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Backyard Activities as Sources of Social and Personal Well-Being: A Study of the Mexican Population (Guasave, Sinaloa)

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Abstract: Isolation due to the COVID-19 pandemic has heightened daily tension, leading to stress and other illnesses. This research examined the impact of backyard activities on social and personal well-being, focusing on agricultural (gardens, vegetables, medicinal plants) and livestock activities (chickens, goats, sheep, cows). An exploratory study was conducted using a Likert-scale survey of 387 people, with 22 items covering economic growth, social well-being, and human development. The results showed that 50% of the respondents experienced pleasant emotions through sensory engagement with home gardens, leading to well-being, reduced anxiety and stress, better concentration, and improved family harmony. McDonald's Omega (ω) value for item consistency was 0.964. Strong correlations were found between economic growth, social well-being, and human development with social and personal well-being, at 0.719, 0.819, and 0.812, respectively. These results are validated by an exploratory principal component factor analysis, which shows the correlation of the classes that integrate backyard activities on a principal axis. Backyard livestock activities had a lesser impact on personal and social well-being compared to agricultural activities, which were valued more for their economic and nutritional contributions. Thus, backyard activities, especially those involving home gardens, significantly enhance social and personal well-being alongside their economic and food benefits.

Keywords: backyard activities; personal well-being; social wellbeing; economic growth

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1. Introduction

The conditions of isolation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and everyday life lead to a deterioration of health, which the World Health Organization (WHO) (2022) defines as 'a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity'; i.e., it encompasses the social and personal well-being of individuals (Raghupathi and Raghupathi 2020; Bauer et al. 2006). Social well-being is a state in which individuals live peacefully together within the same community or physical environment, in which social, economic, and natural factors may come into play, all with a common goal: the pursuit of development as a society (United States Institute of Peace, Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute 2009).

Situations of anxiety, depression, or stress are precise variables in the deterioration of physical, personal, and social well-being. This is why the growing trend in studies

associated with personal wellbeing in general can include both biological and personal well-being as well as psychological aspects (de Vries 2023; Barraza-López et al. 2017).

Development and social welfare policies around the world focus on social, economic, health, quality of life, and other issues. Currently, issues such as people's health have had a greater impact on social support programs. In European regions, the World Health Organization points out the negative impact of economic crises on the personal well-being of society, considering public policies aimed at social welfare and development as tools with positive impacts (Espino Granado 2014).

Kim and Miller (2019) and Wood et al. (2017) have documented the existence of a direct link between people in their homes and nature, biodiversity, green spaces, and ecosystems. These links have improved human health while promoting a commitment to the environment and much-needed sustainable development practices, especially given the accelerated growth of urban spaces which, in recent years, has concentrated more than 50% of the world's population in urban areas and is expected to exceed 70% by 2050 (García Flores and Ordoñez Díaz 2022; Claris Fisher et al. 2021; Burgin 2018).

With population growth, the need for green spaces becomes increasingly important in people's lives. Good environmental education can be a key tool to encourage backyard activities. This can also be developed informally, or in an orderly manner with defined objectives through ecological education (Korcz et al. 2021).

Contact with nature is one of the activities that humans have most frequently sought as a mechanism to achieve personal wellbeing (Buckley 2020). A clear example is the 'forest baths' originating in Japan: a simple practice where humans give their full attention and concentration to the smells, sounds, and scenery of a natural environment in a forest, where their main objective is the search for physical and mental wellbeing (Farkic et al. 2021).

Situations such as confinement to households due to the recent COVID-19 sanitary contingencies have affected people's lifestyles in terms of health, stress levels, and financial and food security (Carroll et al. 2020), the context of which, according to Pérez-Urrestarazu et al. (2021), favored the development of backyard activities in households. These activities were performed not only for food production but also for family recreation. The authors describe a positive impact because productive activities in households influenced social behavior.

Backyard activities have represented an alternative to address the current trends of population growth in the world, specifically regarding food shortages and the deterioration of nutritional status that has been a constant threat in recent years, especially in developing countries or rural communities (Awad 2022; Burgin 2018). The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (Instituto Interamericano de Cooperación para la Agricultura (IICA) 2017) notes that these activities are an important form of agricultural and livestock production for Latin America and the Caribbean and can contribute significantly to the food and nutritional security of rural and urban families in the region.

In communities, backyard activities have been a pastime for people seeking to grow their own fresh and healthy food and enhance their connection with nature (Halvey et al. 2021). They are considered as the "outdoor spaces where all kinds of vegetables and seeds are grown continuously throughout the year for self-consumption or for the development of productive projects in marginalised communities" (Fideicomiso de Riesgo Compartido 2017).

Authors such as Salazar-Barrientos et al. (2015) consider that backyard farming influences the identity of the people who practice it, including their cultural, social, biological, and agronomic relationships, and that, at the same time, they are contributing to the production and self-consumption of food in their homes. In areas with high levels of poverty, they revalue backyard activities as a source of economic income.

Despite the level of importance that backyard activities represent, the vast majority of people are unaware of the concept as such or ignore the benefits that a space in their homes dedicated to the production of consumer goods can have.

The objective of this research is to determine the contribution or influence of backyard activities that, in terms of social and personal well-being, provides to the rural communities of Guasave, Sinaloa, Mexico.

2. Materials and Methods

Following the methodology described by García Flores and Ordoñez Díaz (2022), an exploratory study was carried out in three phases. The first phase consisted of the location and vocation of the study area. The second phase was a socio-demographic description of the people surveyed. Finally, the description and interpretation of the results obtained in the interviews was carried out.

A total of 387 questionnaires were administered to people between 18 and 83 years of age, with a mean age of 43.27 years and a standard deviation of 15.03 years. Most of these people were women (63.69%), who have historically played an essential role in the development of backyard activities, contributing directly to the family economy with the income generated by backyard activities (Jabeen et al. 2020).

2.1. First Phase: Characterization of the Study Area

The surveys were distributed in the municipality of Guasave, which is one of the 18 municipalities of the state of Sinaloa, characterized by its extensive agricultural production, bordered to the north by the municipalities of Ahome and Sinaloa; to the east by the municipalities of Sinaloa, Salvador Alvarado, and Angostura; to the south by the municipality of Angostura and the Gulf of California; and to the west by the Gulf of California and the municipality of Ahome. It also occupies 5.12% of the state's surface area (INEGI 2020a).

2.2. Second Phase: Sociodemographic Description of Respondents

This study was conducted in the rural communities of Guasave, Sinaloa, Mexico. This municipality has a population structure of 289,370 inhabitants, of which 72.71% of its population is concentrated in rural communities, the area described as the object of study in this research. It also has an average of 3.7 inhabitants per dwelling and 53 people per square kilometer (Ayuntamiento de Guasave 2022; INEGI 2020b; INEGI 2021).

Leyva López et al. (2015) point out that Guasave has a 'Low' socio-demographic level of development compared to the rest of the municipalities in the state of Sinaloa, considering in this level of development indicators of social deprivation such as education, health, basic services, and housing quality and spaces (Consejo Nacional de Evaluación de la Política de Desarrollo Social CONEVAL).

Of the total economically active population (EAP), 62% are men and 38% women, while of the total non-economically active population (NEAP), most of these people (42.4%) are 'people dedicated to household chores' (INEGI 2021).

2.3. Third Phase: Surveys Applied

The survey was administered through Google Forms, including 26 questions. In 22 of them, Likert-type scaling was used, and the rest of the questions were related to aspects of gender, age, and the productive sector to which they belong. The 22 items were divided into three categories: economic (4 items), personal well-being (9 items), and human development (9 items). A Likert scale was used to determine the respondents' perception of each item, presented in the form of statements to which the respondent reacts. The statements are thematically related to the classes indicated. Possible responses to each statement can be: (1) Strongly agree, (2) Agree, (3) Neither agree nor disagree, (4) Disagree, (5) Strongly disagree (Canto de Gande et al. 2020).

This study was conducted in the municipality of Guasave, Sinaloa, Mexico in the adult population, which according to INEGI data (INEGI 2020a) comprises a community of 204,163 inhabitants. The sample size was calculated using the statistical formula proposed by Torres et al. (2006), which corresponds to the case where the size of the population is known:

N = population size = 204,163
Z = 95% confidence level (Z = 1.96)
p = probability of success, or expected proportion (p = 50%)
q = probability of failure (q = 50%)
d = accuracy = 4.98%

Substituting the values, the following is obtained:

$$n = \frac{NZ^2pq}{d^2(N-1)+Z^2pq} = \frac{204163(1.96^2)(0.5)(0.5)}{0.0498^2(204163-1)+1.96^2(0.5)(0.5)} = 386.5 \approx 387$$

According to this calculation, the number of respondents is 387.

This calculation is performed based on the literature review by García-Rodríguez et al. (2017), who described three main variables for human health: economic growth, social well-being, and human development. For this purpose, the 22 items were divided into three classes with 4, 9, and 9 items, respectively, proceeding as follows:

The Likert scale was applied to each of the 387 respondents. Four data sets were generated from each respondent's response to each of the 24 items: one for each class and one for the social and personal well-being class, so that a mean value was obtained from each respondent's responses to the items in each class, resulting in a series of 387 data sets for each class. The items in the social and personal well-being class were obtained from the mean value of each respondent's responses to the total number of items.

2.4. Internal Consistency and Validity of the Instrument

To demonstrate the validity and reliability of the instrument, it was subjected to statistical tests (Frías-Navarro 2022) including the McDonald Omega method (IBM 2022): the ideal method to analyze the internal consistency of the scores addressed in the instrument, taking into account the responses of the 22 items of each respondent. The calculations were performed using the freely available program JASP 0.16.1, which is an open-source project with structural support from the University of Amsterdam (JASP Team 2022).

The internal validity of the scale was determined based on an exploratory factor analysis (EFA), which seeks to discover the structure of the data through principal components rotated using the Varimax technique. In this way, we find the factors, components, or eigenvectors in which the items are grouped to form classes or subclasses according to their attributes. The sedimentation graph is also shown, in which the magnitude of the eigenvectors or eigenvalues is observed. From these, the three main components of the variance of the items are determined, as well as the grouping structure of the items on the axes and their relationship with the three classes of item groupings.

3. Results

3.1. Statistical Analysis

Using McDonald's Omega (ω), the 22 Likert-scale items were analyzed using the JASP 0.16.1 program, yielding a $\omega = 0.964$, which indicates that the items were consistent. Frías-Navarro (2022), states that for values above 0.7, the items are consistent.

The normality test was also applied to the categories using the non-parametric Kolmogórov–Smirnov method using IBM SPSS Statistics software. In all cases, when comparing the subcategories, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$ was obtained, concluding that there was no homogeneity between the pairs of distributions analyzed. To determine the characteristics of the instrument, which includes non-normal and ordinal data, Kendall's Tau-b and Tau-c tests were applied using the same statistical program.

When comparing the category social and personal well-being through backyard activities with the categories economic growth, social well-being, and human development, using Kendall's Tau-b statistical test (see Table 1), significant correlations were found in accordance with Rajbahadur et al. (2022). We observed that the relationship between social and personal well-being through backyard activities and the subcategories of economic growth, social well-being, and human development, maintained a strong correlation.

Table 1. Kendall's Tau-b statistical analysis to determine the correlation between social well-being and the development of backyard activities, along with their subcategories.

Category	Subcategory	Correlation Value	Type of Correlation	Significance Level
Social and personal wellbeing through backyard activities	Economic growth	0.71	Strong	0.00
	Social welfare	0.81	Strong	0.00
	Human development	0.81	Strong	0.00

3.2. Description of the Surveyed Population That Performs Backyard Activities

The questionnaire started with introductory questions that allowed us to determine the profile and characterization of the people surveyed, directed to the practices of backyard activities. Backyard activities were divided into agricultural and livestock activities. Regarding agricultural activities, 89.15% of the respondents stated that they carried out these activities at home, including maintaining a family garden, which includes fruit trees, medicinal plants, and vegetables, among others. Regarding livestock, 67.96% of the respondents reported raising animals at home for domestic consumption, such as chickens, sheep, goats, pigs, and cows, among other animals (Table 2).

Table 2. Distribution of backyard activities carried out among the respondents.

	Agricultural Activities	Livestock Activities
Yes	89.15%	67.96%
No	10.85%	32.04%

3.3. Characterization of Backyard Activities

3.3.1. Economic Growth

In the 'Economic growth' class, four items were included that contain economic aspects where backyard activities have a direct impact as an income-generating activity, highlighting the families' satisfaction when visualizing a good future due to the production of their vegetable gardens and/or raising of domestic animals.

A total of 83.47% of those surveyed considered backyard activities to be a good source of income, with a tendency to grow. They expressed positive attitudes towards the products obtained, and they were sure that the products served to satisfy their basic food needs.

A total of 39.02% of the respondents showed great satisfaction in harvesting the fruits of their backyard activities, such as the production of plants, by answering 'Strongly agree'. This shows that, in addition to the tangible economic benefits, there is a well-being that generates harmony in people, as well as personal emotional satisfaction (see Table 3).

Table 3. Items in the economic growth class.

	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Neither Agree Nor Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)
I enjoy doing these backyard activities (home garden and/or raising domestic animals) (EC1).	35.92	50.90	10.85	2.33	0.00
My work in my family garden and/or my small farm is thriving (EC2).	31.78	50.13	15.76	2.33	0.00
I enjoy seeing and reaping the fruits of my efforts from backyard activities (EC3).	39.02	49.87	10.08	1.03	0.00
Backyard activities produce healthy food and income (EC4).	34.37	49.10	13.95	2.58	0.00

Results expressed as a percentage of the total number of surveys.

The economic benefits of backyard activities have different ways of being accounted for, as they are different activities, and families do not have a formal system to account for their income, given that, in most cases, the production of backyard activities can be for sale and/or self-consumption.

3.3.2. Social Welfare

The social welfare class provided insight into the profile of the respondent and the integration of the production of backyard activities as a return of benefits to the society. A total of 52.71% of the respondents said they agreed that the family garden and/or small farm contributed to health and nutrition. Based on this question, most of the respondents said they agreed with the arguments that position backyard activities as actions that 'unite families' and allow and promote 'contact with nature' by generating a taste for the 'smells' and 'sounds' that are generated due to activities (see Table 4). As Sosa-Urrutia et al. (2019) point out, these types of parameters allow us to understand how people behave in the face of social well-being.

Table 4. Claims about the types of social well-being.

	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Neither Agree Nor Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)
My home garden and/or small farm contributes to my health and nutrition (BS1).	30.75	52.71	13.95	2.58	0.00
Backyard activities feel like part of my family (BS2).	23.26	52.71	19.90	4.13	0.00
Being in the family garden and/or my small farm, I feel in touch with nature (BS3).	32.04	56.07	9.82	1.29	0.78
I feel in touch with life as I watch the garden and its fruits grow and/or my pets multiply (BS4).	32.04	54.78	11.37	1.81	0.00
I like the smells of the family garden (BS5).	32.82	49.87	14.21	3.10	0.00
By developing backyard activities, I learn new things (BS6).	36.18	52.71	10.08	1.03	0.00
I like the sounds produced in my backyard (BS7).	28.68	49.10	18.60	3.62	0.00
With the pandemic, my family garden and/or small farm has been a great support to us (BS8).	36.18	47.03	14.21	2.33	0.26
Backyard activities bring my family together (BS9).	22.48	44.70	28.68	3.88	0.26

Results expressed as a percentage of the total number of surveys.

3.3.3. Human Development Class

The modern concept of human development has undergone various modifications due to the social adaptations that human beings have experienced depending on criteria that are in their environment and over which, for the most part, they have no control; for example, social or economic phenomena. These have a direct impact on their development as a person, and sometimes, this parameter allows a country to measure its place in the global world (Yumashev et al. 2020).

Most of the respondents expressed that their backyard activities provided the impression of relaxation (85.27%), stress release (82.43%), release of anxious feelings (76.74%), concentration (78.04%), companionship (74.16%), positivity (80.88%), optimism (83.98%), and relaxation (79.33%) (see Table 5). On average, more than 49% of the respondents said they agreed with the human development criteria from a positive perspective on backyard activities.

Table 5. Statements about the human development class.

	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Neither Agree Nor Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)
I find it relaxing to attend to these backyard activities (home garden and/or domestic animal husbandry) (DS1).	30.49	54.78	11.63	3.10	0.00
It relieves me from the stress of attending to backyard activities (home garden and/or raising domestic animals) (DS2).	28.68	53.75	13.95	3.36	0.26
Being in my family garden and/or my small farm makes my anxiety disappear (DS3).	25.58	51.16	18.09	5.17	0.00
By developing backyard activities, I concentrate better on what I am doing (DS4).	26.10	51.94	17.57	4.39	0.00
Developing backyard activities makes me not feel lonely (DS5).	26.61	47.55	17.57	8.01	0.26
Being in my family garden and/or my small farm, my mood is positive (DS6).	27.65	53.23	16.54	2.58	0.00
I feel optimistic in my home garden and/or my small farm (DS7).	29.97	54.01	14.21	1.81	0.00
I enjoy watering and tending my home garden and/or feeding my pets (DS8).	28.94	56.07	12.14	2.84	0.00
Seeing the family garden and/or my small farm relaxes me (DS9).	29.72	49.61	18.09	2.58	0.00

Results expressed as a percentage of the total number of surveys.

3.3.4. Development and Acceptance of Backyard Livestock and Agricultural Activities

It was necessary to know the respondents' acceptance of backyard activities that included the production and breeding of domestic animals. Therefore, questions were asked to determine their opinion, pointing out that livestock activities are mainly based on the use and exploitation of domestic animals for productive purposes (Onyango 2023).

It is worth mentioning that 33.07% of the respondents expressed 'Neither agree nor disagree'; that is, they were indifferent to the presence of an area where backyard livestock activities are carried out, given that it is very common for families in rural communities to carry out these types of practices in their homes (see Table 6).

Table 6. Acceptance of backyard livestock activities by the population.

	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Neither Agree Nor Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)
I consider that keeping animals in my backyard can lead to diseases.	8.53	22.22	33.07	31.78	4.39
I am annoyed that my neighbor has pets	3.88	10.85	40.83	36.69	7.75

Results expressed as a percentage of the total number of surveys.

The most practiced livestock activity among the respondents was the breeding of pigs, with 32.56%, followed by the breeding of chickens, with 31.27%, mainly due to the variety and low cost of feed sources for these animals. However, it is worth mentioning that 32.04%

of the respondents stated that they do not engage in the breeding and/or production of domestic animals, which indicates a disadvantage compared to backyard farming activities (see Figure 1).

The acceptance and practices of backyard farming activities allow for sustainable production based on feeding strategies, as it is possible to take advantage of backyard by-products. This activity represents an essential source of animal protein for households; however, backyard animal production may have some limitations among the families that carry them out, including a lack of food and the presence of diseases and predators that could affect animal husbandry (Estrada et al. 2023; Valverde Lucio et al. 2021).

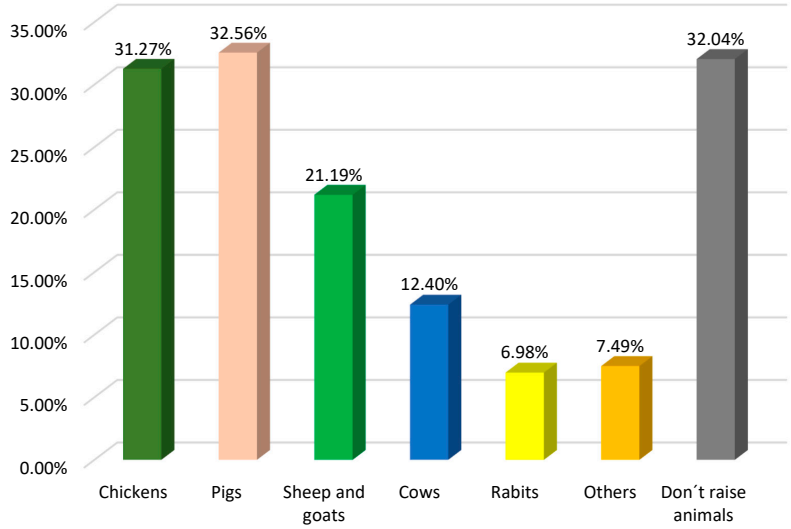


Figure 1. Livestock activities carried out by the respondents.

The majority (21.96%) of the respondents engaging in backyard animal husbandry agreed that the main purpose for carrying out these activities was 'to generate extra income for the family' and as a 'source of food'. It is worth noting that 12.66% of the respondents referred to animal husbandry 'as a distractor', again associating backyard activities with the personal well-being of the people who carry them out (see Figure 2). Although their contribution to personal well-being is less significant compared to agricultural activities, the practices in question demonstrate a positive impact in the economic sphere.

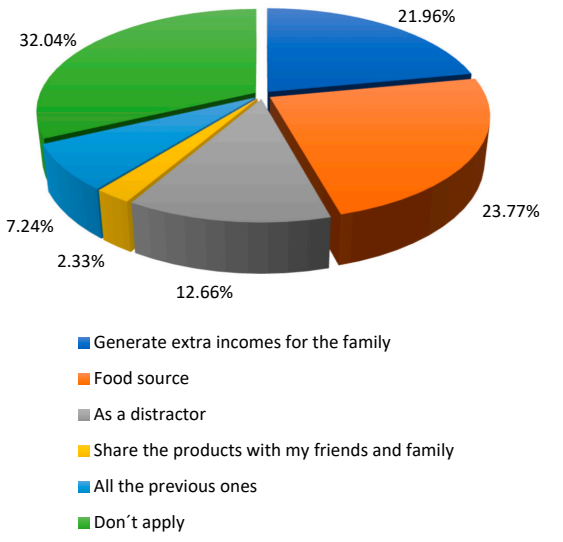


Figure 2. Objectives of domestic animal husbandry.

The production of plants in the households mostly turned out to be fruit trees, which usually included endemic trees of the region such as mangos, plums, oranges, and avocados (López Ortiz et al. 2017), with 63.57%, while 42.38% of the respondents were engaged in the production of vegetables in their homes (see Figure 3). It is important to mention that the respondents who carried out backyard activities with an agricultural focus did so for the production of medicinal plants (28.17%) such as copalquín, toloache, valeriana, basil, and stafiate, among other varieties. These are an essential part of the culture in the rural communities of the region (Aguiar Hernández et al. 2016). Similarly, the main objective of agricultural activities in households, comprising 63.67%, was as a 'source of food' (see Figure 4).

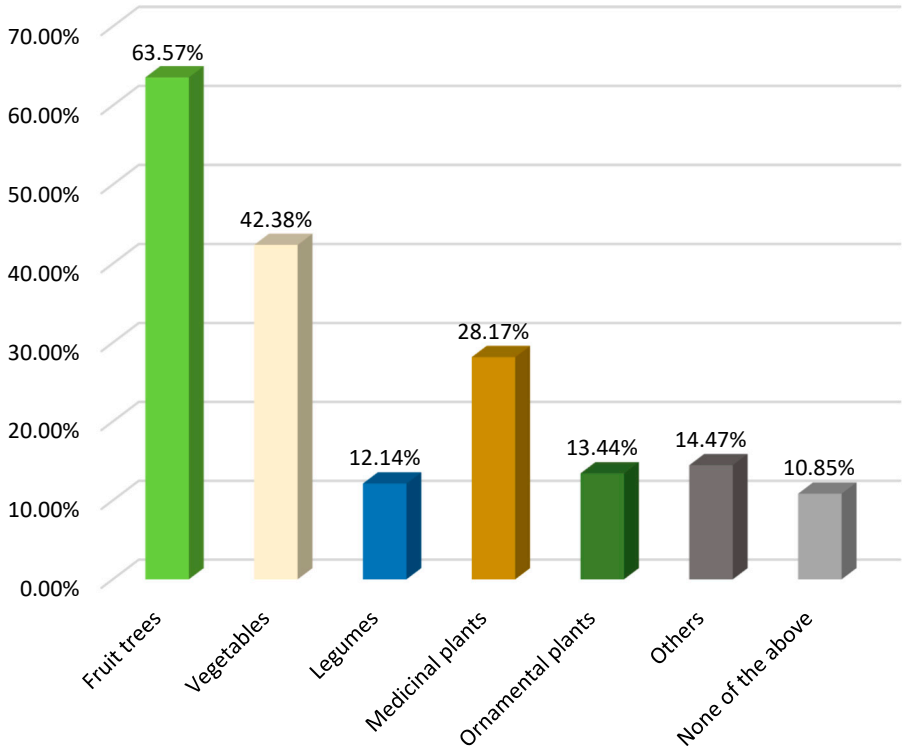


Figure 3. Type of backyard farming activities carried out in households.

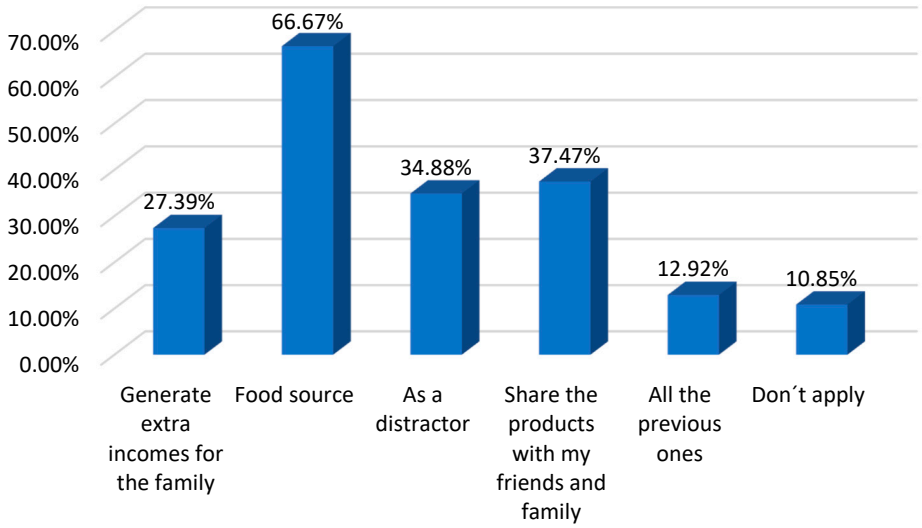


Figure 4. Purpose of backyard farming activities carried out by the respondents.

3.4. Exploratory Factor Analysis

Figure 5 shows the magnitude of the eigenvectors, observing that 68% of the variance was in the first three components. The first one had 57% of the variance, the second one had 6% and the third one had 5%. The percentage distribution of the variance of each component is shown in Table 7.

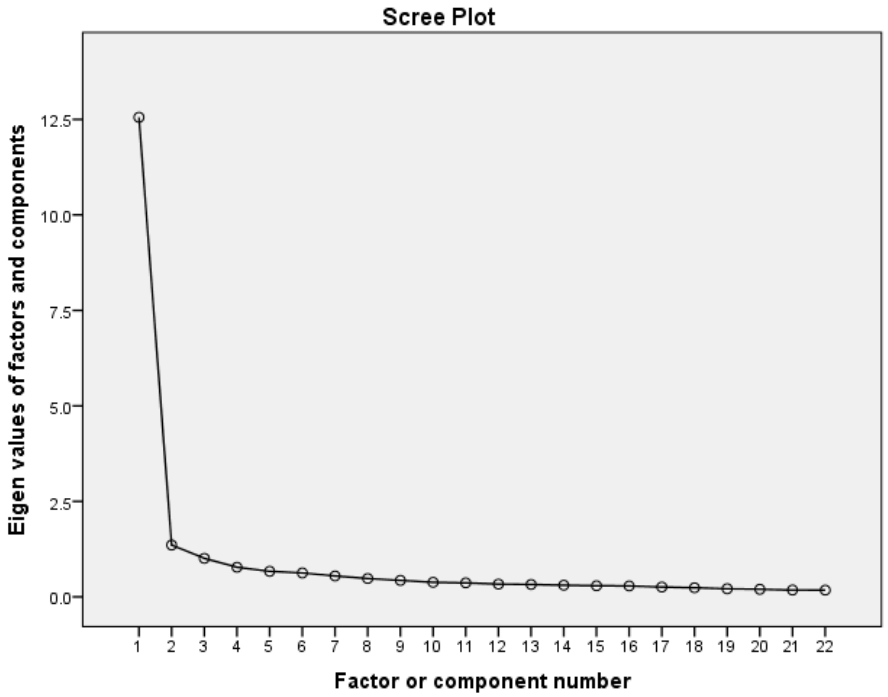


Figure 5. Distribution of the magnitude of the eigenvalues.

Table 7. Percentage distribution of the components.

Component	Initial Eigenvalues		
	Total	% Variance	% Accumulated
1	12.556	57.071	57.071
2	1.357	6.166	63.237
3	1.008	4.584	67.821
4	0.775	3.524	71.344
5	0.669	3.041	74.386
6	0.626	2.844	77.230
7	0.548	2.493	79.723
8	0.481	2.184	81.907
9	0.432	1.962	83.869
10	0.380	1.727	85.596
11	0.366	1.662	87.258
12	0.335	1.521	88.779
13	0.325	1.478	90.257
14	0.305	1.388	91.645
15	0.290	1.319	92.964
16	0.285	1.294	94.258
17	0.258	1.174	95.432
18	0.239	1.084	96.516
19	0.213	0.969	97.485
20	0.199	0.902	98.387
21	0.179	0.812	99.199
22	0.176	0.801	100.000

Table 8 shows the matrix of the three principal components rotated using the Varimax technique, whose values correspond to the correlation coefficients of the items grouped in these axes, factors, or components. This table shows that all the correlation coefficients are positive, classifying them as weak and strong; the former less than 0.5 and the latter greater than 0.5.

Table 8. Matrix of the three principal components or axes rotated in relation to the original items.

Rotated Component Matrix			
	Component		
	1	2	3
EC1	0.753	0.277	0.224
EC2	0.658	0.177	0.362
EC3	0.547	0.223	0.570
EC4	0.325	0.311	0.708
BS1	0.456	0.493	0.393
BS2	0.360	0.691	0.217
BS3	0.655	0.286	0.355
BS4	0.669	0.331	0.347
BS5	0.410	0.438	0.459
BS6	0.531	0.193	0.610
BS7	0.211	0.516	0.616
BS8	0.085	0.617	0.577
BS9	0.401	0.090	0.755
DS1	0.760	0.323	0.163
DS2	0.651	0.485	0.178
DS3	0.341	0.785	0.176
DS4	0.356	0.736	0.218
DS5	0.227	0.781	0.160
DS6	0.447	0.629	0.245
DS7	0.613	0.351	0.370
DS8	0.634	0.391	0.335
DS9	0.267	0.601	0.560

The main axis contains 10 items with a strong correlation coefficient higher than 0.5; i.e., 45% of them had a strong positive correlation. According to the typification of the items, there is a compositional homogeneity of the three categories of the instrument applied to the 387 respondents in axis 1. Therefore, this axis is the main axis and represents the category characterization of backyard activities.

Component 2 exhibits the highest correlation of the human development class, as 55% of the items in this category had a correlation coefficient higher than 0.6. Regarding component 3, 32% of the items had a correlation coefficient higher than 0.5, and 62.5% of them were related to the personal well-being category. Thus, component 1 was the main component, composed of the three classes representing the backyard activities, as it contained 57% of the variance of the items.

In component 1, the low correlation 0.085 of item BS8, which corresponds to 'with the pandemic, my family garden and/or small farm has been a great support to us', is striking. It is an item that acquires a high correlation on axes 2 and 3; i.e., it was more sensitive in the specific categories of the human development class and personal well-being.

Axis 1, having 57% of the variance and containing the three homogeneously distributed classes, represents backyard activities, so that the 22-item survey instrument is validated by the positive correlation between the three classes on a main axis, axis 1. On the other hand, axes 2 and 3, with a contribution of 10% of axis 1, show groupings of the human development class and personal well-being.

4. Discussion

Family integration and, consequently, social well-being are directly related to the economic income that families can generate. However, when talking about social and personal well-being in rural communities, where sources of economic income tend to be low due to primary activities, these sources are neither constant nor permanent. In some cases, they are complemented by governmental support focused on reducing poverty levels, thus increasing opportunities for social well-being (Ruiz-Torres and Trejo-Calzada 2015; Soares 2022).

Backyard activities have had a positive impact on household incomes around the world, not only in the nutritional and economic sphere but also from a social and personal well-being perspective. This is because they generate a state of well-being for those who practice these activities, in addition to revaluing the resources available to households for food production and self-consumption. This was most notable during the health crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic, where the fragility of production systems was highlighted from a global perspective (Huang et al. 2021).

The term 'social and personal well-being' has traditionally been related to purely economic variables such as per capita income and housing (Velasco Arellanes et al. 2018), among others. Regarding personal well-being, it has been integrated into the concept of health, where both social well-being and personal well-being, together with physical well-being, are part of the concept of health.

Researchers have shown the importance of improving personal well-being services, social well-being programs, and mitigating problems triggered by the pandemic. Backyard activities have been found to generate a synergy between food production for self-consumption and a source of well-being, sustenance, spirituality, identity, and a space to rest (Aparicio et al. 2023; Novera and Kark 2022).

Through the application of the surveys in the study area, it was observed that the creation of home gardens in households provides a space for recreation, which has an impact on personal satisfaction. Additionally, as an indirect consequence, it provides economic and environmental benefits, as pointed out by Sofo and Sofo (2020). The municipality of Guasave, Sinaloa, Mexico, has households that carry out backyard activities, and most of these people capitalize on the benefits of these activities for family self-consumption, mainly in rural communities. Where the spaces for their production are larger and have the ideal characteristics to carry them out, a direct relationship has been found between the amount of space dedicated to food production and the economic income received by the families.

Furthermore, their backyard cultivation and production techniques are mainly adapted to their needs, whether food or economic, as well as to their culture and social structure (Pham et al. 2022; Duché-García et al. 2017). However, when carrying out these activities, it is necessary to focus on the purpose for which the backyard activity is carried out, as its production may not be sufficient to meet the family's demand, as described in the study by Magaña Magaña et al. (2022).

Although the objective for which families in rural communities decide to carry out backyard activities is food production, the results usually vary over time, ranging from a source of extra income to family integration generated by the role played by each of the members. Therefore, it is of utmost importance to promote these activities among the communities, as well as to provide support and training programs.

Variables such as social and personal well-being among people involved in backyard activities were observed as an indirect positive consequence and were seen as a benefit, as the respondents maintained a direct relationship between nature and therefore greater community cohesion (Nicholls et al. 2020; Van der Ploeg et al. 2017).

In this study, a reciprocity was found between family integration and the practice of backyard activities, as these brought about positive economic, productive, and work-related consequences. In other words, there is a direct relationship between individuals and their environment with regards to health and well-being (Bauer et al. 2006; Bolaños 2020; Castro et al. 2013).

Backyard activities include plant production and/or animal husbandry. Therefore, their activities are often very diverse, and all family members play a different role, gener-

ating a commitment among families that avoids food waste (Sosna et al. 2019). However, studies show that the promotion of gardens in households is mainly based on social and environmental issues rather than for contributing to a healthier daily diet. Therefore, the culture and practices of these activities in households in the municipality of Guasave include climatic and economic factors, which make backyard gardening useful knowledge for developing countries or areas (Cattivelli 2022; Jiao et al. 2019).

Likewise, food self-sufficiency for consumption has been a fundamental element in the face of discouraging economic scenarios. Therefore, backyard activities are no longer activities specific to the rural sector but are also included the urban sector, expanding the socio-economic groups and geographical locations that carry out backyard activities (Sosna et al. 2019).

The present exploratory study showed that the 22 items of the questionnaire were related to each other. Through to the exploratory factor analysis via principal components, it is observed that the three categories were in a principal axis that represented 57% of the total variance of the items. The categories economic, personal well-being, and human development were correlated, which gives validity to the instrument.

5. Conclusions

Social and personal well-being, as components of health, benefit from backyard activities, mainly in the agricultural class, where the colors, smells, and textures from the products of these activity generate a state of tranquility and pleasure during the harvest.

Most of the families in the municipality of Guasave determine that backyard activities generate tangible economic, nutritional, and health benefits in their components of social benefits and personal benefits. Backyard activities help family integration, as well as the health and economic aspects. All of these aspects are strongly correlated and are reflected in the factor analysis of the main components along a principal axis.

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Institutional Review Board Statement: For the present research, we focused on examining the effect of backyard activities on social and personal well-being in rural communities. In the field study, the respondents gave their informed consent, once the aims and objectives of the research were explained to them, they then proceeded to answer the survey designed on a Likert scale. All participants in the instrument were of legal age, and the information collected does not contain sensitive personal data in terms of chapter one, article three and section VI of the Federal Law for the Protection of Personal Data in Possession of Private Parties in force in the United Mexican States, which reads as follows: Sensitive personal data: Those personal data that affect the most intimate sphere of its owner, or whose improper use may lead to discrimination or entail a serious risk for its owner. Sensitive data are those that may reveal aspects such as racial or ethnic origin, present and future health status, genetic information, religious, philosophical and moral beliefs, union membership, political opinions and sexual preference. Ethical review and approval of this study was waived for the following reason: this research does not involve sensitive personal data, medical research involving human subjects, or medical care involving research.

Informed Consent Statement: Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

Data Availability Statement: This is not applicable, as the data are not in any data repository with public access, if any editorial committee or reader requires access, we will provide it to them; using the following address: griselda.gonzalez@uas.edu.mx.

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