

Literature Review

Perception of psychological wellbeing and perceived social support in older adults in Chile

Abstract

Today there is an era of demographic transition, some researchers, such as,¹ indicate that this increase on a global scale emerged after the Second World War, product of policies to increase the number of population decimated after the war that was in force. In European countries and in the United States. This increase in birth rate was known as “baby boom”. In Chile there was a similar “boom”, since the first population count was made (in 1813), the population has increased from 800 thousand inhabitants to 17 million inhabitants in 2010 (INE, 2010). This increase is explained by the beginning of the expansion and consolidation of the public health system in the 1940s, with which the infant mortality rates were reduced, reaching its highest point in the 1960s and then reduced to these days (National Library of Chile, 2016).

Keywords: psychological, adults, perception, life cycle, physical states, ability, age

Volume 3 Issue 3 - 2018

Percy Alvarez Cabrera L, Juan Pablo Lagos Lazcano, Yibrán Urtubia Medina A

Faculty of Social Sciences and Communications, Santo Tomás Arica University, Chile

Correspondence: Percy Alvarez Cabrera L, Head of Psychology, School of Psychology, Faculty of Social Sciences and Communications, Santo Tomás Arica University, Chile, Tel 56-58-2578423, Email percyalvarez@santotomas.cl

Received: May 03, 2018 | **Published:** May 23, 2018

Introduction

Unlike other places in the world, such as the United Kingdom, it is estimated that the population over 60 years old would double in an estimated time of 45 years (from 7% to 14%).² In Latin America and the Caribbean there has been an alarming aging of the population due to “the low fertility and the increase in the life expectancy of the population that have occurred in the last four decades of the last century” (ECLAC, 2014). In this context, Chile presents a progressive and accelerated change in its population pyramid; is the third oldest country in Latin America, where the group of 60 years or more that in the year 2001 was 10.6% will increase to 19% in the year 2025, with a life expectancy that will reach 80 years.³

Something that causes concern, regarding this aging population, is the welfare state in the elderly, as Krzemien et al.,⁴ say. The last years of life are known to be difficult for the elderly, because they are characterized by losses, threats and adaptation to new psychosocial and physical states; these events can limit life in quantitative and qualitative terms.

When talking about the elderly, we talk about a more advanced stage of personal development and development, which due to its special characteristics deserves to be treated with the utmost care, but for many of its components, it often becomes a stage of marginalization and abandonment.⁵ It is also possible to classify the members of the third age as all those who go through the process of old age, which according to Marín⁶ can be understood as a universal, individual process that is part of the life cycle, where there is a set of morphological, functional and psychological changes produced by the passage of time.

Regarding studies of psychological well-being, these focus on the personal development of individuals, on the style and manner of facing vital challenges and on the effort and eagerness to achieve goals⁷ (Muratori, Zubieta, Ubillos, González & Bobowik, 2015). They emphasize the process and the achievement of those values that make individuals feel alive and authentic, which makes them grow as individuals and individuals and not so much the activities that provide pleasure or move away from pain (Muratori et al., 2015).

Ryff^{7,8} is one of the most important authors in the study of

Psychological Wellbeing, in 1989 she reviewed the most important authors who had talked about this concept: Allport,⁹ Erikson,¹⁰ Jung,¹¹ Maslow,¹² Neugarten,¹³ Rogers,¹⁴ after which he exposed the common points in all the theoretical conceptions surrounding psychological well-being and established that these theoretical convergences are the core dimensions for the development of an alternative model, these 6 dimensions are: Self-acceptance (the ability of feeling good with one, even being aware of one's limitations). Positive relationships (The ability to maintain stable and reliable social relationships that serve as sources of well-being and health), Autonomy (The ability to maintain individuality in different social contexts, have self-determination, be independent and have their authority, Ryff & Keyes,¹⁵ cited in Díaz et al.,¹⁶) as well as better resist social pressure and better self-regulate behavior,¹⁷ cited in.¹⁶ Domain of the Environment (the personal ability to choose or create favorable environments to satisfy one's own desires and needs), Purpose in life [The ability to define objectives that endow life with meaning) and Personal Growth (the effort to develop their potential, to continue to grow as a person and lead to maximum capacity.^{15,16}]^{7,8,16} Well-being is influenced by different factors, such as the exercise,¹⁸ the ability to adapt to a new culture,¹⁹ the sense of community,²⁰ quality of life,²¹ age, gender and marital status. But undoubtedly an important predictor of well-being is the subjective evaluation that the individual makes of his/her resources, among which is the perceived social support.²²

Diener et al.,²³ cited in Novoa²⁴ conceive perceived social support as a reflection of the valuation that subjects make to their own lives. They also add that to have a real approximation to this, it is necessary to consider the components that constitute it: positive and negative affect, general satisfaction with life and satisfaction domain.

According to Escobar, social support is the functional element of social relations, i.e. the interaction within the social network, which operates on well-being through this structure, an idea that is reinforced in the research of Figueroa et al.,²⁵ when they indicate that social relationships play a fundamental role in life satisfaction of the elderly, by promoting well-being, prevention of emotional disturbances such as depression and physical nature such as chronic diseases. Esquivas²⁶ indicates that it is positively related to the quality of life.

Around the scores of social support perceived in a sample of older

adults in Spain and their relationship with psychological well-being. From Juanas et al.,²⁷ they point out that older people who do not go out with other people are less likely to talk to others about their problems, are less distracted than they want and receive less praise and obtain lower scores on all of the dimensions of psychological well-being. The same authors²⁷ state that, as expected, interpersonal relationships act on psychological well-being in a positive way, as reflected in the studies by Ferguson et al.^{27,28}

Despite the theory and research that indicate that the psychological well-being and perceived social support of older adults is lower compared to other age ranges and, in general, that well-being scores are low in this period of life²⁹ Other researchers have found that the participation or occupation in activities can improve both the psychological well-being and the perceived social support, this is clear with a group of university students of the third age who after attending 6 months to a program University of São Paulo (Brazil), they increased their welfare indexes.³⁰ In Chile,³¹ a group of senior volunteers from the “Senior Advisors” program of SENAMA region of Bío-Bío, obtained higher rates of well-being compared to a group of non-volunteer adults who use CEFAM San Pedro, from the Commune of San Pedro de la Paz. In Spain, Guillén & Angulo³² investigated the effects of exercise on psychological well-being and positive personality traits, concluding that, in effect, older adults who perform constant exercises have more psychological well-being than those who did not, likewise, Perez Aldeguer³³ found in their studies that those older adults who were amateur choristers had greater psychological well-being than those members of the elderly who did not participate in a choir. In Singapore, a 2-year follow-up to more than 1500 older adults (of which 12% were in jobs or businesses, 10% volunteered, and 78% did not do any activity). They continued to work and those who participated in volunteering had better scores in cognitive tests, fewer depressive symptoms and better levels of mental well-being and satisfaction than non-voluntary older adults.³⁴

Discussion

Frequent activity in late adulthood allows the development of all those dimensions that in an integrated manner make up what Ryff (1998a, b) conceived as Psychological Wellbeing: The continuation of activities of daily life allows older people to be independent and to do Respect their authority (Autonomy), you can also see the power to choose their environment to meet their needs when they decide to go to work or even work after retirement (Domain of Environment), Within the institutions where activities and work environments are carried out people tend to consecrate stable social relationships and friendships are generated (positive relationships), which together with the continuous development in intellectual and emotional activities make these adults continue to grow (Personal Growth), On the other hand, the older person who stays active accepts their physical deficiencies and generates strategies to face them (Self-acceptance) which shows that there are still goals in life, even with the passage of age (purpose in Life), this connection between a high psychological well-being and the activities is seen in the results of Guillén & Angulo's³⁵ research and Pérez-Aldeguer,³³ when in their research they found that exercise and participation in chorus, respectively, is positively related to psychological well-being.^{36,37}

Acknowledgements

None.

Conflict of interest

Author declares there is no conflict of interest.

References

1. Felitti K. The population explosion and family planning under debate. Institutions, discussions and proposals of the center and the periphery. *School history magazine*. 2008;7(2).
2. Kinsella K, Velkoff VA. *An Aging World: Government printing office*. Washington DC;2001.
3. Sanhueza M, Castro M. Adultos mayores funcionales: Un nuevo concepto en salud. *Ciencias y enfermería*. 2005;11(2):17–21.
4. Krzemien D, Urquijo S, Monchiatti A. Social Learning Strategies of Coping with the Critical Events of Female Aging. *Psicothema*. 2004;16(3):350–356.
5. Mendizabal M. Psycho-social characteristics of the elderly. *Social pedagogy magazine*. 1992;7:167–178.
6. Marin JM. Public health education. 2003;3(1):28–33.
7. Ryff C. Happiness is everything, or is it? Explorations on the Meaning of Psychological Well-Being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. 1989;57(6):1069–1081.
8. Ryff C. Beyond Ponce de Leon and life satisfaction: New directions in quest aging. *International Journal of Behavioral Development*. 1989;12(1):35–55.
9. Allport H. Factor analysis and AIC. *Psychometrika*. 1987;52(3):317–332.
10. Erikson EH. Identity and the Life Cycle. *New York: International Universities Press*. 1959.171pp.
11. Jung CG. *Modern man in search of soul*: Harcourt, Brace and World. New York;1933.
12. Maslow AH. *Toward a Psychology of Being*: Van Norstand. New York;1968.
13. Neugraten BL. The awareness of middle age. In: Neugarten BL (Ed.), *Middle age and aging*: University of Chicago press. Chicago; 1968:93–98.
14. Rogers CR. *On becoming a Person*: Houghton Mifflin. Boston;1961.
15. Ryff C, Keyes C. The structure of psychological well-being revisited. *J Pers Soc Psychol*. 1995;69:719–727.
16. Diaz D, Rodriguez Carvajal R, Blanco A, et al. Spanish adaptation of Ryff's psychological well-being scale. *Psicothema*. 2006;18(3): 572–577.
17. Ryff C, Singer B. From social structure to biology. En C. Snyder & A. López (eds.), *Handbook of Positive Psychology Londres*: Oxford University Press. 2002; 541–554.
18. Oliva A, Mendizabal M, Asencio E. Analysis of psychological well-being, perceived health status and quality of life in older adults. *Social pedagogy*. 2013;22:153–168.
19. Genkova A, Trickett EJ, Birman D, et al. Acculturation and adjustment of elderly émigrés from the former Soviet Union: A life domains perspective. *Psychosocial Intervention*. 2014;23(2):83–93.
20. Cueto RM, Espinosa A, Guillén H, et al. Sense of community as a source of well-being in socially vulnerable populations of Lima, Peru. *Psykhé*. 2016;25(1):1–18.
21. Cuadra Peralta A, Medina E, Salazar K. Relationship of psychological

- well-being, social support, state of physical and mental health with quality of life in older adults of the city of Arica. *Limit*. 2016;11(35):56–67.
22. Vivaldi F, Barra E. Bienestar Psicológico, Apoyo Social Percibido y Percepción de Salud en Adultos Mayores. *Terapia psicológica*. 2012;30(2):23–29.
 23. Diener E, Napa C, Lucas R E. The evolving concept of subjective well-being: The multifaceted nature of happiness. *Advances in Cell Aging and Gerontology*. 2003;15:187–219.
 24. Novoa C, Barra E. Influence of perceived social support and personality factors on the life satisfaction of university students. *Psychological therapy*. 2015;33(3):239–245.
 25. Figueroa L, Soto D, Santos N. Quality of life and perceived social support in older adults. *Medical Sciences of Pinar del Rio*. 2016;20(1):47–53.
 26. Esquivas V. Quality of life and social support perceived during old age. 2015.
 27. De Juanas A, Mendizabal M, Navarro E. Analysis of psychological well-being, perceived health status and quality of life in older adults. *Social pedagogy Reivsta Interuniversitaria*. 2013;22:153–158.
 28. Ferguson S, Goodwin A. Optimism and Well-Being in Older Adults: The Mediating Role of Social Support and Perceived Control. *Int J Aging Hum Dev*. 2010;71(1):43–68.
 29. Vargas S, Paez D, Oyandel JC, et al. Bienestar en regiones extremas de Chile: Comparación de la satisfacción vital entre Magallanes, Arica y Parinacota y el resto del país. *Magallania*. 2016;44(2):159–169.
 30. Ordonez T, Lima Silva T, Cachioni M. Subjective and psychological well-being of students of a University of the Third Age. *Dement Neuropsychol*. 2011;5(3):216–225.
 31. Ferrada L, Zavala M. Psychological well-being: Active Older Adults through Volunteering. *Science and nursing*. 2014;20(1):123–130.
 32. Cueto RM, Espinosa A, Guillen H, et al. Sense of community as a source of well-being in socially vulnerable populations of Lima, Peru. *Psykhé*. 2016;25(1):1–18.
 33. Perez Aldegue S. Los efectos del canto coral sobre el bienestar psicológico en adultos mayores. *Revista Argentina de clinica psicologica*. 2014;23(3):199–208.
 34. Swingel A, Niti M, Tang C, et al. Continued work employment and volunteerism and mental well-being of older adults: Singapore longitudinal ageing studies. *Age ageing*. 2009;38(5):531–537.
 35. Guillen F, Angulo J. Analysis of positive personality traits and psychological well-being in older people practicing physical exercise vs. non-practicing. *Ibero-American Journal of Exercise and Sports Psychology*. 2016;11(1):113–122.
 36. National Institute of Statistics. *Evolution of the population of Chile in the last 200 years*. Santiago de Chile: INE. 2010.
 37. National Library of Chile. *Development and dynamics of the population in the 20th century*. Santiago de Chile: Chilean Memory; 2016.