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## Organizational Wellbeing in CSOs in Morelos (Mexico): Findings from a Qualitative Study.

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<b>Corresponding Author:</b>	Imke Hindrichs, Ph.D. Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Morelos (UAEM) Cuernavaca, Morelos MEXICO
<b>Corresponding Author Secondary Information:</b>	
<b>Corresponding Author's Institution:</b>	Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Morelos (UAEM)
<b>Corresponding Author's Secondary Institution:</b>	
<b>First Author:</b>	Imke Hindrichs, Ph.D.
<b>First Author Secondary Information:</b>	
<b>Order of Authors:</b>	Imke Hindrichs, Ph.D. Arturo Juárez-García Cristina Girardo Daniela Converso
<b>Order of Authors Secondary Information:</b>	
<b>Abstract:</b>	<p><b>Abstract</b></p> <p>In recent years, civil society organizations (CSOs) have become a significant aspect of Mexican reality given the number of people involved in them and their contribution to the services sector. These entities are organizations where voluntary and paid workers may experience wellbeing conditions that are inherent in empowerment processes, feelings of usefulness, and the satisfaction associated with participating in decision-making. At the same time, contradictory dynamics related to governance, power relations, leadership, and decision-making may be activated in CSOs and create uncertainty and psychosocial malaise. In this research, based on a grounded theory approach, 11 interviews and 89 questionnaires were realized in 14 service providing CSOs in the Mexican State of Morelos, highlighting the wellbeing/malaise dimensions and psychosocial factors that are relevant for their members.</p> <p><b>Keywords:</b> organizational wellbeing, psychosocial factors, civil society organizations in Mexico, grounded theory</p>

**Response to Reviewers**

Although the sample size, as well as the inequity of numbers between the group of paid workers (66) and volunteers (22), does not allow comparing groups with statistical significance, we tried to check if there were absolute differences (some category mentioned by only one of the two groups). Surprisingly, we found differences in only three of six categories. Only paid workers mentioned lack of resources and material compensation as risk and/or salutogenic factor. We now specify this in our discussion. In all the other categories we did not found absolute differences between the groups. We include in the conclusions the limitation that our sample is principally represented by members of service providing CSOs (service providers) in one particular and small Mexican federal state, suggesting the necessity to apply the sample in this sense.

Response to Reviewers #2 and #3



**Organizational Wellbeing in CSOs in Morelos (Mexico):  
Findings from a Qualitative Study.**

Imke Hindrichs<sup>1</sup>, Daniela Converso<sup>2</sup>, Cristina Girardo<sup>3</sup> and Arturo Juárez-García<sup>1</sup>

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**Mailing address:**

Imke Hindrichs

Centro de Investigación Transdisciplinar en Psicología, Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Morelos (UAEM)

Pico de Orizaba 1, Col. Volcanes, Cuernavaca, Edo. de Morelos, C.P. 62350, México

**E-mail address:** imke.hindrichs@uaem.mx

**Telephone Number:** +52 (1) 777 3297970 ext. 3714

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<sup>1</sup> Center for Transdisciplinary Research in Psychology, Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Morelos, Mexico.

<sup>2</sup> Department of Psychology, Università degli Studi di Torino, Italia.

<sup>3</sup> Civil Society and Public Policy Seminar, El Colegio Mexiquense, A. C., Estado de México, Mexico.

## Introduction

In Mexico – as in almost every other Latin American country – the vast institutional universe that constitutes the kaleidoscope of organizations generally referred to as *civil society organizations* (CSOs) have given rise to numerous theoretical digressions and different terminology to clearly refer to the sector, particularly in light of the heterogeneous political, social, and ideological typologies that exist around it. According to Olvera (2001), CSOs manifest themselves in multiple conflicts – usually taking place at the micro-social level – where what is most relevant is the political-cultural struggle in which they engage to unify the sector, striving to reform diverse aspects of social life.

Moreover, new citizen needs and the growing demand for services resulting from the withering and contraction of the welfare state and decentralization have resulted in a call for these public sphere organizations to participate in the design and implementation of public policy (Girardo, 2010). In this sense, CSOs' services that cater to people and communities have become increasingly relevant and are referred to as “proximity and/or relational services” (Laville, 2004). As a result, finding a common normative ground is difficult (Mochi, 2004). The demand to find a denotation that appropriately identifies CSOs is not related to a lexical need; instead, what is at stake is providing an account of a sector that represents this diverse world, including the activities promoted to foster greater diversity and have a greater impact for people. Intermediate organizations in which citizens willingly participate are becoming increasingly important in providing services to the community and advocating and defending social demands, principles, values, and rights.

While these assumptions represent social science definitions of the sector that stem from the work of several authors that set out to study and define it in Mexico (Canto, 1998; Conde, 2000; Olvera, 2001; Cadena, 2004; Mochi, 2004; Pliego, 2005; Guadarrama & Girardo, 2007; Martínez, 2008; Girardo, 2010; Somuano, 2011), from a legal perspective, CSOs have been regulated by the *Ley Federal de Fomento a las Actividades Realizadas por Organizaciones de la Sociedad Civil*

(Federal Law for the Promotion of the Activities Carried out by Civil Society Organizations) since 2004. As stated in the latest reform to this law in April 25, 2012, CSOs are defined as follows:

all Mexican groups or organizations that, being legally constituted, carry out one or many of the activities defined in article 5 of this law and that don't seek a profit or engage in proselytism of a political, electoral or religious nature, and without prejudice to the obligations stated in other legal provisions (Art. 3)

These activities are numerous and are related to assistance, support, and services that cater to marginalized sectors of society; the promotion of citizen participation; community service; promotion and defense of rights; education (culture, art, sports, research); environmental protection and preservation; and "second-tier organizations" (organizations that support other CSOs).

According to the information available in the CSO Federal Registry Information System (*Sistema de Información del Registro Federal de las OSC*)<sup>1</sup>, an information system maintained by the National Institute for Social Development (*Instituto Nacional de Desarrollo Social*, Indesol), there are 20,289 active CSOs in Mexico. According to the system, there are 490 active CSOs in the State of Morelos, where the present study was carried out. Considering these data, we must note that not every entity that may be considered a CSO is listed in the Federal Registry and that not every registered organization fulfills all the provisions of the law. It must also be noted that many CSOs operate within the civically and legally established rules, while many others do so spontaneously; that is, they come and go without ever becoming formally institutionalized (Girardo, 2007; Butcher, 2010).

From the perspective of work and organizational psychology, a CSO can be defined as "the set of organizations that share the production of a collective utility, that is, that contemporaneously

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<sup>1</sup> Accessed on July 26, 2014.

correspond to the specific needs of their beneficiaries, workers and surrounding environment” (Lombardi et al., 1999, p. 17).

To *be* civil society is considered a responsibility to the serviced population, the community, the social and natural environment, and the active members of the CSO for an effective attainment of the organization’s social mission. It is from this holistic perspective that CSOs become a unique sphere for the study of organizational wellbeing; they differ from public and private sector organizations in that they work for or defend collective wellbeing based on ideals that prioritize their social mission over economic interests and that promote the active and democratic participation of their members. Finally, even though it actually employs fewer workers than civil society sectors in other countries (Butcher, 2010), the Mexican sector has gradually grown into a space for organized volunteer or salaried work (Girardo, 2010; Hindrichs et al., 2013).

### **Organizational wellbeing and its specificity in CSOs**

In the last twenty years, the study of workplace wellbeing (Warr, 1999) closely followed and even surpassed research that was exclusively concerned with worker states of psychosocial malaise, such as stress and burnout. Human beings are “complex,” capable of experiencing different emotional conditions that are occasionally contradictory (Pratt & Dourcet, 2000). Moreover, work constitutes an activity that induces feelings related to physical and mental fatigue but also to satisfaction, motivation, and commitment. In the context of work, wellbeing develops from the interaction between individual and organizational traits (Biggio & Cortese, 2013).

Thus, organizational wellbeing studies are not exclusively centered on psychosocial risk factors that can negatively impact the worker’s psychological, biological, and social health; such studies also examine those factors that have positive (salutogenic) effects on an individual’s health for which there are few consolidated methodological options (Juárez & Camacho, 2011). If we compare the aforementioned factors we will notice that they are not always the same; furthermore, they do not necessarily have opposite impacts on health and they are not mutually exclusive. Risk-

bearing and salutogenic psychosocial factors develop as “social facts occurring in the workplace that, in combination or dynamic interaction with an individual’s traits and through bio-psychosocial pathogenic or salutogenic stress mechanisms, impact the health-disease process” (Juárez & Camacho, 2011, p. 202). With its complex interaction between space and time, this approach to psychosocial workplace factors is introduced in our understanding of wellbeing as a systemic process.

Interest in the subject of occupational wellbeing has grown especially because of its relationship to the productive process and service productivity (Anttonen & Vainio, 2010). The *happy productive worker hypothesis*, first developed in the thirties in the Human Relations Movement, became revitalized largely because of *occupational health psychology*, which dedicated many studies to the identification of the characteristics of a “healthy organization” capable of promoting the physical, psychological, and social wellbeing maintenance and improvement processes of the whole work community.

For example, Henry (2005) and Grawitch et al. (2007) described the *healthy organization* as a system that had found the right equilibrium between the macro-system –determined by the reference market, the particular situation determined by business strategies and organizational culture – while preserving wellbeing levels. In a *healthy organization*, such equilibrium was found using organizational practices geared toward the democratization of the organizational context and the implementation of participative models, on-the-job training programs that enable recognition and develop awareness, and worker skills, thus supporting their autonomy and empowerment.

In the case of human service organizations (and every CSO caters to people in one way or another), the emphasis on the actual outcome of the services provided constitutes a different and additional value because of the organizational social mission and its social objectives. In this sense, the reciprocal relationship between the wellbeing/malaise of service providers and beneficiaries has been verified. For example, several studies carried out in the health sector highlighted the strong link between stress and burnout in nurses and doctors and the patient’s perception of low-quality

attention (Ferrara et al., 2013). Moreover, studies in the educational context found a link between the emotional wellbeing of professors and positive student experiences (Converso et al., 2014).

In other words, wellbeing/malaise within these organizations has a circular cause-effect (direct and indirect) impact on both individuals and their relationship to work and the organization, and between workers and beneficiaries. The difficulties associated with caring for others effectively and over time when one does not take care of one's self or receive proper care is evident (Piccardo & Martini, 2004).

When compared to the great amount of studies carried out in public organizations or private businesses, research about CSO wellbeing is scarce in the Latin American context, particularly in the case of Mexico. However, existing research – in both the global North and South – underscores the enhanced possibilities within CSOs to promote wellbeing that derives from the coming together of person and environment (in terms of democracy, participation, empowerment, satisfaction, etc.), or the development of the conditions that bring about wellbeing for providers and beneficiaries. This would be achieved because of the widely shared assumption that CSOs enjoy a strong intrinsic motivation for workers to join, promoted by a relationship to the organization that is centered more on “the cause” and its ideals than on extrinsic compensation or motivation (Benz, 2005; Chen et al., 2014).

Precisely in reference to the relationship between wellbeing and occupational satisfaction, the works of Benz (2005) were an attempt to understand CSO employment as the pursuit of satisfaction that goes beyond economic or utilitarian interests. The results showed that CSO workers are more satisfied, at a statistically significant level, than their for-profit colleagues when similar workloads and responsibilities are considered; this result is most certainly not related to monetary compensation. Following traditional workplace wellbeing research paradigms, the sense of belonging, sharing common values, and the feelings of usefulness that stem from working for others in Butcher's research (2010) on Mexican volunteers, providing “meaning” to one's own existence and satisfaction emerge as two additional factors that determine a greater overall workplace wellbeing by fostering positive emotions.



Wellbeing that results from the quality of interpersonal relations and the sense of group belonging also appears in other studies that focus on CSOs, such as Morandi et al. (2009). This study finds that involvement in these organizations and the support received in social interactions fosters worker responsibility, autonomy, and support within social relationships. However, the potential that CSOs have to develop individual and organizational wellbeing is represented by the wellbeing-participation and wellbeing-empowerment relations (Butts et al., 2009). In fact, these organizations constitute a privileged sector for the development of empowered and empowering processes (Peterson & Zimmerman, 2004) because they are built around shared democratic and participatory values while simultaneously following political and/or social empowerment objectives in relation to their beneficiaries and the external context in general (Converso & Piccardo, 2003; Hindrichs et al., 2011).

It is in this sense that CSOs constitute a particular sector for “double empowerment” (Converso & Piccardo, 2003; Piccardo & Martini, 2004; Converso & Hindrichs, 2009): their intention to empower the organizational environment enables internal empowerment processes while, at the same time, requires them to maintain and promote individual and organizational wellbeing and, in a circular fashion, the organizational effectiveness and incidence.

Finally, we should remember that the concept of CSO wellbeing may be related to the concept of *agency*, a construct that Sen (2009) uses in his studies on wellbeing and happiness. In this context, “being active” safeguards an individual’s pursuit of relevant objectives not exclusively related to personal motivations, such as, for example, actions to bring about common good while simultaneously fostering personal wellbeing. Ethics, justice, happiness, and wellbeing are, from this perspective, essential aspects (De Piccoli, 2014).

**Research on wellbeing in CSOs of the State of Morelos (Mexico): Mapping psychosocial factors.**

As part of an inter-institutional CSO project, the goal of this research is to study and map psychosocial factors in CSOs of the State of Morelos (Mexico) as indicators of the dynamics of organizational wellbeing and malaise from their members' point of view. This study aims at contributing to the development of methods and techniques that identify psychosocial factors in specific organizations. Because of this, a grounded theory approach (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1998) oriented the research; that is, the study of social phenomena by gathering qualitative data that emerges from the field without the determination of variables *a priori*, considering King's suggestion (2004) of delimiting data analysis by general themes or templates (category sets).

## **Method and procedures**

This is predominantly a qualitative, cross-sectional, exploratory study that was developed in two stages. Because of the difficulties associated with building a database based on official information, convenience and snowball-sampling techniques were used in both phases. We contacted CSOs by utilizing direct contacts, suggestions made by initial respondents, and a directory provided by a foundation that operates in the State of Morelos. The selection criteria were for organizations to be legally constituted, to have been operating for three years, and the voluntary and informed participation of the respondents.

Between 2012 and 2013, 14 CSOs became involved in the project: 11 during the first stage and eight during the second (five took part in both stages). During the first stage, semi-structured interviews were conducted with CSO representatives (directors, presidents, and founders, among others) that featured questions about their organizations in general, the relevance of organizational wellbeing, and psychosocial factors in particular. To identify emerging psychosocial factors, we asked the following questions: *In general, how would you describe the organizational climate here? Would you say that what is commonly referred to as work-related stress is present? Are*

*people fine in the organization or are there tensions or distress?* More references to psychosocial factors and organizational wellbeing were included in the interviews.

To broaden the variety of perspectives, we included the opinions of operative CSO staff and contrasted them with those of the representatives. To include a quantitative dimension in the study, members (operative personnel and managers) filled out a questionnaire that included, among other scales, a socio-demographic profile and the following two open questions related to risk and salutogenic psychosocial factors: 1) *Considering your job in this organization, write down the five factors that you believe cause you the greatest malaise or tension; and 2) Write down the five things you like the most or are most enthusiastic about your job in this organization.*

During both stages, data analysis was carried out following the procedures suggested by Strauss and Corbin (1998) and King (2004) and using the researcher triangulation principle (Janesick, 1994). In the first stage, after interview transcription, a collaborative analysis was carried out to determine the thematic areas. The interviews were first open coded by labeling text fragments related to psychosocial risk and salutogenic factors (Juárez & Camacho, 2011). Following the *constant comparison* principle between labels, interviews, and researchers, we proceeded to perform an *axial coding* that resulted in a set of templates classified by thematic area. For the second stage analysis, an *open coding* of the responses was conducted by two researchers (both experts in the psychosocial factor field, but only one in the CSO sector field). This procedure was conducted in order to avoid interpretation biases that could originate in prior familiarity with the results of the first stage. Later, always following the *constant comparison* principle, categories with two hierarchical levels (category and subcategory) were built and organized in a set of thematic areas, allowing comparison between both risk and salutogenic factors and between questionnaires and interviews.

### **Semi-structured interview results**

Respondents were representatives of 11 legally constituted CSOs, of which three work in the area of community development, three provide psychotherapy or psychophysical rehabilitation, three manage institutions that care for children and/or women, and two promote women's employment or health rights. There were seven female respondents and four males, with an average age of 47 (between 29 and 67 years of age) and a mean of 11 years and 9 months in the organization (between 4 to 29 years of seniority).

Table I shows a summary of the thematic areas that emerged for psychosocial risk and salutogenic factors. More precisely, we present three thematic areas that are intrinsic to risk factors and three that refer to salutogenic factors; their operative definitions and corresponding analytical categories are included.

The findings highlight how respondents consider relations with external actors as risks and challenges, particularly with respect to the economic dependence of the CSO on external funding. This generates stress among managers (procuring the funds by following grantmaker guidelines) and operative staff (salary uncertainty, low wages, and unstable jobs). Moreover, problems related to violence in Mexico in general and Morelos in particular, characterized by the rise of drug trafficking and an increase in murder, robbery, and kidnapping levels (Manut, 2009), seem to have an impact in terms of distress, demotivation, frustration, and powerlessness among respondents. In turn, the relation with the external context seems to constitute a salutogenic factor when support and solidarity are perceived.

In a similar way, interpersonal relationships also emerge as causes for both malaise and wellbeing. Distress appears because of conflict and tension among members of the organization or in relation to the vulnerability of the beneficiaries, whereas wellbeing is related to the interaction with beneficiaries and among members; the emotions (trust, friendship, and fun); the associated values (solidarity and respect); and the operation itself (collaboration and constant and transparent communication). Finally, work itself can also be a source of distress for respondents; they often have high workloads and too little time to carry out their jobs under conditions that are not always

optimal but which entail high responsibility levels. Nevertheless, the actual content of their work and the meaning they attribute to it is described as one of the main sources of wellbeing in CSOs.

## **Questionnaire results**

The sample is composed of 89 respondents belonging to the following eight legally constituted CSOs: two manage institutions that cater to children, youth, and/or women (N = 52); two promote the health and sexual and reproductive rights of women (N = 19); two provide psychotherapy and workshops for marginalized and low-income populations (N = 10); and two work in community development with children and teenagers (N = 8). Sixty-seven participants (72.28%) are female and nineteen are male (21.33%) with an average age of 37 years and 9 months (between 19 and 71 years old). Most (64.04%) possess a higher education degree in the humanities, social sciences, administration, or health. Their seniority varies from a single month to 27 years and three months (an average of five years and one month). Fourteen participants held managerial positions, forty-six are operative staff, 25 are administrators, and four carry out other tasks. Sixty-two people work in their respective CSO as salaried employees and 22 are volunteers or interns; four declare they work as partly volunteer and partly salaried workers. They work between two and 80 hours a week (32 hours and 21 minutes on average).

Among those that receive a salary, compensation varies from 600 to 20,000 Mexican pesos per month, with an average of 6,402 Mexican pesos; this corresponds to approximately 3.5 times the statutory monthly minimum wage for the State of Morelos in the year corresponding to the survey (according to the *Comisión Nacional de los Salarios Mínimos*, the National Commission on Minimum Wages).

In what follows, we present the categories that emerged from responses to the questions that asked respondents to write down “*the five factors that you believe cause you greater malaise or tension.*” The 315 responses we collected resulted in 21 categories that were interpreted as psychosocial risk factors (PRFs), their respective subcategories, and a group of 14 responses that we

were unable to categorize because their ambiguity made them prone to misinterpretation. We must point out that no category emerged in one CSO only. Tables II to VII present the emerging categories ordered by frequency and organized in six thematic areas. The first column of each table shows the categories of each thematic area, the second column shows the categories' absolute and relative frequencies, the third column displays each category's subcategories, and the last column shows the categories' absolute frequency.

The two thematic areas that include more responses are *carrying out work per se*, which includes issues, contingencies, and problems that arise when actual tasks are carried out (Table II); and *interpersonal relationships among members*, which covers emotional, operative, and value issues as sources of malaise or tension (Table III). The *management and leadership* thematic area follows, capturing issues that originate in procedures, processes, structure, and hierarchical interactions (Table III). Relatively few responses capture what happens within the *interaction with the external environment* (Table V), *compensation and working conditions* (Table VI), and *relationship with beneficiaries* thematic areas (Table VII).

Finally, eight responses (2.54%) refer to the category of psychological or physical *individual traits* of the participants as sources of malaise.

In tables VIII to XIII, which are arranged in the same fashion as the previous tables, we report the resulting categorization for the statements that participants wrote down when they were asked to consider "the five things you like the most or are most enthusiastic about your job in this organization": 17 salutogenic factor categories with their respective subcategories. Out of 330 responses, we were unable to assign eight to a specific category because it was impossible to come up with a univocal interpretation. As was the case with risk factors, there were not any categories that grouped participants from a single CSO for salutogenic factors.

The thematic areas that garnered more responses are related to *work per se*, which deals with the meaning of work, its contents, its nature, the actual tasks involved, and conditions (Table VIII); the *relationship with beneficiaries* thematic area deals with working with beneficiaries, their affective relation, and their accomplishments (Table IX); and the *interpersonal relationships*

*among members* thematic area includes affection and collaboration (Table X). Next, we have the *CSO per se* thematic area that captures the sense of belonging to the organization, satisfaction with its governance, and coordination format (Table XI); and *compensation* (Table XII). Finally, relatively few answers were attributed to the *interactions with external actors* category (Table XIII), and only three statements (0.91%) indicate *personal traits* as a source of wellbeing.

## **Discussion**

The thematic areas and categories that emerged from the interviews and questionnaires in the study are, in general, quite similar. This suggests that managers carry out a close observation of their organizations, perhaps due to the proximity to their members, to the generally horizontal hierarchies, and to some specific patterns related to the wellbeing and malaise dynamics within CSOs. Nevertheless, we should point out that questionnaire respondents identified some issues that were neglected or not emphasized in the interviews.

Both stages of the study capture the dimensions of general organizational wellbeing and those specific to CSOs. However, we must emphasize that the data indicates that these dimensions not only represent positive aspects but also negative ones, reflecting the complexity of human experience when individuals interact in an organizational context. Without doubt, a central role is played by personal relationships, particularly those with beneficiaries and among members of the organization. It is quite remarkable that the relationship with beneficiaries is one of the salutogenic factors with the most responses, whereas it received a relatively small number of mentions as a risk factor. In contrast, affective and operative relations among members constitute a salutogenic factor with some responses on the one hand (Morandi et al., 2009), but are a source of malaise and tension with many more responses on the other hand. Moreover, it is worth noting that, for every salutogenic factor, some of the responses were provided by participants who also provided responses in the risk category of the same thematic area. Although the size of the sample does not permit the use of inferential statistics, this observation suggests that relationships are experienced

holistically and dynamically and not as having a single, absolute valence such as “good” or “bad”. While relational work inherently brings psychosocial risk (Converso & Falcetta, 2007), it also seems to bring the “salutogenesis” of relationships lived as wholes *tout court* (Antonovsky, 1996). In fact, these findings are consistent with previous theories and studies of the natural co-existence of positive and negative emotions (Caballero, Carrera, Muñoz & Sánchez, 2007; Folkman, 2008).

Another fundamental area for the wellbeing in CSO's is work per se, the meaning it purports, and the activities involved in carrying it out. Nevertheless, everyday work can also be a source of malaise when it involves unpleasant tasks, particularly bureaucratic ones, and when it demands a lot from the worker, resulting in high workloads and pressure and entailing little control in a context with limited resources (mentioned only by remunerated participants), possibly threatening the development of autonomy and self-efficacy. The meaning of work and interpersonal relations constitutes another emerging salutogenic factor when it is reflected upon with respect to the feeling of belonging to the organization as workers share, take part in, and commit to its social values and methodology.

Organizations as a whole are themselves referents of wellbeing and malaise in their governance and leadership processes, where democratic organization and empowering, transformational, and transactional leadership – promoting participation and providing symbolic and social recognition – are mentioned as positive qualities. Yet, there are many more responses that point to negative aspects in management, such as lack of governance and leadership (lack of coordination, avoidance of leadership, passive management-by-exception) and controlling supervision and unfairness. In particular, none of the participants who mentioned the latter two aspects as risk factors mentioned aspects of “good government” as salutogenic factors. In contrast, for many participants, the other negative factors of this thematic area seem to co-exist with “good” evaluations of organizational government, revealing that the chance of dialectical criticism could be a source of “salutogenesis” in participative, empowering and democratic processes of leadership and management. Finally, the thematic area of management and leadership it stands out as the only one that is only marginally mentioned as negative in the interviews with CSO representatives.



Even when our results are confirmed by different studies and theories of CSO wellbeing and malaise dynamics, the more material findings should not be underestimated. Despite the low response rate of these few categories mentioned only by remunerated participants, we must emphasize that they emerged “spontaneously.” Interviewed representatives were mainly worried about the difficulties of fund procurement and grant writing and with not being able to provide adequate compensation to the staff of their organization. On the other hand, compensation and working conditions emerged as a source of malaise in relation not only to low remuneration but also in terms of precarious rights and security, reflecting relevant ambiguities and legal holes in the conditions of employment in Mexican CSOs (Hindrichs et al., 2013); very few responses referred to compensation as something only remunerated employees liked about their jobs.

Finally, the complex dynamics of organizational wellbeing and malaise do not take place in a social vacuum, but in an environment often perceived as problematic rather than positive, lacking abstract values and concrete relations with external entities despite interviewees indicating that interaction with other organizations and institutions is something they like and feel enthusiastic about.

## **Conclusions**

The results we have presented in this paper confirm relevant dimensions of organizational wellbeing in CSOs and, at the same time, underscore the “dark side” of such dimensions. This reflects the particular complexity and ambiguity of work within these organizations: contextual and concrete situations that set the wellbeing limits and opportunities in organizations strongly characterized by ideal values (Hindrichs et al., 2011).

From the methodological point of view, the study contributes to the development of methods and techniques to identify psychosocial factors in specific organizations, assuming the challenge of using a mixed method that involves the quantification of complex meanings. This challenge constitutes a limit that must not be overlooked. The meanings expressed by the

participants when they fill out questionnaires is occasionally so decontextualized that their univocal interpretation and coding may become reductive or even impossible to carry out if one wishes to use these categories as measuring variables.

Another limitation in the study is sample size; relatively few observations were collected. Even when the correspondence between the emerging categories and the literature implies a good level of theoretical saturation, it is advisable to increase the sample size and include CSOs from other regions in the country, as well as some that are not only service providers for individuals but that are more focused on political advocacy and on the defense of human rights. Furthermore, going deeper into the qualitative side of the data may improve theoretical saturation and allow for a better understanding of the complex dynamics of the organizational wellbeing/malaise process; focal groups and in-depth interviews with CSO members could be used, for example. At the same time, the categories that emerged could be transformed into continuous variables that may be correlated among themselves and with different variables, including sociodemographic variables (e.g., looking for differences among groups: managers and staff, senior members and recent hires, salaried workers and volunteers, among others) and other psychosocial factors anticipated in theoretical constructs.

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**Table I: Psychosocial factors detected in semi-structured interviews**


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***Psychosocial risks thematic area and corresponding categories***

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External risks and challenges: risk and challenge factors attributed to causes external to CSOs.

- a. Economic factors
- b. External factors

Interpersonal relations: emotive, affective, and operative difficulties related to working with others (staff and beneficiaries).

- a. Interpersonal relations among members
- b. Working with people

Workload and work content: problematic issues when carrying out work.

- a. Workload and time-associated pressures
- b. Physical environment
- c. Responsibility

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***Salutogenic factors thematic area and corresponding categories***

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External benefits: positive relationships with external actors at the local and international level in terms of mutual support, reciprocity, and solidarity.

Interpersonal relations: relations among members and with beneficiaries as a source of wellbeing and operational effectiveness in the CSO.

- a. Interpersonal relations among members
- b. Communication process
- c. Work and relations to beneficiaries

Work meaning and content: personal development related to the meaning attributed to the job and its intrinsic content.

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**Table II: Psychosocial risk factors (PRF) on the *carrying out work per se* thematic area**

<b>Categories</b>	<b>Number and % of responses</b>	<b>Subcategories</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>
Managerial and bureaucratic-administrative work	25 (7.94%)	<i>Completing forms/writing reports/other</i>	10
		<i>similar chores</i>	
		<i>Attend meetings</i>	5
		<i>Inventory</i>	3
		<i>Fund raising</i>	3
		<i>Accountability</i>	2
Workload and pressure	22 (6.98%)	<i>Workload</i>	10
		<i>Pressure (time-related)</i>	6
		<i>Lack of time</i>	6
Lack of resources	22 (6.98%)	<i>Lacking economic resources</i>	8
		<i>(Lacking) physical space</i>	6
		<i>Lacking material resources</i>	4
		<i>Lacking personnel</i>	4
Working conditions and limitations	17 (5.40%)	<i>Compliance of working hours</i>	13
		<i>Task interruption</i>	4
Work content	16 (5.01%)	<i>Coordinating people</i>	6
		<i>Organizing and taking part in CSO events</i>	5
		<i>Design and planning</i>	2
		<i>Others</i>	3
<b>Total responses:</b>	<b>102 (32.38%)</b>	<b>Total responses:</b>	<b>102</b>



**Table III: PRFs on the *interpersonal relationships among members* thematic area**

<b>Categories</b>	<b>Number and % of responses</b>	<b>Subcategories</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>
Emotional issues related to conflict, tension, or communication among members	42 (13.33%)	<i>Gossip, lies, and inappropriate comments</i>	12
		<i>Conflict and tensions among members</i>	7
		<i>Misunderstandings</i>	6
		<i>Unpleasant work environment</i>	5
		<i>Problematic emotional handling among members</i>	5
		<i>Mistreatment or unfair treatment among members</i>	3
		<i>Lack of confidence among members</i>	2
		<i>Others</i>	2
Operative or collaboration and communication problems among members	24 (7.62%)	<i>(Lack of or bad) communication</i>	16
		<i>(Lack of/problems with) collaboration and teamwork among members</i>	8
Members' lack of responsibility and commitment to work and/or the organization	23 (7.30%)	<i>Members lacking commitment</i>	8
		<i>Indifference toward the organizational social mission</i>	6
		<i>Tardiness or absenteeism</i>	4
		<i>Irresponsible members</i>	3
		<i>Others</i>	2
<b>Total responses:</b>	<b>89 (28.25%)</b>	<b>Total responses:</b>	<b>89</b>

**Table IV: PRFs on the *management and leadership* thematic area**

<b>Categories</b>	<b>Number and % of responses</b>	<b>Subcategories</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>
Coordination and (directive) management problems	23 (7.30%)	<i>Disorganization</i>	8
		<i>Avoidance leadership or lack of leadership</i>	5
		<i>Lacking organizational integration</i>	3
		<i>Dependence upon management or administrative procedures</i>	3
		<i>Misuse of economic resources</i>	2
		<i>Others</i>	2
		Little or no work recognition	10 (3.17%)
<i>Little or no work recognition</i>	4		
Undemocratic decision-making	9 (2.86%)	<i>Undemocratic decision-making</i>	9
Mistreatment or unfair treatment on behalf of managers	7 (2.22%)	<i>Unfair treatment on behalf of managers</i>	3
		<i>Authoritarianism</i>	3
		<i>Others</i>	1
Hierarchy and control	4 (1.27%)	<i>Hierarchy and control</i>	4
<b>Total responses:</b>	<b>53 (16.83%)</b>	<b>Total responses:</b>	<b>53</b>

**Table V: PRFs on the *interaction with the external environment* thematic area**

<b>Categories</b>	<b>Number and % of responses</b>	<b>Subcategories</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>
Lack of values	13 (4.13%)	<i>Irresponsibility</i>	4
		<i>Unfairness</i>	3
		<i>Others</i>	6
Relations with external entities	4 (1.27%)	<i>Relations with external entities</i>	4
<b>Total responses:</b>	<b>17 (5.40%)</b>	<b>Total responses:</b>	<b>17</b>

**Table VI: PRFs on the *compensation and working conditions* thematic area**

<b>Categories</b>	<b>Number and % of responses</b>	<b>Subcategories</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>
Compensation	9 (2.86%)	<i>Insufficient compensation</i>	5
		<i>Lacking incentives</i>	3
		<i>Others</i>	1
Lacking work security or rights	5 (1.59%)	<i>Lacking work security or rights</i>	5
Lack of training and updating	2 (0.63%)	<i>Lack of training and updating</i>	2
<b>Total responses:</b>	<b>16 (5.08%)</b>	<b>Total responses:</b>	<b>16</b>

**Table VII: PRFs on the *relationship with beneficiaries* thematic area**

<b>Categories</b>	<b>Number and % of responses</b>	<b>Subcategories</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>
Worrying about the beneficiaries	11 (3.49%)	<i>Conflict among beneficiaries</i>	4
		<i>Lack of commitment to the project on behalf of beneficiaries</i>	3
		<i>Others</i>	4
Beneficiaries' lack of responsibility toward the work of the CSO	5 (1.59%)	<i>Beneficiaries' lack of responsibility toward the work of the CSO</i>	5
<b>Total responses:</b>	<b>16 (5.08%)</b>	<b>Total responses:</b>	<b>16</b>

**Table VIII: Salutogenic Psychosocial Factors (SPFs) in the *work per se* thematic area**

<b>Categories</b>	<b>Number and % of responses</b>	<b>Subcategories</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>
The meaning of work	32 (9.39%)	<i>Ethical meaning of work</i>	24
		<i>Professional accomplishment</i>	8
Work content	22 (6.67%)	<i>Work content</i>	22
Free, autonomous, and stimulating work	17 (5.15%)	<i>Autonomy, independence, and freedom</i>	8
		<i>Stimulating work</i>	7
		<i>Being motivated</i>	2
Personal fulfillment due to development and widening of possibilities	14 (4.24%)	<i>Learning</i>	10
		<i>Meeting and interacting with a lot of people</i>	4
Achieving self-efficacy at work	10 (3.03%)	<i>Getting work done</i>	4
		<i>Self-efficacy at work</i>	2
		<i>Problem-solving</i>	2
		<i>Others</i>	2
Working conditions	7 (2.12%)	<i>Working hours</i>	4
		<i>Physical space</i>	3
<b>Total responses:</b>	<b>102 (30.91%)</b>	<b>Total responses:</b>	<b>102</b>

**Table IX: SPFs in the *relationship with beneficiaries* thematic area**

<b>Categories</b>	<b>Number and % of responses</b>	<b>Subcategories</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>
Actual work with beneficiaries	44 (13.33%)	<i>Assistance, therapy, or consultation with beneficiaries</i>	15
		<i>Events and workshops</i>	6
		<i>Supporting beneficiaries</i>	4
		<i>Providing specific care or information</i>	4
		<i>Working in the community or school</i>	3
		<i>Other</i>	12
Affective relationship with beneficiaries	21 (6.36%)	<i>Sharing and visiting with beneficiaries</i>	11
		<i>Beneficiaries themselves</i>	4
		<i>Others</i>	6
Beneficiary	19 (5.76%)	<i>Beneficiary improvements</i>	13
Achievements/accomplishments		<i>Empowerment of beneficiaries</i>	6
<b>Total responses:</b>	<b>84 (25.45%)</b>	<b>Total responses:</b>	<b>84</b>

**Table X: SPFs in the *interpersonal relations among members* thematic area**

<b>Categories</b>	<b>Number and % of responses</b>	<b>Subcategories</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>
Affective relations among members	43 (13.03%)	<i>Pleasant environment</i>	15
		<i>Colleagues and team</i>	7
		<i>Interaction among members</i>	5
		<i>Receiving social support</i>	5
		<i>Providing social support to colleagues</i>	5
		<i>Friendship with colleagues</i>	2
		<i>Solidarity</i>	2
Operative collaboration among members	20 (6.06%)	<i>Cooperation and camaraderie</i>	10
		<i>Teamwork</i>	6
		<i>Communication</i>	2
		<i>Others</i>	2
<b>Total responses:</b>	<b>63 (19.09%)</b>	<b>Total responses:</b>	<b>63</b>



**Table XI: SPFs in the CSO *per se* thematic area**

<b>Categories</b>	<b>Number and % of responses</b>	<b>Subcategories</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>
Sense of belonging to the CSO	27 (8.18%)	<i>Participating</i>	10
		<i>Commitment to the CSO</i>	7
		<i>CSO objective/social mission</i>	6
		<i>Work methodology</i>	3
		<i>Others</i>	1
Good governance	10 (3.03%)	<i>Social-symbolic recognition</i>	4
		<i>Getting involved in participation</i>	3
		<i>Coordination</i>	3
<b>Total responses:</b>	<b>37 (11.21%)</b>	<b>Total responses:</b>	<b>37</b>

**Table XII: SPFs in the *compensation and rewards* thematic area**

<b>Categories</b>	<b>Number and % of responses</b>	<b>Subcategories</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>
Training or institutional	16 (4.84%)	<i>Training received</i>	<i>11</i>
psychological care		<i>Attending talks</i>	<i>4</i>
		<i>Others</i>	<i>1</i>
Compensation	5 (1.51%)	<i>Compensation</i>	<i>3</i>
		<i>Benefits</i>	<i>2</i>
<b>Total responses:</b>	<b>21 (6.36%)</b>	<b>Total responses:</b>	<b>21</b>

**Table XIII: SPFs in the *interaction with external actors* thematic area**

<b>Categories</b>	<b>Number and % of responses</b>	<b>Subcategories</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>
Interaction with external actors	10 (3.03%)	<i>Interaction with other CSOs</i>	4
		<i>Interaction with other organizations and institutions</i>	4
		<i>External recognition (community, beneficiary relatives)</i>	2
<b>Total responses:</b>	<b>10 (3.03%)</b>	<b>Total responses:</b>	<b>10</b>