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Determining Forms of Expressions of Food Violence in Venezuela

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Abstract

In the present investigation, the existence of various forms of expression of food violence in Venezuela was determined, through the measurement of contextualized variables within the established classification. The existence and aggravation of forms of economic expression of food violence were determined, with a relative improvement in food availability but an increase in the difficulty of access: the basic food basket was located in December 2020 at \$180.16, and the minimum wage at \$6.35, which covers only 3.5% of the basic food basket. Additionally, a substantial increase in the use of the US dollar was determined, in parallel to the Venezuelan legal tender (Bolívar) as well as the introduction of the electronic currency "Petro", which distorts the food access market and hinders the accessibility. Likewise, the effectiveness index for the delivery of food subsidies and the ability to satisfy the basic food basket through the food programs was determined. The existence of forms of moral expression of food violence was determined by observing in the respondents, high levels of dissatisfaction in the delivery criteria both in a general and community way and high levels of inappropriate perception of the use of propaganda or political advertising in the delivery of help with the no consulted use of the image of the beneficiaries. Forms of emotional expression of food violence were evidenced, showing high levels of dissatisfaction and uncertainty in the ability to purchase food, as well as high levels of anguish. Forms of cultural expression of food violence were determined, by determining changes in the ancestral and traditional eating pattern of the Venezuelan, as well as high measurements of dissatisfaction in the forced change in said pattern, as well as in the alteration of tastes and preferences expressed by the respondents have experienced. Sanitary forms of expression of food violence were evidenced, by determining considerable percentages in the consumption of basic products such as flour and sugar in bulk with ignorance of the brand and origin of the food and high levels of dissatisfaction with the realization of this type of consumption. No physical forms of expression of Food Violence were evidenced when the queues for food access were apparently stopped, and the use of body markings.

Introduction

Food Violence is defined as any form of expression that subjects the human being to unworthy processes in the access and availability of food, subjecting them to restrictions, limitations, controls and conditions of acquisition, violating their fundamental basic human right to eat properly. Iciarte in 2019 conceptualizes Food Violence and describes that it would be included within the framework of Galtung's structural violence, which in 2003 indicates that it is originated by a set of structures, both physical and organizational, that do not allow the satisfaction of basic human needs (survival, food, well-being or freedom) and since it is difficult to identify it, it is difficult to fight against it [1]. when developing the concept of structural violence, defines it as: "That which causes the effective, somatic and mental realizations of human beings to be below their potential realizations." Structural violence and its causes are not always clearly visible, and therefore it is more difficult and complicated to deal with this type of violence. Venezuela for several years has been suffering from increasing levels of poverty and food insecurity, visualizing generalized shortages, food inaccessibility, but in many cases treatment not in accordance with human dignity in the process of purchasing food. It is for this reason that the following research proposes the determination of the existence of various forms of food expression, using the classification proposed by Iciarte [2,3] in her conceptualization of food violence in order to not only establish the bases initial theoretical studies of monitoring these forms of expression, if not making a categorized diagnosis of the various manifestations of food violence in the country.

Materials and methods

In this research, it was proposed to determine the existence of forms of expression of food violence in Venezuela, through the measurement of contextualized variables within an established classification. In the present investigation various phases of investigation were carried out.

Phase 1

Taking into consideration that even though the damage or affectation suffered by the victims of this type of violence is the basic right to food, this type of violence in which food violence is circumscribed, is a type of violence that is difficult characterization, poorly defined, and that is usually exercised in a closed, non-direct way, and under the apparent form of aid to society through subsidy policies and guidelines by the government in office, thus determining the existence of different forms expression of food violence. This requires a conceptualization and determination of parameters that define the different forms that can be established. For this, the present research was based on the methodological guidelines for the analysis of food violence, exposed by Iciarte [3,4].in her article "Conceptualization of Food Violence" where the following classification is established:

Table 1: Forms of expression of food violence

Form of Expression	Indicators
Physical	Forcing to acquire food under inclement human conditions: long standing lines
	Unworthy allocation methods like marking numbers on the skin
	Submission and physical abuse of authority figures during the food acquisition process
Economical	Product shortage
	Food unavailability
	Food inaccessibility
	Low purchasing power of the citizen as a consequence of inadequate economic policies
Morales	Discrimination in access to food due to political ideologies.
	Submission to natural or imposed authority figures in order to obtain the acquisition of food.
	Food aid restricted to certain award conditions
	Insufficient food aid
	Local restrictions and “regulations”
Emotional	Citizens’ feeling of uncertainty and instability in the acquisition of food.
	Feeling of Anxiety and depression in the acquisition of food in citizens.
	Forced methods for acquiring food.
	Feeling of helplessness and resentment in the population.
	Government indifference
Cultural	Forcing of culinary transculturation.
	Forcing the individual to make changes in their eating patterns.
	Forced alteration of the tastes and preferences of individuals.
	Annihilation of food needs and desires of the population
Sanitary	Obligation to purchase unbranded products
	Ignorance of the origin or provenance of the food purchased.
	Lack of knowledge of the sanitary condition of the food purchased.
	No guarantee of food safety.

Once the elements that describe the different forms of expression of food violence had been identified, the parameters and variables were established in order to start with the determination of economic forms of expression of food violence, using for this: food availability and access for the year 2020, as well as the establishment of correlations between the amount necessary to purchase the food basket and the minimum monthly wage established by the government. Likewise, the application of the monetary policies exercised by the government and their impact on the right to food in the country were analyzed.

Phase 2

A direct survey was designed and applied to three hundred (300) individuals distributed throughout the country, through a cross-section, in order to collect systematic information of observing individuals and direct participants of the reality under study, from which information was requested regarding various elements that describe the established forms of food expression. For this, the following indicators were established to measure in the survey:

Table 2: Indicators measured

Form of Expression	Indicators Measured
Physical	Acquisition of food under inclement human conditions: long standing lines
	Determination of number assignment or skin marking number marking for the acquisition of food
Economical	Income level and food purchasing power
	Food Access level
	Index of effectiveness of receiving food subsidies from the so-called Local Supply and Production Committees (CLAP) (CLAP Boxes).
	Regularity or periodicity in delivery.
	Levels of satisfaction in the capacity of this aid, in covering the food demand of the individual.
	Individual perception of the effectiveness of the deliveries of the so-called “CLAP Boxes”
	Individual perception of sufficiency in food aid
Morales	Award criteria
	Variability in the award criteria by communities
	Perception of the use of propaganda or advertising by the government in the delivery of food aid.
Emotional	Level of satisfaction in purchasing power at the time of the survey application.
	Level of Uncertainty experienced by the individual in their ability to purchase food in the future
	Level of Anguish experienced by the individual in their ability to acquire food in the future
Cultural	Determination of forced change in the eating pattern
	Determination of forced change in tastes and food preferences of the individual
	Levels of satisfaction in the new eating pattern
Sanitary	Obligation to purchase unbranded products
	Ignorance of the origin or provenance of the food purchased.
	Lack of knowledge of the sanitary condition of the food purchased.

In order to validate the survey instrument (reliability of the questionnaire), it was administered as a test to 5 different individuals. According to the observed behavior, it was possible to establish whether said questionnaire was understood without major problems, in addition to considering the consistency of the scales, the availability and interest and / or collaboration for filling in the questionnaires.

Phase 3

Once the information from the collection instrument or survey was obtained, a total of 22 indicators were analyzed, subdivided into six dimensions of food violence: physical (3), economic (7), moral (3), emotional (3), cultural (3) and sanitary (3), carrying out a descriptive analysis with the data obtained in the information collection instrument, where various economic agents of a similar nature provided the requested information at the same instant of time

Phase 4

Once the information obtained had been analyzed, we proceeded to establish through the discussion of the data, the diagnosis of the existence of the different forms of



expression of food violence established for the present investigation.

Results

Economic expressions of food violence

The cost of the food basket for a family group of four (04) people, presented a cost of 180.16 \$ presenting an inter-monthly variation of 30.3%. By correlating this cost of the basic family food basket with the Venezuelan minimum monthly salary, (6.35\$), a real purchasing power of 3.52% of the basic family food basket was determined, requiring 51.18 minimum wages in the month for a family group can cover your basic expenses [5]. Regarding the monetary policies established by the government, the inflation that had been happening before 2017 worsens, becoming hyperinflation as of November 2017, registering an interannual inflation of 1,370%, constituting the greatest distortion that affects the citizens and their quality of life. Inflation is essentially a monetary phenomenon and in Venezuela the responsibility for monetary policy and inflation falls directly on the Central Bank of Venezuela, and not on other economic agents [6]. The opacity and statistical silence in which the Central Bank of Venezuela has incurred, made that, during the years 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020 it did not issue any report on the country's inflationary situation, being only in the year 2020, when it issued a report that for the year 2020, accumulated inflation in Venezuela stood at 9,585.5% [7]. The main triggers of this situation have been the continuous intervention of the Venezuelan government, both in monetary policy and in the Central Bank of Venezuela, with the constant injection of inorganic money, coupled with the monetization of the deficit, which is produced by the financing made by the Central Bank of Venezuela of the fiscal deficit. Additionally, the government's policy has been to reduce imports of raw materials for the industry and has increased the import of finished products and packaged foods, drastically reducing the supply of goods produced in the country. The exchange control established since 2003, has generated a shortage of foreign currency and the appearance of a parallel market since 2017 that is listed well above the official price and at that unofficial price is that the acquisition of goods is made.

The monetary policies implemented as a consequence of the hyperinflationary situation included another monetary reconversion, applied on 08/20/2018 designating the so-called sovereign bolivar, generating a conversion rate of 100,000 Bs equal to 1 Bs.S, which did not achieve the stability of the economy as the government expected [8]. Likewise, the government carried out salary increases, being insufficient for the significance of the purchasing power of the population in the face of excessive hyperinflation, increasing unemployment for the year 2020 by 35% and with 60% of the economically active population located in the informal sector. All these factors caused the highest levels of emigration in the history of the hemisphere, given the deterioration of the political, economic and human rights situation in Venezuela. The latest report describes that 4.8 million Venezuelans have registered as refugees and migrants [9]. There is mistrust in the national currency and an increase in transactions in foreign currency, given that, as of November 2019, the Venezuelan economy has been dollarized, estimating for that year that 54% of purchase and sale operations are carried out in dollars. Likewise, more than 4,000,000 migrants from abroad send remittances to their families with which they support the family economy. Likewise, since December 2017, the creation of a virtual currency with a representative value in dollars began, based on the price of a barrel of oil. The entry of the "Petro" into the Venezuelan economy as an anti-inflationary measure, generated the issuance of bolivars without a backing, causing the Bolívar to devalue by approximately 60% [10]. When analyzing the data provided in the applied survey, 100% stated that they had jobs that were not subject to the established minimum salary, due to the impossibility of having some type of purchasing power with the minimum salary established by the government. However, despite the fact that the interviewees stated that they had income through multiple channels, 52.03% of the respondents expressed that their monthly income levels allowed them to acquire only less than 20% of the basic monthly food basket, while a 24.89%, could cover with their monthly income only between 20 and 50% of the food basket. The survey revealed that while 18.55% could cover between 50 and 100% of the food basket, they could not face additional expenses to those of food. These results imply that 94.47% of those surveyed have insufficient family income to purchase food corresponding to the basic family basket.

When analyzing the data provided in the applied survey, and establishing the level of food access, 64.25% of the participants described having high levels of difficulty in accessing food, followed by 18.10% who expressed average levels of food access and 13.12% who expressed high levels of food access. 4.52% did not respond. By analyzing the data provided in the applied survey, and establishing the effectiveness in the delivery of the food program implemented by the government, through the Local Supply and Production Committees (CLAP), called "CLAP Boxes", 47.27% of the respondents said they received such help, versus 56.11% who said they did not receive it. 3.62% did not

answer. When establishing the regularity of said delivery, 48.70% stated that they did not receive it on a monthly basis as the program establishes, but that they spend periods of more than three months in its receipt. 21.82% stated that they received it on a quarterly basis, 20.91% stated that they received it on a bimonthly basis and 8.17% expressed that they received it on a monthly basis. When evaluating the level of satisfaction provided by this program in relation to its ability to meet the food demand at home, 98.06% described feeling high levels of dissatisfaction, followed by 1.28% who expressed average levels of dissatisfaction and 0.64% who they expressed feeling low levels of dissatisfaction. When evaluating the perception of the beneficiaries in the effectiveness in the delivery of this food program, 91.65% considered it as inefficient, followed by 5.76% who expressed that it was moderately inefficient versus 2.56% who considered it to be efficient. Likewise, 92.80% of those surveyed expressed the content of the food program as insufficient, while 6.52% considered it moderately sufficient and 0.65% considered it sufficient.

Moral expressions of food violence

When evaluating the criteria for granting the food program by the Local Supply and Production Committees (CLAP), 92.14% of those surveyed considered the granting criteria very inadequate, versus 6.39% who considered it moderately adequate and 1.15% who considered it adequate. By transferring this perception to a local delivery criterion of the community where the respondent resides, 89.54% of the respondents considered the awarding criterion very inadequate, versus 5.80% who considered it moderately adequate and 4.65% who considered it adequate. Likewise, 64.07% of those surveyed considered that there was no local criterion for delivery in their community versus 27.15% who considered that there was. Finally, when evaluating the perception that the beneficiaries had of the government's handling of propaganda or political advertising in the delivery of aid, 93.02% considered it as inappropriate versus 2.90% who considered it moderately inappropriate and 3.99% considered it appropriate. 67.25% of those surveyed stated that on some occasion they were photographed when receiving the aid. 90.54% of the respondents who stated that they had been photographed, stated that they had not received a request for permission to take photographs at the time of delivery of any food aid or their subsequent use of the image.

Emotional expressions of food violence

When analyzing the level of satisfaction felt by the respondent, in their ability to purchase food, 74.66% of the participants described feeling high levels of dissatisfaction, followed by 11.31% who expressed average levels of satisfaction and 9.5% who expressed high levels of satisfaction. 4.52% did not respond. As soon as measurements of the level of uncertainty felt by the respondents were established, in their ability to purchase food in the future, 89.59% of the respondents said they felt high levels of uncertainty. When asked in relation to the levels of anguish experienced by this feeling of uncertainty in the acquisition of food in the future, 62.89% of the participants described feeling high levels of anguish, followed by 18.10% who expressed medium levels of anguish and 11.77% who expressed feeling low levels of distress. 7.24% did not respond.

Cultural expressions of food violence

In relation to the traditional Venezuelan eating pattern, 90.05% of those surveyed stated that they felt a forced change in their eating pattern. 76.01% of the participants described having felt a forced change in their tastes and food preferences, followed by 8.14% who expressed average levels of change and 11.31% who expressed feeling low levels of change. 4.56% did not respond. 71.04% of the participants described feeling high levels of dissatisfaction, generated by this forced change in their eating pattern, followed by 14.48% who expressed medium levels of dissatisfaction and 8.14% who expressed feeling low levels of dissatisfaction. 6.33% did not respond.

Sanitary expressions of food violence

When asked, if there was consumption of basic products in bulk with ignorance of brand and origin, 66.52% affirmed this type of consumption. Of these consumers of unbranded bulk products, 74.66% described feeling high levels of dissatisfaction, due to the realization of this type of consumption, followed by 10.41% who expressed medium levels of dissatisfaction and 1.81% who expressed feeling low levels of dissatisfaction. 13.12% did not respond.

Physical expressions of food violence

When asked, if they had to make long lines to purchase food, 100% said they did not do them. Likewise, 100% described that they did not suffer body marking or number assignment for the acquisition of food or had a restriction in the amount of food in the



various food outlets.

Discussion

Once the parameters and contextualized variables were established within the classification considered for this research, the existence of various forms of expression of food violence were determined in Venezuela. The existence and aggravation of forms of economic expression of food violence were determined, with a relative improvement in food availability in relation to previous years, but an increase in the difficulty of access: the food basket was located at 180.16 \$, and the minimum wage at \$ 6.35, which covers only 3.5% of the food basket. Additionally, a substantial increase in the use of the US dollar was determined, in parallel to the Venezuelan legal tender (Bolívar) as well as the introduction of the electronic currency "Petro", which distorts the food access market and hinders the accessibility. An effectiveness index for the delivery of food subsidies of 47.27% was determined in relation to its general population distribution and a low efficiency in the periodicity of delivery, which directly affects the generation of a low capacity to satisfy the basic food basket. The monetary policies established by the government have been interventionist in numerous sectors, causing rigidity in the economic system, producing a shortage of foreign exchange, monetization of the deficit, injection of inorganic money and therefore, hyperinflation, scarcity of employment, extreme worsening of poverty and forced migration. Additionally, the continuous policy of reducing raw materials for production and increasing finished products, the constant consolidation of a rentier-type economy, has placed the country in a situation of high vulnerability and food insecurity that has brought devastating consequences: In 2019, Iciararte described what was established in the National Survey of Living Conditions (ENCOVI), where Landaeta, Herrera and Ramírez, already described for the year 2017 the existence in Venezuela, of mortality and morbidity due to malnutrition and subsequent diseases given that the diet had lost quantity, variety and was constituted as "anemic" when consumed with a significant decrease in micronutrients, particularly iron, and that 89.4% had insufficient family income to purchase food. When measuring the level of income and purchasing power to purchase food for the year 2019, in this research it was determined that 94.47% of the respondents have insufficient family income for the acquisition of food corresponding to the basic food basket, for what is observed a worsening in food access. These consequences include a decrease in the number of daily meals, an increase in the sensation of hunger in the population, a worsening of the nutritional situation in children under 5 years of age and high levels of poverty, which leads to a spiral of food insecurity. The existence of forms of moral expression of food violence was determined by observing in the respondents, high levels of dissatisfaction in the delivery criteria both in a general and community way and high levels of inappropriate perception of the use of propaganda or political advertising in the delivery of the It helps with the in consult use of the image of the beneficiaries.

Forms of emotional expression of food violence were evidenced, by obtaining high levels of dissatisfaction and uncertainty in the ability to acquire food, as well as high levels of anguish. Iciararte in 2019, describes that, various psychologists, assured that the levels of hostility and anxiety among citizens increased due to the lack of solutions. The queues to buy food, give up money in the face of excessive inflation, water rationing, electrical blackouts and personal insecurity, provide the Venezuelan with a bleak outlook, which is experienced as a constant threat. This stressful situation without the possibility of resolute discharge generates a series of physiological and psychic alterations that, maintained in a chronic form, can be complicated by somatic or psychiatric disorders, having effects of restlessness, insomnia, restlessness, difficulty concentrating, loss of appetite and isolation, even psychopathological alterations such as anxiety disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder, panic attack, generalized anxiety, as well as somatization disorders and depression. Forms of cultural expression of food violence were determined, by determining changes in the ancestral and traditional eating pattern of the Venezuelan, as well as measurements of high dissatisfaction with the forced change suffered in said pattern, as well as the alteration of tastes and preferences manifested by the respondents have experienced. Forms of sanitary expression of food violence were evidenced, by determining considerable percentages in the consumption of basic products in bulk with ignorance of the brand and origin and high levels of dissatisfaction with the realization of this type of consumption. This situation showed for the years 2019 and 2020, various poisonings in the Venezuelan population due first to the substitution of products, and

then to the acquisition of the same, in any mobile establishment, which sells the product at a lower price, but without the due control and health monitoring. No physical forms of expression of Food Violence were evidenced when the queues for food access were apparently stopped, and the use of body markings in said queues. This constitutes a moderate advance, taking into consideration that for the year 2017, establishes that an average of 4.49 hours was spent in queuing for the acquisition of basic food products, generating in the use of the time allocated to the queuing, labor unproductivity [11].

In addition, to the forms of expression of food violence established, opacity and statistical silence on the part of the Central Bank of Venezuela was evidenced, since, during the period 2016-2020 it did not issue any report on the inflationary situation of the country and other macroeconomic variables of interest, which constitutes a flagrant violation of Principle 1, established in the United Nations Principles of Official Statistics, approved in 1994 and endorsed by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 2013/21, of July 24, 2013. That implies the "Relevance, impartiality and equitable access: Official statistics constitute an indispensable element in the information system of a democratic society and provide the government, the economy and the public with data about the situation economic, demographic, social and environmental. To this end, official statistical agencies must compile and provide official statistics of proven practical utility in an impartial manner so that citizens can exercise their right to public information" [12] and the study will be considered for future research. statistical opacity in the food area, in order to establish a possible link as a form of expression of food violence of a legal nature. On the other hand, it is necessary and vitally important to establish and develop lines of research on food violence, given that this type of violence is often rationalized and therefore difficult to identify. Rationalization is often necessary for the victims, because it allows them to endure this situation, but it is also exercised by the perpetrators because it allows them to release blame. Likewise, on many occasions, justification is exercised in order to legitimize this type of violence. It is therefore necessary to educate the population regarding all the inherent aspects of the Right to Food, since the States attached to the United Nations and therefore adhered to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of the United Nations, Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and general comment 12 of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights must guarantee the right to adequate food and must adopt all the necessary measures to guarantee the availability and accessibility of food to the population.

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