

Analysis of public policy formulation and its effect on the technical and professional work of the community psychologist: A case study

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Abstract

The academic and professional relationship between Community Psychology and public policy is increasing, especially as pertaining to social issues. An important discussion is to be had regarding the complexity, degrees of complementarity, and contributions of this link, as well as its risks for the discipline of Community Psychology. In this context, this study asks the following question: *What are the dynamics of public policy formulation for extreme poverty in Chile and its effect on the technical definition of the psychologists' work, and what alternatives this opens up for a discussion on the relationship between Community Psychology and public policies?* A qualitative and idiographic methodological approach is used, based on Grounded Theory by Strauss & Corbin (2002) and the Case Study by Coller (2000), to analyze semistructured interviews with 10 policymakers of the Chile Seguridades y Oportunidades policy and nine legislative and technical documents that support this policy. The results show that the technical work of the psychologist who participates in public policy towards extreme poverty is affected and configured by the mechanisms and dynamics of the connection between the various frameworks of meaning of policy formulation. These frames of meaning affect the configuration of technical norms that, in a dynamic of reciprocal influence between notions of reference,

notions of problem and notions of solution, affect and configure the professional tasks of the psychologists, in terms of the focus of their work, their objectives, levels of intervention and interdisciplinary work.

KEYWORDS

community psychology, policy frames, public policies, social programs

1 | BACKGROUND

1.1 | Relevance of the relationship between public policies and community psychology

During the last few decades, a rising trend has been observed in the incorporation and levels of participation of psychologists in social intervention programs implemented in the context of public policies. This phenomenon, with different local peculiarities and emphasis, has been reported in different national contexts, such as Spain (López-Cabanas, & Chacon, 1997), Portugal (Ornelas, Vargas-Moniz, & Madeira, 2012), Uruguay (Rodríguez, 2009), Argentina (Lapalma & De Lellis, 2012), Costa Rica (Arrieta & Garita, 2012), and Puerto Rico (Serrano-García & Lugo-Hernández, 2016), among other Latin American realities (Montero, 2010). The study of this phenomenon has been specifically analyzed by the discipline of Community Psychology (Alfaro, 2012; Alfaro & Zambrano, 2009; Phillips, 2000; Rodríguez, 2009).

Some analyses, which make it possible to understand this process, refer to social changes related to the configuration of new social risks linked to a greater preponderance of a relational and community sphere in public issues. Specifically, the literature reports that this process has been related to the weakening of family and sociocommunity ties, which has reflected on changes in families (higher proportion of divorces, single-family homes, or female-headed households); demographic changes (fewer children and higher proportion of older adults); massive incorporation of women into the labor market; as well as the loss of reference identities established around social class or work (Subirats, Gomá, & Brugué, 2005). Public policies have had to develop responses to these new problems by promoting new strategies that incorporate categories related to subjectivity and psychosocial dynamics in the analysis of social problems and in the basis of intervention programs (Alfaro, 2012).

1.2 | Discussion on the relationship between public policies and community psychology

According to the literature produced by the Community Psychology discipline, there exist different perspectives regarding the complexity of the relationship between Community Psychology and public policies. Different levels and different types of complementarity and possibilities, as well as risks that this link can generate for both parties, are recognized. Some perspectives highlight the complementarities and possibilities of this relationship, focusing on the knowledge transfer processes from Community Psychology to public policy, whether at the design, execution or evaluation level (Maton, 2017; Ornelas et al., 2012; Perkins, 1995; Phillips, 2000; Ramirez, Ballesta, Lizana, & Albar, 2016). Maton, Humphreys, Jason, and Shinn (2017) highlight some of the policy-related contributions of community psychologists (researchers and practitioners) to the social policy arena, for example, with regard to youth tobacco use, homelessness, and health care and substance use. The authors reveal the assets that community psychologists bring to this arena and the challenges that await them. More specifically, it has been alluded that the

contribution of Community Psychology is towards models and strategies that employ ecological perspectives (Teixeira, Loja, Costa, & Menezes, 2012); development of participatory and empowerment processes (Bishop, Vicary, Browne, & Guard, 2009; Perkins, 1995); networking and configuration of community coalitions (Martínez & Martínez, 2003); and development of work and evaluation methodologies (Arrieta & Garita, 2012; Maton, 2017).

In addition, this study identifies the complementarities and possibilities of this relationship, but focuses on the contributions made from public policies to Community Psychology. It is recognized that the promotion and generation of spaces that demand community work by public policy and social programs, translates into a great opportunity for the enhancement of Community Psychology as a discipline, promoting its diversification, innovation and strengthening in terms of theory, techniques and social intervention (Lapalma & De Lellis, 2012; Ornelas et al., 2012; Phillips, 2000; Rodríguez, 2009; Shinn, 2007).

This may have an important effect on the incorporation, legitimization, and institutionalization of the discipline (Alfaro, 2012; Burton, Boyle, Harris, & Kagan, 2007; Loreto Martínez, Jaramillo, Santelices, & Krause, et al., 2009), thus resulting in better material conditions for the academic and professional development of Community Psychology (Perkins, 1995; Shinn, 2007). Increasing the psychologist's skills with regard to their involvement in public policy is necessary within this context (Serrano-García & Lugo-Hernández, 2016).

Other perspectives on this relationship identify important degrees of tension and risks, caused mainly by the mismatch between the paradigms, models, and forms present in the formulation and implementation of public policies and the theoretical, technical, ethical, and value orientations that characterize Community Psychology. One of the main tensions refers to the obstacles that Community Psychology faces with regard to incorporating certain principles in public policies, such as horizontality, active, and transversal participation of the community, its strengthening, and the development of bottom-up processes. Freitas (2000) points out that public policies tend to employ strategies and practices of an individualistic nature, producing a Psychology in the Community, rather than a Psychology from and with the Community. This supposes a preponderance of clinical models rather than community models, understanding psychosocial problems from individual and microsocial dimensions and variables, and addressing them through welfare logics, where the population is merely a passive spectator of actions carried out to resolve issues that pertain to them. Rocha and Duarte (2016) reveal that changes in sex education policies have both a positive and negative impact at the mesosystem and microsystem levels. Their analysis reveals how the apparently positive trend towards community partnerships does not guarantee the establishment of genuine collaborations between schools and community organizations. Mata and Fernandes (2016), when talking about drug policy changes, underline the option for a "low-threshold psychology" and point out the existent risks in terms of promoting real community empowerment, given the depth and amount of social problems faced daily by these communities.

In the same direction, Sánchez (2007) points out that a tension is developed between the centralized, vertical, and prescriptive (top-down) logics that characterize the planning and implementation of public policies by the State and community work. Montero (2010) considers that there are important limits in public policies for the development of community, preventive and promotional models, aimed at the participation, strengthening and mobilization of the community based on their collective goals. In turn, Prilleltensky (2008) points out that there exists an important tension with Community Psychology as the State favors the development of individual faculties from nonparticipatory, assistance-based methods and focuses on harm or deficit, without considering ecological models of analysis and intervention that connect the problems in these fields with the social conditions from which they originate.

Finally, there is a third perspective that, recognizing existent and significant degrees of tension, considers the possibility of modulating the relationship between Community Psychology and public policies to reduce obstacles to community work. Giorgi (2005) raises the possibility of questioning the welfare nature of public policies (as it generates dependence on the State), and developing community work aimed at greater symmetry between the State and the citizens, as a necessary condition for the latter to constitute themselves as subjects of law and achieve their subjectivation as full citizens. Rodríguez (2009) also establishes that the current challenge is to move

from compensatory public and social policies to transformative policies, through community work that contributes to producing changes aimed at human development promotion and the construction of citizenship, overcoming assistance logics and advancing towards perspectives based on social rights.

Likewise, from this perspective, we find approaches that—recognizing that the processes of the transfer of knowledge from Community Psychology to public policies are not simple, direct, or immediate—affirm the possibility of nesting and sustaining actions from community settings in public policies. This could happen through processes and instances of dialogue and negotiation between agents within the discipline (academics and professionals) and agents of politics (formulators and officials) (Maton, 2013, 2017; Perkins, 1995; Shinn, 2007).

More specifically, it is proposed that to enhance the influence and contribution that Community Psychology can make to the theoretical and practical knowledge used for the formulation and implementation of public policy, it is necessary to know and make changes in the ideas, values, normative frameworks and networks of relationships involved in those policies (Maton, 2017; Shinn, 2007). Phillips (2000) points out that a large part of the problems in the relationship between community psychologists and policy agents is explained by the psychologists' lack of knowledge of public policies.

In this manner, to generate changes in public policies requires to assume their complexity, considering the historical context, as well as the multiple interpretations, relationships, and actors that constitute the processes of their formulation and implementation (Bishop et al., 2009; Maton, 2017). The task of influencing and generating changes in the dynamism of the formulation of problems and solutions must be assumed, where alliances and coalitions between the actors involved are expressed and negotiated (Maton, 2017; Perkins, 1995).

1.3 | Analysis of public policy formulation

Some models for the analysis of public policies underline the important role of the ideas, representations, and frames of meaning presented by the actors and communities. These frames delimitate the problem and the formulation of the public policy (Fischer, 2003). The policies are expressions of the frames of meanings and the ideas that constitute interpretation systems in which the actors and agents place their definitions and actions (Muller & Surel, 1998).

Particularly based on these models of critical analysis and interpretative public policies (Fischer, 2003; Yanow, 2000), a prominent focus is put on the analysis of policy frames (Fischer & Gottweis, 2012), which emphasizes the meaning frames, ideas and institutionalized discourses (Schmidt & Radaelli, 2004). Policy frames are organizational principles that transform fragmented and circulating information into a structured and significant policy problem, in which a solution is implicitly or explicitly included (Verloo, 2005).

The potential and importance of the analysis of policy frames is supported by its increasing use in the study of processes and trajectories of public policies in areas such as gender policies (Lombardo & Meier, 2009; Verloo, 2005); migration (Roggeband, 2010); cultural policies (Barbieri, 2015); social movements and collective action (Benford & David, 2000), among others, thus accumulating an increasing volume of empirical evidence (Roberts, 2016; Shim, Park, & Wilding, 2015).

In the analysis of policy frames, public policies are both created and interpreted based on value disputes between actors regarding the issue of how the problem is defined (Verloo, 2005). This analysis allows for the establishing of areas of consensus, as well as the distinctions that separate and stress the actors involved in the policy formulation. As Hajer and Wagenaar (2003) proposes, these narratives accommodate both consensus and conflict, configuring arenas of policy deliberation. To know and understand what these conflicts of meaning are about allows us to establish to what extent they were resolved in the formulation of the policy, as well as to identify which are the consensuses that facilitate the policy changes.

The frames included in a public policy are social constructions of reality models, being fundamentally processes of construction of meanings by policy actors (Van Hulst & Yanow, 2016). They are guidelines for the understanding

of reality and are in competition, negotiation, and constant dispute. When a policy frame is imposed on others, it structures a hegemonic discourse, which closes and excludes alternative ways of understanding a public problem, positioning itself as a master framework (Barbieri, 2015; Bosomworth, 2015).

The policy frame perspective is an informed and proven tool that allows us to understand how the dynamics of dispute, tension, and collaboration in the formulation of a public policy affect and define its structure. This tradition can be a contribution to a better understanding of the alternatives and the possibilities that have been opened up by the relationship between Community Psychology and public policies.

The research question that guides this study is the following: *What are the dynamics of public policy formulation for extreme poverty in Chile and its effect on the technical definition of the psychologists' work, and what alternatives does this open up for a discussion on the relationship between Community Psychology and public policies?*

2 | METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

The design of this study is qualitative and idiographic. The Grounded Theory by Strauss and Corbin (2002) and the Case Study by Coller (2000) was used as the methodological approach.

The Grounded Theory guided the exploration, production, coding, analysis, and conceptualization of qualitative data to generate phenomena and relationships in the data in a reliable and contextualized way, through open, axial, and selective-integrative coding analysis (Strauss & Corbin, 2002). The Case Study allowed for the development of a detailed description of the social phenomenon studied and the analysis of the behaviors involved in it (Coller, 2000).

This study analyzes the case of a public policy aimed at overcoming extreme poverty in Chile. We used this policy based on its strong presence of psychological concepts in its theoretical foundations and the incorporation of professional psychologists in its implementation. The selection of this policy was made after the process indicated in the procedure.

2.1 | Procedure

At an initial stage, the Banco Integrado de Programas Sociales (BIPS) of the Ministry of Social Development and Family of the State of Chile was reviewed in detail, using as a review criteria, the policies and programs which in their technical base mentioned models, concepts, and notions of reference that are typical of Community Psychology and that take into consideration the participation of psychologists in its implementation. After this review, the Chile Seguridades y Oportunidades policy was selected. The objective of this policy is to advocate families and individuals have access to better living conditions, by overcoming conditions of extreme poverty and social vulnerabilities that affect them, as well as to guarantee the exercise of their rights. This program belongs to the *Cash Conditional Transfer* policies, which has been expanded throughout Latin America and is present in different countries.

The recruitment process began by contacting the people who were institutionally responsible for the policy formulation and who facilitated contact with other key formulation actors, who also participated in the decision-making and design process at various stages of the development of the policy.

2.2 | Participants

A total of 10 key policymakers participated in the research. Some participated in the original design of the policy while others had roles in decision-making regarding the program execution at the ministerial or regional level. In addition, nine legislative, institutional, and technical documents were analyzed. The interviews were conducted in Santiago, complying with all the ethical considerations regulated by the Chilean Comisión Nacional de Investigación Científica y Tecnológica (Conicyt).

2.3 | Instruments

The main objective of the individual and semi-structured interviews was to identify, in the participants' responses, the main meanings that they attributed to the phenomenon of extreme poverty. Following the methodological strategy, we sought to identify and delve into the way in which the policymakers represented the problem and the solution of extreme poverty, the values, meanings, actors, and dynamics involved. Likewise, we sought to identify the main models, concepts, and notions of reference typical of psychology present in their representations, and the profile and professional task that they attributed to the psychologist participating in their implementation (see Table 1).

The legislative, institutional, and technical documents produced during the formulation and implementation of the program were reviewed with the aim of identifying the main relevant contents for their characterization and contextualization.

2.4 | Coding and data analysis

The coding and analysis work of the produced data was done based on the three stages proposed by Grounded Theory: open coding, axial coding, and selective coding (Strauss & Corbin, 2002). The constant comparison method and theoretical sampling were used. According to Soneira (2006), the constant comparison method involves the researchers (a) collecting, (b) coding, and (c) analyzing the data simultaneously. By means of theoretical sampling, saturation was established and the properties of the categories were discovered, establishing similarities, differences, and interrelationships of these properties for generation of the theory. The saturation of the sample was achieved by analyzing all the documents supporting the policy and doing interviews until the different analysts in the team identified the saturation of the categories addressed. In open coding, codes are generated from two sources: precoding and in vivo codes.

A research team made up of six researchers (doctors, master's, and postgraduate students linked to the social sciences, all with training and experience in qualitative research) carried out the coding. The coding and analysis

TABLE 1 Semi-structured "Interview Guideline"

Topic	Subtopic
Representations on the phenomenon of extreme poverty.	Representations and meanings on the problem of extreme poverty
	Actors and dynamics present in the formulation of the problem
	Representations and meanings about the solution to extreme poverty
	Actors and dynamics present in the formulation of the solution
	Values and principles that guided the formulation of the solution
Presence of notions of reference typical of Psychology.	Notions used in the analysis
	Notions used in the definition of the problems and solutions
Professional work of the psychologist during the implementation of the program.	Professional work of the psychologist during the implementation of the program
	Expected profile of the psychologist for the implementation of the program

Source: self-made.

work was done using NVivo 11 software. For the open coding stage, and as a way to identify and keep in mind the degrees of differences and similarities in the interpretation that each member made of the data, an interview was coded jointly, agreeing on interpretation criteria based on the research question.

Subsequently, the transcripts were distributed to the team members, and were then read thoroughly and comprehensively, under the instruction to generate categories regarding key content, in the most textual and descriptive way possible. These codifications were grouped, shared, reviewed, contrasted, and discussed in groups, to stabilize key categories and strengthen their descriptions. The identification and description of categories were recorded in the development of Descriptive Reports.

For the axial coding stage, the descriptive reports of each of the categories identified in the previous stage were reviewed, a joint dialogue, discussion, and agreement on their dimensions and properties was conducted, and an outline of possible relationships between them was made. For the selective coding stage, and referring to the categories and relationships worked on during the previous stage, the results obtained from the interpretation, coding, and analysis of data were linked with the revised theoretical-conceptual antecedents.

2.5 | Validity

To strengthen and guarantee the pertinence and validity of the analysis—in addition to the aforementioned process of constant triangulation of analysts—two international academics with vast experience in public policy research, as well as with experience in programs with psychosocial components, were asked to carry out an external assessment based on reading and evaluating the process and research results. The research team presented these auditors (separately to each one) with reports on the different components of the analysis and the rationale for it, which were then discussed, analyzed, and enhanced in long working sessions (6–8 hr).

3 | RESULTS

3.1 | Open coding: Descriptive analysis

From the initial descriptive analysis (open coding) four main categories emerged in the stories (a) notion of problem; (b) notion of solution; (c) notions of reference; and (d) technical field of the psychologist. For each of these categories, the properties that characterize it and dimensions that account for its variability were identified. Table 2 summarizes this information.

The results of open coding are presented, indicating the categories that emerge from the analysis, distinguishing their main properties as well as the dimensions that structure their variability. This description complements the main reference quotes of the participants which are in italics and in separate paragraphs.

3.2 | Problem concept category: Relational crisis

The “Notion of problem” category refers to the way in which policymakers understand the phenomenon of extreme poverty. This category has the “Relational crisis” as its main property. Both in the interviewees' responses and in the documents analyzed, it is understood that the main cause of extreme poverty is the mismatch between the characteristics and needs of families and the opportunities that society gives to people in this condition.

TABLE 2 Open coding

Category	Properties	Dimensions
Notion of problem	Relational crisis	State-Family Family-Market State-Community
Notion of solution	Change agent	State (psychosocial support) Family (social and labor support) Community
Notions of reference	Networks	State's programmatic offering Social capital
	Family	Resource base Primary social unit
	Poverty	Employment Dignity
Technical field of the psychologist	Disciplinary framework	Transdisciplinary perspective Distinctive contribution
	Technical framework	Family-environment Family's internal dynamics

Source: Self-made.

We are talking about the presence of stressors in family life and social stressors in the environment. So what is in crisis is this relationship.

(Interview 3)

Within this category, three dimensions are configured that account for its variability. The first dimension that identifies the mismatch that explains extreme poverty is related to the low capacity of the State's programmatic offering to help families overcome their conditions. In other words, the mismatch that keeps the extreme poverty is present in the family-state relationship.

Extreme poverty must be understood from what is the responsibility that I have as a State to provide people with these opportunities so that they are in a different situation and not to attribute the responsibility that if they do not get out of poverty it is because they are lazy, because he doesn't want to work. There are conditions that have determined this position today and that, therefore, one wants to intervene from there, make the offer of the available State.

(Interview 5).

It is conceived that one of the central causes in the production and persistence of extreme poverty is the inability of the State to respond to families when they face a crisis situation. This dimension establishes that it is in the family-state relationship that the mismatch occurs.

A second dimension of the variability of meaning in this category establishes that the mismatch occurs between the family and the labor market. Extreme poverty is understood to be based on the lack of resources of the families, which results in a lack of access to the opportunities of the labor market.

What is revealed by the lack of employment, poor working conditions and the low labor participation of families in extreme poverty (...) is the lack of opportunities in access to quality jobs. Our vision of social

policy considers that the Employment is "the" way to overcome poverty and extreme poverty in a permanent and dignified way.

(Document 2).

Extreme poverty is seen as a consequence of families not having received the correct training to be able to cope in the world of labor. In this sense, the main motivation of the policy should be to repair this mismatch between families and the labor market.

A person who has not had access to a good education, or who has not been trained in a profession, when he enters the world of work, comes at a disadvantage and we must take care of it. The main focus of social policy should be the generation of opportunities.

(Document 2).

The imbalance phenomenon is expressed mainly with respect to the opportunities of the labor market and not with the State's programmatic offering.

Less frequent than the previous ones is a third dimension of variability in this category, in which extreme poverty is understood as a mismatch between the State and the communities. The problem is the result of a failure of the State as guarantor of universal social rights.

Protection seen from the guarantee. There is a conflict there because on the one hand you can have a vision intention that the State of Chile has to guarantee education, health, work at the local level. We must advance in promoting a rights-based approach in social policies.

(Interview 4).

From this perspective, the problem is not exclusively focused on families in extreme poverty. The mismatch occurs between communities and territories, with respect to the relationship that the State establishes in terms of guaranteeing universal social rights.

So, the idea is to generate a more territorialized type of intervention... it implies changing certain criteria of targeting because its normative today is most directed at families and does not consider the territorial aspect...

(Interview 4).

A broader perspective is proposed, which seeks to overcome the logic of focused policies. From this interpretation, extreme poverty has a territorial and structural component and cannot be reduced to a problem of families or individuals. This differentiates responsibility with respect to the two previous dimensions where the causes of poverty were identified in the relationship between the families and the environment (the State or the Market). The responsibility, in this case, lies in the insufficiency of the State as guarantor of universal social rights and in the disassociation of the State with the territories and communities that inhabit it.

In this way, the "Notion of problem" category presents a variability expressed in the dispute between different ways of conceiving the problem of extreme poverty. These tensions are observed in the different dimensions acquired by the identified actors in the relational mismatch.

3.3 | Notion of solution category: Change agent

The second category that emerges from the analysis is the "Notion of solution," which is configured in relation to the narratives referring to the different resources that social policy highlights as a way to overcome the problem of

extreme poverty. This category is configured in relation to the “Change agent” property, while the policy formulations highlight which actors should be the main drivers of change regarding the mismatch that would be based on extreme poverty.

The variability of this category is structured from a dimension that visualizes the State as the main “Change agent” to a dimension that identifies the family as the main responsible agent. A third dimension, a less frequent one, also emerges. This dimension identifies the community as the main “Change agent.”

The first dimension in this category considers that the main “Change agent” must be the State. Specifically, it is conceived that the availability of a social protection system is central to overcoming extreme poverty. The State, then, must provide a network of social programs that provide resources and protection to families in extreme poverty.

The State has to dispose of this offer with respect to the citizen, in a logic of social protection.

(Interview 3).

Here the metaphor of the “Bridge” arises to refer to the fact that the State must ensure the ways or means to make available the State's programmatic offering and the services and benefits available, taking special care to proactively create links with families.

(...) And that implied that the State has to assume a much more leading role with respect to bringing these families closer to the State network, that is why it is called the Puente program.

(Interview 3).

From this perspective, the aim is to repair the relationship crisis between the State and families, offering psychosocial support as an intervention strategy that allows families to be connected to the networks of the State's programmatic offering.

An operator will officiate as a connector for families with the local, institutional, and diverse networks, to promote the development of processes that (...) strengthen and multiply their own capital.

(Document 1).

The next dimension of meaning identified in this category refers to families as the main “Change agent” for solving the problem of extreme poverty. This solution model gives relevance to the individual and family effort for being able to connect with the opportunities provided by society, specifically by the labor market.

In the environment there are multiple opportunities, but if they do not have the resources to take advantage of them, they do not work. What must be achieved is that the family has as many resources as there are opportunities in their environment, to connect with them and thus improve their capacity to generate income.

(Document 2).

In this case, the intervention strategy is a component of socio-occupational training that seeks to favor a greater development of personal and family resources in the workplace. The main “Change agent” is not the State but families, in whom competences and capacities should be activated for them to enter the labor market and thus overcome the condition of extreme poverty.

Finally, a third dimension of meaning that appears in this category, with less relevance than the previous ones, is the community as the main “Change agent” for overcoming extreme poverty.

It must promote that there is a work of participation, a sense of community, and collective solutions to common problems. It is that the logic.

(Interview 1).

The proposal for intervention in this dimension focuses on the relationship of people with their immediate environment, with their community and with their neighbors. The intervention strategy here is to develop participatory processes with the communities.

I get together with the neighborhood committee with the organizations that I have in my territorial network, and together we are looking for solutions to different issues. They can be of problems of the own homes, but also of more territorial solutions.

(Interview 5).

The solution to extreme poverty, in this case, is in the promotion of organization and territorial development with emphasis on the resources of the communities, seeking the participation and organization of its members.

The different "Solution Models" appear as a continuation of the "Notion of problem" and are identified in a relationship of tension and dispute regarding the most appropriate way to tackle the phenomenon of extreme poverty. This variability is expressed in different intervention strategies, among which psychosocial support, social, and labour integration support and community participation are identified.

3.4 | Notions of reference category: Networks, Family and Poverty

The category "Notions of reference" is related to the theories, concepts, and models from which the whole of the policy conceptually bases the problem of extreme poverty and its intervention strategies. These notions are set out and defined mainly in the Technical Standards of the policy, which correspond to the official documents that support the program and establish its operational definitions and work strategies.

This category has three main properties: "Networks," "Family," and "Poverty." The notion of "Networks" is a relevant reference in the distinctions that articulate the understanding of the phenomenon and the solution in the analyzed policy. The interpretation of this concept moves from a dimension that identifies the networks as social capital or families' own resource for getting out of the situation of extreme poverty to a dimension that conceives the network as the whole of the State's programmatic offering. The first dimension defines the network as follows:

Social networks are basically systems of connections (conversations and actions) between people, or groups of people, oriented towards the exchange of social supports.

(Document 2).

In this dimension, networks are seen as social capital insofar as they favor the possibility of families overcoming the situation of extreme poverty. In this case, they are private and family-specific resources in relation to the environment.

The other dimension conceives the network as the resources of the State's programmatic offering that integrates a territory. In other words, the idea of a network is interpreted as the set of State resources available for the support of families.

Consequently, in situations where there are no objective possibilities of promoting resources from or within families, the offer of the State in the territories represents the resource that will contribute to the strengthening of this type of capital.

(Document 1).

Both dimensions see “Networks” as a resource that must be incorporated into the intervention. However, the scope of the notion of “Networks” varies depending on whether one is talking about immediate or direct networks (belonging to the family), or expanded “Networks” referring to the different programs that the State implements in the territories.

The “Family” property refers to the group that constitutes itself as the central axis in which the policy puts focus on its action. Its variability of meaning starts from the first dimension that identifies the “Family” as the first source of resources for overcoming extreme poverty.

An intervention unit, in the extend as it represents a privileged space to generate processes that fulfill the promotion and development objectives to overcome extreme poverty.

(Document 1).

This dimension focuses on the relational dynamics of families as a resource and capital that the policy must promote and develop.

A second dimension of meaning underlines the internal and relational dynamics of the family. It refers to affective dynamics absent in the first dimension.

The family is considered as the primary social unit, characterized by the bonds and affective relationships that occur within it, constituting an important subsystem of social organization.

(Document 2).

There is a relational understanding of the family that is transversal, but acquires different emphases depending on whether it is viewed as a source of capacities and resources or as a subsystem of affects and ties. This second dimension is based on the systemic approach, which allows for the identifying of these intervening patterns and intervening on them. As one of the policymakers points out:

The program is based on systemic theory.

(Interview 1).

The notion of “Poverty” is another recurring property of the notions of reference and is understood in the narratives from a multidimensional perspective. This involves incorporating into its understanding the subjective and intangible or immaterial dimensions that complement material or economic factors.

A multidimensional phenomenon that is not only due to a person's income level, but also to the environment, specifically their position in the Opportunity Structure (...). Extreme poverty is characterized by being a situation of permanent crisis, referred to situations of dissatisfaction and material and psychoemotional deprivation sustained over time.

(Document 1).

Extreme poverty is understood as a phenomenon where dimensions associated with subjectivity and relational dynamics acquire importance and is one of the foundations of the policy that appears both in the interview responses and in the Technical Standards.

3.5 | Psychologist's technical field category: Discipline and technique

The “Technical field of the psychologist” category refers to the definitions that emerge in the narratives and documents and which characterize the professional profile of the psychologists involved in the policy (their object of intervention, their objectives, their strategies, etc.). In addition, it refers to the notions and reference frameworks that are used to support this insertion and the relationship established by the discipline and the psychologists with other professionals present in the intervention. Two main properties are configured in this category: “Disciplinary framework” and “Technical framework.” The “Disciplinary framework” refers to the set of concepts and perspectives that specifically define and support the insertion and participation of psychologists in this program. The “Technical framework,” on the other hand, emerges based on the delimitation of the object of intervention, the strategies and the technical emphases that characterize psychologists’ work of on the policy.

The “Disciplinary framework” is defined by the psychologists’ insertion in the program. It varies between a dimension that highlights a multidisciplinary perspective, justified by virtue of the need to have multiple and transdisciplinary bodies of knowledge, and a dimension that highlights a more specific interdisciplinary approach that recognizes a distinctive and differentiated contribution of each independent discipline, and where particular approaches are specifically identified and defined.

The dimension that establishes “Interdisciplinary work” for a comprehensive approach refers to the intervention of the psychologist from a transdisciplinary perspective of the social sciences.

It seems to me that the nature of psychosocial intervention, has at its base this multidiscipline...

(Interview 1)

Here, intervention is understood as the integration of various disciplines of the social sciences, which are conceived in an interactional and intermixed way.

... the requirement that we put on ourselves (...) should be disciplinary mixed... It is not simply the sum of... I think that in this type of intervention it is not about the sum of disciplines but rather about the interactions between those disciplines.

(Interview 1).

In this case, the “Disciplinary framework” is not viewed as the sum of separate particular disciplines, but rather as the interaction and integration of these. The psychologist is incorporated as another social science professional who is integrated with the other disciplines.

The other dimension of the “Disciplinary framework” conceives the disciplinary contribution of psychology in a multidisciplinary framework. In this case, the technical field is understood from a specific contribution, differentiated according to different and separate disciplines, clearly distinguishing the margins and differences of each one.

Yes, for me on the field, working with the family is pure psychology, obviously social or psychosocial psychology. But for me there the method comes from psychology (...) for me the basic understandings are from psychology, in the method, in the concrete intervention, what is done with the family.

(Interview 2).

From this perspective, comprehensive but specific views of each profession are advocated, which converge in common spaces. In this case, the contribution of psychology refers to certain particular knowledge and notions, as well as to distinctive fields of implementation.

The “Technical framework” that defines the insertion of psychologists in the program goes from a dimension that emphasizes the close-territorial work of family support aimed at identifying resources and capacities to a dimension that emphasizes work in the internal systemic dynamics of the family, keeping the focus on resources but adding work elements into the emotional dynamics.

The first dimension of the “Technical framework” defines an insertion oriented to the close accompaniment of family support. This framework configures a professional field of action aimed at direct, stable and long-term support with families. Here the closeness in the form of the bond that is sought to be established with the families is emphasized.

This is why it is proposed that in the support stages, families should be accompanied in the generation of new strategies, with the challenge of moving autonomously and permanently towards obtaining better living conditions for each of the members. and for the group as a whole.

(Document 1).

A professional who must approach families to know and intervene in their daily and internal dynamics is defined within this conception of the technical field. Long-term personalized intervention strategies are proposed that use close dialogue and exchange as a methodology.

The other dimension identified in the “Technical framework” establishes a professional role aimed at strengthening family resources and skills. In this case, the focus of action is on the implementation of interventions in the family dynamic aimed at developing the family's internal resources, which affect the link with the opportunities structure.

It is an accompaniment that seeks to develop certain insertion skills and abilities. (...). But in terms of employment, the generation of competencies, the improvement of the employability profile (...) That the family can exercise mechanisms to overcome their own difficulties.

(Interview 6)

Within this framework, there is an important focus on labor to improve the employability profile of family members. The aim of all of this is for the family to have the necessary resources to overcome the situation of extreme poverty.

In this category, it can be observed that in the studied policy, a diverse technical field of the psychologist emerges, also accounting for and expressing different ways of understanding the relationship of psychology and psychologists with other social science disciplines.

3.6 | Selective coding: Theoretical diagram

Shown below is the result of the integrative relational analysis that expresses the relationship between the categories described in the previous section. The relationship between these categories, their properties and dimensions, allows for the establishing of the mechanisms and dynamics of the public policy formulation for extreme poverty in Chile and its effect on the technical field of the psychologists' work (Figure 1).

A broad and diverse technical field with different degrees of tension and adjustment is identified, whose main objective is to carry out the subjective and relational aspects of the families participating in the public policy of overcoming extreme poverty. In the work of the professionals, two main dimensions are identified that articulate diversity at the level of their specific object of intervention, their objectives, the levels of intervention in which they operate, and the ways of relating interdisciplinarily. In the first dimension, the technical field defines its object of intervention in the relationships between actors, linked to the opportunities' structure of the participating families,

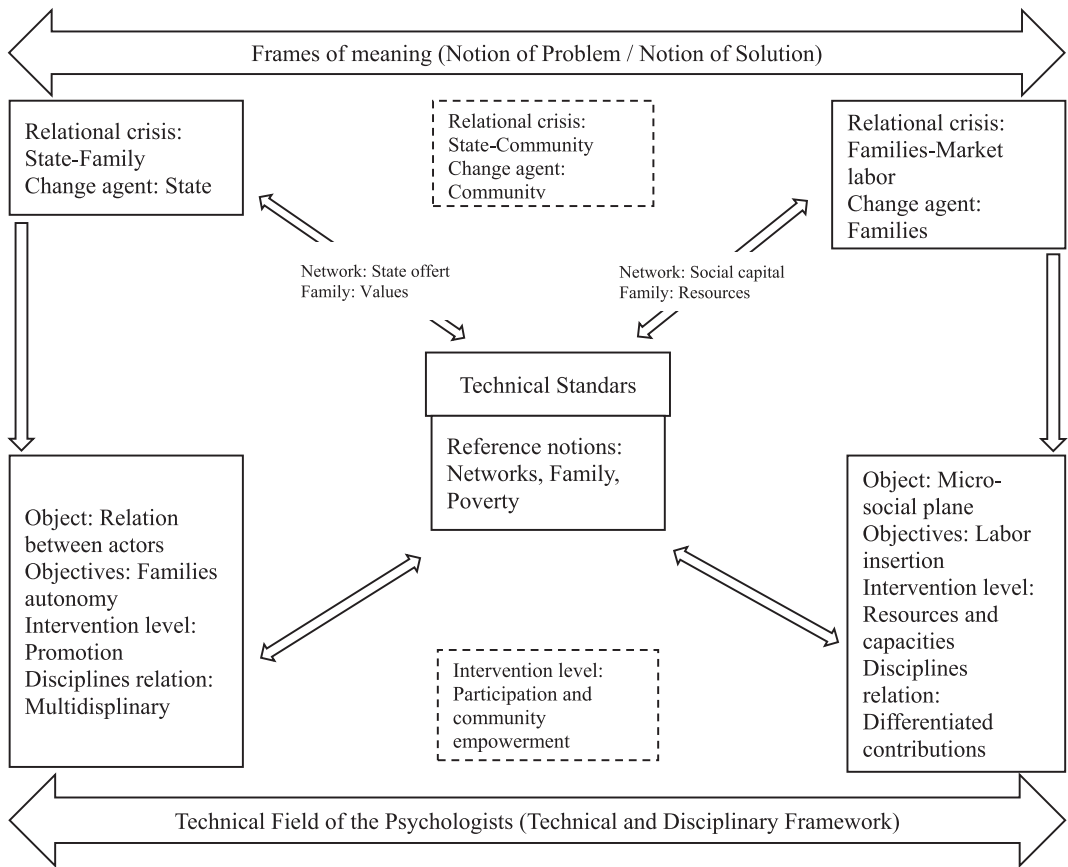


FIGURE 1 Dynamics of the public policy formulation for extreme poverty in Chile and its effect on the technical definition of the psychologists' work

approached from collaborative work with other disciplines (multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary), acting at the level of promotion, development, and training of resources, relational skills, and competences, seeking the goal of autonomy of the individual and the families.

In a second dimension, the technical field delimits a microsocial plane, with a focus on the internal dynamics of the family (from a systemic approach), acting at the level of diagnosing the resources and competences of family members, and the internal dynamics of it, with the aim of activating processes of social and labor insertion, coordinating actions in interaction with the work of other professional disciplines, with differentiated contributions.

The generated analysis links the first configuration of the technical field with a particular solution strategy. This assigns a central value in the generation of changes to the responsibility of the State in repairing the damaged link with families, by means of a bridge between the families and the State. At the same time, the second configuration of the technical field assumes as a "Change agent," the value of the effort and resources of the families themselves in overcoming this condition.

In this way, the integrative relational analysis accounts for the connection between the different frameworks of meaning present in the studied policy and the forms in which the professional tasks are configured. This specifically points to a mechanism of influence between the policy frames presented in the notions of problem and notions of solution, expressed in the role assigned to the State, the Market, and the community. These frameworks guide, delimit, and define the role of the psychologist's intervention as family support.

The connection between the frameworks of meaning of the formulators and the configurations of the notions of reference defined in the policy is distinguished. A dynamic is observed where the two main frameworks of meaning use concepts and notions of reference with emphasis on different dimensions of meaning, which are associated with the description of different problems and solutions. Specifically, the notions of "Networks" or "Family" will be understood differently according to the policy frame from which they are used, activating different intervention strategies. The notion of "Network," referring to resources for optimizing social capital, is related to a notion of problem and solution that emphasizes the lack of family resources for overcoming extreme poverty. The notion of "Network" refers to the set of programs of the state supply and is linked to notions of problem and solution that emphasize the role of the State. Similarly, the notion of "Family," defined around affective relationships, claims, at the level of intervention, value aspects such as dignity. At the same time, the "Family" is defined as the main source of resources, linking with interventions at the level of the internal dynamics of the family.

A main element that emerges from integrative relational analysis is that the notions of reference defined in technical standards play a central role in shaping the technical field of the psychologist in this policy. On the one hand, the notions of reference connect dynamically and reciprocally with the notions of problem and solution present in the frameworks of meaning and the narratives of the formulators and the analyzed documentation. On the other hand, the notions of problem and solution are central and highly relevant components of the operational and technical design of the work policy and strategy, and directly influence the configurations of the psychologist's technical field.

In this way, a notion of "Network" connected to the State configures a technical field of the psychologist oriented to establish a "Bridge" between families and the "Network," through psychosocial support. From another dimension, the notion of "Network" linked to relational resources configures a professional task-oriented to the generation of competences to enhance and promote those resources. Moreover, notions that vindicate the dignity of the family outline a technical framework geared towards family support, while notions that emphasize individual effort outline a technical framework geared towards the development of skills, competencies and resources depending on the objective of the job placement.

Another relevant element to consider that emerges from the integrative analysis is the position that the third policy frame has in the notions of problem and solution, which focuses on the community. The focus on families, which expresses the analyzed policy, is questioned, as it would reduce the structural complexity of the problem of extreme poverty. From this policy frame, an approach is proposed in which the State assumes the role of "Change agent" as guarantor of social rights, based on the territories that promote the participation of communities and their central role. It emphasizes the processes of participation and local development, configuring a technical field of professional action with a focus on intervention from the activation of communities.

Therefore, what emerges from the integrative analysis is that the mechanisms and the connections between the definitions of the studied policy that affect the configuration of the technical field of the psychologist refer to multiple intervening factors. The technical field is affected by the diversity of the disputed frameworks that have a preponderant role, with their notions of problem and solution, as well as the notions of reference that support the policy. These frameworks, through technical norms, in dynamic intermediation with the notions of problem and solution, configure and legitimize certain technical and disciplinary approaches for psychologists, as well as guide a specific intervention strategy.

4 | DISCUSSION

The results obtained show that the technical definition of the professional work of the psychologist in the public policy for extreme poverty in Chile is affected and modulated by the models, concepts and notions present in the Technical Standards, in a dynamic and reciprocal relationship with the "Notion of Problem" and "Notion of Solution" components, in the context of the policy frames and the interpretation prevailing amongst government

policymakers. Consequently, this results in the configuration of the tasks of the professionals in terms of their object of intervention, their objectives, the levels of intervention in which they operate, and the ways of relating interdisciplinary. Likewise, the results obtained allow us to establish that in the studied public policy, diverse frames of meaning and interpretation are configured that dispute and stress each other. This occurs in such a way that the configuration of the technical field is articulated in the context of meaning disputes, where, as is characteristic of public policies, dynamic processes in which multiple contexts, entities, and actors have great relevance (Fleury, 2002).

The professional work of the psychologist participating in the implementation of this policy expresses these disputes, emphasizing between different technical alternatives. Therefore, the relevant levels of variability and diversity are presented, as well as diverse and multiple configuration alternatives, as part of its disciplinary framework and as part of its technical work, in areas, as we have already indicated, of its object of intervention, objectives of the action, levels of intervention, and ways of relating interdisciplinary.

These obtained results, therefore, indicate that the complementarity or tension between Community Psychology and public policy can be multiple and diverse. A priori, a single relationship is not structured. It is defined in relation to the possibilities that emerge from the disputes and articulations of the frames of meaning present in politics. Thus, the levels of complementarity or tension of this relationship will depend on the specific characteristics and dynamics of institutions, actors, relationships, and contexts participating in the processes of formulation and development of public policy.

The relevance of the context and the policy frames present among the actors participating in the formulation is highlighted, to favor or limit the contribution of disciplinary theoretical and technical knowledge of Community Psychology and/or its professionals. The policy frames and their contexts could favor disputes of ideas, values, reference frames and notions that generate alternatives at the formulation and design level, impacting on the implementation of the policy (Shinn, 2007).

The relevance of systematically investigating and analyzing the contexts, actors, meaning frames, and dynamics that characterize the processes of formulating public policies to identify the effective or possible fields of development and improvement of the professional work of Community Psychology has been established (Ornelas et al., 2012; Shinn, 2007). Additionally, it allows for the dimensioning of the possibilities and obstacles for the debate, transmission, and exchange of notions, strategies, and models, as well as ethical principles, from Community Psychology to public policy (Alfaro, 2012). In this context, possibilities and alternatives open up for community psychologists and Community Psychology regarding their contribution to the public policies, as well as for dialogue at the level of formulation and implementation of public policies (Perkins, 1995; Shinn, 2007).

Specifically, the results obtained show the importance of research in the framework of Policy Frame Analysis and other resources of public policy analysis for the discussion of alternatives and the investigative advance of the dimensions, properties and dynamics that configure the policy formulation processes and investigate the interpretative frameworks according to which formulators or policymakers construct problems and solutions (Fischer, 2003; Van Hulst & Yanow, 2016; Verloo, 2005), as well as what alternatives become opened or closed for Community Psychology.

Another aspect of great relevance in this study is the need to research public policies to know the diversity of meanings that can be attributed to the same model, concept and/or theoretical notion, to promote processes and debates of critical academic discernment against the incorporation of theoretical notions and perspective in public policies (Barbieri, 2015; Broad & Turnbull, 2019; Bosomworth, 2015). Possibilities for reflection, discussion, analysis, and problematization of the degrees of correspondence between the notions of problem and the notions of solution used in public policies regarding the conceptual developments and ethical and methodological principles of Community Psychology are opened up. This also favors the visualization of needs and possibilities for the development of "alternative" frameworks that open paths for discussion and exchange between Community Psychology and public policy.

This study provides evidence in favor of policies being a social construction where spaces for negotiation (technical, theoretical, ideological, and political) are possible for Community Psychology, showing alternatives for contributing to issues of participation, empowerment, and development of collective and individual autonomy, as well as with respect to progress in the area of social rights and citizenship.

Regarding the limitations of this study, it should be noted that the specific issues, policies, policymaking processes, and political dynamics presented here may not be generalizable to other countries. Further study of the relationship between interpretive frameworks and the professional fields of psychologists in other contexts is necessary to identify community psychologists' own policy frames and roles.

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PEER REVIEW

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DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available due to privacy or ethical restrictions.

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