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PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF THE CONFINEMENT BY COVID-19 IN THE ZACATECANOS. RESEARCH WITH THE LIFE HISTORY METHOD

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Abstract: With the COVID-19 pandemic, the way in which we live and in general the dynamics of families have changed, coupled with this, confinement has come to redefine the way in which we relate inside and outside our environment. Those who were able to abide by the confinement instructions had to change the way they carried out their activities such as education through digital platforms or teleworking accepted by the Federal Labor Law. These working conditions plus the activities of the home; attention to the children, household chores, stocking the pantry, to name a few, have been quite a challenge. Said fusion of scenarios in the same physical place, have represented a challenge to reorganize in time and form the way to carry them out. In this sense, the present research project is inserted, in knowing what are these effects that at a psychological level have generated these conditions of confinement by COVID-19 in Los Zacatecanos, but also highlighting the areas of opportunity that we have and in general showing the learning and the positive aspects that can be highlighted so far. Project carried out by the Academic Body of Applied Psychology and Education UAZ-CA-238, whose methodology is qualitative, specifically with the Life History Method. To analyze the psychological effects, the basic psychological processes of; attention, memory, perception, emotion, motivation, thinking, and behavior. To carry out the interviews, we had the support of the students and currently there are three thesis students who participate in the process of analysis of information and results. There were a total of 26 interviewees, of which 18 are women and 8 men, the selection was based on the criteria of; Live in the capital Zacatecas or its municipalities, be of legal age and have been in confinement for at least 6 months. The interviews carried out were semi-structured and were carried out in a period of 3 months from February to May of

the year 2021.

Keywords: Confinement, COVID-19, psychological effects, Zacatecan population.

INTRODUCTION

With the COVID-19 pandemic, the way we live and, in general, the dynamics of families have changed; Added to this, confinement has come to redefine the way in which we relate inside and outside our home. Those who were able to abide by the instructions to stay at home had to change the way they carried out their activities; such as education through digital platforms or teleworking accepted by the Federal Labor Law. These working and educational conditions plus the activities of the home, attention to the children, household chores, stocking the pantry, among others, have been quite a challenge.

Said fusion of scenarios in the same physical place, have represented a challenge to reorganize in time and form the way to carry them out, however, not everything must be understood as negative, on the contrary, multiple positive situations can be highlighted, considering that some people allowed themselves to rediscover or develop some strategies and skills with which they have overcome the challenges of the pandemic, for example; in the labor area the start and success of a business and therefore the improvement in the economic aspect, in the family area to take advantage of the times and spaces for a better coexistence, in the educational area to know and implement new technological tools or improve them. All these aspects result in making an assessment of what the pandemic has represented for each one and this way take advantage of these experiences to move forward.

In this sense, this chapter is inserted where it is proposed to show part of the progress of the research project whose objective is to know what are the effects

that these conditions of confinement by COVID-19 have generated in Zacatecans at the level of basic psychological processes. The methodology used is qualitative, specifically with the life history method. To analyze the psychological effects, the basic psychological processes of: attention, memory, perception, emotion, motivation, thought and behavior were taken as a reference. which is the basis for developing our daily activities and, in this sense, exploring how the interviewees experience these processes and, above all, considering that, when two or more of these processes are altered, it can be translated as a state of vulnerable mental health.

The team that coordinates the research is made up of psychology teachers; Dr. Ana Laura España Montoya, Dr. Elizabeth López Saucedo, Dr. Cristina Salcido Rodríguez and cDr, and ME Alma Delia Guzmán Díaz.

The sample that was taken conforms a total of 26 interviewees, of which 18 are women and 8 men. In this writing there are 9 stories that have been analyzed, of those interviewed, 7 of them are students studying for a bachelor's degree and two are teachers. The interviews carried out were semi-structured and were carried out in a period of three months, from February to May of the year 2021.

DEVELOPMENT

This section is organized as follows; The first subtheme describes what the life history method is and the steps that were followed in the present study applying such methodology. The second point addressed some aspects that were considered from the theory for the realization of the rubric used for the paradigmatic analysis, and the next aspect to capture is the analysis of the most significant psychological effects that were identified in the first nine interviewees.

WHAT IS THE LIFE HISTORY METHOD?

The history method is a way of doing research, which is located in the qualitative methodology, it is also included as part of the biographical-narrative methods. Puyana (1994) refers that this approach is aimed at generating alternative versions of social history, based on the reconstruction of personal experiences. It constitutes a first-order resource for the study of human events, in this sense the method allows translating everyday life into words, gestures, symbols, anecdotes, stories and constitutes an expression of the permanent interaction between personal history and history. social.

As already mentioned, the life story allows us to know, from different perspectives and approaches, the experiences and feelings of each person through their discourse, from a human point of view and attending to the very description of those who live these life situations. whose meaning will be individual and unique.

A very important point of this type of method is that it gives a voice to vulnerable people or groups who, rarely or never, have been heard. Apart from fulfilling the purpose of collecting necessary information and data, it also serves as a means of expression for people.

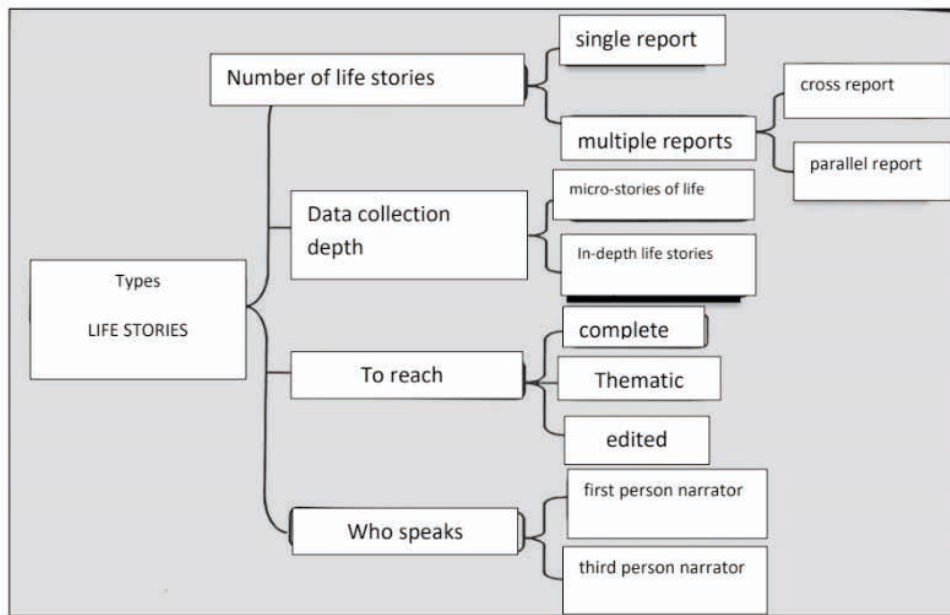
As a first step to be able to access the interviews, it is necessary to make a kind of contract or informed consent, which must be signed by the parties involved. This document is where the characteristics of the research process are specified: objectives, who carries it out, place, date, time and, if applicable, the institution that supports the study, if applicable. You agree to be recorded in audio and/or video, and the approval of the scope and limits that the information obtained will have, that is, if it will be published in any digital and/or electronic media or the use

that will be given to the information (Morina, 2017a). Process that was carried out for the present study and of which there is a record.

The interviews that were carried out for this project were of a semi-structured type with which the necessary information was obtained and after each interview the sessions were transcribed and, This way, the material

for the selection of topics and their subsequent analysis was prepared (Moriña, 2017b).

Figure 1 shows, according to Moriña (2017c), the types of life histories. In this scheme, the aspects that were taken into account to carry out our research are indicated with an underline.



Note. Graph of the different types of life history. Adapted from types of life history, Moriña, 2017d (p.30)

Figure 1 - Types of Life Histories

From the previous figure, the types of life stories for the research process stand out, from which the following aspects were taken: according to the number of stories, it is a *multiple story*. since there are 26 interviewees who were considered for this research, and of a *parallel type* considering that the stories have a theme that can have similarities in general. According to the depth in the data collection, it is a *micro-story* and it is of a *thematic type*, since the interviews were addressed about a central theme; in this case it was the subject of confinement during the pandemic and, finally, the wording that was chosen to be used was in the third person, that is, the narrator *in*

the third person.

During the process, the recording of the interviews is suggested, considering that after carrying them out, comes the transcription of each of the sessions carried out. In the case at hand, permission was obtained from the interviewees to record the sessions, which allowed better management of the information. Subsequently, a selection of the different topics that were addressed was made, the latter was part of the next stage that is the beginning of the information analysis phase and its consequent elaboration of the life history.

The information was processed through

the *paradigmatic analysis of data* according to Sparkes & Devís (cited by Moriña, 2007e, p.72) which consists of “carrying out an analysis of the narrative and thinking about stories, adapting a position based on a typology, taxonomy or category”, with the purpose of having information with a better management that takes into account the voices of the interviewees, but also attends to the methodology and essences can be extracted. From the previous process, an objective report is presented where textual quotes from the interviewees are interspersed.

In this case, to carry out a paradigmatic data analysis, we resorted to the development of a rubric which has been a support to order the information. The rubric was developed for the research, consists of 26 questions, and the scale that was considered is Likert type whose response options are: very frequent, frequent, sometimes, little and never. This rubric made it possible to organize the information in order to highlight the opinion of each interviewee and, this way, get to obtain a common sense.

WHAT ARE THE BASIC PSYCHOLOGICAL PROCESSES?

For Mestre & Palmero (2004a) “psychological processes represent the infrastructure, foundations and framework on which we are building our own life” (p.1). These functions have a physical, neurological, psychological and social correlate, which leads us to understand that it is in the processes where the essence of our thinking, feeling and acting with respect to a given situation is found, in this case referring to the confinement by COVID -19.

Some features that were mentioned below: attention, memory, perception, emotion, motivation, thought and behavior.

Attention: According to Luria (in Hernández) attention is a selective process of necessary information, the consolidation of

eligible action programs and the maintenance of permanent control over their course”. The human being is attentive to what happens around him, this way he reaches a great learning of the world that surrounds him and, without attention, this would not be possible, as well as the organization in thoughts could not exist. structured and ordered.

Attention is also a cognitive selection process that prepares to respond to what is presented, giving priority to one stimulus or another and always in connection with other processes. Of the attentional processes, Luria distinguishes two types of attention that are: voluntary and involuntary (in Hernández, 2012b, p.99).

In the research, the interviewees describe certain factors that they have in common; Considering that attention is a selective process of necessary information, where different determinants are taken into account, such as external ones that have to do with intensity and novelty, in this case, COVID-19 counts as a novel stimulus to which they paid attention. They detailed that at the beginning it was voluntary, in which the interviewees referred paying attention to information related to the number of infections, as well as to the indications that were given mainly in the health, educational and labor sectors. In involuntary care, the interviewees stated that organizing their activities after a while was easier and they no longer worried too much about the issue of the pandemic and specifically about not being able to leave the house. It must be noted that of the nine interviewees considered for this article, 7 of them are university students and two are teachers, in both cases They stated that over time the management of the platforms became easier and easier.

Memory: Aguilar (in Mestre & Palmero, 2004b) describes it as a process made up of the encoding, retention and recovery of

information. Memory is related to some processes such as: perception, learning, language, thinking and problem solving. When remembering an event, the meaning that each one can remember according to their experience is taken into account.

Hernández (2012c) distinguishes three types of memory; sensory, work and long-term. The same author cites Santiago and Gómez (year) to describe sensory and working memory, which is described as responsible for maintaining the information that reaches our senses. Working memory, which is also known as short-term memory, is the set of active symbols to which, at a given moment, attention is paid and that is how we can manipulate it under voluntary control. Long-term memory is the broad set of systems specialized in acquiring, representing, and retrieving different types of information. This type of memory is especially useful in learning.

The learning that the pandemic has left remains in the memory, after what has been lived. Based on what has been mentioned, we can observe how the three types of memory influence confinement by COVID-19.

According to the rubric, the interviewees stated that the memory process has been variable in its functioning, for example; in sensory memory they reported that their senses were sharpened by sensory stimuli in the confinement environment, and that this made it possible for some to have memories or long-term memory activation through smells, tastes or images that they had previously experienced and that with the passage of time they had forgotten.

Perception: According to Díaz & Latorre (2015a) they define it as the way of interpreting sensations and, through their interpretation, giving meaning to everything that surrounds us. The perceptual process would be in charge of organizing and interpreting the sensory

information received. A characteristic of perception is that our senses tend to adapt to stimuli that are continuously present, that is, the intensity with which we perceive them tends to decrease over time if they are not modified.

These same authors distinguish two types of perceptual processing: ascending or bottom-up processing, which focuses on data processing, can be considered from the primary forms of appropriation of sensations. Top-down or top-down processing, also called concept-directed processing, is guided by our prior knowledge and experiences from which we build our perceptions. We use this knowledge and expectations when we try to identify or interpret the information received from ambiguous stimuli or that have not been clearly perceived by our senses (Díaz & Latorre, 2015b).

In relation to the responses of the interviewees, five of them stated that their perception has been focused on aspects related to the pandemic: the number of infections, the lack of precaution of some people or in their personal care, for example, paying attention in hand washing, that is, they are located in ascending perception. The four remaining interviewees reported worrying about situations about their future, their security both in the workplace and in education, which would focus on the downward perception.

Emotion: Gutiérrez (2006a,) defines it as “organic psychic reactions for or against something or someone and which manifests itself on the biological and psychic planes” (p.151). This same author comments that, for an emotion to appear, the perception of an object, the emotional experience and the psychological alteration are necessary. In addition to this, some characteristics can be highlighted such as: external and internal physiological reactions and the subjective experience of emotion.

In this process, seven of the nine interviewees expressed fear and sadness, situations that fortunately are not excessive enough to prevent an adaptive process from taking place. The two remaining interviewees stated that they felt happy, since they in confinement they saw an opportunity to enjoy and live fully with their families and/or activities that were pleasant to them, for example, playing video games.

Motivation: Gutiérrez (2006b) refers that motivation is everything that causes or explains a human act and Maslow describes that the motivation of human behavior is produced by the type of needs that affect the individual and proposes a five-story pyramid in which that each constitutes a different type of needs. At the bottom level are physiological needs, followed by security needs, then love and belonging needs, esteem and appreciation needs at the next level, and self-actualization needs at the top.

It is important to take into account that motivation not only includes positive variables, that is, just as a person can feel motivated and carry out activities to reach a goal and to feel good, motivation can also be of a negative nature, where what moves to a person it can be the punishment, threat, thought or idea for which he acts either to obtain some satisfaction or reward.

Gutiérrez refers that motivation is divided into two: internal or intrinsic motivation and external or extrinsic motivation. Internal motivation occurs when a person performs an activity for their own pleasure, that is, they do it because it gives them satisfaction, for example, a musician can play a specific instrument simply because it gives them pleasure, satisfaction and to feel fulfilled. On the other hand, extrinsic motivation requires an external stimulus, for example, a person who works all week to get paid, incentives are needed for the individual to experience

motivation (2006c).

According to the information obtained in the interviews, it can be said that these are related to Maslow's position in the understanding that, with the pandemic, the interviewees, by abiding by the confinement instructions, are attending to the need for security, to preserve the life, which can be considered both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. Verbally, the interviewees express that they have had variations in terms of extrinsic motivations, since monotony and confinement at times have been a factor to overcome in order to fulfill their duties.

Thought: González (2006d) describes the act of thinking as "a mental combination of previously stored perceptions with new experiences, this to generate a response" p.130. Thought implies a set of operations on knowledge in the cognitive system, thought is aimed at solving problems, this way thought can be understood as an operation and as a result.

Souza (et al., 2007) in his article on BF Skinner's notion of thought, refers that thought is the mediator between the idea and behavior, or what he cites as mediating mind, where thought requires behavior to *transcend*. In this same article, he quotes Ryle who comments that thought is a polymorphous concept, due to the multiple definitions that exist in this regard, for example, when thinking about the concept of thought, we can find a long list of statements (results) aimed at respond to such request.

A question that was asked to the participants was, what did you think at the beginning of the confinement due to the pandemic? Their answers in general have a common factor and that is that 8 of the 9 participants stated "they thought that the confinement would be for a few days or a few months", a situation that over time they saw as less likely to end. Another question that was asked was, what

do you think about the return to activities in this “new normality”? for which 6 of the 9 participants said they still felt insecure.

Conduct: García (2005) refers that the term “behavior in its basic definition was understood as the manifest reaction of living organisms to environmental stimuli” (p.3), a definition that presents a breadth in what we can understand by beings. alive, that is, in this category both humans and animals fit. Let’s go a little further, psychological theories warn that humans possess certain superior psychological processes according to A Lev S. Vygotsky (Cole, et al., 1978) and that this is what makes the response they emit more elaborate than that of a reflex act, the latter, the product of an action that obeys instincts more than a more elaborate cognitive process.

Thought and behavior are two processes that go together, since in the human being, prior to an action, a thought is produced, which guides the behavior. Behavior as a psychological process is an inherent part of man, and how it occurs will be an important reference to determine the degree of adaptation or not of a person to a given situation.

The behavior is a process that the interviewees stated that they had experienced important changes in their life dynamics, for example; stop going to work or classes in person to do it through a device. Others were their sleeping hours, since these were modified. In this sense, 6 of the 9 interviewees stated that, during the first months of confinement, they had problems organizing their sleeping times, either due to lack of sleep or excessive sleep. Another example was the behavior of socialization, which was manifested altered because it was no longer the same, and they even reported that the message is not the same interaction. And in the aspect of the study, in the same way the way of receiving or teaching classes was another behavior that was modified and, at the time of the interviews, for

some they were already adapted, while the rest expressed uncertainty about it.

CONCLUSIONS

As a conclusion, it can be highlighted that, of the seven processes considered for the present study, it was observed that, at the moment, those that have had the greatest difficulty are: behavior, thought and emotions. That is to say, that in these processes the interviewees stated that they had a higher degree of affectation in terms of the way they carry them in their daily lives, considering that the changes to which they were subjected due to confinement were from the beginning situations little explored, which led them to act and think according to the circumstances requested and their emotions such as sadness and despair, at one point were described as adaptive emotions.

From a positive perspective, it can be highlighted that some of the processes such as: motivation, emotion, memory and perception, were described by the interviewees as aspects that were favored in what was called the new normality, in the face of confinement. They described that this experience led them to perceive and analyze their activities in a different way, but in these circumstances they saw the need to attend to and memorize the procedures that this implied, for example; remember how to enter the platform to enter classes, or, make a calendar and organize the activities of the school and home.

Regarding the process of emotion, it is described in both poles, positive and negative, in this case it can be noted that the interviewees stated that, during the pandemic, they had new experiences in their lives that led them to describe the emotional aspect as an opportunity to value and get to know each other, in addition, to value their emotions with respect to their loved ones.

According to the main objective of the study, which was to know what are the

effects that, at the level of basic psychological processes, occur in a sample of 26 interviewees, it is suggested that there is a 70% advance considering that the analysis of 16 of the interviewees. Once this analysis is finished, the final product is the elaboration of the life story, which is a narrative that will be carried out in the third person and whose literary structure will be defined according to the themes that stand out the most in the analysis by rubric, that is, It can be a novel, it can be a story or cartoon.

In accordance with the methodology used, the final product of this study will be a *micro-story* considering that we are only focusing on how the interviewees experience certain psychological processes from the confinement by COVID-19, it is a multiple story due to the number of stories considered. and they

are parallel since the information is being compared in such a way that similarities can be distinguished in general, all this taking the rubric as a reference.

The following aspects were taken from the types of life stories for the research process; According to the number of stories, it is the *multiple story* since there are 26 interviewees who were considered for this research and of a *parallel type*, considering that the stories have a theme that can have similarities in general. According to the depth in the handling of the information, it is a *micro-story* and it is of a *thematic type*, since the interviews were addressed about a central topic, which in this case was the topic of confinement during the COVID-19 pandemic; and finally the writing of the final story will be narrated in the third person.

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