

Views, conflicts, and confluence on rural well-being: A qualitative study on a community in Valparaíso

Miradas, conflictos y convergencias sobre bienestar rural: Un estudio cualitativo en una comunidad de Valparaíso

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ABSTRACT

The criteria and indicators that define rurality are currently under wide debate, uncovering the insufficiencies behind the urban-rural dichotomy. Phenomena such as globalization, migration, and the economic production reorientation seen in rural territories to sectors other than agriculture are of high interest for Social Sciences. In order to contribute elements for reflection during the design of rural development public policy, the qualitative study presented here will attempt to comprehend the relationship between rural community dwellers' views and that of policy makers and executors with territory and sector influence in that same locale. Experience with rurality, relationship with nature, social support, and perspectives from the community organization in the territory appear as analytical axes for the identification of differences between the involved social actors regarding the needs related to social and environmental well-being. Community psychological processes are a feature of rural communities' social dynamics, standing as a critical space for dialog between territory and public policy.

Keywords: community psychological processes, public policy, ruralities, well-being

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RESUMEN

Los criterios e indicadores que definen la ruralidad son actualmente objeto de un amplio debate que pone de manifiesto las insuficiencias de la dicotomía urbano-rural. Fenómenos como la globalización, la migración y la reorientación económica productiva que se observa en los territorios rurales hacia sectores distintos al agrícola son de alto interés para las ciencias sociales. Con el fin de aportar elementos de reflexión en el diseño de políticas públicas de desarrollo rural, este estudio cualitativo busca comprender la relación entre la visión de los habitantes de las comunidades rurales y aquella de los responsables y ejecutores de políticas con influencia en el territorio y en el sector en esa misma localidad. La experiencia con la ruralidad, la relación con la naturaleza, el apoyo social y las perspectivas de la organización comunitaria en el territorio aparecen como ejes analíticos para la identificación de las diferencias entre los actores sociales involucrados respecto a las necesidades relacionadas con el bienestar social y ambiental. Los procesos psicológicos comunitarios son una característica de la dinámica social de las comunidades rurales, erigiéndose como un espacio crítico de diálogo entre el territorio y las políticas públicas.

Palabras clave: bienestar, políticas públicas, procesos psicológicos comunitarios, ruralidades



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Rural territories have been mostly defined from an urban-centric view (Landini, 2015), one that hegemonizes discourses asserted by the elites. These discourses describe rural lifestyles, worldviews, and other related habits as expressions of a deeply-rooted attachment to the land and to the use of natural resources, added to the idea that these spaces' inhabitants, compared to their urban counterparts, enjoy pleasantly idyllic yet culturally backward lives (Gaudin, 2019).

This view is currently under challenge due to a series of phenomena, such as globalization, migration flows, and the economic production reorientation seen in rural territories to sectors other than agriculture, like tourism, industry, and environmental services, among others (Hembuz, 2018), which highlights the diversification seen in the rural world (Hidalgo & León, 2021). Even though this discussion is still inconclusive, several authors share new views on rurality that serve as a starting point to overcome the urban-rural dichotomy (Berardo, 2019; Camarero & Oliva, 2019; Rojas, 2020). Depending on the relationship established between its residential and productive uses, several new territorial avenues have emerged, which are subjects of discussion for new, different sorts of typology, such as: peri-urban or ru-rurban spaces, counter-urbanization processes, or neo rurality, just to mention a few examples (Berardo, 2019).

Adding to the above, there is also the case of frontier-crossing urban processes, carrying their growth to new areas, restructuring such spaces through neoliberal dynamics, where the housing sector plays a major role (Bojórquez, 2022). This phenomenon, known as gentrification, where higher- and middle-class strata migrate and settle places traditionally occupied by middle and lower-class strata, who consequently become excluded, also takes place in rurality (Molina, 2020). Here, the overabundance of households in a territory unprepared to receive this sort of urbanization strains territorial sustainability (Jiménez & Campesino, 2018).

Rural-space gentrification is linked to migration phenomena, particularly from the urban core to locations where the landscape and the wilderness take central stage (Phillips, 2020). The search for a lifestyle change incentivizes certain urban-born groups to form part of traditionally-rural communities, with the potential consequence of bringing psycho-social conflicts and friction and the emergence of new psychological-community processes in the territory (MacAdoo et al., 2019; Monreal et al., 2021).

This way, the socio-political historical conditions that structure ruralities on a community level are linked to a migration of collective practices, social texture degradation, preponderance of individual over group interests, and a feeling of lack of control over the environment (Espinosa et al., 2016). Conversely, livelihood instability has an impact on the modes of subjectivation and the mental well-being of rural context dwellers (Dimenstein et al., 2019).

Both the current phenomena faced by rural territory communities and the cumulative harm inflicted by colonization (Tieken & Wright, 2021), compounded to identity and cultural changes and idiosyncrasies experienced by rural environment dwellers (Aguirre-Pastén et al., 2017), remain as a challenge for social sciences and demand a theoretical interpretation (Rojas, 2020).

The current conceptual limits on the subject lead to further limits in rural development policy efficiency (Gaudin, 2019). For this reason, Chilean-based research conducted by Urquieta, Salinas and Labraña (2021) point out that public policy design and implementation show a lack of observation, coordination, and range of offer, which severely hamper their transformative nature. In fact, the strategies to attack rural inequality that are executed partially or completely unsuccessful by public policy end up in private hands, becoming the source of new forms of inequality (Camarero & Oliva, 2019).

Thus, it is pertinent to consider new approaches and strategies that are better suited to address the territories' specific demands, ones that deal with the rising vulnerability of rural populations and that lend themselves to a development model that is currently under reform, looking towards the notion of a good life (Dantas et al., 2018; Hembuz, 2018).

Roberti and Mussi's (2014) analysis on links between psychology's theoretical or instrumental reference and the processes involved in rural development programs reveals that a significant part of the phenomena that these programs attempt to engage with are understood and executed through psychological concepts and tools. Therefore, the current situation confirms the existence of a set of problems that require an articulation between psychology and rurality (Conti et al., 2020).

All of this becomes increasingly relevant considering Chile has recently started a rural development policy implementation that, following a territorial rationale, attempts to engage four dimensions: social well-being, economic opportunities, environmental sustainability, and culture and identity (Ministerio del Interior y Seguridad Pública, 2020). A recent study on this policy conducted by Bergamini and Rasse (2022) underscores the importance of problematizing the perspective on territory and rural development, as "there are conflicting views on which development model can better provide an improvement in quality of life and well-being" (p. 16).

In order to understand the relationship between rural community dwellers' views and that of policy makers and executors that have influence in rural territories, this article proposes a study that analytically engages the perspectives and needs seen in rural territory. Based on the question on how do views of people that are part of a community relate to the ones held by public policy decision makers and executors on the subject of rural territory needs, we aim to provide an understanding of the experience of inhabiting a rural location and its community and psycho-social dynamics, to analyze the initiative decision making or execution processes, and to delve into the perspectives on well-being held in rural contexts.

We hope to contribute elements for the configuration of a comprehensive model, which will allow us to identify the visions of all different actors, considering the disagreements about the design proposed by said policies, power relations and disputes regarding their meanings in the domain of rural development public policy implementation.

Method

In order to reach the proposed objectives, we opted for a descriptive-comprehensive qualitative methodological design (Ibáñez, 1979), which allows the rising of subjective phenomena and provides the opportunity to develop knowledge regarding complex phenomena, as well as regarding social dynamics that act as a framework for their emergence (Flick, 2004).

It is necessary to describing the subjective phenomenon of the experience of living in a rural setting or of acting as part of institutions that have direct impact on rurality, and developing a comprehensive analysis of this intersubjectivity that is to be carried out through a process of transversal codification based on grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) and through hermeneutical analysis, as proposed by Ricoeur (2011) on the matter of interpretation of dynamic and dialogical discourse in different individual instances linked to the phenomenon.

Participants

Participant selection was effectuated through intentional and convenience sampling (Patton, 1990), representing the diverse range of actors that are part of the studied phenomenon. On the one hand, there was participation from members from a rural community located in the Chilean central region coast, Valparaíso region, both traditional locale inhabitants and people that have dwelt in the area five years or less, in order to consider the growing urban-rural migration experienced in the area (Urbe, 2020). On the other hand, local and national level program and policy makers and executors, which were contacted through key informants, creating a recruiting process through a "snow ball" technique (Strauss & Corbin, 2002).

Nine members of the community were contacted: five original (two women, 55 and 68 years old; three men, 56, 65 and 73 years old) and four migrant inhabitants (a woman, 57; and three men, 61, 64, and 72

years old). The study includes five policy or social program decision makers or executors (two women, 35 and 40 years old; three men, 37, 45, and 52 years old) holding technical or political positions on a local or national level for territorial and sector domains (agriculture, healthcare, and environment).

Data production

During the data production stage, semi-structured interviews and participant observation was carried out between the years 2019 and 2022. Due to COVID-19 pandemic-related circumstances, there was a hiatus on fieldwork, which was resumed by the end of 2021.

Interviews were conducted through a script specifically designed to engage views and needs related to rurality, such as the experience of inhabiting a rural location, community dynamics, initiative decision making or execution, and perspectives on well-being on a rural context.

Participant observation was carried out in community instances, such as local community committee meetings, a community-organized town hall-type meeting, and a locale neighborhood meeting requested by the local authorities for inquiring about the update of land planning regulations. This technique was developed with the intention of attaining a better understanding of the context and the studied phenomenon (Kawulich, 2005), and it was supported by a field notebook that registered meeting circumstances, dialog contents, and performed activities.

Data analysis

In this research we adopted a phenomenological focus, one that enables an approach towards subjective experiences, which are understood as significations put forward by the participant (Finlay, 2014). Interpretation and data analysis were undertaken following both a hermeneutical logic of discourse and an inductive and transversal logic of discourse. The former considers storytelling by the interviewees on the topic of their lives amidst the community or their experiences with institutions (Ricoeur, 2001). The latter involves the creation of transversal analytical dimensions built up over the results of emergent contents that are obtained from a hermeneutic logic, which are analyzed by the procedures proposed by Grounded Theory through open, axial, and selective codification, with the objective to propose a comprehensive model based on relational analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 2002).

On the basis of the above, four analytical dimensions emerged: experience with rurality, relationship with nature, perspective on social support, and views on the territory community organization, all of which are to be described in the results section.

To better illustrate the results of the analysis, selections of the interviews are provided. The keyword OC is used to refer to the original community, MC for migrant community, and P for policy or program decision-makers or executors. This is followed by gender keywords: F for female and M for male. Lastly, the age of the interviewee is included.

Ethical considerations

This research was characterized by persistent ethical reflection and deliberation on the research topic and its participants. Thus, these considerations are present in diverse aspects of the research. The study's process data production rigor and quality were protected through constant reflection by the research team. Regarding the research design, there was a constant focus put on the participant materialized through an informed consent letter, which stated a voluntary, informed, and consented participation, gives detailed background information on the research, safeguards anonymity, and confidentiality of data produced through diverse research instances. It should be pointed out that the informed consent also states that, once the analysis reaches its end stage, instances or methods of returning results to participants will be provided.

Results

The community under study inhabits a rural locale founded in the 17th century. While most of the current inhabitants are families that obtained their land through the farming reform that took place at the end of the 20th century, the last eight years has seen an increase of urban-rural migrant population.

The findings of our analysis will be organized following four thematic lines: (i) experiences with rurality, (ii) relationship with nature, (iii) perspectives on social support, and (iv) views of the territory community organization. Each line reveals, on the one hand, perspectives from the original community (OC), migrant community (MC) and, on the other, views from public policy makers and executors (P). Below we discuss the findings for each of these thematic lines, followed by integrated results derived from relational analysis.

Experience with rurality

The community understands rural territory as an essential aspect on their life trajectory. Their inhabitants relate their identity to this act of countryside inhabiting and express a sense of discomfort and rejection towards the possibility of leaving behind the rural territory life for highly urbanized cities such as Santiago. "I'm not going to return to Santiago, ever. Well, that's because I'm now a farmer, a real farmer" (MC, M, 72). This illustrates that, for the community, the experience of living in rural territory is deeply rooted in their identity, both for traditional and migrant inhabitants.

Thus, for the community, territory appears as an important memory, the vivid remembrance of local experiences leaves an indelible mark in their lives. On this point, the value of inherited teachings is emphatically underscored, particularly among the traditional inhabitants. These are the stories experienced in the territory, transmitted through folk wisdom: "I went to the school in El Convento, and I got a lot from it, but my grandfather's teachings were more useful to me. Those teachings are really valuable" (OC, M, 65).

Additionally, there can be seen demonstrations of pride of living in a rural area, which makes life in the territory a unique and different experience: "There's so much here, singing birds, pleasant wind, and this warmth. I'm proud here" (MC, F, 57). For the community, one of the different experiences that rurality provides is an increased sense of freedom, which derives in an appreciation for everything that the territory and its people have brought to their lives: "you know, it's good for you to have these memories, knowing what life gives you, because you get to experience many things in life (...) and you should be able to share them with following generations" (OC, F, 68).

On the other hand, the experience of rurality shown by public policy makers and executors is more of an external representation of how rural life is lived. The colonial rationale underlying the history of the locale and its community is stressed, illustrating how strongly marked poverty is in Chilean rural contexts: "people in the countryside are probably used to self-exploitation, to having been exploited by a landowner, this is historical heritage here, in the central region countryside" (P, M, 37).

In the past, this space was understood from a rural labor perspective, where crops and harvests were prioritized over the satisfaction of needs of a different order, such as education, housing quality, road paving, among others. In this same line of thought, the 'military dictatorship' is mentioned, which is recognized as imposing an extractivist approach to the land, with intensive exploitation of its resources: "then, the dictatorship happened and I think it really brought down part of that work, so the focus was put in exportation (...), but that also had a negative effect on a large proportion of the farmers" (P, F, 40).

Policy execution reflects a change in the development paradigm, with a preference for reflexive perspectives on new ways of inhabiting the rural territory, which describe a transition towards what is understood as a lifestyle improvement, contrasting with how, in the past, this was mostly considered as an urban feature.

The thing is that everything is influenced by new ways of inhabiting and by a transition that the upper-classes

have made, yesteryear from Recoleta to Providencia, then to Providencia to Las Condes, from Las Condes to Vitacura, and, lastly, to Puerto Varas, which has had an impact on conurbation¹ (P, M, 45)

Considering this, policy makers and executors also ponder about how rurality is understood in contrast with urbanity. They point out that the perception of value of rural territories has increased, as they become desirable for groups that aim to detach themselves from the heavy urbanization associated to cities. That said, they also indicate the presence is scarcity in rural areas, as they are geographically distant from urban cores. In addition, there is a critique of the classification of urbanity and rurality, which they see as a simplistic, dichotomous differentiation that does not adequately represent the intertwining shown in the territories inhabited by numerous people. So, there are areas that cannot be properly classified as rural from a classic conceptualization, as those places show urbanized ways of life, but in a significantly larger territory:

They don't plant nor raise livestock in their house. It clashes with a rural reality, they have cars designed for paved streets, they don't have tractors nor horses. That is to say, it's all about nature. You don't get to see this rural way of life in these new plots. You see very urbanized housing, with urban customs (P, M, 52)

This leads to the conclusion that meaningful elements to understand rurality and urbanity in the country have changed through time.

Policy makers and executors also identify a series of needs that reflect their experience of rurality. One example of these are the obstacles that have to be navigated in order to access services because of significant distances present in this sort of territory, which are felt in access to education, healthcare, jobs, housing, among others. This is interpreted as rural locales facing abandonment by the State, which means that efforts should be focused towards boosting attention on the needs of this territory and reducing inequality resulting from living in these areas. Rural inhabitants are seen as having ready access to local, municipal instances, as opposed to State-level authorities.

Hence, it is necessary for State agents to establish a presence in the rural territory, so they can directly engage with the services not currently being provided. Lastly, public policy makers and executors underscore the need to rebuild rural culture, which they perceive as undermined, as this might increase well-being. The following statement reflects this feeling: "people are sad (...) for the cultural deprivation that's present here, we need to recover cultural aspects of this place, so people can have symbolic resources for building well-being" (P, F, 35).

Relationship with nature

The community underscores a variety of elements regarding their relationship with nature. On the matter of positive aspects, both the receiving community and the migrants consider the rural area ambient as a source of serenity and respite in their lives, as the territory holds a landscape that encourages introspection, to the point that this is even considered a form of therapy. The importance of maintaining a responsible relationship with nature is also highlighted, "in the countryside you have the duty, in my opinion, to hold a conscious relationship with the environment. This means helping back nature, in a way, for everything it gives you" (OC, F, 55). In this way, rurality appeals to its inhabitants in a unique way, through the area's flora and fauna, providing an understanding to the internal dynamics within. It specifically underscores the traditional inhabitants' intimate knowledge of their dwelling's environment:

They have a keen understanding of the location of their grazing livestock; and their houses, their homes, aren't here, but ten, fifteen kilometers away. They can read the weather adeptly, as they are very knowledgeable of their environment, and that's a very important sort of wealth (MC, M, 61)

¹ The quote describes how upper-classes progressively remove themselves from the capital city center to increasingly self-isolated areas that are still close to the capital commercial core, with the last, abrupt displacement being one hundreds of miles away from the capital (TN).

Regardless of this, some negative aspects of the relationship with nature are also stressed. In this sense, the participants indicate that the arrival of new people and industries to the territory has been detrimental for the relationship with the immediate local environment, particularly regarding water and wildlife. This reveals concerns on the prioritization of industrial crops over nature stewardship and the well-being of the local inhabitants.

Simultaneously, public policy makers and executors present a more scholarly-minded approach towards this subject. They state that there is a difference between what is understood as relating with nature and having environmental awareness. The latter implies a perspective where the environment is understood as a range of resources that allows subsistence; the implications of this rationale could lead to a sustainability risk. This shows the need of a theoretical framing of bonding with nature considering a permanent interaction between human and nature itself. Adding to this, the importance of agroecology is presented in the context of relating to nature in rural contexts, where the traditional farmer family is considered a relevant actor in order to improve environmental stewardship. Nevertheless, it is necessary to provide education on this subject before it becomes a viable option in the territory: "I believe that agroecology might be an excellent tool for traditional farmer families, yet there is a vast number of myths and unawareness regarding technologies among civil servants and rural communities" (P, M, 37).

Policy decision makers and executors also elaborate on how they perceive the relationship of people with nature in the rural territories. They draw attention towards how communities value nature considering a life-long history in the territory. In that sense, a higher awareness of the environmental conditions is implicit in inhabiting a rural area. Yet, on a more unfavorable note, they remark that the rural territory has lost its traditional, generational-inherited countryside culture. A deracinated rurality appears. One in which certain customs fade away; there is less contact with traditional, nature-based labor; and less attachment to land. For example, families no longer grow their own food. Considering this, a desire appears for re-enchanting the community with the countryside, striving to promote programs related to sustainability and health factors that lead to a healthy life and self-sustainability farming.

The intense social-environmental crisis is decried by executors and decision makers and the community alike. Particularly, the polluted or saturated zones not only have a deleterious effect on the territory, "they also have created a second-class citizenship" (P, F, 35). Consequently, the crisis has created sacrificial zones beyond those that are commonly referred to in that way, evidenced by an increase in wildfires and droughts in the area, the source of significant harm for the inhabitants, revealing tensions between them and businesses, farmers, and among themselves. There is significant uncertainty regarding the future, which is aggravated by the absence of government control, and a complete lack of spaces for the communities to express their concerns about environmentally protected areas:

The poultry, the pork (industries) in this zone have affected the waterways, on how they use them and what and what they return later to the riverbed [...] there's friction there. There's a great deal of concern on how these are basically issues of civility, [...] once, there was enough water for everyone, and now not everyone can dig a well, because that big business has the (water) titles here, so there's some friction in that regard (OC, M, 56)

The rising rural urbanization also adds to the friction and issues, according to the policy makers and executors. In their view, this process has had a pernicious impact on the territory's wildlife. For example, the population and housing increase has, consequently, meant a decline in indigenous wildlife in the area.

Perspectives on social support

Reciprocity bonds developed in the territory are connected to the concept of social support held by the community. This reflects the need of building trust-based relationships between neighbors, relationships that aim to facilitate sharing opportunities, whether it be regarding sustenance or involvement in community organizations. Then, social support appears through acts of reciprocity between community inhabitants, such as sharing food, water, or endorsing their introduction to any of the various

organization instances. In the territory, social support becomes more evident during crisis, being fund-raising campaigns a frequent expression of that.

We are doing lotas² in order to help people in the community, people that need this help. For example, in case of setbacks or illness, we do some fund-raising, we play a lota. That's what we have been doing lately, at least (OC, M, 73)

That said, the community has experienced the undermining of reciprocity bonds that are a feature of rural territory despite of this social support during crisis times. This situation is partially explained by the rise of conflicts between receiving and migrant inhabitants. There is a feeling among the receiving community that the newcomers intend to usurp the territory, be that through imposing views on community well-being or increasing opportunities of insecurity (though burglary) among others.

Attempts to explain this undermining of bonds suggest that this is caused by cultural shock between lifelong rural dwellers and those coming from urban areas. In this regard, the receiving community feels that their customs are disrespected and that they themselves are underestimated due to their belonging to a rural space, conceptualized as a space of destitution and backwardness. They also consider that issues with community bonding arise from the migrant population's expectations of urbanizing the territory, which causes friction in community organizations. In short, the community reciprocity bonds are felt, instead of being sincere attempts of providing neighborly support, as sheer personal interest:

They [the receiving community] look for opportunities for their own benefit... they look for that. I mean, they'll be nice to you for as long as you provide something to them. But if you don't, then no, no, no. They're looking for themselves (MC, M, 64)

Meanwhile, policy decision makers and executors examine social support in rural territories through a lens of management and service provision for the community. In that sense, they underscore the need of creating programs related to issues consistent with the particular needs of each rural locale, "when planning comes from the central government, it doesn't necessarily adjust to the reality of the people living in the rural territory" (P, F, 40). This is the case of services technical regulations, designed for urban families and inadequate for rural families, which is compounded by a lack of specific programs that engage with these issues in different locations. Moreover, considering the new features and meshing of territories, there is additional complexity in adjusting services provided by the system, meaning that a new territorial organization is in order, one that considers increasing levels of migration to rural areas.

With regards to how these programs and services are adjusted to rural territory requirements, logistic aspects are at its core, due to their remoteness and poor connectivity. In fact, due to population distribution and lack of funding, these are designed for rural areas at all. The need for improvement in the quality of provided services is also pointed out, "people living in rural territory need for the different services staff to do their job and reach out to the territory where they are located" (P, F, 35). All of this is infused of a critical view on the structure and organization of the service network, as it appears as inadequate to satisfy the social support needs of the region.

Views of the territory community organization

The different community organization levels available in the territory are important for their inhabitants. There is significant value attributed to the general self-management skills shown by the neighbors, as well as to the local territory organizations. Regarding neighborhood self-management, the presence of democratically-elected leadership in the community is seen as positive; this gives allowance for grassroots community organization. There is a particular emphasis in horizontal relationships established between local authorities and the existing neighborhood organizations:

You frequently stumble upon [the authority], you can meet him and have a coffee or a glass of wine by the

² A variation of bingo (TN).

18th³, or whenever. And that's really nice, because you feel that you can actually get in touch with the authorities, they aren't isolated, as it usually happens in the city (MC, M, 61).

Also, the community values the self-management skills obtained through its history, starting from times where the locale was a single country estate propriety of a single landowner, that are necessary to create organization instances that allow them to assert their rights and face challenges to their stability.

The self-managed community's associativity appears through small social groups called *clubs*, be that for the elderly, *rayuela*⁴, soccer, among others. These *clubs* are inextricably interwoven, within other clubs and other different, larger organizations that have local representation, such as the neighborhood committees. Neighborhood committees are territory organizations that express a strong feeling of community within their members.

When I'm there, I feel kinship with the people there. You usually leave work every day with that same attitude, you know? [In the committee] it's an entirely different story, you fool around there, you can have a chat, get both good and bad takes on things, but I feel at home in the neighborhood committee (OC, M, 65)

For the community, all forms of organization and self-management in the territory color their way of understanding their relationship with the rest of the inhabitants. This integration with the community is conceptualized as one that looks for social well-being in rurality, with an implicit understanding that being part of the community organization ensures being updated and knowing of any events that occur in their territory, besides being a crucial space for asserting demands for citizen's rights and demands to the State as a whole.

It should be noted that, regarding this last point, despite the community's rich organization skills, it receives very little State support to face certain obstacles they must face. The absence of policies and support on issues related to urban-rural migration lived as a territory is one of them, with a noticeable lack of coordination regarding certain actions involving common issues.

Lastly, the public policy decision makers and executors in general highlight the importance of the involvement of different actors in the community for the elaboration of strategies for the improvement of services and programs offered in the rural area:

The community itself does work and provides feedback for us. We can see that, through our offices of Community Development, that the social aspect catches certain needs, for example, people that need water because their wells dried up (P, M, 52)

The history of self-management and community organization in this locale arises from the process of resources and services acquisition for the area, starting with the original working people inhabiting this territory.

Elements for a comprehensive model: A relational analysis

Considering all four analyzed axes, experience with rurality, relationship with nature, perspectives on social support, and views of the territory community organization, the descriptive analysis unveils disagreement among the views held by the rural community regarding their needs and the interpretation of needs made by decision makers and executors. It also showed some disagreements between community members (originals and migrants).

In order to identify elements that contribute to the configuration of a comprehensive model that follows the aforementioned criteria, two analytic domains are proposed: community well-being related needs disconnection and environmental well-being related needs disconnection.

³ September 18th, Chile's national day (TN).

⁴ Not to be confused with hopscotch, *rayuela* is Chile's official traditional game. It involves manual dexterity, a small metal disk, and good aim (TN).

Regarding the former, the community reveals the need of working with reciprocity bonds between traditional and migrant inhabitants. These groups show interest in setting coexistence agreements in the territory, for which they raise a need for support:

to promote migrant integration, not only on an environmental level, but also with the rest of the people who have already settled down (...) there is no public policy on this, there is no important mission carried out by the State (MC, M, 64)

This demand stresses the need of building bonds of trust and social support with the rest of the inhabitants in the territory.

This need in particular is not shared by policy makers and executors, as their interpretation focuses on improving the area's connectivity and service accessibility:

There are uneven levels of quality of life and well-being, it relies heavily on service accessibility, how well connected are they to the State (...) I think that territories closer to urban areas have better accessibility, are closer to business centers (...) that presents us a challenge: how do we create comprehensive rural development policies (P, M, 37)

In that regard, community well-being is related to service accessibility and connectivity to urban territories, which stands in contrast to the positive view the community holds on virtues of the territory's physical inaccessibility: "you can feel at ease here" (OC, M, 65)

Regarding the domain of environmental well-being related needs disconnection, the community appears as concerned about the environmental issues produced by the presence of large industry in the territory:

They have issues getting water, I saw that they got new pumps on those strawberry crops over there, they have a huge pool. It's always brimming full, it keeps powered on (...) they're always pump out, all day long, they're really thoughtless with water, they just pump out, out, out (MC, F, 57)

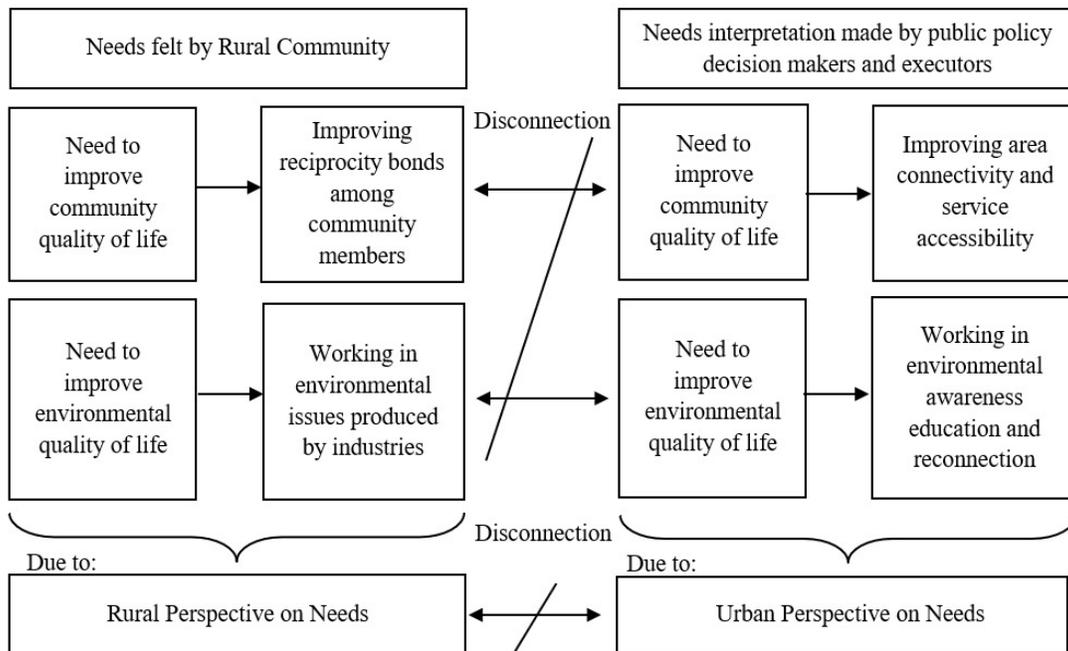
The community in particular states the need of government oversight on the actions taken by large business and farmers, to enforce sustainable work practices, ones that operate in harmony with nature. Policy decision makers and executors also emphasize this issue, pointing out that large industries have had a severe impact in the territory, creating "second-class citizens". Nevertheless, they focus their efforts towards solving needs related to environmental awareness education and re-enchanting the community with nature and the countryside: "the connection that their grandparents and parents had is lost. Today, people just don't grow food, not even for their own consumption, they just buy from a local grocer. It's just that there is not much attachment to the land anymore. We would like to recover that." (P, M, 52) In the light of that, to promote environmental well-being, decision makers and executors conduct sustainability programs that promote healthy living and self-growing in rural population.

That said, the rural community expresses that they do possess knowledge on how to do proper nature stewardship and establish a relationship to the land, derived from the cultural-historical tradition of the region. This shows that the programmatic focus of plans designed to address this topic are disconnected to an urgent need of community environmental well-being.

There is an interest, shown in both analytic domains, to discuss over the different worldviews brought to the community, being those of rurality and urbanity. This subject will be further analyzed in the next section. The analysis done in this section is outlined in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Disagreement in perception of need for the improvement of quality of life due to differences in rural and urban perspectives



Discussion

Research findings reveal domains for the analysis of needs that are relevant to the design of rural development public policies: experience with rurality, relationship with nature, perspectives on social support, and views of the territory community organization.

Experience with rurality appears as a transversal line of exploration for these topics, as it informs the perspective on needs in function of the manner of relating with the rural world. Landini & Beramendi (2020) point out in a study on rural program executors that their assessments on topics surrounding the contents of their labor are predominantly shaped by their professional education or by the institutions they work for, instead of the alternative of personal positions.

From another angle, the experience of rurality also faces disconnection from the re-development and gentrification processes, as they lean towards the application of urban rationales to traditionally rural territories, altering and setting a divide between structures and habitat. This is a relevant point that should be addressed by public policy, as they generate socio-territorial inequality that derives into the 'second-class citizenship' (Camarero & Oliva, 2019).

All of the above is deeply intertwined with the relationship with nature, from which appreciations regarding the landscape and the environment are articulated. This interest domain related to perceived needs stands as a place of diverse differences between the community and policy makers or executors. The former emphatically demands more intense scrutiny for industrial and monoculture practices, while the latter focus on environmental or agricultural education, with no regards to the traditional resources possessed by the community. As a consequence of this, emerges the importance of understanding "rural condition as a territorial domain, where adequate notions of farmer lifestyle, their territoriality and the development they await should form" (Pérez & Avendaño, 2021, p. 83). In this regard, Mardones (2018) puts forward that a possible line of action for public policy is biodiversity preservation in the stewardship of protected areas and of those locations considered as of landscape value, as it promotes the integration of local communities.

Adding to the idea of integration, social support is perceived as a dynamic axis for community processes, and the community interprets it as a unifying aspect of neighborhood coexistence practices. Consistent with what was defined by Gracia and Herrero (2006), the community acts as the channeling entity for social support.

Although not without friction, social support appears as nuanced, as different expressions of relationship between traditional and migrant inhabitants, linked to particular or individual interests, take place. Conflicts are identified when dealing with this axis, signs of a culture of individuality appear as opposed to the historical bond of solidarity (Román et al., 2007). This invites one to delve into the emerging community dynamics associated with rural urban migration described in other works (MacAdoo et. al., 2019, Monreal et. al., 2021).

Social support does not escape the perspective constantly used to understand rural phenomena described by Landini (2015). Conversely, decision makers or executors engage this topic from a perspective that stresses services accessibility, imposing an urban view in their proposal.

Various authors refer to the theoretical relationship between social support and well-being in rural contexts (Flores & Garay, 2021; Garcés, 2017; Möller, 2022). Originally, the notion of rural well-being appears in the mid-twentieth century linked to social support directed by the State towards the people who inhabited rural territories, to increase forestry and agricultural productivity and reduce their vulnerability (Garcés, 2017). For Flores and Garay (2021), social support provides support for material deficiencies, at the same time it affects satisfaction and quality of life, in affective spheres, in care and in instrumental matters. Likewise, it mobilizes interpersonal relationships and resources to meet needs and to promote well-being (Möller, 2022).

The dimensions analyzed in this study allow us to propose constitutive elements of rural well-being. Similarly, Romero et al. (2021) characterizes rural territories in Chile according to access to services, tranquility and good quality of life.

Considerations in the domain of interest of perceived needs and rural well-being conceptualized from its own actors are relevant for the field covered by socio-community psychology, as here it is present a strategic and programmatic opportunity to engage with rurality, seeing as the discipline might support public policy through work with social actors and by strengthening the community (Montero, 2010).

The community organization in the territory plays a paramount role in the discussed perspectives, both for the community and the decision makers and executors. This instance is seen as a valuable community resource that facilitates management processes and supports the attainment of benefits for the locale dwellers. This domain of interest unifies perspectives among the social actors, which makes all the more important its strengthening and development, as these processes activate capacities and resources that provide an improved sense of control of their circumstances towards both self-transformation and of the environment, according to their needs and aspirations (Montero, 2010).

In this sense, Pérez and Avendaño (2021) demonstrate that the promotion of interaction among people, groups and collectives creates associativity, which in turn opens cooperation, reciprocity, and trust processes, playing critical role in building cohesive social and territorial structures if cultural and identity elements are included.

Although there is a larger convergence in perspectives in community organization, additional attention must be given to the analytical level that suggests a disconnection between the perception of needs, particularly in the aspects related to community and environmental well-being. The analysis shows that these differences are related to the experience of rurality, which is integrated as an identity-forming aspect in the community, becoming a biographical aspect of its inhabitants. In contrast, for decision makers and executors, it is relegated to an external element which is to be intervened through an urban angle. This implies a challenge for both research and policy, not only due to its methodological and

practical repercussions, but also because of the interest in expressing its transformative nature, which is their aim (Dantas et al., 2018).

In conclusion, this qualitative research -conducted on participants of a rural community and policy decision makers and executors with local and sector- reach in this same locale, unveils highly relevant elements to the design of rural development programs and policies. Even though this data does not lend itself to extrapolation due to the exploratory spirit of the inquiry, it allows us to identify elements that, added to the current discussion in this field, may contribute to both the understanding of socio-community processes in rural contexts, and to the necessary dialog and convergence between rural territories and public policy.

In addition, it allows progress in the theoretical development of rural well-being, going beyond economic notions or oriented solely to access to social services, emphasizing the relationships of people with their environment and considering local subjectivities over hegemonic urban visions directed towards rural territories.

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