



Analysis of the Degree of Satisfaction with Life Before and During the COVID-19 Pandemic in University Teachers

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Abstract

This paper focuses on analyzing the degree of satisfaction with the life of university teachers before and during the COVID-19 pandemic in the context of social isolation. The present study adopts a quantitative and cross-sectional approach. The sample included 129 university professors, between 18 and 74 years, from the Faculty of Physical Culture Sciences of the Autonomous University of Chihuahua. Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) was obtained to measure the degree of teacher satisfaction (Atienza et al., 2000; Diener et al., 1985; Pons et al., 2002). The results globally showed significant differences between life satisfaction before and during the pandemic according to the means comparison test, using the T-test for related samples, with values of 4.06 before and 3.6 during the pandemic. When categorizing the results according to the escalation, it was shown that 55.7% of the teachers perceived themselves as satisfied before the pandemic, while the opposite happened during the isolation, decreasing, with only 45.5% feeling satisfied. Only 27% felt very satisfied before, and this percentage

decreased to only 14.5% during isolation. The COVID-19 not only wreaked havoc on health, but it also had a negative effects on people's psychological, emotional, and social spheres, thereby modifying healthy lifestyles and leaving possible effects on physical and mental health as a consequence.

Keywords: Satisfaction with Life, COVID-19, Pandemic, University Professors

Introduction

COVID-19, or coronavirus, is the disease caused by the well-known SARS-CoV-2. This new virus was first known on December 31, 2019, when a report was presented on a group of cases of a typical viral pneumonia in Wuhan, the People's Republic of China, which was mentioned by the World Health Organization (WHO, 2020). Months later in Mexico, in February 2020, several cases appeared, increasing rapidly and exponentially, reaching a figure of 770,000 infections and 77,000 deaths by mid-year. By the end of that year, the figure reached more than one and a half million infected and more than 120 thousand deaths. Such impressive data have never been seen in the current history of humanity. The spread of the virus was worldwide. In 2020, a quarantine begins with the closure of economic, educational, cultural and recreational activities, as well as the implementation of sanitary measures such as healthy distance, hand washing, use of face masks, and social isolation (Rodríguez & Zumaya, 2021).

It is said that the coronavirus pandemic has given rise to unprecedented restrictions in the routines of the population, such as prolonged stays in confinement, generating fear, panic, anxiety, stress, dissatisfaction, and states of depression (Camacho et al., 2020). In this sense, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the mental and emotional health of individuals experiencing emotions such as sadness, fear of contagion, thoughts of uncertainty, and frustration. Also, physical discomforts such as headaches, muscle pain, back pain, and difficulties in their sleep cycle, such as insomnia and nightmares (Sandín et al., 2020). This process has affected dimensions of psychological well-being such as self-acceptance, positive relationships with others, autonomy, mastery of the environment, personal growth and purpose in life, and self-satisfaction (Becerra et al., 2021). Satisfaction is considered a psychological state resulting from the interaction between the individual and their social environment. It is predictable based on job satisfaction, satisfaction with the environment, and satisfaction with oneself (Fuentes et al., 2021; Pérez & Alegre, 2014).

However, during the confinement period, all these aspects were altered in many of the people, thereby generating an emotional imbalance (Sandín et al., 2020). According to Pérez and Alegre (2014), life satisfaction can be

predicted based on three experiential variables: job satisfaction, satisfaction with the environment, and satisfaction with oneself; personality variable such as: trait, emotions, and intelligence. Also work environments were affected in terms of time and personnel. Furthermore, most of this process was done virtually or from home. The educational field was no exception as teachers taught classes from home through various platforms. This work from home generated substantially various negative feelings in the teachers. According to Fuentes Gómez and Zúniga (2021), the confinement due to COVID-19 has had a significant impact on teachers' emotional and physical well being resulting to sadness, fear of contagion, thoughts of uncertainty and frustration, headaches, muscle aches, back pain, and difficulties in sleep cycle such as insomnia and nightmares. The population showed high levels of emotional exhaustion, including physical and mental fatigue (Celio, 2021).

According to the effects of the pandemic on the aforementioned variables, to what degree did the confinement due to the COVID-19 pandemic affect the satisfaction with the life of university professors? Thus, this study focuses on knowing if the changes in habits, working from home, isolation and social recreation restrictions negatively affected university teachers' life satisfaction. It aims to provide readers with information about the situation presented and the consequences on the psychological well-being of the people during the quarantine process.

Methodology

Study Design, Variables, and Sample

The present study adopts a quantitative and cross-sectional approach to describe the variable satisfaction with life before and during the pandemic. The sample included 129 university professors, between 18 and 74 years, from the Faculty of Physical Culture Sciences of the Autonomous University of Chihuahua. With an average of 40.7, 62 participants were women (47.3%) and 67 were men (51.1%).

Instruments

Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS) (Atienza et al., 2000; Diener et al., 1985; Pons et al., 2002)

The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) (Atienza et al., 2000; Diener et al., 1985; Pons et al., 2002) is a unidimensional or single-factor scale where the items are of positive aspects and are answered on a five-point Likert scale. The answers are added to obtain a person's degree of satisfaction with their life (5 points: Totally Agree; 4 points: Agree; 3 points: Indifferent; 2 points: Disagree; and 1 point: Totally Disagree). The scores obtained can be interpreted as; 0-5 = Very dissatisfied, 6-10 = Dissatisfied, 11-15 = Neutral, 16-20 = Satisfied, and 21-25 = Very satisfied. The higher the score, the greater

satisfaction with life. The scale was transferred to Google Forms® and the five questions were adapted with references to “BEFORE and DURING” the pandemic as an example: “DURING” the pandemic, have most aspects of my life been the way I want them to be? Or, “BEFORE” the pandemic, were your life circumstances good?

Process

Teachers from the Faculty of Physical Culture Sciences of the Autonomous University of Chihuahua were invited to participate through email, social networks, and promotion of research through the coordinators of the academies of the different semesters of the institution. Teachers who accepted gave their informed consent at the same time they completed the Google Forms®. In the questionnaire, they were asked to answer the questions of the satisfaction with life scale (Atienza et al., 2000; Diener et al., 1985; Pons et al., 2002). The form was sent via email and social networks, such as WhatsApp and Facebook. They were asked to be honest when answering and were thanked for their participation. Once the instrument was applied, the results were compiled through the database collection function in the Google Forms® application, extracting the answers as an Excel document and later working on SPSS version 21.0 for Windows (IBM SPSS Statistics 21.0) to obtain the statistical data on the satisfaction with life scale (Atienza et al., 2000; Diener et al., 1985; Pons et al., 2002). One of the limitations of this procedure is that it was impossible to conduct personal interviews to obtain qualitative data and reinforce what was obtained in the questionnaires on the perception of satisfaction with life. According to what was mentioned in the previous paragraph, this could not be carried out due to sanitary restrictions.

Analysis of Data

Descriptive statistical analysis was carried out by obtaining graphs and through the analysis of comparison of means, using the T-test for related samples, to observe if there are differences in the degree of satisfaction with life before and during the confinement of the COVID-19 pandemic. All statistical analysis were performed using the SPSS version 21.0 for Windows program. The level of statistical significance was established at $p=.05$, and a reliability of 0.90 for Cronbach's alpha was found for the Satisfaction with Life questionnaire (Atienza et al., 2000; Diener et al., 1985; Pons et al., 2002).

Results

The results show the degree of satisfaction with life before and during the COVID-19 pandemic. Below are graphs and statistics from the comparison of means analysis, using the T-test for related samples, to identify the Satisfaction with Life questionnaire (Atienza et al., 2000; Diener et al., 1985;

Pons et al ., 2002), The sample included 129 university professors, between 18 and 74 years, from the Faculty of Physical Culture Sciences of the Autonomous University of Chihuahua. With an average of 40.7, 62 participants were women (48.1%) and 67 were men (51.9%).

Table 1 shows the statistics of related samples of the variable degrees of satisfaction with life before and during the pandemic. In addition, the T-test data for related samples are presented (Table 1) with significant differences, according to the means obtained, which were higher before than during the confinement period. According to Figure 1, an average of 4.05 and 3.61 is observed before and during the pandemic, respectively. The degree perception is lower during the pandemic since 52.9% were more satisfied before and 47.1% had lower data during the pandemic.

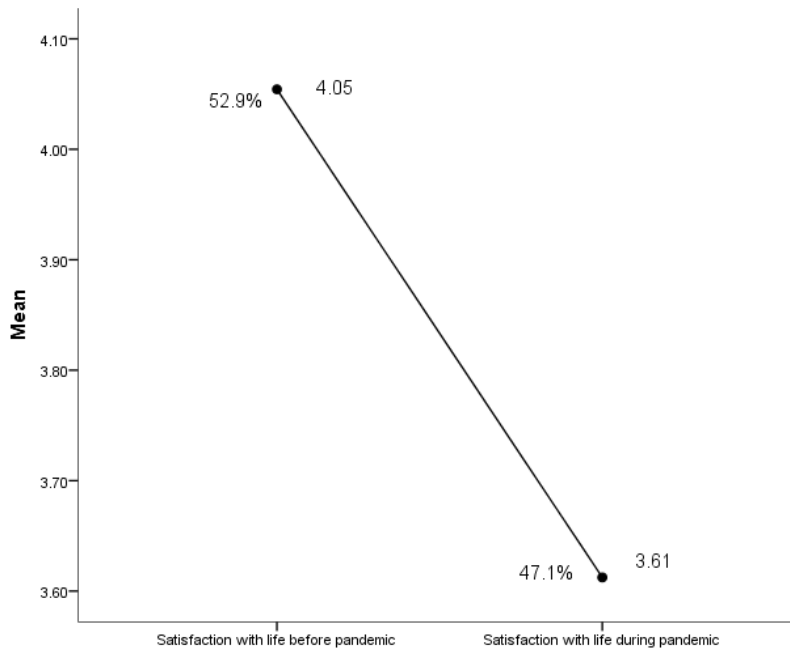
Table 1.

Related Samples Statistics and Related Samples t-test Data for Life Satisfaction Before and During the COVID-19 Pandemic

| | <i>t-test data for related samples</i> | | | |
|---|--|-----|----------------|----------------|
| | t | N | Correlation | P |
| Satisfaction with life before- Satisfaction with life during pandemic. | 5.468 | 129 | 0.413 | < 0.05 |
| <i>Related Samples Statistics</i> | | | | |
| | Mean | N | Typ. deviation | Typ error half |
| Satisfaction with life before pandemic | 4.0543 | 129 | .75322 | .06632 |
| Satisfaction with life during pandemic | 3.6124 | 129 | .92119 | .08111 |

Figure 1.

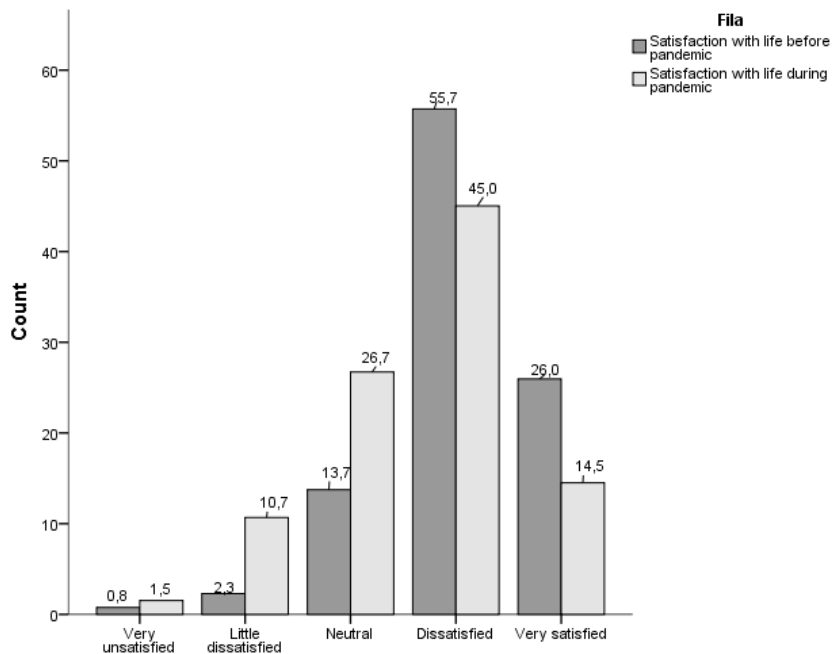
Global data on Satisfaction with Life. Expressed in scores from the Diener et al. (1985), Atienza et al. (2000) and Pons et al. (2002).



Taking into account the mean found in each questionnaire and noting that there are marked differences and a decrease in the degree of satisfaction with life, the response categories of the Satisfaction with Life scale are presented (Atienza et al., 2000; Diener et al., 1985; Pons et al., 2002) for its interpretation from very dissatisfied, dissatisfied, neutral, satisfied, and very satisfied (Figure 2). It can be said that the degrees of satisfaction were better before the pandemic than during the pandemic. Before the pandemic, 55.7% said they felt satisfied, 26.0% very satisfied. However, during the pandemic, there was a decrease to 45% and 14.5% according to the categories mentioned in the previous paragraph. Based on the dissatisfaction scores (very dissatisfied, dissatisfied and neutral), the present low percentages of 0.8%, 2.3%, and 13.7% before the pandemic increases during the confinement period with 1.5%, 10.7% and 26.7%, respectively.

Figure 2.

Level of satisfaction with life before and during the pandemic by low, moderate or high category.



Discussion

The objective of this study was to determine the degree of satisfaction with the life of university teachers before and during the COVID-19 pandemic. It can be said that 55.7% of teachers perceived themselves to be more satisfied before the pandemic, with the opposite occurring during isolation, thereby decreasing this satisfaction to 45.5%. Furthermore, dissatisfaction scores were observed to a lesser degree before the pandemic (0.8% very dissatisfied, 2.3% dissatisfied). This increased during confinement from 1.5% to 10.7% with an indifference from 13.7% to 26.7% before and during the pandemic, respectively. According to Paricio and Pando (2020), confinement generated changes in lifestyles and satisfaction in different populations as well as the teaching area was no exception. The teaching work was marked by the restrictions caused by the pandemic which generated changes in their emotional stability due to excessive work at home and labour challenges presented by the confinement. According to Balluerka et al. (2020) and Robinet-Serrano and Pérez (2020), the pandemic negatively influenced people's well-being. Also, due to routine changes, as stated by Álvarez (2020), Oros and Vargas (2020), the confinement has affected staff in their effort to continue teaching in isolation. On the other hand, another study by Quispe and García (2020) and Pressley et al. (2021), postulated that life satisfaction was

affected by stress, anxiety, and fears due to the workload and changes in education. However, beyond the labour part, the simple reason for confinement is to modify the aspects of personal satisfaction and tranquillity.

Although the pandemic has brought about a series of changes in education and teaching in relation to the perception of emotional exhaustion, the results do not show greater emotional exhaustion in the teaching population (Qurat-UI-Ain, 2021). However, psychological exhaustion is the dimension that shows the most significant impact on Chilean teachers. This could be explained by the need to make adjustments for teachers to provide distance education, meet the increase in demands, allocate more time to prepare classes, ensure proper connections and follow up on the students. In the case of Chile, 63% of teachers consider that they work more and with fewer conditions to carry out their teaching work (Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean [ECLAC], 2020). In addition, problems that have arisen in the face of COVID-19 and that have generated wear and tear are added, such as the logistics of teaching, little knowledge about the use of technological tools, difficulties in communication, ignorance of distance education pedagogical activities, and the management of socio-emotional aspects caused by confinement (Sánchez et al., 2020; Vargas et al., 2021).

Conclusion

The aim of this study was to determine the degree of satisfaction with the life of university professors before and during the COVID-19 pandemic. The results show the negative influence of the COVID-19 pandemic on the degrees of satisfaction with life before and during the pandemic. This is according to the data obtained from administering the questionnaire to assess satisfaction with life. Teachers perceived themselves as more satisfied before the pandemic. However, this satisfaction decreased during isolation. Although 55.7% perceived themselves as more satisfied before the pandemic, this satisfaction decreased to 45.5%, which is about 10% more of dissatisfaction. These changes in emotional stability, manifested in teachers' perception, originated from the restrictions caused by the pandemic, such as the lack of social interaction, the lack of recreation, the excess of work at home and the labour challenges presented during the confinement period. COVID-19 affected the health status of individuals and also had negative effects on people's psychological, emotional, and social spheres. It is important to continue with future research since it was not possible to carry out personal interviews to obtain qualitative data due to the restrictions of the pandemic itself, and thus reinforce what was obtained in the questionnaires on dissatisfaction and what personal aspects originated from it. Although the results obtained cannot be generalized, it can be shown as a scientific data of

the process experienced worldwide, intensely affected without distinction of gender, age or social condition.

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