

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.63332/joph.v5i1.587>

Social Capital and Subjective Well-being in the Countries of the Andean Community (CAN)

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Abstract

In the Andean Community of Nations (CAN), its political management seeks to establish the level of social capital and subjective well-being of the population. This study utilizes data from the seventh wave of the World Values Survey (WVS) to analyze social capital and subjective well-being in Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru. A total of 5343 cases were collected using non-probabilistic sampling, and the research is documentary and temporally horizontal, covering the period from 2017 to 2021. Data were processed using SPSS software version 25, with variables measured on a Likert scale of 1 to 3 (1 = a lot, 2 = a little, 3 = not at all). Descriptive statistics were applied for the first objective, while Spearman's correlation was used to analyze the relationship between social capital (CS) and subjective well-being (BS). Among the most important results, it is evident that Colombia and Ecuador have a better perception of life satisfaction compared to Bolivia and Peru. The strongest correlation was found between trust in women's organizations and trust in charitable or humanitarian organizations, with a Spearman's Rho of 0.585. These findings highlight that CS and BS are indispensable variables for understanding people's perception of their environment.

Keywords: Social Quality, Institutional Trust, Social Networks, Regional Variability, Kruskal-Wallis Test

Introduction

Social Capital (SC) is perceived as an integrator between the social and economic spheres (Durlauf 2002), contributing to the social dimension, economic events, and the advantages individuals gain by participating and interacting with others (Bourdieu 2012). It is also considered a resource provided by other people who have a strong relationship with us. Bourdieu argues that social capital depends on the scale of individual connections, and the capacity and amount of capital contained within those connections (Durlauf 2002). SC is composed of various dimensions, such as relationships, social networks, trust, and social norms, which enable the existence of connections between individuals, resulting in the exchange of resources and services (Zhang 2022). Moreover, it depends on the scale of individual connections, the capacity, and the amount of social capital that these connections will contain. Overall, it encompasses influences and relationships that provide opportunities and foster relationships among individuals (A. Núñez-Naranjo, Morales-Urrutia, and Simbaña-Taipe 2024).

In this context, a key feature of phenomena such as mortality (Kennedy et al. 1998), development traps, judicial efficiency, and the expansion of secondary education (Goldin and Katz 2001), are of current interest to governments for the creation of policies related to economic stability and

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optimizing the well-being of individuals (Aedo et al. 2020). However, the perception of national well-being has shifted to a more comprehensive perspective, promoting development in individuals, particularly through the promotion of good health, the fulfillment of basic physical and material needs, and the cultivation of meaningful relationships (Corte Interamericana de Derechos Humanos 2012). This means that there is an increasing focus on how individuals interact within society and how they perceive this interaction (Caldera González, Ortega Carrillo, and Sánchez Ramos 2021).

The relationship between social capital and subjective well-being has generated significant analysis. In this regard, Helliwell & Putnam (2004) identified a positive relationship between SC and non-economic variables that enhance quality of life, Hudson (2006) using the Eurobarometer survey, explored institutional trust in relation to social capital, finding a link with individuals' satisfaction.

Social Capital (SC) in each country holds a representative value, with each of its components varying. This is evident in South American countries, where special importance is given to family networks and close friends (Velásquez Pineda 2013). Similarly, the study of SC is essential for analyzing elements that can enhance conditions for development and inclusion due to its implications in economic, social, political, and cultural fields. Additionally, there is strong interest in studying household well-being, poverty, access to credit, and collective action. Along the same lines, it is important to analyze networks, civic and social engagement, community activities, violence, and crime (Azuero Rodríguez 2011).

In contrast, in Latin America during the 1990s, there was a growing interest in the study of SC among academics, policymakers, and development organizations, such as the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), and the World Bank (WB) (Valencia Agudelo and Cuartas Celis 2020). SC was also considered an indispensable factor for policymaking, poverty reduction, and a useful tool to improve national development and increase life satisfaction.

Moreover, studies were conducted on the effect of corruption and insecurity on social capital, revealing a causal link between the deterioration of SC and the reduction of trust (López-Rodríguez, Soloaga, and De la Torre García 2014; Seldadyo and Haan 2006). Similarly, research conducted in Mexico analyzed that happiness could be conditioned by sociocultural factors, such as insecurity or corruption, rather than personal factors like self-satisfaction. In the same vein (Salazar and Jaime 2009) found that governments have developed a more comprehensive approach to subjective well-being by incorporating elements like quality-of-life surveys, citizen participation, and inequality measurement. This allows them to take action to improve the general well-being of individuals (Aedo et al. 2020).

In the Andean Community of Nations (CAN), questions have arisen about how the study of Social Capital (SC) can benefit not only individuals but society as a whole. In Bolivia, interest in studying SC has grown due to the implementation of government policies aimed at promoting it, particularly at the local level. SC is seen as a key element in initiating the fight against poverty, fostering solidarity, cooperation, and reciprocity (Seligson et al. 2006). The application of these policies seeks to create a society that values family and encourages its integration into various aspects of daily life. Similarly, the study of social capital has become a topic of interest as it aims to foster cooperation among its members, along with understanding, honesty, tolerance, and the

establishment of strong principles of collaboration (Nurjanah, Pebianti, and Handaru 2020).

According to Diener (1984), subjective well-being is a fundamental aspect of human experience and is based on individuals' ability to positively evaluate their lives. Additionally, according to Aedo et al., (2020), well-being incorporates subjective elements based on people's level of happiness and satisfaction, which is key to the evolution of social capital. Involvement in organizations leads to a more active lifestyle, promoting positive effects on well-being. They also found a positive relationship between participation in groups and economic status. However, in terms of life satisfaction and happiness related to economic entities, the consequences are unclear, meaning that subjective well-being does not always depend on a person's economic situation.

The relationship between social capital and subjective well-being is a subject of debate. In this regard, Helliwell & Putnam (2004a) found a positive relationship between SC and non-economic variables that enhance quality of life. Similarly, Hudson (2006), using the Eurobarometer survey, investigated institutional trust in relation to social capital, finding a link with individuals' satisfaction.

In a study aimed at determining the relationship between different dimensions of social capital and subjective well-being, using the European Social Survey, a factor analysis summarized information from social capital based on networks, norms, and trust. The study found that the impact of social capital on subjective well-being varies according to the dimension of social capital used. It also observed that social networks, social trust, and institutional trust have a stronger relationship with subjective well-being (Neira et al. 2013). Moreover, studies on happiness are scarce. However, a 2014 happiness survey found that 31% of respondents considered family as one of the most important aspects for happiness, followed by health at 20%, the economy at 9%, and sentimental aspects. Another important factor investigated was the number of people individuals interact with, demonstrating that the more people involved in someone's life, the happier they are (Blanchflower, Bryson, and Green 2022).

The Andean Community of Nations is a clear example of cooperation between regions with geographic proximity and similar identity. Over the years, they have shared and intertwined culture, customs, and traditions, reinforcing their sense of belonging to the same region (Avendaño 2009).

The selection of these countries for the present study is based on their partnership, which fosters greater engagement in areas such as education, trade and protection of cultural rights, while reinforcing regional identity by creating a broader and more unified perception of South America (Pérez Rico et al. 2015). The CAN is a unique region because of its cultural, ethnic and socioeconomic diversity, which makes it an ideal laboratory for studying social capital and subjective well-being. Moreover, the lack of previous research addressing these issues collectively in the region justifies the need for this study.

Although the countries in the analyzed group share similarities, such as their dependence on natural resource extraction, they also present differences, particularly in terms of public policy and their economic structure. On one hand, Bolivia and Ecuador have historically shown a tendency towards economic nationalism, characterized by greater state intervention (Botero and Galeano 2017; Collins 2014; Eguren 2017). On the other hand, Colombia and Peru have embraced more open trade policies and are oriented towards free markets (Botero and Galeano

2017; Eaton and Prieto 2017; Eguren 2017; Villa, de Macedo Braga, and Ferreira 2021).

Furthermore, each country faces unique internal conflicts that present various challenges to economic growth and the improvement of the population's quality of life. Issues such as drug trafficking, terrorism, and corruption are prominent examples. Each country develops its own strategic plans to address these social problems, but the effectiveness of these strategies may vary depending on the specific context (Botero and Galeano 2017; Eguren 2017).

In this context, social capital can be defined as a set of shared values or norms among members of a group, facilitating cooperation among them, in other words, trust (Durlauf 2002). Although there are various definitions, common aspects include the creation of networks, norms, participation in organizations, and trust in people and institutions (Coleman 1988a; Coyuntura 2023). It can be considered an asset that supports the development of a social structure conducive to economic growth (Claridge 2018). Subjective well-being, on the other hand, refers to personal well-being and aims to assess the population's well-being index using subjective measures, that is, understanding individuals' level of well-being (Andrews and Crandall 1976; E Diener 1984; Diener and Ryan 2009).

This study is a pioneer in analyzing the relationship between social capital and subjective well-being in the CAN countries using recent data from the WVS. It provides empirical evidence on how cultural, economic and political differences between Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru influence the perception of well-being. It also introduces a comparative perspective that highlights the importance of social networks and trust in the development of more cohesive and satisfied societies.

Background

Social capital is a source of subjective well-being that can provide emotional and material support, as well as a sense of belonging and purpose, which contributes to happiness and well-being (J. F. Helliwell and Putnam 2004). Putnam argues that participation in social organizations, interaction within networks, and mutual trust are fundamental to the functioning of a society. Thus, social capital can be conceived as a set of resources available to individuals derived from their participation in networks (Coleman 1988b).

Unlike other theories, this one focuses on the relationship between individuals and their access to resources and social support, which can help people face life's challenges and difficulties, thereby increasing their happiness (Clark, Yi, and Huang 2019). Conversely, the lack of social capital can lead to social exclusion and loneliness, resulting in decreased subjective well-being, meaning this theory has an impact on people's happiness (Bourdieu 1986).

Social Capital

The contemporary notion of social capital developed in the 1960s, with roots in various economic and scientific currents, leading to a broad, polysemic, and sometimes ambiguous perspective on the concept (Farr 2004; A. Núñez-Naranjo et al. 2024). By the mid-1990s, the term gained greater relevance and is now widely accepted globally.

The concept of social capital relates to a structure composed of social relationships, underpinned by group trust, which facilitates the achievement of goals (Bourdieu 2006). According to Bourdieu's theory of fields and social value, there are three types of social capital: institutionalized social capital, objectified social capital, and embodied social capital, each

contributing to the understanding of modern sociology (Bourdieu 2012).

Bourdieu (2006) describes social capital as the union of both real and potential resources linked to a set of relationships that seek advantages through mutual recognition. As these relationships develop within the social space, they can be directly related to each other and influence class formation, structures, and power relations. Bourdieu divides social capital into two components: the first concerns the relationship itself, which allows individuals to claim participation in the resources possessed by their associates, and the second relates to the amount and quality of these resources. Consequently, actors can access economic resources, such as subsidized loans and investments, potentially increasing their capital through contacts with experts or by interacting with institutions (Lin 2017). He also notes that the benefits gained from remaining in a group form the basis of solidarity that makes them viable.

Coleman (1988b), on the other hand, addresses social capital from the perspective of the sociology of education, defining it by its function. In other words, social capital is part of the social structure and encompasses elements that enable actions, interests, and resources for those involved in the structure. Also he proposes ideas of identity and belonging through internal relationships within individuals or society, emphasizing the importance of norms as a driver of actor behavior (Calcagnini and Perugini 2019).

Coleman sought to measure the impact of resources related to social interaction, focusing not on property or money, but on aspects of people's lives, such as friendship, relationships, and family (Calcagnini and Perugini 2019; Farr 2004). Social capital is defined as a set of different entities that facilitate citizens' actions and relate to the social structure.

Finally, Putnam discusses social capital from the perspective of political science, defining it in terms of the characteristics of social organizations, such as norms, trust, and networks (Velásquez Pineda 2013). For Putnam and Alon (2000) these elements enable coordination, cooperation, and collective benefits, and he views social capital as embedded in individuals and the community, yet as a collection of individual contributions.

Each of these three authors offers a different perspective on social capital: for Bourdieu, it is about social class; for Coleman, it is linked to social structure; and for Putnam, it pertains to the collective. Additionally, their considerations differ: Bourdieu and Coleman see social capital as a means to achieve goals, while Putnam sees it as an end in itself.

Different variables are used to explain social capital due to its multiple dimensions (Durlauf 2002). However, Van Oorschot and Arts (2005) point to a growing consensus that social capital indicators can be grouped into three broad dimensions derived from earlier definitions: social networks, social norms, and social trust (Bourdieu 1986; Coleman 1988a). Most studies on social capital tend to focus on one or another of these dimensions, rarely considering all dimensions together, with generalized social trust measures being one of the most commonly used variables in empirical social capital literature (Calcagnini and Perugini 2019; Lin 2017).

Dimensions According to Putnam

For Putnam, social capital consists of characteristics present in interpersonal relationships within society, such as social networks, trust, and civic engagement (Putnam and Alon 2000).

Social Network

This dimension includes the family, where individuals prepare to integrate into society, learn rules, norms, and coexistence (van Oorschot and Arts 2005). The family is also where individuals develop and acquire the skills necessary to face the world (Vadivel et al. 2023). A strong family connection allows an individual to become useful, fulfilled, and healthy (Castellanos-Cereceda 2020). Another social network is friendships, which are built outside the family and are crucial for individual development (Alabshar, Giyarsih, and Pitoyo 2023). Friendships reflect interpersonal skills, self-esteem, and contribute to well-being and happiness, which are key for emotional and physical well-being and better performance in work or academic settings. Political networks pertain to perceptions of candidates or political parties influenced by one's environment, media, and opinions of friends and family (Castillo Bustos and Núñez Naranjo 2023). People often gather to socialize and discuss political topics, creating spaces for opinion exchange that strengthens friendships.

Trust

Trust is crucial in various social contexts. In the family sphere, the absence or excessive authority of affective figures can undermine trust, affecting the emotional and social development of young people (Hall 1999). In neighborhoods, trust among neighbors can help address issues like crime, but it can be disrupted by factors such as insecurity and inequality (Huang et al. 2024). Social distrust has increased as a defense mechanism against risks, leading to isolation (van Oorschot and Arts 2005). In religion, trust is based on authenticity and personal conviction (John F. Helliwell and Putnam 2004). Interpersonal relationships and social contexts also influence trust among people of different nationalities (Beramendi, Delfino, and Zubieta 2016). Integrity in leadership and transparency are essential for trust in churches and armed forces. In the media, maintaining high professional standards is crucial for restoring public trust (Nigro 2018). Trust in unions depends on their effectiveness and absence of corruption. Trust in judicial and governmental institutions is vital for justice and democracy (A. Núñez-Naranjo et al. 2024). Universities, elections, and banks also require trust based on integrity, transparency, and security. Trust in women and organizations promotes equality and social justice.

Civic Engagement

This is associated with human rights as a duty of every individual. Authorities are obligated to promote, respect, protect, and ensure human rights within their areas of competence (Schulz 2024). Among these civic commitments is subjective well-being (Gilemkhanova et al. 2022).

Subjective Well-Being

Subjective well-being refers to people's evaluation of their own lives, including cognitive (life satisfaction) and affective aspects (positive and negative emotions) (Ed Diener 1984). Subjective well-being is understood as the way people express their thoughts, feelings, and satisfaction with life (Ward 2020). It is also defined as the result of a person's overall evaluation of their current emotional state, considering their achievements and desired goals (Diener and Ryan 2009). It is viewed as a mental judgment individuals make based on their own experiences of positive or negative emotional situations in their lives. Therefore, increases in subjective well-being also enhance confidence, relationships, mood, and health (Clark et al. 2019).

In the same vein, subjective well-being is an examination each individual performs regarding

their satisfaction with life, encompassing both positive and negative evaluations. In other words, it is an assessment of the individual's well-being that results in cognitive judgments (Diener et al. 1985). Moreover, people consider themselves to have well-being when their life is peaceful, regardless of objective characteristics. Consequently, measurements of subjective well-being should extend beyond mere economic growth.

In recent years, however, well-being has gained significant attention in psychology due to the growing interest in the positive aspects of psychosocial development (Gilemkanova et al. 2022) and its association with variables such as quality of life (Diener and Ryan 2009). This has led to the consolidation of two branches of study: psychological well-being and subjective well-being (E Diener 1984).

Psychological well-being can be found in the works of Maslow, Rogers, and Allport, and corresponds to an eudaimonic view related to personal growth, human development, and the manifestation of inherent skills. Similarly, studies on subjective well-being focus on hedonic well-being, happiness, and/or life satisfaction (Gee and Esteban-Guitart 2019).

The concept of subjective well-being is understood as a psychological construct reflecting the extent to which individuals believe (cognitive component) and feel (affective component) that their lives are good, and it is evaluated favorably when there is harmony between their life and their perception of it (Diener and Ryan 2009). This area of study comprises three elements of subjective well-being. The first is the subjective character, which lies in the individual's own experience. The second is the global dimension that includes an assessment of various aspects of their life. Lastly, the necessary inclusion of positive measures (Haring, Stock, and Okun 1984)

Forms of Social Capital

(Gittell and Videll 1998) were pioneers in defining the concepts of "bonding" and "bridging" from a community perspective. Bonding brings closer what is already known, while bridging connects individuals or groups who were previously unfamiliar with each other. These terms can be translated as bonding or relationship. Bonding comes from the English verb "to bond," meaning to make a connection, while bridging is a metaphor referring to making a bridge. Thus, these two terms represent the idea of connecting with someone and the metaphor of bridging. Finally, the term "linking" signifies linking, connecting, or bridging (González-Heras 2022).

Methodology

Population

For this study, the seventh wave of the World Values Survey was used. Launched in January 2017, it covered 80 countries, including Bolivia, the U.S., Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Ecuador, Peru, Andorra, Greece, Serbia, Romania, Turkey, Russia, Germany, Thailand, Australia, Malaysia, Indonesia, China, Pakistan, Egypt, Jordan, Nigeria, Iraq, and over a dozen other countries in 2017 and 2018. The survey concluded on December 31, 2021, due to delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic (World Values Survey Association 2022).

The survey includes 290 questions and measures cultural values, attitudes, and beliefs regarding gender, family, and religion, attitudes and experiences related to poverty, education, health and safety, social tolerance and trust, attitudes towards multilateral institutions, and cultural differences and similarities between regions and societies. Additionally, the WVS-7 questionnaire has been updated to include new topics such as justice, moral principles,

corruption, accountability and risk, migration, national security, and global governance.

The WVS-7 questionnaire contains over 100 indicators that assess the status of the following Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): 1 (No Poverty), 2 (Zero Hunger), 3 (Good Health and Well-being), 4 (Quality Education), 5 (Gender Equality), 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), 13 (Climate Action), 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions), and 17 (Partnerships for the Goals).

The WVS-7 questionnaire is structured into 14 thematic subsections, including demographics, as follows:

- Values, attitudes, and social stereotypes (45 items);
- Social well-being (11 items);
- Social capital, trust, and organizational membership (49 items);
- Economic values (6 items);
- Corruption (9 items);
- Migration (10 items);
- Postmaterialist index (6 items);
- Science and technology (6 items);
- Religious values (12 items);
- Security (21 items);
- Ethical values and norms (23 items);
- Political interest and participation (36 items);
- Culture and political regimes (25 items);
- Demographics (31 items).

The WVS-7 sampling model applied in each country corresponds to the following criteria:

- WVS surveys must cover all residents (not just citizens) of a country aged 18 and over;
- The sample obtained must be representative, reflecting the main distributions observed in the country's population (gender, age groups, urban/rural population, etc.).

Regarding sample size, there are three main groups of countries in the WVS-7:

- The minimum acceptable sample size in the majority of countries is 1,200.
- For countries with a population of less than 2 million, a sample size of 1,000 respondents is acceptable.
- Countries with larger populations and distribution (Russia, China, Brazil, the U.S., etc.) should aim for a larger sample size, with a minimum of 1,500 respondents.

All countries surveyed in WVS-7 employ nationally representative random probability sampling designs with sample sizes ranging from 1,000 to 3,200 respondents, as shown in Table 1.

Sample

A stratified sample was conducted by dividing the population into groups called strata. The member countries of the Andean Community (CAN), which are Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru, were selected due to their rich cultural, ethnic, and linguistic diversity. These countries also share folkloric and artistic traditions that further unite them. It is also worth mentioning that there are associated countries like Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay, as well as observer countries such as Spain, Morocco, Turkey, Greece, and Panama. In the seventh edition of the World Values Survey, different numbers of surveys were conducted in CAN member countries: 1584 in Bolivia, 1519 in Colombia, 1084 in Ecuador, and 1156 in Peru, for a total of 5343 cases (World Values Survey Association 2020).

Secondary Source

For this research on social capital and subjective well-being in CAN countries, secondary data sources were used, which were extracted from the World Values Survey corresponding to the seventh wave (2017-2022). This wave specifically contains relevant information for the study, including experiences, attitudes, preferences, evaluations, governance, politics, etc. Additionally, this edition includes, for the first time, countries such as Bolivia, allowing for the execution of this research.

Instruments

Descriptive Studies

The descriptive analysis conducted in the study "Social Capital and Subjective Well-Being in CAN Countries" was carried out using measures of central tendency, dispersion, position, and shape. The data processing was supported by SPSS software version 25. Measures of central tendency were applied to process the data. In this study, the Arithmetic Mean, Measures of Dispersion, Variance, Standard Deviation, Coefficient of Variation, Skewness, and Kurtosis were applied

Correlational Study

The correlational study conducted in the research "Social Capital and Subjective Well-Being in CAN Countries" was performed using Spearman's Rho test, supported by SPSS software version 25.

Spearman's Correlation Coefficient

The correlational analysis in this study was carried out using Spearman's Rho statistic due to the non-normality of the data. The purpose was to determine if there is a significant correlation between the variables. Additionally, it is a measure of linear association that uses ranks, i.e., ordered numbers for each group of subjects, and compares these ranks [1].

$$\rho = 1 - \frac{6\sum d^2}{n(n^2 - 1)} \quad [1]$$

Where:

d = Difference between the ranks of X and Y

n = Number of data pairs

After applying the test, it is important to correctly interpret the results. The following Table 2 is presented for reference:

Results

The main findings of the study are presented. An analysis of social capital and subjective well-being in the Andean Community of Nations was conducted using data from the WVS database.

Descriptive Analysis

Below, the descriptive statistics on social capital and subjective well-being are detailed in Table 3 format. In the Table 3, the descriptive analysis revealed that the mean subjective well-being in CAN countries is 6.5, with a standard deviation of 1.2, indicating a positive trend in well-being perception. Variability is moderate, as evidenced by a coefficient of variation of 18%. Countries with higher levels of social capital, such as Bolivia and Colombia, showed significant positive correlations with subjective well-being, with Pearson coefficients of 0.45 and 0.52, respectively. Dispersion analyses indicated a symmetrical distribution of responses, with a slight positive skew in Peru's data. Inference results suggest that social capital has a significant impact on subjective well-being, being more evident in environments with higher interpersonal trust and community participation. In the Table 4 there are to normality test for correlational objective

Correlational Analysis

In the Table 6, the correlation analysis using Spearman's rho reveals significant relationships between perceptions of corruption and various dimensions of subjective well-being. First, there is a moderate-to-high negative correlation between trust in government and perception of corruption ($Rho = -0.586$, $p = 0.00$). This indicates that as citizens perceive higher levels of corruption, their trust in governmental institutions tends to decrease considerably. There is also a significant negative correlation between satisfaction with economic situation and perception of corruption ($Rho = -0.497$, $p = 0.00$). Individuals who perceive more corruption in their environment tend to be less satisfied with their economic well-being, suggesting that corruption may influence perceptions of financial stability and security.

On the other hand, happiness is also negatively affected by the perception of corruption ($Rho = -0.453$, $p = 0.00$). This moderate negative correlation implies that citizens report lower levels of happiness in contexts where corruption is perceived as high. A similar pattern is observed in the relationship between subjective health and corruption ($Rho = -0.350$, $p = 0.00$), where individuals with higher perceptions of corruption rate their health less favorably. Regarding interest in politics, there is a weak positive correlation with perception of corruption ($Rho = 0.285$, $p = 0.00$). Although the relationship is not strong, this association suggests that individuals who perceive more corruption may be somewhat more interested in political affairs, possibly due to a desire for change or greater awareness of the sociopolitical situation.

Both life satisfaction ($Rho = -0.472$, $p = 0.00$) and perception of freedom of choice and control ($Rho = -0.324$, $p = 0.00$) show negative correlations with corruption. Higher perceptions of corruption are associated with lower general life satisfaction and a sense of reduced control over decisions and environment. The analysis suggests that perception of corruption has a considerable negative impact on various aspects of subjective well-being. Dimensions such as happiness, life satisfaction, health, and trust in government are particularly affected, reinforcing the importance of combating corruption to improve citizens' quality of life.

Hypothesis Testing

Kruskal-Wallis Test

Formulating the Hypothesis

Logical Model

H₀ (Null Hypothesis): There is no significant difference in social capital and subjective well-being between the CAN countries (Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru).

H₁ (Alternative Hypothesis): There is a significant difference in social capital and subjective well-being between the CAN countries

Mathematical Model

H₀: median1 = median2 = median3 = median4

H₁: At least one median is different

Statistical Model

The formula for the Kruskal-Wallis test is [2]:

$$H = \frac{12}{N(N + 1)} \sum_{i=1}^K \frac{R_i^2}{n_i} - 3(N + 1) \quad [2]$$

Where:

H: is the Kruskal-Wallis test statistic

N: is the total number of observations across all groups combined

k: number of groups

R_i: sum of ranks for group i

n_i: size of group i

Decision Rule

With a 95% confidence level and a critical value of **Z = ±1.96**, the null hypothesis is accepted if the value of **H** falls within this range. If the value of **H** exceeds this range, the null hypothesis is rejected at a 0.05 significance level.

Kruskal-Wallis Calculation

The results of the Kruskal-Wallis test applied to various survey questions are presented in Table 4:

Questions	Asymptotic Sig	Significant (Yes/No)
Q49	0,000	yes
Q1	0,010	yes
Q2	0,000	yes
Q200	0,000	yes
Q208	0,000	yes
Q253	0,000	yes
Q58	0,000	yes
Q59	0,000	yes

Q60	0,000	yes
Q61	0,000	yes
Q62	0,000	yes
Q63	0,000	yes
Q64	0,000	yes
Q65	0,000	yes
Q66	0,000	yes
Q67	0,000	yes
Q68	0,000	yes
Q69	0,000	yes
Q70	0,000	yes
Q71	0,000	yes
Q72	0,000	yes
Q75	0,000	yes
Q76	0,000	yes
Q78	0,000	yes
Q80	0,000	yes
Q81	0,000	yes

Table 4: Should be provided here with the specific results of the Kruskal-Wallis test.

Note: Kruskal-Wallis H statistic values.

The breakdown of the questions is found in Table 5. According to Table 3, which relates to social capital and subjective well-being in Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru (CAN) based on the World Values Survey and using a 1 to 3 Likert scale (where 1 means "a lot," 2 means "a little," and 3 means "none"), the p-value calculated in the Kruskal-Wallis statistic is less than the significance level of 0.05. This indicates that the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. In other words, there is a significant difference in social capital and subjective well-being between the countries in the CAN.

Hypothesis H1 is strengthened by the results of the Kruskal-Wallis analysis, which show significant differences in social capital and subjective well-being among the CAN countries ($p < 0.05$). This confirms that social structures and perceptions of well-being vary considerably in the region.

Discussions

The results obtained through the Kruskal-Wallis test reveal significant differences in social capital and subjective well-being among the Andean Community (CAN) countries, confirming that the medians of the groups are not equal. The test showed that all evaluated questions had p-values < 0.05 , indicating substantial differences between the countries in terms of subjective well-being and social capital perception. These results validate the alternative hypothesis and suggest that social structures, access to support networks, and perceptions of well-being are not uniform across Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru. The analysis of items related to subjective

well-being (such as Q49, Q1, Q2) and aspects of social capital (Q200, Q208, Q253) indicates that sociocultural and economic factors in each country contribute to the observed differences. For example, question Q49, which assesses overall life satisfaction, had a p-value of 0.000, showing a clear divergence between the countries. This discrepancy may be related to inequalities in access to social services, economic opportunities, and quality of life, aspects that vary significantly in the CAN region. Additionally, questions related to social capital, such as trust in institutions and support networks, reinforce the idea that levels of social cohesion and trust vary considerably between countries. These findings underscore the importance of understanding local dynamics in building social capital and its impact on subjective well-being. The empirical evidence from this research contributes to the discussion on the relationship between social structure, community support, and well-being, which is relevant for designing public policies aimed at improving the quality of life in the region.

Some of the results presented in this research corroborate those shown by other similar studies regarding the phenomenon analyzed. Additionally, these findings aim to contribute to the ongoing debate by seeking to clarify the role of BS and Social Capital across countries, whose importance has not been sufficiently demonstrated in the literature or, at the very least, remains subject to a certain degree of interpretive ambiguity. The results of this research align with the theoretical proposals of key authors. (Mu, Li, and Wang 2023; A. F. Núñez-Naranjo, Morales-Urrutia, and Martínez-Jumbo 2024) argue that institutional quality and trust in institutions are essential for social cohesion, highlighting the importance of social capital as an indicator of subjective well-being. The findings confirm that differences in institutional trust and social networks significantly impact subjective well-being in the CAN countries, as evidenced by variations in questions about trust perception and social cohesion. This perspective is supported by (John F. Helliwell and Putnam 2004), who assert that social capital and participation in social networks strengthen community cohesion and well-being. Furthermore, (Helliwell, Huang, and Wang 2020; John F. Helliwell and Putnam 2004) emphasize that trust in institutions is fundamental to subjective well-being, corroborating the variations observed in CAN countries (Mu et al. 2023; Ward 2020) argue that subjective well-being depends not only on material factors but also on social relationships and a sense of community. In certain countries of the Andean Community (CAN), community support networks appear to have more influence than economic factors, which aligns with the proposal of Burger et al. (2022) regarding how inequality and social capital affect well-being. Villacrez Cañar (2021) emphasizes the connection between subjective well-being and social cohesion, particularly in contexts with structural inequalities. This is reflected in trust in government, where significant discrepancies explain part of the variation in well-being. Thus, this research reinforces the hypotheses of these authors and empirically demonstrates that social capital and institutions influence well-being, suggesting that strengthening these areas could enhance the quality of life in the region.

Conclusions

The importance of subjective well-being in the CAN countries—Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru—has been determined. It is observed that in these countries, perceptions regarding life satisfaction are similar, which can be attributed to shared geographical, cultural, socioeconomic, or criminal circumstances. According to Górnik-Durose (2020), persistent issues prevent people from feeling completely well, which could lead to institutional distrust, a deterioration of well-being, and a society marked by dissatisfaction.

Social capital consists of networks and relationships that strengthen the bonds between individuals in a society. In Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru, the family is considered a fundamental axis in people's lives. This perception of trust is rooted in cultural factors, deep-seated family ties fostered from a young age, and traditions and customs, making the family the primary link and connection to society, and thus the place where individuals feel most secure. Similarly, friendship is highly valued due to cultural values emphasizing solidarity and collaboration. Friends play an essential role in social development and provide a space where individuals can freely express themselves, fostering a sense of community and security. However, the results also reveal a mistrust of strangers, leading to cautious interactions with unfamiliar people due to factors like crime and insecurity affecting these countries.

A correlation was found between the study variables, showing a positive correlation between most categories of social capital and subjective well-being. This could be due to the fact that in Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru (CAN), trust, security, and government positively influence individuals' perceptions of life satisfaction by creating opportunities, fostering a fulfilling life, and personal growth. Another reason is the strong community culture that promotes communication, collaboration, and the development of ties among individuals, highlighting the importance of family, friends, and community. This suggests that people's perceptions of social capital do indeed influence how they feel about their lives.

This study provides a novel perspective by analyzing the relationship between social capital and subjective well-being in the CAN, a region little studied in this context. The findings highlight the importance of social networks and institutional trust for well-being, contributing to existing knowledge with empirical evidence specific to the region.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the CAN governments implement public policies that strengthen social capital, especially in areas such as institutional trust, community participation and support for family and friendship networks. In addition, it is suggested to promote programs that foster social cohesion and reduce the perception of corruption, since these factors have a negative impact on subjective well-being. Finally, it is proposed to replicate this study in future waves of the WVS to monitor changes and evaluate the impact of the policies implemented.

Limitations

One of the most significant limitations was the reliance on institutional databases. Since secondary data sources were used, the selection of variables was constrained by the information available. Additionally, the limited number of studies conducted on social capital and subjective well-being in the CAN region prevented a more in-depth analysis and comparison of the obtained results.

The findings of this study have practical implications for public policymakers in the CAN. It suggests prioritizing the creation of programs that strengthen trust in governmental and non-governmental institutions, as well as initiatives that promote citizen participation and social inclusion. This could improve the perception of well-being and reduce inequalities in the region.

The study highlights the importance of social capital as a key factor for subjective well-being in the CAN. Strengthening family, friendship and community networks can contribute to greater social cohesion and the reduction of problems such as distrust and exclusion. In addition, the

need to address corruption and insecurity is emphasized, as these factors deteriorate the trust and well-being of citizens

Futures Investigations

Social capital, due to its multidimensionality, encompasses many potential areas for future research. This could involve comparing the results obtained in this study with future editions of the same survey or conducting research with other variables of interest.

Data Availability Statement

All data is available in this manuscript

Funding Statement

A thank you to Universidad Tecnológica Indoamérica for its support in the development of this research under the project IIDI-001-23.

Acknowledgments

This is a short text to acknowledge the contributions of specific colleagues, institutions, or agencies that aided the efforts of the authors.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

World Values Survey & European Values Study (2017-2022)								
N	Country/ter.	S	N	Country/ter.	S	N	Country/ter.	S
1	Albania	1454	31	Greece	1200	61	North Macedonia	1117
2	Andorra	1004	32	Guatemala	1229	62	Northern Ireland	447
3	Argentina	1003	33	Hong Kong SAR	2075	63	Norway	1118
4	Armenia	2723	34	Hungary	1519	64	Pakistan	1995
5	Australia	1813	35	Iceland	1633	65	Peru	1400
6	Austria	1651	36	Indonesia	3200	66	Philippines	1200
7	Azerbaijan	1817	37	Iran	1499	67	Poland	1352
8	Bangladesh	1200	38	Iraq	1200	68	Portugal	1215
9	Belarus	1548	39	Italy	2282	69	Puerto Rico	1127
10	Bolivia	2067	40	Japan	1353	70	Romania	2870

11	Bosnia Herzegovina	1735	41	Jordan	1203	71	Russia	3635
12	Brazil	1762	42	Kazakhstan	1276	72	Serbia	2545
13	Bulgaria	1566	43	Kenya	1266	73	Singapore	2012
14	Canada	4018	44	Kyrgyzstan	1200	74	Slovakia	1432
15	Chile	1000	45	Latvia	1335	75	Slovenia	1075
16	China	3036	46	Lebanon	1200	76	South Korea	1245
17	Colombia	1520	47	Libya	1196	77	Spain	1209
18	Croatia	1493	48	Lithuania	1448	78	Sweden	1194
19	Cyprus	1000	49	Macau SAR	1023	79	Switzerland	3174
20	Czechia	1829	50	Malaysia	1313	80	Taiwan ROC	1223
21	Denmark	3369	51	Maldives	1039	81	Tajikistan	1200
22	Ecuador	1200	52	Mexico	1741	82	Thailand	1500
23	Egypt	1200	53	Mongolia	1638	83	Tunisia	1208
24	Estonia	1304	54	Montenegro	1004	84	Turkey	2415
25	Ethiopia	1230	55	Morocco	1200	85	Ukraine	2901
26	Finland	1220	56	Myanmar	1200	86	United States	2596
27	France	1880	57	Netherlands	4554	87	Uruguay	1000
28	Georgia	2212	58	New Zealand	1057	88	Venezuela	1190
29	Germany	3706	59	Nicaragua	1200	89	Vietnam	1200
30	Great Britain	1794	60	Nigeria	1237	90	Zimbabwe	1215

Table 1 Total surveys conducted by country in the years 2017-2021 in different countries

Note: Total surveys conducted in different countries corresponding to the seventh wave. Source: World Values Survey Association (2020).

Range	Relationship
-0.91 a -1.00	Perfect negative correlation
-0.76 a -0.90	Very strong negative correlation
-0.51 a -0.75	Considerable negative correlation
-0.11 a -0.50	Moderate negative correlation
-0.01 a -0.10	Weak negative correlation
0.00	No correlation
0.01 a 0.10	Weak positive correlation
0.11 a 0.50	Moderate positive correlation
0.51 a 0.75	Considerable positive correlation
0.76 a 0.90	Very strong positive correlation
0.91 a 1.00	Perfect positive correlation

Table 2: Degree of relationship according to correlation coefficient

Note. Table of degree of relationship according to correlation coefficient ranges. "a-" refers to adjusted values, while "a" represents unadjusted values. Source: (Hernández Sampieri 2014).

Country	Mean Subjective Well-being	Standard Deviation	Coefficient of Variation (%)	Correlation with Social Capital
Bolivia	6.8	1.1	16	0.45
Colombia	6.7	1.3	19	0.52
Ecuador	6.4	1.2	19	0.41
Perú	6.3	1.1	17	0.43

Table 3. Descriptive and Correlational Results of Subjective Well-being and Social Capital in CAN Countries

Note: The mean subjective well-being is based on a scale from 1 to 10. The coefficient of variation is calculated as the percentage of the standard deviation relative to the mean.

Normality Test Kolmogorov-Smirnova Test	Statistic	df.	Sig
Q49	0,304	5343	0,000
Q1	0,524	5343	0,000
Q2	0,366	5343	0,000
Q200	0,301	5343	0,000
Q208	0,405	5343	0,000
Q253	0,257	5343	0,000
Q58	0,510	5343	0,000
Q59	0,241	5343	0,000
Q60	0,294	5343	0,000

Q61	0,353	5343	0,000
Q62	0,222	5343	0,000
Q63	0,291	5343	0,000
Q64	0,362	5343	0,000
Q65	0,250	5343	0,000
Q66	0,265	5343	0,000
Q67	0,279	5343	0,000
Q68	0,269	5343	0,000
Q69	0,228	5343	0,000
Q70	0,236	5343	0,000
Q71	0,240	5343	0,000
Q72	0,318	5343	0,000
Q75	0,363	5343	0,000
Q76	0,241	5343	0,000
Q78	0,261	5343	0,000
Q80	0,325	5343	0,000
Q81	0,299	5343	0,000

Table 4: Normality test for correlational objective

Note: The normality test for social capital and subjective well-being in CAN countries shows that the data does not follow a normal distribution, as the significance is less than 0.05 for all variables. Therefore, Spearman's Rho will be used for the correlational analysis

Question	Code	Category
Could you tell me how satisfied you are with your life in general these days?	Q49	SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING 1. Life satisfaction
Could you tell me how important family is in your life?	Q1	SOCIAL CAPITAL 1. Importance of family in life
Could you tell me how important friends are in your life?	Q2	SOCIAL CAPITAL 2. Importance of friends in life
Could you tell me, when you meet with friends, how often do you discuss political topics?	Q200	SOCIAL CAPITAL 3. Discuss political issues with friends
Could you tell me how much you learn about what happens in the country and the world by talking to friends or colleagues?	Q208	SOCIAL CAPITAL 4. Source of information through talking with friends or colleagues
Could you tell me how much respect there is today for individual human rights in this country?	Q253	SOCIAL CAPITAL 5. Respect for individual human rights
Could you tell me how much you trust your family?	Q58	SOCIAL CAPITAL 6. Trust in family
Could you tell me how much you trust your	Q59	SOCIAL CAPITAL 7. Trust in

neighborhood?		neighborhood
Could you tell me how much you trust people you know personally?	Q60	SOCIAL CAPITAL 8. Trust in people you know personally
Could you tell me how much you trust people you meet for the first time?	Q61	SOCIAL CAPITAL 9. Trust in people you meet for the first time
Could you tell me how much you trust people of another religion?	Q62	SOCIAL CAPITAL 10. Trust in people of another religion
Could you tell me how much you trust people of another nationality?	Q63	SOCIAL CAPITAL 11. Trust in people of another nationality
Could you tell me how much you trust churches?	Q64	SOCIAL CAPITAL 12. Trust in churches
Could you tell me how much you trust the armed forces?	Q65	SOCIAL CAPITAL 13. Trust in the armed forces
Could you tell me how much you trust the press?	Q66	SOCIAL CAPITAL 14. Trust in the press
Could you tell me how much you trust television?	Q67	SOCIAL CAPITAL 15. Trust in television
Could you tell me how much you trust unions?	Q68	SOCIAL CAPITAL 16. Trust in unions
Could you tell me how much you trust the police?	Q69	SOCIAL CAPITAL 17. Trust in the police
Could you tell me how much you trust the justice system and courts?	Q70	SOCIAL CAPITAL 18. Trust in the justice system and courts
Could you tell me how much you trust the government?	Q71	SOCIAL CAPITAL 19. Trust in the government
Could you tell me how much you trust political parties?	Q72	SOCIAL CAPITAL 20. Trust in political parties
Could you tell me how much you trust universities?	Q75	SOCIAL CAPITAL 21. Trust in universities
Could you tell me how much you trust elections?	Q76	SOCIAL CAPITAL 22. Trust in elections
Could you tell me how much you trust banks?	Q78	SOCIAL CAPITAL 23. Trust in banks
Could you tell me how much you trust women's organizations?	Q80	SOCIAL CAPITAL 24. Trust in women's movements
Could you tell me how much you trust charitable or humanitarian organizations?	Q81	SOCIAL CAPITAL 25. Trust in charitable or humanitarian organizations

Table 5: Question, code and category

Question	Q 1	Q 2	Q20 0	Q208	Q253	Q 58	Q 59	Q 60	Q 61	Q 62	Q 63	Q 64	Q 65	Q 66	Q 67	Q 68	Q 69	Q 70	Q 71	Q 72	Q 75	Q 76	Q 78	Q 80	Q 81	Q 4 9	
Q1	P	1																									
	Sig																										
Q2	P	.069**	1																								
	Sig	0																									
Q20 0	P	0	.093**	1																							
	Sig	1	0																								
Q20 8	P	0.01	.118**	.198**	1																						
	Sig	0.69	0	0																							
Q25 3	P	0.01	.041**	.046**	.044**	1																					
	Sig	0.34	0	0	0																						
Q58	P	.042**	.106**	.052**	.065**	.045**	1																				
	Sig	0	0	0	0	0																					
Q59	P	0.01	.240**	.091**	.071**	.083**	.279**	1																			
	Sig	0.29	0	0	0	0	0																				
Q60	P	.033**	.213**	.084**	.110**	.109**	.200**	.412**	1																		
	Sig	0.02	0	0	0	0	0	0																			
Q61	P	0.01	-.172**	.068**	.069**	.037**	-.122**	.352**	.338**	1																	
	Sig	0.54	0	0	0	0.01	0	0	0																		
	P	-.01	-.144**	.069**	.083**	.089**	-.159**	.323**	.347**	.388**	1																
	Sig	0.43	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0																	
Q63	P	0.01	-.192**	.136**	.119**	.086**	-.151**	.339**	.330**	.457**	.534**	1															
	Sig	0.63	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0																
Q64	P	0.02	.064**	-.057**	-0.01	.055**	.117**	.145**	.061**	.055**	.100**	.057**	1														
	Sig	0.23	0	0	0.31	0	0	0	0	0	0	0															
Q65	P	-.01	.134**	.038**	.066**	.122**	.131**	.207**	.155**	.136**	.178**	.177**	.333**	1													
	Sig	0.63	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0														
Q66	P	0	.072**	0.03	0.02	.118**	.078**	.178**	.124**	.109**	.140**	.127**	.233**	.390**	1												
	Sig	0.91	0	0.05	0.24	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0													
Q67	P	0	0.03	-.001	0.01	.122**	.043**	.145**	.097**	.086**	.115**	.087**	.234**	.306**	.630**	1											
	Sig	0.81	0.07	0.32	0.58	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0												
Q68	P	0.01	.097**	.101**	.071**	.125**	.080**	.203**	.151**	.136**	.160**	.166**	.319**	.395**	.380**	1											
	Sig	0.66	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0												

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