Grieses 2009) states that “[t]he starting point for well-being is always cultural in that it is defined, understood and experienced within a social, natural and material environment, which is understood and acted on in terms of the cultural understandings that a people have developed to enable them to interact within their world” (p. 2).

A large number of studies have explored this issue, including those of Diener and Fujita (1994), Diener et al. (1995), Suh et al. (1998), Diener et al. (2000), Theuns et al. (2012).

8.3 The Guaraní People

8.3.1 Overview. *Ethnic Diversity in Salta*

Before turning to the study of the communities and families of the Guaraní ethnic group settled in the provinces of Jujuy and Salta, in the north of Argentina, we consider it important to offer an overview of ethnic diversity in these provinces, particularly in Salta, which is well known for its remarkable diversity and deeply rooted communities. More than nine Indigenous ethnic groups live in this province, and they can be grouped into two large geographical sectors: the highlands and the lowlands, each with its own eco-systemic features. However, part of the province’s population also consists of communities of an extra-American origin with diverse historical roots.

Below we explore the issue of Indigenous peoples in Salta. It should be noted that the ethnic groups are distributed in different jurisdictions, not only at the departmental level but also at the provincial and national ones. Therefore, the characteristics we describe here are not unique to the province.²

8.3.2 Location

The highlands are home to two large Indigenous groups, which are settled on the slopes of the Andes mountains. One of them, the Kolla, occupies the Departments of Los Andes, Santa Victoria, and Iruya, along with some departments in the Jujuy puna; the other, the Diaguaito-calchaquí—also an Andean group—occupies the

²The Guaraní of Salta and Jujuy are also found in Bolivia, place from which the migrations were generated. In turn, they come from the jungles of Paraguay and Brazil for their distribution in the latter two countries. About this topic, you can also see Meliá (1988, 2004) and Shaden (1974/1998).

inter-mountain valleys of the Calchaquí Valley in Salta and the Yocavil or Santa María Valley in the province of Catamarca.

The highest concentration of ethnic communities can be found in the lowlands. However, some groups also live in the Yungas, or high-altitude forests. This is the case of the Guaraní and Chané (an Arawakan group that assimilated with the Guaraní) communities, the former being a more numerous group than the latter. Both ethnic groups are of an Amazonian origin, and arrived in successive migrations before the Spanish invasion and occupation took place (Braunstein 1978). A large part of the Guaraní people arrived in waves of migration for different reasons, such as wars, and in search of lands and employment (Hirsch 1999a, b, c).

Chaco, the contiguous ecosystem, has been home to the so-called typical Chaco peoples since prehistoric times. Of these peoples, the most numerous group in Salta is the Wichí community (formerly known as Mataco). Other communities living in Salta are the Chorote, the Qom or Toba, the Nivaclé (or Chulupí) and the much-reduced Tapiete or Tapui community. Some Chaco groups are settled beyond Salta in the provinces of Chaco and Formosa, and some in Bolivia and Paraguay (Lozano 1941; Martínez Sarasola 1992, 1998; Meliá 1988).

8.3.3 *Languages and Beliefs*

The peoples living in the highlands speak Spanish with its own distinctive traits in terms of grammar and vocabulary. The original languages, that is, Kechua, Aymara, and Kunza (spoken in the Andean puna) have disappeared among the Kolla people. This has also been the case with the Kakán language—spoken by the Diaguita people—the disappearance of which may be attributed to the impositions of Catholic missions first, and then of schools in Argentina (Canals Frau 1973).

The Guaraní language is predominantly spoken in the rainforest lowlands by the Guaraní and Chané peoples (Dietrich 1986), even though the original language of the latter group is Arawak, which is still spoken in Bolivia. Despite inhabiting the lowlands of Chaco, the Tapuy or Tapiete people also speak Guaraní (Califano 1978). All of these groups speak Spanish, but knowledge of the language within individual households is irregular. Many individuals—particularly women—belonging to the Chaco ethnic groups are monolingual (they do not speak Spanish).

Drawing a parallelism between languages and beliefs, the peoples inhabiting the highlands are predominantly Catholic, the same as the Guaraní (Langer 1991, 1998; Tomasini 1977, 1978) and some Chaco ethnic groups. The Anglican Church has undertaken an important missionary work among the Wichí and Chorote peoples (Rodríguez 1991). Missionaries of the Pentecostal Church and the Assembly of God have been active among the ethnic groups in Chaco, including Guaraní families. No detailed studies are known to exist on this situation, which exhibits a great dynamism (Santamaría 1990). While the original beliefs have been largely

displaced, some aspects—such as the widely known *Pachamama* cult of the Andean world³—and syncretic practices still persist.

8.3.4 *Subsistence*

The economy of these groups plays a critical role in their lives. This aspect is usually approached in an oversimplified and superficial manner, which—far from contributing to the understanding of such a vital matter—hinders its comprehension. Below we address some central points.

The economy of all of these groups is diametrically opposed to the economy of the country (indeed, to the world's economy)—that is, the capitalist or market economy. Additionally, the economy of the Indigenous groups is not only diametrically opposed to capitalism, but it stands in stark contrast to it and only shares some minimal similarities. A proper understanding of the issue would require a thorough review of each of the basic economic processes of any economy: economic units and processes of production, circulation, distribution and consumption. Such review would also need to account for the rules of operation of the economy, including the different forms of property (Metraux and Gutelman 1973). It suffices to point out that the individual ownership of the means of production is a notion that is alien to these Indigenous peoples, and it is confined to certain personal commercial property, generally coming from outside the community (Leake 2008). The concept of the market as a central institution of the economy is also alien to them, given that the principle governing production is family consumption rather than the sale of goods (Fusfeld 1976). This does not mean that these populations do not exchange goods—in fact, such exchanges take different forms—but rather that their economy does not revolve around those exchanges (Polanyi 1947, 1994). The penetration of the capitalist market (to which we will simply refer as the “market”), brought about by the growing and persistent intrusion of agents not belonging to the Indigenous communities, has made Indigenous peoples increasingly dependent on the market for the acquisition of goods that have become part of their diets or daily lives, and on the labor market as well for sporadic, irregular—and more often than not—undeclared employment.

³The pre-Hispanic cult of *Pachamama* has deep roots in the Andean world. The term is formed by the Quechua words “*Pacha*” and “*Mamma*”. “*Pacha*” means “earth”, not in the sense of “land” but rather in the sense of cosmos, of the world considered as a whole. “*Mamma*” means “mother”. The meaning is thus that the world is our home; we belong in it and we are protected by it. Such meaning gave rise to a cult that is practiced in rituals varying from one region to another (Zaffaroni 2011). In Salta, a ritual is performed every August 1, in which the nonIndigenous population also takes part. According to the ritual, houses are filled with smoke in order to drive away plagues. The Indigenous groups, especially the Kolla or Andean people, give the ritual a more spiritual and profound sense.

Guaraní production is a major distinguishing feature, and this has led to the issue being treated in an oversimplified manner. Production—understood as the manner of gaining access to consumer goods—is closely associated with the ecosystems in which the Guaraní economic system was originally developed, aside from the different factors that subsequently affected, limited or modified such system. It is through production that a technology component or a group-defining central product may be observed (Rodríguez 2007). For example, irrigated agriculture, soil treatment, and sedentarization—along with herding activities—are predominant among the peoples settled in the highlands (“agriculturists”). The Amazonian peoples rely on nonirrigated shifting agriculture (“horticulturists”). The peoples from Chaco cultivate crops; however, they are mainly engaged in fruit gathering in the forests and wild animal hunting (“hunters-gatherers”). These peoples tended to move within environmental circuits, in accordance with the seasons (“seasonal nomadism”). However, as pressure was exerted by agents of the dominant society, these groups were forced to sedentarize and form the so-called “communities.” For the normal functioning of their economies, all of these groups—both those settled in the highland and lowland regions—depend on the biodiversity of the ecosystem to which they adapted their social life. It goes without saying that the more recent advances of the agricultural frontier and the use of new technologies (deforestation of large areas, transgenic crops, defoliants, polluting pesticides, fencing, among others) have had a devastating impact on biodiversity and Indigenous peoples’ free access, and have increasingly led to poverty, malnutrition, and migrations, with the Indigenous groups having to settle on the outskirts of cities (Naharro et al. 2009; Buliubasich 2012).

8.3.5 *Nonindigenous Ethnic Groups*

We can identify as the main group, due to its demography and access to political and economic power, the national society in general, with its characteristic class composition—comprising the popularly known “high,” “middle” and “low” classes—and its distinctive production, agricultural, mining, industrial and service forms, along with its forms of reorganizing property.

As is widely known, Argentina became the final destination for a vast immigrant population mass of an extra-American origin as a consequence of the so-called national organization processes taking place in the last third of the nineteenth century. The migratory cycle reached its peak between the end of that century and the first two decades of the twentieth century, after which it continued in various degrees of intensity (Di Tella and Zymelman 1971). The large majority of these immigrants came from Italy and Spain, but they also arrived from other European and nonEuropean countries. In the northwestern provinces, the arrival of Arabic groups is worth mentioning, as well as numerous Jewish families and, to a lesser extent, Japanese, and Indian people (from India).

A general feature of these groups—referred to as “collectivities”—was that they adapted rapidly to the national society’s lifestyle, particularly in its economic and legal aspects and, also culturally, by easily learning Spanish, Argentina’s official language. With regard to other cultural aspects, various customs from their countries of origin were preserved. Further studies about these groups are still needed toward a better definition of the ethnic profile of the province and the region under analysis. American immigrants from neighboring countries should also be mentioned; these groups are, to a lesser or greater extent, already adapted to the dominant society’s lifestyle. The official Province statistics do not usually differentiate, considering everyone in undifferentiated categories (Secretaría de Planeamiento y Control de Gestión 1993), except the Provincial Aboriginal Census 1984, limited to the natives of the lowlands.

Finally, a topic that would require a specific analysis is that of the different forms of peasant families, many of which are of an Indigenous, Hispanic or mixed origin, and which are generally self-defined as “creoles,”⁴ but whose sense of ethnic belonging identifies itself with that of the dominant society in terms of language and lifestyles, the exception being their subsistence practices.

8.3.6 *The Guaraní Community in the Province of Salta*

8.3.6.1 **Brief Historical Overview**

The Guaraní or Chiriguano people⁵ originate from to the Tupi-Guaraní ethnic group (Súsnik 1968), which by the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries had already spread over South America from the lower Amazonas. Together with the Arawak and Carib groups, they are part of the rainforest groups with the greatest dispersion in South America. In Brazil, the Guaraní people are divided into four sub-groups: Guaraní Mbya, Guaraní Chiripá, Guaraní-Caiová, and Guaraní Ñandeva—this last group is settled in the Mato Grosso do Sul region and is generally referred to by that name or as Caiová-Guaraní. The Guaraní Mbya group is mainly located in the southern and southeastern states of Brazil, like Sao Paulo, Paraná, Santa Catarina, and Rio Grande do Sul. There is also a Guaraní Chiripá group currently settled in the state of Pará (Shaden 1974/1998). Within these processes toward the search of

⁴Argentinian and Latin American history texts frequently use the term “creoles” (“*criollos*”) to refer to native populations that were neither Indigenous nor European. This is the broad sense of the term as used in the Chaco-Salta region. It is used more restrictively to refer to peasants long established in the area, while Indigenous people also use the term “white man” to refer to the whole of the dominant society’s population.

⁵Their self-denomination is *Ava-guaraní* or *Ava-Guaraní*-speaking people. In this work we will use the terms “Chiriguano” and “Guaraní” interchangeably (Meliá 2004).

land for survival, the Guaraní people may be identified by its persistent migration in search of the “land without evil” (Martínez Sarasola 1992).⁶

Within the Guaraní groups, we consider the Mbya-Guaraní group—also referred to as Caingang—to be of particular importance due to its penetration in the Argentinian territory. This group spread over central Paraguay, eastern Brazil and toward the south, settling in the Argentinian provinces of Misiones and northern Corrientes. Some moved toward the mouth of the Amazon River and then took the opposite direction, while others moved toward the borders of the Incan land, and then settled in the eastern region of Bolivia. This is the group that received the name of Chiriguano, although they are currently more frequently referred to as Ava-Guaraní. These migrations known as migrations in search of the “land without evil” (*Candire*) were interpreted from an idealistic standpoint, but they were also interpreted as the need to find productive land, particularly for the growth of their precious corn. These interpretations may need to be combined, especially as the subsistence production crisis, mainly caused by ecological reasons, required these groups to migrate, and this necessity was fed by the belief in the “land without evil.” Martínez Sarasola (1992) argues that the migration movements may have been caused by the more powerful communities. This is not inconsistent with the strong sense of territoriality that characterized these groups. At present, however, the most important reason for these migrations—which also acts as a limit on them—is no other than the white man, who invades their lands and pushes them out of their forests.⁷ Anyway, on these interpretations, we must consider Meliá (2004):

The theme of the ‘land without evil’ has invaded the field of Guaraní ethnology by the-ologians, scholars and environmentalists. It is not objectionable, but we must distinguish levels and purposes in that literature, which recognizes the contribution of Guaraní people to our society as a utopia key.

Since the Spanish occupation of America, many battles were fought against the white man from the second half of the sixteenth century until the end of the nineteenth century (1892), when the Guaraní were defeated by the Bolivian army in the battle of Kuruyuki. This disastrous event caused the Indigenous people to lose their lands.⁸ In different historical periods, families within these groups migrated toward northern Argentinian territories, especially to the provinces of Salta and Jujuy.

⁶Upon their arrival in the rainforest regions of South America, the European colonizers witnessed numerous groups undergoing processes of migration. Other Amazonian ethnic groups also used to spread over the continent in search of arable lands where to settle. However, the Guaraní peoples were guided by a specific perspective: the search of the “land without evil” in which to reproduce their lifestyles. In a crisis situation, the *chamán* or *pagé* initiated a dance to signal the commencement of the group’s migration.

⁷For more information, see Almeida (1995), p. 376.

⁸The battle of Kuruyuki, on 28 January 1892, marked the defeat of the Guaraní to the Bolivian army, which supported *hacienda* development projects in those territories. Despite it being a massacre, the Indigenous people regard that battle as a heroic act of their people. This battle also marks the loss of their lands in the region.

The Guaraní were historically organized in different social units. The primary model was the patrilineal lineage, whose members lived together in a communal house. Each of these large houses kept alliance relations, based on a system of reciprocities, which included marriages, other celebrations, and war alliances. The following different levels of organization could be identified (see Braunstein 1978; Chase-Sardi 1989):

- (1) a first level of integration was that of lineage groups living in a large shared house known as *tenda*.
- (2) a second level of integration, *tecuá* or *tekoha*, was something similar to a village consisting of houses, or a big open settlement comprising a political and territorial unit, the limit of which was another *tekoha*. This correlates to a notion of territoriality that, according to Chase-Sardi (1989), was of higher significance before the Guaraní lands were invaded by the colonizers. Today, this sense is more restrictive and the territorial unit is known as *tekoha guasu*;
- (3) the third and most comprehensive level of integration was that of the *guara*, which consisted of groupings formed with other peoples with whom war alliances were made.

According to Chase-Sardi, when these groups arrived in Chaco and its neighboring regions, the sense of the third level of organization was lost due to the weakening of the ties between migratory groups. Lineage also originated a new organization based on the village—which grew due to the increase in the number of houses and the missionary work—that tended to bring different *tenda* groups together.

The Guaraní people's main economic activity has revolved around crop growing since ancient times, corn being the major crop, followed by yucca and manioc. Depending on seasonal conditions, their diet was traditionally supplemented with hunting, gathering, and fishing activities. Agriculture was practiced using the so-called slash-and-burn system, which requires laying land fallow (other commonly used terms are “*milpa*” and “shifting agriculture”) (Wolf 1975).

As is the case with the great majority of Indigenous groups, these tasks are learned, practiced, and internalized since childhood, children joining their elders in these activities as much as possible. With respect to the Guaraní in Brazil, Shaden mentions that (1998, p. 96):

Since childhood, boys and girls assist their parents, both in slash-and-burn activities and domestic work. Girls, for instance, fetch water and take care of their younger siblings (...). From ages eight to ten, approximately, boys go through what can be called a learning period: they join their fathers in hunting expeditions, honey harvesting and other activities, learning also, under the supervision of their fathers, weaving techniques and the crafting of different appliances (...)

8.3.6.2 The Guaraní Community on Route 34 in Salta

The most important inflow of Guaraní people in the current Argentinian territory is particularly connected with the possibility to work in sawmills and sugar mills in Salta and Jujuy since the beginning of the twentieth century,⁹ with the secularization of the Franciscan missions by the Bolivian government, as well as with the Chaco war between Paraguay and Bolivia (1932/1935), which originated a large wave of immigration. As a consequence of this, the most important inflow came through Route 34, which connects the border town of Pocitos to Tartagal, and the so-called *Ramal del Norte* (“Northern Branch”) which connects them to the sugar mills in Salta and Jujuy. In these Guaraní settlements, the Franciscan missions became influential—the Guaraní people had already interacted with these missions on the Bolivian side. In the Salta region, some missions were those of Caraparí, Tobantirenda, Aguaray, Piquirenda, Yacuy, and Tartagal, among others. These missions were relatively significant and congregated a large number of people (Tomasini 1977).

The city of Tartagal is located in the northern area of Route 34, some 60 km. from the border with Bolivia, in a region that developed rapidly thanks to the sawmill industry and the sugar mills close to the area, but mostly due to oil extraction activities by the state-owned company *Yacimientos Petrolíferos Fiscales* (YPF). The region became a true “ethnic funnel” where “white” people—both creoles and immigrants, particularly Arabs—converged with Indigenous groups from Chaco that were in the area from earlier times. The Amazonian groups, both the Guaraní and the Chané (who also speak the Guaraní language) are also part of this conglomerate of different peoples and have outnumbered local ethnic groups, with which different types of relations have been established that will significantly affect traditional customs.

In addition to these settlements in the Salta and Jujuy region on Route 34, there are Guaraní communities across the Argentinian side (Salta) of river Tarija. These communities connect to the city of Orán, some of them by crossing over to Bolivian territory, as is the case of the La Loma community in Hipólito Yrigoyen, which dwells on land claimed to be legally owned by the San Martín de El Tabacal sugar mill. This community had presumably settled in the region by 1938, before the foundation of the mission by the Franciscan father R. Chielli (1964).

As a consequence of the rearrangement of settlements in Salta, the Guaraní families established new communities that were not a mere continuity of the original settlements on the Bolivian side, but distinguished themselves in the Salta territory by taking two directions: toward the cities and toward the rural areas.

⁹In his 1912 publication, Friar Bernardino De Nino (OFM) refers to the Bolivian Mission at Machareti, mentioning that: “*emigration to Argentina is a true plague in this mission, because here we find the main recruiters of Indians offering jobs outside Bolivian territory and it is no use quoting statutes since there are good interpreters while, in the meantime, everyone begs for workers*” (cited in Tomasini 1978, p. 225).

Since 1942 and, approximately, until almost the end of the century, the Guaraní families arrived in Salta to work in sawmills. Most frequently, that workforce was hired for forestry exploitation, for which creoles, Bolivians, and other people from the area were also recruited. The work performed at sawmills was the most arduous and perilous: It involved working in the depths of the forest, living in precarious camping sites, felling trees, working in construction, or repairing roads.¹⁰ Timber cutting took place between the months of May and October. After this period, most workers returned to their settlements to prepare the land for the cultivation of corn. Sometimes they also returned for the first harvest of corn, and on this opportunity a traditional festivity was held—the *Arete*.

In the words of our grandparents, our ancestors, they came from Bolivia looking for work in Argentina. At that time there were no vehicles and they would walk great distances to get to Ledesma, the sugar mill. After that, they came to the San Martín de El Tabacal sugar mill.

Later, they came to Tartagal looking for lands to work on and, as usual, Aboriginal people are agriculturists. Since the beginning, they wanted to work the land and have a family, and this is how more people of our Guaraní race came and the community was born...

(Basilio Segundo—Tembeta Group, Tranquitas, August 21, 2002)

The decrease in profits in sawmills—caused by the growing drop in timber resources—led some families to migrate again while some remained in those settlements. Survival strategies were modified and readjusted: certain groups decided to settle in rural areas while others moved to the outskirts of cities.

8.3.6.3 Life in Rural Areas

The pillar of the economic activities is the domestic group, within which the production, consumption, and commercialization stages are defined. The Guaraní tend to preserve their traditional work processes, but they also interact with the market. The group survives by combining agricultural activities, domestic animal breeding for consumption purposes, and commercial activities, as well as through jobs held as temporary workers or—the much coveted—employment in the public sector. The main purpose of this integration into the market is the acquisition of cash for the purchase of different goods that they consider important (Sturzenegger 1978).

Each domestic group owns, separately, a closed area for the cultivation of (in order of importance) corn, manioc, squash, butternut squash, zucchini, sugar cane, watermelon, melon, sweet potato, and other vegetables. In the proximity of the dwelling house, other fruits like bananas, papayas, and mangos are also grown. For the same purpose, certain domestic animals like pigs, turkeys, ducks, and chickens are also bred.

¹⁰These camping sites, as well as the sugar mills, became the determining factor in the organization of the new communities.

Corn is sold and eaten fresh (corn ears) or in dry cobs, which are stored in a special area or cubicle known as *troja* (barn).

The stretch of land used for growing corn varies between $\frac{1}{2}$ and 4 hectares. A similar space is left to recover for 3 years before it is cleared and prepared for sowing. Land clearing and maintenance is a man's work but sowing, harvesting, fence maintenance and irrigation, among other tasks, are shared with the women, who are in charge of all general domestic chores as well as those to be performed in the proximity of the house, like animal breeding.

A common difficulty in productive activities is irrigation, since the Indigenous communities have access to water mostly for drinking purposes only. Another setback is the need to protect cultivated areas from animal intrusion by investing in fences and posts and by regularly performing maintenance tasks, the requirements of which are generally not within their possibilities.

Corn has been and still is the Guaraní's staple food source and it occupies a central role in their activities, with a much more lasting importance than any other product. The relevance of this crop in the Ava-guaraní social and cultural organization is such that Meliá (1988) stated that this Indigenous community could be considered a "corn community." Harvest brings joy and celebrations, and it is at that time that the main festivity of the *Arete* is held. The *Arete* is celebrated with the first sowing of corn and it is an event of great importance in the community's social life. This festivity has been subject to significant changes—particularly since it coincides with the Carnival held by the dominant society—but it is still practiced, except by those who are part of evangelical groups.

Products are usually sold in the city and in urbanized areas, in stands known as "small stalls" ("*puestitos*"), in spaces arranged for this purpose or in the sidewalks. Some products are also sold by the side of the main routes, where the products are displayed on small tables. Sometimes, the Indigenous communities also sell products obtained from their gathering activities, like honey and a special pepper from the forest, known as "*quitucho*," which is sold in bottles with water and salt. Both production and selling activities are duly organized and the different tasks are distributed according to sex and age.

Exchanges within a framework of reciprocity are a very common type of social relation among Indigenous communities and still a widespread practice among Guaraní people, consisting of a continuous circulation of goods within each domestic group and with family members of other domestic groups within the same community. Interaction with other family members that live in other communities is restricted, on the other hand, to Sunday visits and certain festivities—they meet, for example, for inter-community football matches on Sundays. They also meet for the *Arete* festivity, to work in *mingas* (communal cooperative meetings), for political purposes, or for economic assistance when in need. Sometimes, although less frequently, productive activities are shared with other families within the community; this is, however, becoming less common. The *minga*—a pre-Hispanic

cooperative system, formerly known as *motiro*¹¹ among the Chiriguano, and which has always defined the work organization of the Guaraní people—is nowadays limited to clearing and preparing the land before corn is sown. It is at this time that those families that are in a position to “share” invite other families to participate in the activities that take place before the sowing of corn. Before the commencement of the activities, they offer coca leaves and cigarettes and, after the work is done, a large meal is served for all participants.

Agricultural production, however, is not enough to attend to the domestic group’s subsistence needs and, therefore, Indigenous people offer their manpower to make up for that deficiency. This creates great tension due to the incompatibility between the demands of their jobs and the production needs within the domestic group. This tension, in turn, affects certain decisions like the number of hectares to sow and the type of crops to be sown.

In this context, it is not unusual for agricultural production to be suspended or even abandoned. In many cases, economic resources are obtained by working as day laborers, doing “*changas*”¹² (odd jobs), working in oil companies in the area or finding a job in the public sector, all of which may be supplemented with the receipt of bags with food and income from social plans (the “*Trabajar*” plan, the “head of household” plan, etc.), as well as with the assistance from churches and the supplies from meal centers in schools.

8.3.6.4 Access to Land

Agricultural activities entail a certain degree of access to land, although families, with a few exceptions, do not hold title to that land, ownership of which is sometimes held by the state, and sometimes by private persons. Notwithstanding this, certain ancient rules for communal access to land are still in practice: the “*Cacique*” (leader of the group) redistributes land to each domestic group in order to ensure equal access to land. Therefore, Meliá’s observation (1988)—made with respect to other regions—still applies to Guaraní people in the area under analysis:

When a Guaraní family or individual leaves the community for natural reasons, no acquired right may be claimed over the land. Conversely, when another community accepts that family or individual, access to a plot of land is automatically granted.

¹¹As stated by Meliá (1988), “*Motiro refers to the cooperative system that always defined the Guaraní people’s work—not only that of an agricultural nature. It is an institution regulated by customary and ritualistic practices. It is preceded by a formal invitation which the recipient is required to answer...This cooperative system was also used for the construction of houses, clearing the land, cleaning gaps, and installing fences, among others.*” (p. 27).

¹²In the local language, this term refers to a service provided in exchange for payment that does not entail either a fixed or temporary employment relation. This term bears no connection with the word “*chango*” (“young lad”), which is equivalent in Spanish to the local terms “*muchacho*”, “*joven*”, or “*pibe*”, the slang equivalent used in Buenos Aires (Solá 1975; Osán and Pérez Sáez 2006).

Near the city of Tartagal, for instance, the communities settled in the borders of Cherenta, 9 de Julio, San Francisco Solano (La Loma), Tapiete, and El Milagro do not hold title to the land they live on—or they have access to the minimum portion necessary to carry out their agricultural activities. Communities with the legal use (usufruct) of private land are those in La Loma (20 ha), El Milagro (20 ha), 9 de Julio (25 ha), and Yariguarenda, among others. Those in Tapiete, on the other hand, hold individual titles to their land but, jointly, they do not hold more than four blocks in total (Naharro et al. 2009).

8.3.6.5 Life in Urban Areas

The life of Guaraní people dwelling in urban areas is currently undergoing a major transformation process through which their ethnic traits are constantly changing and acquiring new meaning as they merge with urban life. Their great permeability to the dominant culture's customs has resulted in a fast process of disintegration of their ancestral practices. In some cases, the Guaraní people cease to use their original language and, in many other cases, they deny their ethnic origin, retaining only certain beliefs and visits to healers, even if these are forbidden by the churches.

The living quarters of Guaraní people in urban areas do not follow the traditional pattern,¹³ but rather they seek to build houses out of brick. Those who are very poor have only a space to live without a farming area. In those families that have a farming area, while certain practices germane to rural life are reproduced, the break with tradition is still remarkable, given that young people disregard all agricultural activities. With regard to education, many more people have access to secondary and even tertiary studies, thus improving their quality of life in comparison with that of the groups of hunters and gatherers.¹⁴

There are marked differences with hunters-gatherers that settled in urban areas since these still define themselves as Indigenous peoples. The difference is marked by the very geographical location in which they settle: while urban Guaraní families settle on the outskirts of cities or, some, in the cities themselves, Indigenous communities from Chaco settle in the vicinity, keeping a distance from the city of

¹³The traditional housing pattern consisted of groups of families living close to each other, each with a farming area for corn. In this context, family means the extended family, which exceeds our "average family"; that is to say, it refers to a family in which more than two generations may be living together. This coincides, broadly, with the anthropological and sociological concept of "domestic group". The land space available was distributed by a cacique when settling in a new area after a migratory movement. Even if a specific plot of land belonged to a domestic group, certain bonds and rituals were established with other families, thus originating a *tekooha* (see above).

¹⁴With hunter-gatherers settled in urban areas. Strong differences are observed, because they do not abandon their self-identification as indigenous. The pattern of settlement itself points out the difference: while the Guaraní urban families are located on the outskirts of the city or some within it, Chaquenses indigenous communities are located nearby, a few kilometers from the city (3, 6 or more), keeping the own structure of the rural communities of Chaco salteño.

several kilometers (3, 6, or more) and maintaining the structure of rural communities in the Salta-Chaco region.

It is worth noting that the tendency toward the loss of the Guaraní identity that is mostly present in urban groups may be observed in certain rural groups as well. In the community of Yariguarenda, for example, we met the former cacique, Modesto Valdez—who passed away not long ago—and he voiced his concern about maintaining the traditional customs of his people. Of his twelve children, three have died and only three daughters stayed in the community—only one stayed with him. One of his daughters has a stand where she sells vegetables on a street corner in Tartagal. Three of his other children live in Tartagal, two have moved to Salta, and one to Santiago del Estero. Many Indigenous people from this community have married or are partners with creoles and have adapted to the different lifestyles of urban areas within the region.

8.3.6.6 Organization in the Northern Region: The APG (Guaraní People Association)

Several Indigenous associations—most of them Wichí—played an active role during the latest reform to the Constitution of the province of Salta. Such occasion also gave rise to the formation of the Guaraní People Association. In order to understand the origin of this organization, it is necessary to consider its history with the Guaraní people in Bolivia, where Indigenous people have a long-standing and particular organizational tradition. This tradition can be traced back to an ancient institution of colonial origin, the *Capitanía*,¹⁵ a council that governs several communities and which reaches decisions by consensus through assemblies held at the community and supra-community level. By 1987 new *capitanías* emerged, which began to interact with several NGOs. As opposed to what happened in Argentina, the Bolivian government had little involvement with—or, rather, was indifferent to—the different ethnic groups in the lowlands. This, along with the imposition of neoliberal policies, prompted the development of these NGOs with a significant degree of autonomy and ideological diversity. Among the Guaraní people, these organizations involved the participation of the Catholic and Protestant churches, as well as of lay organizations. A very important organization founded by the Jesuits is the CIPCA (Center for Research and Promotion of Peasants), which had been active since 1976. The Guaraní People Association (APG) was created with CIPCA's support and the participation of several NGOs and 43 representatives of a pan-Indigenous organization, the CIDOB (Confederation of Indigenous Peoples and Communities of the Bolivian East). The APG was created to advocate, collectively, for Indigenous people's rights and to foster better development

¹⁵For the analysis of this organization on the Bolivian side we follow Hirsch (1995, 1999a, b, c, 2000).

conditions. Since its foundation, the Bolivian APG consistently gained strength and influence toward the accomplishment of its goals.

In 1992, a group of Guaraní people from the province of Salta visited Bolivia to commemorate the Kuruyuki uprising, and it was on that occasion that they learnt about the Guaraní People Association in that country and they became interested in establishing a similar organization on the Argentinian side. The organization was founded by the end of that year, gathering numerous communities from the provinces of Salta and Jujuy. The APG gathers Guaraní-speaking groups, that is, Chiriguano (Ava-Guaraní and Izocoño groups), Tapiete and Chané. At present, the defining general interests of the organization are (a) land and territory; (b) bilingual education; (c) legislation; and (d) special projects to attend to various needs (Asamblea del Pueblo Guaraní 1995).

On August 19–21, 2000, Indigenous representatives from Salta (Kolla people) and from Jujuy (Kolla and Guaraní people) met in Nazareno (in the Santa Victoria department in Salta) and drafted a document in which they demanded the expropriation of Finca Nazareno. Specifically, and, in broader terms, it meant that the provinces of Salta and Jujuy comply with Argentina's Constitution and other applicable regulations concerning the recognition of the APG as a legal entity) (informal information received by a social actor related to one authority of the zone, September 2, 1998).

Mention should also be made of the participation of COPIRECHA (Coordination of Indigenous Peoples and Organizations of the Argentinian Chaco region) in the meetings. This shows that the communities of the Chaco region seem to be embarking on a road toward unity.

8.4 Final Comments

Based on the notions that well-being and what is regarded as a good life are culturally rooted, we can conclude that the behavior of the Guaraní people in the Salta territory is the result of deep tensions from the past, along with the specific characteristics of the new social environment into which the Guaraní people seek to integrate. On the one hand, the community exerts pressure for ancestral practices (*Ñandé Reko*) to be maintained while, on the other hand, people have new expectations, which are fulfilled—partially and through alternatives—when they settle in urban or rural areas. In this respect, and regarding most cases, the most determining factors are the late arrival in the Salta-Jujuy region, the sudden realization of being in Argentinian territory after the borders with Bolivia were defined, the process for the organization of the communities, the powerful attraction to goods and lifestyles which belong to the creoles, coupled with a long-standing enmity with Indigenous people from the Chaco region. In the Salta region, the Guaraní people have ceased to show an interest in owning land at a community level beyond the limits of the family group. Added to this is a lack of interest in

working the land on the part of young people and those who decide to settle on the outskirts of cities.

If we consider this Indigenous peoples' long journey through time starting in the Amazon rainforest, we cannot but note this community's persistent wandering toward a better quality of life and future opportunities. They are always trying to maintain—at least partially—their old traditions while conquering new spaces in the influential life of the white man. This “search for well-being” may be recognized in their migratory traits inspired by their travels in search of the “land without evil.” It may also be recognized in the settlements established along their migration to the Salta region, where they tried to reproduce their “corn society”; in their festivities, such as the *Arete*, which brings different families together by the exchange of tasks and gifts. It is also present in their arrival in Argentina, which they considered to be *mbaporenda* (land of work) and, above all, in their continuous efforts to participate and grow in the dominant white society—sometimes paying the price of losing their values, as is the case with their language.¹⁶

The observations made by the renowned scholar of the Guaraní world regarding this group's reality in Brazil also apply to these new lands:

In the light of the facts stated here, it seems that Guaraní people today are one of the best examples for the study of the consequences derived from the contact between American Aboriginal people and western cultures. No other American-Indian tribe seems to have been subject, in these four centuries, to the influence of such varied intercultural situations (Shaden 1974, p. 29).

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¹⁶By way of anecdote, it is worth mentioning the personal experience of Héctor Rodríguez and his friendship with a Guaraní leader near Tartagal (province of Salta, Argentina) who was an assistant to a Guaraní teacher in a course that Rodríguez attended, and who told him about his interest in becoming a policeman. Instead, he studied nursing at university and served as a congressman in Salta's legislature, he married a Swede and moved to Sweden, where he separated and devoted himself to Indigenous medicine. His brother was a co-organizer and leader of the APG in the Tartagal area.

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Chapter 9

Quality of Life and Health in Displaced Communities Affected by the Armed Conflict in Colombia

Jorge Palacio, Isidro Maya-Jariego, Amalio Blanco, José Amar and Colette Sabatier

Abstract This chapter examines the factors that affect the quality of life (QoL) of displaced people in Colombia. First, previous studies on the factors that affect QoL of displaced persons including, inter alia, individual factors, traumatic events, situations of escape, and the adaptation of the refugee to host communities and new places of residence are reviewed. Second, the results of three studies carried out in the Atlantic Department (Northern Colombia) are summarized, with quantitative and qualitative data on the process of restoration and adaptation of displaced communities. The first study analyzes the impact of political violence on mental health and social networks on 49 displaced and 50 not displaced young people living in Barranquilla (Palacio and Sabatier in *Impacto psicológico de la violencia política en las familias: Salud mental y redes sociales en los desplazados*. Ediciones Uninorte, Barranquilla, 2002). The second study explores the social identity construction of families displaced by collective violence that participated in a project of self-construction of housing for food in urban area of Cartagena (Revivir de los Campanos). In this project, which promoted social integration, 100 displaced families worked together to build their own homes. These families were supported both by different governmental institutions and nongovernmental organizations (Correa et al. in *Desplazamiento interno forzado, restablecimiento urbano e identidad social*. Ediciones Uninorte, Barranquilla, 2009). The third study analyzes the relationship between social networks and QoL of 19 individuals displaced by violence (Palacio and Madariaga in *Investigación y Desarrollo* 14(1): 86–119, 2006) that live in a suburb of Barranquilla (Pinar del Río). In the conclusion section

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© Springer International Publishing AG 2017
G. Tonon (ed.), *Quality of Life in Communities of Latin Countries*,
Community Quality-of-Life and Well-Being,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-53183-0_9

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two main issues are discussed: the dilemma for the restoration and reconstruction of a new life plan (between returning to the place of origin or resettling in a host community), and the need to integrate displaced persons and demobilized armed, with host communities.

Keywords Quality of life · Health · Displaced persons · Adaptation · Colombia

9.1 Introduction

Displaced persons refer to individuals or families who have lost all or most of their material possessions and have survived one or more traumatic events caused by natural disasters or—as in this case—by situations of conflict. Furthermore, they are living in a place of refuge, which can be the first place of refuge or one of many, for those who continue escaping in order to save their lives. In accordance with the law 387 of 1997.

Internally displaced persons refer to anyone who has been forced to migrate within the national territory, abandoning his/her place of residence and economical activities because their lives, safety, or freedom are violated or placed at risk because of diverse situations, namely: armed conflict, internal disturbances and tensions, generalized violence, massive violations of human rights and breaches of international humanitarian law or other circumstances that drastically alter or disturb public order (Colombia 1997, p. 1).

Beyond legal considerations, this definition makes it clear that forced displacement is an event that leaves persons already suffering from traumatic experiences highly exposed. Displacement directly affects millions of people and thousands of communities in Colombia. People individually and collectively (communities) are the main victims of forced displacement. This shared experience of suffering paves the way to a psychosocial trauma (Martín-Baró 2003; Blanco et al. 2016).

Today Colombia has a cumulative population of 6.9 million internally displaced persons from 1985 to 2015, as a result of the internal conflict that the country has experienced in the last fifty years. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Colombia has been placed multiple times on the top of the list of countries with the most internally displaced persons in the world numerous times in the past fifteen years (UNHCR 2015; IDMC 2016). For instance, in 2015 in South America, the highest figures for displacement include Chile, with one million internally displaced persons due to natural disaster (earthquake and tsunami), and Colombia, with 224,000 internally displaced persons due to political violence.

The majority of displaced Colombians flee mainly from rural to urban areas in attempts to escape clashes between illegal armed groups and the army. These rural areas experience high levels of confrontation between armed groups fighting for the strategic control of drug productive areas, as well as trafficking of illegal

substances, in addition to other illegal activities, such as agricultural production and mining. Today the war has become much more an economic conflict than an ideological one.

In the areas of greatest conflict the peasants suffer from landmines, forced recruitment of children, illegal control of communities, targeted assassinations, etc. (UNHCR 2015). In recent years, the movement of displacement has also been due to natural disasters associated with floods and droughts (Włodarczyk et al. 2016; Amar et al. 2014) or to the damage to water sources in towns and cities from mining (Romero 2012).

The Colombian government has tried to address this complex problem in several ways. One example of this is the implementation of the Law 1448 of 2011 on the care, assistance, and reparation to victims and the restitution of their lands (Colombia 2011). This law addresses the improvement in access to different types of resources for displaced families. The government is also participating in peace talks with illegal armed groups (FARC and ELN). Peace talks are expected to end the conflict with two of the largest illegal armed groups that are among the main instigators of displacements. However, other issues remained unsolved such as emerging criminal gangs, impunity, corruption, and inequality. These problems generate many of the social issues that affect the health and QoL of Colombians, as the issues continue to be active causes of poverty and violence.

9.2 Displacement: Before, During and After

When we talk about QoL in displaced persons, we refer to the perception of their position in life, and how well they feel in it according to their cultural context, their value system, their expectations, needs, and achievements (WHOQOL Group 1995). This perception is built according to their physical and psychological health, as well as their level of independence, social relations, and surrounding social structure (Tonon 2009; Ferris 2006; Cummins and Cahill 2000).

However it is necessary to consider at least four key situations that are found in displacement, which affect QoL and the health of displaced persons, namely: (a) the previous history of the individual before traumatic events, (b) the type of event and traumatic experience forcing the person to leave their home or city, (c) the flight or exodus of the person, referring to the physical displacement because of the need to preserve their life or improve their living conditions, and (d) finally the process related to adapting to the place of refuge or settlement (Palacio 2002). Then we review these four elements in detail.

9.2.1 Individual History of Mental Health

To better determine the impact of displacement on health and QoL, it should take into account the personal history of mental health of the displaced person, inquiring the risk and protection factors before the traumatic event, which modulated their response and symptoms presented after displacement. The factors can be biological, social, and environmental such as histories of abuse, mental illness, traits of neurotic personality, or external locus of control, all of which can increase negative coping responses to traumatic events (Hodgkinson and Stewart 1998; Aristizabal et al. 2011).

9.2.2 Traumatic Events

Traumatic events are those circumstances that remain engraved in the memory of the person as representations of the great losses or experiences of violence and that generated great amounts of pain and/or suffering. To describe them, we use the categories defined by Macksoud and Aber (1996) in a study with Lebanese families of different economic status and religious orientation (Table 9.1).

These traumatic events are interpreted according to the intensity and subjective perception of the threat (Hodgkinson and Stewart 1998):

Table 9.1 Traumatic Events

Categories	Description
Displacement	Forced to change or leave your home, school, work, neighborhood, or village
Emigration	Forced to leave the country
Separation	Separation from father/mother, both, and/or other family members
Grief	Death of parents, brothers/sisters, grandparents, and/or other close relatives of family
Witness to Acts of Violence	Witness intimidation/torture/physical injury or murder of family members and/or other persons
Victims of Acts of Violence	Exposure to or direct suffering due to: bombings, shootings, explosions, airstrike, destruction of home, school or workplace, exposed to massacres, theft of home, beaten, tortured, raped, kidnapped or detained by armed groups, suffering serious physical injuries, or physical disabilities
Participant in hostilities/soldier/combat	Having trained with armed groups, ordered to carry weapons or to patrol, engage in combat, forced to kill others
Extreme poverty	Lack of access to food, drink, and shelter for extended period of time(s)

Source Adapted from Macksoud and Aber (1996)

- How intense or severe is the stressor?
- If it is accompanied by heat, light, noise, or darkness.
- If it was sudden or could be anticipated.
- If it is controllable or uncontrollable—can you escape or avoid?
- If it represented a threat of imminent death or physical injury.
- If it lasts long, short, or episodes.
- If it was experienced alone or in groups.
- If the threat is toward self or other(s).
- If it can repeat or not.
- If it is a fortuitous or natural event, or one that occurred under human control.
- If it was an objective experience (number of dead or injured) or subjective (belief in the possibility of dying).
- If there is an ideological commitment to interpret and deal with these events. For example with the glorification of war, patriotism or religious commitment, the desire for freedom from unjust situations (Punamaki et al. 1997; Boothby 1992).
- If the stressor is accompanied by other social or relational factors that amplify its traumatic effect such as bereavement, separation from family, emotional reactions of others close, etc. (Leyens and Mahjoub 1994).

9.2.3 Physical Movement—Displacement

It refers to any movement done by one person or group to seek refuge in one or several successive places in order to avoid or escape the traumatic events and preserve their life or try to improve their QoL. Overall this mobility—especially if it is forced—affects the mental health of the person experiencing such an event (Newcomb et al. 1986; Micklin and Leon 1978), and has a greater impact on children, women and elderly in vulnerable situations. These vulnerable populations have more symptoms of depression related to the traumatic events they have experienced, and the loss of its tangible and intangible assets. In addition, they begin to be part of a new and stigmatized group called “displaced persons” with a lower social status, where they experience more shortages (exclusion, discrimination) and sufferings, in which their social identity and self-esteem are also affected (Palacio and Sabatier 2002).

9.2.4 Survival or Adaptation to Place of Refuge

The problems of displaced persons continue in places of refuge. Even though life is safer, displaced persons still face many shortcomings in the cities and towns that are not adequately prepared to receive them. This makes it difficult to access many kinds of resources, not only for the displaced persons but also for the

persons/populations receiving them (Palacio and Sabatier 2002). This sociopolitical context that presents many problems makes it more difficult to overcome the traumas of war or violence of the displaced persons, because of the competition for scarce resources, among other things. Eventually, over time such competition imposes a process of “the survival of the fittest” and creates more conflict between displaced persons, host individuals, and those in surrounding communities (Palacio and Sabatier 2002).

In this vein, Miller and Rasmussen (2016) propose an ecological model of refugee distress that take into account variables such as poverty, unemployment, family conflict, discrimination, and daily stressors. These factors may have more impact on the quality of life than the characteristics of violent situations and events that forced displacement. For example, the host community often shows behaviors of rejection or distrust of those displaced by the lack of knowledge about their motives or reasons for becoming displaced. In other circumstances, displaced persons after a while (usually around a year) adapt to the host community where they can potentially find better conditions than those experienced in their place of origin before the conflict, which leads them to stay in this new place (Blanco and Amarís 2014; Correa et al. 2009). This adaptation also depends on the position of integration, assimilation, or separation that the displaced person or group wants to have with the host community (Berry 1997; Palacio 2002).

To better understand this process of adaptation it is essential first to analyze the social support surrounding displaced persons as they arrive in their new settlements (Hodgkinson and Stewart 1998; Martínez et al. 2001), in addition to other key factors, such as:

- Magnitude of traumatic events and war situation: How long has the conflict been present in the place of origin?/What is the estimated duration of the conflict?/How long was the displaced person immersed in the conflict?/How long ago did the displaced person leave their place of origin?/In how many settlements has the displaced person been before?/How long was the displaced person in the last or current settlement?
- Social support: How isolated is the displaced person to receiving material help?/What is the displaced’s perception of social support or help?/Does the displaced individual have contact with other family members?/Is the displaced person living other traumatic events (e.g., sick, wounded or missing family members in displaced’s family)?
- Community Interactions: What are the attitudes toward the displaced people of the host community?/What is the culture of the host society?/What is the host society’s relations with the group of displaced people?/In the interaction with others, how has the social representation of the conflict evolved?
- Expectations for the future: Does the current living situation contain risk factors or high levels of violence or conflict that can force the displaced to move again?/What chances have the displaced people to return to their home?/What chance to remain in their new place?/What chances to move to a safer/new place?

Taking into account these factors and their combinations, it can be seen that each person responds differently to traumatic events (Chiland and Young 1994; Chakraborty 1990; Oakley and Salazar 1993; McCallin 1991). For example, this has been observed in studies with displaced children or in conflict zones. Garbarino and Kostelny (1996) identified an increased accumulated risk for traumatic response due to conflict in Palestinian male children, compared to female children, and especially that there was an increased risk in younger children compared to older. To the contrary, in a refugee camp in Guatemala, Miller (1996) found adolescent girls to be more vulnerable than boys.

The separation from family and the attitude of the adults around children, most importantly the mother, are the factors that most affect the type of response a child will have in relation to traumatic events. Ajdukovic and Ajdukovic (1993) found a clear relationship between depressive symptoms among older girls and young women and more deteriorated health in their mothers. Laor et al. (1996) and Kuterovac et al. (1994) also observed a higher reaction to stress in refugee children from the former Yugoslavia level when their mothers also reacted highly to the stress of displacement.

Thus the anxiety of parents and family separation can become situations of higher risk for the mental health of children than the actual intensity of the traumatic events. Hence the need to try to keep the family together during the traumatic event or when the environment is dangerous, and support parents and adults in their attempts to mitigate their reactions to stressors when they are in front of their children (Baddoura 1998).

9.3 Studies of QoL in Displaced Persons

Communities of displaced persons from different parts of the world are found to have many unmet needs, as well as problems related to well-being that are evident before, during, and above all, after displacement, all of which are clear indicators of very low QoL. A study by Araya et al. (2007) on the effect of trauma on QoL among 1193 Ethiopians displaced after conflict, used the SCL-90-R and WHOQOL-BREF to examining the moderating effect of coping and social support. They found that QoL and mental health were lower according to the age and the traumatic events experienced, in addition to the living conditions in the place of refuge. They point out that the interventions oriented at reducing mental distress, modifying coping strategies, and encouraging social support are useful to the improvement of QoL.

In a second study, they assessed QoL six years after the occurrence of post-conflict displacement in Ethiopia (Araya et al. 2011), comparing 749 displaced women living in refugee camps in Addis Ababa and 110 displaced women who had resettled in the neighborhood of Debre Zeit, 50 km away from Addis Ababa. With the application of WHOQOL-BREF, they found that the women living in a community setting, even though they had experienced more traumatic events, had better

physical, psychological, environment health, and social relationships. In addition, there were a higher proportion of married women who received more social support, and used more often task-oriented coping strategies.

A similar psychological impact is observed in other African countries and different traumatic conditions. Getanda et al. (2015) observed that internally displaced persons living in refugee camps in Nakuru (Kenya) had lower levels of mental health, QoL, and life satisfaction (measured with the General Health Questionnaire-12, and a modified version of WHO QoL-BREF). They were found to have suicidal thoughts, discontentment with the government, perceptions of lack of support, and fear regarding what would happen to them and their children in the future. These results were observed most in persons who did not perceive support from the government, but only informal support from friends.

In Colombia, it was observed that one of the first signs or symptoms of violence in the behavior of displaced adults was the fear to organize themselves in order to demand their rights (Arquidiócesis of Cali 1997; CODHES 1997). For instance, displaced farmers showed an inhibition of the protest and self-organizing behavior, as different illegal armed groups threaten and assassinate the leaders of movements for human rights. So that displacement by violence seems to also affect the capacity for collective action and community organizing.

Muñoz-Conde and Pachón-García (2011) measured changes in QoL and poverty of the displaced population in Colombia between 2008 and 2010, based on the results of the second and third National Survey of Verification of the Rights of Displaced People. They used different econometric indicators such as Index Living Conditions, the magnitude and intensity of income poverty (indigence line and prevalence of poverty), the magnitude of poverty by Unsatisfied Basic Needs and the Integrated Method of Poverty. In the three-year period, the poverty and insecurity continue with little change in population deplazada, i.e., with higher levels than the national average. Displaced from the Atlantic coast have the lowest indicators of QoL. The few changes were observed in the right to identity, education, and health, but indicators of immediate assistance, emergency care, and income generation are the lowest.

As noted, the situation of displaced persons shows the difficulties in their QoL and health in general, however it is necessary to adjust these criteria to take into account regional particularities (Tonon and de la Vega 2016). To further describe these particularities, the following studies will describe observations in young adults and displaced families in northern Colombia (see summary in Table 9.2).

9.3.1 Study 1: Health and Adaption in Youth

The first study of Palacio and Sabatier (2002) examined the hypothesis that problems of mental health (anxiety, depression, aggression, posttraumatic stress) and adaptation (altruism and planning behaviors) are more present in populations of youth in situations of displacement than youth who have no been displaced.

Table 9.2 Three studies with displaced persons in Northern Colombia

Sample	Goals	Results
98 young residents in Malambo	Comparing displaced and non-displaced individuals living in poverty	Displaced young showed more symptoms of PTSD and more mental health problems (depression and anxiety)
100 displaced families participating in a self-build housing program in the outskirts of Cartagena de Indias	Describing social identity dynamics in displaced persons	Both uncertainty and disruption in the personal biography are faced with resilient attitudes and an effort to regain the ability to establish plans for the future
19 displaced persons residing in Pinar del Río, Barranquilla	Comparing the psychosocial situation depending on the time of residence in the host community	Displaced persons with more than a year living in the host community show worse physical health indicators than displaced persons with less than three months in the refuge

In addition, the social support of parents acts as shield, reducing problems of health in the youth.

Subject: a group of 98 young people who lived on the outskirts of Malambo, a village near Barranquilla were randomly selected. Participants were between 9 and 16 years old (mean = 12.25 years, SD = 2.18), of both sexes, of which 48 were displaced (had arrived less than 4 years to their current place of living) and 50 lived in poverty but were not previously displaced. All participants had completed their primary education and several had completed the first years of high school.

Instruments: The youth responded to the following questionnaires: The Posttraumatic Stress Reactions Check List (PTSRC) (Macksoud et al. 1990a), The Child Behavior Inventory (CBI) (Macksoud et al. 1990b) and the Childhood War Trauma Questionnaire (CWTQ) (Macksoud 1992). Parents responded to a Social Support questionnaire (Madariaga et al. 1993).

Results: Displaced families fled because of threats from armed groups, and not so much because of direct experiences of acts of violence. They reached the new place of settlement about a year ago after spending an average of 6 months with many difficulties of all kinds. None of the displaced families have lived in the new place of settlement for more than fifteen years.

It was observed that the displaced youth presented more problems of mental health, but that factors of sex, age, and time living in the new place of settlement need to be taken into account. The social support of the parents, the way it was measured, was not found to play a role in the protection of health in the youth. With response to the symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), it was found that the displaced youth presented an average of 8 of the 14 symptoms evaluated (SD = 3.2). They identify to have experienced a traumatic event, dream, and

thoughts of the event, and have an elevated state of alertness. The older displaced youth were also observed to present less symptoms of stress, which is to say that the younger displaced youth were more affected by PTSD ($r = -0.31$; $p < 0.03$).

Displaced youth presented more depressive and anxious behaviors than non-displaced young people ($t = 4.83$; $p < 0.00$, $t = 5.94$; $p < 0.00$). They also have fewer planned or organized behaviors ($t = -0.76$; $p < 0.44$), but have more altruistic behaviors ($t = 3.94$; $p < 0.00$) compared to non-displaced youth. With respect to time of arrival at the shelter, displaced young people who arrived more than a year ago show more aggression problems compared to those who arrived a month prior to the study. The female youth presented more depressive and anxiety behaviors than the male youth ($t = -2.76$; $p < 0.007$).

Contrary to expectations, with regard to social networks, it was noted that displaced families have a denser network (10–13 people) and a greater number of daily exchanges with a type of instrumental support, i.e., providing mostly material aid. While not displaced family networks are smaller (3–6 people) and their members are more engaged in emotional exchanges of higher quality.

On the other hand, in the general population the size of the family network is related to elevated levels of depression and altruism (both with $r = 0.21$; $p < 0.05$), and in the displaced families the size of the network ($r = -0.30$; $p < 0.05$) decreases as families remain in the new place of settlement. It seems that the network of the families becomes more selective with those members of the community that provide social support of a higher quality, however this does not favorably impact the health of their children.

9.3.2 Study 2: Social Identity and Adaptation in Families

The study sought to describe the construction of social identity and the process of adaptation of a group of displaced families that received a plot of land to build their own house on in a neighborhood of Cartagena called “Revivir de los Campanos” (Jiménez et al. 2003). Displaced families expressed the desire not to return to their former region, as well as the expectation of reestablishment in an urban region with better living conditions.

Social identity is defined by Henri Tajfel, as the link between psychological functioning and social processes surrounding the life of any person. Specifically, Tajfel defined social identity as being part of the self-concept which derives from the knowledge that people have of their membership in a social group, both through evaluative and emotional significance associated with their membership (Tajfel 1984).

Subjects: 100 displaced families that had arrived more than a year ago to Cartagena and decided to stay in the city were intentionally selected. They lived in different settlements, all very poor, on the outskirts of Cartagena including the neighborhoods of Pozón, Nelson Mandela, and around the Ciénaga de la Virgen.

Families participated voluntarily in a project of the self-build housing for food supported by different government institutions and NGOs.

Instruments: The methodology consisted of ethnography along 12 months, with two interviews of each participant. The first was an exploratory-descriptive phase to understand the context, and a second phase consisted of time for understanding and deepening of the processes of identity construction. Observation, in-depth interviews, focus groups and comparative analysis of the categories of discourse were used.

Results: A number of elements were observed that demonstrate how the identity of displaced persons is constantly changing due to the process of adaptation and integration to their new host environments. Also it is observed in a more direct way the vicissitudes faced by families because of a limited, and not adequately coordinated, policy to attend internal displaced individuals. Families did not have access to a system of information concerning the public policies of attention to internal displacement, particularly information regarding programs of restoration, relocation, and development.

Government presence in the settlements of the displaced has been intermittent, especially in programs of social care and recovery. Displaced persons perceive that they are located in faraway “depository spaces” (Castillejo 2000), far from the center of the city, which seems more of a geographical segregation than real support for proper attention or adaptation. As a consequence, a negative relationship was established with the places of arrival in comparison to the “abundance” perceived by displaced persons in their place of origin, whereas the loss of traditional livelihoods in rural areas made it more difficult to face the demands of urban life.

The process of deterritorialization of modern urban life deprives displaced persons of their original spatial context, as well as significant elements of their past, which no longer are valuable. Language, customs, rituals, and even food are lost, and therefore their identity is transformed. Thus, for the displaced person urban space becomes an adversary, which needs to be controlled, invaded, transformed, or disputed.

The following indicators can be observed in displaced persons that are experiencing a positive process of reestablishment:

- First is to regain its narrative ability to claim their rights and recover their dignity (Bello 2001) through the construction of an individual biography.
- Second, fears are reduced or disappear. The new environment is no longer perceived as a threat, and displaced persons overcome the feeling of dread towards the place of origin, or topophobia (Bello 2001), very common in non-elaborated traumas, because displaced individuals reject all what it represents what was lost.
- Third, individuals can expand their horizons of time to plan their future. Displaced persons are then able to look at their past, present, and thus project their future, conceiving identity as a project that is supported by resilient attitudes (Blanco and Amarís 2014; Yáñez 1997).

9.3.3 Study 3: QoL and Personal Social Networks

In the third study, we sought to test the hypothesis that health, QoL, and personal social networks of displaced persons are more deteriorated as they spend more time in places of refuge (Palacio and Madariaga 2006). In this case, the study compares the times of arrival to the settlement.

Subjects: Through snowball sampling, 19 participants from a neighborhood outside of Barranquilla, Pinar del Río, were selected. There were eight men and eleven women between the ages 27 and 61 years that formed two differentiated groups: One group was made up of participants with less than three months of resettlement in Pinar del Río and the other group was compound by those who had been living in the new location for more than one year.

Instruments: Two instruments were utilized in the study, the first was a questionnaire regarding QoL in health (SF-36) and the second was a questionnaire regarding the social networks that can generate the names of the people who are part of the personal social network and identify the types of support perceived (Arizona Social Support Interview Schedule (ASSIS), Barrera 1980; Barrera et al. 1981).

Results: It was observed that the indicators of the QoL in health, both physical and mental health, are very low and confirm the difficult conditions of life experienced by the displaced persons. The averages of the subscales are between 31 and 55 points (physical, mental) when in the normal Spanish population the overall average is 77 points, with a very low standard deviation (Iraurgi et al. 2004).

On the other hand, it was worrying that only displaced persons with less than three months in the place of settlement achieved an average level of 50 points in the subscale of physical functioning, indicating that their health is not severely limiting them for physical activities (such as personal care, walking, climbing stairs, take or load weight, etc.). However, in the physical dimension they do feel a great limitation on what to do with physical activity, i.e., they believe they cannot adequately perform work and other daily activities due to present limitations in performance caused by nuisance health.

From the dimension of mental health, it is observed that the emotional role has the lowest scores. This suggests that the displaced, regardless of the time of arrival at the settlement, consider that emotional problems interfere most with their work or other daily activities.

With respect to time of arrival at the settlement, averages of QoL are very low in both groups, there is no significant difference observed between the two. However, it is observed that the displaced that have more than one year in the resettlement, have a tendency toward lower levels of QoL, and this difference becomes significant in the subscales of physical functioning and vitality, which seems to show that their general physical health may be deteriorating compared to the displaced with less than three months since their arrival.

9.4 QoL and Resettlement of Displaced Persons

When we observe the consequences of displacement by violence in the QoL of displaced persons and their families, we see that they move away from the ideal of a democratic society in which the well-being is promoted and where people feel happy, healthy and capable (Shah and Marks 2004). In addition to this, we find that the health is affected in a broad sense as defined by the Comprehensive Health Model (Keyes 2005), due greatly to the fact that the quality of relationships that are essential to the well-being of the subject is destroyed by displacement (Blanco and Díaz 2005).

In the case of Colombia, and according to studies presented above, a number of factors must be taken into account to better describe the QoL in displaced persons, and to be able to propose successful interventions for the reestablishment of the displaced persons. The relocation is expected to ensure conditions that allow the displaced to have viable alternatives to rebuild their new life project, and that this is sustainable in whatever place they are established voluntarily. In addition, it should be an appropriate context for community building or integration into an existing community.

The reestablishment is made more difficult by the dilemma of returning to the region of origin or residence in the new place of settlement. This decision allows us to know how the displaced person perceives his position in life, and how well they feel in it according to the cultural context, the system of values, expectations, needs and achievements (WHOQOL Group 1995).

In general institutions, nongovernmental organizations, ethnic communities and even the government give preference to the displaced returning to their region of origin. Given that the conflict in the region of origin is over, and that clearance of landmines has been made for return (when necessary), and that return is a voluntarily decision, the return is seen as a good choice. However, from the psychological point of view, when return is done without adequate preparation, returning to the place of origin can lead to memories of violence and generate feelings of distress due to the different traumatic events experienced when last living there. In addition, it can cause the displaced person to return to a state of grief for the place of resettlement they are returning from.

If the return is not a viable option yet, the alternative is to stay in the place of refuge. According to estimates by the Red De Solidaridad in 2001, approximately 80% of displaced families did not want to return to their home and had decided to remain in the temporary settlements. This is still true, but the reason is not so much for violence in places of origin, but because of the improvement in living conditions found in the city versus the rural areas. These results are also confirmed in the research done by Blanco and Amarís (2014) with various groups of displaced women in the city of Soledad, near Barranquilla.

If we take into account the results of research on the mental health of young people and displaced families in the Atlantic department, and the reestablishment of families in Cartagena it is observed that remain in the settlement also does not offer

the best advantages for the current conditions in host communities. In the study of Amarís and Ferguson (2011) on mental health and family function of displaced single mothers, the mothers wanted to live in better conditions, be accepted by society in general, and have a job to allow them to meet their needs. For this reason, displaced families are faced with a dilemma with no clear solution because living conditions in both places are not favorable; poverty and inequality are still very high both in host and sending communities.

9.5 Social Support and Community Integration

It is difficult to speak of good QoL and health in persons in situations of displacement when we understand how they are received in places of resettlement. They are generally placed in the outskirts of large cities or in small towns where they must compete for resources with families already residing in there in poverty. These resettled families create new lines of territory in the neighborhoods (Salazar 1995). In the interaction between resettled and host populations, the process of reestablishment is a challenge for all in the community (Palacio and Sabatier 2002).

Regardless of whether the displaced persons return to their place of origin or remain in the place of resettlement, it is important that they construct among themselves a “community” that offers support in the search for creative and sustainable solutions to the problems of inequality and poverty. The cohesive social capital and the social support resources are particularly necessary and relevant in the early stages of the resettlement process. Emotional support appears to contribute to the adaptation of the displaced population, thanks in part to its formation of a psychological sense of community (Vera et al. 2015; Ramos-Vidal et al. 2014). The construction of a sense of community is the precondition that will allow whatever strategy of adaptation or development as defined by the community, the government, and nongovernmental organizations offering support, to be successful. This is because one of the most essential consequences of forced displacement, and in general, any events of collective violence is the destruction of primary safety nets and social supports, defining a principal factor of psychosocial trauma (Martín-Baró 2003; Blanco et al. 2016).

In this context of needs, it is necessary to carry out interventions that offer the opportunity for displaced persons to recognize their interdependence with their neighbors as well as opportunities to develop and maintain relationship with them through reciprocal supportive behavior (Sarason 1974). In general, it is expected that displaced persons, persons of demobilized armed groups, and host communities will eventually achieve feelings of being part of a larger community, creating an atmosphere of stability and confidence that overtime decreases the divisions between the groups.

9.6 Conclusions

Through various studies with Colombians displaced by political violence, we have observed some relevant interactions at the community level between the point of origin and the point of arrival of displaced persons, which would benefit from further research.

Internally displaced persons often suffer from PTSD, depression, and anxiety, as well as worse indicators of QoL and satisfaction with life than the rest of the population. We have documented this with various groups of people displaced by political violence in Colombia.

The characteristics of traumatic events associated with political violence have been widely described in research on psychological stress. In this chapter, we have shown how the conditions of displacement itself, along with the daily stressors in the host community, also have an important role in the quality of life of displaced persons.

We have documented two paradoxes experienced by internally displaced in Colombia. On the one hand, they face the dilemma of return, because they feel caught between staying in a host community with poor living conditions, and the urge to return to the place associated with the original traumatic events, with the added difficulty of starting a new displacement. On the other hand, at least for recent refugees, the time spent at the shelter does not necessarily reduce the symptoms of stress, probably in part because they still keep in touch with other people experiencing the same problem, so they continually recreate traumatic events and are exposed to maladaptive behaviors of others.

Both research and intervention should pay attention to the collective dimension of trauma. The destruction of the social fabric, the ideological justification of violence and the spread of negative patterns of behavior are part of a context of psychosocial trauma. In addition, host communities have a determining role in the evolution of the quality of life of the displaced, both through their attitudes toward integration and the availability of formal and informal support resources that facilitate adaptation after trauma.

Acknowledgements The studies were supported by Ecos Nord—France Gouvernement, Colciencias (1215-10-12502) and Universidad del Norte.

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Chapter 10

Sense of Community Mediates the Relationship Between Social and Community Variables on Adolescent Life Satisfaction

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Abstract The study of subjective well-being in adolescence has had a recent and dynamic development. Despite this, the meso-systemic contextual factors and their relationship with well-being have had relatively little attention compared to the micro-social dimensions. Regarding this context, this chapter aims to examine the association between life satisfaction with social-communitarian dimensions, and specifically the role that the sense of community plays in Chilean adolescents. Here, we provide a systematic review of the literature on the relationship between subjective well-being in childhood and adolescence with a focus on Sense of Community, Social Well-Being, and Community Support variables. Next, we analyze the relationship between subjective well-being scales together with analyzing the role of the sense of community in mediating overall life satisfaction and its relationship with community support and social well-being. The analysis uses the Students' Life Satisfaction Scale (SLSS) (Huebner 1991), Sense of Community Scale (Sánchez 2001), the Social Well-being Scale (Keyes 1998), and Perceived Community Support Questionnaire (PCSQ; Herrero and Gracia 2007). The target population studied in this chapter is based on a convenience sample of 438 adolescents of both sexes, aged between 14 and 18, belonging to public schools, subsidized private schools, and private schools distributed among seven urban neighborhoods in three regions of Chile. The results indicate that the sense of

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© Springer International Publishing AG 2017
G. Tonon (ed.), *Quality of Life in Communities of Latin Countries*,
Community Quality-of-Life and Well-Being,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-53183-0_10

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community mediates the relationship between community support and overall life satisfaction in Chilean adolescents. In addition, the sense of community has a partial contribution to the relationship between social well-being and overall life satisfaction. The discussion includes an analysis of the implications of these findings for future studies on adolescent subjective well-being.

Keywords Sense of community · Adolescents · Well-being · Life satisfaction · Chile

10.1 Presentation

In recent decades there has been a growing interest in the study of subjective well-being. Research on this subject has allowed us to learn about and understand its positive development, its causes, and dimensions, and how to establish how these relate to the prevention of risk behaviors and situations of social exclusion and vulnerability.

Overall, the evidence from these studies highlights the relationship between physical and mental health and integral human development (both of individuals themselves and the group to which they belong). These results have allowed, on the one hand, for more objective descriptions of the necessary conditions for living well, from the perception of the subjects themselves (Veenhoven 2002). However, on the other hand, it shows that subjective well-being is associated with people's social and community integration. Since often public policies tend to identify the conditions that negatively affect people's lives (e.g., poverty and lack of health services), measurements of subjective well-being become a valuable tool for going beyond these objective indicators, highlighting the positive resources and capacities of groups and individuals.

Despite the notable and important advancement of the scientific literature on subjective well-being, there are still some areas that are underdeveloped, to which this chapter aims to contribute. First, we must advance the study of psychological states and determinants associated with the different dimensions of well-being in children and adolescents, particularly in developing countries. The available evidence on these populations has still a long way to reach the production volume associated with adults (Casas et al. 2012; Tomy and Cummins 2011). Second, the study of well-being in childhood and adolescence could benefit from the inclusion of factors that come from the meso-systemic level. This—in the words of Bronfenbrenner (1993)—is defined as a system composed of microsystems and micro-contexts in which the person develops socially, such as the home, school, work, etc. It is, therefore, plausible to examine the relationship of concepts associated with the meso-system, such as perceived community support, sense of community, and empowerment, among others. We think that their inclusion would advance an ecological and multilevel understanding of well-being (Ben-Arieh 2008),

integrating contextual dimensions that jointly consider personal, relational, and collective needs (Prillelstenky 2004).

Under this premise, the present study analyzes the mediating role that the sense of community can fulfill in linking perceived community support and social well-being with life satisfaction in a sample of Chilean adolescent students. Thus, this study aims to contribute to the understanding of life satisfaction in adolescents, integrating dimensions that contribute to understanding the relationship between the individual and their community environment. Specifically, this study analyzes the mediating role that the sense of community has on the association between variables of social/community character, such as perceived community support and social well-being and its effect on overall life satisfaction. In this sense, the research questions that guide this study are as follows:

- Is there an association between social/community variables (sense of community, perceived community support, and social well-being) and overall life satisfaction in Chilean adolescents?
- To what extent does the sense of community mediate the relationship between perceived community support on overall life satisfaction in Chilean adolescents?
- To what extent does the sense of community mediate the relationship between social well-being on overall life satisfaction in Chilean adolescents?

10.2 The Research on Well-being with Adolescents

The conceptual field of well-being integrates three perspectives: the psychological, subjective, and social (White and James 2007). In this study, we will deal specifically with the second and third perspective. Subjective well-being is defined as a tripartite category of phenomena that include positive and negative emotions and life satisfaction (Diener et al. 1999). Affective components based on emotional responses, although always short-lived and fluctuating, are representative of the nature of everyday life (Gilman et al. 2000). Meanwhile, life satisfaction is understood as an overall cognitive assessment of the person regarding their quality of life with respect to their circumstances (Diener and Suh 1997; Seligson et al. 2003) that accounts for the degree to which they positively evaluate their life as a whole (Veenhoven 1994) or with reference to specific areas, such as family, friends, or school (Huebner 2004; Seligson et al. 2005), relative to a present state, but not momentary.

The literature reports that high levels of satisfaction with life positively correlate with physical and mental health, good interpersonal relationships, and educational and professional success (Park 2004). On the other hand, life satisfaction correlates negatively with risk behaviors, such as substance abuse (alcohol, tobacco and illicit drugs), violence, aggression, and sexual victimization (Proctor et al. 2009). Various studies conducted in adolescent populations report that low life satisfaction correlates positively with depressive symptoms, violent and aggressive behavior,

substance abuse, suicide attempts, suicidal ideation, low self-esteem, and lack of harmony with social relations (Furr and Funder 1998; Suldo and Huebner 2004; Valois et al. 2004, 2009; Zullig et al. 2001).

Different authors agree that the study of subjective well-being in children and adolescents presents some difficulties that other groups, such as adults, lack. Indicators of subjective well-being in adolescents vary not only in terms of contextual variables, but also due to the phenomena of adolescent self-development (Casas 2010a; Frønes 2007). In this sense, we cannot assume that the results from adult samples can be extrapolated to younger populations, even though they belong to the same sociocultural context (Ben-Arieh 2008; Bradshaw and Lau 2010; Bradshaw and Richardson 2009; Casas 2010a, b). Despite the importance of having measuring instruments aimed at minors, there are few publications on this topic. The development of this area would help to identify the factors related to the individual differences in the perception of well-being (Huebner and Gilman 2002; Seligson et al. 2003, 2005), as well as the identification of risk subgroups in order to provide the appropriate support and resources that governments can provide (Tomyn and Cummins 2011).

Since subjective well-being is a key component in achieving positive mental health and an important determinant of many positive results in the lives of children and adolescents, it is important to incorporate these measures into a country's educational and social programs (Cereceda 2012; Proctor et al. 2009). The latter is closely related to the approach of the United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF 2010), which proposes that the development of policies and programs for children and adolescents should provide knowledge about the conditions of the collective object of such actions.

As in other fields of knowledge, the vast majority of research on subjective well-being comes from realities of the developed world, especially from Europe and the United States (Casas et al. 2014; Tiliouine 2015). Instead, research on this topic in developing countries is rather scarce (Lau et al. 2005; Siyez and Kaya 2008; Tiliouine et al. 2006; Webb 2009). Particularly in Latin America, it is necessary to advance the understanding of young people's subjective dimensions, given that general measuring indicators are used, they are not specific to the region nor do they consider children or adolescent populations (Aguado 2009).

10.3 Social Well-being and Subjective Well-being

Social well-being is an indicator of how individuals conceive the society in which they are immersed and how they subjectively experience their relationship with it (Keyes 1998). Therefore, this allows for the characterization of the positive performance of the relationship the individual has with the public and social domain (Ferreira 2005). The notion of social well-being adaptation to the environment and sense of community integration are also fundamental, as these integrate the valuation that people have for their role within a given society. From this perspective,

social well-being would comprise five dimensions: (1) *social integration*: assessment of relationship qualities that the individual has with society and the community; (2) *social acceptance*: the degree of enjoyment experienced by the individual knowing and feeling that they belong to a particular group or community; (3) *social contribution*: a feeling that the person has to be an important (vital) and useful member of society; (4) *social actualization*: confidence that members of a group have the potential for growth and development in a society and have the ability to generate wealth for its members; and (5) *social coherence*: the ability to understand social dynamics, the perception of quality, organization, and functioning of the social world (Keyes 1998).

There are a lot of empirical studies linking social well-being with socio-demographic variables. In relation to age, Keyes (1998) mentioned that as people grow older, an increase in four of the five social well-being dimensions occurs (with the exception of the social coherence dimension, which decreases). There is also evidence that participation in social organizations by adolescents (Albanesi et al. 2007) and young adults (Cicognani et al. 2008) positively increases social well-being. These findings have led to the conclusion that the positive benefits of participation vary depending on the type of organization and the nature of the activities and experiences that young people (Quintelier 2008) are offered. Thus, integration and social contribution are high among adults working together with peers to solve problems (Gilbert Brim et al. 2004). Moreover, all dimensions of social well-being (especially social integration) increase depending on the perception of neighborhood safety and confidence among neighbors. Likewise, social well-being is associated with civic health and social capital (Keyes and Shapiro 2004). Regarding gender, Zubieta et al. (2012) found that women better assess the quality of their relationships with the environment, are more useful and contribute to the common good compared to men. Finally, Zubieta and Delfino (2010) related social well-being with religious practices. These authors indicated that people who define themselves as practitioners of any religion have higher scores on the social contribution dimension, where they perceive themselves as important members of society.

Social well-being has also been studied in relation to various aspects of life satisfaction, positive emotional states, and happiness. The analysis of global surveys within adult populations show that social capital is strongly associated with subjective well-being in different contexts such as marriage, family, ties with friends and neighbors, working relationships, civic engagements (individual and collective), honesty and trust (Helliwell and Putnam 2004). Moreover, there has been a close relationship between social and subjective well-being. This confirms that people's well-being cannot be understood independently of the ties that bind them to other people and their level of participation and contribution to society (Blanco and Díaz 2005). In the same line, Espinosa et al. (2016) evaluated the relationship between social and subjective well-being, mediated by psychological well-being. The results showed that the social conditions of which people develop their positive emotions and judgments of life satisfaction depend on interpersonal trust and the perception that the community is a positive scenario and promotes

personal growth. In conclusion, the results of various investigations point out that a good, warm, and close network of social relationships can provide a life of optimism and confidence in the future, and makes us more socially active and supportive, and according to Keyes (1998) psychologically healthier.

10.4 A Social Support and Subjective Well-being in Adolescents

There are many definitions of social support, given that this concept has been developed in different disciplines (Cohen and Syme 1985; Gottlieb 1981; Lin 1986; Schaefer et al. 1981). In general, researchers have adopted a multidimensional definition of social support (Cohen and Wills 1985; Sarason et al. 1983). Laireiter and Baumann (1992) propose that social support has five components: support networks, climate or environmental support, support received, perceived support, and the context in which it occurs. One of the most comprehensive definitions of social support refers to the provision of goods and perceived support, both instrumental and expressive of friend networks and social relationships in general, where the focus is on how these sources offer different feelings of union (Lin 1986).

Social support plays a central role in the analysis of well-being determinants (Cohen et al. 2000; Eckersley et al. 2001; Gracia 1997; Gracia and Herrero 2006; Montero 2003; Ramírez and Cumsille 1997). Social support is related to well-being because it promotes positive emotions, creates a sense of personal value, helps make life more predictable and acts as a stress buffer to build self-esteem, self-efficacy, and behaviors related to problem solving (Barra 2004; Tomy and Cummins 2011). Different research reports that social support has several positive effects concerning individuals' health and well-being. Subjects that perceive high levels of social support have a high self-concept, a more appropriate coping style against stress, greater self-esteem and self-confidence, greater personal control and subjective well-being, as well as better health in general (Palomar and Cienfuegos 2007).

In the context of adolescence, social support is considered an important external resource which, when present with other variables, decreases the participation in behaviors that harm health and promote the ability to achieve success in different contexts (San Martín and Barra 2013; Valois et al. 2009). Adequate social support allows individuals to adapt to the demands of their environment (Palomar and Cienfuegos 2007), becoming a key aspect for the development of interventions within the adolescent population (Orcasita and Uribe 2010). In that sense, social support appears as a protective factor that reduces or limits the practice of physical and/or psychological risk behaviors in this population (Navarro 2004; Orcasita and Uribe 2010). Pardo et al. (2004) found that the loss and decrease in social support, in addition to the maintenance of negative social interactions, generates greater difficulties in adolescents' psychological well-being. By contrast, positive social

interactions, growth or maintenance of social support, promote adolescent well-being. In a study evaluating the use of information technology and communications, it was found that they have an indirect influence on adolescents' subjective well-being through perceived social support from friends (Sarriera et al. 2011). In Chile, (Rodríguez-Fernández et al. 2012) found that the support of family and peers have a direct effect on life satisfaction in a group of young people between 12 and 22 years old.

Gracia and Herrero (2004) coined the concept of perceived community support that takes into account both the individual and community-neighborhood levels. The individual level focuses on perceptions of the degree of integration, the active role and available support resources in their community, as well as the effects of these perceptions in adjustment and individual well-being. At the community level, support can also be understood as the result of the particular characteristics of a given community (Abello and Madariaga 1997; Reimel de Carrasquel and Jiménez 1997). In this sense, individual differences in levels of perceived community support may also reflect differences in the communities where these people reside (Brissete et al. 2000).

10.5 Subjective Well-being and Sense of Community

The sense of community concept is a psychological variable that refers to the beliefs and attitudes about neighbors and the neighborhood (McMillan and Chavis 1986). In other words, it considers the perceptions, attitudes, and feelings of community members about their relationships and interactions with their context (Elvas and Moniz 2010). The sense of community puts focus on interdependence, it is built on the relationship between individuals and the expectations of some subjects relative to others (Pretty et al. 1994). One of the essential features of this would be the attachment or strong emotional link to the neighborhood, which could include a feeling that the residents care about their neighborhood and that the neighborhood cares about its residents (Cantillon et al. 2003). Thus, the sense of community aims to highlight that people are part of a network of mutually supportive relationships, always available and which they depend on (Sarason 1974).

The meta-analysis by Talò et al. (2014) points out that the sense of community should be considered as a dependent construct of the immediate context of everyday life, whose transferability to settings, populations, and measurements is not only inherent, but also potentially objectified (Hughey et al. 1999; Nowell and Boyd 2010). It is noteworthy that the sense of community can emerge from experiences or conditions that are not tied to a physical location. Fischer (1977, 1982) and Wellman (1979), among others (Hunter and Suttles 1972; Janowitz 1952) have argued that there are a growing number of communities that are not tied to a locality (e.g., based on interest, profession, workplace, race, and sexual preference).

Various studies have reported positive relationships between integration into the neighborhood of residence, psychological well-being, and health of its members

(Cohen et al. 2000; Delgado et al. 2012; Gracia and Herrero 2004). For its part, Davidson and Cotter (1991) indicated that people with a high sense of community score higher in subjective well-being and happiness. Other authors reported positive correlations between low subjective well-being, poor mental health, and lack of sense of community, both in adults (Davidson and Cotter 1991; Farrell et al. 2004) and adolescents (Pretty et al. 1996). Similarly, the neighborhood (Cicognani et al. 2008; Prezza and Costantini 1998), school integration (Vieno et al. 2007), social capital (Harpham et al. 2004), and community participation (Chavis and Wandersman 1990; Cohen et al. 2000; Herrero et al. 2004) have shown positive associations with psychological well-being.

The sense of community also seems to have important implications for the well-being of children and adolescents. Pretty et al. (1994) found a positive relationship between social support, quality of social relationships, self-esteem, life satisfaction, and sense of community in a group of teenagers. In a study in Brazil, children who reported a greater sense of community with their neighborhood and community, scored higher in subjective well-being compared with those who showed little integration with their community (Rodrigues et al. 2014). Cicognani et al. (2014) observed a direct relationship between membership in community organizations and youth well-being, as well as a relationship mediated by the sense of community and empowerment. In a similar line of work, Elvas and Moniz (2010) found that children and young people in a historical district of Lisbon showed higher levels of satisfaction, better quality of life, more citizen participation in the neighborhood, and a greater sense of community compared to people of the same age from a new residential district.

10.6 Method

The participants included 438 adolescents (37.5% women), who attended courses between the first and fourth year of secondary education distributed among seven urban communities from 3 regions of Chile during the school year 2014–2015. The age of participants ranged from 14 to 19 years ($M = 15.8$ years, $SD = 1.21$). Students came from three socioeconomic statuses (SES) (39.8% low level, 37.1% midlevel, and 23.2% high level).

10.6.1 Instruments

Students' Life Satisfaction Scale

Huebner (1991) created the SLSS in order to assess overall life satisfaction in children and adolescents. The version used in this study was previously evaluated in a sample of Chilean schoolchildren by Alfaro et al. (2016) and contains five items

(e.g., “I have a good life,” “My life is better than other children”). A Likert scale of 6 points was used (1 = Strongly Disagree; 6 = Strongly Agree). The Cronbach’s alpha for this study was 0.77.

Sense of Community Scale

The version used consisted of 18 items developed by Sánchez (2001) and measures different aspects of the evaluation a person makes on the community (neighborhood/location) where they live and ties that they have with other members (e.g., “I have roots in this place,” “My neighbors often help me if I need it”). A Likert scale of 7 points was used (0 = Strongly Disagree; 6 = Strongly Agree). The instrument used in this study obtained high reliability (Cronbach’s alpha = 0.93).

Perceived Community Support Scale

Instrument taken from Gracia and Herrero (2006) and has 14 items that aim to assess dimensions of integration, participation, and community organization (e.g., “I could find people who will help me solve my problems,” “I attend to support calls that are made within my community”). A Likert 5-point scale was used (1 = Strongly Disagree; 5 = Strongly Agree). Cronbach’s alpha for this study was 0.84.

Social Well-being Scale

This scale was created by Keyes (1998) and consists of 33 items assessing five dimensions: social integration, social acceptance, social contribution, social actualization, and social coherence. A reduced version of 15 items was used in this study (e.g., “I think I can contribute something to the world”; “People do not care about other people’s problems”). A Likert scale of 11 points was used (0 = Totally Disagree; 10 = Totally agree) (Cronbach α = 0.79).

Demographic variables

In addition to the aforementioned scales, questions to collect socio-demographic information such as age, gender, education level, and SES were included. For the SES analysis, three categories were considered (high, medium, and low) obtained by recoding the school vulnerability score developed by an agency of the Chilean Ministry of Education, which has high correspondence with family income levels.

10.6.2 Procedure

Data collection was implemented within the framework of a research project funded by a grant from the Universidad del Desarrollo. The original objective of the research project was related to the adaptation and validation of different scales of subjective well-being and other psychosocial variables, relevant to the study of the

quality of life in adolescents aged between 14 and 19 years, enrolled in secondary education. Ethical research protocols were met, with special emphasis on the confidentiality of the information produced and the informed consent of educational establishments, children, and their parents or guardians.

10.6.3 Data Analysis

We eliminated 15 cases of the total because they had more than 20% of missing values in their responses. Several variables had missing data, but its frequency was less than 5% so that the data were imputed with the SPSS statistical package with the median of each item.

All items presented Skewness and Kurtosis in the expected ranges ($-3 > x < 3$) except item 5 of the SLSS scale (“I have a good life”), which reflects the life optimism bias, since 82% of the answers are in the highest categories of the scale. In view of this preliminary result, the item was monitored in subsequent analyzes to evaluate its influence.

Lost data analysis used the multiple imputation procedure to make use of all available data. Missing data were imputed using the Missing Values Analysis function of the IBM SPSS 21.0 statistical package (Graham 2012).

10.7 Results

10.7.1 Mean Comparisons

The comparison of averages using *t*-tests for independent samples established that there are statistically significant differences according to sex in two of the four assessed variables. There is evidence ($t(481) = -2.84, p < 0.01$) that men had higher life satisfaction ($M = 4.84$) than women ($M = 4.60$). Similarly, there is evidence ($t(481) = -2.30, p < 0.05$) that men perceived greater community support ($M = 2.99$) than women ($M = 2.82$). There were no differences by sex in the sense of community variables ($t(481) = -1.43, p = 0.152$) and social well-being ($t(481) = -1.49, p = 0.138$).

Meanwhile, mean comparisons by ANOVA established that there were significant differences by school grade and by socioeconomic level only in some of the assessed variables. In relation to the current variable, only social well-being showed a statistically significant difference ($F(3479) = 4.93, p < 0.05$), and averages of fourth year students ($M = 5.83$) were greater than first year students ($M = 5.07$) and showing no other differences within this variable. There were no significant differences in the variables life satisfaction ($F(3479) = 1.61, p = 0.186$), sense of

community ($F(3479) = 0.37, p = 0.773$), and perceived community support ($F(3479) = 0.43, p = 0.735$) according to the year the students were attending.

Regarding the socioeconomic level differences, there were differences in two of the four assessed variables. In the case of life satisfaction, there was statistically significant evidence ($F(2480) = 9.21; p < 0.001$) of lower average at the low level ($M = 4.55$) compared to both the middle ($M = 4.89$) and high levels ($M = 4.89$). Regarding social well-being, there were also statistically significant differences by socioeconomic level ($F(2480) = 11.92, p < 0.001$), as again those who were at a low level had a lower average ($M = 4.95$) compared to the middle ($M = 5.64$) and high levels ($M = 5.60$).

10.7.2 Correlations

The correlation analysis showed statistically significant correlations in all combinations of the studied variables ($p < 0.01$). The highest correlation was observed between sense of community and perceived community support, which had a direct and moderate Pearson's correlation coefficient ($r = 0.62$). The second correlation was also direct, but moderately low, and was observed between life satisfaction and social well-being ($r = 0.38$). The third correlation was observed between life satisfaction with a sense of community ($r = 0.27$), which was weak but statistically significant. The remaining correlations were less than 0.30 but all statistically significant ($p < 0.01$): life satisfaction with community support ($r = 0.17$), social well-being with sense of community ($r = 0.19$), and community support ($r = 0.15$).

10.7.3 Multiple Linear Regression Models

The analysis included the evaluation of two regression models that assessed the association and the main effects with life satisfaction. Model 1 without controlling for demographic variables explained the variability of life satisfaction by 18% ($R^2 = 0.18, p < 0.001$). In the analysis of main effects, the sense of community variables ($\beta = 0.21; t = 3.94; p < 0.001$) and social well-being ($\beta = 0.34; t = 8.01; p < 0.001$) had a direct association and was statistically significant with life satisfaction. On the contrary, the perceived community support variable did not show a statistically significant association with the dependent variable ($\beta = -0.01, t = -0.16, p = 0.873$).

Model 2 did control the demographic variables. This model explained the life satisfaction variable by 20% ($R^2 = 0.20, p < 0.001$). In the analysis of main effects, the sense of community variables ($\beta = 0.21; t = 3.97; p < 0.001$) and social well-being ($\beta = 0.31; t = 7.21; p < 0.001$) had a direct association and was statistically significant with life satisfaction. On the contrary, the perceived community support did not show a statistically significant association with the dependent

variable ($\beta = -0.02$, $t = -0.32$, $p = 0.749$). Among the demographic variables, only sex showed a direct association for men in relation to life satisfaction ($\beta = 0.09$, $t = 2.21$, $p < 0.05$). The school year ($\beta = 0.04$; $t = 0.95$, $p = 0.343$) and socioeconomic level variables ($\beta = 0.08$, $t = 1.91$, $p = 0.056$) showed no direct association with the dependent variable.

10.7.4 Mediation Analysis

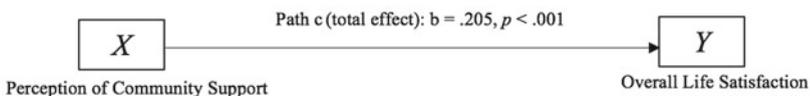
Two simple mediation analyses were implemented using OLS (Ordinary Least Squares) path analysis. The first analysis examined the effect of mediation of the sense of community between perceived community support and life satisfaction. As shown in Table 10.1 and in Fig. 10.1, participants of the study indicated that the perceived community support was associated with an increased sense of community (Path a: $b = 1.100$, $p < 0.001$), and also that a greater sense of community was associated with greater life satisfaction (Path b: $b = 0.176$, $p < 0.001$). This result supports the proposed mediational hypothesis. The indirect effect was assessed using the *bootstrap estimation approach* with 10,000 samples (Preacher and Hayes 2004). These results indicate that the indirect coefficient ($ab = 0.194$) was statistically significant, obtaining a confidence interval that does not include 0 ($I. C. = 0.092-302$). There was no statistically significant evidence that perceived community support is associated with life satisfaction independent of the effect of sense of community (Path $c' = 0.011$, $p = 0.862$).

The second analysis examined the mediation effect of the sense of community between social well-being and life satisfaction. As shown in Table 10.2 and Fig. 10.2, participants of the study indicated that social well-being is associated with increased sense of community that is associated with a greater sense of community (Path a: $b = 0.158$, $p < 0.001$), and also that the greater sense of community is associated with greater life satisfaction (Path b: $b = 0.138$,

Table 10.1 Model coefficients for the sense of community mediating the relationship between perceived community support and life satisfaction

		Consequent						
		M (Sense of community)			Y (Life satisfaction)			
Background		<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>		<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>
X (Community support)	<i>a</i>	1.100	0.063	<0.001	<i>c'</i>	0.012	0.067	0.862
M (Sense of community)		–	–	–	<i>B</i>	0.176	0.038	<0.001
Constant	<i>i</i> ₁	0.177	0.189	0.351	<i>i</i> ₂	4.121	0.158	<0.001
		$R^2 = 0.39$ $F_{(1481)} = 306.73$, $p < 0.001$				$R^2 = 0.07$ $F_{(2480)} = 18.52$, $p < 0.001$		

Simple relationship



Mediated relationship

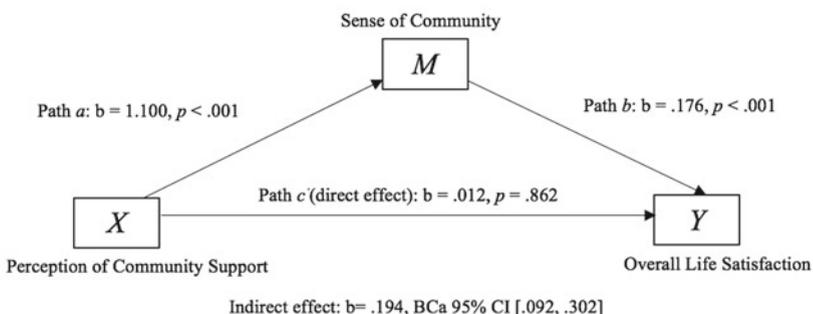


Fig. 10.1 Simple mediation model for the sense of community mediating the relationship between perceived community support and life satisfaction

Table 10.2 Model coefficients for the sense of community mediating the relationship between social well-being and life satisfaction

	Consequent							
		M (Sense of community)			Y (Life satisfaction)			
Background		<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>		<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>
X (Community support)	<i>a</i>	0.158	0.038	<0.001	<i>c'</i>	0.194	0.024	<0.001
M (Sense of community)		–	–	–	<i>B</i>	0.138	0.028	<0.001
Constant	<i>i</i> ₁	2.549	0.213	<0.001	<i>i</i> ₂	3.247	0.150	<0.001
					<i>R</i> ² = 0.14		<i>R</i> ² = 0.18	
					<i>F</i> (₁₄₈₁) = 78.82, <i>p</i> < 0.001		<i>F</i> (₂₄₈₀) = 53.17, <i>p</i> < 0.001	

p < 0.001). This result also supports the mediational hypothesis for the social well-being variable. The procedure to estimate the indirect effect was the same as for the first analysis of mediation (Preacher and Hayes 2004). These results indicate that the indirect coefficient (*ab* = 0.022) was also statistically significant (*I. C.* = 0.008–0.39). There is significant evidence that perceived social well-being has an effect on life satisfaction independent of the sense of community effect (Path *c'* = 0.194, *p* < 0.001).

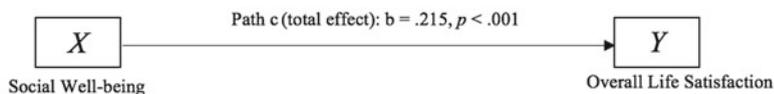
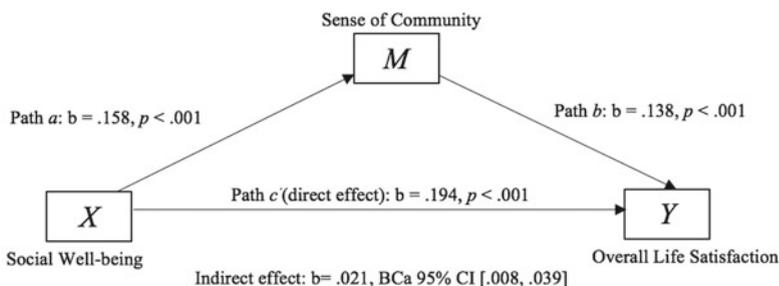
Simple relationship**Mediated relationship**

Fig. 10.2 Simple mediation model for the sense of community mediating by the relationship between social well-being and life satisfaction

10.8 Conclusions

This study aimed to analyze the mediating role of the sense of community among independent variables (perceived community support and social well-being) on overall life satisfaction in a sample of Chilean adolescents.

Among the results obtained in this study, the sense of community was confirmed as a mediator for the association between perceived social support and overall life satisfaction (Path $c' = 0.012, p = 0.862$). In this sense, the indirect effect of sense of community on the association between the studied variables was statistically significant (indirect effect: $b = 0.194, \text{BCa } 95\% \text{ CI } [0.092, 0.302]$). This result confirms the conceptual background presented in the literature review, particularly since it indicates that the assessment of the community has a positive effect that enhances the overall assessment that adolescents make about their lives.

On the other hand, when sense of community was assessed to mediate the association between social well-being and overall life satisfaction, no evidence was found from these data that supports the mediation proposal. The sense of community in this model of mediation has a very small indirect effect to mediate the relationship between the studied variables, and although it was significant, it showed a very low coefficient (indirect effect: $b = 0.021, \text{BCa } 95\% \text{ CI } [0.008, 0.039]$). This result suggests that the sense of community partially contributes to the association between the more global perceptions of society and personal contributions toward it (social well-being) on overall life satisfaction. Thus, the results of this simple mediation model suggest some decoupling between the perceptions of

the closest community with those about social well-being. This is particularly valuable, as this result confirms the coexistence of different levels of perception according to reported ecological levels (neighborhood/community and society).

Among the obtained results, the sense of community appears as a variable with statistically significant associations with other variables included in this study. The sense of community correlated in varying degrees with overall life satisfaction, social well-being and perceived social support, also showing little sensitivity to the assessed demographic variables. These results suggest that the sense of community has more variation to be associated with constructs based on perceptions other than demographic variables, which opens opportunities to deepen these tools with different layers having subjectivities of adolescents in their daily lives.

Regarding the limitations of this study, the Keyes scale has potential measurement error as it was used as an abbreviated version without previous applications in Chile. In addition, the proportion of the sample partially reflects the socioeconomic distribution of the adolescent population in Chile.

Several methodological challenges will be relevant to address in future studies. These include the use of structural equation modeling to model the association between the proposed constructs and overall life satisfaction. In addition, the need to study the moderate mediation by SES further enriches the findings of similar work while it better reflects the income distribution of the studied population.

From a conceptual point of view, the present study could be deepened including two variations in new designs. The first change would be to include mental health variables in adolescents (internalizing and externalizing symptoms) so as to sharpen the sense of community contribution to overall life satisfaction. The second variation would be to add the concept of subjective well-being as a dependent variable including not only overall life satisfaction, but also positive and negative affects on its measurement. Both variations facilitate the comparability of results of similar studies in these two fields: socio-emotional health in schools and subjective well-being in adolescents.

Finally, the present study represents an innovation in the way the sense of community is studied in Latin American countries, in particular the young population. In this study, the use of mediation analysis helps us to visualize the contributions of community psychology in understanding the variability of overall life satisfaction in adolescents.

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Chapter 11

Children and Young People's Perceptions of Risk and Quality of Life Conditions in Their Communities: Participatory Mapping Cases in Portugal

Javier Martinez, Michael McCall and Isabel Preto

Abstract Emerging concerns of international organizations, such as the UNICEF *child-friendly cities* movement, include the recognition of children and young people as a vulnerable group in society, and an emphasis on policies and actions for them to thrive in a safe environment. However, policy and planning responses do not always take into account the perceptions and local knowledge that children and young people already have about their community and quality-of-life conditions. The aim of this chapter is to present an analytical framework that includes the concepts of community well-being/quality-of-life/risk together with the application of participatory mapping methodology. The framework is informed by quality of life studies, children's geography, and participatory mapping perspectives. We argue that this multidisciplinary lens is required to translate children's and young people's views and visions about their own communities into effective urban action plans. We illustrated the analytical framework with case studies, where innovative approaches elicit children's and young people's viewpoints that are meaningful for planning. From the cases we studied in Portugal, we learn that participatory approaches stimulate children and young people to critically and actively involve with their community in the identification of problems as well as in the co-design of solutions. Schoolchildren's perceptions of risks in their urban environment were elicited through PGIS (participatory GIS) and web applications to geographically describe and explain sites and causes of risk. We conclude by presenting the

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© Springer International Publishing AG 2017
G. Tonon (ed.), *Quality of Life in Communities of Latin Countries*,
Community Quality-of-Life and Well-Being,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-53183-0_11

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potentials of participatory mapping of children's and young people's perceptions and the challenges of integrating participatory approaches.

Keywords *Child-friendly* urban planning and design • Quality-of-life • Risk perception • Participatory mapping • Portugal

11.1 Introduction

Emerging concerns of international organizations, such as the UNICEF *child-friendly cities* initiative (UNICEF 2016), include the recognition of children and young people as very vulnerable groups in society, and emphasising policies and actions for them to thrive in a safe environment. This encompasses recognizing the rights that children and youth have to influence decisions. However, urban policy and planning responses have been slow to take into account the perceptions and local knowledge that children and young people already have about their community and well-being (Alarasi et al. 2016). There have been calls for incorporating children's views and needs—and their local knowledge—into urban and neighbourhood planning for several decades, especially in USA, Scandinavia, UK and other European countries. Ground-breaking radical entries were made by Bill Bunge in Detroit (DGE 1971) and Kevin Lynch in Boston (Lynch 1977). See also, e.g. Berglund (2008), Berglund and Nordin (2005, 2007), Nordin and Berglund (2012), Wurtele and Ritchie (2005) and Kahila and Kytä (2009).

There have been many developments in the investigations of children's and young people's uses of space, their recognitions of quality-of-life and risk in their local living environment, and their well-being in urban areas, as well as the relation between dimensions of children's well-being (e.g. health) and urban development at large (Woolcock et al. 2010). These studies are not only focused on their immediate local space such as their local community or neighbourhood (Ramezani and Said 2012; Freeman 2010) but many also consider the broader urban areas visited by children (Vanderstede 2011; Fusco et al. 2012).

In this chapter, we focus on the common, frequent (daily or weekly) space constructed or appropriated by the child—outside of the home. An appropriate term for these relevant, active, quotidian, living spaces of children is not obvious. These spaces are outside of the family physical home, however, they are not only in the immediate spatially contiguous neighbourhood (or *colonia*, *barrio*, *bairro*), they include also the school and especially the space of the “journey-to-school” (the most frequent “journey-to-work” pattern globally, and subordinated in most urban transport planning), and they also include the space of urban centres, malls, parks, sports grounds, entertainment and recreation sites and all those places where kids just hang out. We consider using the term “*child 'hoods*”, as a semantic riff on the US term, the “*hood*” (neighborhood).

These studies have advanced the concepts and theory: in particular, the key factors of well-being identified as relevant for children (Freeman 2010; Simkins and

Thwaites 2008; Maneja Zaragoza et al. 2009; Preto 2015; Prats Ferret et al. 2011; Prats Ferret and Baylina 2012), and the assessment of dissimilarities between age groups, gender and social class differences and ethnicity (Karsten 1998; Skelton 2000; Leonard 2007; Lehman-Frisch et al. 2012; Prats Ferret and Baylina 2012; Travlou et al. 2008). There is also a much broader array of tools now used (Alarasi et al. 2016; Freeman et al. 2016; Beneker et al. 2010; Zhou et al. 2015; Warren 2010; Plush 2009).

The main objective of this chapter is to present an analytical framework that includes the concepts of well-being/quality-of-life/risk of “children in the community” with participatory mapping methodology.

This framework is illustrated with cases where innovative approaches including (qualitative) methods of participatory mapping elicit children's and young people's viewpoints that are meaningful for planning.

This chapter first presents recent international movements that advocate building *child-friendly cities* and communities by recognizing children's specific, peculiar (to them) local knowledge, and the ontological and ethical validity of that knowledge—thus supporting and legitimising their rights and their engagement through participation (Sect. 11.1.1).

In this context, the framework we developed analyses:

- (a) What factors, indicators and values are considered for quality-of-life conditions affecting children. In terms of values, we acknowledge the presence of external vis-à-vis internal views (etic vis-à-vis emic,¹ and, experts and adults vis-à-vis children).²
- (b) How the knowledge and views of the child are integrated in urban or social planning processes (participation).
- (c) How we measure and map those.

In the following Sect. 11.1.1, we present the relevance of building child-friendly and supportive communities. Section 11.2 develops the analytical framework that incorporates the concepts of community well-being/quality-of-life and participatory mapping methodology. Section 11.2.1 defines quality-of-life and well-being in relation to living environment qualities that matter to children and young people. Section 11.2.2 looks into the different levels and realms of children's participation. The last sections of the paper critically present and illustrate the cases in Portugal before concluding on the potentials of participatory mapping of children's and young people's perceptions and the challenges of integrating participatory

¹For a discussion on etic and emic views in quality-of-life, see Martinez et al. (2016). Emic is considered as the community's internal view and is a perception of living conditions according to the people experiencing them first hand. Etic is the view from outside, from the external observer who comes in and sees living conditions from the outsider perspective.

²It should be noted that adult parents often have very different values and perceptions from adult experts (e.g. planners). For a full discussion on etic and emic views in quality-of-life, see Martinez et al. (2016).

approaches into public interventions aiming at improving quality-of-life and building child-friendly communities.

11.1.1 Building Child-Friendly and Supportive Communities—Concepts and Policy

The perception and use that children and young people have of their communities is often ignored by planners and policy makers. More often than not adults' views determine how communities and cities are built. This affects not only the quality of spaces that children and young people can make use of but also increases the challenges they have to face in their daily life. Many of them are already affected by a context of poverty and are exposed to risk.

We need to stress the importance of understanding the current urban context where children grow up. These include new urban compact forms (e.g. brownfield redevelopments, gentrified city centres) and “new spaces of affluence and selective inclusion” (Woolcock et al. 2010). In the Global South, spaces of selective inclusion such as gated communities and shopping malls clearly exclude many groups of children and young people, or turn them into mere onlookers of consumption. This mirrors what is documented in the Global North as the growing culture of “children as consumers” (Chin 1993; Karsten 2005).

Even when planners involve children and young people in participatory planning process they tend to concentrate on two extreme groups: “the trouble makers” and those already actively involved in local policymaking and community activities, the “achievers” (Nairn et al. 2006). In this way, they ignore and exclude from participation the “ordinary” child and young people (Vanderstede 2011).

In recognition of these challenges, several global and local initiatives include children's and young people's views in the planning and management of cities. They not only advocate for the role of youth in setting up the “urban agenda” (UN-HABITAT 2016), but also include specific normative recommendations on how a city should look like in order to be considered “*child friendly*” (i.e. UNICEF 2004). In its framework for action UNICEF (2004, p. 1) indicates several rights that have to be guaranteed to every young citizen by a city in order to be considered “*child friendly*”. We have classified those rights in three main groups:

Rights to spatial justice

a Child Friendly City guarantees the right of every young citizen to

- “Be an equal citizen of their city with access to every service,³ regardless of ethnic origin, religion, income, gender or disability” [and age]

³We should note that children do not require access to *every* service (e.g. services that are specifically targeted or restricted to adults or elderly).

Participatory—Procedural rights/the right to participate

a Child Friendly City guarantees the right of every young citizen to

- “Influence decisions about their city”
- “Express their opinion on the city they want”
- “Participate in family, community and social life”
- “Participate in cultural and social events”

Quality-of-life rights/the right of well-being

a Child Friendly City guarantees the right of every young citizen to

- “Drink safe water and have access to proper sanitation”⁴
- “Be protected from exploitation, violence and abuse”
- “Walk safely in the streets on their own”
- “Meet friends and play”
- “Have green spaces for plants and animals”
- “Live in an unpolluted environment”

Some of the rights to quality-of-life and the notion of social and spatial justice (Smith 1994; Soja 2010) (e.g. equitable access to services) are related to physical and social qualities of the living environment (Chawla 2002) with clear spatial connotations that can be influenced by planning and policy making. Eliciting how those qualities are perceived by children and young people should be a key element during the initial phase of any planning and decision-making process. Children's participation in planning processes is specifically mentioned as one of the key elements required to build *child-friendly cities*—“promoting children's active involvement in issues that affect them; listening to their views and taking them into consideration in decision-making processes” (UNICEF 2004, p. 4). Recently, the “Youth and the New Urban Agenda” report (UN-HABITAT 2016) has recognised the role of youth in urban planning, and in particular how public space and urban mobility are important elements to improve access in several domains of life (education, health, leisure, employment).

However in practice, policy and planning responses do not always take into account the perceptions and local knowledge that children and young people already have about their community and well-being (Woolcock et al. 2010; Alarasi et al. 2016).

To build child-friendly communities it is necessary to (1) identify what are the different quality-of-life domains and qualities of the physical and social environment that matter to children, and, (2) acknowledge that there are different degrees of participation possible in each of these domains.

⁴This right is certainly relevant for children in the Global South. Adequate housing and heating may be more relevant depending on the context.

11.2 Framework Integrating Quality-of-Life and Participatory Mapping

In this section, we propose an analytical framework that includes concepts of community well-being/quality-of-life/risk studies and participatory mapping methodology. These concepts and the framework are presented in the following sections.

11.2.1 *Quality-of-Life and the Living Environment of Children and Young People*

The concept of quality-of-life can be very useful to identify in a systematic way all the domains in life that matter to children and young people. Quality-of-life is a multidimensional concept including several domains. Some of them are clearly related to the different activity spaces and living environments of children and young people (e.g. home/housing, health, school/education, community/neighbourhood, etc.). The concept of community well-being stresses *what quality-of-life means to residents* (in this case, children and young people), and on those particular domains that matter to them. Quality-of-life studies usually propose specific frameworks with combinations of domains adapted to the local context (Berhe et al. 2014; Tesfazghi et al. 2010). The physical and the social environment represent two domains where specific qualities can be identified as affecting children and young people.

The *Growing Up In Cities* study by Lynch (1977) is recognized as a seminal study on children's and young people's evaluations of their neighbourhoods (Alarasi et al. 2016; Woolcock et al. 2010; Chawla 2001). In the 1990s, this study was revived by the Convention on the Rights of the Child (OHCHR 1989) and revisited by a new study that evaluated the progress made in the living environment compared to the 1970s situation. This study formulated indicators of social and physical qualities of the living environment (spaces that the children live in, play in, or regularly visit) based on evaluations by the children themselves.

11.2.2 *Children's and Young People's Perceptions of Their Living Environment ("Child 'Hoods"), and Their Participation in Community Life and Planning*

In quality-of-life and community well-being studies, **objective quality-of-life** (or objective well-being) is usually measured by using indicators that represent observable and measurable conditions, whereas *subjective quality-of-life* relates to

the perceptions and satisfaction that residents have with. Traditionally, in quality-of-life studies the assessment done by experts relates to “objective” quality-of-life conditions (e.g. measured via indicators and census data). This is usually used as the template against which to compare children’s and young people’s perceptions. The assessment done by experts (e.g. planners) is then contrasted with that done by residents (i.e. children). One could however argue that the actual ‘objective’ quality-of-life is the assessment made by the local children and community residents, whereas the experts’/planners’ assessment is actually their own ‘subjective’ views based on whatever paradigmatic professional education they have received. Some studies explicitly contrast these two views (Berhe et al. 2014; Shumi et al. 2015) and identify divergent and convergent views.

The more that children’s and youth views are made visible and incorporated into planning practices, the more the experts’ views have opportunities to converge with them. The possibility of eliciting children’s views will depend very much on the degree or level of participation that takes place in practice. Hart (1992) adapted the ladder of participation of Arnstein (1969) and identified eight possible levels of children’s participation:

Non-participation levels

1. Manipulation
2. Decoration
3. Tokenism

Degrees of participation

4. Assigned but informed
5. Consulted and informed
6. Adult-initiated, shared decisions with children
7. Child-initiated and directed
8. Child-initiated, shared decisions with adults.

Some of the dilemmas and challenges⁵ of children’s participation in planning might be disentangled if the theoretical perspective and realm of planning with children are specified. Planners can incorporate children in decision-making following different realms. Francis and Lorenzo (2002) identified different realms of children’s participation (Table 11.1) and proposed an integrated “proactive” approach.

The value of this classification is that is not ordinal and that the categories are not exclusive to each other. Any given policy (activity, programme, and project) could reflect several realms. We have also incorporated in Table 11.1. How the participation levels of Hart (1992) may correspond to each of these realms.

Tables 11.2 and 11.3 present the framework that can be used to integrate elements of both quality-of-life frameworks and participatory mapping. The purpose

⁵E.g., Should planning be guided by children, or, with children? Should adults define the boundaries of the process?

Table 11.1 The seven realms of children’s participation in city design and planning

Realm	Approach	Justifications	Participation levels (Hart)
Romantic	“Children as Planners”, “Children as Futurists”	Planning ‘by’ children	3, (2), 7
Advocacy	“Planners for Children”	Planning for children with needs advocated by adult planners	4, 5, (6)
Needs	“Social Science for Children”	Research-based approach that addresses children’s needs	5, 6
Learning	“Children as Learners”	Participation through environmental education and learning	4, 5, 6
Rights	‘Children as Citizens’	Children have rights that need to be protected	6
Institutionalization	”Children as adults”	Planning ‘by’ children but within institutional boundaries set by adults, authorities, and clients	4, 5, 6
Proactive	“Participation with vision”/ Planning “with” children	Planning ‘with’ children. Combines research, participation and action to engage children and adults in planning and design. Children are active participants in process but designers/planners play an important role	6, 8

Source Based on Francis and Lorenzo (2002)

of the framework is twofold: (1) to integrate elements of participation/participatory mapping in QoL/community well-being studies, and (2) to evaluate cases where children and young people participate in assessing their living environment. Table 11.2 “*the right to well-being*” presents some examples of qualities of the living environment and contrasts the values and views of planners and other adults with those of children and young people. Table 11.2 can help to trigger some questions on indicators and values used, as well as the different resulting views. From a quality-of-life perspective, we propose to include both objective and subjective views. Children’s views (emic) are key since the concept of community well-being stresses what quality-of-life means to residents themselves (Lee et al. 2015).

Participatory mapping is one of the methods that can be used to elicit the “subjective” quality-of-life and community well-being assessment done by children under a proactive realm. Table 11.3 “*The right to participate*” lists the possible participatory mapping tools that can be used with children (c.f. McCall and Peters Guarin 2012).

Table 11.2 The right to well-being

Quality of urban life/community well-being		
Factors, indicators and values		
Which view predominates? Are they convergent or divergent?		
Qualities of the living environment and life domains ^a	Planners’ and other adults’ views, “etic”	Children’s views, “emic”
Play/recreation areas	Safe and secure green areas and playgrounds	“I cannot enter this gated park”
	Organised and safe “Adventure playgrounds”	Wild spaces—uncontrolled and un-patrolled
Planning for night time safety	Curfews on children and youth	Unreasonable restrictions on behaviour
Planning for safety	Safety and control	Move freely in the community and gather with peers
Disturbance to others (sound)	Zones of Tranquillity, Time periods for tranquillity	Sound, noise, music are desirable
Social tolerance of “alternative behaviour”	No banning of (adult) public drinking, etc. “alternative behaviour”	Children’s discomfort with drunks, junkies, and rowdy adults (Maneja Zaragoza et al. 2009; Preto 2015)
Transport planning—journey to school	Efficient use of time, route planning	Children like to dawdle and fool around (Mackett et al. 2007)
Journey to school, Safety	Reduce traffic risks	Reduce traffic risks
	Reduce criminal violence	But also risks from other violence—savage dogs, etc., and bullying, along the route
Banning of certain commercial activities near schools— <i>forbidden fruits</i>	Reduce “adult” behaviour temptations to children	Zones are dull and boring
Urban landscapes—Importance of cultural and historical sites and landmarks	Sites and landmarks of interest to adults	Sites and landmarks of interest to youth—e.g. music sites, or sites of radical activities (Travlou et al. 2008)
Preservation of historical sites and landmarks	Sites and landmarks of interest to adults	Children may find historical areas dull, “grey” and boring (Alarasi et al. 2016)

^aWe do not pretend or claim to be exhaustive in the list of factors, indicators or domains of quality-of-life presented. They are chosen to contrast the views of children and adults

11.3 Portugal Cases

11.3.1 Purpose

The study we present, carried out in Póvoa de Varzim, is part of a broader research project about participation of children and adolescents in urban planning processes

Table 11.3 The right to participate—how can children participate

Participatory mapping and PGIS tools used with children
<i>Virtual Globes</i> —uploading spatial knowledge onto virtual globes like Google Earth, Virtual Earth, OpenStreetMap; or creating mash-ups
<i>Participatory creation and acquisition of children's local spatial knowledge</i>
Simple sketch maps on paper or whiteboards or tablets
Participatory Planning games/exercises in the classroom or in the field
Online social geography surveys
RRA and PRA spatial tools—such as transect walks, open-ended interviews
Geo-referenced mapping tools—airial photos or satellite imagery as base maps; or topographic/thematic maps
P3DM—3dimensional physical models made of clay, cardboard, polystyrene
<i>Innovative tools for children's local spatial knowledge—GIS and GIS/2</i>
Mobile GIS with tablets or smartphones—digital recording in GIS format, includes GPS, images, sound, weblinks. E.g. CyberTracker
Online VGI (Volunteered Geographic Information) and Crowd sourcing—e.g. Flickr; Facebook; OpenStreetMap; Google My Maps; Green Maps; dedicated websites
Participatory Videos/Photos; and Multimedia materials—texts, images, sounds, and websites
Soundscapes (urban landscapes are multi-sensual)—sound easily added
<i>Presentation tools</i>
Performance techniques, e.g. theatre, play, dance, song, landscape music
Visualisation. Display local spatial knowledge with graphics/visualisation software to maps
Geo-tagging on websites—Wikimapia; OpenStreetMap; Google My Maps; Green Maps

in Portugal (Preto 2015; Preto et al. 2016). The main objective of the project was to study the perceptions of risk of young people (children and adolescents)—as a central component of quality-of-life conditions, using Participatory GIS (PGIS). Risk was defined as any situation that children and adolescents consider, in their daily routines, as a threat and/or a vulnerability to their well-being and that of their community, at the present time or the near future.

Based on this global objective, there were other specific objectives:

- (a) Identify, characterize and represent aspects of the urban environment that young people consider a risk to their well-being and of their community;
- (b) Identify and characterize which positive aspects of well-being and quality-of-life young people value in their communities.

11.3.2 Method and Brief Description of Study Area

Póvoa de Varzim is a medium-sized⁶ coastal city with approximately 63,400 inhabitants.⁷ It is located in the north of Portugal, 30 km (18.6 miles) from Oporto,

⁶According to the classification suggested by Costa (2002).

⁷According to the latest census of 2011. Instituto Nacional de Estatística (2013).

Table 11.4 The schools^a involved in the study

School	Location	Sample	Age
School 1	Inner city	53	11–17
School 2	“Rurban” area	23	10–11
School 3	Inner city	30	12–17
School 4	“Rurban” area	65	10–14
School 5	Inner city	42	10–11

^aApproximate total number of students on schools 1, 2, 3 and 5, respectively: 800, 200, 150, 1000 and 500

the second biggest Portuguese city. Póvoa de Varzim is characterized by the diversity of its urban landscape: the urban inner city located near to the Atlantic coast, and the “rurban” area with mixed characteristics lies between urban and rural.

This study involved 213 students, from five different public schools, aged between 10 and 17. It was carried out during two school years 2011/2012 and 2012/2013. The selection of student was based its age, school location and willingness to participate. The original sample consisted of three schools (schools 1, 2 and 3). Two other schools (schools 4 and 5) were added to the sample after contacts with the municipal authorities, (see later in this section). According to the Portuguese educational system schools 1 and 3 are “*escolas secundárias*”, attended mainly by students aged between 12 and 17 years old and schools 2, 4 and 5 are “*escolas básicas 2, 3*” attended mainly by students between 10 and 14 years old.

Table 11.4 details the location of each school and the number of participants and their age range.

Schools 1, 3 and 5 are located in the inner city, in a central area of Póvoa de Varzim. The students who attend these schools are mainly from the inner city but also from other surrounding villages. Schools 2 and 4 are located in areas away from the inner city (“rurban” areas). These schools are attended by students who live in surrounding villages, mainly rural. All schools are characterized by socioeconomic heterogeneity, which was translated to our sample. School 2, however, is located in a less favoured area and with more features of rurality. As the schools are in locations with different characteristics this allows a broad representation of young people from all areas of the city.

Before describing all the tools and techniques of data collection, it is important to emphasise some methodological and practical issues. Participatory (mapping) projects with schoolchildren are not common, at least in Portugal; they are still innovative and have not yet gained wide general acceptance with professionals and the authorities. Thus, sometimes it was difficult to ensure availability (or, at least, the total availability) of schools and teachers, who are fully engaged with many academic activities. Even with the existing availability, it was not always possible to apply the same methods in all the schools. Moreover, it was not always possible to interact directly with the students over a long period. Interaction was primarily mediated by teachers with whom we could establish a good platform of collaboration. Therefore, the methodology was not rigid and was subject to a dynamic

Table 11.5 Summary of the techniques used in each school

School	Data collection	
	Diagnosing the students' perceptions of risk	Geo-referencing
School 1	Questionnaire <i>online</i> and "on paper"	<i>Google Maps/Earth</i> and <i>CyberTracker</i>
School 2	Questionnaire "on paper"	Digital photography
School 3	Questionnaire <i>online</i> and "on paper"	<i>Google Maps</i> and Conventional maps
School 4	Questionnaire <i>online</i>	<i>Google Maps</i>
School 5	Questionnaire <i>online</i> and "on paper"	Conventional maps

process of readjustment, so that it could be adapted to the different contexts, preferences and difficulties without prejudicing the objectives.

The study consisted of three main stages, which we can summarize as: (1) diagnosing risk perceptions; (2) georeferencing; and (3) presenting results and making contacts with external authorities. These stages met with different degrees of accomplishment in the various schools.

During the first stage, we tried to acquire a general overview of children's perspectives about what they consider as risks in their daily life in their city, or more specifically in their neighbourhood (Preto 2015; Preto et al. 2016). We used a grounded, open-ended, bottom-up approach, and no risk categories were pre-defined. During this stage we used a questionnaire, including mostly open-ended questions, focusing on: (a) identifying and characterizing what young people consider as risks to their well-being in their community; and (b) understanding what young people value and prioritize in their communities.

For the process of georeferencing we selected four distinct techniques: online mapping, digital photos, conventional maps and/or CyberTracker.⁸

These techniques were applied separately or jointly, i.e., in some schools we used only one of these techniques, but in others it was necessary to use more than one. This requirement was due mainly to two reasons: logistics—depending on the classroom conditions, the preferred georeferencing technique could vary—and complementarity. Table 11.5 shows how these techniques were applied in each school.

School 1, our first case, had some special characteristics. Whereas in the subsequent schools we collaborated directly with teachers who mediated the contacts with young people, at School 1 we worked with four final year students, who 'tutored' other students throughout all the steps involved; namely they helped other students during the georeferencing process. Moreover, they also gave very valuable suggestions to the study. The initial study plan only intended to geo-reference the risk situations and places. However, when the georeferencing process began, the four students questioned us about only mapping the risk situations and they

⁸CyberTracker (<http://www.cybertracker.org>) is an open source geo-tagging application.

suggested to also map the “good things” in their city. They intended to create two contrasting paths: the path associated with risk situations and the path associated with their favourite places. Their idea was implemented and it was included also in the georeferencing process in schools 3 and 5.

For the data analysis we used IBM SPSS 22.0. SPSS Text Analysis for Surveys 2.1 was used to perform content analysis on keywords,⁹ thus allowing the categorization of the risk situations indicated by the children, as well as the quality-of-life aspects which they valued in their communities. The risk maps and maps were obtained using the open-source GIS ILWIS.¹⁰

The final stage was the presentation of results to schools and municipal authorities. After analysing data, the final results were delivered to all schools.

At School 1 it was possible to discuss the results in an open session, at which were present also other students, teachers, two police officers from the “Safe School” program and a local journalist.

The results obtained in School 1 were published by two local newspapers in Póvoa de Varzim. After the publication, the City Hall showed interest in collaborating, in order to obtain a more detailed study. Therefore, they facilitated contacts with other schools (schools 4 and 5).

11.4 Results

Students showed they have detailed knowledge of their surroundings, namely those that are part of their daily routines. This was observed not only by the risk situations and locations they indicated, but also on the final maps, due to the high concentrations of markers around schools and along their routes to school from home. Furthermore, the risk situations indicated by the students correspond to real and concrete concerns, contextualized in their daily lives. Table 11.6 shows the different risk categories perceived by young people in Póvoa de Varzim.

We observed that the category with highest preponderance is traffic accident risks. 48% of the participating students pointed out situations in this category (few and/or badly placed crosswalks, few and/or degraded sidewalks, speeding traffic, non-existing or malfunctioning traffic signs). Zones of violence and robberies are the second most important category (26%), though in percentage terms they are very close to the third one. In this category, students pointed out especially situations of real and actual robberies/thefts, but also potential situations of robbery and violence due to lack of policing, poor lighting, and also the bad reputation of certain places. Situations included in the category ‘environmental risk’ were mentioned by

⁹The categories were based on keywords (or sets of keywords) associated with a particular theme. The keywords were extracted from the students' responses to the questionnaire, and the rules of categorization were defined joining keywords connected by a common theme.

¹⁰<http://52north.org/communities/ilwis>.

Table 11.6 Risk categories

Risk category	No. of students	%
Traffic risks	103	48.4
Areas of violence and robberies	55	25.8
Environmental risk	50	23.5
Deficient infrastructure	24	11.3
Suspicious people and behaviours	13	6.1
Dangerous and/or abandoned animals	11	5.2
Other	2	0.9
No relevant risks	32	15.0

Adapted from Preto (2015) and Preto et al. (2016)

23% of the students—mainly the lack of dustbins and poor waste management by the competent authorities.

School 1, located in the inner city and near a problematic neighbourhood is more associated with the category “areas of violence and robberies” and “suspicious people”. School 2 and School 4, which are located in the peri-urban area, highlight more the category “traffic risks”.

It is important to note that there were significant differences¹¹ in the risk categories according to the school location. School 1 and schools 2 and 4 are responsible for the main differences.¹² School 1 which is located in the inner city and near a problematic neighborhood is more associated with the category “areas of violence and robberies” and “suspicious people”. Schools 2 and 4, which are located in the rural area, are more associated with the category “traffic risks”. As stated before, students from these schools live mainly in surrounding (rural) villages. They usually travel to school by bus, alone or with friends, (probably) increasing their awareness about traffic risks. Also, at school 3 we observe the highest percentage of students not pointing to any risk situation. Analyzing their usual routes to school, we observe that for the majority of students they are made by car and accompanied by adults.

Figure 11.1 represents the final map obtained after gathering all the risk situations, georeferenced by all the participating students.

Regarding the geospatial distribution, the “school” clearly stands out as the epicentre around which students made the georeferencing of risk situations. We observed the highest concentration of risk markers in the areas around the respective schools. Besides that, for the schools where students live in more distant locations (like schools 2 and 4), it was also possible to observe a convergence of risk situations around their places of residence (above all, traffic risks). This reinforces the importance of the implementation of this kind of study in a school

¹¹Chi-square independence test ($\chi^2 = 222.5$, $df = 84$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$).

¹²According to the *adjusted standardized residuals* provided by the Chi square independence test from SPSS IBM 22.0.

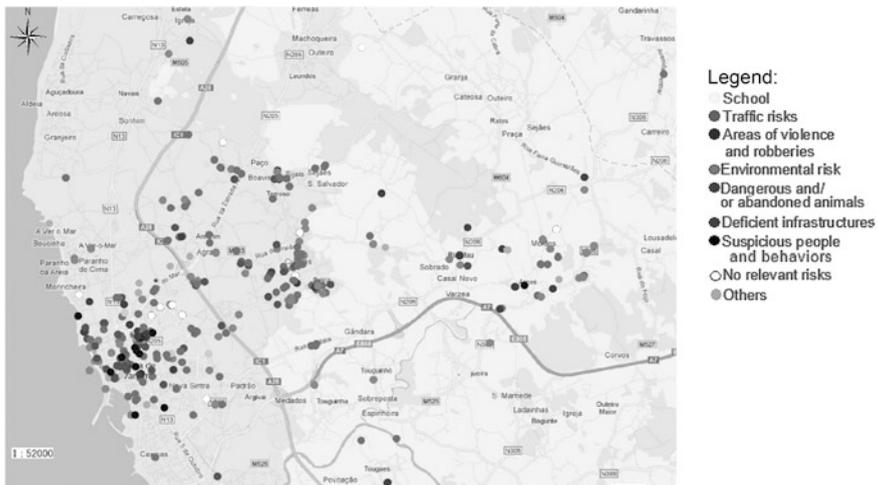


Fig. 11.1 Risk map covering the city of Póvoa de Varzim

context, working together with parents, teachers, agents of authority and planners. Being more aware of the risk situations that concern and affect young people, teachers and parents can act in a pedagogical and preventative way, and police officers and planners become naturally more alert and open to discuss possible structural and functional changes within the localities.

Regarding the geospatial distribution of risk markers, we also observed that in three schools (1, 3 and 5), there was a small cluster of markers related with areas of violence, concerning a neighbourhood with bad reputation. Students asked for more policing and better lighting.

Eighty-five percent of the students participating in this study said they are happy to live in their locality. We concluded that the quality-of-life aspects which young people value more in their locality are related with tranquillity and with the spaces shared with their community, namely family and friends, rather than with material or structural factors. The beauty and preservation of the natural surroundings are also aspects they value. This is well demonstrated in Table 11.7 which shows the “pleasant categories” resulting from the analysis of the aspects that young people prefer.

We observe in Table 11.7 that 51.9% of the students indicated they valued the “tranquillity and safety” of their localities. The category “good neighbourhood and nice people” was indicated by 23.2% of the students. Categories like “Places for people, leisure and interesting events” and “Place of residence of friend and family” reflect the importance of spaces to be together with family and friends. The category “Green spaces and little pollution” related to the preservation of the natural surroundings was indicated by 21.0% of the students. Concerning the natural surroundings, some students also mentioned “Proximity to the sea” and “Beautiful natural landscapes”.

Table 11.7 Pleasant categories

<i>Pleasant category</i>	No. of students	%
Tranquillity and safety	94	51.9
Good neighbourhood and nice people	42	23.2
Green spaces and little pollution	38	21.0
Places for people, leisure and interesting events	29	16.0
Place of residence of friends and family	23	12.7
Proximity to the sea	19	10.5
Beautiful natural landscapes	17	9.4
Good infrastructure	17	9.4
Easy access to essential services and infrastructures (schools, hospitals, pharmacies, supermarkets, etc.)	17	9.4
Places for playing sport	13	7.2

Adapted from Preto (2015)



Fig. 11.2 Risk situations (*dark grey dots*) versus favourite/important places (*light grey dots*)—from school 1 (*left, star symbol*) and school 5 (*right, star symbol*)

In general, the aspects that students valued in their locality are independent of the risk situations they indicated. The risk situations refer to specific and concrete situations, but they tend not to contaminate the global and positive vision that young people have of their locality. In Fig. 11.2, which represents risk situations vis-a-vis favourite places, we can observe the proximity, sometimes even a spatial coincidence, between places marked as favourites and places where risk situations are identified. Moreover, it is interesting to note that in the map from school 1, the risk situations are “surrounded” by the favourite places.

In this study, when georeferencing their favourite places, the students also included the places (areas) they considered important in the locality. Therefore, they

georeferenced local public services, commercial areas and touristic hotspots such as monuments around the city and typical areas like fishing villages. They also located green spaces and small natural parks and nearby beaches, and—though with less intensity—they georeferenced clean and safe areas in the city, as well as crosswalks, sidewalks, good streets and adequate traffic signs. This is probably as a counterpoint to the risk situations.

11.4.1 Discussion—Methodological Issues of Working with Children

In general, the actual implementation of participatory processes is not an easy task - when the level or degree of participation is above and beyond 'consultation', it is even more complicated. And if the participatory processes intend to set young people as the protagonists, the difficulties are multiplied. In the study presented, excluding the implementation at school 1, the level of participation remained essentially at the level of consultation. Moreover, as said before, Portugal is not yet experienced in participatory projects with young people. That is one of the main reasons behind the initial scepticism regarding the possibility of obtaining useful and valid results from young people. However, after looking at the results, teachers and students were surprised and excited with the quality of the information we gathered using the students' questionnaires and georeferencing.

During the process of data collection, we observed the importance of the georeferencing task, namely using digital photos and conventional maps. This importance derives not only from the practical importance of the results obtained, but also because this task enables and encourages a more engaged participation from the young students. It is a relaxed way—even fun—for the young people performing this task, while offering the opportunity to debate the situations they georeferenced.

We also observed the interesting possibility of promoting participatory processes with young people through their older peers, that is, the older students can assume a double role, participating and building bridges towards (a more active and enthusiastic) participation of other young students. This reflects the issue that interpersonal distance between researcher and children can be an obstacle (Hill 2005; Driskell 2002; Alarasi et al. 2016).

On the other hand, participatory processes focusing on the school environment enable the creation of synergies between schools and local authorities that can facilitate the resolution of risk situations similar to those characterized in this study. At School 1, when discussing the final results, the two police officers who were present explained that in their contact with schools, it is complicated to understand the concrete concerns that students have in terms of safety. They considered that this kind of project, which has potential to be integrated easily into school routines could be very helpful to municipal authorities.

Statistical data and/or 2-dimensional maps (or even 3-D models) do not have the capacity to accurately represent all the multiple dimensions of young people's lives and opinions. But they are certainly an excellent starting point to: (a) support adults (planners, teachers, parents, etc.) to understand and be more sensitive regarding the relationships that young people have with their surroundings and (b) let adults understand better the present and future needs of young people within their locality (den Besten 2008; Freeman and Vass 2010; Anel 1990).

11.5 Conclusions

In this chapter, we have used case studies in Portuguese schools to illustrate an analytical framework for *child-friendly* urban spatial planning that includes the concepts of well-being, quality-of-life, and risks for 'children in the community', addressed through the methodology of participatory mapping. This multidisciplinary lens allows us to identify the potentials of participatory mapping for eliciting children's and young people's perceptions, as well as the challenges of integrating young people's viewpoints so as to be meaningful for planning.

The significant advantage of the participatory mapping of children's and young people's perceptions is the possibility it gives to support and legitimize their rights and their engagement through different levels of participation. The framework we propose could be used to make more evident the emic views of children vis-à-vis the etic views of experts (planners) and adults. This is evident in some of the case studies where the adult experts were surprised by the new knowledge provided by the children in some domains of life (e.g. safety and crime).

A challenge in eliciting children's views is what sorts of (spatial) knowledge can be translated into specific policies and planning interventions for child-friendly communities—for instance, risk maps can be used to identify clusters or concentrations of specific perceived risk conditions in urban space. Involving children and adults (teachers, researchers, planners) in the participatory mapping process and in the discussion of outputs can facilitate cooperation and synergies between children, their schools and families, and the local government.

The framework presented in this chapter is built around two fundamental rights for children and youth: the right to well-being, and the right to participate. This framework makes explicit the different views towards well-being and quality-of-life, as well as the realms and levels of children's participation. In the cases we analysed, we observed that children appreciated the elicitation of their views on risk and on "good things" in the community, while their degree of participation was mostly at the levels of consultation and advocacy.

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Chapter 12

Family and Social Networks and Quality of Life Among Community-Dwelling Older-Adults in Spain

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Abstract Family and social networks are changing at all ages, becoming more fragile and less dense, and contact is getting less in-person. However, these networks are one of the most important dimensions of domain-specific quality of life among older-adults. This chapter deals with the networks and associated factors analysis. Data come from the Ageing in Spain Longitudinal Study, Pilot Survey (ELES-PS), representative of people aged 50 years old or more in community dwelling. Information about network size and structure and satisfaction with relationships was used. Univariate and bivariate statistical techniques were applied. The results showed the role that family and friends play in older-adult networks. The family network proved to be broader than the social network, which decreased with age due to health and functioning decline. Not in-person contact outweighed in-person contact with children and parents, and a strong in-person relationship with grandchildren remained. The survey pointed to the residential independence of older-adults from their family network, and the further relatives lived from older-adults' home, the more contact was kept by phone, letter or other not in-person forms. Contacts in-person prevailed with friends and neighbours. Satisfaction with relationships was very high, especially the contact with first degree relatives.

Keywords Quality of later life · Social and family network · Personal and social conditions · Spain

12.1 Introduction and State of the Art

The ageing process is a demographic phenomenon with clear economic, social and political implications. From a broad perspective, countless facets could be assessed to understand its importance and significance in today's world and also in its

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© Springer International Publishing AG 2017
G. Tonon (ed.), *Quality of Life in Communities of Latin Countries*,
Community Quality-of-Life and Well-Being,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-53183-0_12

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foreseeable future development. From a more specific outlook, as people age they have to adapt to the conditions of a society with a demography that is becoming older. Within this context, family and social structures are essential for building the system of relationships within which the individual ages, a fact to which the international scientific literature has born witness (Rojo-Perez et al. 2015).

As is usual in social sciences, an approach based on theoretical configurations of different academic disciplines is essential to understand the complexity of the phenomena, through its components, conditioning factors, the consequences generated and the policies that are developed. It is also common to combine micro and macro perspectives to analyse ageing that appears in adulthood, but is marked by the course of life. In this context, two models are essential for interpreting family and social networks: the Carstensen's Theory of Socioemotional Selectivity and the Kahn and Antonucci's Social Convoy Model. Both have been discussed by several researchers, on a national (De Donder et al. 2012; Stoeckel and Litwin 2013; Buz et al. 2014; English and Carstensen 2014) or compared international level (Kohli et al. 2009). The latter model has studied types of relational structures in the family, home and social environment (Uhlenberg and De Jong Gierveld 2004; Fiori et al. 2008; Chen et al. 2010; Dubova et al. 2010; Litwin 2011; Litwin and Stoeckel 2013), from these three circles of relationships (Nguyen et al. 2016).

In addition to their structural and functional analysis (Antonucci et al. 2013), family and social networks have been associated with other aspects such as perceived health (Deindl et al. 2013), functionality in performing tasks (Dubova et al. 2010), physical and mental health (Stephens et al. 2011; Perkins et al. 2012; van Groenou et al. 2012; Li and Zhang 2015; Nguyen et al. 2016), well-being of the elderly (van der Horst and Coffé 2012; Antonucci et al. 2013; Mejía and Hooker 2014; Litwin and Stoeckel 2013; Fuller-Iglesias 2015; Nguyen et al. 2016), as an approximate measurement of health status (Perkins et al. 2012) or the Internet use (Hogeboom et al. 2010; Caballero de Luis 2014). There is also a tendency to regard family and social relations as a structure that supports the social capital that older-adults rely upon to develop safely (De Donder et al. 2012), for the transition from working life to retirement (Lancee and Radl 2012), for protection against loneliness (Fokkema et al. 2012; Sánchez et al. 2014; De Jong Gierveld et al. 2015) or for maintaining or not maintaining support between relatives and/or friends (Fiori et al. 2011).

In contrast, there is also plenty of evidence of a significant correlation between the limitation of family networks and other negative aspects that are vitally important, like poverty and social exclusion (Cattell 2001), health deterioration and other related aspects (Nicholson 2012), that require attention and acute care (Sintonen and Pehkonen 2014), like depression (Sicotte et al. 2008; Litwin 2011; Wilby 2011), cognitive reserve (Stoykova et al. 2011) or elder abuse (Melchiorre et al. 2013).

Family and social networks (friends and also neighbours of the residential environment) are mainstays for supporting ageing in the usual residential environment with autonomy and independence. Networks can be defined as "a set of

actors linked to each other through a relationship or set of relationships” (Lozares 1996), which can lead to more or less supportive interactions (Van Tilburg 1995). These networks have evolved from their more traditional nature and turned into networks with more fragile and circumstantial connections. For instance, family and social ties are taking on different overtones, albeit without obscuring that they are still highly relevant for people’s living conditions and quality of life.

As social constructions, family and social networks have a fundamental basis for their analysis, regardless of the methodology applied in doing so. Generally, they are arranged around two concepts: the structure that measures their physical components and the function that they perform (Antonucci and Ajrouch 2007; Mejía and Hooker 2014). According to the broad consensus that has been reached, family and social relationships are multidimensional, and specific measurements are required to study their structure and function, be they objective or subjective, that can be measured over the course of life (especially in old age) (Antonucci et al. 2013). It is just as usual common to refer to factors involved in building them and performing their functions. The most frequent are socio-demographic in nature, such as age, gender, marital status, level of education or socioeconomic status (Stephens et al. 2011) etc., but others are “situational”, such as the environment, culture or government policies (Antonucci and Ajrouch 2007; Fiori et al. 2008), just like physical and functional health (van Groenou et al. 2012), measured by indicators of perceived health status, performance of activities of daily living and psychological well-being (Li and Zhang 2015).

Similarly, the role that networks play as quality of life predictors is well documented in the literature (Netuveli et al. 2006), as well as the lack of quality of life when loneliness is perceived (Victor et al. 2004). In the Spanish case, the ties between family and social networks and their relationship with quality of life has been analysed as well. A survey conducted among older people living in family home in the Madrid Region revealed that family and social networks are the second and fourth components, respectively, of quality of life at old age (Fernández-Mayoralas et al. 2011), and systematic reviews offer similar results (Brown et al. 2004). The link between quality of life and family relationships and friendship is expressed in two ways: on the one hand, regarding the benefits of the transfer of care and instrumental support (Escobar-Bravo et al. 2011), if older people need looking after when their level of health and functional competence is impaired. However, emotional support is also said to be very important for the conditions and quality of life at old age (Netuveli et al. 2006).

Research conducted into welfare and family ties has established that contacts’ type of interaction, as well as geographical proximity, should be taken into account to determine what influence the family network has on living conditions and quality of life (Ryan and Willits 2007). A prominent residential preference in old age has to do with staying independent but with solid family ties, in what has been called “intimacy at a distance” (Ahmed-Mohamed et al. 2013). It is precisely when relations are satisfactory that frequent contact with one’s family can form part of individuals’ adaptation strategies to boost their subjective well-being. And the time

spent on such contacts has a significant personal meaning that adds to the welfare obtained by feeling integrated in a physical and social environment (Silverstein and Parker 2002).

Family and family network constitute a dimension established per se, different from the social or friendship domain, which is made up of members of one's own choice and who are not relatives (Angelini and Laferrère 2013). During the ageing process, both networks tend to complement one another, and family relationships tend to increase while relations with the social environment decrease (Ahmed-Mohamed and Rojo-Pérez 2011). Relationships in the physical residential environment (neighbours) has also proven enormously important in a global model of quality of life in old age (Rojo-Pérez and Fernández-Mayoralas 2011) or as a determinant of overall residential satisfaction (Rojo-Pérez et al. 2002). It is even known that the older-adults come into contact with neighbours with a very similar frequency as with other members (children) and more often than with brothers and sisters, parents or other relatives (Puga González 2007), showing that the residential environment and closeness can promote such contact (Thomése and Van Tilburg 2000).

Other aspects of older-adults' life become important in relation to whether or not they have family and social networks. It seems a proven fact that people's loneliness is directly linked with the lower density and quality of their networks (Victor et al. 2004; Hawkley et al. 2008), not so much the family network as the social one (De Jong Gierveld et al. 2015), especially with the proximity of family and social support circles (Shiovitz-Ezra 2013), although there are differences between countries in individuals' loneliness that are not only attributable to the network effect (Fokkema et al. 2012). Family and social networks not only have a bearing on loneliness, but also on the sense of belonging to the community and residential satisfaction (Prieto-Flores et al. 2011a). Something similar could be argued in relation to health, insofar as a lower density and quality of family and social support boosts the risk of health problems and the perception of loneliness (Stephens et al. 2011).

Based on this framework, this chapter mainly aims to explore the network of relationships of older adults in their family and social environment in Spain as facilitators, along with other personal and contextual factors and circumstances, of ageing in community. Specifically, it aims to (i) assess the quality of family and social networks, taking into account their size, distance according to the place of residence, frequency of contact and satisfaction with relationships as an indicator of domain-specific quality of life; and (ii) define the socio-demographic and contextual associated factors that can help to understand the characteristics of relationships with networks. The underlying assumption is that older cohorts have a living environment in which the family network prevails over the social network, compared to younger cohorts whose social network is stronger. For its part, in older cohorts the social network is based primarily on relations with their counterparts in the residential environment, in other words their neighbours, as a means of adapting to different processes (retirement, disability, dependence, death of peers etc.). In this

regard, the initial consideration is that better health and functioning conditions will be associated with broader family and social networks, more in-person than not in-person contacts and quality of life based on higher satisfaction with personal relations. It is also assumed that the further away relatives live, the less frequent the relationships will be, and that a lower frequency of relationships will be associated with a lower level of satisfaction with them.

12.2 Materials and Methods

Data source come from the Ageing in Spain Longitudinal Study, Pilot Survey (ELES-PS), a representative sample of community-dwelling people aged 50 years and older in Spain, carried out in 2011. The information was collected in four phases (telephone, visit by nurses, computer-assisted personal interview—CAPI—and self-administered questionnaires), with a sample for each of 1357, 1185, 1086 and 898 weighted subjects, for an error of ± 2.7 , 2.8, 3.0 and 3.3%, respectively, and for a confidence level of 95%. Survey design, methodology, thematic dimensions and measures are detailed in other papers (Teófilo et al. 2011; Rodríguez-Laso et al. 2013).

For study purposes, family and social networks are analysed from a number of elements (Table 12.1).

Table 12.1 Elements researched for family and social sub-networks in the ELES-PS survey

Family and social networks	Investigated elements							
	Existence	Size	Place of residence	Frequency of in-person contact	Frequency of not in-person contact	Satisfaction with networks relationship	Age	Sex
Spouse/partner	x	x	x	x	x	x		x
Father	x	x	x	On the whole	On the whole		x	x
Mother	x	x	x				x	x
Children	x	x	Each son/daughter	On the whole	On the whole	On the whole	x	Each son/daughter
Brothers/sisters	x	x	Each Brother/sister	On the whole	On the whole	On the whole	x	Each Brother/sister
Grandchildren	x	x		On the whole	On the whole		By age and sex intervals	
Son/daughter in law	x			On the whole	On the whole			
Father/mother in law	x			On the whole	On the whole			
Other relatives	x			On the whole	On the whole			
Friends	x	x		x	x	x		
Neighbours	x			x		x		

In shadow, data no available.

- (a) **Size** of the family network (as variable derived from having a spouse or partner, father, mother, number of living children, number of living grandchildren; number of living siblings) and size of the social network (number of friends).
- (b) **Closeness or distance**, depending on where the relatives (father, mother, each brother or sister and each child) live. This information has been recorded in three categories: (1) In the respondent's home; (2) In another home in the same town or city; (3) In another town or city, further away. The information for each element for each family sub-network was grouped under the multi-response format. A variable has also been generated to compute the proportion of subjects of each sub-network who live **close** (in the same home, building, district or town/city) or **far away** (they do not live in the same town/city).
- (c) **Quality**, measured by the frequency of contact with the sub-networks. The contacts were of two types: *face to face* (person-to-person relationships with members of the sub-networks) and *non-face to face* (contact not in-person by telephone, letter, email, message, etc.). The frequency (average number of days/month with reference to the last 12 months) has been collected for each type of contact with the member of the sub-network with whom they have had most contact and who does not live in the respondent's home: father/mother, children, grandchildren, sons/daughters, brothers/sisters, father/mother in law, other relatives, friends, neighbours (in the case of neighbours, only face-to-face contact information has been gathered).
- (d) **Satisfaction with relationships** has been used as an indicator of domain-specific quality of life for sub-networks of spouse/partner, children, other relatives, friends, neighbours and the family network as a whole. Based on the Personal Well-being Index (International Well-being Group 2013), satisfaction with relationships was measured on a unipolar scale of 0–10, with 0 representing the lowest level satisfaction imaginable and 10 representing the highest level of satisfaction. These variables were standardized as values of 0–100.

Personal and contextual variables regarding socio-demographic characterization (sex, age in three groups, marital status, level of education and occupation-based social class), the geographical residential environment (size of residential area) and self-assessment of loneliness based on the 6-item De Jong Gierveld Loneliness Scale (De Jong Gierveld and Van Tilburg 2006; Prieto-Flores et al. 2011b) (total score ranges from 0 to 6, with higher scores indicating greater feelings of loneliness) were used as explanatory variables of the quantity and quality of social networks. The study also used basic indicators of the level of competence in health and functioning, such as perceived health (on a scale of 1: very bad, to 5: very good) (Teófilo et al. 2011), morbidity or health conditions (suffering illnesses or health problems from a list of up to 21 conditions) (Teófilo et al. 2011), functioning (24 activities of daily living regarding physical, basic and instrumental functioning were researched; higher values indicate better functional capacity) (Teófilo et al. 2011), and a self-report measure of depression based on the 10-item version of the Centre for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale (CES-D10) (Robison et al. 2002), with higher scores indicating depression disorder.

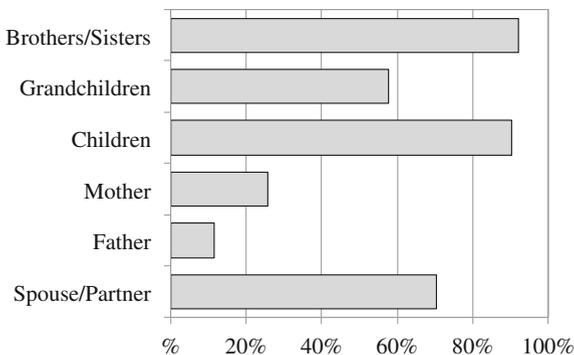
The basic characteristics of the population and their social networks were ascertained through descriptive statistical analysis (univariate and bivariate frequency tables and centrality statistics). Analysis of variance F-test with Bonferroni post hoc comparison was run to examine the effect of the socio-demographic, personal and contextual conditions on the family and social networks dimensions and to test the statistical differences within the categories of the variables. *P*-value ≤ 0.05 is reported as statistically significant. Pearson correlation coefficient (thereinafter, *r*, for a *p*-value ≤ 0.05 or ≤ 0.01) was used with scale variables.

The sample was characterized by a slight predominance of women (55%) and an average age of 66.3 years (SD: 10.7; min: 50; max: 98). Being married or living together was the most widespread situation (7 of 10), and almost 20% were widows/widowers; 43.7% lived in two-member households (mean: 2.5; SD: 1.1; min: 1; max: 8), generally, with a spouse or partner, and 16.8% lived alone. Perception of loneliness revealed a mean value of 2.2 (SD: 1.7; min.: 0; max.: 6). Almost a quarter had a university education and 36.0% were literate or had incomplete primary education; 38.3% were manual workers and 21.2% of them were unskilled. More than 4 out of every 10 people aged 50 or more lived in large urban areas (>100,000 inhabitants). Regarding the level of health and functioning competence, an average of 2.6 chronic conditions was observed (SD: 2.3; min.: 0; max.: 13), functional capacity obtained an average value of 90.0 (SD: 9.8; min.: 32; max.: 96) and depression reached an average of 2.0 (SD: 2.4; min.: 0; max.: 10).

12.3 Composition and Size of the Family Network

The family network of older-adults residing in family housing in Spain was made up by the spouse or partner in 70.3% of cases (Fig. 12.1). 11.6 and 25.7% declared that their father or mother, respectively, was still alive. Just over nine out of every ten reported having children, 57.7% had grandchildren and 92.2% had brothers/sisters.

Fig. 12.1 Composition of family network



In relation to size (Table 12.2), the family network averaged 7.8 members (SD: 4; min.: 0; max.: 30), as a result of 60.2% of those interviewed declaring that they had a network of between 5 and 11 members and less than 20% of the subjects reported a size of between 1 and 4 members. However, this average size did not show statistically significant differences by gender, but it was larger among the older population (Table 12.2), so differences were observed between younger and older men and women, considering both gender and age together. It was different according to civil status, such that singles, with a smaller average sized network, stood apart from individuals who were married/living with a partner,

Table 12.2 Size of the family network by socio-demographic features

Personal and contextual variables	Mean ¹	F-contrast ²	p-value ²	Valid cases	
				N	%
Gender					
Male	7.6 _a	1.672	0.196	611	45.0
Female	7.9 _a			746	55.0
Age in years					
50–64	6.9 _a	26.457	0.000	636	46.9
65–74	8.4 _b			367	27.0
75+	8.7 _b			355	26.1
Civil status					
Single	3.3 _a	38.038	0.000	75	5.5
Married/living with a partner	8.1 _b			954	70.4
Widower/widow	8.4 _b			266	19.6
Separated/divorced	6.4 _c			62	4.5
Level of education					
Less than primary studies	8.5 _a	17.871	0.000	489	36.0
Primary studies	7.9 _a			308	22.7
Secondary or higher studies	7.1 _b			560	41.3
Social class based on the occupation					
I–II–III: Non-manual workers (managers, clerks, professionals, supervisors)	7.0 _a	21.782	0.000	520	54.9
IV–V: Manual workers (skilled, semi-skilled, unskilled)	8.2 _b			428	45.1
Size of residential area (number of inhabitants)					
<10,000	8.1 _a	2.942	0.032	325	24.0
10,001–50,000	8.0 _a			457	33.7
50,001–100,000	7.7 _a			335	24.7
>100,000	7.2 _a			240	17.6

¹ANOVA F-test with post hoc Bonferroni correction. Values in the same column and subtable not sharing the same subscript are significantly different at p -value <0.05 in the two-sided test of equality for row means

²Univariate variance

widower/widow and separated/divorced. Contrasts were likewise observed between those married/living with a partner or widower/widow and separated/divorced individuals. A larger family network was observed among those who declared that they had less than primary education and were manual workers. The residential habitat size showed a reverse statistical relation but did not show significant differences between the various categories.

A weak but positive and significant correlation was found between the size of the household ($r: 0.059$) and the suffering of disease ($r: 0.131$), while there was a reverse correlation with functional capacity ($r: -0.108$). In this way, a larger family network was found among older-adults living in larger housings and those suffering more adverse health conditions and a worse level of functional capacity.

12.4 Quality of the Family Network

The quality of the relation, measured by the **frequency of contact** in number of days per month and for each type of contact, either in-person or not in-person, reached an average of 11.6 and 10.4 days/month, respectively. The highest frequency occurred with children, followed by grandchildren and the father or mother, that is, with first- and second-degree family members (Fig. 12.2). However, differences were found according to the type of contact, such that contact not in-person (by telephone, messages, letter, etc.) was higher than that of in-person with children, the father or mother and brothers and sisters. On the other hand, contact in-person was especially high with grandchildren, followed by other family members, sons/daughters-in-law and mothers/fathers-in-law.

Regarding first level family networks (parents and children), the frequency of contact in-person with parents was independent from the socio-demographic

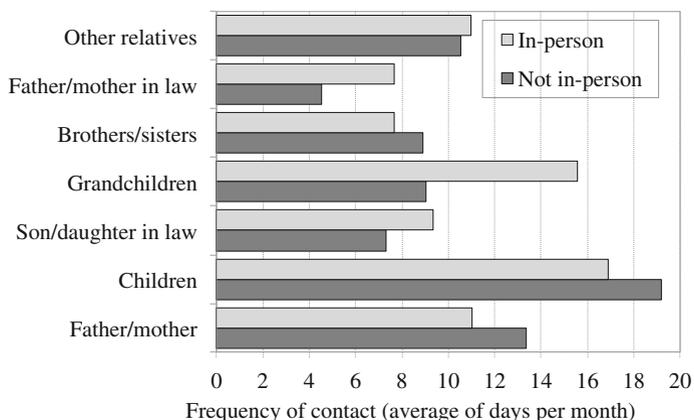


Fig. 12.2 Frequency of family contacts, in number of days per month and type of contact

features of older-adults, although a quarter of them declared that their mother was still alive but only 11% stated that their father was alive. Contact with children was reversely associated to level of education and social class, and it was more frequent among women doing manual work. No significant correlation was found between this type of contact and the size of the housing, health conditions and functionality, depression and the perception of loneliness for either of the two family sub-networks.

In these two family sub-networks, the frequency of contact not in-person showed statistically significant differences by gender, age, civil status, level of education and gender according to social class. In this way, a greater average frequency of contact was declared by women, people 65–74 years of age, the single and widower/widow population, people who completed primary, secondary or higher education, and non-manual female workers followed by manual female workers. As in the previous case, a significant correlation was not found with the size of the housing, health, functionality and the perception of loneliness. The size of the residential area was as well not statistically significant, although contact in-person was more frequent in smaller areas, whereas contact by telephone, letter or other not in-person means was more prominent in larger municipalities. Other factors, such as the circumstances and living conditions of older-adults, as well as other aspects of the sub-networks, may also help to explain the quality of relationships. In this respect, below is a study of the distance from the place of residence of family members and its possible influence on a greater or lesser frequency of contact.

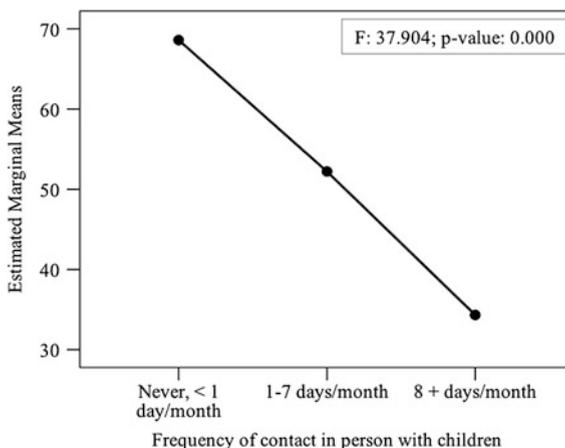
In the ELES-PS survey, the address was considered only for sub-networks of parents, children and brothers/sisters. Thus, the same address as older-adults was the place of residence of 13% of the parents and 26.2% of the children (Table 12.3).

Table 12.3 Distance to place of residence of family sub-networks

Place of residence of the family	Responses		% of cases ^a
	Num	%	
Father and/or mother (valid cases: 412)			
Living at the same address/same housing	66	13.0	15.9
Living in different addresses but in the same municipality	237	46.9	57.6
Living in different municipality, at a greater distance	203	40.1	49.2
Total	506	100.0	122.6
Children (valid cases: 1226)			
Living at the same address/same housing	811	26.2	66.2
Living in different addresses but in the same municipality	1154	37.2	94.2
Living in different municipality, at a greater distance	1136	36.6	92.6
Total	3101	100.0	253.0
Brothers/Sisters (valid cases: 1171)			
Living at the same address/same housing	32	1.0	2.7
Living in different addresses but in the same municipality	1263	39.1	107.8
Living in different municipality, at a greater distance	1932	59.9	165.0
Total	3227	100.0	275.5

^aThe % exceeds 100.0% due to it is calculated on the number of valid cases

Fig. 12.3 Estimated marginals means of proportion of children located in different municipality or at a greater distance and contact in-person

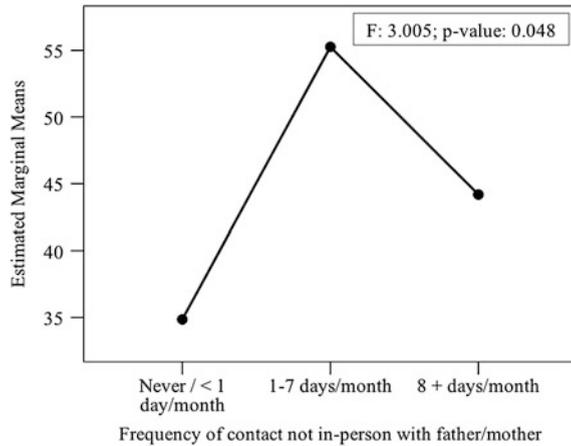


Conversely, 37.2 and 36.6% of responses showed that the children lived at addresses in the same or a different municipality, respectively, while slightly higher proportions were observed in the case of parents (46.9 and 40.1%). Finally, nearly 6 out of every 10 brothers/sisters lived in different municipalities or at a greater distance.

As a general rule and in relation to living in a different municipality or at a greater distance, a statistical association was found with the frequency of contact in-person. In this way, a high proportion of subjects in the sub-networks of father/mother, children and brothers/sisters did not have contact in-person, and this proportion declined in the intervals of 1–7 days/month and 8 or more days/month (Fig. 12.3). This means that few subjects had a high frequency of contact in-person when the addresses of the sub-networks were in a different municipality or at a greater distance. But the frequency of contact not in-person in these family sub-networks was configured according to two contact profiles. On the one hand, the sub-network of fathers/mothers and brothers/sisters (Fig. 12.4), among whom few subjects declared that they did not have this type of contact (never or less than 1 day/month). A larger proportion of subjects had this contact in a frequency interval of 1–7 days/month, and the proportion of cases fell significantly after that frequency. On the other hand, a linear profile was found with the sub-network of children, with a higher proportion of cases of older-adults who were in contact with a frequency of 8 or more days/month. Size of household ($r: -0.347$) and health perception ($r: -0.076$) showed a reverse correlation with the proportion of children living in the same municipality or at a greater distance.

Satisfaction with family relations supplements the quality of the network. This dimension, measured for three sub-networks (Table 12.4), settled at an average figure of 85.7 over 100 for children (SD: 16.5; min.: 0; max.: 100), falling to 80.7/100 (SD: 22.3; min.: 0; max.: 100) for the spouse or partner and 74.2/100 (SD: 19.2; min.: 0; max.: 100) for the rest of family members. Regarding the socio-demographic associated factors, statistically significant differences were found for satisfaction with the spouse or partner according to gender, gender by age, civil

Fig. 12.4 Estimated marginals means of proportion of father/mother located in different municipality or at a greater distance and contact not in-person



status, level of education by gender and gender by social class. Thus, the profile of most satisfied individuals was defined by men, and among men younger individuals compared to women of any age group, married men versus widower/widow and separated/divorced men, and manual workers versus non-manual female workers. The level of satisfaction with relations with children was higher among women and independent from age. Significant differences were also found among widower/widow and single individuals, among those with less than primary education versus those with secondary or higher education, and manual versus non-manual workers. On the other hand, only gender and civil status had a statistical association with satisfaction with relations with other family members (other than the spouse or partner and the children), such that women showed higher satisfaction, whereas there were no differences among people of different civil status, although single and separated/divorced individuals were more satisfied.

Considering other personal conditions, a significant correlation was found between satisfaction with family relations in the aggregate (with the spouse or partner, children, other family members) and the suffering of disease ($r: -0.166$), the self-perceived health status ($r: 0.171$), functional capacity ($r: 0.091$), depression ($r: -0.322$) and the perception of loneliness ($r: -0.481$). In this way, satisfaction with family relations was higher where fewer diseases, depression and loneliness were suffered, and where there was a better functional capacity and perception of one's health condition.

In respect of the relation between frequency of contact and satisfaction with family relations in the aggregate (Table 12.5), a low but significant and direct correlation was found between satisfaction and contact in-person with father/mother, children, sons/daughters-in-law, grandchildren and other family members. Thus, the greater the frequency of contact in-person, the higher the level of satisfaction with relations. Regarding contact not in-person, satisfaction with family relations also had a positive association with sub-networks of sons/daughters in law, grandchildren, brothers/sisters and other family members.

Table 12.4 Satisfaction with family networks according to socio-demographic features

Personal and contextual variables	Satisfaction with spouse/partner (mean: 80.7; SD: 22.3; min.: 0.0; max.: 100.0)		Satisfaction with children (mean: 85.7; SD: 16.5; min.: 0.0; max.: 100.0)		Satisfaction with other relatives (mean: 74.2; SD: 19.2; min.: 0.0; max.: 100.0)	
	F-contrast ²	p-value ²	F-contrast ²	p-value ²	F-contrast ²	p-value ²
	Test of means ¹		Test of means ¹		Test of means ¹	
Gender						
Male	82.8 _a	6.982	84.0 _a	7.795	72.0 _a	8.714
Female	78.3 _b		87.2 _b		76.1 _b	
Age						
50-64	8.1 _a	2.082	85.5 _a	0.763	73.2 _a	2.135
65-74	79.3 _a		85.0 _a		74.3 _a	
75+	781 _a		87.1 _a		76.9 _a	
Civil status						
Single	74.3 _{a,b}	25.699	73.1 _a	3.186	78.3 _a	2.707
Married/living with a partner	82.6 _a		85.8 _{a,b}		73.1 _a	
Widower/widow	67.5 _b		87.5 _b		76.9 _a	
Separated/divorced	42.1 _c		81.7 _{a,b}		78.5 _a	
Level of education						
Less than primary studies	79.8 _a	0.648	88.1 _a	4.122	75.6 _a	2.513
Primary studies	82.5 _a		86.0 _{a,b}		75.8 _a	
Secondary or higher studies	80.4 _a		84.0 _b		72.6 _a	
Social class based on the occupation						
I-II-III: Non-manual workers (managers, clerks, professionals, supervisors)	79.9 _a	1.695	84.3 _a	4.077	73.8 _a	0.149
IV-V: Manual workers (skilled, semi-skilled, unskilled)	82.1 _a		86.8 _b		73.3 _a	

(continued)

Table 12.4 (continued)

Personal and contextual variables	Satisfaction with spouse/partner (mean: 80.7; SD: 22.3; min.: 0.0; max.: 100.0)		Satisfaction with children (mean: 85.7; SD: 16.5; min.: 0.0; max.: 100.0)		Satisfaction with other relatives (mean: 74.2; SD: 19.2; min.: 0.0; max.: 100.0)	
	F-contrast ²	p-value ²	F-contrast ²	p-value ²	F-contrast ²	p-value ²
Size of residential area (number of inhabitants)						
<10,000	82.4 _a	0.576	86.8 _a	0.796	74.0 _a	0.934
10,001–50,000	79.7 _a		86.3 _a		75.9 _a	
50,001–100,000	80.5 _a		84.7 _a		72.8 _a	
>100,000	80.8 _a		84.6 _a		73.2 _a	

¹ANOVA F-test with post hoc Bonferroni correction. Values in the same column and subtable not sharing the same subscript are significantly different at p-value <0.05 in the two-sided test of equality for row means

²Univariate variance

Table 12.5 Satisfaction with family networks according to frequency by type of contact

Family networks	Contact in-person			Contact not in-person		
	Pearson r	p-value	Cases	Pearson r	p-value	Cases
Father/mother	0.163	0.013	229	0.104	0.118	227
Children	0.106	0.019	483	0.086	0.061	480
Son/daughter-in-law	0.109	0.006	631	0.114	0.004	631
Grandchildren	0.156	0.003	351	0.116	0.030	351
Brothers/sisters	0.066	0.113	576	0.142	0.001	575
Father/mother-in-law	0.096	0.135	242	-0.027	0.681	242
Other relatives	0.115	0.004	635	0.094	0.018	635

12.5 The Social Network: Size and Quality of the Relationship

The social network among older-adults in community dwelling was evaluated for friends who the interviewed considered intuitively as their 'best friends'. The average size was 5.0 (SD: 5.6), and nearly 35% reported having between four and six friends compared to nearly 12% of cases who declared they did not have friends.

Significant statistical association through analysis of variance was found between the size of the network of friends and age by gender and civil status. However, it cannot be said that there is a significant relationship between the size of the social network and the level of education by gender (p -value: 0.073) and the size of the residential habitat (p -value: 0.099).

In this respect, differences in the average number of friends were found between the categories of men and women 65 or older (Fig. 12.5). Civil status likewise introduced significant differences, such that being separated or divorced or married/living with a partner was associated with a social network of a size slightly above average, followed by being single; widower/widow was the civil status reporting the smallest sized social network (Fig. 12.6). Significant differences were found between the categories of married or living with a partner and widower/widow. The network of friends was greater among those who perceived they had better self-perceived health status (r : 0.069) and functional capacity (r : 0.081) and those who declared that they did not feel lonely (r : -0.144).

The average frequency of **contact in-person** by number of days per month was 10.5 (SD: 10.4; range 31) (Table 12.6). Statistical differences were not found by gender, although women declared a slightly higher frequency than men. However, this contact was associated with the rest of the socio-demographic features, such that it increased with age, was higher among those lacking education and consequently belonging to social classes related to manual work. Differences were also occurred by civil status in general, but the categories used did not show differences using post hoc Bonferroni correction test. The frequency was progressively higher as the residential habitat became smaller. A significant reverse correlation was

Fig. 12.5 Estimated marginals means of size of friends network by sex and age

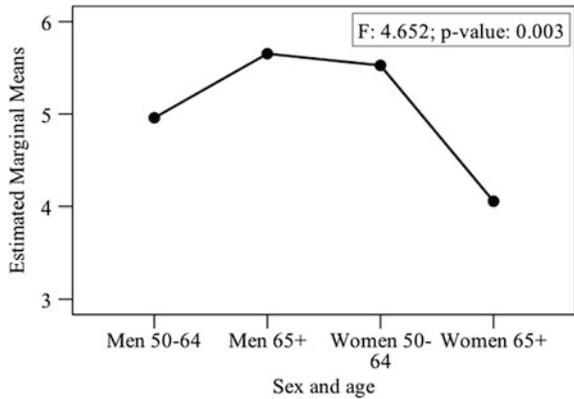
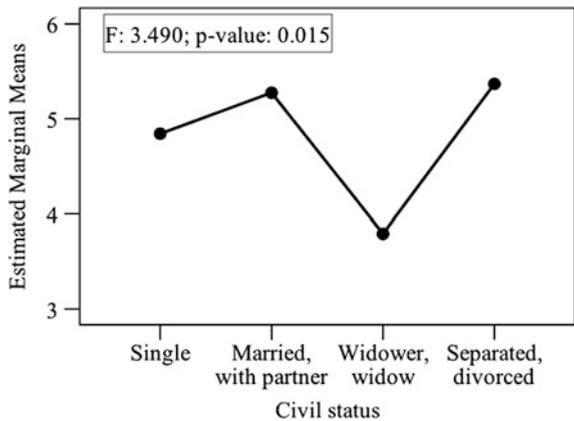


Fig. 12.6 Estimated marginals means of size of friends network by civil status



found with the size of household ($r: -0.103$) and a direct correlation was observed with depression ($r: 0.081$).

In the case of **contact not in-person**, the average frequency was 8.7 days/month (SD: 9.6; range 31) (Table 12.6) and was statistically associated with nearly all the socio-demographic features, except social class. Thus, women, single individuals, those with primary or higher education, non-manual workers and those living in larger demographic municipalities were the subjects with the highest frequency of contact not in-person. This contact was also more frequent among those living in smaller housing ($r: -0.069$) and with better functional capacity ($r: 0.073$).

Comparing both types of contact with the network of friends, a different socio-demographic characterisation was found. The frequency of contact in-person was higher among older subjects, population with less than primary education and manual workers. But contact not in-person was more frequent at younger ages, older-adults with secondary or higher education or among those who were non-manual workers, which could be prompted by a greater use of the telephone and, especially, Internet communications. Likewise, those living in smaller

Table 12.6 Frequency of contact with social network according to socio-demographic features

Personal and contextual variables	Contact in-person (mean: 10.5; SD: 10.4; min.: 0; max.: 31)			Contact not in-person (mean: 8.7; SD: 9.6; min.: 0; max.: 31)			Valid cases	
	Mean ¹	F-contrast ²	p-value ²	Mean ¹	F-contrast ²	p-value ²	N	%
Gender								
Male	9.9 _a	3.423	0.065	6.9 _a	26.796	0.000	611	45.0
Female	11.0 _a			10.2 _b			746	55.0
Age								
50-64	9.5 _a	4.398	0.013	9.4 _a	4.844	0.008	636	46.9
65-74	11.7 _b			8.8 _{a,b}			367	27.0
75+	11.6 _{a,b}			6.9 _b			355	26.1
Civil status								
Single	9.1 _a	2.670	0.046	11.6 _a	8.730	0.000	75	5.5
Married/living with a partner	10.1 _a			7.7 _b			954	70.4
Widower/widow	12.6 _a			11.1 _a			266	19.6
Separated/divorced	11.3 _a			12.4 _a			62	4.5
Level of education								
Less than primary studies	12.9 _a	12.533	0.000	6.6 _a	10.732	0.000	489	36.0
Primary studies	10.4 _b			9.3 _b			308	22.7
Secondary or higher studies	9.0 _b			9.8 _b			560	41.3
Social class based on the occupation								
I–II–III: Non-manual workers (managers, clerks, professionals, supervisors)	9.2 _a	12.273	0.001	9.1 _a	2.349	0.072	520	54.9
IV–V: Manual workers (skilled semi-skilled, unskilled)	11.6 _b			7.9 _a			428	45.1
Size of residential area (number of inhabitants)								
<10,000	11.5 _a	2.980	0.031	7.5 _a	3.841	0.010	325	24.0
10,001–50,000	11.0 _{a,b}			8.2 _{a,b}			457	33.7
50,001–100,000	10.5 _{a,b}			9.3 _{a,b}			335	24.7
>100,000	8.5 _b			10.6 _b			240	17.6

¹ANOVA F-test with post hoc Bonferroni correction. Values in the same column and subtable x. not sharing the same subscript are significantly different at *p*-value <0.05 in the two-sided test of equality for row means

²Univariate variance

municipalities declared having greater contact in-person than those living in larger areas, which could hinder access to contact in-person.

The average level of **satisfaction with friends relationships** was at around 76.1/100 (SD: 18.5; min.: 0.0; max.: 100.0), being, significantly, women who reported greater satisfaction (77.7 vs 74.3 for men). Having a better health perception ($r: 0.077$) and functional capacity ($r: 0.084$), as well as lower levels of depression ($r: -0.220$) and loneliness ($r: -0.410$), were correlated with a better quality of life based on satisfaction with these relations. The sub-dimensions of frequency of contact in-person ($r: 0.128$) and not in-person ($r: 0.086$) with friends and satisfaction with their relationships showed a significant though weak correlation, confirming the association between said parameters.

The social network **made up by neighbours** showed an average frequency of relations in-person (the only type considered for this sub-network) of 9.4 days/month (SD: 11.9; min.: 0; max.: 31). The personal frequency of contact with this network was associated with gender, age, level of education, social class and residential habitat (test of means), such that the average frequency was exceeded by women, those 65 or older (Fig. 12.7), the uneducated population or those with incomplete primary education and manual workers, as well as residents in areas of up to 100,000 inhabitants (Fig. 12.8). This contact had a reverse correlation with the size of household ($r: -0.086$) and the perception of loneliness ($r: -0.100$).

Satisfaction with relations with the network of the residential area reached an average figure of 69.5 (SD: 21.8; min.: 0.0; max.: 100.0). Frequency of contact and satisfaction with relations with neighbours had a significant relation ($r: 0.265$). But living in smaller housing ($r: -0.090$), not suffering from depression ($r: -0.144$) or perceiving loneliness ($r: -0.363$) were inversely correlated.

Fig. 12.7 Estimated marginals means of frequency of contact with neighbours by sex and age

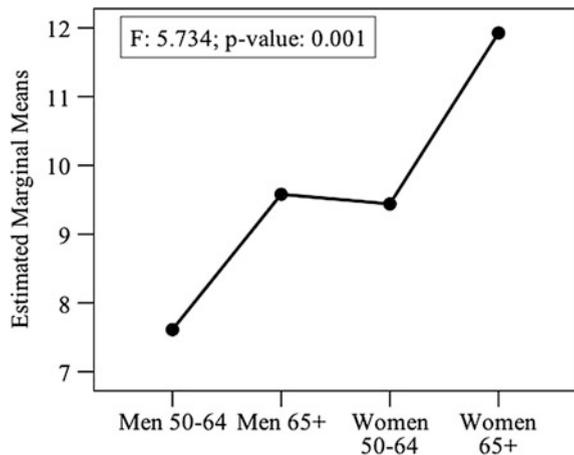
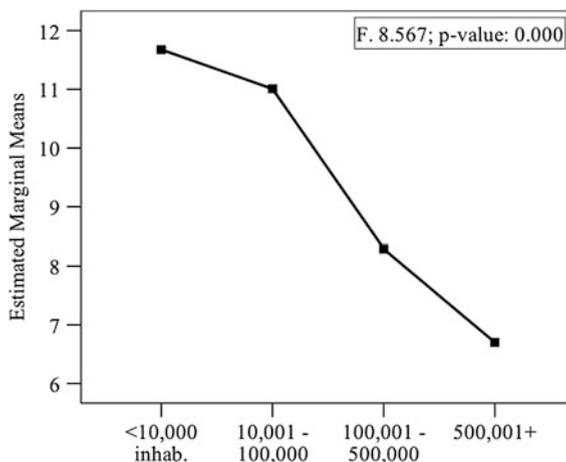


Fig. 12.8 Estimated marginals means of frequency of contact with neighbours by size of residential area (number of inhabitants)



12.6 Discussion and Conclusions

This chapter has analysed the conditions and quality of life related to the family and social networks in the older-adults living in family housing in Spain, as one of the most salient dimensions for quality of life in old age, as it has been named in priori research (Fernández-Mayoralas et al. 2011). The relevance of both networks derives not only from the fact that they are a source of relations influencing quality of life (Antonucci and Ajrouch 2007). They can also become sources of instrumental and emotional support (Waite and Das 2010), in the context of family and social structures in line with the Convoy Theory of Social Networks (Buz et al. 2014; Nguyen et al. 2016). Research on these networks has been approached from a multidimensional perspective (Antonucci et al. 2013), including the existence thereof, the characteristics of the type of relations, whether with the family (various sub-networks) or friendship (friends and neighbours), and the quality of the networks (size, composition, frequency of contact per type of network and geographic proximity). Nevertheless, the goals of this study did not include the domain of the function (for instance affection, help, and transfers). Thus, the relevant role played by family and friends in the living conditions of older-adults has been seen, insofar as they maintained extensive and solid networks of contact in-person or not in-person, leading to high satisfaction level.

It is a salient fact that the family network is varied, with an important presence of brothers/sisters followed by children (Litwin 2011, 2012), especially in countries in the South of Europe (Stoeckel and Litwin 2013), as is the case of Spain. This is in keeping with the high number of children in the generation of the parents of current older-adults. The conjugal network is likewise extensive, consistent with the results obtained in the population 65 or older (Puga González 2007), and the presence of parents due to the relatively lower age of the population studied. As expected, it was found that family bonds decline insofar as the conditions necessary for them to

remain in place weaken, such that being single is one of the factors behind the reduction of family size (Waite and Das 2010). Other individual aspects, for instance morbidity and functional capacity, have proven to influence the family network and hence the size of housing. Thus, greater morbidity and worse functional capacity were associated with larger family networks (Kohli et al. 2009; Stoykova et al. 2011; Caetano et al. 2013). This fact could be explained by the diseased and disabled population's need to live with other family members in the context of intergenerational solidarity and transfers. However, no association was found between the size of the family network and the self-appraisal of health, as opposed to other research conducted in the European context (Antonucci et al. 2013; Deindl et al. 2013) or in Brazil (Caetano et al. 2013), although in the latter case the network was measured using other criteria.

Frequency of contacts, in general, is one of the structural features that are helpful for distinguishing family sub-networks (Antonucci and Ajrouch 2007; Nguyen et al. 2016), laying significance on the value of emotional proximity (Stoekel and Litwin 2013) and appraising their importance in making up intergenerational support (Antonucci and Ajrouch 2007; Kohli et al. 2009). The strength of networks of children is marked by the high frequency of contact in-person and, especially, not in-person, guaranteeing a foreseeable greater future attention (Buz et al. 2014), in contrast with the sub-network of brothers/sisters. Contacts with grandchildren tend to be in-person, within the framework of intergenerational relations and the provision of care, as another one of the social roles played by older people within the context of active ageing (Petrová Kafkov 2015) and family norms established in regimes of strong consensus within the individual's closer surroundings. The ELES-PS survey has shown that, after care for the spouse or partner and the ascendants (parents or in-laws), grandchildren are the next sub-network in terms of receiving support by older-adults, which would also strengthen the network via high contact in-person.

Supplementing the existence, size and contact with family sub-networks, older-adults preserved their residential independence (Ahmed-Mohamed and Rojo-Pérez 2011), having their address in different housing, in the same or in a different municipality of their family, with the exception of children, who were located in similar proportions in the same or a different municipality. A quarter of older-adults still live at the same address as their children, although this might be due, at least partially, to the age of the population studied (50 and older). In this respect, it is significant to note the importance in Spain of the fact that several members of the network share the same address, in order to achieve greater density of support and care (Sicotte et al. 2008), although in the survey information to identify the housing in which the older-adults lived (their own home or that of their children or other family members) was not requested. However, a greater distance from the address of residence was associated with a lower frequency of contact in-person and higher contact by telephone, letter or other not in-person means, as a general rule (Knipscheer and Dykstra 1995).

The level of satisfaction with relationships with other members of the family sub-networks is another feature of the robustness of the family network. Thus,

satisfaction was very high with children and spouse (Fuller-Iglesias 2015), and lower with other family members, although in all cases it was in line with the standard pattern of satisfaction with life in Western countries (70–80 over 100) (Cummins 2010). These findings are consistent with the results of the Personal Well-being Index, which showed that satisfaction with personal relationships was the best-valued domain by older adults (Rojo-Perez et al. 2012). Also, a direct and significant relation was found between satisfaction and frequency of contact (Shiovitz-Ezra 2013; Fuller-Iglesias 2015; De Jong Gierveld et al. 2015), within interpersonal contexts (Degli Antoni 2009).

The social network made up by friends was less numerous than the family network, consistent with other research (Ahmed-Mohamed and Rojo-Pérez 2011; Puga González 2007). The fact of not having friends is not a salient behaviour, being declared in Spain by just one out of every ten older-adults. It is often found in the literature that the size of the network of friends declines with age (Puga González 2007), although a pattern of adaptive continuity is also seen, as people get older (Finchum and Weber 2000). However, using the data from the ELES-PS survey it is not possible to statistically support, in a general manner, that the size of this network declines with older age, although significant differences were found between older men and women, and it was seen that among women the social network declines strongly. The size of the residential area did not show significant results in the reverse relationship with the size of the social network, contrary to what could be expected from the existence of a more extensive social network in smaller areas because they would make contact easier. But the positive perception of health, functional capacity and not feeling alone corresponded to larger social networks (Li and Zhang 2015), thus showing the multiple benefits arising from friendship (Finchum and Weber 2000).

It could be expected that in-person and not in-person relationship with people outside the family circle would be less frequent, similar to the relations with ‘other family members’ who are not the parents, children or grandchildren, and that frequency of contact should decline with older age. Although this pattern can be seen in this study, it was not statistically significant, maybe because the population of older-adults considers people who could be still of working age, which would help to explain why men from 50 to 64 years of age have smaller social networks. This feature was also present among women 65 and older, probably influenced by impaired health (Buz et al. 2014). This situation is reinforced in the case of unmarried individuals and those living in smaller housing. Conversely, higher personal predisposition, based on not suffering from depression or having better functional capacity, prompted contact, both in-person and not in-person, with friends (Nicholson 2012), although contact with the social network does not seem as stable as with the family network (Kohli et al. 2009).

The satisfaction with friend relationships, although within the standard pattern interval (Cummins 2010), is a bit lower than reported for relations with children and the spouse or partner, and similar to what was reported for other family members. Likewise to what occurs with the family network, the social network of friends has

a direct influence on personal satisfaction, contributing to greater confidence, better health, lower stress and social support (van der Horst and Coffé 2012).

The frequency of personal relations with neighbours, or with people living in the same residential area or municipality, was only slightly below that of relations with friends, in general terms. People aged 65 to 74 are an exception to this behaviour; they reported a higher frequency of contact, as opposed to younger people still involved in their labour activities (Rodríguez Rodríguez et al. 2014). These results did not confirm the initial assumption of greater integration of older-adults with neighbours than with friends, but the difference was small (one day on average per month). Although it was not tested in this study, it is possible that this undifferentiated behaviour between networks of friends and neighbours may be at the basis of how they supplement each other in an individual's residential area (Walters and Bartlett 2009). Satisfaction with relations with neighbours is lower than with family members and friends, and is in keeping with other research on the quality of life of the population at large, setting at the lower limit of the standard pattern (Cummins 2010). However, previous studies on the residential area in old age showed that the neighbour network becomes an important predictor of residential satisfaction (Rojo-Pérez et al. 2002).

Future research should focus on other aspects of networks, such as their function, including the exchange of resources (economic resources, goods and services) and intergenerational care (Chen et al. 2010), in order to assess their role in satisfying the basic needs of individuals and their families, as well as their influence on quality of later life.

It would also be very interesting to analyse the correspondence between family and social sub-networks and the performance of participative and social activities by older-adults in order to evaluate whether social and community integration entails an active ageing (Fernández-Mayoralas et al. 2014) and, as a consequence, influences their personal well-being and quality of life.

In this chapter a cross-cutting analysis has been conducted grounded on the baseline survey of the ELES-PS project, and thus it has not been possible to address a study of trajectories. When two or more waves of data are available it will be possible to see the strengths of the family and social sub-networks in the process of longitudinal changes and transitions in the quality of life of older people. In keeping with new forms of relations via electronic information technology and communication devices, it would be interesting to propose hypotheses regarding the change of strategy in relations with networks and how maintaining digital contacts or other contacts not in-person affect the well-being and quality of life of older-adults.

The research on networks has been addressed from a multidimensional perspective (Antonucci et al. 2013), including the type of relations, whether with family members (various sub-networks) or of friendship (friends and neighbours), frequency of contact or geographic proximity. But a limitation in this study has to do with the type of data collected for family and social networks according to the source that was used. The ELES-PS survey has prevented a uniform analysis due to the lack of homogeneity of the data measured for each one of the sub-dimensions of the sub-networks. In order to overcome this obstacle, it would be desirable that

successive waves of the Longitudinal Research on Ageing in Spain gather the same dimensions for all the sub-networks (existence, size, age and gender of all members-, distance from the place of residence, frequency of contact by type, satisfaction with relations, support or care that is exchanged). This is the reason why the hypotheses regarding a lower frequency of contact according to a greater geographic distance from the address, on the one hand, and the direct relation between quality of life and frequency of contact, on the other hand, has been checked in an exploratory manner. The data source has not made it possible to study where contacts with the sub-networks take place, this being an interesting aspect not only for finding out about the functional mobility of older-adults but also about the public resources in residential areas and their role in social integration.

This study has taken into account personal socio-demographic, health and functioning conditions, as well as the residential area in respect of the size and quality of the family and friends sub-networks and their relation with quality of life. Successive research should be carried out using multivariate analyses to examine more deeply the possible relations between sub-networks and other dimensions of ageing, for instance instrumental and emotional support in the context of level of competence in terms of health and functionality. It is a proven fact that strong, quality networks have influence on the health of older people (Puga González 2007; Waite and Das 2010) during their ageing process. It would also be useful to delve into the repercussion of the need to supporting and care for older people on their ideal situation of residential independence.

Acknowledgements The Ageing in Spain Longitudinal Study, Pilot Survey (ELES-PS), has been carried out by the Research Unit on Ageing Process (Research Group on Ageing, GIE-CSIC, and the Matia Instituto Gerontologico) and supported by the “Acciones Complementarias 2009” Programme of the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation (CSO2009-06637-E/SOCI; CSO2009-06638-E/SOCI; CSO2009- 08645- E/SOCI), the SAIOTEK 2009 Programme of the Basque Government, and the “Obra Social Caja Madrid” Foundation. The data analysis of this survey was founded by the Spanish Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness (“Proyectos de Investigación Fundamental No Orientada 2011”, Ref. CSO2011-30210-C02-01). More information can be seen in: <http://www.proyectoeles.es>

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Chapter 13

Digital Media, Identity and Quality of Life of a Local Ecuadorian Community in Andalusia (SE Spain)

Cristiano Codagnone, Pilar Cruz and Isidro Maya-Jariego

Abstract This article is a case study of the digital practices of Ecuadorians residing in Vera, a small city of 15,000 inhabitants in the Province of Almería in Eastern Andalusia (Spain). Participant observation of the community and in-depth interviews of Internet shops' owners and users were used to describe access to, use and appropriation of, digital media by recent immigrants. The ethnographic fieldwork was complemented with a survey to 60 young participants in a digital literacy course. Ecuadorian immigrants use digital media to maintain ties to the homeland and also as a tool for inclusion in the host society. The role of the Internet, *locutorios* and mobile phones are examined. Compared to mobile phones and online communities, locutorios are *behaviour settings* for recent immigrants, where digital media usage and appropriation take place in the context of local interaction among individuals in an active process of acculturation and adaptation to the receiving country. Participation in communities of recent immigrants contributes to subjective well-being of newcomers and has an indirect impact on the quality of life of local people.

Keywords Migration · Information and communication technologies (ICT) · Internet · Locutorios · Mobile phones · Behaviour settings · Quality of life · Transnational communities

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© Springer International Publishing AG 2017
G. Tonon (ed.), *Quality of Life in Communities of Latin Countries*,
Community Quality-of-Life and Well-Being,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-53183-0_13

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13.1 Introduction

Digital media have become increasingly pervasive in contemporary societies and provide new means for economic and social actions, as well as for building anew or re-shaping cultural and social identities. They are a potential new source of social differentiation and inequality, or conversely of equalisation and integration. Access to, and use of, digital media in the economy and society have become, since the mid 2000s, the object of policy efforts aimed at supporting digital inclusion as an additional avenue for social inclusion and at fighting digital exclusion as a compounding factor of social exclusion (Codagnone 2009). Indeed, digital exclusion could be the quintessential and paradigmatic form of social exclusion in the new order of ‘informational capitalism’ (Castells 1996). As our everyday work lives are increasingly entangled in activities and relations enabled by digital media, being digitally excluded is a new source of inequality as it can result in exclusion from relevant networks and social relations, jobs and leisure opportunities, and from informed contributions to the public debate. This contention can be further appreciated if it is borne in mind that digital means, or lack thereof, are shaped by, and at the same time, shape those relative capabilities and relative ‘functionings’ that determine social exclusion or inclusion on the whole (Sen 2000; Tschudin et al. 2012).

These general reflections on the overall importance of digital media bear evident relevance for the more specific situation of immigrants and individuals of immigrant descent, in whatever form one wants to look at them, be that as transnational communities, diasporas, or ethnic minorities. Digital media are both an instrument for undertaking the migration adventure and maintaining ties to the homeland and also a potential source of inclusion or exclusion in the host society. The participation of immigrant communities in the so-called ‘*Information Society*’ made it to the EU policy agenda in 2006 in Riga during the Ministerial Conference on digital inclusion. In the Riga Declaration among six policy priorities for the development of an inclusive Information Society, one proposed the promotion of cultural diversity in Europe by “*improving the possibilities for economic and social participation and integration, creativity and entrepreneurship of immigrants and minorities by stimulating their participation in the information society*”.¹

This policy interest led the European Commission to fund an exploratory research on access to, and use of, digital media by immigrants and ethnic communities.² This research analysed both policies and initiative in support of

¹Available at http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/events/ict_riga_2006/doc/declaration_riga.pdf, page 4, § 23 and § 24.

²The research was coordinated by the Institute for Prospective Technological Studies (IPTS)—one of the seven research institutes of the DG JRC of the European Commission—and was carried out by a research consortium where Codagnone was the scientific director and principal investigator and Maya-Jariego was the head of the Spanish research team. More detail on the background of the research and on the participating research institutions can be found in Codagnone and Kluzer (2011) and in Codagnone et al. (2009).

immigrants' use of digital media and the actual access to, and use of, such media at the 27 members of the European Union by June 2013 (EU27) and with some more in-depth exploration (including case studies) for France, Germany and Spain.

The principal focus in this paper is the relation between the access to, use and appropriation of, digital media and diasporas by revisiting one of the case studies of the previously mentioned EC funded research that clearly fits with the theme of this book. We consider, in fact, the particular case of Ecuadorians in Vera, a small city of 15,000 inhabitants situated in the Province of Almeria in Eastern Andalusia.

Case studies enable a rich and in-depth description of phenomena and, besides providing evidence, can enable theory building or refinement, or both. In order to uncover insights into more general theoretical issues, the approach adopted here is that of the instrumental case study, whereby a particular case focuses on certain delimited instances of the general phenomenon investigated.

The theoretical issues to be discussed through the prism of this selected case come from the literature on immigrations, transnationalism and diaspora, as well as from the more general sociological literature on social capital.

Digital media can be seen as amplifying and re-shaping existing patterns of media usage by immigrants who use them to manage transnational ties and mobility and this interconnection should be considered to be a radically new element of contemporary mobility (see Levitt et al. 2003). Digital media allow immigrants not only to make decisions and transnationally arrange all the main life events, such as weddings and funerals (Mazzucato et al. 2006), but also to deal with everyday life concerns of close relatives at home (Vancea and Boso 2015) (e.g. in migrant mothers, digital media have a significant impact on the process of diaspora identification and integration, checking school achievements and homework of their children in the origin country). High transnational and local mobility are enabled by digital media that, according to (Vertovec 2007), make it easier for potential migrants or recurrent migrants to find useful information and maintain social contact. Studies of diasporas show the increasing importance of imagination and virtuality in the definition of collective memberships that is evidently amplified by the functionalities of digital media (Brah 1996; Cohen 1997; Safran 1991). The sense of ethnic belonging is a fundamental factor in diasporas because it generates empathy and solidarity with co-ethnic members wherever they settle. The growth of online content and services in the homelands feed such needs. The structural features of the migration phenomenon (transnationalism, mobility, diasporas dynamic) matched with the new functionalities offered by digital media have led some scholars to talk of a transformed nature of immigration centred on the new figure of the 'connected' (Diminescu 2008) or 'interconnected' migrant (Ros 2010). Not surprisingly, and contrary to commonly held stereotypes, members of diasporas, when they have the access and use, are intensive users of digital media (see, for instance, Guiral and Le Corvec 2006). Digital media also play a role in the double challenge of forming and shaping new cultural and social identities that help them adapt to new societies and at the same time remain in contact with the homeland. This points in the direction of the relation between use and appropriation of digital media and two forms of social capital: bonding and bridging. Social capital can be

defined as “the ability of actors to secure benefits by virtue of membership in social networks and other social structure” (Portes 1998, p.6). In one sociological tradition, there is a clear ‘preference’ for the bridging type of social capital comprising ‘weak’ and instrumental ties, as opposed to strong ties heavily loaded culturally and socially with reciprocity (of obligations). According to Portes and Sensenbrenner (1993), for instance, it is not possible to see only the benefits of socially embedded behaviours, without considering its cost and risks. These are the potential negative facets of social capital such as in those cases of deviant organisations and close-knit communities that make coercive control over individuals. Strong ties with co-ethnics are a source of social support which can not only favour economic action but can also exert constraining influences reducing, thus, interaction with the host society and limiting integration. Bridging instrumental ties are well known to be a channel to get a job (Bayer et al. 2005; Borghans et al. 2006; Granovetter 1973) and digital media have been shown to effectively support this way of accessing the labour market (Zinnbauer 2007). On the other hand, there is another side of social capital that concerns the level of collaboration, trust and sense of identity that characterise a community as a whole (see Putnam 2000). In this respect the bonding relations that digital media may support with co-ethnics or with the homeland need not have only isolation effects but could actually help build a solid identity within diaspora communities enabling them to better bridge and integrate with the host societies. It is, thus, possible to go beyond the dichotomous view that digital media have either bonding or bridging effects.

It is precisely this hypothesis and the extent to which digital media have a radically different impact from that of traditional media on the process of the identification and integration of diasporas that are explored in this case study.

13.2 Data, and Context

The data sources for this case study come from ethnographic work conducted on Ecuadorians in Vera between 2003 and 2008 (Checa Olmos et al. 2007; Cruz 2007a, b; Maya-Jariego et al. 2009). This work was an integral part of the EC funded study for which the following instruments were used:

Participant observation. Direct observation at all locutorios (Internet Cafes) located in Vera (Eastern Andalusia) to determine which were frequented by Ecuadorians. The research then focussed on those locutorios, with both Internet and mobile phones services, which Ecuadorians used most, and which, it is worth noting, were often managed or owned by Ecuadorians. Subsequently, the three locutorios used most intensively were selected for close observation, and it is on the basis of this observation activity that the ethnographies for this case study were built.

In-depth interviews. In-depth Interviews were conducted with users of the locutorios (10) and owners or personnel (5).

Small survey. A survey of 60 teenagers at the Alyanub High School in Vera was carried out during computer lessons. The survey was conducted amongst all students, which allowed for the comparing of information about digital media use among Ecuadorians, Spaniards, and students from other nationalities.

Through the triangulating of the various sources of information (direct observation in locutorios; interviews with some users, owners and managers of these services; data from the survey among teenagers in Vera High School Alyanub), it was possible to identify certain patterns in the use of locutorios by Ecuadorians.

From previous research (Cruz 2007a), it is known that locutorios have an important role as spaces that provide access to telephone and Internet communication to immigrants residing in Vera. This case focuses, therefore, on locutorios as social spaces for the articulation of the local immigrant communities both as a channel for access to digital media and as de facto community centres. Thus, the main theme addressed here is that of locutorios as a site for community building and identity stabilisation. By focusing on these aspects, however, the case also enables the exploration of other issues such as: (a) bonding and bridging effects; and (b) patterns of digital media use and appropriation by Ecuadorians.

Ecuadorians are the largest group of Latin American residents in Spain and, according to official statistics, they are the third largest group of foreign nationals after Moroccans and Romanians, with 391,202 Ecuadorians possessing a residence permit as of March 2013. The Ecuadorian population is particularly interesting to study because of its speedy insertion into Spanish society and the Spanish labour market, with the ensuing problems of adapting to social situations and working conditions, which, notwithstanding, these immigrants have been gradually overcoming; as a result, they have become the largest group from Latin America to be granted resident status in Spain.

13.3 Descriptive Findings

The locutorios emerged in urban landscape of towns and cities in Spain at the same time as the arrival of immigrants. The key to locutorios is the combination of different products that reinforce each other to create, in many cases, an efficient service chain. In addition to telephone booths, they also usually offer mobile phone top ups, Internet facilities, photocopying, printing of documents, and so on. Many often offer the sale of ethnic products, such as food products and soft drink. Locutorios have seen a rapid growth in Spain, surpassing all expectations. In Vera, locutorios are social spaces for local immigrant communities and play an important role in access to, and use of, digital media. They are used by more than 50 different nationalities of residents in Vera. Most locutorios are concentrated in a central residential area of the town. In addition to locutorios, there are two other places where Ecuadorians access the Internet: the Guadalinfo classroom in Casa de la Cultura, where the access is restricted to people enrolled in courses in the centre, and the Ecuadorian Association Huancavilca del Amazonas (henceforth HUDEA),

where access is free but restricted to the discretion of the president of the association.

First, it was noted that locutorios are used by Ecuadorians for three broad objectives:

Functional. The most obvious reason for their presence at locutorios is to perform a number of activities such as accessing: (a) phones, computers, and the Internet; (b) sending money; (c) buying ethnic products and other items.

Instrumental. Ecuadorians find in locutorios important information on many issues: the walls of locutorios are full of ads about flats for rent, supply of and demand for, labour, as well as information on social and cultural activities ranging from workshops or courses offered in town to artistic exhibitions, restaurants and so forth.

Social. Interviews, direct observation and answers to the students' survey clearly show that locutorios are a space of community articulation, social interaction and identity construction. While in some instances the social interaction is incidental (users socialise and talk while waiting their turn), many also report that they go to locutorios to meet with friends and relatives. In some cases, incidental interactions lead to friendships that widen the social support networks in a new environment. In a survey conducted in 2003 (Cruz 2007a), for example, it was surprising that Ecuadorians often mentioned locutorios as a place of meeting with their friends or relatives or both. Moreover, they are places of propagating, directly or indirectly, the identity of Ecuadorians in Spain through the re-establishment of diverse symbols displayed in highly visible places, especially in those locutorios owned by Ecuadorians. These symbols fluctuate from national flags (tricolour), national shields, country maps and charts with images of varied landscapes and cities, to photos of Christ and the Virgin of local devotion. Ecuadorians share intense and widespread nostalgia for their country. Locutorios remain places of sharing with compatriots and, through this sharing, feelings of closeness to their country of origin deepen. Many also referred to the owner of a locutorio as a prominent person in the networks of trust and support of Ecuadorians (Cruz 2007a, b).

In addition to their practical and instrumental use, locutorios have a clear social role as meeting place for newcomers.

The call centre is a meeting point. While waiting, you talk to others who are waiting and talk about everything, about Ecuador, about here. Now there are no so many people waiting as before, because now many people have gone. Sometimes I'm just waiting here if I have nothing to do [...] In the locutorio most people use the Internet to communicate with family, so we meet with others here. [Woman, 33 years, 7 years in Spain, unemployed]

Second, both observation and interviews indicate that about 80% of Ecuadorians found in locutorios, either as users or as owners/personnel, are men. The reasons for this tendency are twofold.

Women have less time than men: because of the work they perform (in agriculture, domestic service, and children and elderly care); because they must care for their own children; and because they have to do the housework.

Mothers tend to allow teenage daughters to go to locutorios only when they have to consult the Internet for homework while they themselves do not like to hang out there because of the presence of ‘so many’ men. Some of the women interviewed reported that they preferred to go to the office of HUDEA.

It is a predominantly male environment:

I go to locutorios to use the Internet, especially two call centres [...] because they are more centrally located, they are calm and I like the service [...] I have noticed that there are more men who use the Internet, most are boys from Morocco and Ecuador. Also occasionally I have seen a Spanish boy, who is gypsy, using the Internet, but it is rare. There are other girls of Ecuador who use the Internet, but very few. [...] Sometimes my brother come with me, and I use half an hour the computer and he uses it another half, because my mom is concerned that I went alone [...] is that my mom has seen that there are almost always men on the Internet, and she is concerned and therefore sends me with my brother. [...] I usually ask the owner of the locutorio to give me some of the machines facing the wall, so people waiting in chairs do not see what pages I’m seeing. They are not forbidden webpages, but I do not like people to notice what webpages I visit. [Woman, 20 years old, one year living in Vera, brought by her mother, works in agriculture]

Third, the profile of the Ecuadorian users would appear to correspond to the following specifications.

Long time (more than five years of use) proficient users of Internet or computers, or both. There are relatively fewer of these among Ecuadorians as compared to Spaniards and other Latin American nationalities.

Beginners and learners, a condition that appears to characterise the majority of Ecuadorians. It is worth noting, for instance, that among students responding to the survey at IES Alyanub, 55% declare medium computer and Internet knowledge, as opposed to 23.3% who declare a basic and 16.7% a high knowledge, while all Ecuadorians students identify themselves as ‘basic users’, and none state having a high level of competences.

In a few years, both opportunities for access and digital skills in the community of Ecuadorians in Vera were increasing:

People who came to Vera from Ecuador are younger than elsewhere in Spain; the children of the people who came first, use more the internet, adults do not; adults more often make phone calls [...] There are now more people who know how to use computers. Internet is more accessible: there are more call centers and Internet is available in almost all; also many Ecuadoreans bought computers in recent years [...] friends teach them to use the Internet [...], some attend computer courses and learn. [Woman, 33 years, 7 years in Vera, in charge of locutorio]

Finally, it is important to stress that Ecuadorians, especially mothers, increasingly perceive the Internet as crucial for the education of their children. What is more, in this respect, the president of HUDEA explained, during interview, that there is increasing interest among Ecuadorians for learning and using computers and the Internet, as this is perceived as an ever-growing need in order to support children in their studies, to gain access to other jobs, to use it as a tool for finding work and for adapting to the new country. International migration usually involves the reorganisation of the family, and very often for Ecuadorian migrants children

are supervised in an everyday basis by grandmothers, whereas mothers use the media to maintain socialisation contacts (Herrera and Carrillo 2009).

Within the family group, remote communication not only facilitates the exchange of emotional support but fulfils some instrumental functions, for example in completing homework:

Women use more chat [...], parents and mothers use more the webcam to communicate with their children in Ecuador. So they can see each other and it's better than just talking on the phone. They get excited over. [Female, 34 years old, 8 years in Vera, works part time cleaning in a hotel and works in the locutorio as receptionist].

Some families have purchased computers to communicate with their children and support them in school activities at a distance. [President of Association of Ecuadorians, 54 years old, 8 years in Spain].

13.4 Discussion

For Ecuadorians in Vera, locutorios are as much an instrumental place to access and use digital media, as they are a de facto locus for community building and identity re-shaping and reinforcement. This occurs by both being in the physical place and using the digital media accessible. They are places where they meet co-ethnics, and where they feel at ease and where they sense an attitude of mutual trust because they are among their fellow citizens with whom they can talk without having to justify or use a variety of language that, although it has certain similarities, is different from their own; these are places where immigrants feel understood and can discuss experiences; and also places that have some elements that immigrants recognise as familiar and that remind them of their country and place of origin (from symbols to landscapes that decorate the walls or even the food or beverages that can be bought on locutorios). They provide access to contacting their relatives and friends in Ecuador and around the world, thereby extending and reinforcing ties of friendship and community belonging.

Locutorios also favour formal and informal channels of contact, and opportunities to get online news, and to watch sports competitions (particularly soccer matches), among other events from Ecuador. Locutorios offer to Ecuadorian youth easier access to Internet and the opportunity to pursue their own interests or a way to seek their own cultural reference, music being a case in point, as not a lot of Latin American music is played on Spanish radio stations. Ecuadorian young people and their friends listen to, or watch, predominantly Latino music videos on the Internet, influenced by Caribbean rhythm such as salsa, merengue, reggae ton, hip-hop and rap. On other hand, Ecuadorians over 30 prefer cumbia, tecnocumbia, rocola, bachata, vallenato. Through the Internet, locutorios allow young people who have recently arrived in Vera under the family reunification process to keep in contact with all their social networks in Ecuador, with whom they can have a permanent exchange of experiences. The relationship between Ecuadorians and Spanish

populations (or other nationalities) of Vera across locutorios is complex and constrained by the prevailing and hegemonic patterns of sociability. Thus, social relations in this small town are still determined by interaction between people of the same nationality. Ecuadorians prefer to use Websites and Internet resources to communicate with their own family and the country of origin, rather than to obtain information on the host country. Also adolescent Ecuadorians tend to look primarily at Latino Webs, showing, in this preference, a degree of social distance with the host society.

Although locutorios are marked by the use of symbols and elements that are reminiscent of values and customs from the country of origin, Ecuadorians who frequent them and using digital media are increasingly adopting forms of communication that correspond to uses in Spanish society. Some changes in social and cultural patterns are observed. Ecuadorians who use Internet tend to become more independent and also may socialise more easily. Among teenagers the traditional model of education, that reinforces a reserved mode of communication, is breaking down. As a result of their regular use of locutorios, young men seem to be less shy, and to have a greater inclination to communicate with strangers (as is the case with those known in chat or discussion forums on line). They also use locutorios to do some of their homework and to play and view photo Websites. A degree of relational integration was also noted during the research observations. People from different Ecuadorian cities and regions interact while waiting to use the telephone booth or the Internet. By the same token, it was observed that, over time, spontaneous and informal contact between Ecuadorians and people from other countries is also established. For example, it was documented in the field notes for this research that intercultural contact in the locutorios was resulting in friendships between Ecuadorians and people from countries as diverse as Bolivia, Ghana, Argentina, Senegal, Romania, Morocco and Brazil. More noticeably, the importance attributed by parents about the ability to use the Internet and the computer for educational purposes and for finding a job is a sign that Ecuadorian immigrants understand the role of digital media and have towards them the same kind of instrumental approach as the host society. Thus, the use of digital media at locutorios can also be regarded as a means for bridging social capital which may result in immigrants finding job opportunities and, for this reason, they are eager to acquire the necessary skills. Moreover, locutorios offer owners real possibilities to participate in the economy as entrepreneurs. It is possible for them to establish their own businesses given the high market demand of the significant number of Ecuadorian immigrants in Vera.

Compared to mobile phones and online communities, locutorios are *behaviour settings* for recent immigrants, where digital media usage and appropriation take place in the context of local interaction among individuals in an active process of acculturation and adaptation to the receiving country (Maya-Jariego 2012). Mobile phones are usually one of the first acquisitions of Ecuadorian immigrants when they arrive into Europe as they allow for the easy location of individuals when they are moving from one city to another; they also facilitate changing jobs and moving apartment. Mobile phones are portable personal devices, which fit particularly well in a situation of geographical mobility and are used by the whole population for

interpersonal interaction. In contrast, locutorios establish a community context in a fixed place, where mainly recent migrants meet when communicating with family and friends in their home country (Ramírez 2010). Locutorios usually have, therefore, an ethnically segmented clientele and offer local opportunities for networking with peers, as well as the kind of socialisation with co-ethnics and mutual exchange of support that is required to cope with the stress of acculturation and adaptation to the new country.

Online forums and social networking sites are also a common space of interaction among immigrants. Online groups are relational communities, which are very flexible in the way they define the goals, members and modalities of interaction. For instance, they may take the form of “Ecuadorians in the world”, “Ecuadorians in Spain” or just a group of second generation Ecuadorians in Europe. Online communities involve the use of digital media by definition. They usually grow through a mechanism of preferential attachment where the individuals that are better connected tend to attract new contacts. In fact, just a few very active members may be enough to articulate the online interaction, empower participants and contribute to the development of a sense of community. Unlike online communities, Internet cafes are constituted from local clusters of relationships. Proximity adds to the communication needs related to mobility resulting in Internet shops, where interaction is more constrained for geographical reasons. Therefore locutorios are contexts for the learning of digital technologies particularly relevant at the local level, where a significant part of users shares both national origin and co-residence in the same town. Perhaps the most characteristic elements of locutorios are precisely that the process of technology appropriation takes place in the context of informal relationships between mainly recent immigrant countrymen.

The frequenting of locutorios is linked to the early stages of migration. For this reason they are key places for reaching out to other recent migrants. When settlement progresses, people tend to use their own lines, individualise the use of the Internet and other digital media, and in general become more like the host population in their digital practices. Booths and online communities provide temporary support in a moment where contacting with others under similar circumstances is especially relevant for psychological adaptation (Maya-Jariego and Armitage 2007). Later, the need for resources to connect with the host community will become increasingly more pressing and necessary.

Participation in communities of recent immigrants contributes to subjective well-being of newcomers and has an indirect impact on the quality of life of local people. The practices of sociability that were recorded in the locutorios of Vera, both through face-to-face interaction and remotely, show how the protagonists build ways of communication that help to cope with the contexts of exclusion and inequality, given the “accumulation of social disadvantages” that often characterises migrant populations (Zanfrini 2007). Both face-to-face and remote contacts that occur in these social spaces contribute significantly to improve the quality of life of Ecuadorian migrants, by providing means to strengthen their interpersonal relationships, which are an important component of welfare and quality of life

(Fernández-López et al. 2010; Urzúa and Caqueo-Urizar 2012). It is hoped that these forms of cohesion can benefit the city as a whole.

In contexts such as Vera, where the interactions between Spanish and Ecuadorians (and other nationalities) are mostly confined to work (Cruz 2007a, b), call centres serve to reinforce various types of personal contact (Huertas Bailén 2012) and open new ones in the process of insertion and/or adaptation of migrants to the town, which is also promoting a greater social and emotional well-being. Going to locutorios gives them a new space of interaction that is not tied to work, providing areas of empathy, where the conversation constitutes a form of enjoyment and leisure.

13.5 Conclusions

The results of this case study have indicated that locutorios are a good example of the interaction between digital media and social capital and seem to support two conclusions: (a) that bonding and bridging effects are not incompatible; and (b) that the impact of digital media in the life of diasporas, though in amplified fashion, is not different from that which traditional media had in the past.

The social interaction at the locutorios and through the media available there fosters social inclusion and social cohesion, articulating the immigrant community. While some processes of isolation from the host society have been documented, incipient processes of cultural hybridation were also observed, as well as an increasing focus on skills for instrumental purposes of a bridging type such as improving performances at schools and finding better jobs. People very often access the Internet to look for jobs. They feel that they are opening up new avenues and personal itineraries to find alternative employment. Self-efficacy and self-confidence seem to be key factors in this process. The cases of successfully finding a job are shared with others, expanding the experience through the network. In this way, personal empowerment experiences end up being a resource also for the entire community.

The juxtaposition between the bonding and bridging effects of media suffers from the classical interpretation of migrants as affected by a 'twofold absence': absence from home, but also absence of proper integration in the destination country. This overlooks the fact that the modalities of connection allow for a continuous co-presence, which is amplified and made faster by digital media. Immigrants use media for both bridging and bonding purposes. The two processes of bridging and bonding may turn out to be intertwined, as a person could be occupied with bridging and bonding at the same time. In other cases, bonding with the home country may be more important than bridging with the new country, with this possibly changing at different stages in the migrant's life.

Finally, if we look at the history of migration, it is evident that the effects seen for digital media are not so different from those that the ethnic press had before the advent of the Internet. The ethnic press played a dual role: first it helped by keeping

the migrants informed about life back in their home countries and by perpetuating a sense of belonging. At the same time, the ethnic press played an integrating role in the new communities since it provided information to migrants about the new context. The ethnic press, while nourishing a sense of belonging and preserving visibility of co-nationals among members of the receiving society, also encouraged acceptance of the characteristics of the host society. The same seems to be happening with digital media as suggested from this ethnographic study of Ecuadorians in Vera.

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Chapter 14

Quality of Life of Community-Dwelling Older Adults in Spain

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Abstract Population aging is growing and, consequently, has attracted great interest in knowledge on the promotion of health and quality of life (QoL) in old age. In this context, a multidisciplinary team designed the CadeViMa Study, a cross-sectional study to assess the QoL of community-dwelling older people and to identify its associated factors. It incorporated a representative sample of 1106 people aged 60 years or older in Spain. QoL was assessed by means of a generic instrument for measuring health-related QoL (HRQoL), the EQ-5D, and a global QoL rating scale, the Personal Well-Being Index (PWI). The survey also gathered information on the sociodemographic, health-related, psychosocial, financial, and contextual characteristics of the participants. Results indicated that QoL of community-dwelling older adults was influenced by age, health status, loneliness, social support and disability. People aged 78 years or more reported a significantly lower QoL (PWI) than younger counterparts did. Logistic regression models showed that some chronic health conditions, such as osteoarticular or mental health disorders, and disability have a great impact on HRQoL and global QoL. Perceived loneliness and social support strongly influenced global QoL. Loneliness, in turn, was negatively associated to residential satisfaction. We also found that a high sense of coherence, a concept related to successful aging, is also associated to better QoL in old age. These results reflect the importance of the functional, social, mental, and contextual dimensions in the QoL of community-dwelling older adults, and may help to set the priorities of interventions addressed to preserve their QoL.

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Keywords Community dwelling · Older people · Quality of life · Disability · Health status

14.1 Introduction

Older adults are a growing segment of population worldwide. Although it represents a success for humanity, aging also has profound implications for societies. Many people can experience their aged years in good health, but many others can suffer from limitations or decline in physical and mental capacities. Most of the health problems of older age are the result of chronic diseases, which can be prevented or delayed by engaging in healthy behaviors or palliated by supportive environments (World Health Organization 2015). Older people must also deal with vital events, such as leaving the job market, the death of relatives or friends and changes in familial and societal roles. In recent years, there has been a growing interest in the concept active aging. The World Health Organization defines active aging as the process of optimizing opportunities for health, participation, security, and lifelong learning in order to enhance quality of life as people age (Faber 2015; World Health Organization 2002). In turn, quality of life (QoL) is the individual's perception of their position in life in the context of the culture and value system where they live, and in relation to their goals, expectations, standards, and concerns (WHOQOL 1995). As people age, their QoL is largely determined by their ability to maintain autonomy and independence. In this context, measuring QoL and achieving a better understanding of factors that influence QoL in older adults are of vital importance.

QoL in older age is commonly measured using the same instruments than in the rest of population. Some generic rating scales, such as the Personal Well-Being Index (PWI) (International Well-being Group 2006), for global QoL, and the EQ-5D (EuroQol Group 1990), or the SF-36 (Ware and Sherbourne 1992) for health-related QoL, have been widely used in studies of QoL in elderly population. However, some characteristics of aging such as the appearance of age-related diseases, physical and mental decline and adverse vital events, raise the question if questionnaires that have been developed in younger adult populations can be used equally validly for older populations (Power et al. 2005). Some issues, such as the format and the type of administration and the specific domains of QoL included in the scales, make necessary to apply specific tools for older people, or at least, to use them as a complement of the generic ones. Some specific QoL measures for older people have been developed in the recent years and have proved reliable and valid for this population. These QoL scales are the World Health Organization Quality of Life questionnaire version for older people (WHOQOL-OLD) (Power et al. 2005), with versions in several languages, the Older People's QoL Questionnaire (OPQOL) (Bowling 2009), with a shorter version (Bowling et al. 2013), and the CASP-19 (Hyde et al. 2003). In a study comparing these three measures, authors concluded that all of them showed good psychometric properties but the OPQOL

has a potential value in the outcome assessment of health and social interventions (Bowling and Stenner 2011).

Models of QoL in old age agree in the multidimensional composition of the construct, with domains related to physical, psychological, and social spheres (Netuveli and Blane 2008). Studies differ in the specific weights of the components and the relationship between them. Older people generally rate their QoL in positive terms, with circumstances such as having good health, engaging in social contacts with family and friends, carrying out meaningful activities, having independence and a good financial situation, and living in an accessible and friendly environment being the most relevant contributors to a good QoL (Bowling and Gabriel 2004; Netuveli and Blane 2008). QoL has been found to be better in older people than in younger people, a result consistently reported by several studies that has led to some authors to propose explanations such as the homeostatic theory of well-being (Cummins et al. 2003) or the role of psychological processes such as adaptation, resilience, and social comparison in the maintenance of satisfactory QoL (Baltes and Mayer 1999; Beaumont and Kenealy 2004).

In Spain, like other countries, older people are a growing segment of the population. More than 20% of Spanish population is aged 60 years or older and it is estimated that it will increase to more than 30% by 2025 (World Health Organization 2002). Most of them live in their own homes, with only 2.8% living in institutions, despite the fact that more than a half of people with any disability is older than 65 years old (National Institute of Statistics, INE 2009). Remaining in the current home as one ages is the preferred housing option for most elderly people, despite the presence of barriers (e.g., stairs, low maintenance, lack of accessibility, etc.) in their surrounding environment. The “Aging in Place” strategy sets as a priority that elderly people, including those in need of care and support should, wherever possible, be enabled to continue living in their own homes (OECD 1994). Studies have found that “aging in place” is a critical element of QoL in older adults (Horner and Boldy 2008), but there is a need of knowledge on the sociodemographic, clinical, social, and contextual variables that contributes to QoL in people that age in place.

In this chapter, we present results of a Spanish study that provide information about the determinants and associated factors of QoL in older adults, including health and cognition, functional status, as well as psychosocial and contextual aspects. Results provide important information to develop strategies that will help to maintain and improve the QoL of community-dwelling older adults.

14.2 The CadeViMa-Spain Study

In 2008, the cross-sectional study “Quality of life in Older adults in Spain” (*Calidad de vida en mayores en España, CadeViMa-Spain*) was designed to obtain information on the determinants of global QoL in community-dwelling older adults living in Spain and to offer recommendations and suggestions which may help to

define social and health policies aimed at providing good QoL in Spanish older adults (Fernandez-Mayoralas et al. 2012). The study was approved by the Institutional Review Board of Carlos III Institute of Health.

For this study, a nationally representative sample of 1106 adults, aged 60 years or more, was selected from the total population in Spain according to the official population figures from the National Institute of Statistics and using a proportional multistage stratified sampling. The inclusion criteria were: men and women, aged 60 years or older, community-dwelling, who gave informed consent to participate and who were able to answer the survey questions. Subjects scoring more than four in the Short Portable Mental Status Questionnaire (SPMSQ) (Pfeiffer 1975), a brief screening tool for cognitive impairment, were deemed as not able to understand and answer the survey. Those subjects were replaced by others from the same sampling stratum. Sociodemographic characteristics of the final sample are displayed in Table 14.1.

The survey was designed as a home-based questionnaire and conducted via face-to-face semi-structured interview. QoL was assessed with a global QoL measure, the PWI (International Well-being Group 2006), and a health-related QoL (HRQoL) questionnaire, the EQ-5D (EuroQol Group 1990). The PWI measures subjective well-being with seven items related to QoL domains. It is scored on an 11-point Likert-type scale, from 0 (completely dissatisfied) to 10 (completely satisfied), with a neutral score of 5 (neither satisfied nor dissatisfied). The sum of scores is transformed into a percentage of the maximum possible score, ranging from 0 to 100. The PWI has also an additional item on satisfaction with life as a

Table 14.1 Sociodemographic characteristics of the sample

Variable	N	%
Sex: female	623	56.3
<i>Marital status</i>		
–Single	75	6.8
–Married	645	58.5
–Divorced	38	3.4
–Widowed	345	31.3
<i>Education level</i>		
–No education/incomplete primary	349	31.6
–Primary	432	39.1
–High school	253	22.9
–University	71	6.4
<i>Employment</i>		
–Working	89	8.1
–Retired	569	51.5
–Pensioner	94	8.5
–Housewife	220	19.9
–Other	132	12.0

whole. The scale has been translated and validated for older population, with an adequate internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.88$) (Forjaz et al. 2012; Rodriguez-Blazquez et al. 2011). The EQ-5D is a generic measure for QoL and health status. It has a descriptive part, with five questions on difficulties in activities of daily living, mobility, self-care, pain/discomfort and anxiety/depression, scored from 1 (no problems) to 3 (severe problems). Scores are then converted into a single index (EQ-index) using an algorithm, with a range from 0 (death) to 1 (perfect health), with scores below 0 representing health states worse than death. The second part is a visual analogue scale (EQ-VAS) on the current health status, ranging from 0 (worst imaginable health state) to 100 (best imaginable health state). The EQ-5D has a validated Spanish version with normative values for Spanish population (Badia et al. 1999). The participants were also asked to nominate and rank the five aspects they considered to contribute most to their QoL.

In addition to QoL scales, the CadeViMa-Spain study applied several assessment measures for gathering data on health, functional status, psychological functioning, family and social networks, economic and work situation, leisure, residential environment, and satisfaction, which will be presented in the corresponding section (Table 14.2). In this chapter, we will review the main findings related to the QoL and associated variables of community-dwelling older adults in the framework of the CadeViMa-Spain study.

Table 14.2 Variables and measures in the CadeViMa study

Variables	Measure	References
1. Sociodemographic characteristics	Sex, age, marital status, education, employment	
2. Quality of life	EQ-5D index	The EuroQol Group (1990)
	Personal Well-Being Index	International Well-being Group (2006)
3. Health status	Chronic conditions checklist	
	EQ-5D visual analogue scale	The EuroQol Group (1990)
	HADS-D	Zigmond and Snaith (1983)
4. Cognition	SPMSQ	Pfeiffer (1975)
5. Functional status	Barthel index	Barthel and Mahoney (1965)
	Functional Independence Scale	Martínez-Martín et al. (2009)
6. Psychosocial aspects	SOC scale	Lundberg and Peck (1995)
	6-item Loneliness Scale	De Jong-Gierveld and Tilburg (2006)
	DUFFS	Broadhead et al. (1988)
7. Contextual factors	Community Well-Being Index	Forjaz et al. (2011)

HADS-D Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale—depression subscale; *SPMSQ* Short Portable Mental Status Questionnaire; *SOC* sense of coherence; *DUFFS* Duke-UNC Functional Social Support Scale

14.3 Health Status and Cognition

Health status is a well-known determinant of QoL in general population and in older people (Bowling et al. 2002; Michalos et al. 2000). However, many older adults report a satisfactory QoL despite having severe health problems and there is a process of adaptation to the consequences of having poor health that modulates the contribution of health to QoL (Netuveli and Blane 2008). Cognitive functioning is also relevant for QoL: meta-cognitive processes are important components in the appraisal of QoL, and judgment on person's own well-being requires insight, self-perception, and understanding of personal circumstances (Kiely 2014). Losses in specific cognitive domains impact on global functioning and QoL in different ways (Mitchell et al. 2010).

In this study, health status was assessed by means of the EQ-VAS and an item on self-perceived health status ranging from 1 (very bad) to 5 (very good). A scale on comorbidity was also applied, adapted from the Cumulative Illness Rating Scale for Geriatrics (Miller et al. 1992). This scale asked about the presence of 20 self-reported chronic medical conditions and the treatment or aid received for each reported condition. The survey included the subscale of depression of the Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HADS-D) (Zigmond and Snaith 1983), a brief self-reported measure to screen possible depression in nonpsychiatric patients. It has seven items rated on a Likert-type scale from 0 (no problems) to 3 (severe problems). Scores 8 to 10 represent possible cases and 11 or more are indicative of depression. The HADS-D has a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.85 (Fernandez-Mayoralas et al. 2012). As previously commented, the SPMSQ was administered to ascertain cognitive deficits in the participants. This screening instrument contains 10 questions on cognitive functioning (orientation, remote memory and concentration). A cutoff of ≥ 4 errors was set for cognitive deficit or probable dementia.

The subjects of the sample, composed with 56.3% of women and a mean age of 72.1 years (standard deviation, SD = 7.8) (Table 14.1), presented a mean of 3.3 (SD = 2.5, range = 0–15) chronic conditions, with the most prevalent being bone and joint problems (53.3%) and arterial hypertension (39.9%) and visual problems (29.0%) (Delgado-Sanz et al. 2011; Martinez-Martin et al. 2012). Multimorbidity (two or more chronic medical conditions) was present in 74.7% of the sample. The EQ-VAS mean score was 66.2 (SD = 20.9), significantly below the normative value in Spanish general population (Badia et al. 1999). QoL scales mean scores were 0.83 (SD = 0.25) for EQ-5D index and 71.03 (SD = 13.5) for PWI. Table 14.3 displays the descriptive statistics of the applied measures.

Health was the most frequently reported by participants when asked about the important domains for their global QoL, and was mentioned in the first position by more than a half of respondents (Fernandez-Mayoralas et al. 2012; Martinez-Martin et al. 2012). The most important and consistent health status determinant was depression (HADS-D), showing a negative influence both in general QoL (PWI) and HRQoL (EQ-5D index) (Delgado-Sanz et al. 2011; Martinez-Martin

Table 14.3 Descriptive statistics of the applied rating scales

Scales	Mean	SD	Range
<i>Quality of life</i>			
–Personal Well-Being Index	71.03	13.5	15.7–100
–EQ-5D index	0.83	0.25	–0.65–1.0
<i>Health and cognition</i>			
–EQ-5D VAS	66.16	2.88	0–100
–Self-perceived health status	3.67	0.76	1–5
–Comorbidity	3.29	2.48	0–15
–HADS-D	4.92	4.30	0–21
–SPMSQ	0.6	1.0	0–4
<i>Functional status</i>			
–Barthel Index	95.82	11.05	0–100
–Functional Independence Scale	64.39	7.59	17–69
<i>Psychosocial aspects</i>			
–Sense of coherence (SOC) scale	2.30	1.28	0–6
–DUFSS	44.95	9.00	11–55
–Loneliness scale	1.92	0.93	0–6
<i>Contextual factors (CWI)</i>			
–Community services	48.21	10.32	0–100
–Community attachment	50.64	14.35	0–100
–Physical and social environment	50.52	13.96	0–100

SD standard deviation; *VAS* visual analogue scale; *HADS-D* Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale, subscale Depression; *SPMSQ* Short Portable Mental Status Questionnaire; *DUFSS* Duke-UNC Functional Social Support Scale; *CWI* Community Well-Being Index

et al. 2012; Rodriguez-Blazquez et al. 2012). Depression was strongly associated to all EQ-5D domains, particularly to activities of daily living and anxiety/depression (Delgado-Sanz et al. 2011). Therefore, interventions to maintain or enhance QoL of community-dwelling older adults should pay close attention to screening and treating for depression. This can be done through a medical approach, by prescribing medication or psychological treatment, as well as using a psychosocial focus, with environmental modification and promotion of social interactions and healthy life style.

Other health variables were also associated to QoL. People with poorer perception of health status (EQ-VAS), with more chronic conditions or with cognitive impairment scored worse in the EQ-5D index or in the PWI (León-Salas et al. 2015a, b; Martinez-Martin et al. 2012). For PWI, the same relationship was found with the EQ-VAS in a subsample of 234 community-dwelling older adults (Rodriguez-Blazquez et al. 2012). The chronic conditions that most impaired HRQoL, as measured by the EQ-5D index, were arthrosis/arthritis, sleep problems and diabetes (Delgado-Sanz et al. 2011). Older adults with these health problems are a vulnerable group that needs special attention.

In our study, health status and health-related variables (depression, comorbidity) appear as relevant determinants of both QoL and HRQoL in older population. This is congruent with previous studies that highlight the key role that health plays in the multidimensional model of QoL (Bowling et al. 2002). Addressing health problems such as depression or specific chronic conditions must be one of the priorities for care policies in old age.

14.4 Functional Status and Disability

According to the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health, ICF (World Health Organization 2001), disability is conceptualized as a deficit in any of three domains: body functions and structure, activities and participation, and the negative result of the “dynamic interaction between a person’s health condition, environmental and personal factors”. As people age, progressive reduction in the ability to perform activities of daily living occurs, but the presence of chronic medical conditions may lead older adults to disability, dependence and lower QoL. Functional status and disability have been deemed as an important determinant of QoL in most studies (Palgi et al. 2015) although the presence of disability per se does not cause low QoL (Albrecht and Devlieger 1999).

In our survey, functional status and disability was assessed with two scales: the Barthel Index (Mahoney and Barthel 1965) and the Functional Independence Scale, FIS (Martínez-Martín et al. 2009). The Barthel Index is the most commonly used instrument for assessing difficulties in activities of daily living. It is composed by 10 items, with a total score range from 0 (completely dependent) to 100 (completely independent). Cutoff points have been set for the degree of dependence. The Barthel Index has a satisfactory internal consistency (Cronbach’s alpha = 0.84) (Fernandez-Mayoralas et al. 2012). The FIS is a tool specifically designed to assess the degree of functional independence in community-dwelling older adults. It contains items on self-care, domestic tasks and mobility inside and outside, with three response categories: can do it without help, needs help to do it, and cannot do it and needs someone to do it. Higher scores indicate greater functional independence. Internal consistency of the FIS resulted adequate (Cronbach’s alpha = 0.89) (Fernandez-Mayoralas et al. 2012).

In the sample, 837 subjects (77.9%) had no disability and only 31 individuals (2.8%) reported severe or very severe disability, as measured with the Barthel index. According to the FIS, 22.6% of respondents needed help with a least one activity. Descriptive statistics of both scales are in Table 14.1. Functional status was strongly associated with HRQoL (EQ-5D index), but not with global QoL (PWI) (Fernandez-Mayoralas et al. 2012; León-Salas et al. 2015a, b; Martínez-Martín et al. 2012; Rodríguez-Blázquez et al. 2012), as seen in previous

studies (Borowiak and Kostka 2004). In a subsample study of 705 adults aged 65 years or older with at least two chronic medical conditions, disability was associated to suffering from mental health and osteoarticular problems, and was one of the main determinants of low HRQoL (Table 14.4) (Forjaz et al. 2015). This study suggested that it is necessary the identification of older people with chronic diseases more likely associated to increased disability and lower QoL. In general, efforts devoted to improve the functional status of older people or to implement measures that compensate the loss of functional capacity in old age would allow increasing their QoL.

Table 14.4 Regression models of quality of life and health status rating scales

Dependent variables	R ²	Independent variables	Odds ratio/standardized beta	95% CI/ <i>p</i> -value
EQ-5D index*	0.23**	Age	1.07	1.04, 1.11
		Sex (men)	1.45	0.98, 2.13
		Disability	2.47	1.47, 4.14
		Asthma	2.36	1.31, 4.23
		Mental health disorders	4.27	2.37, 7.68
		Osteoarticular	5.10	3.42, 7.58
EQ-5D VAS ^a	0.20	(Constant)	(11.94)	<0.001
		HADS-D	-0.26	<0.001
		Barthel index	0.19	<0.001
		Loneliness scale	-0.12	0.013
		Sex	-0.14	0.025
		PWI ^a	0.34	(Constant)
HADS-D	-0.32			<0.001
EQ-VAS	0.24			<0.001
Loneliness scale	-0.19			<0.001
Interaction age institutionalization	-0.14			0.001

*Logistic regression model with a subsample of 705 subjects

**R² Nagelkerke

^aMultivariate linear regression model

Only significant associations are displayed

VAS Visual analogue scale; *PWI* Personal Well-Being Index; *HADS-D* Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale, subscale Depression

14.5 Psychosocial Aspects

One of the main components of QoL, of special relevance for older adults, is related to psychosocial aspects. In fact, most QoL measures include dimensions such as psychological or emotional well-being, as well social functioning. In addition, a more in-depth knowledge of psychosocial aspects may be obtained using questionnaires aimed at measuring specific psychosocial concepts, such as sense of coherence, which is a personal factor, loneliness and social support, more related to social networks. The CadeVima study included measures of these three constructs.

Sense of coherence (SOC) refers to the degree to which a person views the world as meaningful, comprehensible and manageable, and it is positively related to health and QoL (Eriksson and Lindström 2006, 2007). SOC is viewed as a buffer against poor health, and individuals with a high SOC are resilient to the negative effects of mental (Geyer 1997) and physical health (Virués-Ortega et al. 2007), including impaired functional status (Kahana et al. 2012). The CadeViMa study participants were asked to complete the Spanish, 3-item short SOC version (Lundberg and Peck 1995), where higher scores indicate a lower SOC. Scores are computed for the total scale (0–6), as well as for three subscales: manageability, meaningfulness, and comprehensibility. The SOC scale had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.44, which is related to the low number and heterogeneity of items that form this short version (Fernandez-Mayoralas et al. 2012) and may lead to underestimate the associations between SOC scale and the rest of variables.

According to the results from the CadeViMa, the Spanish population of older adults presents relatively low SOC scores, indicating a good SOC, especially in the meaningfulness scale (mean = 0.69, SD = 0.63) (Table 14.1). SOC was different according to sociodemographic characteristics. Thus, a significant lower SOC was reported by women, widowed people, those with a lower education level and a higher age. Lower SOC was also significantly associated with difficulty in all QoL dimensions, as measured by the EQ-5D, as well as moderate/severe disability (Giglio et al. 2015). When controlling for other factors in a multiple regression model, the most important determinants of SOC were global QoL (PWI, $\beta = -0.32$) and depression (HADS, $\beta = 0.26$), followed by education level ($\beta = -0.06$). These results should be taken into account when developing interventions aiming at facilitating coping in older age. Psychosocial interventions focusing on personal factors might consider the individuals' functional status, mental health aspects, their global QoL, as well as be tailored to the educational level of the participants. Further studies, especially with a longitudinal design, are needed to elucidate the causal relationship between SOC and health factors. Most probably, this relationship is dynamic and circular.

Loneliness is a feeling experienced when the social network is insufficient, either in a qualitative or quantitative way (de Jong-Gierveld 1987). The Spanish version of the 6-item Loneliness Scale presents adequate psychometric properties (Cronbach's alpha = 0.77), and offers results in a 0–6 scale where higher scores indicate greater loneliness (Ayala et al. 2012; de Jong-Gierveld and Tilburg 2006).

Older adults in Spain report relatively low loneliness feelings in this scale (mean = 1.9, SD = 1.8), which might be related by cultural factors such as strong family ties and importance given to leisure activities in old age (Martinez-Martin et al. 2012) (Table 14.1). Higher feelings of loneliness were significantly associated with being older, living alone or without a partner, having a greater disability, and presenting lower QoL (PWI, $r = -0.43$), more depression (HADS, $r = 0.46$) and lower social support ($r = -0.59$) (Ayala et al. 2012). In addition, loneliness was also affected by the context where people live. Indeed, results from structural equation modeling suggest that a better residential satisfaction determines a positive sense of belonging, which, in turn, leads to lower feelings of loneliness (Prieto-Flores et al. 2011).

Social support may be measured as the extent to which the social needs are satisfied through interaction with others. The Duke-UNC Functional Social Support Scale (DUFFS), satisfactorily validated in older adults in Spain (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.94$), is formed by 11 items, leading to a total social support score (higher scores mean higher social support) (Ayala et al. 2012; Broadhead et al. 1988). Community-dwelling older adults report an intermediate level of social support, with a mean value of 44.95 (SD = 9.00, range = 11–55) (Ayala et al. 2012) (Table 14.1). The item that represents the most confidential support is receiving advice from others, and the least support is talking about personal and family problems. Concerning affective support, the item that represents the strongest support is receiving more help at home, while the weakest support is receiving help when sick in bed. Older people who reported a higher social support also referred having a better QoL (PWI, $r = 0.40$), lower depression (HADS, $r = -0.40$), and lower loneliness feelings ($r = -0.53$). In addition, emotional social support was significantly and positively related to frequency of contacts with relatives ($\beta = 0.27$), coping ability ($\beta = 0.19$), number of friends ($\beta = 0.13$), health status satisfaction ($\beta = 0.15$) and having a spouse or partner ($\beta = 0.11$) (Ahmed-Mohamed et al. 2013). These results underlie the importance of social networks and its beneficial effect on health outcomes.

A similar study to the CadeViMa, the Ageing in Spain Longitudinal Study, Pilot Survey (ELES-PS), also allowed analyzing the psychosocial determinants of global QoL, in comparison with others (Rodríguez Laso et al. 2013). Participants from the ELES-PS study indicate that global QoL (PWI) was partly explained by sociodemographic and economic resources, psychosocial, health and functioning, family and social networks, leisure and residential environment (Rojo-Perez et al. 2012). Although the contribution of each of these factors varied according to the specific QoL dimension, depression was one of the most consistent and stronger determinants. These results are consistent with and supported by the ones previously reported, using data from the CadeViMa study.

Other psychosocial factors are directly related to the sociodemographic characteristics and the role (activity or work status) the person plays (Pino et al. 2014; Pino-Domínguez et al. 2016). Although no QoL differences are observed by work status, when controlling for other factors, significant differences emerge when looking at health status. Thus, homemakers (100% women in our sample) have

a lower health status than other groups. This might be due to the fact that homemakers never retire from their work at home, making them more vulnerable to health problems. Specific interventions are called for this group.

14.6 Contextual Factors

The QoL of older adults is influenced by the contextual and residential factors. Aging in place refers to the ability to live in one's home and community in a safe, independent and comfort way. Most of older adults prefer to remain at their usual homes (Rojo-Pérez et al. 2007), but health deterioration and change of life and support conditions may lead to institutionalization or placement in a residential long term care facility.

When comparing community-dwelling older adults with those living in residential care settings, some differences and similarities emerge (Rodríguez-Blázquez et al. 2012). First, initial differences in health status (EQ-VAS) between these two groups disappear when controlling for age. In addition, age has a greater effect in the global QoL of older adults living at their homes than in institutionalized older adults. This might be due to the fact that the institution may compensate for loss of functional ability, independence and social network, and thus provide a supportive environment. When looking at HRQoL dimensions, community-dwelling older adults present less difficulties in mobility, self-care and usual activities, but more anxiety/depression than those institutionalized (León-Salas et al. 2015a, b).

Furthermore, sense of belonging has a similar role, mediating the relationship between loneliness and residential satisfaction, independently if older adults live in the community or in residential facilities (Prieto-Flores et al. 2011). Efforts should be made to enhance and preserve social relationships and attachment to the residential environment, since this helps to prevent feelings of loneliness.

We have studied the importance of residential context on QoL variables by looking at two different situations: living at home or in a residential care setting. However, it is also important to look at a broader context: the neighborhood or local community environment, as well as geographical differences.

The Community Well-Being Index asks about the satisfaction with 10 aspects of the local place of residence, grouped into three 0–100 scales: community services, community attachment, and social environment (Forjaz et al. 2011). It has been validated using Rasch analysis, with good results (internal consistency, measured with the person separation index, PSI = 0.82–0.85) (Forjaz et al. 2011). Older adults participating in the CadeViMa study in Spain had been living in the same neighborhood for the past 50 (SD = 22.57) years and reported a lower level of well-being in the dimension community services (mean = 48.21, SD = 10.32) than in rest of dimensions (Giraldez-García et al. 2012) (Table 14.1). Results from a multivariate regression show that at least two local community indicators were associated with health outcomes such as self-perceived health, functional independence, depression, and comorbidity. Satisfaction with community services was

the most consistent contextual determinant of all health outcomes, being positively associated with health status and functional independence (odds ratio, OR = 1.26 and 1.24, respectively), and negatively associated to depression and comorbidity (OR = 0.68 and 0.74, respectively). Local community environment, especially community services, plays an important role in health.

The individuals' perception of their health status is affected by regional inequalities in Spain (Fernandez-Martinez et al. 2012). Older adults living in the south of Spain reported a more negative health status than those living in other regions, while those living in the Madrid region reported the highest self-rated health. In addition, a significant socioeconomic gradient was observed for income, but it was nonsignificant for education level. Other studies have reported a relationship between geographic deprivation and QoL in older adults in London (Chandola et al. 2007), or between poorer health status and lower income neighborhoods in Brazil (Cremonese et al. 2010).

14.7 Concluding Remarks and Future Directions

With the objective of increasing our knowledge on overall QoL in community-dwelling older people from a multidimensional approach, the CadeViMa-Spain study gathered information on a wide range of objective and subjective variables, using standardized measures and a nationally representative sample. Increased chronological age, or life years per se, do not lead to a lower QoL, but it is instead associated to combination of health problems and depression, disability, and dependence, loneliness and lack of social support, poor psychological resources, and regional and community inequalities. In view of these results, some conclusions and recommendations can be drawn.

QoL in older age must be assessed with validated instruments that include the relevant components of the construct for older people. Global and health-related QoL rating scales provide complementary information, useful for a multidisciplinary approach. Identifying vulnerable groups of older people living in community with multimorbidity, specific chronic diseases or depression must be a priority for health and social services, who may implement the adequate care programs to preserve a satisfactory independence level and improve the QoL of this population.

Within the context of declining health and functioning with aging, promoting active aging, with programs addressed to engage in family and social networks, leisure activities, eliminating physical and social barriers to aging in residential environments and social participation, would also allow older people to maintain their level of QoL. The desire of older adults of aging at home must be adequately supported by social and health services, with comprehensive care programs and staff trained in detecting unmet needs.

Further studies must include longitudinal surveys to analyze the effect of QoL in other indicators such as institutionalization and mortality. More research is also

needed to compare specific groups of older people such as those living in nursing homes and to study cross-cultural and ethnic differences in QoL and its determinants.

Acknowledgements The CadeViMa-Spain study was supported by the Spanish Ministry of Science & Innovation (ref: SEJ2006-15122-C007GEOG).

The members of the Spanish Group on Quality of Life and Ageing are:

Pablo Martínez-Martin, Maria João Forjaz and Carmen Rodríguez-Blázquez at Carlos III Institute of Health; Gloria Fernández-Mayoralas and Fermina Rojo-Perez, at the Spanish National Research Council; María Eugenia Prieto-Flores, at National University of Distance Education (UNED); and Belen Frades-Payo at CIEN Foundation-Reina Sofia Foundation.

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