

Revista **CENTRA** de Ciencias Sociales

CENTRA Journal of Social Sciences

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Introduction

The Andalusian Studies Centre Foundation — **CENTRA** —, attached to the Advisory Board of the President's Office, Public Administration and Home Affairs of the Regional Government of Andalusia, is a scientific and cultural entity that was founded over 20 years ago. The founding objectives of this entity include supporting scientific research and generating knowledge around the social, economic and cultural reality of Andalusia.

In line with this purpose and its nature, **CENTRA** created, in 2021, a new line of scientific publications in the field of social sciences that is in keeping with the universal standards of scientific communication. These publications include three collections of books (Today, Research Library and Approaches) and the CENTRA Social Science Magazine.

The **TODAY** collection covers topical issues of interest on the social and political reality of present-day Andalusia that are linked to the wider context of Spanish society, the European Union and, in short, global dynamics. It is characterised by a strong focus on presenting empirical evidence on the discussed phenomena, linking the data provided to their theoretical and explanatory analysis.

Even as a collection connected with the scientific community and social science research, it is conceived under the wider idea of disseminating information for an audience that is not expert in the topics covered. The collection, which has been published continuously since 2005, is now structured following a process of selection of original manuscripts according to universal criteria in scientific quality and anonymous evaluation by academic peers external to CENTRA. It is available in digital format and is free to download from the Andalusian Studies Centre web page.

The new **RESEARCH LIBRARY** collection comprises case study research papers from the different knowledge areas of social sciences. It therefore seeks to publish the findings from exhaustive research in accordance with standardised communication criteria. Thus, this collection also allows the publication of those PhD theses from the field of social sciences that meet these criteria and that are presented in a format that is compatible with editorial standards and the established length.

The **APPROACHES** collection, which is also newly created, compiles in a single volume the academic result of seminars, scientific conferences, and so on, that arise from an academic research or discussion initiative and result in a collaborative work directed by an editor or editors. The group nature does not detract in any way from the commitment to quality and the scientific nature of the collection, given that the generation and validation of scientific knowledge is a collaborative and communal process that has become increasingly necessary as the frontiers of social science have progressed. However, the collective nature of the works published herein does demand meticulous work by the editor or editors who coordinate the initiative, supervise the work by the different contributors, evaluate the substantive result of the contributions and integrate them in a unitary whole that is the final published manuscript.

Finally and also a new addition, the **CENTRA Journal of Social Sciences**, the first issue of which you have open in your hands, is a six-monthly scientific publication for the areas of this field of scientific knowledge. It is published in both English and Spanish in digital format, which is free to access and download, as well as being published in hard copy in Spanish. It is a miscellaneous social science magazine that does not exclude the possibility of publishing discussion sections and specific numbers that are monographic in nature, and that, in any event, shall be governed by the same universal standards and anonymous evaluation by the scientific community as the rest of the articles presented. The magazine is open to unpublished articles, written with the utmost scientific rigour by the large scientific community on a national and international level.

So that there is content for this new scientific publication initiative, there is an interdisciplinary Editorial Board made up of prestigious university professors and scientific research bodies. I would like to thank both the Board and the experts at CENTRA for their invaluable dedication to the project, as well as the authors who have already contributed in giving substance to the initial idea and to the many authors to come. I would, of course, also like to thank the readers of our scientific publications who are ultimately the referent that makes advancing knowledge on social reality possible. Many thanks to all.

Tristán Pertíñez Blasco
Managing Director
Andalusian Studies Centre Foundation

ARTICLES
ARTÍCULOS

ARTICLES/ARTÍCULOS

Pitirim A. Sorokin and the Reconstruction of Humanity

Pitirim A. Sorokin y la reconstrucción de la humanidad

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ABSTRACT

Even if Pitirim A. Sorokin is nowadays considered a master of sociology, he still remains relatively unknown to the younger generations of sociologists. This article attempts to reread the thought of this Russian-American scholar in the light of contemporary society, while also encouraging a greater awareness of him in the scientific circles of sociologists. The proposed rereading, specifically, regards the theme of the reconstruction of humanity and will be done through the analysis of three of his works that have been strongly criticised in American academic circles (*The Crisis of Our Age*, *Man and Society in Calamity*, and *The Reconstruction of Humanity*). They contain numerous topical aspects for contemporary society dealing with social change and crisis. In these works, Sorokin also proposes paths through which humanity can be reconstructed, along with the guiding role of sociology assumes in undertaking these paths. The whole of humanity, for the Russian-American sociologist, remains the only true creator of good living conditions for human beings.

KEYWORDS: Sorokin; crisis; calamity; reconstruction; humanity.

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RESUMEN

Aunque Pitirim A. Sorokin se considera hoy en día un maestro de la sociología, sigue siendo relativamente desconocido para las nuevas generaciones de sociólogos. El fin de este artículo es proponer una relectura del pensamiento de este estudioso ruso-estadounidense a la luz de la sociedad contemporánea y promover un mayor conocimiento sobre su persona en la comunidad científica sociológica. La relectura que se propone versa, específicamente, sobre el tema de la reconstrucción de la humanidad y se hará a través del análisis de tres de sus obras, las cuales han sido fuertemente criticadas por los círculos académicos estadounidenses (*The Crisis of Our Age, Man and Society in Calamity, The Reconstruction of Humanity*). Estas obras recogen muchos aspectos de actualidad para la sociedad contemporánea relativas a los cambios sociales y la crisis. En ellas Sorokin también propone caminos a través de los cuales reconstruir la humanidad y el papel guía de la sociología para emprender esos caminos. El conjunto de la humanidad, para el sociólogo ruso-estadounidense, sigue siendo el único y verdadero artífice de buenas condiciones de vida para el ser humano.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Sorokin; crisis; calamidad; reconstrucción; humanidad.

1. The theoretical relevance of Pitirim A. Sorokin

Understanding how the theories of some so-called “classical” scholars are intertwined with their own biographies and human history – as is particularly true for Pitirim A. Sorokin (Zyuzev, 2019) – is not only fascinating but, at the same time, is challenging and helps to explain their choice of some specific themes and studies rather than others.

Re-reading a sociological “classic” such as Pitirim A. Sorokin – relatively unknown to the younger generations of sociologists – is an even more difficult task, given the vastness of his work and the attention it pays to various socio-cultural phenomena. The aim of this contribution is to highlight how much and in what way the forgotten theories of this scholar are current (Mangone, 2018a) and how they are deeply rooted in the search for an integration between the points of view and methodologies of different human and social disciplines.

These first lines will describe the scripts¹ as defined by Goffman (1959) – or the significant interactions of Sorokin introduced already into his *Sistema soziologii* (Sorokin, 1920) – that led me to the studies and works of this sociologist, while also highlighting the hostility towards him that was present in academic circles.

When I was a sociology student at the University of Salerno for the Sociology of Knowledge exam, I had to study the book, *I maestri del pensiero sociologico* (Coser, 1983) – the English edition being *Masters of Sociological Thought* (Coser, 1977). What struck me, even then, was the note of the translator of this edition (made under the supervision of Alberto Izzo) which stated: “The second American edition also includes a chapter on Pitirim Sorokin not included in the Italian translation” (Coser, 1983: 7). As a very naive first-year student, I did not ponder on the meaning of the note and continued with my studies. Only when I became a young researcher, did I begin to understand why that chapter had not been translated. I came across Sorokin several times, but every time I was about to

write something about this scholar, there was always someone who, for reasons of intellectual and scientific expediency, persuaded me not to, which made me more and more curious. I tell this story because every choice is situated in time and space. As for me, when I was “mentally freed” from the “opportunistic” intellectual and scientific constraints supposed to promote my career, I finally took the opportunity to satisfy that curiosity thorough bibliographic research on Sorokin’s works, starting with his Italian translations. Naturally, the note from the book I had studied many years ago came to mind and, to my great surprise, in retrieving the second American edition of Coser’s book (1977), I finally managed to “unravel” the mystery of the chapter on Sorokin. At best, the note was a poor justification. If I were to lean towards mischievousness, I could label it as outright censorship – and I will explain why. In the second American edition, Lewis Coser also adds the chapter on William I. Thomas and Florian Znaniecki, in addition to that on Sorokin, but only the latter has not been translated. Suspicion cannot but arise: why is one translated and the other not?

I will try to sketch out an answer on the basis of two reasons. The first is perhaps linked to his relationship with Corrado Gini, as testified by their epistolary exchange – the letters are kept at the University of Saskatchewan (University Archives & Special Collections, P.A. Sorokin fonds). Gini, considered very close to Fascism, as were all the others tainted with the same brush, was relegated to the shadows. As if erasing Gini and all those he had exchanges with (Sorokin included) could also erase those dark moments. The second reason is, I suppose, linked to Sorokin’s anti-conformist nature. His non-mainstream attitude (what concerns American sociology, unlike many of his contemporaries, such as Talcott Parsons) made him at times in complete opposition to all the drifts of sociological studies not centred on serving humanity – and American sociology, at a time of its development, was certainly not focused so. Of the two reasons suggested, this one is perhaps the most accredited. It is precisely Sorokin’s way of being that caused him to be “disliked” by Italian scholars – an unscientific statement, but a particularly apt one.

Delving into Sorokin’s thought has allowed me to understand how, in today’s digital society, the role and functions of the human and social sciences – first and foremost of sociology – have been “lost” in the pursuit of the operationalisation of the social and the human being². The social sciences lost sight not only of their specific objects of study but also of their purpose of service to humanity (which Sorokin refers to several times in his work). Furthermore, and worse, they forgot that socio-cultural phenomena must be studied according to their dynamism (in space and time) since the constituent elements (personality, society, and culture) are constantly changing and cannot be studied separately (and this is true not only for sociology). The choice to delve into and write about this scholar meant (and still does) to highlight how many of his forgotten theories can be brought up to date – which for me also means, in part, overcoming and going beyond them. Needless to say, this does not apply only to Sorokin and his thought. In these times of crisis (exacerbated by the pandemic spread of the SARS-CoV-2 virus), some of his themes are as relevant as ever – such as

his studies on crises and disasters (Sorokin, 1941, 1948, 1942/2010) – and are deeply rooted in a continuous search for an integration of the points of view and methodologies of the different human and social disciplines (*integralism method*).

Reading Sorokin today, in order to recognise his topicality, means framing his thought within the historical reality experienced by the scholar. He himself, in his autobiography (Sorokin, 1963), points out that the evolution of his thought had several phases, corresponding to his personal and family events, so much so that he wrote in a fragment of a letter, “Eventfulness has possibly been the most significance feature of my life – adventure. In sixty-eight years, I have passed through several cultural atmosphere” (Sorokin, 1958a: 178). For reasons of space, I cannot expand on this author’s biography, referring the reader to his autobiography and intellectual bibliography. (Sorokin, 1963; Johnston, 1995). Here I intend to analyse Sorokin’s theories on social change and the crisis of society by examining his works in which these reflections are presented in an analytical manner. In particular, I will refer to the following works: *The Crisis of Our Age* (1941a), *Man and Society in Calamity* (1942/2010) e *The Reconstruction of Humanity* (1948). In these three books, in addition to the concept of crisis, the possible means and ways through which to transform the actions of individuals in order to guide them towards the reconstruction of a humanity shattered by a profound crisis are also recalled.

In these three works, however, Sorokin does not deviate from the previous overall theoretical framework and, specifically, from the systematic interpretation of social reality, its structures and dynamics that is methodically set out in the four volumes of *Social & Cultural Dynamics*³ (Sorokin, 1937a, 1937b, 1937c, 1941b). The development of the theory of the cyclical movements of systems that he had identified (ideational, sensate and idealistic) and that are produced by the transformations of the mental bases (cultural mentalities) of men and groups (experience linked to the thinking of individuals and the processes of symbolic mediation that enable the attribution of meaning) and that represent the elements from which his diagnosis of the crisis of society emerges.

The *ideational system* refers to theological science as the most important discipline of reference,

Mainly the supersensory, and superrational “subjects” and “realities.”, [...]. The sensory and empirical phenomena are studied only incidentally and even then not for their own sake but merely as “visible signs of the invisible world,” as symbols of the supersensory reality (Sorokin, 1957: 228)

and its criterion of validity refers to the Holy Scriptures, in which logical reasoning is entirely superfluous and is only recognised when sensory perception does not contradict the Scriptures. In the sensate system, on the other hand, the reality of the senses prevails and the relationship between man and society is instrumental: “Mainly the world of the sensory perception, like the phenomena studied in the natural sciences [...]” and has as its validity criterion the “Mainly the reference to the testimony of the organs of senses (often reinforced by their extensions – telescopes, microscopes, etc.), supplemented by the logical reasoning, especially

in the form of the mathematical reasoning.” (Sorokin, 1957: 229). Finally, the idealistic system incorporates elements of the ideational and sensate system (it is partly supersensory and partly sensory-empirical) and in it

the knowledge about the sensory phenomena is subordinated to that of the supersensory “realities.” The total system of knowledge here incorporates, [...] reasoning and empirical knowledge in the sense of the contemporary science. The ultimate reality is thought of as knowable. The exposition of the truth is dialectic and deductive (Sorokin, 1957: 228)

in this system, the criterion of validity is based on logical reasoning, without disdaining references to sensory experience; the three forms of truth (faith, reason, and sense) are integrated into it.

Each system corresponds to a science, and to the system of social sciences (idealistic system) belong socio-cultural phenomena characterised by meaningful interaction in which

The essence of the logico-meaningful method of cognition is, as has already been mentioned, in the finding of the central principle (the “reason”) which permeates all the components, gives sense and significance to each of them, and in this way makes cosmos of a chaos of unintegrated fragments. (Sorokin, 1957: 14)

Sorokin’s attention never deviates from the two foundations that characterise his entire theoretical framework: a) the indivisible socio-cultural trinity: society, culture and personality (Sorokin 1947/1962); the interactions of these three aspects and three further components (humans, meanings and vehicles) give rise to the complexity of socio-cultural phenomena and *meaningful human interaction* processes; b) the idea of sociology as a science engaged in the study of meaningful interactions between the elements of socio-cultural phenomena, and capable of pointing the way forward for the improvement of the living conditions of individuals.

2. Crisis diagnosis and remedies

Sorokin – in his book *The Crisis of Our Age* (1941a), written during the Second World War – argued that the crisis that was being experienced was nothing ordinary. It was not merely economic or political, but also involved areas such as art, philosophy and religion, as well as the entire way of living, thinking and acting in Western society. Today, one can think by analogy of the crisis that has been exacerbated by the spread of the SARS-CoV-2 virus around the world. In this book, Sorokin, dedicates his reflection to a detailed description of the crisis of Western society in the different spheres of action of individuals, highlighting the diagnoses and different points of view that have developed on the subject. Among the latter, two were prevalent and opposed to each other so as to be defined – by Sorokin – the first optimistic and the second pessimistic.

The first diagnosis considers the crisis as an ordinary crisis of an economic nature and, therefore, surmountable with some interventions. To solve this crisis, the

adjustment of different conditions (economic and political) or the elimination of *wicked men* is proposed in order to hope for a return of prosperity. This diagnosis is optimistic in identifying both causes and remedies; the other diagnosis, on the other hand, is pessimistic (particularly in the United States) because the crisis is seen as the agony that precedes the future death of Western society and culture: “The present crisis is but the beginning of the end of their historical existence. No remedy can avert this destiny; no cure can prevent the death of Western culture” (Sorokin, 1941a: 16). Believing both diagnoses to be fallacious, Sorokin presents a third. This is not reduced to political and economic oppositions, nor even less to the destruction of culture and society, because “the *total sum* of social and cultural phenomena of Western society and culture has never been integrated into one unified system. What has not been integrated cannot, it is evident, disintegrate” (Sorokin, 1941a: 26). For Sorokin:

the present crisis is not ordinary but extraordinary. It is not merely an economic or political maladjustment, but involves simultaneously almost the whole of Western culture and society, in all their main sectors. It is a crisis in their art and science, philosophy and religion, law and morals, manners and mores; in the forms of social, political, and economic organization, including the nature of the family and marriage – in brief, it is a crisis involving almost the whole way of life, thoughts, and conduct of Western society. more precisely, it consists in a disintegration of a fundamental form of Western culture and society dominant for the last four centuries (Sorokin, 1941a: 16-17).

These are the theoretical foundations upon which the diagnosis of the extraordinary crisis that western societies were experiencing is also based, and which Sorokin analyses in the various areas of society. The analysis of the Russian-American scholar, however, is not limited to the diagnosis of the crisis, but also elaborates a theory to get out of the crisis. In the last chapter of this book (entitled *The disintegration of sensate culture; The roots of the crisis and the way out*), he identifies the way out of the crisis with the change of what he calls sensate culture – here the Sermon on the Mount is recalled for the first time, which in later works on altruistic creative love (Sorokin, 1954) will be taken up several times. He called for a change in the mentality and attitudes of individuals in the direction of the norms prescribed by the Sermon on the Mount, since such a change would entail a reshaping of economic and political structures. In essence, the change was to modify the forms of social relations, replacing *antagonistic behavior* or *compulsory* and *contractual* relations with purer relations so as to transform the value system and the conduct of individuals towards others, cultural values and the world in general. In this way, Sorokin can be considered a promoter of the overcoming of modern culture (sensate system) in the direction of a transformation of relations between individuals, as well as between them and institutions through the rediscovery of the positive values of man (Mangone, 2020; Mangone & Dolgov, 2020). It is no coincidence that the terms that are used by Sorokin to qualify the conduct of human beings already in the book *Contemporary Sociological Theories* (1928) – making a significant choice – are the terms *antagonistic behavior* or *compulsory*, and *solidaristic*, and not the terms *conflicting* and *cooperative*. An analogous typology (*Antagonistic*

and *Harmonious Interactions*) appears in an unpublished and undated typescript⁴ (Sorokin, n.d., chap. V: 8), without however the pages describing this typology. For Sorokin, the forms of interaction and conduct, therefore, represent a cornerstone of his studies. The choice of the term solidarity is not accidental. The guarantee of the protection of social weaknesses is entrusted precisely to solidarity, which presupposes reciprocity. The primary problem of a society in continuous transformation is the disappearance of the mechanical solidarity bonds of Durkheimian memory and, therefore, the action of the individual arises as a causal dependence between physical involvement and the pressure exerted by the environment on the individual. The term solidarity therefore presupposes the involvement of all the interacting parties in the social system, not allowing – in this way – the abandonment of social protections for the weakest, but soliciting the energies and autonomous initiatives of individuals to strengthen the protection and guarantees for all individuals. The solidarity form of human conduct, however, will later be replaced by *love relationship*. It should be noted that Sorokin in his studies made the words love and altruism interchangeable by referring to all the actions that produce and maintain the psychological and/or physical good of oneself and others through positive actions. The *love relationship* is considered by Sorokin as “the supreme and vital form of human relationship” (Sorokin, 1954: 76) that, before reaching this conceptual maturity with the works produced in the years of activity of the *Harvard Research Center in Creative Altruism* (1949-1959), had already made its appearance in previous writings.

Based on Sorokin’s analysis, therefore, the way out of the crisis is to change the cultural mentality,

A careful study of the situation accordingly shows that the present crisis represents only a disintegration of the sensate form of Western society and culture, to be followed by a new integration as notable in its own way as was the sensate form in the days of its glory and climax (Sorokin, 1941a: 24).

The transformation consisted of recognizing and correcting the errors that had been perpetrated in the sensate phase of society and culture in order to create a mental, moral and sociocultural revolution in Western societies. A revolution that could take place through five steps, which can be summarized as follows: a) rapid recognition of the extraordinary nature of the crisis; b) the recognition that the sensate system is not the only possible form and that above all it is not immune to defects; c) the shift from one system to another when one acquires the awareness that the creative force of the first is running out; d) a profound re-examination of values and the rejection of pseudo-values through the strengthening of real values; and, finally, e) a transformation of the forms of social relationship and of the forms of social organization, hand in hand with the change of the cultural mentality. This remedy, from Sorokin’s words, is not based on the desirable, but on a sociological induction that is repeated in the same way for all previous crises and which can be summarized in the formula: “Crisis-ordeal-catharsis-charisma-resurrection” (Sorokin, 1941a: 321). The previous societies were preserved from dissolution not so much through the manipulation of economic, political, genetic or other factors, but mainly through the transformation of values, a sort of spiritualization of mentality and socialization towards positive social relations.

3. Diversification and polarization of the effects of calamities

Within the theoretical framework that analyses the socio-cultural changes of society following or during a crisis, Sorokin's analysis of the changes that are a consequence of calamities also fits. *Man and Society in Calamity* (1942/2010) tackles the problem of the transformations of daily life following calamities. Starting from the idea that individuals live in an age in which calamities repeat themselves and are, more often than not, inevitable, Sorokin believes that they exert a great influence on many aspects of daily life: from thought forms to behaviour, from social life to the cultural processes of society. When Sorokin wrote this book, it was clear what was meant by calamities – whether they were directly caused by men (war and revolution) or natural (starvation and pestilence) – and how these *monsters* were going to transform the normal flow of the daily life of individuals.

The lexicon around the concept of calamity has changed, the term disasters is preferred (Mangone, 2018b), but in the merits of this work, the focus is on the effects of these phenomena on individuals and society.

In this work, Sorokin defines the “typical effects” that are repeated every time there is a calamity of the same type and states:

The life history of any society is an incessant fluctuation between periods of comparative well-being and those of calamity. [...] Sooner or later this catastrophic phase is succeeded by a new stretch of well-being, which is replaced, in turn, by a further period of calamity. And so this alternation goes on, throughout the entire duration of the society in question (Sorokin, 1942/2010: 13).

Beyond this first consideration, and even before discussing the effects on the thinking, attitudes, social organization and cultural life of individuals, he clarifies a general principle that he calls *law of diversification and polarization of the effects of calamity*.

By this principle is meant that *the effects of a given calamity are not identical—indeed, often are opposite—for different individuals and groups of the society concerned*, since individuals and groups differ from one another biologically and psychosocially. Thus, a person who is immune to a given disease is naturally not affected by it in the same way as one who is not immune (Sorokin, 1942/2010: 14).

and this also depends on the degree of exposure to the calamity of individuals and groups.

The effects do not fall only on aspects of an emotional nature (fear, anxiety, etc.) but also on the cognitive processes of social representation, individual and collective memory, as well as the structuring of thought.

The first of these effects consists in the *tendency of all the cognitive processes to be concentrated more and more upon the calamity and the phenomena that are directly and indirectly connected with it, together with increasing insensitivity (beginning with sensation and perception) toward extraneous elements*. (Sorokin, 1942/2010: 28).

Continuing along his path of analysis, he identifies the second of the changes that calamities produce and which consists

of a tendency toward disintegration of the unity of our “self” and of mental functioning. It manifests itself in an increasing incapacity to concentrate on objects unrelated to the calamity, in a growing dependence of our thinking upon fortuitous external influences; in a decreasing autonomy and self-regulation of our thoughts, independently of external stimuli; and, finally, in an access of various forms of mental disease. In brief, calamities promote the growth of mental disorderliness and disorganization (Sorokin, 1942/2010: 35).

Individuals and the social structure undergo profound changes and as already mentioned above, these also depend on the type and duration of the calamity. However, the common element is that these changes necessarily require the escape from a crisis situation and the search for new balances. Crises caused by calamities represent a normal moment in the flow of life precisely because, if not caused by men, they are unpredictable and inevitable, and therefore not to be considered *sui generis*. According to Sorokin, however, crises caused by calamities also allow for the recognition of characteristics of social systems that may not be otherwise recognized (propensity for resilience and solidarity, for example), as the calamitous event causes consequences on the vital, on the socio-psychological regulatory mechanisms, as well as on social change.

In this sense calamities one of the potent and radical agents of sociocultural change. Although when the emergency is over, many a society rapidly recovers (reestablishing its equilibrium, its unity, its institutions, its system of social relationships), nevertheless it is never the same as the one that existed before the calamity. [...] For good or ill, calamities are unquestionably the supreme disruptors and transformers of social organization and institutions (Sorokin, 1942/2010: 120–121).

In societies involved in a disaster, regardless of the type, there is always a *before* and an *after*, therefore it is a priority to tackle the problem of the emergence of an emergency by managing to outline the dynamics that characterize the populations when trying to give a new order (Mangone, 2018c) necessary to cope with the changed system of needs. In the last chapter, Sorokin turns his gaze to a future perspective (*A Glance into the Future*), also considering the means that could be useful for escaping from the crisis consequences of a calamity, as well as for overcoming the anarchy of values:

Since the trends are already in operation they cannot be prevented or averted. they can be shorted and alleviated, however, by the individual as well as societies. The best way for an individual to meet them is by integrating his values and rooting them - not so much in the values of the sensory world - but rather in the moral duty and the transcendental values of the Kingdom of God [...]. For societies, the shortest, the most efficient, and the only practical way of really alleviating and shortening the crisis is by reintegrating its religious, moral, scientific, philosophical and other values. This reintegration must be effected in such in noblest values of this sensory world, but primarily in the values of moral duty and kingdom of God (Sorokin, 1942/2010: 318).

In this way, it is possible to mend the fracture in the network of social relations that often makes the definition of the social structure itself chaotic during and

after a disaster. It is this process that becomes a powerful factor in socio-cultural change. One thinks, for example, of what happens in territories occupied by enemies or territories that become the landing place for a part of the population that makes an exodus to escape from the harmful effects of conflicts, famine and/or epidemics (i.e., refugee camps), or what happens in territories contaminated by chemical agents and the effects of these on the population. Calamities provoke major changes both in individuals as well as the social structure, while determining the need to start again, to reconnect the thread of the life of individuals and the community, thus trying to imagine a possible future, searching for a project that can get the whole community out of a situation of crisis (imbalance) and direct it towards new balances. It is worth recalling the persistent sense of uncertainty about the future of the populations hit by a disaster, the regret for lost affections and property, as well as the disorientation caused by the forced detachment from daily habits and the impossibility of recognising themselves in their own historical and cultural context.

In order to understand the real consequences of a calamitous event within a territory and a community, as well as on individuals beyond the victims and material damage, one must not stop at the moment when the emergency is over but must go beyond that and observe what happens in subsequent years. Observing these phenomena implies an intellectual action that goes beyond disciplinary points of view and methods of investigation (qualitative and quantitative). These studies and their methodologies must be oriented towards the integration of the subjective and objective dimensions. The binding elements are the interpretation and construction of reality through the relationships between individuals, and between individuals, society and culture. Since individuals are agents of interaction (in the world of everyday life and in institutions), all these aspects – which originate from communicative events – must be read within the framework of the process of construction of social representations with respect to facts, things or individuals, or simply to an object. When studying calamities, it is therefore necessary to consider an integrated interweaving of factors and the activation of different paradigmatic and disciplinary lenses. Sociological knowledge, and that of the other social sciences, must flow into a single integrated system of knowledge – traceable to Sorokin's (1958b) integralism – which must focus on all the aspects of transformation of the social system (personality, society and culture).

In the light of this, it can be deduced that Sorokin in *Man and Society in Calamity* presents the same remedies that he had previously indicated in *The Crisis of Our Age* to get out of a critical condition. For human societies, the quickest and most effective way to truly alleviate and shorten the crisis is to reintegrate their values, so that the nascent value system is rooted in the values of moral duty and can proceed to normalise everyday life by strengthening existing networks and structures, re-establishing pre-existing ones and/or creating new ones.

4. From crisis to the reconstruction of humanity

Sorokin's task of identifying possible remedies for the crisis continued with his book *The Reconstruction of Humanity* (1948) – the last one I examine – in which he attributed the disintegration of solidarity ties to the impact of the exaggerated individualism of the cultural sensate mentality, which could have led to the destruction of humanity if ways had not been taken to counter it. In the pages of the book, he tries to outline how individuals can emerge from the great uncertainty caused by the crisis following the Second World War. For Sorokin, the possible way out of the crisis can only be altruism, which thus becomes an essential and, at the same time, unique tool for peace and survival:

A peaceful, harmonious, and creative society can exist only when members at least a minimum of love, sympathy, and compassion ensuring mutual aid, co-operation, and fair treatment. Under these conditions its members are united in one collective “we” in which the joys and sorrows of one member are shared by others. In such a group a member is not as isolated “atom”, but a vital part of a creative community (Sorokin, 1948: 57–58).

He defines altruism by arguing that each individual, through their own direct experience, knows “what constitutes love or altruism” (Sorokin, 1948: 58), but then distinguishes between: a conduct *genuine altruism*, a conduct *nonaltruistic* which is not opposed to altruism but does not have its characteristics either, and a conduct *antialtruistic* or *egoistic* which collects all those actions which are clearly opposed to altruism (i.e., revenge, enmity, etc.). To these, Sorokin adds a further clarification on what is the “*wise and creative altruism from blind altruistic passion*” (Sorokin, 1948: 60); the first (wise) is composed of actions without harmful effects on others, and this regardless of the subjective or objective dimension, while the second (creative) is subjectively altruistic in its end but not in its objective nature which is non-altruistic. With regard to the latter, Sorokin himself presents the example of a mother who, caught up in her passion for her son, satisfies all his whims without managing to inhibit his demands (even the harmful ones).

Towards the final part of the book, he summarises the remedies for the resolution of the crisis in the sensate society. The Russian-American sociologist argues that, beyond the complexity of mental phenomena, the main reason for man's impotence in being creatively altruistic is the neglect of these phenomena by science during the last four centuries. According to our author, it is a priority for science to correct the misconception of man and the socio-cultural universe, and, for this reason, research plans must be promoted and pursued by the study of the *human energies*.

The conduct of individuals is not always positively oriented towards each other. However, such conduct can be transformed by a revolution of minds and hearts (obviously a revolution without violence). The book concludes with a recommendation for the future to ensure the renaissance and transformation of humanity to a creative order of happiness:

Since the existing sensate order is moribund, we have no choice, unless we are resigned to the extinction of our civilization, but to follow the road to renaissance and transfiguration. Assisted by the forces of the historical process and especially by the liberated energies of the superconscious, humanity may travel this road until it reaches the haven of the new order of creative peace and happiness. All that is necessary is the supreme mobilization of our available mental and moral forces, control of subconscious drives by the conscious and superconscious factors, and unflinching determination to meet courageously all the difficulties of the pilgrimage. It is for humanity itself to decide its destiny! (Sorokin, 1948: 241).

In Sorokin, therefore, confidence in the potential of the social sciences as guides for mankind is affirmed, to the point of even hypothesising the birth of a new applied science dealing specifically with the promotion of friendship, unconditional love and mutual aid:

The historical moment has struck for building a new applied science or a new art of amitology – the science and art cultivation of amity, unselfish love, and mutual help in interindividual and integroup relationships. A mature amitology is now the paramount need of humanity. Its development tangibly determines the creative future of *homo sapiens* (Sorokin, 1951: 277).

The first task of this new discipline would be a careful analysis of the basic aspects, properties and forms of the altruistic relationship (Sorokin, 1958c, 1959), which means that amitology actually starts from the study of social relationships and interactions. This is not only a return to his general theory of social and cultural dynamics, which holds together the three indivisible elements (personality, society, and culture), but also appears to be a final stage in the long intellectual journey undertaken by Sorokin, which aims at the search for the *summum bonum* for humanity: the search for that vital energy (creative altruistic love) to be promoted or rebuilt from the depths of humanity to help it emerge from the serious crisis that envelops it. As Rusu points out, therefore, there are two inspiring principles of amitology:

an anthropological end, aiming to discover the most efficient techniques for the altruistic transformation of human personality, and a societal ideal, aiming to reconstruct humanity as a universal community of altruistic love. At a micro-level, Sorokin strove for amitology to lead to the “creative altruisation” of persons and groups, that is, to people’s characterial transfiguration through the power of love (Rusu, 2018: 11)

and the application of these principles implies, however, an understanding of the mechanisms through which human beings take their decisions on the basis of the degree of knowledge they possess about a certain situation.

From the analysis of these three books, it emerges that Sorokin can be considered as the scholar who prefigured the overcoming of the sensate culture in the direction of a transformation of the relations between individuals, and between them and institutions, through the rediscovery of the positive values of human beings.

5. Towards the reconstruction of humanity: universal altruism

According to Sorokin, change must therefore start from the rediscovery of man's positive values, and science acts as a guide, also by overcoming strictly sensate models of knowledge. Sorokin's is not just a *sociology of crisis*, but a *critical sociology*, which does not stop at analysing the processes of degeneration of society but searches for its deep roots and presents possible ways of overcoming its negative aspects. The history of sociology tells of a development of this science that shows a neglect of studies concerning certain positive aspects of everyday life (love, gratitude, altruism, solidarity, cooperation, etc.). This is particularly true of the new generations of sociologists. This position is often justified by the fact that these are not considered a problematic (negative) aspect of society but a regular aspect of human and social affairs. From the outset, this science assumed a *negativistic mode* of operation, i.e., a *modus operandi* tending to bring out only negative or pathological phenomena without ever highlighting any positive and healthy phenomena (Sorokin, 1966). Moreover, it has also been characterised by an orientation towards the contrasts that individual societies present (normal/pathological, north/south, friend/enemy, centre/periphery, rich/poor, selfishness/altruism, etc.), often neglecting the significant relationships between all the elements that constitute and give life to socio-cultural phenomena (personality, society, and culture). In the *Declaration of Independence of the Social Science*, Pitirim A. Sorokin (1941c) expressed a clear position on the role of sociology and social sciences in general:

Sociology and the social sciences will abandon their insane ambition to be pseudo-mechanics, pseudo-physics, or pseudo-biology. They will reclaim their lost primogeniture to be a science studying socio-cultural phenomena directly, with their own system of referential principles fitted to the peculiar nature of socio-cultural reality (Sorokin, 1941c: 226)

Applying these principles and assumptions implies understanding the mechanisms through which human beings make their decisions. These dynamics highlight the problem of choice. The latter, in turn, must be declined with respect to the temporal dimension and the degree of knowledge of situations, as well as with respect to who and how decisions are made (individuals or their representation). The decision-maker bases his decisions on cultural mentalities and the degree of knowledge he possesses about a certain situation, but the way he decides has not yet been revealed. Here we return to the problem posed by Sorokin (1958b) concerning the construction of an integrated knowledge system that would hold the three forms of knowledge together: *empirical-sensory*, *reason*, and *intuition*. A system of knowledge capable of providing as many elements as possible for the understanding of superorganic (sociocultural) phenomena and, therefore, where possible, also predicting their transformations. The dynamics described so far make it possible to affirm that *the reconstruction of humanity is desirable*, which can no longer be configured only on the level of law, but also on that of a duty based on an ethics of responsibility (Mangone, 2021).

This applies to individuals as well as to politics and institutions. Although these positions may appear at first sight to be a *sociological humanism*, they are not in fact so. Rather, we are dealing with a *humanistic sociology*: a science that does not only analyse and study socio-cultural phenomena, but which, with its characteristics, helps to explain and understand that “more human” part of individuals who are producers of meaningful interactions (creative and responsible social actors). Sorokin was the forerunner of that “positive sociology” – in analogy with “positive psychology” (Nichols, 2005, 2021) – or “humanistic sociology” that many scholars hoped for between the end of the last century and the beginning of the third millennium (Berger, 1963; Lee, 1973, 1978; Goodwin, 2003).

From here, Sorokin invites the social sciences to analyse socio-cultural phenomena not only in their negative influences or effects, but also in their positive influences or effects. As can be seen, Sorokin laid the historical and intellectual foundations for the development and institutionalisation of a sociology that can contribute to the analysis and study of the positive attitudes of human beings with the aim of transforming their way of interacting by orienting them towards that bond Sorokin himself had called *love relationship* and which would characterise a free, harmonious, humanistic and creative society.

This perspective takes for granted the condition that the individual is a *homo socius* because he or she is a producer of meaningful interactions in a context of norms, values and meanings, and on the basis of this it can be said that the individual can be recognised in the concept of the *common good*. A good of individuals as members of a community and, as such, they can pursue it united on the basis of solidarity that manifests itself in universal altruism, capable of giving meaning to human action and its development. Sorokin, using a medical metaphor, stated that sick humanity can find an effective cure in the affirmation of *universal altruism* which is an *antidote* (Sorokin, 1958c).

Sorokin, for these reasons, towards the end of his book *The Ways and Power of Love*, indicates how universal altruism can be promoted.

Hatred is still one of the most powerful emotions of man and one of the most efficient “motors” of human behavior. In an overwhelming majority of human beings it cannot be quickly eliminated or even greatly weakened. It can, however, be rechanneled for serving different “works” and “operations”. Hitherto it has “powered” mainly interindividual and intergroup conflicts. Instead of this function, its power can be used for extension of love and for binding mankind into one solidary body. How? *By redirecting the power of hatred from its present channels of interindividual and intertribal conflicts into a new “pipe line” serving the sacred war of humanity against the most terrible, most implacable, eternal, and common enemies of every human being, every group, and of the whole of mankind: against death, physical and mental disease, gravest criminality, stupidity, ignorance, interhuman strife, ugliness, poverty, fruitless suffering, nature’s calamities, interhuman hatred itself, and a host of other forces inimical to every man’s creative growth and everybody’s vital, mental, and moral well-being* (Sorokin, 1954: 464-465)

As can be seen from the bibliographical reference accompanying the quotation, this statement, which on the surface seems to have been expressed today, is more than half a century old and remains relevant. For Sorokin, the fate of humanity

lies in the hands of humanity itself, which must respond to a dilemma: to continue predatory policies or to embrace policies of solidarity. Sorokin is credited with creating a dynamic sociology (the analysis of change) based on a total conception of man and society. The figure of Sorokin in America has remained *very Russian*, not only in training but also in the application of principles. He was not a “soldier of fortune” (Martindale, 1975), nor simply a “perpetual loner” as Coser had defined him (1977), but he was certainly a “prophetic” nonconformist (Johnston, 1995). So much so that he himself, at the end of an article in which he lists eight points that would characterise his worldview (*Weltanschauung*) regarding the “social creeds and political factions of the present time”, writes (ironic as he often happened to be):

I am looking to the coming “City of Manifold Integral Culture”. This explain why in this matters (to the utter confusion of all the tabloid mentalities who call me now super-fascist, now communist, now reactionary, now radical) I prefer to be a non-conformist “conservative like Hell” in some secondary matters, and “radical as Heaven” in important ones. So far as the revolution for the very foundation of culture - in the basic principle of the reality-value - is the greatest revolution possible, I am more radical than all the radicals of the “old regime of the culture.” Otherwise, to use the apt words of Henry Adams, I am a “conservative Christian anarchist” (Sorokin, 1940: 15).

These few lines perhaps clarify better than any other definition who Sorokin was, a “conservative Christian anarchist” that – from my point of view – must be interpreted as a free man who had always faced the consequences of his actions even when they led (several times) to the death sentence in Russia. Sorokin was always an innovative scientist, his conservatism regarding certain aspects of an evolving society, such as the transformation of the family and sex (Sorokin, 1956b) were linked not to his conception of science but to his aversion to a sensate and materialist society stemming from his Russian Orthodox education. On the other hand, the sociology he is faced with is a betrayed sociology, because it is bound up with what he calls *quantophreny and testomania* (Sorokin, 1955) and with the reductive conceptions he defines as the study of *mechanical models or robots* (Sorokin, 1956a), which leaves no room for a more open and profound look at the interpretation of social reality through which to give orientation, value and meaning to the research itself.

His positions, however, always started from an assumption: to place at the centre of humanity in its entirety made up of individual personalities interacting with each other and who were inserted in their own social and cultural context of reference, because only this could act to get out of the crisis that was considered to be irreversible.

Notes

- 1 Goffman defined *scripts* as those complex structures of knowledge one possesses about an ordered succession of actions. Scripts define various situations which have become known through experience. In everyday life, this appears to be the most effective methodology adopted by individuals to better manage situations and environmental interpretation through conceptual representations of individual objects, as well as events and social relations.
- 2 See the great success of quantitative methods, testing and the use of big data, Sorokin, from this point of view was an “uncomfortable” sociologist, because from the very beginning of the last century he denounced the asphyxiation of the humanities and social sciences (Sorokin, 1956a) as an end in itself.
- 3 It should be noted that these four volumes were later published by Sorokin himself in a single volume (Sorokin, 1957), which is the text referred to in this contribution.
- 4 The typescript, *The Nature of Sociology and its Relation to other Sciences*, was kindly granted in copy by the University Archives & Special Collections, P.A. Sorokin fonds of the University of Saskatchewan (Canada) which holds it together with the entire documentary archive that belonged to Sorokin.

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ARTICLES/ARTÍCULOS

The Use of YouTube by Political Parties in Andalusia

El uso de YouTube por los partidos políticos andaluces

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ABSTRACT

Social media platforms have become instrumental for propaganda strategies. Of all the social networks, the video-sharing site YouTube has successfully established itself as the audiovisual platform par excellence, arousing the interest of political parties. This study analyses the YouTube communication of the main political parties in Andalusia as a result of the lack of academic literature on the use of this platform at a regional level and, more specifically, in the self-governing region of Andalusia. To this end, the content of the videos shared in 2020 on the official YouTube channels of the Andalusian parties was analysed. The findings provide information on the frequency with which the various parties upload content, the main topics, the type of interaction (positive or negative) and the objectives and role as a propaganda tool. The research shows the predominance of the radical right party Vox regarding different variables; the importance of the economy, policy and government; the use of YouTube for communicating party stances; and the propaganda attacks on rival parties and/or governments.

KEYWORDS: andalusian political parties; political propaganda; YouTube politics; social media and politics; content analysis.

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RESUMEN

Las redes sociales se han convertido en plataformas esenciales para las estrategias propagandísticas. Entre todas las redes existentes, YouTube ha conseguido erigirse como la plataforma de almacenamiento audiovisual por antonomasia, siendo de gran utilidad para los partidos políticos. Este estudio analiza la comunicación de los principales partidos políticos andaluces en YouTube, debido a la escasez de literatura académica acerca del uso de esta plataforma a nivel autonómico y, más concretamente, en Andalucía. Para ello, se ha realizado un análisis de contenido de los vídeos publicados en los perfiles oficiales de los partidos andaluces en YouTube durante el año 2020. Los resultados del análisis aportan información acerca de la frecuencia de publicación de los diferentes partidos, las principales temáticas utilizadas, el tipo de interacción (positiva o negativa) o los objetivos y funciones propagandísticas. La investigación evidencia el predominio del partido de derecha radical Vox en distintas variables, la importancia temática de la economía, la política y el gobierno, el uso de YouTube para comunicar posiciones de los partidos y el ataque propagandístico a partidos y/o gobiernos rivales.

KEYWORDS: partidos políticos andaluces; propaganda política; política en YouTube; redes sociales y política; análisis de contenido.

1. Introduction: Social Media and Politics

With there being significant participation from political parties and leaders on the internet and social media, Spain could arguably be said to be immersed in what Davis, Baumgartner, Francia and Morris (2009) conceptualise as a post-maturity phase in internet campaigns, where the use of sophisticated websites is normalised and attention is directed towards social media. The use of social media became a relevant resource from the time of Barack Obama's campaign in 2007–2008 (Capra et al., 2008; Church, 2010), being integrated into the repertoire of political communication on a global level. This is evidenced by Donald Trump's systematic use of Twitter and Facebook in the 2016 US campaign, which continued throughout his presidency; and, during that same campaign, by the activity on new social media such as Instagram and Snapchat (Bosseta, 2018).

Spain can be included among those countries where social media has represented a turning point in political communication (Ruiz del Olmo and Bustos Díaz, 2016). In particular, social media use in current Spanish politics is within a context of far-reaching changes: traditionally, the panorama was characterised by a virtually two-party system where the social-democratic party, Partido Socialista Obrero Español (PSOE), and the conservative party, Partido Popular (PP), held power alternately since 1982, both in the central Spanish government and in the majority of the self-governing regions. The first cracks appeared in the 2014 European elections when the left-wing party Podemos was created, with the main traditional parties losing a significant number of votes. The rise of Podemos — which appeared in a turbulent social context following the success of protest movements such as the 15-M or anti-austerity movement in Spain — was followed by that of Ciudadanos, a center-right liberal party that originated in Catalonia and quickly became another serious competitor for the bipartisanship. Following the 2015, 2016 and 2019 general elections, Ciudadanos and Podemos transformed themselves into relevant political forces, until the point at which the latter formed the current Spanish progressive coalition government with PSOE. At the same time, a separatist movement was

gaining momentum in Catalonia that polarised Catalan politics into pro- and anti-independence groups. As a result of the reaction to this phenomenon, the radical right-wing party Vox (Ferreira, 2019) entered parliamentary life between 2018 and 2019, becoming the third-largest political force in Spain.

These general trends of change are also seen in the self-governing region of Andalusia. Andalusia is one of the most important regions in Spain: in 2020, Andalusia had a population of 8,464,411 inhabitants, compared to the country's total of 47,450,795, thus making up around one-fifth of the Spanish population (Spanish National Statistics Institute (INE), 2020). Politically characterised by the predominance of PSOE of Andalusia, which governed the region for 36 years, the results of the elections held on 2 December 2019 brought about a historic change: PSOE received the most votes; however their share was not enough to form a government, and Vox caused political uproar by entering the Parliament of Andalusia. Thus, for the first time since the Franco dictatorship, Andalusia is governed by a centre-right coalition between Partido Popular Andaluz and Ciudadanos Andalucía, which had the political support of Vox until May 2021 (RTVE.es, 2021).

All this has implied a series of changes — both in how the leaders' activities are perceived and in the political activity itself — that have taken the socio-political map of Spain and Andalusia to a climate unseen in recent years. In this context, the term “new politics” has become a common reference in public discourse. Originally applied to Podemos and Ciudadanos, the label appears to encompass all those actions that intend to “*acercar la política al ciudadano*” (bring politics closer to the people; Civietta, 2015), combining the use of tools and technologies that enable greater visibility of the dealings and negotiations of the parties. Thus, there is the realisation that other ways to understand and do politics exist — in contrast to the so-called “old politics” — that enable new ways of communication and leadership (Domínguez Benavente, 2017). This new politics is associated with the use of social media, to the extent that the differentiation between new/old leaders has become a variable of analysis for these networks (López-García, 2016; López-Meri et al., 2017).

The aim of this article is to examine the communication dimensions of this climate of political and technological change, focusing on the analysis of the messages conveyed by the main political parties in Andalusia on one of the most important social media networks: the video-sharing site YouTube. Before addressing this aim, it is necessary to review the literature on how this platform has been used.

2. Theoretical Framework: The Use of YouTube by Political Parties

Content and political ramifications on YouTube have already been the subject of numerous research studies, the majority of which focus on content analysis (Berrocal Gonzalo, Domínguez and García, 2012; Gil Ramírez, 2019; Litvinenko, 2021; Cerdán Martínez, 2021). For example, Möller, Kühne, Baumgartner and Jochen (2019) focus, from a statistical point of view, on the likes, dislikes, comments and number of views of the most-watched YouTube videos, both for entertainment and political videos. Among other findings, they indicate that

the viewers of political audiovisual content respond in a different way to social information than those who watch videos for entertainment. Contextually, it is important to remember that YouTube is not the only video-sharing network that has been studied with reference to its political dimension: TikTok, currently a hugely popular social network, has also been analysed from the viewpoint of its potential to spread political ideology due to its entertaining features (Vijay and Gekker, 2021); from the perspective of the metrics reached and the narrative themes used (Barreto and Rivera Prado, 2022); or highlighting how Podemos has adapted to TikTok slang and its technical specificities (Cervi, Tejedor and Marín Lladó, 2021).

More precisely, the review of specific literature on the propaganda use of YouTube by political parties and candidates offers some results on an international level. Already in the 2006 US election cycle, Gueorguieva (2008) indicated the relevance of YouTube when putting lesser-known candidates on the map and building support. Church has studied YouChoose and its YouTube section, “a viral forum for presidential candidates to campaign in the digital sphere” (2010: 125), and, in his study of clips of 16 candidates in the 2008 US elections — combining a quantitative and qualitative approach — he points out that the content “appeared to focus primarily on the character of each candidate rather than his or her respective policies (*ibid.*: 130). Research by Klotz (2010) on the 2006 and 2008 electoral campaigns for the US Senate, based on content analysis and keyword tracking, finds that YouTube did not generate new political communication formats in the 2008 elections, with the ad format still predominating. The landmark 2008 US campaign has also been studied by Ridout, Fowler and Branstetter (2010: 14) — who compile adverts with over 1,000 views and data on political advertising coverage in the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, as well as conducting a survey —, for whom “the 2008 election appears to be the first true ‘YouTube’ election”. Pineda, Garrido and Ramos (2013) analyse the similarities and differences in a content analysis of spot ads and political videos on YouTube during the 2008 elections in Spain and the United States. They find that the candidate is key in the general stance adopted, indicating that questions surrounding ideology and the parties play a secondary role, and that American and Spanish adverts do not use the same campaign points, with the exception of the issue of economic growth. Vesnic-Alujević and Van Bauwel (2014) also use content analysis to study the use of YouTube by three parties from four countries (France, Italy, Ireland and Slovenia) during the 2009 European Parliament elections. They conclude that the parties differ in their strategies — both at a national level and on ideological terms — and that they use different styles. Furthermore, they conclude that more than half of the 67 videos sampled centred on issues as opposed to the candidate, while YouTube is a network that should favour personalisation. Within the Asian context, Foong Lian (2018) analyses 35 videos by the main parties who ran in the 2016 Sarawak state elections (Malaysia) in order to analyse the cultural meaning of the audiovisual content. She finds an ideological battle between “us” and “them” with a view to underscore nationalism, providing hegemonic and anti-hegemonic framework on the realities of Sarawak. Sohal and Kaur (2018) study the use of YouTube during the 2014 elections for the Parliament of India, analysing 92 adverts by the Indian National Congress and the Bharatiya Janata Party. They find

that both parties primarily focused their content on appealing to voters. The article by Olof Larsson (2018) on the presence of Norwegian parties on YouTube provides information about likes and dislikes, perceiving them as relative indicators of popularity on this social media network. On the other hand, by means of a discursive and semiotic approach, Romero (2019) analyses the speeches made by Mauricio Macri on Facebook and YouTube during the 2015 presidential elections in Argentina, finding that Macri's main modes of presentation are developed in contrast with what is commonly understood as "politics". Based on a study that includes, among other elements, tools derived from the narratological study, Rodríguez-Serrano, García-Catalán and Martín-Nuñez (2019) investigate the strategies of misinformation used by twelve European extreme right-wing parties. They find the creation of a common enemy for the people to be a main topic, as well as a xenophobic approach that positions immigration as a key problem; in another investigation on the topic, the same authors (2021) highlight the use of patriotic motives.

In the case of studies focused on Spain, and according to Álvarez García (2010), YouTube was the most exploited network by both PSOE and PP in the 2008 election campaign. Later, by means of a descriptive and quantitative content analysis, Berrocal, Gil Torres and Campos-Domínguez (2016) studied the most viewed YouTube videos on the political parties that achieved representation in the European Parliament following the 2014 elections, as well as those videos on their main leaders. Their findings show that personalisation is not the norm and that the party, the platform or the actions/activities are at the fore. Gómez de Travesedo and López (2016) carry out a content analysis of the PP, PSOE, Ciudadanos and Podemos profiles during the first pre-campaign week of the 2015 elections, studying formal, content and interaction variables. They conclude, among other data, that PSOE is the party that has taken most care of this platform, as well as being the party that attributes most relevance to the candidate while, in the case of PP, this is given to other party members. Focusing on the elections held on 26 June 2016, and based on a content analysis of 80 videos, Berrocal-Gonzalo, Martín-Jiménez and Gil-Torres (2017) conclude that the most-watched videos during the on-going campaign were *politainment*, while the most-watched videos in the election campaign were informative. In their quantitative and qualitative analysis of 80 videos by PP, PSOE, Ciudadanos and Podemos, Gil-Ramírez, Gómez de Travesedo-Rojas and Almansa-Martínez (2019) highlight personalisation — without exceeding, however, the attention given to the parties, except in the video thumbnails — and a scarce *politainment* approach. Likewise, the study by Gil Ramírez, Castellero Ostio and Gómez de Travesedo Rojas (2020) is quantitative and qualitative, and it analyses the most-viewed videos on PP, PSOE, Vox, Podemos and Ciudadanos. The study finds that in the audiovisual content thumbnail, the political representative prevails over the abbreviations of the parties, while in the title text it is the other way around. Studying videos uploaded by Spanish parties, users and the media, Gil-Ramírez and Gómez de Travesedo-Rojas point out that "la clase política española aún no está aprovechando las posibilidades y herramientas que ofrece YouTube ni para posicionarse estratégicamente, ni para establecer una comunicación recíproca con la ciudadanía" (the Spanish political class is still yet to take advantage of the opportunities and tools that YouTube offers either to position themselves strategically or to establish reciprocal communication with the people; 2020: 39).

Returning to the electoral context, Villar-Hernández and Pellisser Rossell (2021) analyse — from a descriptive and quantitative perspective that includes elements such as narrative emphasis, among others — 44 spot ads shared for the elections held on 26 June 2016 by PP, PSOE, Podemos and Ciudadanos. They find, among other elements, that all the parties make more emotional appeals — except for Ciudadanos — and that the leaders are present, but not in an exaggerated way, and therefore it appears that the trend of personalisation is slowing.

The literature on the political use of YouTube in Spain also includes regional and/or local studies. Methodologically combining content analysis and survey (with Likert scale), Vázquez Sande (2016a) studies the most-watched YouTube videos of the 23 candidates who became the representatives of the seven main cities in the 2011 municipal elections in Galicia, finding that storytelling is used to associate the candidate with different lifestyles and show their private life (family, for example). The same author (Vázquez Sande, 2016b) confirms that the candidates who used personal storytelling in the 2011 elections in Galicia are not young, come from majority parties and have been candidates on previous occasions. Studying the values transmitted and the resources used, Vázquez Sande (2017) also observes that the transference of symbolic capital based on the candidate's qualities is not explicitly carried over to the political sphere. On the other hand, Gandlaz, Larrondo Ureta and Orbegozo Terradillos (2020) qualitatively analyse 13 spot ads on YouTube by the parties that achieved representation in the 2016 Basque Parliament elections (EAJ-PNV, EH Bildu, Elkarrekin Podemos, Partido Socialista de Euskadi-Euskadiko Ezkerra and PP) — according to concepts such as the factors of the video that contribute to their virality and repercussion, the recognition of common aspects in the more successful videos, and the comparison of each party's election results — and they observe that the channels with most subscribers, uploaded videos and views correspond to the parties that obtained the most votes (EAJ-PNV and EH Bildu).

Focusing specifically on Andalusia, the literature on the use of YouTube by the parties in this region of southern Spain is, however, non-existent. There is research on the use of social media networks, such as Twitter (Deltell, Claes and Osteso, 2013; Díaz and Del Olmo, 2016; Pérez-Curiel and García Gordillo, 2019) and Instagram (Carrasco-Polanco, Sánchez-de-la-Nieta-Hernández and Trelles-Villanueva, 2020) during elections in Andalusia; however, there are no studies on the political and propaganda use of YouTube by parties in Andalusia. It is precisely this gap in research that this article endeavours to fill. Parting from the general objective of analysing the political communication on YouTube by the main political parties in Andalusia in 2020, we propose — taking into account the previous review of the literature — the following research questions (RQ) as secondary objectives:

RQ₁. *Which political parties in Andalusia are most active on YouTube?*

RQ₂. *Which Andalusian parties have the highest number of views, likes and comments on YouTube?*

RQ₃. *What are the main topics addressed by the Andalusian parties in the videos?*

RQ₄. *For the Andalusian parties, what are the main purposes of the videos they publish on YouTube?*

RQ₅. *What are the main propaganda targets of the Andalusian parties on YouTube?*

3. Methodology

The choice of YouTube as the sample frame for the analysis of this research is justified based on the popularity and political relevance of this online site. Created in 2005, YouTube is the most important digital video platform, with an audience of over one billion unique users each month (The YouTube Team, 2013). Furthermore, YouTube has significant reach on social media and is accessible through more than 350 million mobile devices (Ricke, 2014). The selection of YouTube also lies in the fact that it has been naturally included in the repertoire of political parties given that it is one of the sites that “provide popular venues for individuals and organisations to express their views, opinions and shared lives with the larger community of web users, which in turn may affect thought and behaviour in realms such as politics” (Capra et al., 2008: 211). Its users, on the other hand, are an attractive audience for political campaigns: a substantial portion of voters use networks such as YouTube “and can be reached there by candidates and their campaign ads” (Gueorguieva, 2008: 291). For that reason, YouTube is a platform used by the main parties in the run-up to an election (Álvarez García, 2010), as well as being “the one-stop source for popular videos about politics” (Davis et al., 2009: 21).

The analysis sample comprises, on the one hand, all the videos uploaded during 2020 to the official YouTube channels of the political parties in Andalusia that achieved parliamentary representation in the 2018 regional elections: the coalition Adelante Andalucía, Partido Popular Andaluz, Ciudadanos Andalucía, PSOE de Andalucía and Vox Parlamento de Andalucía. It should be pointed out that the parties Izquierda Unida Andalucía (IU-A) and Podemos Andalucía (Podemos-A) initially formed part of the coalition Adelante Andalucía (Adelante-A); in 2020, however, there was a divide between these parties and the branch of the Anticapitalistas, the current leader of the Adelante-A project, to which the Izquierda Andalucista party also belongs. Therefore, in light of the potential confusion that the label “Adelante Andalucía” may entail, it is preferable to analyse both the audiovisual content of this organisation and that of the individual parties that are or have been part of it: Anticapitalistas Andalucía, IU-A, Podemos-A and Izquierda Andalucista (table 1)¹. Based on these nine channels, the total number of videos in the sample amounts to 999.

The data-gathering technique chosen to respond to the research questions is content analysis (Krippendorff, 2004), a quantitative technique that will enable a frequency analysis to be performed. As regards the operationalised variables and categories for the analysis based on the research questions (table 1), firstly, the posting frequency of each Andalusian party has been included. In addition to this, there is a variable of formal elements that is based on the quantification of the average number of views, the likes that each video receives, the dislikes and the comments — elements

that have already been used for the analysis of Spanish political communication on YouTube (Gómez de Travesedo and López, 2016). Thirdly, a theme-related variable has been included to clarify the main topics addressed by the parties. Research into the topics of political YouTube videos has also already been the object of study (cf. Pineda, Garrido and Ramos, 2013; Berrocal, Gil Torres and Campos-Domínguez, 2016; Vázquez Sande, 2016; Gil-Ramírez and Gómez de Travesedo-Rojas, 2020). In this instance, this study departs from the thematic operationalisation proposed by Graham, Broersma, Hazelhoff and van 't Haar (2013), with the addition of some topics proposed by Aladro Vico and Requeijo Rey (2020), as well as some items provided on an *ad hoc* basis in order to adjust the analysis to the reality of the region under study, such as Andalusian nationalism. Fourthly, to study the general purposes or functions of the videos (reflect news, present a stance, use humour, etc.), we once again revert to the operationalisation of Graham, Broersma, Hazelhoff and van 't Haar (2013), with the partial addition of the research undertaken by Ruiz del Olmo and Bustos Díaz (2016). To complement these functions, a variable related to the propaganda target of the audiovisual content has been included on the coding sheet, entailing references in favourable/defensive, neutral or attacking terms (Baines and O'Shaughnessy, 2020: 234) to Andalusian political parties, the Regional Government of Andalusia and the central Spanish Government, to thus reveal the propaganda strategies of the parties in relation to themselves, their opposition and their political allies.

Table 1

Methodology summary table

| Sample of parties on YouTube | URL address of the video source on YouTube |
|---|---|
| Adelante Andalucía | https://www.youtube.com/c/AdelanteAndaluc%C3%ADa |
| Anticapitalistas Andalucía | https://www.youtube.com/c/AnticapitalistasAndaluc%C3%ADa |
| Ciudadanos Andalucía | https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCIT9UzICuWKQWSe_x_PmA2g |
| Izquierda Andaluista | https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0-Bob1WL4WhOfwB75bVg2g |
| Izquierda Unida Andalucía | https://www.youtube.com/user/iuandalucia |
| Partido Popular Andaluz | https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCPx6C_S8AXg281jc4MZLokA |
| Partido Socialista Obrero Español de Andalucía | https://www.youtube.com/user/psoeandalucia |
| Podemos Andalucía | https://www.youtube.com/c/Podemos_AND |
| Vox Parlamento de Andalucía | https://www.youtube.com/c/VOXParlamentodeAndaluc%C3%ADa |
| Analytical variables and operationalisation of concepts | |
| Variable 1: Posting frequency. | |
| Variable 2: Formal elements (average number of views, likes, dislikes and comments). | |
| Variable 3: Video topics. | |
| Variable 4: Video purposes. | |
| Variable 5: Propaganda target of the videos (reference in favourable/defensive, neutral or attacking terms) | |

In terms of intercoder reliability, for which Krippendorff's alpha coefficient (α) has been used, an initial trial of two reliability tests, each with two coders, was carried out, obtaining an average reliability in the thematic and purpose variables of 0.80 (which is minimally acceptable in terms of content analysis), while the variables relating to propaganda were insufficient, $\alpha = 0.67$. Following this test, the coders were instructed to profile the meaning and applicability of certain variables and categories (including the thematic variable). A second reliability test delivered an average value of $\alpha = 0.94$ in the thematic and purpose variables, and $\alpha = 0.83$ in the variables related to propaganda. This second test also delivered an agreement of 0.98 in the block relating to the comments, likes and views variables.

4. Results

This section presents the main empirical results arising from the use of the designed content analysis methodology, in order to respond to the research questions posed. To start, table 2 provides information on the variable of video posting frequency on YouTube by each party during 2020.

Table 2

Videos posted by each party (frequencies)

| Party | Videos |
|----------------------------|--------|
| Vox Parlamento Andalucía | 508 |
| Ciudadanos Andalucía | 174 |
| Partido Popular Andaluz | 81 |
| IU Andalucía | 65 |
| PSOE Andalucía | 63 |
| Adelante Andalucía | 58 |
| Podemos Andalucía | 33 |
| Anticapitalistas Andalucía | 16 |
| Izquierda Andalucista | 1 |
| Total | 999 |

Vox is the party that shares and stores the most videos on the social network under study, a long way ahead of Ciudadanos Andalucía (Cs-A) and Partido Popular Andaluz (PP-A). The lowest frequencies correspond to Anticapitalistas Andalucía (Anticapitalistas-A) and Izquierda Andalucista (Izquierda-A), with the latter only posting one video in 2020. These data indicate a clear predominance of the right-wing parties on the political spectrum in Andalusia (Vox, Cs-A and PP-A are the most

active on YouTube), as well as the predominance of new parties, Vox and Cs-A, which together make up 68.26% of the total audiovisual production of the Andalusian parties, while a party that is so historically integrated in the Andalusian reality, such as PSOE de Andalucía (PSOE-A), merely posts 6.3% of the total.

Moving on to how the parties' messages are received, table 3 shows the average and standard deviation related to the number of views, likes, dislikes and comments on each YouTube channel, obtaining the type of user engagement with each party.

Table 3

Number of video views, likes, dislikes and comments (average, \bar{X} , and standard deviation, σ)

| Parties | Views | | Likes | | Dislikes | | Comments | |
|----------------------------|-----------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|----------|
| | \bar{X} | σ | \bar{X} | σ | \bar{X} | σ | \bar{X} | σ |
| Adelante Andalucía | 240.9 | 509.9 | 12.6 | 13.5 | 1.5 | 3.1 | 2.2 | 7.8 |
| Anticapitalistas Andalucía | 86.4 | 59.3 | 4.6 | 4.2 | 0.3 | 0.8 | 0 | 0 |
| Ciudadanos Andalucía | 23.9 | 70 | 1.1 | 3.7 | 0 | 0.1 | 0.2 | 0.5 |
| IU Andalucía | 1437.9 | 10622.2 | 21 | 100.1 | 2 | 10.8 | 2.7 | 16.6 |
| Izquierda Andalucista | 122 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Podemos Andalucía | 207.8 | 714.8 | 5.3 | 6.7 | 1.1 | 2 | 0.3 | 1.1 |
| Partido Popular Andaluz | 10.2 | 9.2 | 1.1 | 0.9 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| PSOE Andalucía | 277.5 | 504 | 4 | 11 | 0.5 | 1.1 | 0.4 | 0.9 |
| Vox | 1083.7 | 5886.2 | 131.7 | 478.1 | 1 | 5.7 | 17.3 | 67.9 |
| Overall total | 689.5 | 5027.4 | 69.9 | 347.7 | 0.8 | 5 | 9.2 | 49.3 |

IU-A, which ranks fourth in posting frequency in table 2, is the party that receives the most views by YouTube users, as well as dislikes. At the same time, Vox not only ranks first in terms of posts, but it is also the party with more positive engagement, as it has the most likes and comments by far, with the number of dislikes in line with the rest of the parties; thus, it can be said that this ultraconservative party generates considerably more enthusiasm on YouTube than its opponents. Regarding traditional parties like PSOE-A and PP-A, the low average number of likes stands out, as well as the major difference in average views, with PSOE-A receiving nearly 28 times more views than PP-A. On the other hand, the high standard deviations in the number of views of Adelante-A, Vox and, particularly, IU-A indicate that the consumption of political videos may concentrate on a few audiovisual productions that are watched in abundance. Likewise, the high standard deviation value in the overall total value of likes indicates a significant spread in terms of the videos that are received favourably by the users.

Table 4
Video topics (%)

| Topic | Adelante-A | Anticapitalistas-A | Cs-A | IU-A | Izquierda-A | Podemos-A | PP-A | PSOE-A | Vox | Total |
|----------------------------------|------------|--------------------|------|------|-------------|-----------|------|--------|------|-------|
| Economy and business | 12.1 | 25.0 | 26.4 | 23.1 | - | 3.0 | 19.8 | 11.1 | 30.1 | 24.9 |
| Government | 10.3 | 6.3 | 6.3 | 9.2 | - | - | 14.8 | 19.0 | 13.0 | 11.4 |
| Health and well-being | 3.4 | - | 16.1 | 12.3 | - | 3.0 | 16.0 | 12.7 | 9.3 | 10.7 |
| Education | 5.2 | - | 10.3 | 1.5 | - | 3.0 | 4.9 | 11.1 | 8.5 | 7.7 |
| Current parliamentary affairs | 20.7 | - | 6.3 | 9.2 | - | - | - | 6.3 | 2.0 | 4.3 |
| Campaign and/or parties | - | - | 1.7 | 13.8 | 100.0 | 48.5 | 1.2 | 1.6 | 1.8 | 4.0 |
| Andalusia/Andalusian nationalism | 3.4 | 6.3 | 0.6 | 4.6 | - | 6.1 | 16.0 | 1.6 | 2 | 3.3 |
| Budgets | - | - | 2.3 | 6.2 | - | - | 2.5 | 3.2 | 2.8 | 2.6 |
| Gender/feminism | 5.2 | - | 0.6 | 3.1 | - | 3.0 | 1.2 | 1.6 | 3.1 | 2.5 |
| Immigration | - | - | 1.1 | - | - | 3.0 | - | - | 4.1 | 2.4 |
| COVID-19 | 15.5 | - | 6.3 | 1.5 | - | - | - | 1.6 | 0.6 | 2.3 |
| Media | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 3.3 | 1.7 |
| Environment | - | 6.3 | 1.7 | - | - | 3.0 | 1.2 | - | 1.6 | 1.4 |
| Corruption | 1.7 | - | - | - | - | - | 1.2 | 3.2 | 1.6 | 1.2 |
| Infrastructures | - | - | 1.7 | - | - | - | - | - | 1.8 | 1.2 |
| Human/civil rights | 1.7 | - | 1.1 | 1.5 | - | 3.0 | - | - | 1 | 1.1 |
| Other | 17.2 | 25.1 | 8.1 | 7.7 | - | 21.2 | 21.0 | 4.8 | 6.7 | 9.6 |
| Undefined | 3.4 | 31.3 | 9.2 | 6.2 | - | 3.0 | - | 22.2 | 6.9 | 7.7 |

Table 4 shows that “economy and business” is the preferred topic of Andalusian parties on YouTube. This is seen in parties with parliamentary representation, such as Vox (the party with the most audiovisual content on the topic), or that are even in government, such as Cs-A, which includes in one of its videos an appearance by Juan Marín (Cs-A spokesman and Vice President of the Regional Government of Andalusia) where he comments on the importance of strengthening and developing the tourism sector following the COVID-19 health crisis (Ciudadanos Andalucía, 2020). The economy also predominates in parties without representation, such as Anticapitalistas-A, as illustrated in the interview with Lisardo Baena, trade unionist of the Spanish General Confederation of Labour (CGT) and Anticapitalistas activist, in which he talks about the PP and PSOE labour reform (Anticapitalistas Andalucía, 2020). In other instances, the prevailing topic is “campaign and parties”, as Izquierda-A and Podemos-A show, and which is confirmed in a video featuring Pilar González (senator of Adelante-A), in which she participates in a campaign event and underscores the Andalusian sentiment as a fundamental cornerstone for a prosperous future in the region (Podemos Andalucía, 2020). Furthermore, videos about the government stand out in parties such as PSOE-A (in particular), PP-A,

Vox and Adelante-A. It is important to highlight that, although the parties have preferred topics, Vox offers the most thematic variety, from budgets through to immigration, as well as media, nationalism and education.

Table 5

Video purposes (%)

| Purposes | Adelante-A | Anticapitalistas-A | Cs-A | IU-A | Izquierda-A | Podemos-A | PP-A | PSOE-A | Vox | Total |
|--------------------------|------------|--------------------|------|------|-------------|-----------|------|--------|------|-------|
| Party stance | 81 | 81.3 | 44.3 | 78.5 | 100 | 51.5 | 84 | 42.9 | 46.3 | 53.7 |
| Criticise/debate a topic | 12.1 | 18.8 | 14.4 | 10.8 | - | 3 | 3.7 | 44.4 | 48.4 | 32 |
| Highlight achievements | 1.7 | - | 32.2 | 4.6 | - | - | 6.2 | 6.3 | 2 | 7.9 |
| Politician's stance | - | - | 1.1 | - | - | 45.5 | 6.2 | - | 0.6 | 2.9 |
| Recognition/appreciation | 1.7 | - | 1.7 | 4.6 | - | - | - | 1.6 | 0.8 | 1.2 |
| Reflect news | 1.7 | - | 0.6 | - | - | - | - | - | 0.2 | 0.3 |
| Personal matter | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 0.4 | 0.2 |
| Offer advice/help | 1.7 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 0.1 |
| Undefined | - | - | 5.7 | 1.5 | - | - | - | 4.8 | 1.4 | 2.1 |

In terms of the purposes or functions of the audiovisual messages, table 5 shows that nearly all the parties use YouTube in order to define themselves and adopt a stance. An example of this is a video posted by Adelante-A in which Inma Nieto makes a statement in Parliament taking a stand against male violence and speaks of the need to create measures to favour effective gender equality between men and women (Adelante Andalucía, 2020). For their part, PSOE-A and Vox focus more on “criticising/debating a topic”; for example, Eugenio Moltó (Vox representative in the Parliament of Andalusia) makes a statement in which he criticises the shortage of medical practitioners in Andalusia (Vox Parlamento de Andalucía, 2020). In general, the low number of individual politicians taking a stance (with the exception of Podemos-A) and the negligible frequency of personal matters stand out, as well as the importance of the category “Highlight achievements” in the case of Cs-A — logical given that Ciudadanos is in the regional government.

Table 6*Video propaganda target (%)*

| Target | Adelante-A | Anticapitalistas-A | Cs-A | IU-A | Izquierda-A | Podemos-A | PP-A | PSOE-A | Vox | Total |
|--|------------|--------------------|------|------|-------------|-----------|------|--------|------|-------|
| Attack the Regional Government of Andalusia | 57.3 | 45 | - | 54.4 | - | 11.1 | - | 72.1 | 25 | 24.2 |
| Attack the Spanish Government | 4.0 | 15 | 18.4 | - | - | 11.1 | 52 | 4.4 | 20.8 | 19.1 |
| Defend the Regional Government of Andalusia | - | - | 51.5 | - | - | - | 28.4 | - | - | 13 |
| Neutral reference towards the Regional Government of Andalusia | 1.3 | - | 3.4 | 2.2 | - | - | - | 5.9 | 22.5 | 12.2 |
| Attack PSOE-A | 9.3 | 10 | 14.3 | 1.1 | - | 2.8 | 16.7 | - | 9.5 | 9.8 |
| Attack Adelante-A | - | - | 5.6 | - | - | - | - | - | 3.1 | 2.7 |
| Defend Vox | - | - | 1.1 | - | - | - | - | 1.5 | 3.2 | 1.9 |
| No propaganda target | 10.7 | - | 0.8 | 1.1 | - | 13.9 | 2 | - | 1 | 1.9 |
| Defend the Spanish Government | 1.3 | - | - | 16.7 | - | - | - | 4.4 | - | 1.5 |
| Defend another party (Podemos) | - | - | - | 1.1 | - | 44.4 | - | - | - | 1.3 |
| Attack PP-A | 2.7 | 5 | - | 2.2 | - | - | - | 2.9 | 1 | 1 |
| Defend Cs-A | - | - | 3.8 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 0.8 |
| Attack Cs-A | 2.7 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 0.6 | 0.5 |
| Attack Vox | 2.7 | - | - | 5.6 | - | - | - | - | - | 0.5 |
| Defend Adelante-A | 2.7 | - | - | 4.4 | - | 2.8 | - | - | - | 0.5 |
| Defend PSOE-A | - | - | - | 2.2 | - | 2.8 | - | 5.9 | - | 0.5 |
| Other | 2.7 | 5 | 0.4 | 2.2 | - | 2.8 | 1 | - | 0.2 | 0.8 |
| Undefined | 2.7 | 20 | 0.8 | 6.7 | 100 | 8.3 | - | 2.9 | 13.2 | 8 |

* This may exceed 100% due to the fact that one video may have several propaganda targets.

Lastly, table six offers data on the propaganda targets, whereby the most noteworthy finding is the predominance of the attack on the Regional Government of Andalusia by some of the left and centre-left opposition parties: Adelante-A, IU-A, Anticapitalistas-A and, particularly, PSOE-A. An example of this is the press conference by Rodrigo Sánchez Haro (PSOE-A MP), who criticises the inactivity of the President of the Regional Government of Andalusia, Juanma Moreno, in light of the alarming COVID-19 data during the third wave of the pandemic. In fact, he even goes so far as to classify it as “*la fracasada gestión de Moreno Bonilla*” (the failed management of Moreno Bonilla; PSOE de Andalucía, n.d.). Vox shares a propaganda target with these progressive parties — the fact that the radical right attacks the liberal-conservative Regional Government of Andalusia in 25% of videos is very significant. PP-A also chooses to attack, but in this instance, the attack is against the Spanish Government; for example, Toni Martín accuses Pedro Sánchez

and his progressive coalition government of creating tension and confrontation between the citizens (PP andaluz, 2020). For their part, both Cs-A and Podemos-A direct their propaganda targets towards defence.

5. Discussion and Conclusions

YouTube is established as a key tool for the propaganda and strategy tactic of political parties. As we will see, this digital propaganda takes on particular characteristics if we study the production of videos by the main parties in the self-governing region of Andalusia.

To start, the data on posting frequency indicate a clear predominance of the centre-right and right-wing parties in the political spectrum, with Vox (in particular), Cs-A and PP-A being the most active on YouTube — such that the total sum of videos by the right wing (763) is nearly three times greater than the sum of audiovisual content by the left wing (236) —, as well as the predominance of the new as opposed to traditional parties — the fact that half of the videos have been published by Vox alone indicates the communicative drive of this party versus traditional parties such as PSOE-A, which posts eight times less videos than Vox. These data contradict prior research that points to parties with a longer track record posting more spot ads on YouTube (Villar-Hernández and Pellisser Rossell, 2021); that PSOE and PP (respectively) use YouTube the most during pre-campaign (Gómez de Travesedo and López, 2016); and that in the Basque regional context, the channels with the highest number of videos correspond to the parties with the most votes (Gandlaz, Larrondo Ureta and Orbegozo Terradillos, 2020). On the other hand, and taking into account the ideological variable, the elevated audiovisual production of the right wing in Andalusia contrasts with the evidence that points to Podemos adopting the language used on the new video platform TikTok (Cervi, Tejedor and Marín Lladó, 2021) or that Podemos and IU are the most active parties in Andalusia in terms of the use of images on Twitter (Díaz and Del Olmo, 2016). This indicates potential differences in terms of the use of YouTube, in comparison to other platforms, according to each party's ideology. Furthermore, our data coincide with the international prominence that the political right appears to have on social media video sites. There is evidence that, in Norway, the right-wing populist Progress Party plays a prominent role on YouTube (Larsson, 2018), and that on TikTok, the users of the US Republican Party generate more political content and obtain more responses (Medina-Serrano, Papakyriakopoulos and Hegelich, 2020) — while in Spain there is no outright prominence on the part of the right wing, since Podemos and Ciudadanos are the parties that post most frequently on TikTok, and do so consistently, while Vox is among the parties that posts the least (Cervi and Marín-Lladó, 2021). In any case, our data coincide with the literature concerning the markedly active role of Ciudadanos, highlighted in the research carried out by Gil-Ramírez and Gómez de Travesedo-Rojas (2020). On the other hand, the notable production by Vox may qualify the idea that the activity levels of the Spanish parties and the management of the image that is projected on YouTube are in their infancy (Gil-Ramírez and Gómez de Travesedo-Rojas, 2020); on the contrary, the use that Vox makes of YouTube in Andalusia already indicates a marked state of maturity when posting content. In

relation to this party, and as the study by Castro Martínez and Díaz Morilla (2021) reveals, it is more active on networks aimed at young users, such as YouTube, Instagram or TikTok, with its presence on Gab, a social network that does not limit any content and where the users are associated with extreme right stances, also being of significance.

The predominance of Vox is not limited to its posting frequency. It is the party with the highest average number of likes and comments, and the party with the second highest average views (second only to IU-A), which indicates that it generates considerably more engagement than other parties. In the Basque context, Gandlaz, Larrondo Ureta and Orbegozo Terradillos (2020) find that the channels with the most views correspond to the parties that are most voted for; in Andalusia, neither PSOE-A nor PP-A (the most voted for parties) receive the most views on YouTube. In this vein, Andalusian propaganda also differs from previous research data; for example, according to the study by Gil-Ramírez and Gómez de Travesedo-Rojas (2020), the videos that YouTube groups under the tag “Ciudadanos” receive the most views, while the users who search for content related to “Podemos” on the platform leave the most comments. In terms of the positive or negative reaction (likes/dislikes) that the content provokes in viewers, both “Ciudadanos” and “Podemos” stand out for obtaining the highest results. In Andalusia, however, Vox surpasses the average number of likes received in comparison to the “new politics” parties Cs-A and Podemos-A — in comparison to the average 131.7 likes received by Vox, the videos by Cs-A and Podemos-A barely receive 1.1 and 5.3 likes on average, respectively. Contextually, it is important to take into account that the likes a video receives are a comparatively more favourable indicator of the comments left than the dislikes (Larsson, 2018). All this can be related to the idea that the minority parties with extreme ideology, some without representation in parliament and scarce focus from traditional media, find an important opening in YouTube (Rodríguez-Serrano, García-Catalán and Martín-Núñez, 2019). Although Vox can no longer be considered a minor party, it highlights the connection between ideological radicalism and social media — it must not be forgotten that this is the party with the most YouTube followers in the context of the extreme right (Rodríguez-Serrano, García-Catalán and Martín-Núñez, 2019). More generally, the low average number of comments left on Andalusian political videos contrasts with the data by Vesnic-Alujevic and Van Bauwel (2014) on YouTube in the 2009 European elections, that indicate that comments were left on 43.5% of videos.

The data also indicate that the “new politics” does not present homogeneous results given that Cs-A, for example, has far fewer average views than traditional parties such as PSOE-A — with an average number of views eleven times greater than that of Cs-A — and new parties such as Podemos-A. The idea that the “emerging parties”, so-called in the early days, gain an advantage on YouTube over “old politics” in terms of the activity that their channels record (Gil-Ramírez and Gómez de Travesedo-Rojas, 2020) is not entirely applicable in Andalusia, since between Podemos-A and Cs-A, for example, there are large differences in terms of posting frequency, number of views, topics discussed and purposes.

In relation to the latter, it must also be mentioned that, although Podemos has been indicated in the literature as a party that surpasses PP and PSOE and nearly equalises Ciudadanos in terms of the number of views accumulated (Gil-Ramírez and Gómez de Travesedo-Rojas, 2020), in Andalusia, it has a lower average number of views than traditional parties such as PSOE-A or IU-A.

The analysis of the topics addressed by the parties indicates interests focused on the economy and purely governmental, parliamentary and political matters — the videos included in these thematic categories, in fact, amount to 44.6% of the total. This is in line with previous studies on Spanish political advertising on YouTube, which highlight the importance of topics such as “Democracy” and “Campaign” (Pineda, Garrido and Ramos, 2013), and, at the same time, contradict the idea that the majority of the videos by Spanish parties during the pre-campaign inform about topics of social and media interest (Gómez de Travesedo and López, 2016). Compared with this, social matters are relatively secondary in the communication of Andalusian parties — the thematic category of gender/feminism, for example, only accounts for 2.5%. Furthermore, the literature indicates that the political content on YouTube related with the main Spanish parties is focused on contextual and circumstantial matters, such as the motion of censure or the verdict on the Gürtel case and the corruption of PP (Gil-Ramírez and Gómez de Travesedo-Rojas, 2020), something which is not reflected in the Andalusian propaganda, since, with the exception of Adelante-A and IU-A, matters such as current parliamentary affairs are also secondary. Furthermore, topics such as nationalism, which has certain importance in the Sarawak (Malaysia) election videos according to research by Foong Lian (2018) are relatively secondary in Andalusia. Something similar occurs with immigration; in our data it accounts for a negligible 2.4%, while it is a key issue in the YouTube strategies of the European extreme right (Rodríguez-Serrano, García-Catalán y Martín-Núñez, 2019).

In terms of the purposes of the videos, the importance of the parties taking a stance and the tendency towards debating and criticising topics — categories which, together, amount to 85.7% of the total — indicate that the Andalusian parties tend to favour corporate and general issues instead of personalised and individual aspects. This finding has significant implications for the debate around the tendency to personalise politics on social media, as well as indicating that YouTube is fundamentally used in Andalusia to create party brand, and not the brand of the individual leader. On the other hand, this tendency markedly contrasts with the accumulated knowledge about YouTube: research pointing out that the large majority of campaign videos feature the candidates and not the parties (Berrocal-Gonzalo, Martín-Jiménez and Gil-Torres, 2017); that the videos by European extreme right parties place emphasis on the figure of the leader (Rodríguez-Serrano, García-Catalán and Martín-Núñez, 2019); and that Vox strongly strives for personalisation on YouTube (Gil Ramírez, Castellero Ostio and Gómez de Travesedo Rojas, 2020). Compared with this, the management of YouTube in Andalusia is closer to the data pointing to the lack of personalisation regarding topics such as Catalan independence (Gil Ramírez, 2019) or the use of YouTube by political parties in India, with a slight emphasis on personal traits (Sohal and Kaur, 2018).

Considering the propaganda target in relation to attacking, defending or referring in a neutral manner to other parties and/or institutions, a pattern emerges in which attacking the ideological and/or political opposition is key. In particular, PSOE-A is attacked both by the right wing (PP-A, for example) and by the left wing (notably, Anticapitalistas-A), and the same happens with the Regional Government of Andalusia — which, in fact, is the most attacked governmental office. The tendency towards propaganda attack is not limited, therefore, to a specific ideological stance. This is in line with previous studies that indicate attacks on YouTube aimed at political opposition parties in the United States (Church, 2010), and how, in Spain, PSOE and PP focus more on attacking (Gómez de Travesedo and López, 2016). Furthermore, it appears that the tendency to attack in Andalusian politics is particularly radical within the Spanish context, given that, for example, the study by Villar-Hernández and Pellisser Rossell (2021) on the use of YouTube in the 2016 elections indicates that all the parties opt for positive spot ads, except for Unidas Podemos.

To summarise, our research shows, in addition to the predominance of Vox in various analytical variables, a panorama where the parties in Andalusia are focused on the economy, policy and the government; where YouTube is essentially used to communicate party stances; and where the propaganda message primarily seeks to attack opposition parties and/or governments. From here on, more research needs to be done on the communication of Andalusian parties on YouTube and other social media, both as the object of study and in comparison to other self-governing regions in Spain.

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Notes

1. The organisation Primavera Andaluza, associated with Adelante Andalucía, has not been included in the sample due to the fact that it does not define itself as a political party.

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ARTICLES/ARTÍCULOS

Judgement, Common Sense and Discernment: Contributions from Humanistic Thinking to the Social Professions

Juicio, sentido común y discernimiento: contribuciones del pensamiento humanista a las profesiones sociales

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ABSTRACT

This paper reviews definitions and usage of judgement and common sense as time-tested criteria in decision-making. It looks at how scholars in different disciplines and professions have approached judgement and professional wisdom, (to include tacit knowledge and common sense). It advocates teaching, reflecting and dialoguing on ethical principles and the incorporation of the classical virtues in discussions to increase social workers and other professionals' full understanding of the complex meaning of these terms. These terms have often been viewed mistakenly only from a narrow political perspective or even an anti-science perspective. Such misunderstandings have precluded the acknowledgement of good judgement as a tenet worth discussing in decision-making in professional practice. The paper does not advocate any single approach to decision-making and acknowledges the quandaries of professionals. Neither does this paper delve into the very old tension between science and social work, which has been amply documented before. However, the paper builds the case that practitioners and academics can use good judgement to enhance, not abandon, their commitment to fairness and justice. Professionals, in the sense of those who belong to a discourse tradition (MacIntyre, 1984), can successfully overcome prejudicial assumptions relying on discernment developed through study, reflection and lived experiences. Finally, it is acknowledged that social work policies and practice parameters are reliant on ethical and legal frameworks. Philosophic and legal reasoning discourses are discussed as offering worthwhile perspectives. The paper strives to draw on the humanistic and multidisciplinary approaches to "knowing" to enhance the wisdom upon which the all human professions build.

KEYWORDS: autonomy, classical virtues; moral discourse; practice wisdom; professional judgment; social professions; humanistic thinking

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RESUMEN

En este artículo se revisan las definiciones y el uso del juicio y el sentido común como criterios aprobados en la toma de decisiones. Se analiza el modo en que los estudiosos de diferentes disciplinas y profesiones han abordado el juicio y la sabiduría profesional (incluidos el conocimiento tácito y el sentido común). Se aboga por la enseñanza, la reflexión y el diálogo sobre los principios éticos y la incorporación de las virtudes clásicas en los debates para fomentar que los trabajadores sociales y otros profesionales comprendan plenamente el complejo significado de estos términos. A menudo, estos términos se han analizado de forma errónea teniendo en cuenta únicamente una perspectiva política limitada o incluso una perspectiva empírica extrema. Estos malentendidos han impedido el reconocimiento del buen juicio como un principio que merece la pena debatir en la toma de decisiones de la práctica profesional. En el artículo no se defiende un enfoque único para la toma de decisiones y se reconocen los dilemas a los que se enfrentan los profesionales. Tampoco se profundiza en la antiquísima tensión existente entre la ciencia y el trabajo social, que ya se ha documentado ampliamente. Sin embargo, en el documento sí se plantea que los profesionales y el mundo académico pueden hacer uso del buen juicio para mejorar, no abandonar, su compromiso con la equidad y la justicia. Los profesionales, sobre todo aquellos que pertenecen a una tradición discursiva (MacIntyre, 1984), pueden superar las suposiciones prejuiciosas apoyándose en el discernimiento que han desarrollado a través del estudio, la reflexión y las experiencias vividas. Por último, se reconoce que las políticas del trabajo social y los parámetros de la práctica dependen de marcos éticos y jurídicos. Los discursos de razonamiento filosófico y jurídico se tratan como si ofrecieran perspectivas valiosas. En el documento se procura recurrir a los enfoques humanistas y multidisciplinarios del «saber» para mejorar la base sobre la que se fundamentan todas las profesiones humanas.

PALABRAS CLAVE: autonomía; virtudes clásicas; discurso moral; sabiduría práctica; juicio profesional; profesiones sociales; pensamiento humanista.

1. Introduction: rationale and parameters

This paper suggests that judgement and common sense have been time-tested criteria in decision-making. It looks at how scholars in different disciplines and professions have approached judgement and professional wisdom, (to include tacit knowledge and common sense). It offers definitions of key terms that are involved in any discussion of judgement as used in the professions. It advocates reflecting and dialoguing on ethical principles and the acknowledgement of the classical virtues to increase professionals' capacity to achieve good judgement in their decisions. Terms such as judgement, autonomy, discretion, common sense and even the "virtues" have frequently been viewed mistakenly or only from narrow political perspectives. In the next few pages, they are fully discussed and clarified to avoid misunderstandings and provide some historical context.

Much humanistic and philosophic knowledge came into disuse in the professions on the erroneous view that it gravitated against science. There has been a plethora of literature on this conflict¹. While this paper does not delve into the longtime tension between science and social work, for example, it recognizes that such misunderstandings have precluded the acknowledgement of good judgement as a tenet worth discussing in decision-making in all professional practice. This paper does not suggest any single approach to decision-making and acknowledges the quandaries of professionals. However, the paper builds the case that practitioners and academics can use good judgement to enhance, not abandon, their commitment to humanistic values, fairness and justice.

Professionals, in the sense of those who belong to a discourse tradition (MacIntyre, 1984), can successfully overcome prejudicial assumptions relying on discernment developed through study, reflection and lived experiences. The classical (Socratic or Aristotelian) virtues, particularly justice, prudence and courage, play a role in making wise decisions. Additionally, tacit knowledge plays a role in decision-making in practice, not only in the human professions but in aviation and other professions when time is of the essence.

Finally, the parameters of policies and practices of social work (and other service professions) are reliant on ethical and legal frameworks as well as resource considerations. Philosophic and legal reasoning discourses are not a panacea but offer additional worthwhile perspectives. The paper strives to draw on the humanistic and multidisciplinary approaches to “knowing” to enhance the wisdom upon which all the human service professions build and are trained.

2. Judgement and good judgement

Judgement, discretion, common sense, professional wisdom, though often unclear, all are viewed as important concepts in the social care professions. Muller (2018) suggests that professionals have artificially narrowed their scope of action, passively accepting the disappearance of wise-judgement from decision-making. In social work and beyond, these terms appear to have joined a list of words often misunderstood primarily because they seem to threaten the empirical gains of the profession. Furthermore, “professional judgement” has been misused to justify lack of knowledge, prejudice and arbitrariness, including a disregard for fairness and justice. However, nothing could be farther from good judgement. Let us attempt to clarify the meaning of essential terms.

Ancient and modern philosophers debated the nature of knowledge. Etymologically, the word judgement comes from *judicamentum*, or the act of judging in deciding a question of law or rights. For the classics, questions of law appear very early as being part of the concept of judgement. In classical philosophy, particularly for Aristotle, making a judgement also includes comparison of concepts, which always involves truth and falsity (New Catholic Encyclopedia, 2003).

In social work, for example, judgement is embedded in moral philosophy and values. At the onset of the profession, Aristotelian philosophy was often followed because ‘its aim is essentially practical’ (McGhee, 1998, p. 38) and was useful in professional decision-making. Aristotelian thinking is based on the cardinal virtues; it is a doctrine of Prudence and equanimity in actions. The aim is always to achieve a balanced personality to arrive at happiness. Unfortunately, as Houston (2003) suggests, happiness for one might not be happiness for another, so professionals must look further. Writers in social work acknowledge that often hurt can be avoided through the application of standards, rules and moral principles (Juarvi, et al, p. 68). Here is where *codes* that regulate actions become involved, be they legal or professional codes (Preston-Shoot, 2013).

“What emerges strongly from this analysis is the foregrounding of accountability to service users, to law and to social work expertise ...” (Preston-Shoot, 2013, p. 42). For example, a social worker whose judgement is questioned is accountable to the legal codes under which he/she practices, to supervisors, to professional associations of peers and ultimately to the law.

Good judgement is based on experience and, experience is not just the passage of time. Experience requires the overhauling of one’s cognitive and affective structures and adding new dimensions to a given situation. In other words, good judgement must confront prejudice and in Aristotelian thinking, it must move from *techne* (skill) to *phronesis*, which is good judgement applied to practice. Good judgement is the *raison d’etre* of judges, philosophers and scholars and pairs with discretion and common sense in professional decision-making. As Banks (2006) acknowledges, “Frequently in the social work literature, values are distinguished from knowledge and ethical/moral issues from legal and technical matters” (Banks, 206, p. 11). This is not possible because every responsible professional decision involves a struggle of values and often a conflict. While philosophy and personal values may influence decisions in clinical practice, external codes such as legal codes, complex bureaucracies and resources also enter into these decisions. The professional, like the lawyer, uses discovery and confirmation as facts in all decisions. But is also committed to Justice as the ultimate goal.

3. Autonomy, Discretion and discernment

“Professionals are workers who are authorized to act with a degree of freedom from external control” (Evans, 2013: 739), that is, autonomy. In social work, the values of the experienced workers play a key role in achieving independent good judgement (Payne, 2007). Discretion and discernment are components of autonomy because the exercise of good judgement requires comparisons of alternatives and prudence. Autonomy calls for a measured balance of interests, mandates, often legal but more often bureaucratic, if not political, and resources. Historically, discussions involving judgement and discretion were ubiquitous in the early social work literature: after all, social work grew close to the ministry and developed as a separate discipline because of the pressures of industrialization in the Western world, primarily the English speaking world.

In the U.S., in 1915 and 1925 Flexner blamed not only medicine for lacking enough scientific bases. He also accused social work of being a “semi-profession” because in his opinion, both practices lacked the knowledge building approaches he found in the hard sciences, which were the model of the time. Social workers went through a very lengthy debate where science and art were compared and contrasted often in very bitter ways¹. This quarrel of paradigms transcended the national borders of U.S., since many countries, including Spain, began modeling their educational requirements following the English speaking world and continued such tendency to present days (Martinez-Brawley and Vazquez-

Aguado, 2008). In the case of Spain, the movement towards the “scientific” also coincided with the moving away from religious sponsored schools or institutes to lay universities in the 1960s. The advent of broader social welfare measures after the new Spanish Constitution of 1978 gave impulse to various movements of professionalization with the development of various bodies residing in the new “Autonomias” (Gil Parejo, 2004). The tension between the science paradigm and the humanistic perspective continued to be debated.

Since the development of the science-humanities philosophic schism, social workers and other social scientists have debated the value of judgement and discretion vis-a-vis science in knowledge building (Martinez-Brawley and Zorita, 2016; Martinez-Brawley, 2001). More recently, the prevalence of large data driven work appears to have taken over the social work and social science literature. The academy has found it hard to accept that philosophic analysis, reflection, good judgement and discernment, reliance on values and the classical virtues play an important part in knowledge building, because balanced decisions today have to do with ethics and justice. Lash (2000), drawing on Kant (1952), differentiates between *determinate and reflexive* judgement. Reflexive judgment is what lies at the core of the fluid, risk taking decisions professional have to make today, while determinate judgement, closer to physics and mathematics, aims for objective validity, which have been the appeal of many professionals recently. Quoting Parton (2007),

It is thus much more appropriate to see that what is required in the contemporary contexts of social work is the encouragement of this reflexive judgement as opposed to the determinate judgement. The increasing complexity and fluid nature of the world means that the world is less predictable, therefore less regularized. This is not to say that the practitioner is likely to be in control of these situations. It is to suggest, however, that there is far more room for maneuvering that may at first appear. (Parton, N., 2007, p. 145)

As I am writing today, the political debates across the academies in the U.S. have sprung calls for “reasonableness” and “the exercise of judgment where reasonable people would disagree” (Henley, 2022). Across continents, what the controversies over Justice as a consequence of slavery, human exploitation, imperialism and many other political theories which are not exempt from injustice rage rampant. In a review of a book by Marks (2021), Henley tentatively suggests that academics may have been guided by the “model of mathematics and science” —my point here— “even when “different subject matters have different levels of certainty available to them” (Henley, 2022) and to be exact, different times and places challenge professional actions differently. Ethical principles and values remain a useful guides of professional behavior.

4. Fairness, Justice and Common Sense

Many philosophers advocate dialogue and reflection on ethical principles and the incorporation of the classical virtues in practical ethical discourse (Houston, 2003). MacIntyre (1984), suggested that in Aristotle, *justice* was the first virtue in political life, but that unfortunately, our society has not been able to agree even on “the relative importance of the virtue concepts within a moral scheme” (p. 244). Banks (2006) identified two ethic discourses in social work. One representing an ethic of care and one an ethic of justice (p. 59). Both co-exist and struggle within the philosophic framework not only of social work but of other service professions, be it law, medicine, housing, etc. Certainly, the philosophic discourse can help members of all social professions arrive at a fuller understanding of the complex meaning of soundness and impartiality in judgement. Value theory can contribute to enlighten social professions’ grounding on fairness, equality justice and utility (MacIntyre, 1984, Ch. 17). Sound professional judgement, in the sense of judgement arrived at by those who belong to a discourse tradition, must overcome prejudicial assumptions.

For those who worry about the interference of “political persuasions” in making judgements, political orientations have always been present in micro and macro discussions and seasoned practitioners must rely on the wisdom of the collective and on the virtues of the profession. The wisdom of the collective was highlighted recently by Professor of Constitutional Law and U.S.

Senator Jamie Raskin who, quoting Thomas Paine, suggested that “common sense is also the sense we have all in common as a community” (February, 2021). But these matters are highly contested not only in social work but in law and all social professions where different stances can co-exist and practical wise decisions are required.

A useful discussion of the role of social work in discretionary decision-making in relation to legal and professional codes can be found Preston-Shoot’s (2014). Most legal codes or statutes help social workers apply their key values of judgement and balance where knowledge is incomplete (Preston-Shoot, 2014). Other authors, looking for collaboration models between law and social work have discussed the often-conflicting obligations of the two professions. For example, Deck (2020) recognizes that there can be conflicting ethical demands between law and social work, for example, in setting the limits of advocacy in regards to a client’s desires, or on the level of public responsibility. Nevertheless, she still highlights the possibility of collaboration (Deck, 2020). It becomes clear, in exploring such possibilities, that the two professions can learn from each other because they share many basic commitments to principles based on a common philosophy of justice and fairness. Clark (2012) further submits that by considering various options, workers can achieve a standard of impartiality in arriving at better judgement. But “even if the Codes [legal codes or statutes] cannot guarantee ethical behavior, reference to the principles of reasonableness and rationality may help identify poor practice.” (Preston-Schoot, 2014, p. 43).

In other words, as Raskin (2021) suggested, the use of common sense is always needed in arriving at if not the right, the reasonable answer.

5. Rationality and Common Sense in Judgement. Using Tacit Knowledge

In emphasizing rationality —in contrast to whim— a word must be offered on intuition, which is also called *tacit knowledge* in professional thinking (Polyani, 1964 & 1967, Martinez-Brawley and Zorita, 2007; Shaw, 2016 & 2014). Are the two concepts in opposition to each other?

Apparently not, if by rationality we mean in depth consideration of all factors involved in a situation. Payne summarized it best:

Humanistic social work incorporates both stances. Central to its position is the human capacity for rational use of scientific evidence and through this, human control of our environment. But humanistic practice is not limited to rigid 'evidence-based' practice, which relies on only some forms of understanding. Humanistic practice wants to use *all* the knowledge, *all* the skills, and *all* the creativity that human beings have achieved. (Payne, 2011, p. ix)

Experience demonstrates that judgement is the ability of making decisions when one does not have all the facts, but professionals have a great deal of knowledge that is deeply ingrained in their cognitive and emotional structures. For example, most decisions made in battle or when facing enormous immediate perils are made by experienced leaders relying not on protocols but on intuition informed by a lifetime of know-how (witness the many successful landings executed by pilots when there appeared to be no solution, or the hunches on which scientists have based very important discoveries). The problem today is that education falls short of stressing creativity and intuition in thinking beyond the rigid protocols learned and gives little recognition to tacit knowledge. A 2020 Special Report in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* corroborated the importance of teaching about intuition and experience in decision-making and suggested that this as a problem in all areas of study.

The situation in social work is common in many other professional disciplines today. Yet, it is hard to find intuition or judgement or tacit knowledge discussed in depth in methods or research courses today². The positivistic orientation of most current research results in the outlining of best practices that can be readily prescribed but devalue professional knowledge or wisdom and judgement (McCarthy and Rose, 2010). Formulaic thinking, often set by administrative regulations and agency management, plagues practice. Practitioners moved from describing *cases* in the old language, to offering observations of coded behaviors collected on data forms that transform people and decisions into mechanical acts. However, good social work interventions, more often than not, rest on the wisdom (judgement) of the practitioners and the level of discretion exercised by workers and managers (Evans, 2012). This does not mean that workers act in

an arbitrary or willy-nilly fashion or without understanding of the situation. On the contrary, they have been tacitly preparing for years to make such decisions. In any profession, experienced workers know that they will never be in full possession of all the facts or have all the possible legal or theoretical possibilities at their disposal, but the seasoned professional knows when he/she must act to avoid further mishaps or danger. Munro (2010) discusses judgement and balance where knowledge is incomplete. As already mentioned, it is in incompleteness that experienced professionals rely on tacit knowledge (Martinez-Brawley and Zorita (2007). Evans (2013) further emphasizes the process and quality of making decisions, the exploration of benefits and drawbacks, the full awareness of one's biases that help arrive at justice and fairness. In addition to biases, the use of intuition and tacit knowledge requires an ability to consider error. All decisions must confront the possibility of error.

6. Freedom, Autonomy, Common Sense

Freedom is an important component of professional judgement, because to concur or deviate from protocols and formulaic thinking, the professional must act freely. Descartes believed that a person's judgements are free acts. He proposed that when a judgement is reached because of reasoning, it is indeed a free act. Most professional judgements are *a posteriori* act, which is derived from experience. Durkheim (2004) who navigated difficult times in philosophy and psychology, stated in his Philosophy Lectures that judgement was a complex operation involving many faculties (Gross and Jones, 2004, p. 24). Durkheim indicated that "philosophy may supplement observation through consciousness in the materials, of history, broadly understood..." (Gross and Jones, 2004, p. 24).

These philosophic understandings are of relevance when looking at professional judgements in general and particularly in social work. Professional judgement is an intellectual operation which often arises from intuition. However, it also involves a conscious process of comparison of concepts in relation to truth and error filtered through observation, history, ethics and the individual's experiential base. In other words, professional judgement is not devoid of facts but it is also an ethical or value judgement. It is here that the practitioner can adjust his/her thinking to the dictates of experience. A wise professional in social work cannot ignore the specific milieu, history, desires and freedom of the recipient of a service or the cultural, linguistic and other unique dimensions in taking professional decisions (Martinez-Brawley, E., Zorita, P. and Rennie, F. 2013)³.

According to Cullity (2011), the activity of moral judgment is that of 'thinking whether something has a moral attribute' (p. 1). Moral judgements refer to 'our alleged capacity to go beyond the application of rules when we deliberate morally' (Cullity, 2011, p. 1). Moral judgement might also be called 'moral discernment' or 'moral wisdom', displayed when we exercise the judging capacity well. In law, for example, a judge may impose a sentence on the high end or the low end of

mandated parameters. Whether he/she uses one or the other depends on the judge's process of moral discernment that enhance decision-making (Bennion, 2000). The merits of good judgement are dependent not only on the facts, but on the experience, integrity and moral thinking of the judge. In making human decisions, we cannot get away from the human aspects of the decisions. What we can do is ensure that those who act professionally, have the best chances of using their moral capacities well. Fact can illuminate a decision but are never the only factor for the professional.

To illustrate the point, discussing judgements and common sense in science, Whitehead (1929) stated that

Science is rooted in what has been called the whole apparatus of common sense thought. That is the datum from which it starts and to which it must recur. You may polish up common sense, you may contradict it in detail. You may surprise it. But ultimately, your whole task is to satisfy it. Whitehead was prepared to accept commonsense as justification for accepting a conclusion. (Whitehead, 1929, p. 110)

7. Reliance on the Virtues and the Possibility of Change

Prudence (*phronesis*), as we have said, also enlightens many professional decisions. The mandate of do not harm in medical practice, for example, shows the application of Prudence. In clinical social work, the principle or axiom to begin where the client and the admonition of *listen to the client*, build on the same notion. In policy, courage and justice balance prudence in the professional commitment to change.

A concern frequently expressed by professionals is that judgements, because they reflect moral values, are relative and tend to reflect vested interests and faulty perspectives. For example, many injustices have been committed in the name of Prudence, usually against the weakest members of society, and many decision-makers have hidden behind Courage to justify lack of Prudence or frivolity. But, all judgements have the possibility of being wrong and many are often revisited because they have been solely dependent on the *Zeitgeist* (spirit of the times). Laws and judicial decisions are often modified. If we cannot accept the possibility of error, 'we would have to reject the scientific approach, for its history is fraught with contradictions among theories, and even among experimental findings' (Heider, F., 1958, pp. 5-6).

In rejecting an established course of action, the professional displays another virtue, which is courage. Courage has been referred to as the mid-point between prudence and timidity or, humorously, in political terms, a recent member of the British Parliament talked about it as between 'prudence and foolishness' (Stewart, 2019). In wise governance and policy debates, judgement, discretion and discernment have been the cornerstone of lasting practices. Great politicians whether conservative (leaning right) or liberals (leaning left) have often relied on the use of the classical virtues (Prudence, Courage, and Justice) in governance and have failed when they have ignored them. Again, socially minded Stewart (2019), often refers to 'prudence and justice' as beacons for wise decisions.

Many social workers believe that good judgement has often been equated with concurrence with the established order and hierarchies, contradicting the principles of social change inherent in the profession. But that need not be the case. In making changes, or dissenting from established practices, the professional exercises freedom to make good judgements and applies many of the virtues, particularly Courage and Justice.

When knowledge is used discriminately, the professional requires both the confidence and the freedom to exercise it. Herein lies autonomy, but also the value of professional integrity, which is one of the many crucial ingredients of professional practice. The failure of integrity in an accredited professional destroys public trust and perhaps it is understandable that a degree of skepticism is the result, and thus a resort to evidence-based practice. (McCarthy et al, 2010, p. 100)

Many of the “softer” approaches in searching for knowledge and decision-making are as popular as they are debated, particularly in countries where culture has stressed the humanistic tradition. The critiques that emerged through the decades related to the influence of beliefs and political forces in arriving at such knowledge conclusions or judgements were pointed and important. Hammond’s (1996) classic text on human judgement suggests:

A comprehensive view of judgement and decision-making must take into account not only those tasks for which analytical models may be employed to evaluate the rationality and logical defensibility of cognition but also those tasks in which analytical models cannot be employed... The fragility of analytical systems constitutes a risk, well known to all users of them but seldom considered... (Hammond, 1996, p. 156)

Hammond’s statements are also applicable to the social sciences, where analytical models based only on scientific findings may not always be available and where other type of knowledge, including experience, may be applicable. Needless to say, professional education must include preparation of these situations. The professional must also understand environmental, cultural and linguistic concerns (Martinez-Brawley, Zorita and Rennie, 2013; Martinez-Brawley and Gualda, 2010).

In searching to understand fairness and justice, in judgment Alasdair MacIntyre (1984) repeatedly stated the element of virtue as buttressing all responsible judgements. MacIntyre proposed that the good that is internal to a practice is a good that is part of the practitioners’ understanding of virtue, and in his discussion, it is not just Prudence but also Justice. He suggests that laws, Laws—whether legal or scientific, are always general. Then, he states:

Particular cases will always arise in which it is unclear how the law is to be applied and unclear what justice demands. Thus, there are bound to be occasions in which no formula is available in advance; it is on such occasions that we are to act *kata ton orthon logos* (according to the right reason). (MacIntyre, 1984, p. 152).

In essence, it is in these cases that judgement, common sense and practice wisdom become essential. Social workers would benefit from returning, in some measure at least, to the philosophic roots of their professional thinking and to the practice of virtue ethics to formulate wise solutions (Martinez-Brawley and Zorita, 2017). Examples are common when a child must be removed from

home, an emergency medical intervention must be undertaken, or an elderly person must be moved to a facility or a newly arrived immigrant family given an exception that might save or safeguard its life.

Nevertheless, social workers are still reluctant to accept judgement as a form of wise decision-making. Because judgements generally reflect the accumulated wisdom of a discipline, or any other *métier*, the fear is that the thinking will remain static and that change will suffer. The fear is that judgements invoking practice wisdom will dismiss minority, feminist and other very valuable dimensions in practice. We have already noted that empirically based decision-making alone does not always remedy the human judgement involved in professions such as social work or law. Science does not always remedy imprudent or unjust judgement. In reference to law, Posner states: 'science fails to offer law certainty and objectivity'. ... 'science offers no practical assistance, because trials are not modeled on scientific inquiry.' (Posner, in Levit, 1990-1991, p. 497). In social work, Dowie and Macnaughton (2000) offer a similar perspective. They state,

... scientific knowledge and research ... within evidence based practice can support practitioners in their decision-making; however this has limitations and cannot be totally value free: therefore it can be restrictive in enabling the practitioner to respond to every facet of their... practice. (McCarthy et al, 2010, p. 103).

8. Summary and Recommendations for practice and education in the social science based professions

We have reviewed a large number of terms and concepts that come into play when professionals have to make immediate decisions that do not fit into pre-studied protocols. While many might believe that those commonsensical solutions are thoughtless, or have not been mulled over, wise professionals can show that they have taken a life-time of preparation. When a practitioner has developed a culture of practice based character, wisdom, experience and knowledge, the making of just and fair decisions will be paramount and the following of bureaucratic rules will be subordinate to justice and goodness (MacIntyre, 1984)

Following are a few suggestions for the training of the applied professions akin to the social sciences, including professional social work.

1. However empirical the professional training might be, it would be remiss to abandon or minimize a solid training on ethics. The ethics courses should include exposure to understanding the virtues, knowing their use in other professions. Cases where moral principles— Prudence and Courage, and Justice and Fairness are involved must be discussed. The aim of these discussions would be to acquire the practice of ethical thinking rather than arrive at any single solution. The history of professions justifies the constant scrutiny of its narratives and traditions.
2. To engage in ethical decision-making, students should be exposed to philosophical thinking. As we have seen, students can engage in many practical aspects of

philosophy. Discussions of the moral good and the internal moral compass implicit in each professional are enlightening.

3. The history of social work as a *métier* would help broaden students' interest in the complex debate of sound decision-making. MacIntyre (1984) stated that an 'adequate sense of tradition manifests itself in a grasp of those future possibilities which the past has made available to the present' (p. 223).
4. Finally, students should discuss comparisons of how different professions that cannot fully rely on science face the current push towards exclusivity of the "scientific model." Many professions rely on a great deal of knowledge outside the hard sciences. Learners need to appreciate the breadth of being part of an ancient and valuable tradition, a tradition that can blend knowledge from many other disciplines and perspectives.

Notes

1 The literature on the debates over approaches to research and practice is abundant in social work. It is not the purpose of this paper to delve into this debate but the reader is directed to works by Fischer, J., Heineman, M., Goldstein, H., Hartman, A., Witkins, S., Martínez-Brawley, E., Martínez-Brawley, E. and Zorita, P., Thyer, B.A., Anastas, J., Brekke, J. and many others too numerous to include.

2 Tacit knowledge, simply stated, is that which flows spontaneously from an intimate and sympathetic acquaintance with the object to be known. In this sense, knowledge is an "indwelling" or is "incarnate" in the knower (Polanyi, 1969, p. 134). Philosophers have for centuries debated the nature of tacit and codified knowledge, was Polanyi who made it central to the philosophy of knowledge. (Martínez-Brawley, E. and Zorita, P. (2007)

3 Here are a few examples of selected cultural and linguistic concerns: Martínez-Brawley, E., Zorita, P. and Rennie, F. (2013) Dual Language Contexts in Social Work Practice: The Gaelic in the *Comhairle nan Eilean Siar* region (Outer Hebrides, Scotland) and Spanish in the Southwestern United States. *European Journal of Social Work*, (2011), 16, 1-18; Martínez-Brawley, E. & Zorita, P. M-B. Immigration and social services: The perils of professionalization. (2011) *Families in Society*, 92, 2.

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ARTICLES/ARTÍCULOS

3D Printing in Education. Theoretical Perspective and Classroom Experiences

Impresión 3D en educación. Perspectiva teórica y experiencias en el aula

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ABSTRACT

3D printing in universities uses printers that enable the three-dimensional printing of objects. A teaching methodology based on the printing of models is implemented that can be taught interactively and progressively to a wide range of students, from primary and secondary education and vocational training through to undergraduate and postgraduate studies, particularly in the STEM fields of education (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics). The resources used in 3D printing can be integrated in different fields of science as part of a teaching approach based on interdisciplinarity and the application of scientific and mathematical knowledge. This study aims to disclose the role of 3D printing in education, its characteristics, advantages and disadvantages, as well as illustrate various educational experiences on different levels, providing a reference framework that sets out the current situation in terms of its use. Educational experiences using 3D printing obtain meaningful learning thanks to manipulative experimentation, the fostering of motivation to learn, and improved educational results. Students learn while they experiment and have fun, creating a desire to continue acquiring knowledge that is relevant on both a professional and personal level.

KEYWORDS: ICT; 3D printing; higher education; new methodologies; makerspaces.

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RESUMEN

La impresión 3D en el ámbito universitario utiliza impresoras que permiten realizar impresiones tridimensionales de objetos y ponen en práctica una metodología de enseñanza mediante la impresión de modelos que se pueden enseñar a un amplio colectivo de estudiantes, de forma interactiva y progresiva, desde Primaria, Secundaria y Formación Profesional hasta los estudios universitarios y de posgrado, especialmente en la educación de las áreas STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics). Los recursos utilizados en la impresión 3D se pueden integrar en diferentes áreas de las ciencias en un enfoque de la enseñanza basado en la interdisciplinariedad y aplicabilidad de los conocimientos científicos y matemáticos. El presente trabajo pretende dar a conocer el papel de la impresión 3D en la educación, sus características, ventajas y desventajas, así como ilustrar varias experiencias educativas en distintos niveles, proporcionando un marco de referencia que expone la situación actual en cuanto a su uso. Las experiencias educativas utilizando la impresión 3D obtienen aprendizajes significativos gracias a la experimentación manipulativa, el fomento de la motivación para aprender y mejores resultados educativos. Los estudiantes aprenden mientras experimentan y se divierten, se genera un deseo por continuar adquiriendo conocimientos aplicables tanto en el ámbito profesional como personal.

PALABRAS CLAVE: TIC; impresión 3D; educación superior; nuevas metodologías; *makerspaces*.

1. Introduction

In recent years, the integration of technologies in classrooms and in all teaching and learning processes has been a significant step forward in the field of education. These elements offer numerous different scenarios and possibilities and they evolve on a daily basis, creating new elements that give rise to a wider variety of tools and methodologies.

Objects, materials, machines or tools that, until recently, had been thought to belong to other knowledge areas, are now applicable to education, enabling us to harvest their full potential. Thus, robotics, augmented reality and 3D printing are being increasingly introduced in educational processes. This final element is going to be the focus of this study, which aims to disclose the role of 3D printing in education, its characteristics, advantages and disadvantages, as well as different educational experiences at varying levels to provide a reference framework that sets out the current situation.

3D printing involves the use of a printer that allows objects with volume, that is, three-dimensional objects, to be printed. These objects are created from specific designs produced using CAD (computer-aided design) programs (Moreno et al., 2016).

There is considerable variety when producing three-dimensional designs, which can be pieces with all kinds of forms or shapes. Education, as stated above, has not pioneered the use of this element; rather, it was the more technical scientific fields, such as architecture, engineering or industrial design, that first used it (Mpopfu et al., 2014; Ford and Minshall, 2019). Today, the field of medicine uses this technique to manufacture prostheses (Sanz-Gil, 2017); geography, to create

relief maps (Šašinka et al., 2018; Oswald et al., 2019); technical drawing, to make parts that can be manipulated; and art, to reproduce works (Saorín et al., 2017).

Likewise, in the field of education, 3D printing as a teaching resource is gaining momentum. This is due to teaching and learning processes being understood as makerspaces, that is, spaces for construction and creation where the digital aspect is of particular importance. Thus, students actively participate in practical problem solving (Ford and Minshall, 2019).

The objective of employing this technique within education lies in the revival or recycling of traditional classrooms as creative spaces that address the future needs of students and educate them through experiential learning (Popescu et al., 2019).

The use of tangible objects or models as a teaching resource has always been one of the most frequent practices in education. Recently, however, and with technology acquiring considerable importance within education, these models are now made using digital tools.

In this context, emphasis must be placed on a closely related term, 3D modelling. It is the step prior to three-dimensional printing; using specific apps on a digital device, whether that be a tablet, computer or mobile phone, models of different elements can be designed or transformed until the desired outcome is achieved before printing. In short, it increases the possibilities of creating and adapting the future model to suit the requirements (Cervera et al., 2015).

Therefore, a three-dimensional object can be created in two different ways, in both digital and tangible form; they are good options that can complement each other.

Creating digital models outweighs some of the disadvantages associated with material objects, such as breakages. Likewise, having the model in digital format enables it to be disseminated, replicated as many times as desired, reproduced and simultaneously visualised on various devices, stored and transported, among others.

The use of digital models, as well as three-dimensional models in the field of education, is becoming possible thanks to the affordable prices currently available. In this sense, different applications that have lowered the cost have had a significant influence, as both teachers and pupils can access them free of charge (Carbonell et al., 2016).

2. Advantages and Disadvantages

2.1. Disadvantages

The use of tangible models to help students visualise educational structures in three dimensions has been a cornerstone of general education, particularly in science, for a number of years. The classic anatomical, biological, botanical and mechanical

models, and so on, were reused by different generations of students across the globe. However, conventional modelling kits were limited in terms of the types and accuracy of the models and structures that could be used for construction.

To mitigate these limitations, and in the early phases, CAD systems consisted of tools to display two-dimensional (2D) or three-dimensional (3D) graphics that involved complex design processes before they could finally be manufactured, often by hand (Vidal and Mulet, 2006). Today, however, the majority of current educators were trained before advanced CAD programs and solid modelling packages for 3D printing became widely available, while those teachers who recognise educational advantages in 3D printing must frequently learn about varying techniques that are often beyond their area of expertise or turn to virtual training sources (YouTube, e-learning, etc.) (Veisz et al., 2012).

The lack of training has led some educators to sketch preliminary designs and undertake manual calculations to complete the conceptual design and development phase, lengthening the preparation process. The recent development of 3D printing technology has enabled the creation of a much wider variety of structures for teaching; however, they are not easy to implement. Creating the files necessary to print complex structures tends to be technically challenging and requires the use of various software programs that are not always easy to operate and are written in highly technical English (Jones and Spencer, 2018).

Furthermore, not all educators and students have the resources or technical skill to create these files and, therefore, they are discouraged when attempting to use 3D printing in the classroom. In general, 3D printing requires access to databases with the necessary resources, such as UniProt or PubChem for chemical, biological or human structures. With these databases, basic structures of molecules, cells or chemical structures can be created internally on the teacher's computer or easily obtained online from said databases. However, it is difficult to store refined prototypes or erase errors in the design in these databases.

To correctly operate the programs and databases, 3D printing requires time availability, a range of materials, and access to installations or local or online providers with the necessary printers and economic resources to obtain tangible models for a large and adequate number of students. Furthermore, although commercial 3D printers are becoming increasingly cost effective, their adaptations to software do not always enable them to be used for the variety of disciplines required in the classroom.

A common criticism of 3D printing techniques is that they may lead to the educator/designer focusing on the details instead of the underlying principles (Utterback et al., 2006). It is written that "sketching by hand allows a designer to capture an idea quickly; it concentrates on the essentials rather than on bells and whistles" (Utterback et al., 2006).

This is supported by assessing the information required by a CAD system to generate a representation of an object in comparison to the amount of information required to design the prototype.

2.2. Advantages

Nevertheless, set against these disadvantages, simple methods have been developed to easily generate the files needed to print nearly any previously filed structure in 3D using the National Institutes of Health Print Exchange server (<http://3dprint.nih.gov/>) (or simple alternatives), among others (Coakley et al., 2014).

This is a complete and interactive open website for searching, browsing, downloading and sharing files for 3D printing. This file base allows users to quickly and cost-effectively browse the options to print different structures in a range of materials using local and online shops, as well as internal 3D printers by means of rather simple protocols.

The simplification of the hardware and software tools required for 3D printing means that the technology is becoming accessible to even non-experts. The diversity of interests in 3D printing, together with the wide distribution of the printers themselves, means that there is a host of opportunities to use 3D printing at all levels of education (Miller, 2014).

This methodology can take 3D printing to a wider audience, helping disseminate its use in science education, and it can also be used by students in self-directed learning exercises. In modern pedagogy, education systems using the 3D printing model can support and visualise the design as it is developed, stimulate creativity, improve administrative management of the resources necessary to operate the appropriate hardware and software, enable collaborative work, and interactively design with the student user (figure 1).

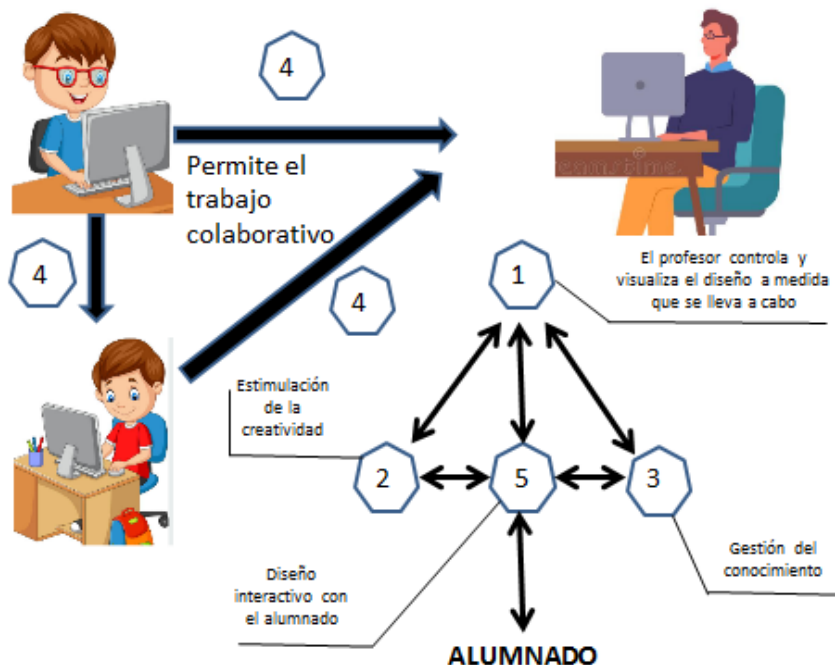
Teaching methodology based on the printing of 3D models can be introduced to a wide range of students, interactively and progressively, from primary and secondary education (students aged 6 through 16) and vocational training to undergraduate and postgraduate studies, particularly in the STEM fields of education, integrating different areas of science in a teaching approach based on the interdisciplinarity and applicability of scientific and mathematical knowledge.

The projects and activities proposed under the 3D approach aim for the application of scientific and mathematical knowledge in a context linked to technology and tangible and practical three-dimensional engineering.

In the educational context, 3D printing enables students to explore the relationship between form and function in living tissue using three-dimensional printing since the way in which structure relates to function, through space scales, from the individual molecule to the complete organism, is a central topic in biology. Thanks to 3D printing, the following question can be reversed: Does function follow form?

In other words, it enables a practical or experimental approach to the architecture of living tissues, with the hope that the structure created leads to the desired function, offering students a new learning experience (Miller, 2014).

Figure 1
Elements of the 3D design system



Source: Modified from Vidal and Mulet, 2006.

The accuracy of samples printed in 3D is comparable to the original samples in many biological fields, including anatomy (McMenamin et al., 2014). This alternative focus to produce anatomically precise reproductions offers many advantages over plastination: it enables multiple copies of any studied specimen to be produced quickly on any size scale, and it can be adapted for any educational centre in any country, avoiding cultural and ethical issues, such as those associated with the teaching of medical science using real specimens.

3. 3D Printing in Education

In recent years, a new technology has emerged, 3D printing (Sanz-Gil, 2017), which is defined as:

A suite of technologies that creates a tangible product from a digital model. This technology is considered a sort of additive manufacturing due to it producing objects in 3D from the successive application of layers of a specific type of material (Ortega, 2016; cited in Zavaleta, 2019: 35).

There are different 3D printing technologies; however, the most widely used in academic settings is fused filament fabrication (FFF) or fused deposition modelling (FDM) (Beltrán-Pellicer and Rodríguez-Jaso, 2017).

With each passing year, the idea that education professionals have in relation to the active role of students in the classroom changes, as experience has shown that meaningful learning is fostered when students are involved in their learning process. That is why the area of technology is taking on an increasingly central role in the field of education, showcasing new resources, such as 3D printing, which develops different skills in the learners, including organisation, creation, imagination, logical reasoning, and so on (Zavaleta, 2019). As regards the figure of the teacher, 3D printers enable a wider range of possibilities when designing and expanding activities that will increase student interaction with the technologies, enabling them to assume a lead role in their learning process (Johnson et al., 2016; cited in Blázquez-Tobías et al., 2018).

On the basis of the foregoing, it is worth mentioning the relevance of the teacher's role when selecting the methodology and digital content to be studied in the teaching and learning process (Moya, 2013). In relation to this digital content, there are numerous programs that enable modelling and 3D printing to be carried out.

3.1. 3D Applications and their Educational Use

Today, 3D printing is an affordable educational technology given that its cost has been significantly reduced due to the waiving of the patents associated with the Reprap project (Blázquez-Tobías et al., 2018). Numerous materials can be used to print in 3D; however, thermoplastics (PLA or ABS) are the most widely used in the classroom due to their low cost and versatility (Evans, 2012).

Likewise, there are different 3D design software programs, for example, OpenSCAD (a highly versatile program for printing solid elements using software compatible with Linux, Windows and Mac) and FreeCAD (a widely used 3D design tool due to it being open and useful in any size imaginable); or lamination software, such as Ultimaker Cura 3D (the most popular 3D printing software in the world thanks to its simple workflow and ability to create personalised configurations). They enable objects associated with any knowledge area—mathematics, music, history, technology, and so on—to be printed, aiding students' understanding of the content related to the subject and fostering motivation, creativity and interest (Sánchez et al., 2016).

According to the latest Horizon Report, 3D printers are a technology that will have a significant educational impact over the coming years, leading students to learn by exploring through manipulation, in other words, learning by doing (Adams et al., 2017). Likewise, this report states that 3D printing enables the contextualisation of learning, becoming a resource suitable for working with students with special educational needs (SEN) as it can help them develop their creativity, mo-

tivation and established competencies, while working in a cooperative and collaborative way with the group/class.

Lütolf (2014) asserts that all students, from primary education to university students, have the ability to use 3D printers and design and laminating programs, taking into consideration that the complexity of the object to be designed and printed will increase with age. Furthermore, Lütolf clarifies that it is a safe resource to be used in the classroom.

Regarding the use that can be made of 3D printers in educational contexts, Johnson et al. (2016) point out the advantages of using this work methodology in project-based learning (PBL). In this sense, the first school 3D printing lab, with ten MakerBot Replicator+ printers, was opened in Bogotá in 2017. In the lab, students from nursery, primary and secondary education develop design and 3D printing projects that enable them to reinforce the learning objectives of different subjects: music, biology, history, mathematics and physics. Specifically, students in nursery education start out learning spatial dimensions, while those in primary and secondary education make sketches and models of different objects using 3D modelling software before printing them. This technology has enabled teachers to implement innovative projects in their study programmes while students improve their creative, planning, collaboration, communication and critical thinking skills (Rosales, 2017).

Another example is the FIRST Robotics equipment, which has implemented additive manufacturing (AM) technology due to it being particularly useful for printing parts and robots. AM objects facilitate the learning of challenging topics that are difficult to understand, such as biological and chemical phenomena. That is why the Center for BioMolecular Modeling at Milwaukee School of Engineering has used AM to create molecular structures and physical models of proteins, so that the molecular world becomes real when their students hold these models in their hands (Huang and Leu, 2014).

4. Educational Experiences with 3D Printing

A number of educational experiments have used 3D printing as a teaching resource given the multiple benefits that it offers for learning varying content in different educational stages and disciplines (Moreno et al., 2016; Popescu et al., 2019).

This teaching material, particularly in the case of engineering and areas of design, offers students the opportunity to face real problems and situations that they can interact with, analyse and find a suitable solution. This strengthens mechanical, spatial and associative skills, as well as meaningful learning, and develops creativity and self-learning. Furthermore, 3D printers enable three-dimensional models to be created that represent complex concepts and facilitate the creation of ideas and novel designs. This has been demonstrated in experiments such as those undertaken by Rua et al. (2018) in descriptive geometry on the mechanical engineering programme, where students had to learn to

represent three-dimensional objects in two-dimensional spaces using geometric techniques. With traditional materials, spatial memory, abstraction capacity and association are not stimulated due to the lack of interaction with real objects. For this reason, by using 3D printing, life-size models could be made. The students used these models to identify forms and were able to easily comprehend the projections in two dimensions, as well as put together a 3D model to form all the parts.

In mathematics, 3D printing can also be very useful for understanding some abstract concepts, such as integration. This is a fundamental aspect of calculus, which is based on the concept of sum as an infinite sum of infinitely small areas or volumes. Thus, in an integral calculus class at the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering, a program was designed in OpenScad to generate 3D teaching material on Riemann sums, using rectangles made to scale.

Bonet et al. (2017), meanwhile, carried out a pilot study with the Automation and Electronic Engineering undergraduate students at the University of La Laguna, with the aim of analysing the influence of using 3D printers to boost creativity. The result showed a large increase in creativity, reaching values only obtained in purely creative degrees, such as Fine Arts.

Beltrán-Pellicer and Rodríguez-Jaso (2017) verified its educational effectiveness in the field of mathematics, particularly in geometry and probability reasoning.

Mesa et al. (2021) took this innovative resource to secondary school classrooms to demonstrate its effectiveness in engineering education, developing important aspects in students such as imagination, design and the making of robotic mechanisms through engineering design.

Plaza-González (2021) designed a complete project combining all the Technical Drawing content covered in the first year of Bachillerato (equivalent to Lower Sixth or Year 12), which culminated in printing the object designed in 3D. She considered printing in 3D to be fundamental for acquiring competences that enable collaboration with other disciplines, understanding the design processes of the professional world.

This resource is also used and proves to be highly effective with younger students. Blázquez-Tobías et al. (2018) affirm that these experiences can become more complicated depending on the development of the students' skills. In this vein, Daniel et al. (2021) implemented this tool in primary and secondary school classrooms for the purpose of studying various subjects with a cross-disciplinary approach. Various works of art were printed in 3D in Physical Education. Following a breakout exercise, the students, working as a team, then had to complete challenges and pass different tests in order to obtain a code that would let them achieve their goal: unlocking the padlock on a chest. By doing so, they sparked the interest of the students who, in a cross-disciplinary approach, learned content belonging to different areas without needing to use a textbook.

Gómez-Ruiz (2018) also developed an experience using three-dimensional models in primary education, proving its utility to favour educational inclusion, as these re-

sources were highly useful for students who had difficulty recognising the three-dimensional nature of objects, as well as being fundamental for visually impaired students, who were able to recognise the different forms in 3D by manipulating the models. Thus, they created maps, planets and chemical elements using the school's 3D printer.

Within informal education, there are also experiences of using 3D printing such as that undertaken by Nolla et al. (2021) in the mathematics club at an Italian international school in Madrid, in which different activities were carried out in order to learn and study maths in more detail from another angle. The project "*Aeromodelismo y matemáticas*" (Aeromodelling and Mathematics) allowed students to try out a practical mathematics application in another discipline, by means of 3D printing.

5. Conclusions

This study on the use of 3D printing in the field of education has shown how this technology offers significant benefits in the student learning process. Among the numerous advantages, the attainment of meaningful learning thanks to manipulative experimentation can be highlighted, fostering in students the motivation to learn and improving educational results. Students learn through experimenting and having fun, generating in them a desire to continue acquiring knowledge which will be useful in the short and long-term future, on both a professional and personal level.

The use of 3D technology in education has been acquiring special relevance for some years now due to the recognition of the active role of students in their learning. These technologies are flexible and versatile and can be adapted to students, the educational stage, interests, needs or the subject being taught.

The advantage of offering students elements that are not available to them in their context and the ability to observe them from all angles for better study results in an increasingly widespread use of these models.

Likewise, throughout this article, it has been sustained that these models not only favour the understanding and development of theoretical and practical content, but also basic competences, such as the digital competence of both teachers and students. The numerous experiments that have been undertaken using this educational resource have made evident the development of some aspects: mechanical, spatial and associative skills, creativity, auto-learning, imagination and understanding of abstract concepts. It also increases the motivation of students, facilitates educational inclusion, enables cross-disciplinary learning and experimentation in classrooms, giving students the opportunity to learn in an active way, favouring meaningful learning.

There are, however, disadvantages to the 3D printing system, such as the operation of complex computer programs; databases that, although very extensive, are limited to the STEM fields; the fact that teachers are required to invest a considerable amount of time in understanding how to use the resources; and a greater focus on the details than on the underlying principles.

In the future, more empirical studies are needed that offer results on the cognitive development of students, their experience in the classroom and the use of 3D applications at different educational levels (Ford and Minshall, 2019). Introducing these technologies in other areas outside of the STEM fields would also offer an impetus (Gyasi et al., 2021).

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ARTICLES/ARTÍCULOS

Caring for People at Risk of Suicide in the Andalusian Health Service: A Qualitative Study of the Institutionalisation Process

Atendiendo a la persona en riesgo de suicidio en el Servicio Andaluz de Salud: un estudio cualitativo del proceso de institucionalización

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ABSTRACT

Suicide continues to be the main external cause of death in Spain. Andalusia is the region with the highest number of suicides in the country. It is important to address its prevention. Here we describe how people who have attempted suicide access and are treated by the Andalusian Health Service. A qualitative study was conducted exploring public health care and its assessment. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with health professionals, patients, family members and relatives. This search was complemented with ethnographic information, all of which was explored following a combined strategy of analysis in line with the grounded theory assumptions. The results reveal setbacks in access to the health system, and stigmatised representations among professionals. At the same time, limitations due to lack of training and uncertainties in risk management were identified. Finally, strong difficulties were found among family members and patients, as they face stigmatisation and taboos that lead to profound vulnerability, especially in areas with fewer resources. All of this hinders early detection and reduces the capacity for prevention.

KEYWORDS: suicide attempted; health service; medical records; referral and consultation; patient care; family caregivers.

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RESUMEN

El suicidio continúa siendo la principal causa externa de muerte en España. Andalucía es la región con mayor número de suicidios del país. Es importante abordar su prevención. Aquí se describe cómo las personas que han sufrido tentativas de suicidio acceden al Servicio Andaluz de Salud y son atendidas en este. Se realizó un estudio cualitativo explorando la asistencia sanitaria pública y su valoración. Se recabaron datos mediante entrevistas en profundidad, tanto a profesionales de la sanidad como a personas afectadas y familiares de estas. Esta búsqueda se complementó con información etnográfica. Todo ello se analizó siguiendo una estrategia combinada de exploración atendiendo a los presupuestos de la teoría fundamentada. Los resultados revelan contradicciones en el acceso al sistema sanitario y representaciones estigmatizadas entre profesionales. Al mismo tiempo, se identificaron limitaciones por la falta de capacitación y las incertidumbres en la gestión del riesgo. Finalmente, se comprobaron fuertes dificultades en familiares y supervivientes, pues hacen frente a la estigmatización y a los tabúes con profunda vulnerabilidad, especialmente en las zonas con menos recursos. Todo ello lastra la detección temprana y resta capacidad de prevención.

PALABRAS CLAVE: intento de suicidio; Servicio de Salud; registros médicos; derivación y consulta; atención al paciente; familiares cuidadores.

1. Introduction and background

A person dies from suicide every 40 seconds. According to the WHO, suicide, with a global rate of 10.5 cases per 100,000 inhabitants, poses a grave public health problem and it is now even included as one of the objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development — Indicator 3.4.2 — published by the United Nations (World Health Organization [WHO], 2021). The rate is 1.8 times higher among men than it is women. This is particularly the case in European countries (WHO, 2019). Moreover, for each suicide, there are estimated to be up to 20 suicide attempts, with this proving to be the greatest risk factor and the key area for improving its prevention (WHO, 2014). The issue does not affect just the victims; rather, it has an impact on the entire social environment: relatives, loved ones and friends. For each suicide, it is estimated that between six and fourteen people are severely affected (Clark and Goldney, 2008; Jordan and McIntosh, 2011).

In Spain, suicide continues to be the number one external cause of death — with a rate of 7.5 suicides per 100,000 inhabitants — making it deadlier than traffic accidents, homicide and gender-based violence combined in terms of deaths recorded (Spanish National Statistics Institute [*Instituto Nacional de Estadística, INE*] 2019). This seems to be a continuing trend, with no great variation experienced over the past twenty years (Sáiz and Bobes, 2014), with the greatest suicide rate coming in 2014 (8.4) and the lowest in 2010 (6.8). Despite these alarming figures, Spain does not have a national suicide prevention plan, and as such, it is an ongoing issue that has yet to be resolved (Sáiz and Bobes, 2014).

At first glance, suicide would seem to depend on a series of personal factors. However, as discovered by Durkheim (2012), by focusing not on the individual incident, but instead on the overall impact — the suicide rates in each society, group or social category — we can see that it is littered with consistencies. A quick look at the historical figures on the suicide rate in Spain (Barricarte et al., 2017) tells us that Durkheim's almost two-centuries-old hypotheses still ring true (*Semi-*

nario de fundamentos clásicos de la sociología [“Lectures on Classic Fundamentals of Sociology”], 1999). In fact, and by way of example, the suicide rate in France has historically been double that of Spain. Another constant that can be seen is the decrease of the suicide rate during socio-economic crises and its increase during boom years. This goes some way to explaining what happened with suicide rates during the global Covid-19 pandemic (Pirkis et al., 2021). This has been coined the “good health paradox in pandemics” (INE, 2021), something that has been observed globally (see also the analysis in “*Surprisingly, suicide has become rarer during the pandemic,*” 24 April 2021).

The fact that these consistencies continue to occur helps transform suicide from an event that has “its own unity, individuality and consequently its own nature [...] into a dominantly social event” (Durkheim, 2012: 5). As such, it is subjected to real forces that impose themselves on it: “the individual is dominated by a moral reality greater than himself: namely, collective reality” (*ibid.*: 6).

In modern society, people who have committed self harm (whether or not resulting in death) or who have or have had suicidal thoughts are considered mentally sick, and they are referred for specialist care in specific healthcare establishments (psychiatric hospitals, mental health units, etc.). If we take Goffman’s (2001/1961) definition, they can to a certain degree be considered “total institutions”, as they are settings for supervision and re-socialisation (with rigid rule structures in place) which force a person to transform their own image, although they do not quite stretch as far as coercive organisations (with closed doors, bars in the windows, security, etc.). Continuing with Goffman, each society fosters special ways in which service providers and clients interact with one another, with those deemed a suicide risk being represented by healthcare professionals in the public healthcare system, who must deal with “the client”, in other words the affected parties, their family and loved ones.

The WHO announced that it was imperative to adopt urgent suicide prevention measures (WHO, 2019) and the strategies required to implement them, prioritising the need to properly register, monitor and locate people at risk of suicide in the public health system (PAHO, 2018). Prevention is possible, and it begins by training primary care healthcare professionals to detect suicide risks, as 83% of people who die from suicide seek assistance in this setting in the year prior to their death, and even 66% during the month prior (Giner and Guija, 2014; Luoma et al., 2002). The next step is being able to correctly classify the severity of the risk, thus enabling the person affected to access the most suitable tools and level of care (WHO, 2000). Finally, in each case, personalised records must be kept containing information on previous suicide attempts or on any other details related to cases of self-harm.

In order to effectively implement this prevention plan, the Spanish autonomous communities have drawn up their own action plans. Andalusia, the country’s most populated region, is one of the areas with the highest number of deaths by suicide each year (Chishti et al., 2003; Córdoba-Doña et al., 2014), and it has devised several directives on caring for people at risk of suicide and drawn up a number of guides

containing practical recommendations for healthcare professionals (Basaluzzo Tamborini et al., 2010; Rueda López, 2010). These guides come to the conclusion that people who are at risk of committing suicide are generally not currently on the most suitable care pathways, and this inhibits their adequate monitoring. It draws our attention in particular to those who have not been admitted to institutions specialising in mental health. All of this is clear proof that the real risk run by people with the intention of committing suicide is not being considered (Oquendo and Mann, 2008).

In this regard, the general objective of this study is to describe how people at risk of suicide access the National Health System in Andalusia (NHS-A), how they are cared for and how this information is recorded. In addition, its specific objectives focus on gathering the opinions of family members and friends, as the impact that the suicide of a loved one has on them is another risk factor that must be corrected (PAHO, 2018). This research forms part of the EUREGENAS (European Regions Enforcing Actions Against Suicide) project, which aims to bolster suicide prevention actions (Euregenas Project, 2012).

2. Theoretical context

In this investigation of suicide, going beyond Durkheim's perspective, the biomedical model of public health has taken priority, although, from a sociological point of view, this fails to fully consider the micro and macro view of the fundamentals of the sociological approach to suicide research (Wray et al., 2011). Here we see an attempt to address the issue from this perspective, which suggests dealing with the process of "institutionalisation" of the survivor, or the person at risk of suicide, and the ensuing social "stigma".

The process through which one becomes a "man", in the terms used by Berger and Lukmann, "takes place in an interrelationship with an environment" (2003: 66). Therefore, the environment in the social construction of humans is of utmost importance. As such, life around suicide is constructed socially, and in it the institutions where this process occurs play a fundamental role.

The institutionalisation process entails integrating oneself into this environment. In order for this integration to come about, habituation is a must, something that is a precursor to any institutionalisation process. All human activity is subject to habituation, meaning that people give meaning to their everyday activities and legitimise the daily order of their lives.

It is at this point when it becomes necessary to explain the greater part of the process of institutionalising the person at risk of suicide, which takes place in healthcare establishments, and which involves socially objectifying the solution to the problem, in addition to performing legitimised routine actions in these institutions.

The concept of stigma, on the other hand, is a challenging one as Goffman's concept reduces it to a mere "attribute that is deeply discrediting" and which reduces the bearer "from a whole and usual person to a tainted, discounted one" (1963: 3). However, this concept has evolved, and authors such as Link and Phelman, complement-

ing the definitions put forth by others (Jones et al., 1984), and particularly applying it to the context of mental health, propose a conceptualisation that is of fundamental use to this work, as they understand that stigma exists when five interrelated components come together: “In our definition, stigma exists when elements of labelling, stereotyping, separation, status loss, and discrimination co-occur in a power situation that allows these processes to unfold” (Link and Phelan, 2001: 370).

Both labelling and stereotyping are part of our cognitive processes, which Susan Fiske (1998) tells us must be connected with the social context, and which are the precursor to our tendency towards behaviour that can be expressed as prejudice, discrimination and exclusion (Augoustinos and Walker, 2001).

Given this context, our general objective here is to describe the healthcare received by people who have survived a suicide attempt and accessed the Andalusian Health Service (SAS)’s mechanisms. Our specific objectives are identifying the processes of stigmatisation and institutionalisation that occur behind this access to the system as well as the dynamics of healthcare, describing the discourse of professionals and exploring the assessment of this care by the people affected and their families.

3. Methods

The social context in which this investigation is conducted focuses solely on the 2008 financial crisis, which further heightened the socio-economic factors most associated with poor mental health (poverty, low levels of education, social fragmentation and inequality and unemployment). Back then, the SESPAS report (Gili et al., 2014) recorded a dramatic increase of mental health disorders in primary care settings.

This investigation is limited to the two Andalusian provinces of Málaga and Jaén, whose high suicide mortality rate is above the regional average (Institute of Statistics and Cartography of Andalusia [*Instituto de Estadística y Cartografía de Andalucía*, IECA], 2017), and where the proven link between the prevalence of people who suffer from mental illnesses and the impact of inequality on a financial level, as well as in terms of the quality of social relationships and the differentiation of status in societies, is most obvious (Pickett and Wilkinson, 2010).

3.1. Data sampling and collection

In order to tackle this objective, a qualitative methodology was adopted, combining ethnographic work with discourse collection (Krippendorff, 1990), for which purpose in-depth, semi-structured interviews were conducted, alongside observation in both the institutional (healthcare professionals) and private spheres (people at risk and their families and/or loved ones). In this sense, we took on a more participatory role as “social assistants” when dealing with survivors of suicide and their families, while when faced with healthcare professionals it was an “investigative” role. Thanks to these two different roles, we were able to record discourse and note down observations in the field diary simultaneously, allowing the observations to be interpreted later *a posteriori* (Guasch, 2002).

The study centred around three levels of analysis and their corresponding units of observation:

- 1) Access to the Andalusian Health Service (hereinafter, SAS) by the person at risk. In this case, the units of observation are the healthcare services, which we can further subdivide into institutional structures (and three levels of healthcare) in order to observe them in more detail:
 - a. Primary care (health centres and rural practices, from now on HC and RP, respectively).
 - b. Mobile (ambulances) emergency care services (from now on MECS).
 - c. Hospital accident and emergency departments (from now on A&E).
 - d. Specialised hospitals with high treatment success rates (from now on SH).
- 2) Care given. In this case, the units of observation are healthcare professionals, also broken into three different levels:
 - a. General practitioners (from now on GPs).
 - b. Emergency healthcare professionals.
 - c. Mental health specialists (psychiatry/neurology).
- 3) Assessment of the care given by the people affected. The units of observation are the people who have attempted suicide, as well as their families and loved ones.

When observing these units, a strategic, non-probabilistic sample was taken, “whose selection of sample units meets subjective criteria, in line with the objectives of the investigation” (own translation, González and D’Ancona, 1997: 200). In order to achieve this, three types of sample units were determined: healthcare services, professionals and people affected. These three levels were confined to the local health areas of Jaén-Sur and Málaga-Valle Guadalhorce.

The following inclusion criteria were used when selecting healthcare professionals: 1) those who have been working in the same establishment and role for at least two years, and 2) those who have treated patients at risk of suicide, or even those who have died of suicide. This selection was made by the Mental Health Clinical Management Units (hereinafter, MHCMU) of both health areas. These units were responsible for choosing and personally contacting both the healthcare professionals who met the inclusion requirements and the people affected.

A minimum of 10 interviews was considered necessary for each area, and attempts were made to keep the number of interviews in proportion in terms of the gender of the healthcare professionals and the healthcare services where they worked. Interviewees were sent a letter outlining the objectives of the study and a consent form by their corresponding MHCMU. A total of 17 healthcare professionals, 4 suicide survivors and 4 of their family members and/or loved ones participated, resulting in a sample size of 25 individuals. No healthcare professionals or interviewees refused to collaborate in our investigation. Table 1 shows the distribution of the sample of healthcare professionals who participated.

Table 1

Healthcare professionals by service type, health area and gender

| Participants and services | Jaén-Sur | | Málaga-Valle Guadalhorce | | Total |
|-----------------------------|----------|--------|--------------------------|--------|-------|
| | Male | Female | Male | Female | |
| PC doctors (health centre) | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 |
| PC doctors (rural practice) | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 |
| MECS doctors* | 1 | 1 | - | 1 | 3 |
| A&E doctors* | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 6 |
| Total | 6 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 17 |

Note: * A&E: Hospital accident and emergency department; MECS: Mobile emergency care services (ambulances).

Table 2 contains the distribution by gender and health area of the survivors and their families and/or loved ones. The underrepresentedness of male family members was due to the pre-selection performed by the MHCMU based on the willingness to participate in the study, authorisation by means of informed consent and the availability of people fitting this profile.

Table 2

People who have attempted suicide and their family members by health area and gender

| | Jaén-Sur | | Málaga-Valle Guadalhorce | | Total |
|---------------|----------|--------|--------------------------|--------|-------|
| | Male | Female | Male | Female | |
| Patient | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 |
| Family member | - | 2 | - | 2 | 4 |
| Total | 1 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 8 |

Once the participants were selected, a field diary was kept in which the data collected for each health area were recorded. The data were collected from the practices and at the homes of the participants of the study. The audio of all of the interviews was recorded, each lasting a maximum of 70 minutes, and simultaneous observation was performed, with all of the notes being kept in a diary. The fieldwork was carried out during the month of April 2011, during which time the framework of Strategy 3 “Mental Health and Gender” of the II Comprehensive Mental Health Plan of Andalusia (PISMA) was adopted (Del Pino López, 2013). This plan was followed by III PISMA 2016–2020, which continues to propose the design of a specific region-wide suicide prevention plan, led by the MHCMU.

3.2. Analytical categories

The content of the interviews was based on a review of the literature, the attainment of this study's specific objectives, the adaptation of the WHO's tool for suicide prevention for general practitioners (WHO, 2000) and the recommendations for detecting people at risk of suicide and acting accordingly aimed at Andalusian healthcare professionals (Huizing et al., 2016). The script was written to help achieve the objectives of the investigation and it structures the guided observation in accordance with the aspects referred to in Table 3.

Table 3

Guide to analytical categories

| Block | Categories of analysis |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| I. Access to the healthcare network | The person's ways of reaching the health system Community officers involved Circumstances around their access to healthcare Interventions aimed at family members |
| II. Risk assessment | Who assessed the risk in the initial stage How it was assessed, depending on the health service accessed Where the risk assessment was performed |
| III. Referrals | Referral types by risk classification Referral protocol employed in each case Actions taken depending on the risk type and healthcare service |
| IV. Recording of information | Information recorded about the person affected (risk/healthcare service) Who wrote the clinical report The medium on which the report is recorded Who the information was passed on to |
| V. Professional barriers | Difficulties of professionals in detecting and treating the person at risk Professionals' willingness to undergo training |
| VI. Family intervention | Intervention with loved ones Opinion of families and people who have attempted suicide on the healthcare received Main demands on the public health system |

3.3. Analysis

This is a cross-sectional investigation which uses a strategic sample for descriptive purposes. The analysis methodology used has followed the grounded theory (Strauss and Corbin, 2002). This strategy bases itself on the idea that every analysis must go beyond merely describing the social reality being investigated, recognising its subjectivity. Its goal is to lay bare the points of view and perspectives of the subjects of the investigation. For this reason it is coded in three stages — open, selective and theoretical coding — in which the information is fragmented and checked for regularities, linked categories are promoted, and a proposal for a fundamental and latent social process is made, respectively.

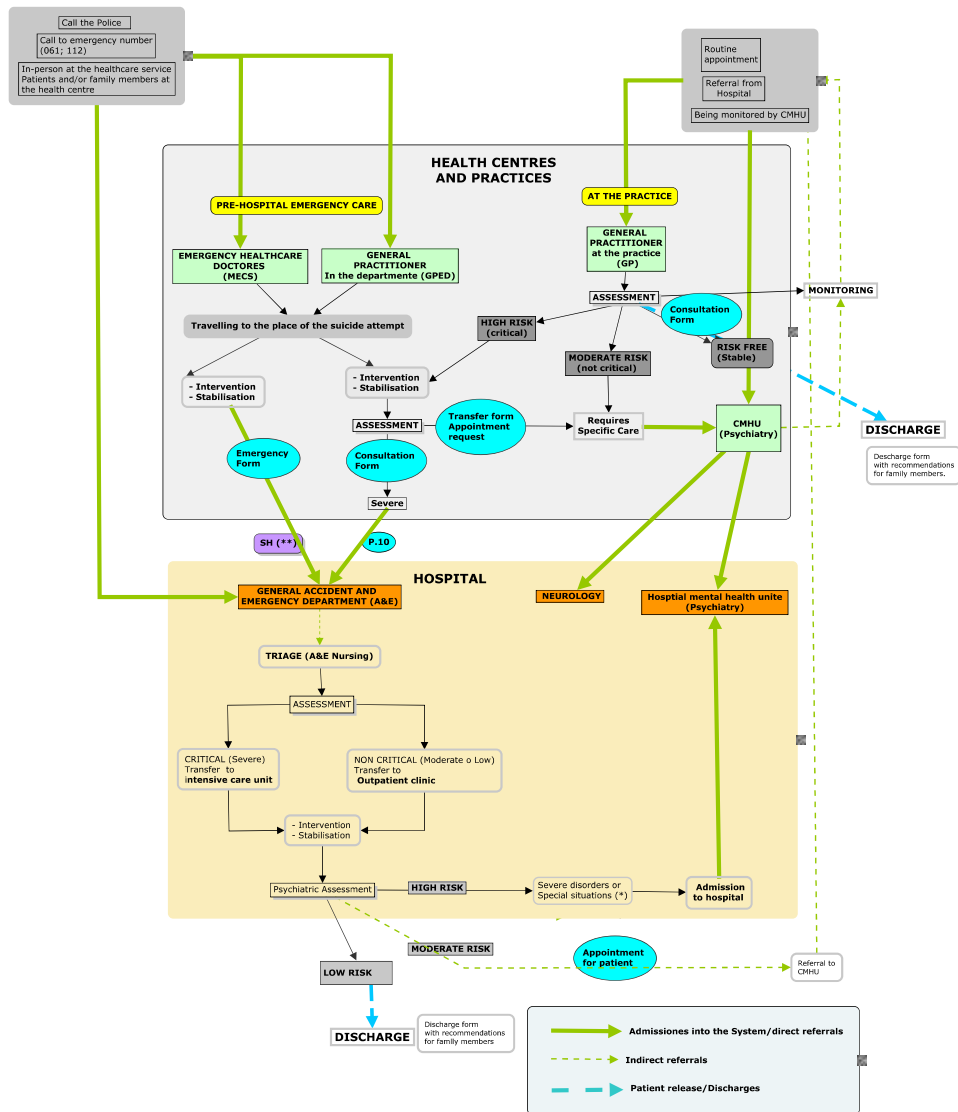
In order to carry out this process, a collaborator transcribed the material and a researcher performed a pre-analysis, identifying the categories that appear in Table 2. These were contrasted with those of other researchers who were participating in the project. During this phase, the categories were evaluated in order to explore their relevance and adapt them to the data obtained. Once they were validated, all of the interviews were codified, fragmenting the categories by job role, healthcare service and health area. In order to describe the type of information gathered at each level of care, the results were graphed using CAQDAS CmapTools (v6), which was developed to organise and display findings in a concept map (Lee and Fielding, 1991). A graph was created for each level of care so that they could all be later joined together in a single graph which would display all the types of access, interventions, referrals, procedures and monitoring. In order to explain the possible family interventions, as well as the barriers or obstacles faced by the professionals, a category analysis was performed which explored their opinion of the clinical practice and the main difficulties the professionals found when managing these cases, in addition to the opinion of suicide survivors and their family or loved ones of the healthcare. This information is presented as text.

4. The institutionalisation of people at risk of suicide

4.1. Constructing stigma: institutional structures and professional discourses on people at risk of suicide

The results are shown in a flowchart (Figure 1), which describes how people who have attempted suicide enter and leave the different services and levels of health-care. Alongside this are the procedures, types of referrals between healthcare levels depending on the level of suicide risk (serious, moderate, low/no risk), the type of professional who treated them (GP, emergency doctor, etc.) and the information that was recorded.

Figure 1
Healthcare circuit for people at risk of suicide in the SAS



Three different ways of accessing the health network have been observed, depending on the risk level and the time and place of the suicide attempt.

First is access to non-hospital emergency care. This may be by calling the emergency services and/or community officers (Local Police or Civil Guard). The way of gaining access to the healthcare network differs depending on whether the attempt occurs in an area

with no nearby or open public health centres, or whether it has resulted in death or serious injury. In these cases, the officers visit the place where the suicide attempt has occurred and notify the MECS. The ambulance's emergency medical team performs a first assessment and intervention *in situ* depending on the level of risk of death presented: if the risk is moderate or severe, they perform interventions in order to stabilise the patient and transport them to the nearest hospital (or SH). The patient continues to receive care in A&E. If there is a low risk of death, they perform interventions in order to emotionally stabilise the patient, before referring them to their GP for continued care at their practice.

Information on this primary care is recorded on paper on an "Emergency Form", which contains the date, time, place and reason for care (ICD-10 codes X60-X84), without specifying the type of suicidal intention (ideation, repetition, gesture, etc.). The interventions performed are also recorded here. This sheet is given to the person who attempted suicide, if they are conscious, so that they can hand it over to the staff when they reach the hospital.

In this scenario, the healthcare professionals create their own discourse about the "client". As such, on the one hand, MECS professionals are able to indicate the difficulties they have faced when treating a person at risk of suicide. They categorise situations as "aggressive" when the person they are caring for does not want to be treated. In addition to these interpretations of the situation, they also add any restrictions experienced in accessing clinical information from different care levels.

I don't know why, but in our unit, we need authorisation from the patient or their family, or from the chip, and not all diagnoses, unless they are admitted, are entered in their Diraya record¹ (male, GP-RP-J07)².

[If we don't see previous information] we don't know what's happened (female, MECS-M13).

Another common interpretation is that they are obliged to pass on information. Time and again they claim it is counter-productive to inform the person affected, and especially their family, of all of the observations performed by professionals, especially when family conflicts are detected as a cause:

[Regarding the clinical report] the patient shouldn't be able to get their hands on it [...] As a doctor, it's not something I think the patient should be able to see, but it is absolutely necessary that they know who the next professional who's going to treat them is (male, GP-RP-J07).

Secondly, the person affected is transported to a hospital or health centre in order to be treated. Once again this depends on proximity and availability, and they may be taken to a HC, RP or hospital. In this case, the emergency healthcare professional evaluates the risk level and assesses whether they should be referred to a different level of healthcare. If the person affected goes to a HC, the primary care professional is responsible for assessing the risk level. If they deem the patient to be high risk (or if they have a special condition), they request referral and emergency transfer to a hospital (by filling in the P-10 referral form). The patient may be transferred by ambulance or taken by a family member. If the risk level is low or moderate, the primary care health professionals may refer the person at risk of suicide to the community mental health unit (hereinafter, CMHU) or, if there is a long waiting time, to A&E. This information is recorded in the "Consultation Form" and added to the SAS' Diraya digital system. This form includes family history and past suicide attempts, as

well as possible causes, regular medication and accessibility to lethal means. If they are transferred to the hospital, a physical copy of this form is given to the person who attempted suicide.

If the person affected is taken straight to the hospital, the nursing staff perform triage in order to complete an early assessment of the risk level. If the risk is deemed to be high, the person affected is referred to the intensive care unit (ICU). If the risk is low or moderate, they are sent to the outpatient clinic. In either case, the emergency healthcare professionals at both locations perform the necessary diagnostic tests and studies and stabilise the person affected both physically and emotionally. Once they have been stabilised, if there is still a high risk, an emergency psychiatric specialist is asked to perform another assessment and they may discharge the patient, request that the patient be admitted to the hospital's mental health unit or refer them to the CMHU for follow-up. When the patient is discharged, they are transferred to primary care for follow-up. The care received in the hospital is recorded digitally in an "Emergency Form", which includes the data from the "Consultation Form", the interventions performed at the hospital's A&E department, and a psychiatric assessment, if applicable.

If we apply the definition of "stigma" proposed by Link and Phelan (2001), in the first notes made and the emergency healthcare professionals' discourse records, we can already see the use of labels, barely hidden beneath metaphors, which are clear proof of how this type of "client" is treated differently:

There are some patients who... it's easier to talk to a brick wall than it is to them (male, A&E-J01).

Sticking with Link and Phelan, the second component, the link between the label and negative stereotypes ("they don't collaborate", "they deny having an illness", "they refuse care"), is somewhat reactive:

The family may be asking for a lot, but if the patient doesn't collaborate, [in other words] if they deny they have an illness, they refuse to go to the doctor's for even five minutes... (male, GP).

The social cognition process occurs when the labelling and associating of the behaviour with negative attributes justifies the display of negative attitudes towards this kind of patient. Their rejection becomes legitimised as it is implied that repeated attempts are the "fault" of the person at risk of suicide, resulting in the following kind of scenario:

[...] You can see that they repeat this behaviour, that nothing changes [...] It annoys you. You stop caring about them so much. You'd like to be able to take control of the situation. And be able to manage the family. And in A&E we use resources that shouldn't be used for this kind of patient (male, doctor in A&E-J09).

[...] They've already passed through a pain threshold due to recurrence, and they visit the practice with a certain amount of apathy, indifference even (male, GP-HC-M14).

From this point of view shared by emergency healthcare professionals, the work that carry out is always being questioned. They feel obliged to legitimise their actions and they therefore need a cause which justifies observation, diagnosis and treatment. This establishes the "standards" that people who use the health service "must" fo-

low. Add to that an institutional structure that doesn't grant healthcare professionals the physical space and time needed to properly care for people in this situation:

[We need spaces] that aren't shared by so many people and so loud, as well as spaces that allow us to properly observe the patient (male, A&E-J01).

Finally, it is possible to access the health system by requesting an appointment, through referral from another service or if follow-up is required for specific sequelae (such as of the throat or neck as a result of hanging or the ingestion of toxic products). In these cases, there are also significant barriers in terms of the information recorded. The first barrier is the fact that the professionals are restricted to a single ICD code that does not differentiate between gestures, ideation or repetition, something that is made up for in the interview at the practice. A&E departments do not have access to the assessments performed by mental health departments, and MECS professionals underscore the importance of this gap in gaining a better understanding of the situation and that of the people affected. GP professionals, for their part, also highlight the significance of a lack of information and the obstacle that it poses, as it limits their involvement to pharmaceutical prescription, and in the event of a new suicide attempt this propels the "counter-referral" dynamic and multiplies the risk.

If you see that you have a patient who is insistent, one who is showing clear signs of problems (they're not sleeping, they are very anxious, etc.), they need to be referred to psychiatry [hospital mental health unit], or you have to take them yourself to the mental health clinic [CMHU] (female, GP-RP-M17).

4.2. Constructing stigma trajectories in families and loved ones

Each suicide survivor displays their pain in a different manner, though all families affected share the same opinion: "The biggest scare of my life"³ (F.2. Female. Málaga).

The shocking testimony of a young female survivor of several suicide attempts, which uncovers the thought process involved in that crucial moment, reveals how the first recourse of healthcare seems like the only way out:

I was a very active and open person [...] As I've already attempted it [before], I know that all it takes is one minute. One minute during which you forget about your family, you forget that you have children [...] It's such a fleeting moment that... [Pause] that when you're thinking about it, before that moment is even over, you tell yourself "I need help" [...] You already know that it's just a matter of days, or even hours (S.1. Female. Jaén).

She even specifies to what extent healthcare serves as a "lifeline":

Your body gets used to treatment. So, every certain amount of time, you need for them to change your treatment. You have the intention of harming yourself. But there [the acute medical unit], you know that you're going to be watched closely day and night (S.1. Female. Jaén).

The discourse of patients and their families leaves little room for doubt of the role played by healthcare, or lack of, in their lives. All of the healthcare professionals involved, on the other hand, consider the family members and loved ones to be main players, thanks to being both key sources of information and the people responsible for providing special care for the person affected from the moment they are discharged from the healthcare service.

However, the total lack of basic resources for those affected (such as guides, catalogues or directories) which may meet their needs, particularly those for vulnerable collectives such as minors and groups at risk of social exclusion, is completely overlooked. This is a key issue for the families:

I'd like for there to be a place where you can go and talk to people... People going through similar things, even if there's no doctor present. A type of meeting for people who are facing the same problems (F.2. Female. Málaga).

Neither professionals nor families mention any type of specific assistance, consolation or social support service for this purpose. Particularly glaring is the lack of specific initiatives for young children of people who attempt suicide, with this demographic being completely ignored.

Family members, meanwhile, partially represented by the women selected for this study by the MHCMU, whether mothers, wives or daughters, are the ones who must act as informal carers. The immense pressure that this implies, adding to the emotional impact of the situation, reflects the distress and constant fear of further suicide attempts. This mainly occurs in families that have already witnessed previous episodes and seen similar cases in the town where they live. They live in a state of trepidation that there may be a contagion effect, described as the Werther effect (Niederkröten-thaler *et al.*, 2010), which results in the use of the dichotomous labels of “us”/”them”. In this sense, factors such as the linking of negative stereotypes associated with rejection, discrimination, status loss and exclusion once again converge, especially if this occurs in a rural setting. This is how one carer expressed her fear:

I've lived in X [rural village] for 26 years, and I could tell you about 30 people. In other words, at least one person a year who has committed suicide [and did they manage it?] Yes, yes. As well as others who attempted it. I could give you names and numbers [...] Every time one happens, I record it. I could almost tell you the order in which they happened (F.1. Female. Málaga).

A profound discourse of the survivors and their affected families gradually emerges, which reveals how having experienced a suicide attempt (whether or not the person affected survived) makes them feel a “social force” that pushes them little by little towards isolation and loneliness. And although they do not say as much, they do know that the suicide of a family member is taboo in their shared social spaces, which further strengthens this invisible line that separates “us” and “them”.

Just having someone to talk to who knows what it's like, who understands the fear that you have, because it's really scary (S.2. Male. Málaga).

[...] we start to cry [whenever we talk about it], so the less we talk about it, the better (S.2. Male. Málaga).

The difficulties are compounded in rural areas, where families experience these feelings with a greater intensity, given that the increased social isolation and greater distance from specialist services do nothing to help reduce this feeling of stigma. The lack of specialised mental health services, particularly emergency psychiatric services, as well as the lack of awareness regarding support resources⁴, all increase this sense of isolation. Here it is worth further highlighting the particular lack of resources available to vulnerable collectives.

In this sense, community professionals in rural areas point towards the need to improve shared GP practices and the available ICT resources for preventing suicide.

5. Discussion and conclusions

The analysis of this information suggests people at risk of suicide are institutionalised in the Andalusian public health system. In other words, on the one hand, institutionalised structures are constructed and, on the other, scenarios and discourses are generated that provide evidence of a difficult attitudinal climate. Consequentially, families are also becoming integrated into this process, which results in increasingly more stigmatising trajectories as it progresses. This process is also propagated in the media when talking about suicide among adolescents (Sánchez-Muros and Jiménez-Rodrigo, 2021).

The institutionalisation process begins with admission to the healthcare service. This first point of the system differs depending on when the attempt occurs and its severity. The person at risk and their family members follow a care pathway that puts up barriers preventing them from receiving correct and proper treatment, thus inhibiting the prevention of suicide.

The discourse on rejection seen across all the levels of care analysed contributes to the process by creating specific professional jargon which justifies — whether due to a lack of specific training, necessary resources, ability or communication — the inability to provide correct care. This issue coincides with other investigations (Saunders et al., 2012), and these barriers are similar to those already found in other investigations which indicate the need to focus both on early detection (Bajaj et al., 2008; Hawton and Van Heeringen, 2009) and on necessary training for primary care, emergency and mental health healthcare professionals (Muñoz-Sánchez et al., 2018). Institutionalisation complicates the sound assessment of the risk and the determination of the specific care that should be given for the risk posed by the person affected, a topic that has also been dealt with in other studies (Gensichen et al., 2010).

Properly recording information on the person who has attempted suicide and who is seeking care from the public health service takes on more or less importance depending on how the institutions and professionals construct the scenario and its discourse regarding the event that has occurred in a social context. Both the recording of information of each case and access to the clinical history can vary according to the way in which the person at risk accesses the system. Health services do not uniformly record information, nor do they access this information in the same way, and this variation results in the delayed detection of risks as it impedes the anticipation of the severity of an attempt (Gotsens et al., 2011). The methods used to record information on each case of suicide or attempted suicide, and its transfer to and level of accessibility between the different care levels that the person at risk passes through, do not meet the WHO's recommendations (2018) designed to prevent a person from committing repeated suicide attempts and self-harming. This problem is also corroborated by other investigations that outline at least seven quality indicators that are only met in less than a third of clinical reports (Miret et al., 2010). Overall, this proce-

dures leads to “information vacuums” that healthcare professionals tend to make up for through interviews with the survivors and/or their family members, thus giving way to a certain level of bias that proves to be an obstacle to providing the right level of care required at each moment.

Finally, the lack of health and social support for populations that are particularly vulnerable only further consolidates stigmatised trajectories. The dearth of information on resources or services designed to support family member or friends affected by a loved one’s suicide attempt results in a lack of interventions for these people. Non-existent suicide prevention in these groups only further aggravates the risk. There is considerable demand for support groups to help care for people at risk of suicide, although the scarcity of information makes these possible initiatives a non-starter. The findings coincide with those of studies on the satisfaction of suicide survivors and their family members with this type of healthcare, as well as the claim that primary care is the healthcare service and level that is best suited to disseminating this information (Triañes Pego, 2014).

It is of vital importance to point out that families, particularly the women, are ultimately left to perform the role of informal carer of the person at risk of suicide, as they are the main custodians of the clinical reports, essential companions and carers on constant alert, which increases their anxiety. These carers not only experience the suicidal attempt or ideation, but they are also subject to a deep sense of pressure and stigma, especially in smaller towns and villages, and they demand increased contact with peer groups, highly rating initiatives designed to start up mental health support groups for families. These same family members call for health and social workers to provide them with adequate information on guidance and support resources and/or services aimed at people who have suffered irreparable damage.

It is also essential to underline the limitations of this investigation, namely its small sample size and ambition, which make it impossible to obtain conclusive results, although we can take away suggestive findings. The structure and discourse analysis helps overcome the limitations of the qualitative methodology, shedding light on the processes of social construction by extracting discursive components and structural dynamics, thus helping create initiatives and policies that provide a solution to this problem.

Overall, the way in which people at risk come into contact with the healthcare network, the procedure for recording case information and the shortcomings in the healthcare received all play a vital role in the institutionalisation process of the person at risk of suicide. Meanwhile, these factors foster the convergence of the components of stigma, shrouding those affected by suicide risk and their family and/or loved ones in it, which ultimately severely inhibits the prevention of suicide.

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Notes

- 1 “System used in the Andalusian Health Service as a digital medium for storing medical records. It contains all of the health information of every person cared for at health centres, ensuring that it is available whenever and wherever it is needed in order to treat them, while it is also used to manage the healthcare establishment” (Diraya, n. d.).
- 2 Key: Gender of the professional (binary: male or female); acronyms used for healthcare professionals (A&E: doctors in hospital emergency departments; GP: general practitioner, primary care doctors); acronyms used for healthcare services (HC: health centre; RP: rural practice); first letter of the health area (J: Jaén; M: Málaga) and the identification number of the person interviewed.
- 3 Identification codes for interviewees: F (family member) or S (suicide survivor), plus their identification number. This is followed by their gender and province.
- 4 Both the specific mental health care services: children and adolescent mental health services, mental health therapeutic communities, mental health rehabilitation units (MHRU), mental health day hospitals (MHDH); and the community and social support services: residential programmes (care homes, supervised residences, respite care, home care), employment programmes (workshops, employment training courses, social enterprises), leisure and free-time programmes (permanent spaces/social clubs, leisure and free-time activities), programmes promoting and supporting mentorship schemes, mutual support programmes for families and service users (mutual support initiatives, awareness-raising, managing social support programmes, fostering the participation of collectives), care programmes for inmates with severe mental illnesses.

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ARTICLES/ARTÍCULOS

Evolution of Autism Spectrum Disorder in Almeria: Prevalence and Incidence by Sex, Comorbidity and Municipal Distribution

Evolución del trastorno del espectro autista en Almería: prevalencia e incidencia por sexos, comorbilidad y distribución municipal

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ABSTRACT

The aim is to assess the evolution of the prevalence and incidence of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) by sex from 2008–2020, as well as more common comorbidities and municipal distribution in the province of Almeria (Spain).

A longitudinal descriptive study is carried out using information from the Education Administration, calculating prevalence and cumulative incidence throughout the period, stratified by sex. For the prediction calculation, trend analysis and regression analysis are used to determine the relationship between the general population distribution and the ASD population.

In the province of Almeria (Spain), prevalence increased from 4.58‰ for men in 2008 to 15.26‰ in 2020, and from 1.49‰ for women in 2008 to 2.71‰ in 2020. There is an average annual increase in cumulative incidence of 1.09‰. By 2025, the prevalence is expected to reach 18.41‰ in men and 3.22‰ in women. The most common comorbidities are mental retardation and attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder. As regards municipal distribution, the distribution of the general population explains the distribution of children with ASD.

The conclusion drawn is that there is an increase in the prevalence of ASD in the province of Almeria with an upward trend that is expected to continue over the coming years.

KEYWORDS: autism spectrum disorder; inclusive education; prevalence; incidence; comorbidity; sex distribution.

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RESUMEN

Se pretende valorar la evolución de prevalencia e incidencia del trastorno del espectro autista (TEA) por sexo, de 2008-2020, así como comorbilidades más frecuentes y distribución municipal en la provincia de Almería (España).

Para ello se realiza un estudio descriptivo longitudinal con información de la Administración educativa, calculando prevalencia e incidencia acumulada en todo el período, estratificada por sexos. Para el cálculo de predicciones se utiliza análisis de tendencias, y análisis de regresión para conocer relación de la distribución de población general en relación con población TEA.

En la provincia de Almería (España), la prevalencia pasa del 4,58‰ para hombres en 2008 al 15,26‰ en 2020, y del 1,49‰ para mujeres en 2008 al 2,71‰ en 2020. Se observa un aumento medio anual de la incidencia acumulada del 1,09‰. Se prevé llegar a una prevalencia del 18,41‰ en hombres y del 3,22‰ en mujeres en 2025. Las comorbilidades más frecuentes son el retraso mental y el trastorno por déficit de atención e hiperactividad. En cuanto a su distribución municipal, la distribución de la población en general explica la distribución de los niños con TEA.

Se concluye con un crecimiento de la prevalencia de TEA en la provincia de Almería que se prevé siga aumentando en los próximos años.

PALABRAS CLAVE: trastorno del espectro autista; educación inclusiva; prevalencia, incidencia; comorbilidad, distribución por sexo.

1. Introduction

The conceptual and terminological evolution of autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is associated with an increase in cases, greater social awareness and improved identification strategies and provision of support services (Dallman et al., 2021).

1.1. Diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder

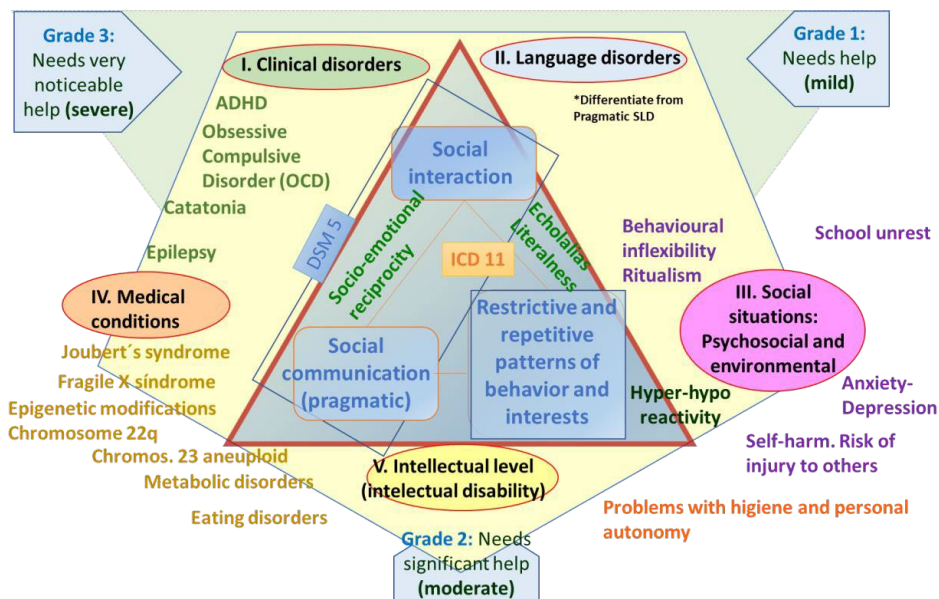
The diagnostic category of autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is reflected in the International Classification of Diseases (ICD) and in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM), as well as in the World Health Organization (WHO, 1993) diagnostic criteria.

In the ICD-10-CM (Spanish Government, 2022) currently in force, five sub-types are included: autism disorder, Rett syndrome, childhood disintegrative disorder, Asperger's syndrome and pervasive developmental disorder-not otherwise specified.

In addition to identifying the main criteria (worsening of social communication, social interaction and restrictive and repetitive behaviours, interests or activities), autism spectrum disorder is characterised by the frequent presence of other clinical conditions, notably attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), functional language difficulties, whether there is associated mental retardation and the degree, lack of personal autonomy, worsening of behaviour (disruptive and instances of self-harming) or vulnerable social situations (WHO, 2021) (figure 1).

Figure1

Concept of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)



Source: Own research.

1.2. Epidemiologic Studies of Autism Spectrum Disorder

The lack of consensus and the steady increase stand out in the numerous studies on prevalence in people with ASD (figure 2) (Sánchez-Raya et al., 2015).

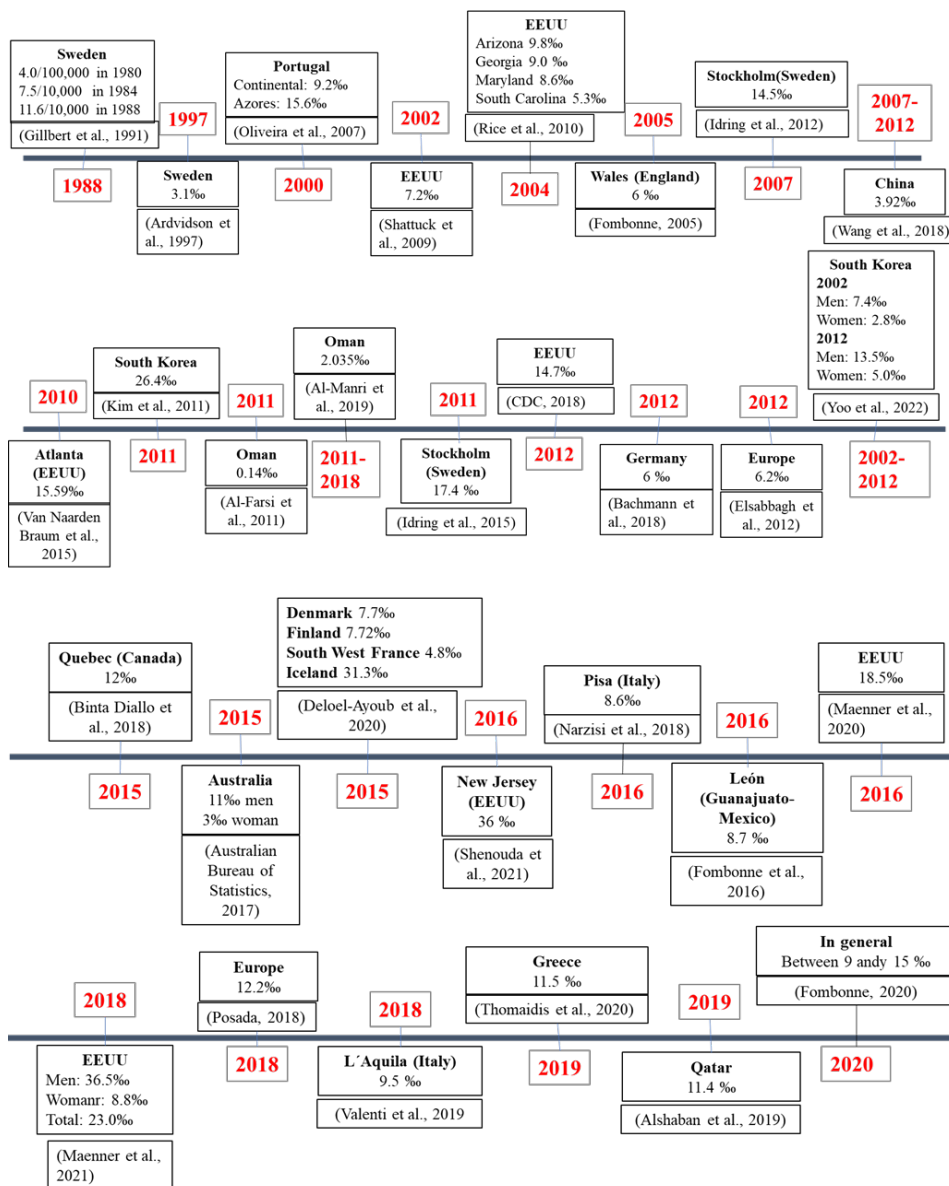
Waterhouse (2008) justifies this by:

1. Changes in diagnostic criteria (Lai et al., 2013).
2. Improvement of identification and evaluation systems (Bolison et al., 2016).
3. Increase in care services for people with ASD, which may explain differences in prevalence between Bangladesh (2016), with 0.75‰ (Akhter et al., 2018), and the US (2018), with 36‰ (Maenner et al., 2021).
4. Growing awareness of the disorder (Wing and Potter, 2002).

The WHO (2019) calculates that 1 in every 160 children has ASD (6,25‰); Fombonne (2020) specifies the variations between 9–15‰.

In Spain, there are inter-regional variations and a steady increase (table 1); from 1‰ in Madrid (2001) (Belinchón, 2001), Aragon (2005) (Frontera-Sancho, 2005) or Seville (2007) (Aguilera, Moreno y Rodríguez, 2007), around 6‰ in Salamanca-Zamora (2012) (García-Primo et al., 2014), Las Palmas (2013) (Foratea-Sevilla et al.,

Figure 2
Prevalence studies of ASD outside of Spain



Source: Own research.

2013) and Guipúzcoa (2020) (Fuentes et al., 2020), up to 15.5% in Tarragona (2018) (Morales-Hidalgo et al., 2018) and 12.3% for Catalonia in general (Pérez-Crespo et al., 2019).

Table 1

Prevalence studies of autism spectrum disorders in Spain

| Year | Author | Place | ‰ | Description |
|------|---|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| 2001 | Belinchón (2001) | Self-governing region of Madrid | 1 | People with ASD, Region of Madrid: 1,274. Extrapolated to 29 years: 1,795. Prev.1‰ |
| 2005 | Frontera-Sancho (2005) | Aragon | 0.92 | ASD population: 155. Prev. 0.9211‰. Underdiagnosis, especially in Asperger's syndrome |
| 2007 | Aguilera et al. (2007) | Seville | 1.3 | ASD prevalence in compulsory education. Seville (city). Prev. 1.297‰ |
| 2008 | Spanish National Statistics Institute (INE, 2021) | Andalusia, Aragon | 4.9 2.2 | Sample-Andalusia: 2,800. Prevalence 0.49%; Sample-Aragon: 2,300. Prevalence 0.22%. |
| 2012 | García-Primo et al. (2014) | Salamanca-Zamora | 6.4 | Participants: 9,524. Instrument: M-CHAT |
| 2013 | Fortea Sevilla et al. (2013) | Las Palmas | 6.1 | Sample: 1,796 children (18–30 months) |
| 2014 | Sánchez-Palomino and Villegas-Lirola (2014) | Almeria | 2.7 | School population: 99,572 pupils. Prevalence: 2.7‰. Coincidence of variations in frequency of ASD with variations in general population |
| 2017 | INE (2018) | Spain | 5.7 | Spanish National Health Survey (26/06/2018). Children aged 3–14. Men: 0.95% / Women: 0.16% |
| 2017 | Pérez-Crespo et al. (2019) | Catalonia | 12.3 | Reference population: 1,326,666 children (2–17 yrs.). ASD population: 15,466. Boy:girl ratio: 4.5:1 (12,647 boys and 2,819 girls) |
| 2018 | Morales-Hidalgo et al. (2018) | Tarragona | 15.5, 3–5 years 10.0, 10–12 years | Neurodevelopmental Disorders Epidemiological Research Project (EPINED). Participants: 5,582 children. ASD results: 1.55% preschool education and 1.00% primary education |
| 2020 | Fuentes et al. (2020) | Guipúzcoa | 5.9 | ASDEU project. Reference population: 14,734, 7–9 years. Estimated prevalence: 0.59% (95% CI: 0.48–0.73%) |

Source: Own research.

1.3. Differences in Prevalence of ASD by Sex

The prevalence of ASD is higher among men than it is women. This could be justified due to underdiagnosis in girls (Wagner, 2014). This is the result of how, in *ad hoc* prevalence studies, more men than women participate (Watkins et al., 2014), the screening tools are more sensitive to identifying ASD in men (Kirkovski et al., 2013), and women with a higher intelligence quotient are not diagnosed with ASD (Parish-Morris et al., 2017). The differences between men and women oscillate between 4.34:1 (95% CI: 3.83–4.86) for Europe and 4.28:1 (95% CI: 3.76–4.79) for North America (table 2).

Table 2*ASD ratio (R) by sex in Europe and North America*

| Year | Europe. Average M:F ratio: 4.34 (95% CI: 3.83-4.86) | | | North America. Average M:F ratio: 4.28 (95% CI: 3.76-4.79) | | |
|------|--|----------------------------------|-----|---|-------------------------------|-----|
| | Place | Reference | R | Place | Reference | R |
| 1990 | France | Fombonne et al. (1997) | 1.8 | | | |
| 1990 | South Thames (United Kingdom) | Baird et al. (2006) | 3.3 | | | |
| 1992 | Lisbon, Alentejo and Algarve (Portugal) | Oliveira et al. (2007) | 2.9 | | | |
| 1992 | Norway | Sponheim and Skjeldal (1998) | 2.1 | | | |
| 1996 | | | | Atlanta (US) | Yeargin-Allsopp et al. (2003) | 3.9 |
| 1997 | | | | Minnesota (US) | Barbarese et al. (2005) | |
| 1998 | Iceland | Saemundsen et al. (2013) | 2.7 | Brick Township (New Jersey) | Bertrand et al. (2001) | 2.9 |
| 1998 | Staffordshire (England) | Chakrabarti and Fombonne (2001) | 4.0 | Montreal (Canada) | Fombonne et al. (2006) | 4.9 |
| 1999 | England, Wales and Scotland | Fombonne et al. (2001) | 8.1 | | | |
| 2001 | Lothian (Scotland) | Harrison et al. (2006) | 7.0 | | | |
| 2002 | Faroe Islands (Denmark) | Ellefsen et al. (2007) | 5.7 | US | CDC (2007) | 4.2 |
| 2002 | Staffordshire (England) | Chakrabarti and Fombonne (2005) | 6.1 | South Carolina (US) | Nicholas et al. (2008) | 3.1 |
| 2003 | England | Willians et al. (2008) | 6.8 | | | |
| 2004 | Denmark | Parner et al. (2011) | 5.3 | British Columbia (Canada) | Ouellette-Kuntz et al. (2007) | 5.3 |
| 2004 | Kent (United Kingdom) | Tebuegge et al. (2004) | 6.1 | San Francisco (US) | Windham et al. (2011) | |
| 2004 | United Kingdom | Sun et al. (2014) | 3.2 | | | |
| 2004 | United Kingdom | Totsika et al. (2011) | 4.4 | | | |
| 2006 | Denmark | Nordenbaek et al. (2014) | 3.9 | South Carolina S.) | Nicholas et al. (2009) | 4.8 |
| 2007 | Stockholm (Sweden) | Idring et al. (2012) | 2.6 | US | Kogan et al. (2009) | 4.2 |
| 2008 | Stockholm (Sweden) | Fernell and Gillbert (2010) | 4.9 | Montreal (Canada) | Lazoff et al. (2010) | 5.5 |
| 2008 | Norway | Isaksen et al. (2012) | 4.1 | | | |
| 2009 | United Kingdom | Russell et al. (2014) | 5.4 | | | |
| 2010 | Gothenburg (Sweden) | Nygren et al. (2012) | 4.0 | US | Baio et al. (2014) | 4.6 |
| 2010 | Norway | Suren et al. (2012) | 4.3 | Arizona and Wisconsin (US) | Christensen et al. (2019) | 2.6 |
| 2010 | United Kingdom | Taylor et al. (2013) | 4.8 | | | |
| 2012 | Germany | Bachann et al. (2018) | 2.8 | | | |
| 2014 | Poland | Skonieczna-Zydecka et al. (2017) | 4.5 | Colorado (US) | Christensen et al. (2019) | 5.2 |

| Europe. Average M:F ratio: 4.34 (95% CI: 3.83-4.86) | | | | North America. Average M:F ratio: 4.28 (95% CI: 3.76-4.79) | | |
|--|-------------------|-------------------------------|-----|---|---------------------|-----|
| Year | Place | Reference | R | Place | Reference | R |
| 2015 | Denmark | | 3.9 | Canada | Ofner et al. (2018) | 4.0 |
| 2015 | Finland | Delobel-Ayoub et al. (2020) | 3.3 | | | |
| 2015 | France | | 5.4 | | | |
| 2015 | Iceland | | 4.4 | | | |
| 2016 | Norway | Ozerk et al. (2020) | 3.6 | | | |
| 2018 | Tarragona (Spain) | Morales-Hidalgo et al. (2018) | 4.3 | | | |
| 2019 | Catalonia (Spain) | Pérez-Crespo et al. (2019) | 4.5 | | | |
| 2019 | Italy | Valenti et al. (2019) | 4.1 | | | |
| 2020 | Greece | Thomaidis et al. (2020) | 4.4 | | | |

Source: Own research.

This difference may be explained by the existence of specific risk factors in men and protective factors in women (Jacquemont et al., 2014) or by the existence of phenotypic buffering in women (Werling et al., 2016).

2. Research Design

There are relatively few studies on the prevalence and incidence of ASD in Andalusia (Aguilera et al., 2007; Sánchez-Palomino and Villegas-Lirola, 2014). This information is important for understanding the disorder and providing the associated services.

This study aims to assess the evolution of the prevalence and incidence of ASD by sex from 2008 through 2020, and analyse the most common comorbidities and distribution of ASD in the province of Almeria.

Anonymous administrative data on children aged 3–16, schooled in Almeria (Spain) between 2008–2020 (Regional Government of Andalusia Department of Education), are used.

The average annual reference population (3–16 yrs.) is 89,900 (95% CI: 85,867–93,934), with a minimum of 84,047 (2008) and a maximum of 108,692 (Regional Government of Andalusia, 2021).

The average distribution by sex, over the 13 years, is 46,191 males (95% CI: 44,125–48,257), with a minimum of 43,268 (2008) and a maximum of 55,752 (2020), and 43,709 females (95% CI: 41,738–45,680), with an average of 48.62% women in relation to the total population (95% CI: 48.53%–48.71%).

In this cohort, children diagnosed with ASD between 2008–2020 are identified and denominators are defined based on the total population of children from nursery education to compulsory secondary education (ESO) and special education. The data correspond to the month of September of each academic year.

Es un estudio descriptivo-longitudinal para el análisis de variaciones de prevalencia-incidencia en trece años (2008–2020).

It is a descriptive longitudinal study for the analysis of variations in prevalence and incidence over 13 years (2008–2020).

The analysis of comorbidities in pupils with ASD is descriptive and transversal, and is in reference to the 2019–2020 academic year.

The study variables are the diagnostic categories associated with autism spectrum disorders (ICD-10-CM) (Spanish Government, 2022), stratified by sex.

The units of measurement were the frequency or number of pupils for each diagnostic category, the prevalence or number of students with ASD in relation to the number of general pupils, and the accumulated incidence or number of new pupils with ASD in each period in relation to the risk population (Colimon, 2019).

To calculate the accumulated incidence, the risk population is defined as the pupils from the second stage of nursery education to compulsory secondary education (ESO, 3–16 years), not including those pupils diagnosed with ASD. Given the difference reported in relation to sex (Loomes et al., 2017), to avoid the bias of a single general measure, the prevalence and overall incidence stratified by sex are calculated.

The incidence is categorised based on percentiles (low: up to the 25th percentile; middle: between 25–75; and high: above the 75th percentile). Prevalence and incidence are two related measures, for which reason the sustained increase in the incidence of ASD implies an accumulative increase in prevalence (Fombonne, 2020).

To assess the association of prevalence of ASD by sex, the Pearson bivariate correlation between the evolution of the prevalence in men and women is calculated to discover the overlap between both sexes.

The calculation of the prevalence and incidence predictions for the next five years (2021–2025) is performed using the SPSS v.27 time series module, proposing for each series an analysis model according to the characteristics of the resulting mathematical function (ARIMA-additive or Holt-exponential). The benchmarks for the calculation are the prevalence and incidence of ASD by sex (dependent variables), and as the independent variable, the temporal sequence in years (2008–2020).

For the 2019–2020 academic year, a co-occurrence analysis (comorbidities) is carried out to discover the most common special educational needs in pupils with ASD.

UCINET software is used (Borgatti et al., 2002), plotting the relationships between each of the special educational needs under study.

The distribution of pupils with ASD in the province is calculated using the count for each municipality and is represented using the QGIS 3.22 application (QGIS.org, 2022). To find out whether the distribution of the overall population (independent variable) explains the distribution of the population with ASD (dependent variable), a regression analysis is carried out using STATGRAPHICS 19.

3. Results

3.1. Prevalence

If, in 2008, a total of 150 pupils aged between 3 and 16 years had ASD, this figure will rise to 726 in 2020. The prevalence has increased from 3.09‰ (95% CI: 2.52–3.66) in 2008 to 8.10‰ (95% CI: 6.97–9.22) in 2020 (table 3). This difference is especially relevant in the case of males, where the prevalence increases from 4.58‰ (95% CI: 3.62–5.55) in 2008 to 13.18‰ (95% CI: 11.79–14.56) in 2020, having reached 15.26‰ (95% CI: 13.67–16.85) in 2019; that is, one in every 65 males aged between 6 and 12 years had some type of ASD. The prevalence in both sexes only decreased in 2020 (-1.22‰) and in 2013, the prevalence in women decreased (-0.07‰).

The average percentage growth per year for prevalence and incidence is 8.33% for both sexes.

The evolution of the prevalence in men and women presents a high degree of association, obtaining a Pearson bivariate correlation of 0.964 (95% CI: 0.872–0.989); in other words, the prevalence varies proportionally for both sexes.

The average risk factor by sex or prevalence ratio in men (numerator) and prevalence in women (denominator) is 4.09 (95% CI: 3.61–4.56) for the period from 2008 to 2020. The standard deviation is 0.78, indicating a high degree of stability over the thirteen years, with a minimum of 3.07 in 2008 and a maximum of 5.16 in 2019. The risk of presenting ASD between 6 and 12 years of age is 4.09 times greater in men than in women. This difference is especially relevant in the group identified with Asperger's syndrome, with a risk factor of 10.37 (95% CI: 6.40–14.34), whereby the possibility of presenting Asperger's syndrome is 10.37 times higher in men than in women.

3.2. Incidence

In the series, a continued increase was recorded, with an average annual incidence of 1.09‰ (95% CI: 0.61–1.57). As for males, the average annual incidence is 1.73‰ (95% CI: 0.89–2.57), and for females, 0.42‰ (0.27–0.56).

The lowest incidences are recorded in the years 2009, 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2020, and the highest incidences in 2015, 2017, 2018 and 2019 (table 4).

There is a dip between 2011 and 2013, a plateau between 2015 and 2017, and a significant increase in 2014, 2015 and, particularly, in 2018 and 2019, with a decrease in 2020 (figure 3), coinciding with the pandemic and lockdown in the second and third quarters of 2019 due to COVID-19.

Table 3*Prevalence and accumulated incidence of ASD by sex (2008-2020)*

| Year | Freq. ASD 3-16 yrs. | Prevalence % ^o | | | Accumulated incidence % ^o | | |
|------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| | | M | F | M+F | M | F | M+F |
| 2008 | 150 | 4.58 (3.62-5.55) | 1.49 (0.92-2.05) | 3.09 (2.52-3.66) | | | |
| 2009 | 166 | 4.92 (3.92-5.92) | 1.50 (0.94-2.07) | 3.25 (2.67-3.83) | 0.35 (0.17-0.52) | 0.00 (0.00-0.00) | 0.19 (0.10-0.28) |
| 2010 | 227 | 5.67 (4.61-6.74) | 1.76 (1.15-2.36) | 3.77 (3.15-4.39) | 1.18 (0.85-1.50) | 0.42 (0.22-0.61) | 0.81 (0.62-1.00) |
| 2011 | 250 | 5.82 (4.74-6.89) | 1.84 (1.22-2.46) | 3.87 (3.24-4.50) | 0.50 (0.29-0.71) | 0.10 (0.00-0.19) | 0.30 (0.19-0.42) |
| 2012 | 240 | 6.26 (5.15-7.37) | 1.85 (1.24-2.46) | 4.09 (3.45-4.73) | 0.27 (0.12-0.43) | 0.07 (-0.01-0.15) | 0.14 (0.06-0.22) |
| 2013 | 260 | 6.85 (5.69-8.01) | 1.78 (1.18-2.38) | 4.35 (3.69-5.01) | 0.47 (0.27-0.68) | 0.21 (0.07-0.35) | 0.35 (0.22-0.47) |
| 2014 | 302 | 8.18 (6.93-9.42) | 1.93 (1.32-2.55) | 5.09 (4.39-5.79) | 1.09 (0.78-1.39) | 0.26 (0.11-0.41) | 0.68 (0.51-0.85) |
| 2015 | 370 | 9.48 (8.20-10.75) | 1.97 (1.36-2.57) | 5.84 (5.12-6.56) | 1.49 (1.14-1.84) | 0.43 (0.24-0.63) | 0.98 (0.77-1.18) |
| 2016 | 414 | 10.03 (8.73-11.34) | 2.07 (1.46-2.68) | 6.16 (5.42-6.89) | 1.25 (0.93-1.57) | 0.34 (0.15-0.48) | 0.80 (0.61-0.98) |
| 2017 | 477 | 11.24 (9.87-12.61) | 2.33 (1.69-2.98) | 6.91 (6.14-7.69) | 1.45 (1.11-1.79) | 0.56 (0.32-0.75) | 1.01 (0.80-1.21) |
| 2018 | 542 | 12.71 (11.25-14.16) | 2.86 (2.14-3.58) | 7.93 (7.10-8.76) | 1.81 (1.43-2.19) | 0.31 (0.15-0.47) | 1.08 (0.87-1.29) |
| 2019 | 692 | 15.26 (13.67-16.85) | 2.96 (2.23-3.69) | 9.32 (8.42-10.22) | 3.29 (2.78-3.80) | 0.59 (0.36-0.81) | 1.97 (1.69-2.26) |
| 2020 | 726 | 13.18, (11.79-14.56) | 2.71 (2.05-3.36) | 8.10 (6.97-9.22) | 0.58 (0.38-0.78) | 0.13 (0.03-0.23) | 0.32 (0.21-0.42) |

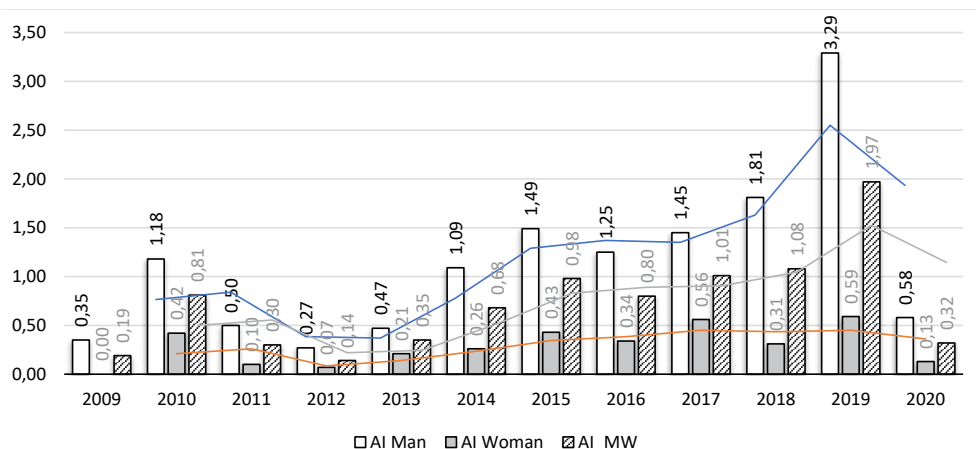
Source: Own research.

Table 4*Association of incidence by degree in relation to sex*

| | Incidence M % ^o | | | Incidence F % ^o | | | Incidence M+F % ^o | | |
|------|----------------------------|--------|------|----------------------------|--------|------|------------------------------|--------|------|
| | Low | Medium | High | Low | Medium | High | Low | Medium | High |
| 2009 | 0.35 | | | 0.00 | | | 0.19 | | |
| 2010 | | 1.18 | | | | | 0.42 | 0.81 | |
| 2011 | 0.50 | | | 0.10 | | | 0.30 | | |
| 2012 | 0.27 | | | 0.07 | | | 0.14 | | |
| 2013 | 0.47 | | | | 0.21 | | 0.35 | | |
| 2014 | | 1.09 | | | 0.24 | | | 0.68 | |
| 2015 | | | 1.49 | | | 0.43 | | | 0.98 |
| 2016 | | 1.25 | | | 0.34 | | | 0.80 | |
| 2017 | | | 1.45 | | | 0.56 | | | 1.01 |
| 2018 | | | 1.81 | | 0.31 | | | | 1.08 |
| 2019 | | | 3.29 | | | 0.59 | | | 1.97 |
| 2020 | 0.58 | | | 0.13 | | | 0.32 | | |

Source: Own research.

Figure 3
Incidence of ASD by sex (2009-2020)



Source: Own research.

The increase in the incidence values is 4.12 times greater in men than in women.

The average percentage has led to an average increase of 8.33% (95% CI: 4.52–12.15%), with a standard deviation of 6%. Values peaked in 2019, with a percentage increase of 23.96% for men and 17.25% for women, while minimum values were recorded in 2012, with 1.97% for men and 2.05% for women. In terms of percentage, in relation to the accumulated annual incidence, the detection of men and women was very similar.

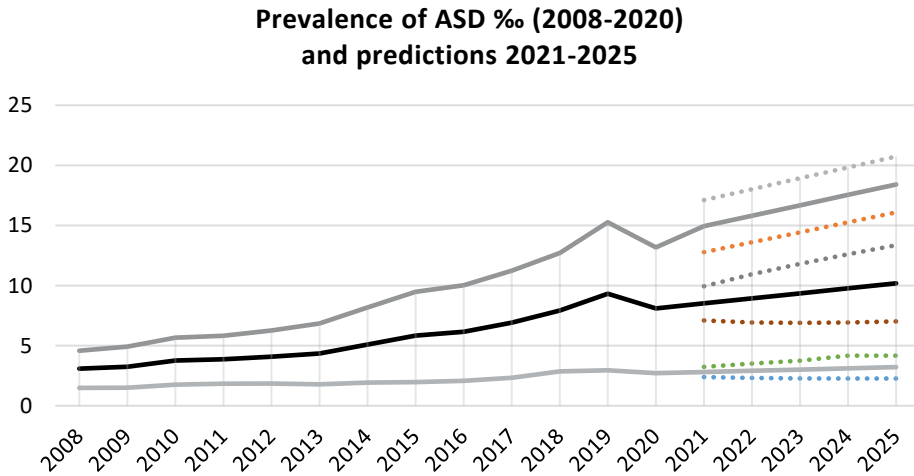
3.3. Prevalence and Incidence Predictions

Prevalence and incidence, and their evolution, are closely related (figures 4 and 5).

The predictions for the next five years imply a sustained increase that would see the population of pupils with ASD aged between 3–16 years reach 1,049 subjects in 2025 (CI 95%: 833–1.264), with a global prevalence of 10.19‰ (95% CI: 7.02–13.36), which in the case of males would reach 18.41‰ (95% CI: 16.09–20.74) (table 5).

Figure 4

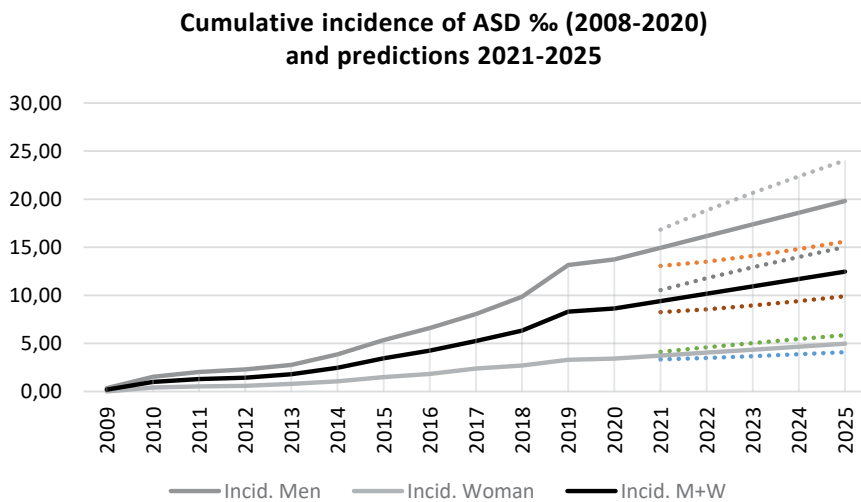
Evolution of prevalence, 2008-2025



Source: Own research.

Figure 5

Evolution of incidence, 2008-2025



Source: Own research.

Table 5

ASD predictions, 2021-2025 (95% CI)

| Year | Prevalence % ^o | | | Expected freq. ASD 6-12 yrs. | Expected freq. ASD 3-16 yrs. |
|------|---------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| | M | F | M+F | | |
| 2021 | 14.94 (12.78-17.11) | 2.81 (2.39-3.24) | 8.52 (7.10-9.94) | 461 (362-570) | 791 (694-887) |
| 2022 | 15.81 (13.61-18.02) | 2.91 (2.31-3.51) | 8.94 (6.93-10.94) | 496 (378-631) | 855 (718-991) |
| 2023 | 16.68 (14.43-18.93) | 3.01 (2.28-3.75) | 9.35 (6.90-11.81) | 533 (396-690) | 920 (753-1,087) |
| 2024 | 17.55 (15.26-19.83) | 3.12 (2.27-4.17) | 9.77 (6.93-12.61) | 571 (417-748) | 984 (791-1,177) |
| 2025 | 18.41 (16.09-20.74) | 3.22 (2.27-4.17) | 10.19 (7.02-13.36) | 610 (439-808) | 1049 (833-1,264) |

Source: Own research.

The prediction for 2025 is that one in every 54 males and one in every 310 girls, aged between 6 and 12 years, will have some type of ASD.

3.4. Comorbidity

For the comorbidity analysis, the reference group was the population of pupils at school who have special educational needs (SEN) associated with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in the province of Almeria in the year 2019. Of a total of 692 pupils, 211 have autism (30.5%); 135 have Asperger's syndrome (19.5%); 343 have pervasive developmental disorder-not otherwise specified (49.5%); 2 have Rett syndrome (0.3%); and 1 has childhood disintegrative disorder (0.15%).

- Autism: of the total number of pupils with autism-associated SEN (211), 38 also have other needs (18%), of which 23 show intellectual disability (severe-moderate). That is, 11% of pupils with autism-type ASD also have severe or moderate intellectual disability.

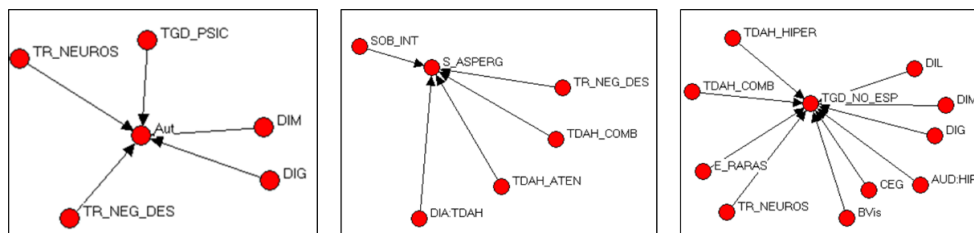
- Asperger's syndrome (AS): of the total number of pupils with AS-associated SEN (135), 30 have other associated needs (22%), of which 17 have attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), and 3, oppositional defiant disorder. Notably, 12.4% of pupils with Asperger's syndrome have ADHD comorbidity.

- Pervasive developmental disorder-not otherwise specified (PDD-NOS): of the total number of pupils with PDD-NOS-associated SEN (343), 51 have other associated needs (15%), of which 22 are associated with intellectual disability, 15 with ADHD, and 2 with oppositional defiant disorder. It must be highlighted that, in the case of pupils with pervasive developmental disorder-not otherwise specified, 6.4% have intellectual disability, and 4.49% have attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder.

- Rett syndrome and childhood disintegrative disorder: the total number of pupils with these needs is very low; 2 in the case of Rett syndrome, and 1 in the case of childhood disintegrative disorder.

Figure 6

Comorbidities of autism spectrum disorder



Source: Own research.

17.3% of pupils with ASD-associated SEN have comorbidities that increase their difficulties (Mannion and Leader, 2013). The most common comorbidities are behavioural aspects, largely associated with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorders (Rico-Moreno and Tárraga-Mínguez, 2016) (figure 6).

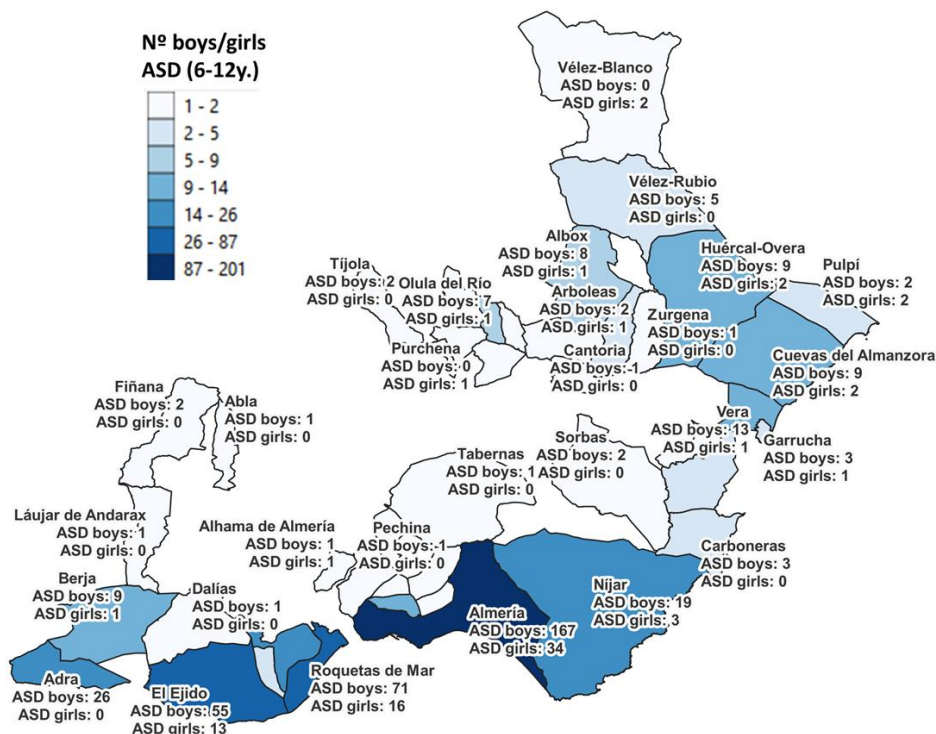
Likewise, it is also important to underline the relevance of ASD comorbidity with intellectual disability on different degrees and the significant correlation with education modalities (Sánchez-Palomino and Villegas-Lirola, 2014).

3.5. Distribution

Distribution in the province of Almeria is not homogeneous. As was to be expected, there is a higher concentration of pupils with ASD in the main population centres. This is especially true in the municipal centres of Almeria (256 aged 3 to 16 years, of which 201 are between 6–12), Roquetas de Mar (122 aged 3 to 16 years, of which 87 are between 6–12), El Ejido (91 aged 3 to 16 years, of which 68 are between 6–12) and Vícar (20 aged 3 to 16 years, of which 18 are between 6–12) in the Poniente Almeriense region, and to a lesser extent in the Levante Almeriense region: Níjar (27 aged 3 to 16 years, of which 22 are between 6–12), Vera (18 aged 6 to 12 years, of which 14 are between 6–12), Cuevas del Almanzora (11 aged 6 to 12 years), Garrucha (4 aged 6 to 12 years), Huércal Overa (15 aged 3 to 16 years, of which 11 are between 6–12), Olula del Río (15 aged 3 to 16 years, of which 8 are between 6–12), Pulpí (6 aged 3 to 16, of which 4 are between 6–12) and Los Vélez (10 aged 3 to 16, of which 7 are between 6–12) (figure 7).

Figure 7

Distribution of the number of boys/girls with ASD in Almeria (2020)



Source: Own research.

A double-square-root regression analysis is carried out, finding that the equation that relates the ASD population distribution (dependent variable) to the overall population distribution (independent variable) in the municipalities of the province of Almeria is:

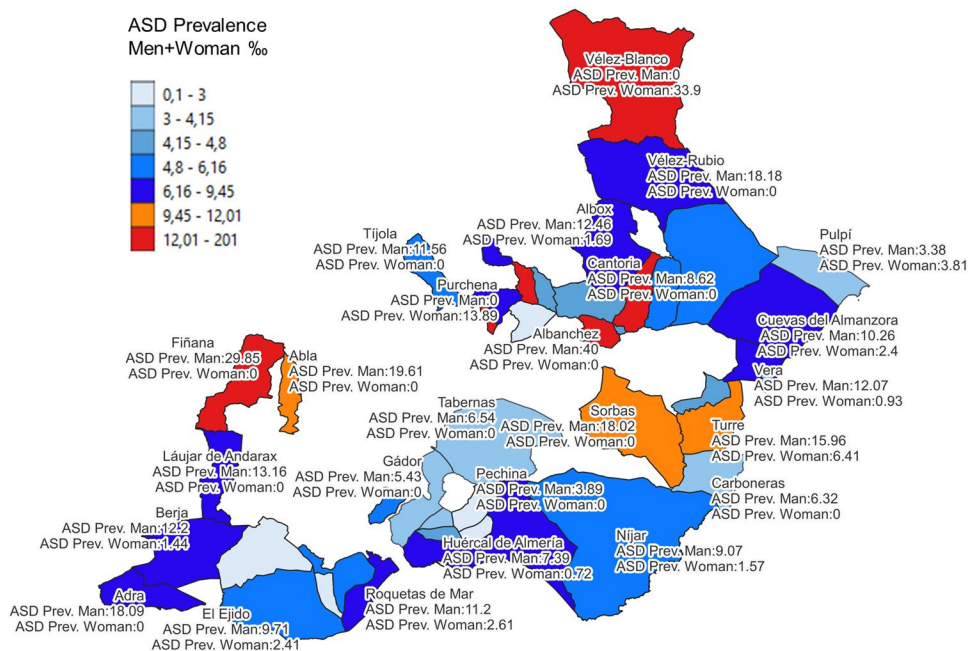
$$Total ASD_{M+W} = \sqrt{745402 * 10^{-10} * (Total M + W)^2 - 222.275}.$$

The *p* value (0.00) in the ANOVA table is less than 0.05, and therefore there is a statistically significant relationship between the distribution of the ASD population and the overall population with a 95% confidence index. The *R*² statistic indicates that the adjusted model explains 97.6% of the variability in the distribution of children with ASD aged between 6 and 12 years, with a correlation coefficient between both variables of 0.988, indicating a strong relationship without collinearity attributable to the serial organisation of the residuals (values predicted by the model less the observed values), finding a *p* value from the Durbin-Watson test of 0.597 (greater than 0.05).

On balance, the distribution of the provincial prevalence is representative of the distribution of municipal prevalence (figure 8).

Figure 8

Distribution of the municipal prevalence of ASD in Almeria (2020)



Source: Own research.

4. Discussion

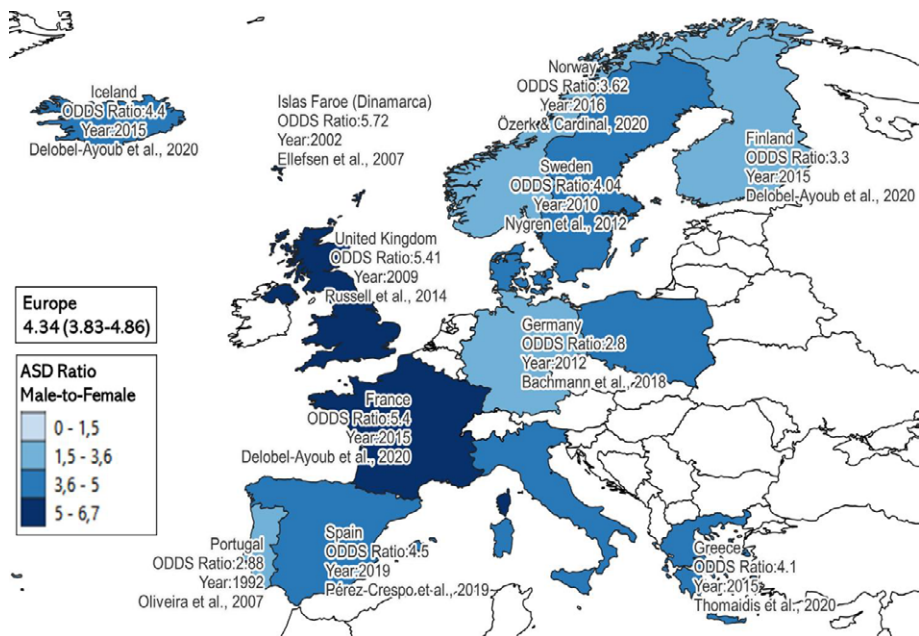
4.1. Prevalence

There was an average percentage increase of 8.33%, whereby prevalences of ASD in 2008 of 4.58‰ in men and 1.49‰ in women have increased to 15.26‰ and 2.71‰ in 2019, respectively. The only decrease in the prevalence calculated for both sexes in the entire period from 2008 through 2020 occurs in the year 2020.

The differences in prevalence between the sexes are highly significant; the average risk of having ASD (odds ratio of prevalence by sex) (Fombonne et al., 2021) is 4.09 times greater for men than it is for women (95% CI: 3.61–4.56) in line with the expectations in the studies undertaken in Europe (figure 9). In the case of the typology of Asperger’s syndrome, this figure reaches 10.37 (95% CI: 6.40–14.34).

Figura 9

Map of male-to-female ASD ratio in Europe



Source: Own research.

It is a stable index throughout the entire series, with a standard deviation (δ) of 0.78 and an average (μ) of 4.09, which implies a coefficient of variation (δ/μ) of 0.19 (less than 0.5). The difference in prevalence between sexes in the province of Almeria cannot be said to be attributable to an underdiagnosis of ASD in women.

4.2. Incidence

Similar to the findings in terms of prevalence, the incidence also shows a continued increase with an average annual incidence of 1.09‰ throughout the period 2009–2020. There are periods in which the identification of pupils with ASD is lower (between 2009 and 2013, as well as in 2020), and periods in which it is higher (2015–2019). There is a sustained plateau between 2015 and 2017, and an increase in 2018 and 2019.

Entrance in the cohort has followed the pattern found in the prevalence ratio between sexes, with an increase that is 4.12 times greater in men than in women, although proportionally, the increase has been very similar in men and women.

4.3. Prevalence and Incidence Forecasts

The expectation is that we will continue to see a sustained increase in the number of pupils who will present ASD in the next five years, which would mean that in

2025 there would be a prevalence in men of 18.41‰ (95% CI: 16.09–20.74) and 3.22‰ in women (95% CI: 2.27–4.17), implying that a population of 1,049 boys and girls aged between 3 and 16 years will present ASD (95% CI: 833–1,264). In other words, if one in every 65 children had ASD in 2019, this will be one in every 54 in 2025.

4.4. Comorbidity

The analysis of the comorbidities of pupils with ASD shows that both intellectual disability and attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder are frequently associated, and therefore the difficulties faced when accessing the curriculum multiply (Flannery et al., 2020). In pupils with autism, 11% have severe or moderate intellectual disability. 12.4% of pupils with Asperger's syndrome present ADHD. Of those pupils categorised as PDD-NOS, 6.4% also have intellectual disability and 4.49% have ADHD.

4.5. Distribution

There is a concentration in certain municipalities and areas in the province of children with ASD, which implies the need to continue increasing specific resources aimed at the pupils in these areas, without forgetting those that do not live in said areas.

Environmental causes associated with the geographical distribution of ASD in the province of Almeria cannot be inferred given that the distribution of boys and girls with ASD is explained by the distribution of the overall population.

5. Conclusions

There is a steady increase in the prevalence of autism spectrum disorder in the province of Almeria from 4.58‰ in men in 2008 to 15.26‰ in 2020, and to a lesser extent for women, from 1.49‰ in 2008 to 2.71‰ in 2019. The prevalence ratio by sex is seen to remain constant over time. The incidence implies an average annual continued increase of 1.09% from 2008 to 2020. It is expected that this increase will continue in the coming years, reaching 18.41‰, in the case of men, in 2025 (95% CI: 16.09–20.74).

The comorbidities identified in pupils with ASD in the province of Almeria are in line with those described by Hossain et al. (2020) and Guerrero et al. (2019).

In terms of the distribution in the municipalities in the province of Almeria, it must be highlighted that the overall population distribution explains the ASD population distribution in the province, and that the provincial prevalence is representative of the municipal prevalence.

Predicting the evolution of the population with ASD and knowing its distribution in the province of Almeria is relevant for proposing future studies aimed at the formation of a network of centres that offer special attention for these pupils in the province, in order to give an appropriate educational response not only to pupils in

specific education centres, but also to those in ordinary education, oriented both at catering for their personal characteristics (age, gender, personal image, etc.) and their personal learning style (Tamarit-Cuadrado, 2006).

It follows that there is the need to anticipate sufficient personal resources and suitable physical spaces, and to give special relevance in the training of teachers to generalise educational measures and strategies that encourage the normalisation of the attention paid to pupils with special educational needs associated with ASD (Navarro-Montaña y Hernández-de-la-Torre, 2017).

The main limitation of this study lies in its retrospective and merely descriptive nature. There is no random verification of the cases of ASD nor the possibility of assessing underdiagnosis. The instruments used in the diagnosis and its results are unknown. This is particularly evident in the analysis of comorbidities, which recommends the initiation of a recategorisation based on the DSM-5 criteria (APA, 2014) and the ICD 11.

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ARTICLES/ARTÍCULOS

The Halfway Society: Towards a Definition of the Features of Human Sociality

La sociedad a medias: hacia una definición de los rasgos de la socialidad humana

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ABSTRACT

The ambiguous relationship between individual and society is an issue shared by all social sciences. Society is only possible as an emergent result of an anthropological attribute of each subject: sociality. This article tries to analyse the features of that human sociality that is limited by three factors: the survival of individuality, the fluid character of nostrity and the specific structured finitude of its extension. As a consequence, the emerging society will always be a half society, with links that are made and unmade, with ambivalent conflictive processes that do not allow completely compact societies, nor homogeneous groups, nor absolute collectivisation. Freedom emerges precisely amidst the thick seams that make up this fragile social fabric.

KEYWORDS: sociality; social ontology; social complexity; human evolution; freedom.

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RESUMEN

La ambigua relación individuo y sociedad es un aspecto común a todas las ciencias sociales. Su discusión tiene una larga tradición en la teoría social. Sin embargo, el enfoque del artículo no es específicamente sociológico, sino interdisciplinar. Se pretende especialmente introducir elementos más neuro-psico-biológicos en la discusión sociológica. Por ello se incluye un epígrafe previo sobre la evolución de la socialidad en el mundo animal. El objetivo del artículo es mostrar que la sociedad sólo es posible como resultado emergente de un atributo antropológico de cada sujeto: la socialidad. Por eso se trata de analizar los rasgos específicos de esa socialidad humana que está limitada por tres factores: la pervivencia de la individualidad, el carácter fluido de la nostridad y la finitud estructurada de su extensión. Como consecuencia, la sociedad emergente siempre será una sociedad a medias, con vínculos que se hacen y deshacen, con ambivalentes procesos conflictivos que no permiten sociedades completamente compactas, ni grupos homogéneos ni colectivización absoluta. La libertad emerge precisamente en medio de las gruesas costuras que constituyen este frágil tejido social. Esa libertad ambivalente es la que genera la compleja dinámica de las relaciones sociales estudiada por la teoría social.

PALABRAS CLAVE: socialidad; ontología social; complejidad social; evolución humana; libertad.

1. Introduction

Social sciences share a key but difficult to interpret aspect: the relationship between individual subjects and aggregates or collectives; in other words, the *individual and society binomial*. That said, the “and” in individual and society is copulative as well as disjunctive: it unites and separates two different realities, alien to each other, but constitutive at the same time. This ambivalent way of understanding the nexus is what prevents us from understanding the relationship as false or obvious. In fact, this way of conceptualising the relationship is misleading because it places at the same level two realities with different ontological statuses. The individual is an empirical concretisation, whereas society is partly empirical and partly abstract reality. Neither naïve realism nor radical nominalism can account for the complex ontology of the social (Outhwaite, 2006). But what then does this ambivalent duality of the “and” as copulative and disjunctive mean?

The copulative “and” places emphasis on the fact that society is an emerging result of a quality of empirical individuals: namely *sociality*. Thus, society emerges from an *anthropological property*. Sociology derives from anthropology. This implies that all social science is epistemologically anchored in human *sociality*, understood as an ontological property of the subjects. Without sociality there is no society. For its part, the disjunctive “and” stresses that although aggregates are not wholly empirical realities, they do acquire a specific ontological quality, a formalisation of specific relations. This idea indicates the strange nature of society, which often seems to swallow its very individuals, who desperately resist, generating an inherent tension in sociality. Thus the disjunction warns us that sociality is not an univocal sociality, but an ambivalent one. How is it possible that the individual and society relationship is intrinsically ambivalent?

2. Sociality as anthropological property

The dual nature of sociality leads to a paradox faced by social sciences. In order to do social science it is necessary to have a prior anthropological model on which to base any subsequent theoretical and empirical development. However, — and here is the paradox — the greater part of social science works with a type of implicit anthropological model that assumes sociality without specifically addressing it. Thus, social sciences retreat into the “social” without taking into account the type of underlying “sociality”. It is assumed that society is a result that emerges easily and automatically from the mere grouping of individuals. But the key question is the *specific mode* of sociality that underpins society.

Like any human property, sociality is subject to the interrelated influence of what I call the “etiological triangle”: biology, culture and environment. These three vertexes do not work in the same way and they are not symmetrical. While the human being *is* biology and culture, *it has* environment. The three factors contribute to the concretisation of the type of society that may emerge from a specific form of sociality. But the etiological triangle does not work in a deterministic way. Each vertex acts to *moderate* the influence of the others. This explains the *complexity* of the social agent and their irreducibility to any simplified model. Here the complexity of a system refers to “one in which a few simple rules give rise to phenomena that cannot be deduced from those rules themselves” (Lumbreras, 2021: 47). Thus, the interrelation of the three vertexes generates properties that are difficult to attribute to only one of them. This does not exclude the possibility of aspects that may be *essentially* quasi-determined by specific factors. But these exceptions show that it is not easy to delimit the scope of action of any of them. For that reason, the vertices must be understood as *accentuating* and not *delimiting* concepts. In the case of sociality, biology functions as an *intrastructure* that modulates and is modulated by the *environmental* properties in which it has been concretised, and by the *cultural* expressions that have accentuated one or other aspects.

On the one hand, the environmental etiological vertex, in its triple physical-natural, artificial-technological and social tipology (Garcia, 2004: 25-26), has conditioned sociality and the society emerging from it in many ways. For example, the two are not the same in mountainous-isolated environments and coastal-open environments, in environments that are deeply connected through technological infrastructures or in those where artificial connectivity is absent, or in societies that are egalitarian or strongly stratified. Current *Big History* narratives unequivocally show how the Earth “has been the protagonist in shaping the human narrative”, for in fact “the Earth made us” (Dartnell, 2020: 9). In social sciences, this power of the physical-natural environment has been an essential ingredient in macro-social explanations, particularly human geography, geopolitics, economic history, etc. For their part, in archaeology and in the history, philosophy and sociology of technology, the artificial environment has been at the forefront. The technosphere or technostructure has become a privileged factor in social theory. But sociality and society are not only conditioned by those infrastructures that are by their nature specifically connected to communication.

As Sennet (1996) and all disciplines related to urbanism insisted, the design and planning of cities conditions the way people react with each other, how we see and hear each other, and whether we touch or avoid each other. Finally, the social environment or social structure is a privileged factor in explanations from sociology and political science. The structure and its social positions of status, class and power will condition the ways in which sociality is expressed and the type of society that can be built.

On the other hand, the cultural vextex, in other words, the ideas and beliefs resulting from the symbolic and ideological dimension, have been key to shaping sociality. The political philosophies that form the bases of various ideologies are based on wide-ranging prior ontological and anthropological commitments to the social nature of human beings. Often these ideas become customs, in other words, in that which does not involve reflection and requires no more motivation than “convenience” (Weber, 1984: 24). These cultural influences are often subtle, but are very real and specific. By way of example, the specific role of human sociality is substantially different between individualist and collectivist cultures, exemplified generically in Western and Eastern cultures (Sapolsky, 2018: 406–418). Put succinctly: “collectivist cultures are about harmony, interdependence and conformity, and the needs of the group guide behaviour, while individualistic cultures are about autonomy, personal achievement, originality and the needs and rights of the individual” (*ibid.*: 406).

Precisely this last example provides me with a chance to insist that if we want to understand how the human being is a “zoon politikon”, the influence of the biological infrastructure cannot be ignored. Sapolsky himself insisted that the difference between these two types of culture could be correlated with a variant of the dopamine gene DRD4. The 7R allele has a 23% incidence in Europeans and Americans of European origin, and only 1% in East Asians. Precisely this variant “produces a receptor that is less responsive to dopamine in the cortex, and is associated with novelty seeking, extroversion and impulsiveness” (*ibid.*: 416). Its greater incidence could explain the typical traits of the individualist culture against the collectivist. The development of such research from the increasingly fruitful field of ancient DNA genetics is already bearing fruit in its relationship to archaeology and anthropology (Reich, 2019). Some social science theories regarding ancestral population movements and their influences on the constitution of specific cultures throughout early human history are being refuted, qualified or confirmed by genetic data. It would be useful for social theory to strive to integrate new findings from the natural sciences if it is to understand human sociality and the complex individual–society relationship.

The rest of the article is an attempt to reconstruct sociality as an anthropological property. To do that, I will focus on the infrastructure of that sociality, ignoring the influences of environment and culture that I have just described. The aim is to show that human sociality as an anthropological property shows an ambivalent quality that explains that “and” which is simultaneously copulative and disjunctive and which forms the basis of all social sciences.

3. Human sociality in animal evolution

Although social theory does not usually resort to comparative, evolutionary analysis, it is an essential requirement if we are to understand the infrastructure of sociality.

In the animal kingdom, almost all species have some kind of intraspecific (with those of their own species) or interspecific (with those of other species) relationship. Even solitary, pre-social or sub-social species have to cope with mating rituals, confrontation with potential competitors, predation relationships, etc. All of these require behaviour of a social nature, such as, for example, the fascinating quality of deception or dissimulation. However, what we are interested in here is sociality as an *essential* property of a species. Independently of the sub-types that may be distinguished from within the enormous animal biodiversity, in general we can talk about three large sociality types and their three corresponding societies.

1. *Colonial invertebrates*. Here the individual-society relationship is perfectly anchored. There are no conflicts or rifts. Examples of this type of sociality are found in corals, siphonophores or bryozoans (Dunn, 2006). These animals are a colony made up of other smaller animals. The colonial animal — in other words, society — emerges from the cooperative assembly of smaller animal units called “zooids”, which are of two types: those which have specialised in order to feed the colony (autozooids such as *gastrozooids*) and others which have specialised in defence, cleaning, support or reproduction (heterozooids such as *gonodendra* for reproduction, or *dactylyzoid* for trapping prey). The “social perfection” of these colonial invertebrates lies in the fact that zooids, although homologous to a free-living solitary animal, are actually attached to and physiologically integrated with the rest of the colony. They are like parts of the body, incapable of living alone although they are independent organisms. Siphonophores have the highest degree of functional specialisation and the greatest organisational precision of any colonial species. Thus, sociality in this first type has an absolute orientation and the result is perfect societies without rifts or conflicts. The division of labour is so strict that society is a perfectly fitting *colony*.

2. *Eusocial insects*. The second type is that of social insect species such as ants, termites, and certain wasps and bees (Wilson, 1980). They have a high degree of sociality without achieving the perfection of the colonial invertebrates. The difference resides in the fact that the organisms making up the colony of insects are separate physical entities, although they cannot live for long in isolation from the rest of the colony. Ant colonies have evolved degrees of complexity, size and internal differentiation. In some species of simpler, or at least less complex, social insects, specialisation and functional differentiation in castes are not so pronounced. The degree of evolution of these insects in which society appears more like that of the siphonophores is one where the size of the colony has led to division not only into reproductive and non-reproductive castes, but also into physical and physiological sub-castes of workers with greater specialisation regarding specific tasks. The appearance of this system derives from evolutionary tension between the tendency towards inter- and intra-colonial competition (Hölldobler and Wilson, 2014: 54). But the society of eusocial

insects is not as strict as in the case of invertebrate colonies. There is always the possibility of the same organism performing several tasks. In terms of colonial efficiency, in eusocial insects natural selection has tended to work with an unstable equilibrium between specialisation and plasticity (*ibid.*: 115–116). Although this type of sociality is more common in insects, there is also an extraordinary, exceptional case of a mammal that maintains this same sociality; the mole-rats. In the societies of these mammals there are also workers, semi-workers and soldier castes, and a queen (Attenborough, 1993: 142–145). Thus, the individual-society relationship in this type is less perfect. We cannot speak of a colony, but a *super-organism*. Specific individuals have a degree of autonomy and independence. There is a degree of individualism. For that reason, the fit is more complex, conflicts may occur between individuals, and each individual may be required to perform different tasks with varying degrees of skill and adapted to the super-organism.

3. *Vertebrates and mammals*. Finally, the last type of sociality generally includes the social species of vertebrates and mammals, in which there is greater mismatch between individuals, intra-species aggression, selfishness, etc. This type of sociality is ambivalent: there is a driving force behind social behaviour, but there is also a counteracting force (Wilson, 1980: 395). Their individuality positions them as closer to solitary species and their sociality to colonial and eusocial species. But neither of the two extremes is sufficient to explain these animals. To various degrees and complexities this evolutionary route is present in social mammals (elephants, wolves, social primates, whales, etc.), which are “who-animals”. In other words, “They know who they are; they know who their family members and friends are. They know their enemies. They establish strategic alliances and deal with chronic rivalries. They aspire to a higher rank and await their chance to challenge the existing order. Their status affects their private life prospects. Their lives follow a career arc. Personal relationships define them” (Safina, 2017: 14). Here behaviour is more complex. There are tasks involved in physical survival to cope with, but above all there is the task of managing social relationships. The social environment is therefore more complex than the ecological niche itself. The members of these species display more complex social behaviour: they play, rehearse, plan strategies, pretend, dissimulate, lie, fight politically, have complex hierarchies that it is necessary to be aware of, complex interaction rituals, etc. In other words, they have a strategic mentality in which the balance between their individuality and the collective is no longer rooted in an absolute, boundless sociality. They are political species because they are forced to engage in diplomacy, to compromise at times and show resistance at others, to play Machiavellian games between individuals. Any social mammal displays this type of conduct. It is perhaps primates, and particularly chimpanzees, that have been best studied in that respect, since the famous book by Frans de Waal (2007). But we know that the same is also true for wolves, cats, elephants, etc. Among social vertebrates and mammals the individual and society maintain a complex balance. The fact that the subject is formally autonomous and independent prevents perfect adaptation at the collective level. For that reason, these species do not form either colonial or super-organic societies, but what I prefer to call *communities* (I am not using the term in a strictly technical sense, but loosely). That is why for these species society will always be a *halfway society*. The human being cannot escape this ambivalent, conflictive logic between the individual and society.

4. Limits of human sociality

It is important to stress the diversity of evolutionary pathways towards sociality, because it prevents making unjustified assumptions or mistaken comparisons between species. In any event, as stated by Wilson (2012: 17), “the path to [human] eusociality was traced by a competition between selection based on the relative success of individuals within groups versus the relative success between groups. The strategies of this game were written as a balanced blended mix of altruism, corporatism, competition, domination, reciprocity, defection and deception”. This difficult strategy between the individual and the social is characteristic of the type of society of all vertebrates, non-human social mammals and humans. Their most advanced societies fall short of perfect adaptation, for alongside a driving force towards sociality there is a counteracting force that privileges individuality. There are signals that trigger contradictory impulses in others: sometimes gregarious and sometimes aggressive behaviour (Eibl-Eibesfeldt, 1989). Along the same lines, the infrastructure of human sociality is complex and ranges from brain mechanisms to endocrine or microbiotic influences. Furthermore, the elements common to the species must always be balanced against the organic peculiarities of each individual subject. In any case, I believe that there are three fundamental limitations to human sociality: the survival of individuality, the fluidity of nostrity and the structured finitude of its extension. We are going to look at each in turn.

4.1. The survival of the individual

In reality, society will always be a society of individuals because it is the result of sociality conceived as an anthropological property. For that reason, it is interesting to ask ourselves how it is possible that individuals can generate societies. Or to put in another way, what are the infrastructural traits of sociality? Simplistically, one can speak of three neural circuits involved in social cognition that give rise to three adaptations related to sociality (Lieberman, 2013). These adaptations allow the creation of societies through the interaction of individual subjects.

1. The *connection* based on the neural overlap of physical and social pain. In other words, our well-being is related to our capacity to be connected to other persons. For that reason, separation produces pain, and connection produces pleasure. This fact even goes back to the mother-child bond: “Since a mother cannot be simultaneously attached to and separated from her baby, the opioid system and the arousal system function reciprocally. When one is active, the other shuts down” (Smith, 2003). The importance of being connected has left its imprint on human brain mechanisms. This connection is what is known as *attachment*, which also has an evolutionary origin in a kind of widening process of the circle of care, starting from self-care and extending. In the case of mammals (and possibly social birds), it appears that evolutionary adjustments to emotional, endocrine (hormones such as oxytocin and vasopressin), nervous and reward/punishment systems in virtue of which individuals achieve their own well-being, were modified to extend the well-being of others (Churchland, 2012: 39).

At first, these others were limited to offspring, then to kin, then to friends, and so on, thus progressively widening the circle. This assumes that the well-being of our loved ones is part of our own “internal homeostasis”.

2. The *theory of mind* or the ability to interpret the actions and thoughts of others, given that, as neuroscientists insist, “humans have an irresistible tendency [...] to transform our understanding of the behaviour of others into a whole series of assumptions about the mental states of others” (Jeeves and Brown, 2010): 98). A lot has been written about the theory of mind. In any case, a fundamental requirement for being socially connected is to be able to share a common world through the mutual interpretation of our intentions and actions. People with autism encounter difficulties precisely in the aspect of social life in which the reading of intentions and the strategic capacity to manage social connectivity are essential. Less severely autistic people are guided in their social relationships more by actual behaviour and less by their underlying behavioural patterns. And those who exhibit more severe degrees are outspoken and honest, because they do not feel the pressure to conform to others (Kandel, 2019: 53).

3. *Harmonisation* is a paradoxical neurological capacity because, according to Lieberman, it requires a malleable sense of self that allows the influence of others over the subject. In fact, the self would not be so egoistic or selfish, but deeply influenced and constructed by others. Lieberman (*ibid.*: 189) considers that “our sense of self [can be described] as a ‘Trojan horse’ self”, in that its function is not so much to distinguish us hermetically from one another, but to ensure the success of sociality. The delicate balance between the individual and society is not exempt from tensions. Thus, according to Lieberman, despite maintaining the subject’s own consistency as an independent individual, this egoistic Trojan horse aims to minimise this conflict. Lieberman’s idea is not new, of course. In general, social psychology and sociology have always considered that the self has an essential social construction component. For Lieberman, “the self exists primarily as a conduit to enable the social groups in which we are immersed (i.e. our family, our school, our country) to supplement our natural drives with socially derived drives” (*ibid.*: 191–192). That said, this harmonising quality requires an effort of “self-control” because the simplest cognitive tendency is to use one’s own perspective to interpret the intentions and actions of others. But this is often unhelpful because it can lead to confusion between what I think the other is doing and what they are actually doing, or the intention I think the other has and their own intention. This duality shows that harmonisation is not achieved automatically, because the social brain does not exhaust all the brain’s characteristics. For that reason, Lieberman insists that self-control is also necessary to challenge this egocentric bias in order to evaluate the other person from their own perspective.

However, these three sociality mechanisms not only do not eliminate the survival of the individuality of the subject, but are the basis of it. In the sociality of vertebrates and mammals, there will always be an unresolved tension between the demands for the survival of the individual subject and the survival of the collective. We thus know that even beginning with the supposition — which I do

not share — of strict rationality of the subjects, it is evident that the aggregation of these individual preferences and rationales will not always be beneficial for society as a whole. What is rational and even beneficial for a particular individual may be detrimental for the community. And vice versa. In that sense, the “motivational pluralism” (Tena Sánchez, 2010) in human beings invalidates both disintegrating individualistic selfishness and automatic socialising altruism. Human sociality is complex because it is based on a greater range of motivations: the non-social (selfishness) and social (aversion to inequality, strong reciprocity, weak reciprocity [or reciprocal altruism], unconditional altruism, and malice and envy). In reality, this means that individual motivation and social motivation are constitutive and pervasive in human sociality. Social bonds are generated through an emotional complexity that reinforces or destabilises connection, theory of mind, and harmonisation with others.

4.2. The fluid nature of “nostrity”

Another limitation on human sociality resides in the fluidity of the construction of our “nostrity” or awareness of a collective and aggregate identity. The nostrity or collective identity is based on the social identity of its subjects. However, the existence of diverse social identities in a single individual makes nostrity forever a “halfway” process. The limited sociality of people prevents “nostrities” being homogeneous. Although this fluidity affects any group membership and any one person experiences it daily, it is perhaps most relevant in the political sphere. I shall therefore provide some general reflections along these lines.

The political construction of the “us” and “them” is not absolute, but fluctuates. In the individual subject there are continuous re-categorisations: sometimes the “us” of being a woman may suit me when I feel displaced in macho politics, but I will automatically stop feeling united with a woman if she is a neo-liberal and I am a communist. At that point, perhaps the categorisation of “us” that suits me means betraying sisterhood if I can achieve a class goal that I consider more important than a gender goal. But that alliance with a communist man over a neo-liberal woman can be destroyed if it turns out that my communism is religious and Christian, while the man is an atheist Marxist. So, if the destruction of religion is proposed as an objective, perhaps I would be better off allying myself with my Christian co-religionists, even though they may be men and rich businessmen, and that would be a betrayal of my class objective. Even so, if the aim of this new alliance with rich Christian men proposes armed struggle against Muslims, and I am a pacifist, it may be in my interest to betray my co-religionists and ally myself with a multi-religious movement whose aim is peace and tolerance. That said, in that movement, most of them eat meat, and I am a vegan, which forces me to realign myself once again with those who, although they are men, liberals, atheists, religious, violent, etc., are nevertheless vegans, and I need to ally myself with them in my fight to defend animals and their dignity. And so on ad infinitum. In different situations each person sees the need to re-categorise their “us” and their “them”. Of course, on some occasions these different ideological rifts or fractures can come together to a greater or lesser extent in “unified packages”.

But such unification will never be full, total and absolute, and there will always be the possibility of re-categorisation. Every person is multi-selves, but there is also a “multi-nostrity”. The history of ideas shows the constant fragmentation into groups that had shared an initial homogeneous commitment.

Thus, each person belongs to multiple “us” with conflicting loyalties in their response to the challenges of the various interests that emerge from the multiple “them” whom they confront. Political ideology *cannot* recognise this impossibility to construct ideologically homogeneous groups, because this would involve eliminating the supreme fiction of the unity of group interests against the enemy. That said, and given that this fragmentation always exists, it must be rationalised through the accusation of heresy and treason, as opposed to fidelity and coherence. Robert Michels’ Iron Law of Oligarchy shows exquisitely that the fragmentation of the original group is always accompanied by a complementary process of ideological legitimisation/delegitimisation. For those that break off from the original trunk, those that remain are infidels who have distorted the original meaning of the community. Those who remain will accuse those who leave of heresy and of betraying the original meaning of which they are now the only real and faithful representatives.

This does not mean, in any event, falling into an extreme nominalism that denies any possibility of categorising an “us” as a community of interests. Denying the homogeneity of categories does not imply rejecting the possibility of discerning groupings that are distinguishable by common features. In fact, nominalism would disable the possibility of criticism of the injustice of some over others. If individual persons are all that exist, then there is no room for a critique of the domination of class, race, gender, species, religion, and so on. Between nominalism and realist Platonism lies the balance: recognising that there is no absolute, timeless and stable cross-cutting nature that places human subjects in a permanent “us” versus an equally stable “them”; *while at the same time* insisting that group categories exist as approximate and forever correctable ways of accounting for social reality. This is why the concepts of Christianity, Islamic *ummah*, the proletariat, sisterhood, nation, race, ethnicity, ideological brotherhood, etc., are always marked by an inherent contradiction based on human sociality itself, in which multiple social identities which often do not fit together must always fit together. They exist, but they do not exist. This cross-cutting nature is a political fiction. The nostrity is always “half way”.

4.3. The structured finitude of sociality

The third limitation, closely connected to the previous one, derives from the very scope of sociality and its structured nature. Despite the limitations that critics have rightly pointed out to Robin Dunbar’s theories, and without having to assume the initial specificity of linear correlations between neocortex and social group size, Dunbar (2016) addressed two fundamental questions. On the one hand, in the limitation of our capacity to extend sociality to infinite limits; and, on the other hand, in the segmented structuring of sociality itself into different circles of greater and lesser attachment. Sociality, therefore, is neither infinite nor undifferentiated. It is always limited and structured. Connectivity

mechanisms do not lead us to be sociable with everyone, or in the same way. The two are linked: since our sociality is not infinite, we will have to choose with whom and in what ways we create social links.

Biologists, anthropologists, paleoanthropologists, evolutionary psychologists, etc. have documented the universal fact that we evolved to live in communities of few members and that we tend to favour our kith and kin more clearly. However, historical development has led to a totally different environment: humanity has been creating ever wider and more complex societies in which we have to cooperate and attach ourselves to people who are not necessarily from our closest circle. Humans have managed to form very large communities. However, these associations do not result from an automatic, seamless process, as the social nature of humans is neither colonial nor supra-organic. Turner and Maryanski (2016) have insisted that humans lack bio-programmers that automatically create social bond-building beyond small-scale natural connectivity. In fact, in human beings, the most natural sociality is not that of belonging to “groups”, but to “communities” with a general feeling of fluid belonging and not so much of close, stable ties. Over time, however, grouping into larger collectives demanded unification through cultural symbols, which became totems and religious symbolisations. The possibility of broad communities without direct, physical, interpersonal ties is only possible through the personification of the group through totemic symbolisation, as Durkheim previously proposed. For Turner and Maryanski, the key to the possibility of this enlargement is the emotions. It is not about forging monkey-like gregarious societies, but about creating strong bonds through increased emotional bonding. Human social solidarity reaches new heights through mechanisms that were already pre-programmed into their biology: increased positive emotions, interpersonal fine-tuning, rhythmic synchronisation, the exchange of valuable resources, positive sanctions and predisposition to ritualisation (Collins, 2004). In addition, two cultural ingredients — symbols and totems — have led to stronger ties and larger collectives.

From this we can deduce the existence of two contradictory types of “social instincts”: a *kinship instinct* that favours cooperative behaviour with our relatives and close friends, and a *tribal instinct* that favours cooperation and altruism in large groups and organisations of unrelated people (Richerson and Boyd, 2005): 196). This generates an inherent conflict within sociality. Despite the fact that thanks to environmental modifications and cultural adaptations we have managed to live in large-scale societies, this ambivalence in the intra-structure has not been eliminated. On the contrary, it has generated a further limitation: inter-group conflict. The symbolic totemisation and sacralisation of groups have created a supra-individual rivalry that is a feature of these complex human societies. The so-called “differentiation principle” in group formation (Giménez, 1992) takes place thanks to social psychologists’ well-studied process of a triple categorisation: *in-group similarity* (members of the same group see themselves as similar, but not entirely alike), *out-group homogeneity* (members of one group see members of the other group as homogeneous to each other, devoid of distinctive individual qualities) and *out-group differentiation*

(which exaggerates the differences between groups). This triple process gives rise to a collective identity — I have already stated that it will always be “half way” — which tries to subsume the subject under an umbrella that allows them to feel safe within a group, viewing those who do not belong to it as a threat. This social categorisation process ends up being the basis for stereotypes, collective discrimination, racism, xenophobia, nationalism and, ultimately, geopolitics. These social ills are not easily eradicated through culture/education and environmental modification, precisely because they are based on intra-structural mechanisms inherent to human sociality. The helplessness we feel as a society when we see that our scientific and technological advances are not matched by the meagre results achieved regarding social justice may be rooted in that. The intra-structure of human sociality has not evolved at the same pace as our cultural ideas about social justice and the technological transformation of our densely populated environments. This does not mean we must renounce the reasonable aspiration for a better humanity, but simply that we are obliged to recognise that intergroup discrimination and conflict emerge from the finite, structured sociality that — at least for the time being — still constitutes the human species.

5. The hypothesis of the uni/multi-self psychic structure: a bio-psycho-sociological approach

Human societies are therefore the result of a sociality based on three constraints: the survival of individuality, the fluidity of nostrity and the structured finitude of their extension. This type of sociality has generated complex, ambivalent and not perfectly fitting societies. Specifically, one of the basic features of this type of social environment is that which has been the focus of my research in recent years (Romero Moñivas, 2018, 2021). I believe that human societies have exacerbated a duality that exists in all the complex social species of vertebrates and mammals. I am referring to the ambivalent duality of two contradictory and complementary pressures present in the social environment: on the one hand, the existence of multiple and different situations with different cultural and social codes (fine-grained quality) and, on the other hand, the need for stable expectations of reciprocal action in order to maintain collective life (coarse-grained quality). The *grain* concept was introduced within genetics in the 1960s to explain the scale at which the organism experiences environmental variability (Gillespie, 1974). Highly variable environments are considered fine-grained and those that maintain a certain degree of stability are considered coarse-grained. The two generate different environmental pressures on genetic selection. Applied to human sociality, this fine-grained/coarse-grained duality must also have exerted significant pressure on the way the social environment is managed neuropsychologically. Thus, this way of understanding the social environment forces us to include a neuropsychological question within social theory: What must the brain and mental structure of the human being be like in order to be able to manage this dual dimension of social life?

Two opposing pressures push human beings: if an individual wishes to survive in complex social environments, they must be able to display a flexible psychic structure of multiple selves that allow them to adapt to a variety of changing social situations. But social life also requires stable reciprocal expectations, which make it necessary to manage this psychic flexibility in a specific way through the correct choice of a “specific self” for each situation. Therefore, people must be flexible enough and at the same time consistent enough to be able to produce and reproduce human society. It is a very complex equilibrium. These two psychic qualities must appear in a complementary manner in the human brain. If only one of the two qualities is present, pathological behavioural traits are produced. A uni-self structure (e.g. in people with autism) is inefficient for the individual because in a social environment featuring so many different micro-situations, rituals and interactions, a rigid psyche would make life impossible, preventing people from being functional in different environments (Richler, 2010). On the contrary, a completely multi-selves psyche (as in multiple personality or hard bipolarity) is also not viable as an adaptive strategy because it prevents the reduction of social uncertainty and the possibility of reciprocal social expectations between people. A completely unstructured and mismanaged multi-selves psychism disrupts community life because the stability required in social relations is absent (Lysaker and Lysaker, 2001). Therefore, the most optimal adaptation strategy is one that balances the two possibilities. On the one hand, the adaptive need for changes in social environments which requires the subject to be able to adapt to each ritual and social situation; and, on the other, the need to generate stable social communities through reciprocal expectations, which requires people to be able to manage their multi-self package with a degree of stability and regularity. To my mind, the fundamental point is that the uni/multi-self psychic structure can be considered as an evolutionarily stable strategy (ESS). This concept refers to a strategy that is *impermeable* when adopted by a population as an adaptive strategy to a specific environment. Impermeability refers to that strategy which cannot be displaced by another new alternative strategy. In other words, it is an adaptive equilibrium which, given a specific environment, cannot be improved by another. The human brain, therefore, demands both openness to what is new and contingent, and stability regarding what must be predictable. It is this complex balance that allows for that situational astuteness that Machiavelli in *The Prince* considered essential for the good of the prince, but which, in fact, is a feature of every human being in the midst of an intricate web of diverse social situations: “Thus, you can appear to be clement, faithful, humane, upright, devout and be so, but be so disposed that if it becomes necessary not to be so you can and know how to adopt the opposite attitude” (Machiavelli, ch. XVIII). Therefore, I have postulated that for the management of social duality, the social agent requires a uni/multi-self psychic structure.

However, this overall equilibrium is not the same for all people at all stages of life. Each brain is different, and therefore the uni/multi-self balance will be different. There are subjects who, because of their own biological disposition or because of their specific circumstances of socialisation, will veer more towards either the hypertrophy of uni-self rigidity or multi-selves chaos. But beyond the individuality of each brain and the peculiarity of each person,

my hypothesis implies that a transformation of the uni/multiple equilibrium can be postulated according to the age of the subjects. However, it is not age alone that determines this transformation. Rather, what is at stake is that brain development may be related to the type of roughness (fine-grained or coarse-grained) of the social environment at each stage. In other words, natural selection has generated a different pattern of brain development depending on the type of social environment in which the brain had to develop. Simplifying the situation, we can distinguish four main stages in the biological-social development of people: childhood, youth, adulthood and old age. Therefore, each stage requires a different balance in the uni-multiple structure in order to be able to adapt adequately to its particular social environment. In childhood there is a tendency towards uni-self rigidity, in adolescence and youth. There is a propensity towards multi-self non-governability, in adulthood is where uni/multi-self balance is most demanding and necessary, and finally in old age there is a progressive return to uni-self rigidity.

In any case, what all this implies is that the duality of the social environment — diversity and predictability — would have required a complex sociality that allowed subjects to manage this inherent tension. This sociality is not the same at each stage of human development, which explains why social bonds and configurations are different between children, young people, adults and the elderly. Society is not something that emerges automatically, but is rather a complex process of management by individuals faced with ambivalent, changing situations, cognitive limitations, conflicting group loyalties, biased interpretations of others, and so on. Therefore, human sociality is a neuro-psycho-sociological management process. As stated by Lüscher (2011: 387) “social cohesion is not based on values and norms, but arises from the possibilities, skills and mechanisms that people develop, invent and deploy [*entwickeln, erfinden und entfalten*] and thus institutionalise, when confronted with ambivalences in joint procedures”. Sociality is an anthropological property that allows the exercise of the management of social relations with limitations that are reflected in the very result of this management: the societies that emerge are “halfway-societies”.

6. Conclusion: the half-way society and the emergence of freedom

The main idea that I wanted to stress is that the human social agent will always be found in a dynamic tug-of-war with other agents and, as a consequence, there can never be a *complete society, homogeneous collectives, or unified socio-political systems*. Human beings are social and unsocial, dependent and free, collective and individualistic. Although we are bound to social life, it does not come about without a laborious, continuous effort through which we create bonds of various types that are never definitive, nor one-dimensional, nor perfectly fitting. In fact, even at the moment of birth of human beings, this conflict between the individual (the baby) and society (the mother) is already present. The two dominant theories about the timing of childbirth show this conflict. Whether

it is due to the problem of the “obstetrical dilemma” — our bipedalism created narrower hips in women that prevent oversized baby brains from being able to exit through the birth canal — or the problem of “metabolic rate” — at a certain point the baby’s energy demands exceed the mother’s ability to supply — both cases involve a conflict of survival. Natural selection has opted for a half-way equilibrium allowing the survival of both baby and mother. But if only one of them had been chosen, the other would not survive.

Our common origin with primates such as orangutans, gorillas and chimpanzees has not completely disappeared from our development as humans throughout the biological and socio-cultural history of our species. This has generated ambivalence regarding social links. For that reason, at the current evolutionary stage of our species, the emergence of a complete or total society in the style of siphonophores or even the most highly evolved eusocial insect species is unlikely. For example, feminism itself has certainly been the latest social movement to base its demands precisely on this ambivalence of sociality: the woman (the individual) cannot and should not only be a “mother”, submitting her individuality to the well-being of the family (the collective). Only in a balance, both difficult and complex, between altruism and selfishness, between cooperation and resistance, between being a mother and being an individual, can a healthy equilibrium be found between the demands of the individual and those of the family collective. In sociology, it has long been clear that a healthy, normal socialisation process involves a balance between the conventional dimension that I take from society and the idiosyncratic contribution that each subject makes when taking on the conventional. If this does not happen, two pathologies appear: through excess, the oversocialised and, through a lack, the undersocialised. Pathological subjects who can be recognised through their unhealthy submission or their indomitable resistance. Neither of the two is socially functional. The former is not because society also demands resistance, freedom, and creativity in order to trust our functionality as members of society. The latter is not either because continuous resistance to everything prevents the creation of stable and harmonious bonds.

Human beings are social and their brains attest to that, so it is not possible to fully understand a social system without interpersonal ties of one kind or another that constrain individuality while at the same time making it possible to enhance it: from weak to strong bonds, from kinship to tribal, from stable to fleeting, from emotional to rational, from altruistic to selfish, from communal to associative, from competitive to cooperative, etc. But, for the same reason, this variety of ties prevents the construction of systems in which collectivity is constituted as the purpose of the human, subsuming the subject to social totality. Unitary social integration is only possible — if indeed it can be possible at all — at the cost of violating human individuality. The political transcript of this half-way society is precisely the impossibility of the *fulfilled utopia*, not as a regulative ideal, but as a *de facto* harmony caused by a specific socio-political system. There will always be thick seams constituting human society and any political system that tries to manage it. There is never a perfect fit between all subjects or between all groups. This misalignment creates folds, creases and

thick seams throughout the social fabric. It is precisely these rough edges of the social fabric that are the condition of possibility for the margins of action, that is, of freedom (Romero Moñivas, 2018b). Where there is no perfect fit between the “barriers” there is the possibility of resistance, evasion and reform.

In that sense, rescuing Mead’s (1982) classic analysis, human sociality is half-hearted because the *self* is always made up of the *me*, as a “series of organised attitudes of others that one adopts oneself” and of the *I*, as a “reaction of the organism to the attitudes of others”. An essential part of what we are is devoted to sociality. But the individual does not disappear within the social aspect. In Mead the “I” “is uncertain”, a more creative dimension of the “oneself”: “the “I” is always different to what the situation itself demands” (*ibid.*: 205). Mead’s “I” is that very experience of creativity, of freedom, which is exemplified so strikingly in the artist, the inventor and the discoverer, but which is present in every human being (and I would add, in every vertebrate and mammalian social animal where this individual–society conflict occurs). Therefore, this duality of resistance–submission, of obstinacy–fidelity, of individuality–sociality, always endures because both are constitutive of this half-way society typical of humans and which the social sciences have as their object of study.

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RESEARCH NOTE/NOTA DE INVESTIGACIÓN

Surviving Cancer in Adolescence. An Approach to the Social Sequelae based on Life Trajectories¹

Sobrevivir al cáncer en la adolescencia. Una aproximación a las secuelas sociales a partir de trayectorias vitales

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ABSTRACT

Adolescents cured of cancer can see their path in life altered by the consequences of the disease, since the understudied social sequelae play an important role in their academic and relationship trajectories. The research note aims to contribute to the analysis of educational contexts and the effects they have on the subjective construction of adolescents through the different experiences in the varying dimensions affected by the diagnosis and treatment of childhood cancer, taking into account the educational, family or leisure environment. Of particular interest is the impact of the diagnosis and the treatment interval (one year for bone tumours) on social interaction and resuming a normalised social life.

KEYWORDS: childhood cancer; survivors; trajectories; social sequelae; clinical sociology.

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RESUMEN

Los/as adolescentes curados de cáncer pueden ver alterada su proyección vital por las consecuencias de la enfermedad, pues las secuelas sociales, poco estudiadas, tienen un protagonismo importante en sus trayectorias académicas y relacionales. La nota de investigación trata de contribuir al análisis de contextos educativos y sus efectos en la construcción subjetiva de los adolescentes a través de la experiencia de la diferencia en las distintas dimensiones a las que afecta haber sido diagnosticados y tratados de un cáncer infantil, considerando el ámbito educativo, familiar o de ocio. Especialmente interesa el impacto del diagnóstico y el paréntesis del tratamiento (un año en tumores óseos) en la interacción social y la recuperación de una vida social normalizada.

PALABRAS CLAVE: cáncer infantil; supervivientes; trayectorias; secuelas sociales; sociología clínica.

1. Introduction

Changes in cancer treatment have increased the survival rate among the child population. However, survivors must face another challenge: the social sequelae. In the most recent data² from the Spanish National Statistics Institute (INE) on deaths, cancer is the leading cause of natural death among members of the Spanish population aged between one and fourteen years old. On the other hand, according to data from the latest report by the Spanish National Registry of Childhood Tumours (RETI-SEHOP), the survival rate of children who receive treatment is 81% (patients who survive a period³ of five years following diagnosis).

The experience of facing and surviving cancer at such ages results in disruptions and profound changes in the interaction with different social contexts (Khan, Ahmad and Imran, 2021) and, given the involvement of various social agents such as family, peer group, public and private institutions, amongst others, this is an object of study for the field of sociology. The continued lack of awareness around the specific psychosocial needs of childhood cancer survivors affects their subjective well-being and their return to a full life following the healing process (Hendriks, Harju and Michel, 2020). Interested in the health/disease experience, we approach this topic from a sociological perspective that addresses the clinical sociology, relationship aspects and their transformations following the disease, which affect the patient directly (self) and their relationship with their social context.

2. Objectives and Issues to Resolve

The overall objective of this research note is to explore the changes and repercussions felt by childhood cancer survivors in their social interaction, and specifically:

OE1. To analyse the impact of the disease from the experience of the survivors in the school environment and peer group.

OE2. To investigate the capacity for, potential and results of individual action (survivor) to cope with the social sequelae after medical discharge following cancer from the different life trajectories of those young people who have been cured.

We depart from two basic premises: firstly, the established social perception of cancer adversely affects the interactive relationships that survivors build with the school context and peer groups. Secondly, childhood cancer survivors are said to have seen their interactive relationships with the school context and peer groups altered owing to the physical, psychological and social sequelae caused by the disease and its treatment, and which are also determined by their initial social status.

3. Methodology

The methodology used for data collection is qualitative and biographic (Pujadas, 2002), by means of in-depth interviews that follow the life-story structure of clinical sociology. These data enable the constrictions perceived by the subjects in their social environment to be determined, as well as their reactions and the strategies that they implement in response (Verd and Lozares, 2008; De Gaulejac and De Yzaguirre, 2018). In line with Hall (2006), the clinical sociology is centred on the learning on the part of the researcher through the accounts of the subjects.

The study population corresponds to adults cured of Ewing sarcoma and conventional osteosarcoma who have been diagnosed with childhood cancer, which has a very high incidence among adolescents. The need for surgical intervention to replace the damaged limb with an internal or external prosthesis may lead to image and mobility issues, affecting the personal and social development of the adolescent for life (Brown et al., 2015). The selection of adults who were diagnosed with cancer during adolescence responds to an interest in reconstructing their life trajectories from the moment of diagnosis until the present day. Of interest are the repercussions perceived over time in the social environment, during hospitalisation and following discharge (Aragón and Martínez, 2021).

As can be seen in table 2, the profiles of the cases in question present initial socio-demographic variations; however, seeing their lives interrupted by the same *event* during adolescence is a factor that they all have in common.

The analysis of results has centred on the dialectical relationship between the social determinants that shape the subjects' life trajectory and the capacity for action and adaptation that they develop based on the analysis of their life experiences, reconstructed through language (Grasseli and Salomone, 2012). In line with the contributions by Dumas et al. (2015) and by means of an exploratory analysis, a scheme of relevant categories and subcategories has been drawn up based on the consulted literature and the experiences of the interviewees (table 1). This framework accounts for the wide variability in the situations faced by the childhood cancer survivors with two main elements: the health trajectory, marked by the period of the disease and its physical sequelae; and the social trajectory, centred on the impact of cancer on daily life and, in particular, on the relationship with different social contexts of interest.

Table 1*Coding categories for the analysis of the interviews carried out*

| General category | Subcategory |
|--|---|
| 1. Socio-demographic variables | |
| Social background | 1.1 Birth place 1.2 Educational attainment 1.3 Socio-economic status |
| 2. Impact on the self and social relationships. Point of inflection in the life trajectory | |
| Diagnosis of the disease | 2.1 Previous illnesses, unidentified malaise (uncertainty) 2.2 Communication of the diagnosis 2.3 Initial state of depression/disconnection from the world, at the start of treatment 2.4 Lack of knowledge on cancer/bone tumours 2.5 Emotional strategies for coping with the diagnosis 2.6 Strategies of discourse for talking about the disease 2.7 Use of the 'cancer' concept |
| 3. Social isolation | |
| Hospital life | 3.1 Place of treatment/admission and transfer to the place of residence for treatment 3.2 Relationships with other inpatients 3.3 Hospital monitoring and monitoring of care following treatment |
| 4. Personal and social importance of image | |
| Physical changes (internal/external dimension) | 4.1 Autonomy/dependence 4.2 Hair loss 4.3 Weight loss, physical exhaustion 4.4 Fertility/motherhood 4.5 Trauma-related sequelae 4.6 Rehabilitation/caring for the body 4.7 Disability recognition |
| 5. The reconstruction of interactions between peers and personal projects for the future | |
| Relationships in the educational environment/peer group | 5.1 Academic year of the diagnosis 5.2 Not attending classes (interruption of academic life) 5.3 Communication between the educational centre and family 5.4 Marks 5.5 Adaptation of the syllabus by the centre, academic monitoring 5.6 Explanation to the peers of the current/past situation 5.7 Relationship with classmates 5.8 Relationship with teachers 5.9 Academic expectations/projects for the future 5.10 Student orientation by the centre 5.11 Needs detected by the survivor that must be met and that were not met at the time |

Source: Own research.

Table 2*Summary of technical information of the interviews carried out*

| | Age at diagnosis | Current age | Sex | Birth place | Educational attainment | Occupation |
|----|------------------|-------------|--------|-----------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| I1 | 13 | 30 | Female | Gines (Seville) | Higher education | Scientific research |
| I2 | 17 | 24 | Female | Ubrique (Cádiz) | Higher education | Student |
| I3 | 13 | 31 | Male | Barbate (Cádiz) | Further education | Hospitality |

Source: Own research.

4. Preliminary Results

4.1. The diagnosis of cancer in childhood as a major disruption in the life trajectory

In the observed cases, the disease is detected through initial discomfort of unknown origin that is attributed to other causes such as tiredness or physical injuries. Treatment requires one-year hospital admission according to protocol, for which reason the day-to-day relationship with the family and peer group changes, and a close relationship with the medical personnel develops.

There is an initial period of social isolation. In two of the cases, the treatment involved travelling from the usual place of residence, an additional difficulty in the experience of being a cancer patient as it forces them to leave their main residence and cease attending educational centres, they are separated from their parents and it is, general speaking, a temporary financial burden. Following the initial social isolation, they give special recognition to the relationships with other “actors” in the oncology unit: other diagnosed children, families, medical personnel, volunteers, and so on. New peer relationships based on the same life experience are established.

1_I1: at the start, it was as if I was in a state of depression...⁴

2_I2: I didn't interact a lot...

3_I3: at the start, well, what can I say...

While the peer group prior to the diagnosis was made up of a sports team or classmates, treatment sees the introduction of other children as peers who share their physical, psychological and social sequelae. The physical changes as a result of the disease and the treatment affect the self-concept of the individuals who experience the sequelae and how he/she is perceived by others. Thus, the opposition between them (healthy adolescents) and us (adolescents diagnosed with childhood cancer) is established, forging a new self and group identity that creates special links after hospital treatment is completed, strengthening the set-up of support networks between parents that, at times, extend to association activity.

4_I1: there was a boy who was the same age as me...

5_I2: my parents were there...

6_I3: you have to empathise, talk to people...

4.2. Strategies of discourse for talking about the disease. “Cancer” as a taboo

In their accounts, there is a lack of contrast between the cancer-death and cancer-survival pairings. They highlight the prevalence of the former in those groups without experience of the disease, attributing a lack of knowledge and

information that the subjects also recognise they lacked prior to their cancer diagnosis.

Identification as a cancer patient may result in rejection, and one of the main attitudes that the interviewees identify is “pity/sympathy” on the part of those who do not experience cancer, and which stigmatises those who are affected.

7_I1: the people felt like...

8_I2: family members and I...

Nevertheless, the experience of healing gives a different meaning to the term for the subjects, who begin to establish a link between cancer and survival, now as a synonym of a curable disease.

9_I3: I started to realise that that word...

10_I1: there are people who you tell...

4.3. Impact of the physical sequelae resulting from cancer treatment on social relationships

Adolescence is characterised as a period of emancipation, in which the subject becomes more independent from their parents. However, given the localisation of the osteosarcoma in the lower limbs of the body, reduced mobility is one of the main sequelae in their accounts of the experience. The limitations associated with mobility entail the use of a wheelchair, crutches or other support elements that are incorporated into the daily life of the adolescents, as well as discomfort/pain to a greater or lesser degree throughout life.

Hair loss is another of the most significant physical changes encountered and it forms part of the social image with which they are identified. The social construct of femininity includes long hair as one of the attributes of women, for which reason hair loss during adolescence may take on different meanings depending on the sex of the adolescent, as the two women interviewed express.

11_I1: I had long hair...

12_I2: to be a female and a teenager...

Nausea as a result of the pain and chemotherapy cause decreased appetite and very accelerated weight loss in adolescents (their physical appearance changes entirely in a short space of time). I3 indicates that at the age of treatment, he was around 1.80 m tall and his weight fell to “forty and a bit kilos, so I was all head and no body”.

Following surgery (the application of a prosthesis is generally required), there is a series of trauma-related sequelae that are very significant in the subsequent life trajectory. The challenge of living with an internal prosthesis becomes more complex due to different adverse effects (infections and fractures) that result in

additional surgical interventions, additional periods of rehabilitation and new physical sequelae, which, in turn, have social repercussions. In the two accounts with a longer subsequent trajectory since diagnosis (I2 and I3), references are made to surgical interventions due to trauma on numerous occasions.

The constant uncertainty at the possibility of a new sequela favours the appearance of “Damocles’ syndrome”, the chronic fear of cancer and/or trauma recurrence, in the subjects and their environment (Cupit, Syrjala and Hashmi, 2018). This continual exposure to risk affects the subjects’ decisions and the opportunities they encounter in an academic or work environment, among others. Caring for a prosthesis after each intervention requires daily rehabilitation for a period of approximately one year, which is incorporated into the daily life of the survivors throughout the entire subsequent trajectory. This requires time and effort to be invested on a daily basis that, at times, interferes with the conciliation of other activities such as work, family or studies.

4.4. A social response to inequality: disability recognition

Disability recognition is a response to the social inequality that arises from the physical sequelae. The interviewees state that they initially had qualms about being recognised as “people with disabilities”. This recognition may lead to the subjects’ double stigmatisation: having had cancer and being identified as disabled (Kim and Yi, 2014).

In the case of the interviewed women, both obtained this benefit and they consider that it enabled them to alleviate certain hardships that they encountered during their trajectories. They highlight the educational opportunities, given that their academic life was interrupted for long periods of time, and assert that the degree of disability has enabled them to access and/or complete their studies. They think that this recognition has favoured their personal autonomy, education and finding a job.

13_I1: thanks to that, I enrolled, for example...

14_I2: they recommended we request the degree of disability...

In contrast, the account by I3 expresses rejection of the disability recognition, establishing an ongoing relationship between obtaining the degree of disability and receiving an economic benefit for “not working”. A striking element is the use of the concept of being “disabled” as a synonym for “person unfit for work”. This subject is the only interviewee to use the term “*minusválido*” (handicapped, disabled) in their account, and they give it a meaning based on the contrast between being more or less valid (“*ser más válido/ser menos válido*”). Thus, he considers that this recognition would diminish his personal autonomy, as he would be identified as a subject who is less fit for the job.

15_I3: I thought that that would be saying that I couldn’t earn...

4.5. Interactive relationships in the educational environment

A cancer diagnosis in childhood is at the expense of performance and psychosocial development in the educational environment (Tsimicalis et al., 2018). The academic context in the accounts refers to the context of “school career” in that it considers the trajectories a “diachronic construct of the social and subjective identity of the pupil through their interaction with the educational institution” (Verhoeven, 2013: 89).

The relationship with the educational system breaks down when the disease is detected. The school career must consider two elements that determine the trajectory of the subjects: the multiplicity of causes that may converge to give rise to inequality, and the individual capacity for developing strategies as their situation becomes more complex in the educational context. The inequality that the interviewees are exposed to is determined by three main sources: “the redistributive dimension (resources), the symbolic dimension (recognition of the inequality) and the power dimension, understood as the subject’s capacity for action” (Verhoeven, 2013: 89).

Hospital admission means that the pupil stops attending the educational centre and their development may be impaired (Brinkman et al., 2018). The three interviews mention sporadic school attendance when the evolution of the treatment so permitted, with the aim of avoiding complete disconnection from the academic system. There is an attempt to maintain those habits associated with “student life” (homework, reading, studying, and so on), even from the hospital itself. These activities facilitate the normalisation of life away from the usual context in order to enter a hospital environment, a nexus between life prior to the disease and life after. Treatment, however, may impair school performance, as it reduces “their energy and concentration and negatively affects their cognitive, affective and social development” (Grau, 2005: 49).

16_I1: I was completely focused for the first two days...

17_I2: the anxiety that I felt before each exam...

18_I3: everything started off really well, but...

According to the accounts, there is no academic monitoring when a standardised protocol is followed in all the centres, but rather it arises from an informal agreement between the families and teachers. This indetermination may give rise to arbitrary decisions that affect the learning trajectory of the pupils (Paré-Blagoev et al., 2019). The academic tasks were received through classmates (taking them to their home, by telematic means); however, none of the interviewees received learning support from extracurricular teachers, either in the hospital or in their homes. The means of each family to offer educational support are unequal and depend on the parents’ prior education and the cultural, time and cognitive resources within their reach (Castejón, Montes and Manzano, 2020).

19_I1: my parents took the enrolment...

20_I2: school didn't see any problem...

In the observed cases, those adolescents who previously obtained higher average grades, whose parents are skilled workers and who have higher social statuses, are able to maintain certain academic activity during the period in which they undergo hospital treatment and can join the class the following academic year with the rest of their classmates. However, in the case of I3, as someone who obtained pass and, at times, fail grades, and whose parents had a basic level of studies and a minimum income level, not attending school in person during the year he was an inpatient resulted in the need to repeat the school year.

21_I3: well, I didn't get top marks...

Repeating the school year intensifies the distancing from the peer group, which makes the inclusion of the pupil in the school context more difficult and may have discriminatory effects (Hill, 2014; Choi et al., 2018). Being recognised as a “pupil repeating the year”, a “pupil with cancer” or a “pupil with a disability” forms part of the symbolic dimension of inequality that the survivors encounter in the educational environment. The fear of rejection by the peer group may even lead to these adolescents hiding the diagnosis and/or the possible physical and psychological sequelae that may manifest as a result of the disease (Barrenetxea, 2021).

The subjects' capacity for action in situations of inequality gives rise to different strategies that vary depending on the opportunities that they learn throughout their trajectories. An example is seen in the use of disability recognition as an opportunity to gain access to higher education or to obtain grants that enable them to keep learning. On the contrary, the perception of a lack of options or a lack of awareness of the “rules of the educational game”, as well as “school orientation processes as imposed [...] may generate feelings of impotence or passivity in the face of their own school destiny” (Verhoeven, 2013: 90).

The trauma-related sequelae experienced by the subjects following cancer treatment exacerbate the difficulty to maintain continuity and development during the learning and, subsequently, work trajectories, despite this element being closely related to the occupation sector.

22_I2: they caught me...

23_I3: it was one of the things that limited me...

4.6. Interaction with the peer group in adolescence stigmatised by cancer

The experience of cancer has an impact on the cognitive and emotional development of the adolescents interviewed, for which reason, following diagnosis, the reference peer group deviates from what was known up until that moment. The survivors

maintain a link with the peer group during the treatment period, but the way in which they interact changes. Prolonged absence from school and the physical impossibility of participating in group activities and plans requires the peers to adapt to the needs of the diagnosed subjects. The three cases analysed perceive distancing on the part of the group both during and after hospital treatment and the loss of some relationships with friends.

Interaction with other young people leads to acceptance, but also to confrontation between personal experience and the collective identity of the group that may limit mutual acceptance. Two of the interviewed subjects textually express how they see themselves as being more mature after overcoming the disease than those young people of the same age who have not had the same experience, perceiving greater post-traumatic growth in comparison to those who were their equals prior to diagnosis (Howard et al., 2017).

24_I1: emotionally, I would not know...

25_I2: I think that maturing...

5. Concluding thoughts

This exploratory approach suggests that the detection of childhood cancer destabilises the life of the subjects and affects their relationships with the different social contexts, resulting in social sequelae. The clinical sociology approach enables the experience and evolution of the sequelae of cancer to be investigated, following a diachronic time perspective to observe the changes in social interactions before and after the diagnosis. In the accounts, there is an allusion to the current validity of the social representation of cancer associated with death that favours the social stigmatisation of those affected. That said, the experience of healing lends a different meaning to the term for the subjects, establishing a link between cancer and survival.

The sequelae of the disease alter the subjects' interactive relationships with their school context and peer group, disrupting the relationship from the moment of diagnosis for hospitalisation and the successive interventions resulting from physical sequelae. This places the interviewed survivors in a situation of inequality on multiple levels, which is determined by the resources (social status and academic performance prior to diagnosis), the symbolic dimension (being recognised as a "pupil with cancer") and capacity (being recognised as a "disabled pupil" or a "pupil repeating the year"), whereby all these dimensions may manifest themselves at once.

Educational inequality is exacerbated by the non-existence of a standardised institutional protocol to attend to the specific educational needs of children with cancer. Absence from school and the limitations of insertion in the educational system during hospital treatment lead to distancing from the peer group. The isolation is compounded by the physical changes (image) that the young people express and by unequal cognitive and emotional development among young people who have had cancer and young people who were their *equals* prior to diagnosis. However, a new

collective identity is reinforced with the creation of mutual support networks among those affected and the relationship with *new equals* with the same experience in a trajectory marked by cancer and its sequelae in the medium and long term.

Although the interviews carried out are limited, the exploration presented suggests the need to keep investigating, from a sociological perspective, the social sequelae experienced by the survivors of childhood cancer. The relationships with their family, school and peer group context, among others, have been marked by the diagnosis and by the different sequelae over the course of their trajectories. It would be necessary to gather more life experiences and investigate other contexts of interest that, for reasons of space, have not been developed in this article.

The relevance of social interaction in overcoming the disease must be considered to a greater degree by public powers, favouring the equality of opportunities for young people who overcome childhood cancer. All this will facilitate their access to disability recognition and establish specific educational monitoring programmes adapted to this group and their families, and so on. Adopting these initiatives, among others, requires that the perspective of survivors be integrated in the development of programmes aimed at encouraging full social development and raising people's awareness of the challenges of surviving cancer in adolescence.

Notes

- 1 The project that provides the framework for this proposal was awarded the 2020 Youth Prize for Scientific Culture (*Premio Joven a la Cultura Científica 2020*) in the Social and Human Sciences category by the City Council of Seville and CSIC (Spanish National Research Council).
- 2 INE death statistics according to cause of death in the period 1980–2020.
- 3 In this report from 2021, 2014 is the most recent year of incidence that offers a follow-up of 5 years from diagnosis.
- 4 Due to reasons concerning the length of the article, the complete snippets from the testimonies are available at: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1zZuoLAvHTXpcO1VH8GiURY4G16U1dTQ6/view> (in Spanish only).
- 5 Work, non-profit, healthcare environment, etc.

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RESEÑAS/REVIEWS

Rosa Aparicio y Alejandro Portes (Eds.).
Los nuevos españoles. La incorporación de los hijos de inmigrantes. Manresa: Bellaterra, 2021

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A principios del siglo **xxi**, debido a la llegada masiva de personas de otros países, nuestro país se convirtió en un extraordinario laboratorio social donde poder testar diferentes teorías relacionadas con el fenómeno de la integración de inmigrantes. Esto fue lo que hizo que el profesor Portes encontrara en España un lugar idóneo para su estudio y que junto con la profesora Rosa Aparicio desarrollara una ambiciosa investigación que hoy ve la luz. Este libro es un compendio de estudios sobre diferentes aspectos y focos de la integración social y de los procesos de adaptación de la llamada segunda generación de inmigrantes en España; hijos e hijas de inmigrantes que, como bien señalan Cachón y Aysa-Lastra en su contribución, por definición no son propiamente inmigrantes. En este estudio han participado algunos de los sociólogos y sociólogas españoles más reputados en el ámbito de las migraciones que han podido explotar unos datos inéditos sobre esta realidad en nuestro país.

La elaboración de datos empíricos cuantitativos sobre hijos e hijas de inmigrantes en España, escasos o inexistentes hasta ese momento, ha sido lo que ha permitido un impulso o profundización de la investigación de temas y cuestiones relacionados con su proceso de adaptación a la sociedad española, merced a la realización de una encuesta longitudinal tipo panel a hijos e hijas de inmigrantes en España, la Investigación Longitudinal sobre la Segunda Generación (ILSEG), realizada en tres olas (2007, 2012 y 2016) que ha incluido no solo la segunda generación, sino también encuestas a familiares o a jóvenes autóctonos como grupo de control. La ILSEG supone una encuesta de un muestreo grande, generoso, representativo, técnicamente muy bien diseñado: 7.000 personas en la primera ola, otras 7.310 en la segunda (teniendo en cuenta muestra de reemplazo y población nativa adicional), 2.920 en la tercera (de los cuales 1.606 correspondían a la muestra original).

La encuesta surgió a partir de la propuesta de un convenio que el profesor Alejandro Portes, director del Centro de Migraciones y Desarrollo (CMD) de la Universidad de

Princeton, hizo a la profesora Rosa Aparicio, del Instituto Universitario de Estudios Sobre Migraciones (IUEM) de la Universidad Pontificia Comillas. Un proyecto de tales características ha requerido una importante fuente de financiación. La inicial corrió a cargo de la Fundación Spencer de Chicago. Para las siguientes olas la coordinación tuvo que buscar financiación adicional, y la encontró en la Universidad de Princeton, la Fundación José Ortega y Gasset-Gregorio Marañón, la Comunidad de Madrid y el Plan Estatal de Investigación, Desarrollo e Innovación. Habitualmente, en la investigación vemos las casas terminadas, sin los andamios que las han hecho posibles, pero contribuye a su mayor y mejor comprensión recordar estos esfuerzos y andares.

La ILSEG es una réplica de una encuesta-proyecto enormemente similar realizado por el mismo Alejandro Portes y Rubén Rumbaut en Estados Unidos entre 1992 y 2005, la *Children of Immigrants' Longitudinal Study* (CILS), que ya constituyó un hito en la investigación de las segundas generaciones de inmigrantes. Como recuerda el mismo Portes en el tercer capítulo, esta valiosa e importante nueva fuente de datos representó la base empírica para el modelo de «asimilación segmentada», una de las teorías más usadas y referenciadas en el estudio de los procesos de integración social de las segundas generaciones de inmigrantes, constituye un ejemplo de uno de los casos en los que se va de lo empírico a la teoría, en que lo empírico permite nuevos desarrollos teóricos.

Debido a la importancia tanto de la encuesta madre o de referencia como de esta interesante teoría que emanó de la primera, muchas de las investigaciones que se recogen en este compendio basadas en la explotación de ILSEG han testado, contestado o tenido en cuenta la posible aplicación de la teoría de la asimilación segmentada al caso de los inmigrantes de segunda generación en España.

Cómo señala Rosa Aparicio en el primer capítulo, también a modo de introducción, para la primera explotación de los resultados de la tercera ola de ILSEG, en lugar de acometerla los autores y coordinadores de la misma, se ha optado por compartirla con una diversidad de autores y equipos de investigación, lo cual ha contribuido a conseguir unos resultados diversos en temáticas, en aproximaciones teóricas, metodológicas y técnicas, que le confieren un gran interés y riqueza, y que procedemos a detallar a continuación.

El segundo capítulo, «Asimilación segmentada y trayectorias de clase: las segundas generaciones de inmigrantes en el mercado de trabajo en España», ha sido realizado por Lorenzo Cachón Rodríguez y María Aysa-Lastra. Se apoya en una visión *reproductivista* del mercado laboral según la cual este reproduce la estructura social con sus desigualdades de género, de etnia, de edad, de clase social, etc. Se aportan datos de la ILSEG que muestran que el proceso migratorio supone mayores dificultades de logro educativo y de inserción laboral para los jóvenes de la segunda generación de inmigrantes en comparación con sus homónimos autóctonos, siendo la ocupación del padre y el estatus socioeconómico de la familia los factores que explican una mayor inserción en el segmento primario del mercado laboral.

En el tercer capítulo, «Clase y ambición en el proceso de lograr un estatus: una réplica española», de William Haller y Alejandro Portes, los autores muestran con la encuesta la aplicabilidad del modelo Wisconsin de Logro de Estatus en España para predecir los logros educativos y ocupacionales a partir del estatus socioeconómico de los padres y de la ambición individual, también transmitida de padres a su descen-

dencia. Estos se muestran como los factores claves para el ascenso social de los hijos de padres inmigrantes.

En el cuarto capítulo, «Una mirada de largo plazo a los determinantes del logro educativo de hijos de inmigrantes en España», de Héctor Cebolla Boado, el autor aprovecha la característica longitudinal de la encuesta para testar si las variables que juegan un papel importante en el fracaso escolar de los inmigrantes en la etapa obligatoria (la titularidad de los centros, el porcentaje de inmigrantes en la escuela, las características familiares o la historia migratoria) también tienen un impacto significativo a largo plazo, confirmándose tal extremo. En el capítulo se desmienten algunos prejuicios importantes, como que la concentración de inmigrantes baja el nivel educativo de una escuela.

En el quinto capítulo, «El proceso de adaptación de los hijos e hijas de migrantes ecuatorianos en España a partir del análisis de sus trayectorias educativas», de Jaime Fierro, Sònia Parella, Berta Güell y Alisa Petroff, el equipo de la Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona confirma mediante un análisis de regresión que la estructura de oportunidades educativas es distinta en el caso de los hijos e hijas de españoles que en el de los hijos e hijas del conjunto de inmigrantes latinoamericanos, y entre ellos específicamente los ecuatorianos, presentando menores niveles de escolaridad. En este caso, la ambición educacional, el estatus socioeconómico familiar y el origen nacional son variables centrales para explicar las diferencias en los logros educativos.

En el sexto capítulo, «Expectativas educativas en España: una mirada a los descendientes de los inmigrantes procedentes de Marruecos, Colombia, República Dominicana», de María Sánchez-Domínguez y Elisa Brey, las autoras parten de la constatación de que, si bien la situación de la segunda generación suele ser mejor que la de sus progenitores, los descendientes siguen mostrando desventaja en el ámbito educativo y laboral en comparación con los hijos de los españoles. Ante esta situación se preguntan qué peso real tiene la familia en las expectativas escolares de su descendencia. Su análisis multivariable revela que las variables más explicativas son el sexo, la edad, la educación universitaria de la madre y el tipo y nivel de ingresos, siendo poco explicativo el país de origen.

En el séptimo capítulo, «Generación 2.5. Un análisis sobre la integración social de los hijos/as de uniones mixtas en España a partir de los datos de la encuesta ILSEG», de Dan Rodríguez-García, Verónica de Miguel Luken, Miguel Solana Solana y Beatriz Ballestín González, los hallazgos de este equipo señalan similitud y proximidad entre los hijos e hijas de parejas mixtas y los hijos e hijas de los autóctonos, así como distancia respecto de los hijos e hijas de parejas inmigrantes endógamas, en aspectos como la identificación con España, la tendencia al secularismo, las expectativas académicas, la inserción laboral, el prestigio ocupacional y la composición de las redes personales/sociales. En el único aspecto que hay diferencias significativas entre españoles y los hijos e hijas de las parejas mixtas es en la experiencia de la discriminación, la cual se acentúa especialmente en aquellas personas que tienen características fenotípicas visibles más diferentes a las blancas y caucásicas, lo que muestra una preocupante pervivencia de los estereotipos y del racismo en la sociedad española.

El octavo capítulo, «“Ni de carne ni de pescado”: experiencias de discriminación y auto-identificación nacional de hijos e hijas de inmigrantes en España», de Estre-

lla Gualda, aborda en qué medida los inmigrantes de generación 1.5 (aquellos que emigraron con 12 años o menos) se sienten que pertenecen al lugar donde residen. Destacan el lugar de residencia, el número de años en España, el estatus socioeconómico familiar o los sentimientos de discriminación como algunos de los principales factores que influyen en este sentimiento de pertenencia.

En el noveno capítulo, «Uso de regresión logística para la detección de patrones de participación política de segundas generaciones de inmigrantes en España», de Pablo Biderbost y Guillermo Boscán Carrasquero, los autores examinan en qué medida las diferencias entre la cultura política de los países de origen y la de España están relacionadas con el grado de participación política de los inmigrantes, el cual revierte a su vez en su integración social. Algunos factores, como el nivel educativo, el haber sufrido discriminación, provenir de países democráticos o haber participado en organizaciones sociales, influyen en este grado de participación.

Finalmente, en las «Conclusiones» que cierran el volumen, Portes realiza un ejercicio de síntesis y discusión interrelacionando y referenciando los resultados de todas las investigaciones con la maestría, el acierto y la elegancia que le caracterizan. Entre los más reseñables, encontramos, por un lado, alguno más técnico-metodológico, como la mención que cabe prestar, en esta y otras investigaciones cuantitativas, a las variables intervinientes o controles por otros factores predictivos, que pueden hacer modificar los efectos iniciales de variables que en un principio aparecen como muy significativas (tal es el caso de los capítulos 2, 3, 5 y 6). Y por otro lado, aspectos más de contenido, especialmente, la poca relevancia de características culturales para explicar el logro educativo y el estatus ocupacional al controlar por el estatus socioeconómico de las familias y por el tiempo en España, llegando a afirmar que el proceso de consecución de estatus en España es el mismo para hijos de inmigrantes y para hijos de autóctonos. En cambio, las características culturales sí tienen más influencia en la identificación nacional con España y las percepciones de discriminación.

Así mismo, parece reseñable señalar, por un lado, que, a pesar de que nos encontramos en uno de aquellos casos en que nuevos datos permiten nuevas hipótesis y teorizaciones, cada capítulo está convenientemente asentado en una buena revisión de literatura científica e investigación existente para el caso de la segunda generación inmigrante en España. Por otro lado, todos los autores y autoras muestran una alta competencia y capacidad de uso de métodos y técnicas cuantitativas y estadísticas, tanto bivariantes como multivariantes, que permiten la realización, por ejemplo, de análisis que muestran el peso o incidencia de variables intervinientes, como subraya el mismo profesor Portes.

Ahora bien, también es de reseñar que la metodología cuantitativa presenta algunas limitaciones que no permiten profundizar en las causas a las que se intenta aproximar. En algunos capítulos de este libro los autores aventuran razones para explicar resultados cuantitativos, generalmente apoyados en referencias a investigación previa u otras teorías. Una buena manera de acercarse a estos motivos es con el recurso a metodologías y técnicas cualitativas que permitan conversar con los y las protagonistas de estas historias, dejar que cuenten sus razones y sus porqués, que permitan recabar información, matices y respuestas con los que profundizar en las motivaciones de las personas, y así ganar en acierto de la investigación. Generalmente, estas

limitaciones han sido convenientemente señaladas en cada capítulo por sus autores y autoras, como es menester, con una invitación a profundizar en futuras líneas y agendas de investigación. Si bien en algunos casos, como en el capítulo 7, se ha complementado con investigación cualitativa procedente de otras investigaciones.

No se puede terminar esta reseña sin reconocer y agradecer a los autores el esfuerzo en la transmisión de sus conocimientos en esta obra de forma fácil y didáctica para todos los públicos, recordando que esta «segunda generación de inmigrantes» forman parte ya de la realidad social española, no debiéndoles considerar como inmigrantes, pues, tal y como queda patente en este trabajo, no son inmigrantes propiamente dichos; con una alta probabilidad, tarde o temprano serán ciudadanos españoles de pleno derecho, debiendo seguir trabajando en su integración, y no cayendo en este-reotipos de racismo y xenofobia, los cuales no deberían tener cabida en una sociedad moderna y avanzada como la que queremos seguir habitando y construyendo.

RESEÑAS/REVIEWS

Olga Salido y Matilde Massó (Eds.). *Sociología en tiempos de pandemia. Impactos y desafíos sociales de la crisis del COVID-19*. Madrid: Marcial Pons, 2021

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Pocas dudas caben acerca de la naturaleza social de la crisis pandémica. La expresión «crisis sociosanitaria» ha estado, desde el comienzo de la pandemia, en boca tanto del público lego como de los expertos detrás de la «*evidence-based policy*». No obstante, no parece que haya habido una política basada en la evidencia científico-social. Más bien al contrario, las ciencias sociales en general y la sociología en particular han permanecido, mayormente, al margen de los procesos de toma de decisiones para hacer frente a la crisis pandémica ocasionada por la expansión del nuevo coronavirus.

El libro *Sociología en tiempos de pandemia* (2021), editado por las profesoras Olga Salido (Universidad Complutense de Madrid) y Matilde Massó (Universidad de A Coruña), y publicado en la «Colección Investigación Sociológica» de la Federación Española de Sociología, podría ser tomado como un claro acicate frente a la marginación que ha sufrido el gremio sociológico. El volumen, compuesto por 24 capítulos organizados en cuatro bloques —algunos de cuyos principales *highlights* se reseñan a continuación—, es producto del buen hacer de los sociólogos y sociólogas de este país y constituye un claro ejemplo de, como diría Raymond Boudon, la sociología que realmente importa.

1. La sociología ante la pandemia: retos y desafíos para una nueva sociedad

Emilio Lamo de Espinosa (UCM) inaugura el primer bloque del libro con una reflexión acerca del fallo del multilateralismo y de una posible gobernanza global, en beneficio de una clara revitalización de la familia y del Estado como aquellas instituciones capaces de dar cobijo y seguridad a los individuos en tiempos marcados por la complejidad y la incertidumbre. La pandemia nos ha hecho recuperar la conciencia de la centralidad de la «viejísima institución del parentesco» y de la fortaleza y capacidad

de movilización que tienen los Estados, constituyéndose como herramientas clave para frenar el desarrollo de la pandemia, si bien siempre al acecho del fantasma del autoritarismo político. Se habla, en este sentido, de una «desglobalización limitada» y de una poderosa aceleración geopolítica que obliga a poner los ojos en Asia y la «tentación colectivista» frente al individualismo occidental, habida cuenta de la exitosa gestión de la crisis pandémica por parte de China.

El segundo capítulo corre a cargo de Julio Carabaña (UCM). En él se realiza una brillante defensa metodológica sobre el seguimiento de la COVID-19 mediante encuestas. En base a la rapidez con la que pueden producirse, aplicarse y analizarse, y a su reducido coste económico, se argumenta a favor de un sistema de seguimiento independiente de los Servicios de Salud que incorpore, desde el principio, información contextual relativa a los hogares, trabajo, ocio, etc., «cuyo estudio sociológico permitiera precisar los ámbitos sociales por los que el virus se propaga».

El tercer capítulo es obra de Josep Lobera (UAM) y de Cristóbal Torres (UAM). En este capítulo se abordan las dificultades a las que se enfrenta la comunicación científica cuando imperan la complejidad y la incertidumbre, agudizando las controversias científicas frente a un escrutinio público sin precedentes que demanda, precisamente, seguridad y certidumbre. En este contexto, la comunicación efectiva de la tecnología para generar adhesión a las medidas sanitarias se enfrenta a barreras y obstáculos como la percepción social del riesgo, el comportamiento del entorno social inmediato, la confianza en las instituciones, las creencias conspirativas o los costes asociados a la identificación de información veraz.

Firman el cuarto capítulo Fabrizio Bernardi (UNED) y Carlos J. Gil (European University Institute, EUI). En él se pone en valor lo que los sociólogos en particular pueden aportar al estudio de la propagación del virus, en términos de estructura ocupacional, clases sociales, logro educativo... Se muestra, así, la relación entre un menor nivel de estudios y la dificultad para acceder al teletrabajo, siendo mayor el riesgo de contagio entre trabajadores poco cualificados de servicios y comercios. En relación a los ancianos, se muestra también la mayor probabilidad de vivir en residencias a menor nivel de estudios, estando más expuestos, por lo tanto, al riesgo de contagio, hospitalización y muerte.

Juan Jesús González (UNED) muestra, en el quinto capítulo, cómo la gestión de la pandemia ha puesto a la situación política como el principal problema percibido por la población, minimizando o, cuando no, expulsando de la agenda pública cualquier otro problema social previamente percibido como importante. La polarización social en torno a la gestión política de la pandemia ha servido, pues, tanto como «cortina de humo» como obstáculo a la gobernabilidad y la resolución de problemas.

Margarita Barañano Cid (UCM) y José Ariza de la Cruz (UCM) cierran la sección con una reflexión, a la luz de los datos disponibles, sobre la hipótesis que apuntaba a la salida de las ciudades o al abandono del hogar principal, configurando nuevos hábitats más dispersos y deslocalizados como respuesta al riesgo de contagio en las grandes e hiperpobladas ciudades. No obstante, los datos disponibles apuntan más bien a «un notable reforzamiento de la vida en el espacio del barrio», marcado por el papel de las redes informales de apoyo mutuo y de cuidados.

2. Los impactos sociales de la pandemia, una mirada sociológica

Este bloque se centra en los impactos de la pandemia sobre colectivos concretos. María Ángeles Durán (CSIC) inaugura esta sección con el capítulo «Las edades sin nombre». En él se presenta la vejez como una categoría problemática en términos ontológicos y epistemológicos: la vejez no constituye un grupo social, sino un conjunto de individuos definidos cronológica y estadísticamente de acuerdo con criterios cambiantes, definidos siempre desde fuera como «población de riesgo» o como «los vulnerables». La pandemia ha intensificado esta relación de la vejez con la enfermedad, la decadencia y la generación de problemas a solucionar por las generaciones más jóvenes, obviándose el importante papel que previamente al estallido de la pandemia jugaban en la economía reproductiva no remunerada. Sin identidad colectiva propia y sin capacidad de articularse políticamente —a pesar de representar casi 10 millones de potenciales votantes—, la vejez ha devenido en clase pasiva e improductiva, relegada a los márgenes del sistema.

Miguel Requena (UNED) es el autor del capítulo 8. En él se presentan los principales impactos de la COVID-19 sobre la mortalidad, la fecundidad y las migraciones, con un claro efecto sobre un decrecimiento poblacional que se inscribe en el más amplio ciclo de declive demográfico en el que estamos inmersos. En los capítulos 9 y 10, Jorge Benedicto (UNED), por un lado, y Pau Marí-Klose (diputado en las Cortes Generales) y Alba Lanau (Centre d'Estudis Demogràfics, CED), por otro, analizan los impactos de la pandemia sobre los jóvenes, colectivo que si bien se ha mostrado más impermeable a la enfermedad, ha sido objeto de estigma social y denuncia pública como presuntos culpables de la expansión del virus por su escasa adhesión a las políticas sanitarias, y sobre la infancia, ardua tarea debido a las dificultades metodológicas para acceder de manera directa a los infantes como objetos de estudio sociológico.

Fausto Miguélez (UAB) y Ramón Alós (UAB) analizan en el capítulo 11 los efectos de la revolución digital, acelerada por la pandemia, sobre el futuro del empleo. El teletrabajo, con sus ventajas (flexibilidad o innecesaridad de desplazamientos) e inconvenientes (aislamiento o invasión de la privacidad), presenta retos (relativos a la inversión en I+D+i, por ejemplo) y oportunidades (una economía más verde y sostenible) que los Estados deberán saber gestionar para potenciar sus aspectos positivos y minimizar aquellos negativos. En este sentido, Capitolina Díaz (UV), María Ángeles Sallé (UV), Cecilia Castaño (UCM) y la reputada investigadora del ámbito de la informática y el *big data*, Nuria Oliver, desarrollan en el capítulo 12 la idea de que la pandemia ha revalorizado los cuidados y la tecnología, pero mientras que la revalorización de los cuidados —sector feminizado— empieza a desvanecerse, la importancia de la tecnología —sector masculinizado— sigue en aumento. Es el caso del teletrabajo, modalidad de trabajo poco accesible para las mujeres, debida a su alta presencia en «empleos intensivos en interacción humana». A raíz de este hecho y de otros tantos, se desarrolla el concepto de «sindemia» para hacer referencia a cómo, más allá de la enfermedad, la pandemia golpea más duramente a las mujeres.

3. Desafíos y respuestas políticas a la crisis

Luis Moreno (CSIC) y Ángel Belzunegui (URV) inauguran la tercera sección de la obra abordando algunos de los problemas políticos asociados a los intentos de la Unión Europea de mancomunar los esfuerzos de los Estados miembros para combatir la pandemia. En este sentido, en el capítulo 14, Miguel Laparra (UPN) reflexiona sobre la exclusión social en la «sociedad del confinamiento». En él se apunta a los cambios metodológicos de institutos como el INE, que implican la ruptura de series de estadísticas de contenido social, dificultando tanto el estudio riguroso de la exclusión como la implementación de políticas sociales efectivas. No obstante, los datos disponibles permiten mostrar que las ayudas sociales en época de confinamiento han llegado menos a los sectores vulnerables que al conjunto de la población, acumulándose los efectos sociales de esta crisis sobre situaciones estructurales previas. Precisamente sobre situaciones estructurales previas, Sandra Dema Moreno (UOV) revisa, en el capítulo 15, los efectos que las catástrofes siconaturales tienen específicamente sobre las mujeres y las respuestas de las teorías feministas ante la evidencia de un desigual impacto de género.

Siguiendo con más desafíos planteados por la pandemia, en el capítulo 16, Mariano Fernández Enguita (UCM) aborda, con meridiana claridad, cómo la pandemia ha afectado a los sistemas educativos y las formas de transmisión del conocimiento y las dificultades que atraviesa la enseñanza adaptada a la modalidad *online* ante la brecha digital, que no es solo de acceso, sino de uso. Le sigue José Antonio Noguera (UAB), que dedica el capítulo 17 a los retos y dilemas de las políticas de garantías de ingreso, distinguiendo entre los problemas políticos, de diseño y de implementación a los que estas políticas han de enfrentarse en un escenario proclive, como es el generado por la pandemia. Firma el capítulo 19 Antonio Izquierdo Escribano (UDC), que pone de manifiesto el retroceso en la integración de los inmigrantes, más expuestos al riesgo de contagio, como consecuencia de la renacionalización o repliegue de las sociedades de acogida, en este caso, de la sociedad española. Finalmente, cierra esta sección Josep Espluga Trenc (UAB), preguntándose sobre las posibilidades de combinar crecimiento económico y mejora ambiental, habida cuenta de la constatada evidencia de que para que mejore el medio ambiente, ha de «empeorar» el sistema económico.

4. Actitudes, valores y formas de vida

Luis Enrique Alonso (UAM) y Carlos J. Fernández Rodríguez (UAM) encabezan el primer capítulo de esta última sección, dedicado, como no podía ser de otra manera, a la sociología del consumo. En este capítulo se analiza, pues, la evolución de los patrones de consumo durante la pandemia (primeras fases de acaparamiento de productos básicos, seguidas de un descenso general del gasto en consumo) y la consolidación (progresiva) del consumo *online*.

El capítulo 21 es obra de Miguel Caínzos (USC) y Carmen Voces (USC). A partir del análisis de las encuestas de Opinión Pública y Política Fiscal del CIS, se llega a la conclusión de que la fórmula de la «revalorización de lo público» tiene sus límites. El análisis de las actitudes de los españoles hacia el estado de bienestar muestra que la

COVID-19 ha puesto de acuerdo a la población en cuanto a necesidades extraordinarias (que pueden afectar, por ejemplo, a las políticas fiscales), pero ha generado un mayor disenso de fondo en términos ideológicos. Rubén Díez García (UCM) dedica el capítulo 22, precisamente, a la polarización, distinguiendo dos dimensiones de la cultura cívica, una normativa —orientada hacia el individuo y el pluralismo— y otra comunitaria —orientada a la participación y la solidaridad—, y muestra cómo el transcurso de la pandemia ha polarizado ambas orientaciones debido, fundamentalmente, a los intentos de los diferentes partidos políticos de monopolizar diferentes discursos relativos a la atribución de responsabilidades por la gestión de la pandemia. En cierto modo conectado a esta cuestión, Eduardo Bericat (US) analiza, en el capítulo 23, el impacto de la COVID-19 en el bienestar emocional de los españoles, poniendo de manifiesto la desigual distribución social de las formas de sentir y la intensidad con la que se siente y experimentan los acontecimientos en función de la posición social de las personas.

Por último, desde el Instituto de Estudios Sociales Avanzados (IESA) del CSIC, Manuel Fernández Esquinas, actual presidente de la Federación Española de Sociología, y Manuel Pérez Yruela (presidente, también, de la FES en el período 2004-2007) ponen el broche final a esta obra colectiva en el capítulo 24 con un necesario análisis del papel de las instituciones en la crisis de la COVID-19, extrayéndose valiosas lecciones de la experiencia española relativas a la relación entre la efectividad de las instituciones y la cohesión social, sobre la inercia de determinadas instituciones incapaces de adaptarse al cambio que conduce a mermar la efectividad de determinadas políticas y, por último, la necesidad de disponer de leyes y burocracias algo más flexibles y abiertas a la innovación institucional.

5. A modo de conclusión...

El lector que abra las páginas de *Sociología en tiempos de pandemia* podrá observar no solo un compendio de capítulos elaborados por las voces más autorizadas —y también por otras más noveles— de la sociología española. Podrá observar, también, un sólido argumento a favor de la homologación, tanto en el plano social como en el plano político-institucional, de las ciencias sociales a sus homónimas naturales en lo que respecta a la gestión de la pandemia. Pues, de la misma manera que la política basada en la evidencia científica-natural ha sido fundamental para hacer frente a la pandemia, «es inevitable que la elaboración de leyes y políticas sociales sea en el mejor de los casos ineficaz y en el peor desastrosa si no se basa en las ciencias sociales»¹. La gestión de una crisis como la que actualmente seguimos experimentando a nivel planetario no puede llevarse a cabo exitosamente de espaldas a la investigación científico-social y a la participación de las ciencias sociales en el diseño, implementación y evaluación de políticas públicas.

1 Bunge, M. (1999). *Las ciencias sociales en discusión* (p. 329). Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana.

RESEÑAS/REVIEWS

Luis Enrique Alonso, Carlos J. Fernández Rodríguez y Rafael Ibáñez Rojo (Eds.). *Estudios sociales sobre el consumo*. Madrid: Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas, 2020

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En las sociedades contemporáneas, el análisis de las prácticas de consumo ha presentado un lugar periférico a pesar de ser el centro de reproducción social. Además, algunas perspectivas reduccionistas han considerado el consumo como un acto individual y racional o como una simple alineación material y simbólica. Desde una mirada sociológica es necesario superar esta visión para sacarlo de cualquier análisis reduccionista y considerarlo «como uso y apropiación», tal y como indican en la introducción de esta obra sus editores Luis Enrique Alonso, Carlos J. Fernández y Rafael Ibáñez, intelectuales con una dilatada contribución en la sociología del consumo en España. Desde la perspectiva mencionada ha sido escrito este volumen, redactado por expertos/as de la sociología del consumo, desde los más veteranos hasta algunos más noveles, que nos ofrece una interesante panorámica de los estudios sociales sobre consumo que se producen en nuestro contexto partiendo de un enfoque metodológico pluralista y cognitivo que presenta una gran utilidad para el análisis de las prácticas sociales de consumo.

Su organización se basa en cinco secciones que se encuentran divididas en veintiséis capítulos. La primera se aproxima al proceso de desarrollo de la sociedad de consumo en España, así como a su conformación en objeto de estudio sociológico y el desarrollo de las herramientas metodológicas para su análisis. La segunda realiza un análisis teórico-paradigmático de los enfoques clásicos y contemporáneos de los análisis de consumo. Los tres siguientes bloques nos muestran diferentes análisis empíricos sobre los cambios en las formas de consumo originados por la crisis económica, las relaciones entre los procesos de consumo y las prácticas culturales, así como de la emergencia del denominado consumo colaborativo y sostenible.

1. Sección primera. La sociedad del consumo: desarrollo y herramientas de investigación

En esta primera parte, Fernando Conde aporta, a partir de un holgado trabajo de campo realizado en 2004, una contribución sobre las lógicas de consumo y sus regímenes de historicidad que constituye una herramienta principal para analizar los cambios sociales del consumo en un contexto y momento determinado. Las lógicas de consumo son definidas aquí como la perspectiva discursiva que utilizan los consumidores para afirmar la estructura de motivaciones y argumentaciones en relación con los objetos de consumo. Estas tres lógicas de consumo son la distinción (asociada a la posesión o acceso de un bien minoritario que presenta una alta valoración social por su estatus diferencial), la diferencia (relacionada con las diferenciaciones simbólicas que se dan dentro de un sistema de imágenes y valores en un grupo social) y la novedad (vinculada a una búsqueda más personal de la innovación y la creatividad que deshace la rutina de lo conocido). Por otro lado, los regímenes de historicidad hacen alusión a los niveles de profundidad de la cultura en los hábitos sociales de consumo. Estos son el natural (el más difundido en la sociedad al extremo de percibirse como obvio), el cultural (situado entre lo obvio que casi no se percibe y lo artificial que llama la atención) y el artificial (el más ajeno a los hábitos y costumbres). Como afirma Conde, estos niveles pueden cambiar en un momento histórico dado, como ocurre con la ropa *vintage*, que en su día fue percibida como natural y actualmente como artificial. Además, sugiere que la dinámica de relación entre las lógicas de consumo y los regímenes de historicidad puede mostrar una concurrencia compleja de relaciones entre ambos tipos de perspectivas discursivas.

Gaspar Brände y José Castillo repasan la formación de la sociedad de consumo en España, un proceso que, determinado por sus características socioeconómicas y culturales, fue singular y más tardío que en otros países del contexto internacional. Entre las causas de este retardo se encuentra la Guerra Civil, que frenó las condiciones de bienestar necesarias para formar una sociedad de consumo desarrollada. En la década de los sesenta, coincidiendo con un crecimiento económico y la entrada en una economía de mercado moderna que no se limita a la subsistencia, surgieron indicios de avances en este ámbito, aunque gran parte de la población seguía en una situación de subdesarrollo. Durante la década de los setenta, una época agitada política y socialmente, comienzan a generalizarse los bienes de consumo que no se limitan a la satisfacción de las necesidades básicas. Es en la década posterior cuando nuestro país empieza a caracterizarse como una sociedad de consumo madura al nivel característico de las sociedades de consumo avanzadas.

M^a Dolores Martín-Lagos y Marta Donat nos ofrecen una interesante panorámica del análisis del consumo en la Unión Europea. Para ello, realizan un recorrido por las fuentes secundarias disponibles en la Unión Europea que analizan este fenómeno. Además, exponen algunos índices compuestos que permiten sintetizar la información y realizar una comparación entre distintos países, ofreciendo un índice compuesto elaborado por las autoras que conforma una novedosa herramienta metodológica para medir la reflexión de algunas cuestiones del consumo responsable, como el proceso de compra de los consumidores, la información que poseen sobre el proceso de la elaboración del producto, la reivindicación sobre sus derechos y la preocu-

pación por las repercusiones del acto de compra. Los resultados ponen en evidencia que los países nórdicos se encuentran en las primeras posiciones del citado índice de consumo responsable, estando a la cola los países del este y del sur. Las autoras sugieren que los resultados deberían ser un aliciente para aumentar la información y el conocimiento de los ciudadanos y poder ejercer mejor sus derechos en el ámbito del consumo.

José Manuel Victoriano analiza la emergencia del cualitativismo crítico, surgido en España en la década de los sesenta y setenta, momento en que se afianza la moderna sociedad de consumo de masas. De la mano de intelectuales como Jesús Ibáñez, Ángel de Lucas y Alfonso Ortí, el cualitativismo crítico pondrá en evidencia los límites de las primeras investigaciones cuantitativas de aquel momento, proponiendo desde sus inicios una investigación social con una lógica crítica del orden social y su transformación progresista.

El último capítulo de este bloque, escrito por Jesús Gutiérrez Brito, cuestiona si la importancia del grupo de discusión sigue presente con la emergencia del mundo de internet y la sociedad de consumo de masas. Como indica Gutiérrez Brito, el grupo debe adaptarse a la realidad para analizar las prácticas de consumo en el presente, y en particular para poder investigar el entorno virtual.

2. Sección segunda. Teorías y dispositivos

La segunda sección comienza con un capítulo de los editores del libro en el que estudian los avances del neomarxismo contemporáneo realizados desde la escuela de la regulación, la sociología urbana francesa de los consumos colectivos y la confluencia del marxismo con la teoría del habitus de Bourdieu.

Seguidamente, Javier Callejo Gallego examina, sobre la base de la audiencia como capital, el nexo entre los diferentes regímenes de acumulación de la audiencia (los de la lógica de la propagación y los de la lógica de la conexión) y su supeditación a los modos de consumo.

Marc Barbeta Viñas establece las líneas de contacto fundamentales entre la teoría psicoanalítica y la sociología del consumo, destacando los usos y abusos que desde el análisis social del consumo se han realizado con respecto al modelo psicoanalítico.

José Luis Moreno Pestaña compendia sus investigaciones sobre imposiciones estéticas al cuerpo y explotación laboral mediante el concepto de capital erótico, considerado aquí como un tipo de capital cultural, y el proceso por el que el cuerpo puede resultar capitalizado.

Por último, el capítulo de Pablo García Ruiz aborda el consumo compulsivo y los riesgos que presenta, especialmente para los jóvenes, centrándose en el análisis de los juegos de azar *online*.

3. Sección tercera. Consumo, crisis y cambio social

Este bloque se inicia con otro capítulo de los editores de este libro en el que indagan sobre las implicaciones del modelo *low cost* y su relación con la economía colaborativa, la cual ha favorecido el aceleramiento de ciertos aspectos vinculados con esta economía de bajo coste. Además, evalúan el impacto y los retos que plantea este modelo de consumo, por ejemplo, en la calidad de vida de los trabajadores.

Tras ello, Vidal Díaz de Rada establece una tipología de las comunidades autónomas a través de la distribución de los gastos familiares para conocer los patrones de gasto. Los resultados muestran que en la mayoría de las comunidades el gasto está aumentando en la enseñanza y la vivienda y disminuyendo en los alimentos y bebidas.

Por su parte, Cecilia Díaz Méndez e Isabel García Espejo tratan de comprender, en el marco de unas sociedades modernas que empujan cada vez más a una individualización del consumo alimentario, el efecto de dicha individualización sobre los hábitos alimentarios de los españoles tomando en consideración sus ritmos y horarios.

Para terminar esta sección, José María Arribas Macho y Francisco Fernández-Trujillo Moares examinan la relevancia del consumo a la hora de construir una nueva identidad nacional en los inmigrantes latinoamericanos. Como sugieren sus resultados, el consumo debe considerarse como un factor determinante para el proceso de incorporación de los inmigrantes.

4. Sección cuarta. Consumo(s), cultura(s) y consumos culturales

En el primer capítulo de este bloque, Tally Katz-Gerro considera las características fundamentales de la investigación comparativa transnacional focalizada en los patrones de consumo cultural, la cual aporta mayor entendimiento de los atributos de la estratificación cultural. En este análisis localiza las semejanzas y disimilitudes entre países, mostrando los inconvenientes metodológicos y conceptuales y apuntando a las posibles expectativas futuras.

Siguiendo con el segundo capítulo de esta sección, Carlos J. Fernández Rodríguez y Riie Heikkilä actualizan un trabajo realizado hace más de una década sobre el debate entre la teoría de la distinción de Bourdieu, la cual concebía que la jerarquización de los estilos de vida era consecuencia del capital cultural de los sujetos, y el omnivorismo cultural acuñado originalmente por Peterson y que postulaba que un patrón del gusto estaba formado por diferentes gustos estéticos o prácticas culturales amplias y diversas. Tras poner al día las tesis del omnivorismo cultural, analizan las críticas más preponderantes hacia esta teoría. Por último, plantean que esta controversia debe enriquecerse con la observación de otros dispositivos de producción del gusto, como la prensa cultural, ya que presenta una gran incidencia en la transformación de los gustos y su ordenación en las jerarquías culturales.

Manuel Herrera-Usagre analiza el influjo del tipo de capital cultural producido en el ámbito familiar y educativo sobre el consumo de una mayor variedad de géneros artísticos y culturales, centrándose en los géneros musicales y la asistencia a eventos de artes visuales y escénicas.

Dafne Muntanyola-Saura integra diversas disciplinas de las ciencias sociales, humanísticas y tecnológicas para especificar el origen sociohistórico del consumo cultural, catalogar las escuelas más preponderantes en este campo de estudio y reunir las principales escuelas teórico-empíricas que analizan sus prácticas concretas.

El capítulo de Joaquim Rius-Ulldemolins y Juan Arturo Rubio Arostegui discurre sobre las relativamente nuevas políticas culturales, uno de los aspectos que modelan el consumo cultural en las sociedades contemporáneas. Estas han variado, como indica el título de su capítulo, desde la utopía de la igualdad ante la cultura hasta el consumo cultural como instrumento.

Finalizando esta sección, Semi Purhonen trata de determinar si el modelo de Bourdieu presentado en *La distinción*, y cuyo objeto de investigación se sitúa en Francia en la década de los años sesenta, podría ser extrapolado a otros momentos históricos, países y culturas, y en especial a los estilos de vida y las diferencias de los consumos culturales en la sociedad finlandesa, caracterizada por una cierta igualdad de oportunidades y menores niveles de desigualdad socioeconómica.

5. Sección quinta. Redes, sostenibilidad y consumo

La última sección da comienzo con un estudio de Igor Sádaba y César Rendueles, quienes examinan la progresión de las prácticas y los discursos del consumo *online* mediante el análisis de las campañas digitales en el enfoque de sus intercesores, los *community managers*.

Javier Gil García analiza a fondo el fenómeno de Airbnb, la plataforma líder en alojamiento vacacional nacida en el año 2007 que es estimada como una de las empresas de la denominada economía colaborativa más pujante del mundo. Esta interesante aportación evoca que, si bien Airbnb legitima su modelo de negocio sugiriendo que contribuye a un mundo mejor, más bien está contribuyendo al desarrollo de nuevas prácticas neoliberales.

En esta misma línea, Javier de Rivera y Ángel Gordo López se centran en los discursos legitimadores de la economía colaborativa que han resaltado bondades de la misma, como la satisfacción de las necesidades materiales de los particulares o su potencial para transformar la sociedad con oportunidades para el crecimiento económico sostenible. Esto ha favorecido una imagen pública positiva que no se corresponde a la realidad, pues su objetivo a largo plazo es un cambio neoliberal en la economía que no favorece la mitigación de las desigualdades económicas ni la búsqueda de la sostenibilidad ambiental.

En el siguiente capítulo, también centrado en el fenómeno del consumo colaborativo, Elena Gil Moreno estudia sus diversas facetas, unas que podrían ser positivas, como las narrativas colaborativas liberadoras en el ámbito del *crowdfunding*, y otras negativas, como la promoción de un modelo de trabajo prosumidor precario que restringe los derechos laborales y fomenta la autoexplotación.

En torno a la crisis ambiental que afrontamos, Santiago Álvarez Cantalapiedra y Mónica Di Donato establecen su relación con el consumo y señalan que, además, se ca-

racteriza por una grave desigualdad entre países, presentando así una clara dimensión ecosocial.

Para finalizar, Marina Requena i Mora analiza el discurso publicitario de nuestro país sobre las áreas naturales protegidas, identificando que la protección de estos espacios, más que soluciones ambientales, esconden el crecimiento del capitalismo neoliberal y su reproducción.

En conclusión, este volumen es una obra de referencia imprescindible tanto para expertos como para estudiantes interesados en los estudios sociales de consumo, que nos ofrece, además de una importante base teórica, unas herramientas metodológicas apropiadas. Su significación supera el ámbito de la sociología, pudiendo ser útil para otras disciplinas afines que pretendan analizar esta intrincada esfera de la vida.

Asimismo, es destacable que esta obra considera temas de actualidad, tales como el consumo colaborativo y responsable. Igualmente, se adentra en asuntos relevantes para las ciencias sociales, como la crisis ecosocial en la que nos encontramos inmersos y su vínculo con el consumo. En este sentido, podría ser provechoso seguir avanzando en el estudio de formas alternativas de consumo que muestren una preocupación creciente por la insostenibilidad de los patrones consumistas y del modelo socioeconómico vigente.

Por último, en el momento actual, en el que la crisis producida por la COVID-19 ha podido modificar sustancialmente los hábitos de consumo, se convierte en una necesidad continuar con el análisis sociológico del consumo desde la perspectiva integradora que este libro nos ofrece.

RESEÑAS/REVIEWS

**Celeste Jiménez de Madariaga (Ed.).
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El monográfico *Patrimonio Cultural Inmaterial de la Humanidad* es el resultado del proyecto «Patrimonio Cultural Inmaterial de la Humanidad. Patrimonialización, Gestión y Buenas Prácticas», proyecto de investigación e innovación científica desarrollado rigurosamente por un equipo interdisciplinar de investigadores, entre los años 2016 y diciembre de 2020, en el seno de la Universidad de Huelva.

El proyecto aporta la novedosa perspectiva de disciplinas tales como la antropología social, la gestión cultural, la economía, los métodos cuantitativos y el *marketing*, para reconocer la importancia de investigar los procesos a través de los cuales el Estado español, y sus diferentes administraciones y políticas, acoge (o pretende acoger) algunos de sus elementos del patrimonio cultural inmaterial al sistema de salvaguarda que la Unesco ratificó en 2003 para esta tipología de patrimonio a través de la Convención para la Salvaguarda del Patrimonio Cultural Inmaterial de la Humanidad, desde la que en 2006 España pasó a ser un Estado parte. Dado el interés social, el proyecto obtuvo financiación en el marco del Programa Estatal de Fomento de la Investigación Científica y Técnica de Excelencia.

En la obra encontramos una compilación de gran parte de los resultados obtenidos que se presentan a través de 12 capítulos estructurados de manera ordenada para entender el proceder de la Unesco en materia de Patrimonio Cultural Inmaterial, así como la participación del Estado español en la misma, identificar cómo se estructuran las competencias y políticas patrimoniales en el país, diagnosticar los elementos del patrimonio cultural inmaterial reconocidos por la Unesco, evaluar los criterios seguidos para tal fin e investigar el posible impacto económico, social y cultural derivado de las declaraciones en cada territorio.

En cuanto a la metodología, en la obra se aúnan diferentes métodos de manera interdisciplinar. En este libro se da cabida a estudios en los que prima el enfoque cualitativo, como la etnografía y la interpretación antropológica, y el enfoque propio de los métodos cuantitativos, como los modelados econométricos y los análisis macro y micro.

Asimismo, se incluyen cuatro estudios en profundidad de casos de patrimonio español incluido en la Lista Representativa del Patrimonio Cultural Inmaterial de la Humanidad y el Registro de Buenas Prácticas (el último que se expone): «La Patum de Berga», «El Flamenco», «La Fiesta de los Patios de Córdoba» y «Revitalización del saber tradicional de la cal artesanal» en Morón de la Frontera (Sevilla). Estos casos se complementan con otros internacionales: «El mariachi, música de cuerdas, canto y trompeta» (México), «El Fado, canto popular urbano» (Portugal) y «El Baile Chino» (Chile). En los capítulos 8-12 de este libro encontramos estas experiencias.

En el primer capítulo, su editora, Celeste Jiménez de Madariaga, quien además es investigadora principal del citado proyecto, nos adentra en el estado de la cuestión, objetivos, metodología y organización de los contenidos investigados. La tesis de la autora parte de los procesos de patrimonialización de reconocido interés mundial, que se inician desde la Convención de la Unesco de 1972 sobre la Protección del Patrimonio Mundial, Cultural y Natural, convención a partir de la que se reclaman contenidos que aborda este libro: la falta de reconocimiento de elementos del patrimonio cultural inmaterial; la importancia del patrimonio cultural inmaterial para entender la historia de la humanidad; la inexistencia de un marco jurídico apropiado a tal patrimonio; y, finalmente, la necesidad de actuar frente a la pérdida de muchos patrimonios inmateriales.

En el año 2003, la Conferencia General de la Unesco aprobó la Convención para la Salvaguardia del Patrimonio Cultural Inmaterial de la Humanidad. Esta convención revolucionó las políticas internacionales sobre patrimonio que, anteriormente, habían tenido unos fuertes matices historicista y monumental. Se comenzaba a entender el patrimonio también como la parte de la cultura viva y cercana que las personas de todo el mundo podían identificar con su cotidianeidad. Para declarar los elementos del patrimonio se adoptó el sistema de listas que aplicaba la convención de 1972. Esta vez se clasificaban entre la Lista Representativa, la Lista de Salvaguardia Urgente y el Registro de Buenas prácticas de salvaguardia.

En concreto, la Lista Representativa supuso un éxito. Desde que España ratifica su condición de Estado parte de esta convención, el país ha logrado inscribir 20 elementos en la Lista Representativa y 3 en el Registro de Buenas Prácticas. Existe un incremento del interés por parte de las instituciones públicas por salvaguardar el patrimonio cultural inmaterial incorporándolo a sus competencias y llevando a la práctica los principios de la convención de 2003.

En el capítulo 2, «Crónica de una Convención para Salvaguardar el Patrimonio Cultural Inmaterial», nos relaciona las ideas clave que promovieron el reconocimiento mundial de la diversidad cultural «un patrimonio común de la humanidad» y, en consonancia, el progreso teórico en torno a la idea de patrimonio cultural para ampliar su tradicional sentido material hacia una que comprendía mejor la realidad de la

diversidad de las culturas con el reconocimiento del patrimonio cultural inmaterial. Los tratados y convenciones, hasta llegar a la convención de 1972, no reconocían los patrimonios desligados de la autoría maestra o de las grandes civilizaciones, poniendo el centro a la cultura europea sobre todas las demás. La convención de 2003 trataba de dar un lugar al patrimonio más generalizado y rico, el que se define en esta convención.

La Convención para la Salvaguarda del Patrimonio Cultural Inmaterial de la Humanidad es el resultado de reflexiones y encuentros sobre ideas fundamentales para el progreso hacia una sociedad más justa e igualitaria. En ella encontramos ideas de los mayores hitos del siglo xx, como la protección de los derechos humanos fundamentales y de los derechos grupales (a través de los derechos culturales), la sostenibilidad y, por supuesto, el respeto y la protección de la diversidad cultural. Si bien es cierto, como nos narra esta autora, que con la materialización de estas ideas se crea un nuevo concepto de patrimonio que se institucionaliza en base a la experiencia de la convención de 1972 y que tendrá que ir forjándose a medida que se irían incorporando a la convención de 2003 nuevas ideas sobre la «teoría del patrimonio cultural».

«La realidad imaginada», expuesta en el capítulo 3, trata sobre la consolidación del concepto de patrimonio cultural inmaterial. En este capítulo se deconstruyen las ideas imprescindibles a través de las cuales la convención de 2003 define el concepto de patrimonio cultural inmaterial, las formas en las que se manifiesta y los procesos de salvaguarda. La cuestión aquí tratada es la «sobreclasificación» del patrimonio cultural, primero en material e inmaterial, y luego, a través de las diferentes listas propuestas por ambas convenciones en las que subyace la forma en la que los Estados de derecho que ratifican la convención gestionan el patrimonio a través de sus organismos internos. En cuestiones de salvaguarda, la clasificación conlleva una fotografía de los patrimonios en un momento y forma concretos que la dificultan. Sobre cómo aplicar acciones reales de salvaguarda será fundamental el papel de las comunidades, grupos e individuos portadores del patrimonio.

Como una de las grandes aportaciones de este libro, en el capítulo 4, Saúl Lázaro Ortiz y Aniceto Delgado Méndez, gestor cultural y antropólogo social respectivamente, hablan sobre el sistema de listas empleado por la Unesco para reconocer el Patrimonio Cultural Inmaterial de la Humanidad. En él encontramos cómo se componen e implementan cada una de ellas, las áreas temáticas en las que se clasifican los patrimonios declarados y se analiza el principio de igualdad de participación de los Estados parte en las decisiones de la convención. Su revisión se genera gracias al análisis estadístico de la incidencia de cada uno de estos valores expuestos. Con él, los autores muestran que, de todas, la Lista Representativa es el instrumento más reconocido, los elementos inscritos en el Registro de Buenas Prácticas se confunden bajo las ramas de la Lista Representativa y, a pesar de tener un fin de salvaguarda importante, los Estados parte no se movilizan para incluir sus elementos en la Lista de Salvaguarda Urgente, ya que tienen una visión negativa sobre la misma.

En el capítulo 5, los economistas David Castilla Espino y Juan José García del Hoyo, junto a la editora, analizan los factores y criterios de inscripción en la lista de la convención de 2003. Estos criterios aparecen en las Directrices Operativas elaboradas para la aplicación de dicha convención. En el mismo capítulo se describe el proce-

dimiento para la presentación de candidaturas de PCI a la Unesco en España, que únicamente es a través de un procedimiento burocrático de formularios y documentación. Uno de los mayores problemas aquí expuestos es la hiperburocratización de un proceso al que no todas las comunidades tienen acceso, poniendo en entredicho el principio participativo de la convención y su aplicabilidad.

El peso de cada criterio en la aprobación de una candidatura se analiza a través del método de los Mapas Cognitivos Difusos. A los criterios que valora la Unesco para aceptar una propuesta a candidatura se suman otros propuestos por estos investigadores devenidos de los trabajos realizados en el proyecto. En este capítulo se aporta, además, los criterios más relevantes para que un elemento del patrimonio sea inscrito en la Lista Representativa del Patrimonio Cultural Inmaterial de la Humanidad, así como la relación que existe entre dichos criterios.

En el siguiente capítulo, los autores Aniceto Delgado Méndez y Saúl Lázaro Ortiz nos vuelven a acercar a la gestión gubernamental del patrimonio cultural inmaterial, esta vez en España. Se muestra cómo las políticas nacionales se empapan de los avances y reflexiones que se estaban dando a nivel mundial y que dejaban de entender el patrimonio inmaterial como algo «pintoresco» para pasar a formar parte de algo representativo para las comunidades que nada tiene que ver con la «excepcionalidad» de los elementos patrimoniales. Su legislación ha sido posible gracias a la descentralización de las competencias en las CC. AA. que, más que propiciar el refuerzo de una identidad nacional creada, da forma legal a las realidades de cada territorio que componen el país.

Las aportaciones sobre cómo evolucionan las leyes de patrimonio cultural en el país, desde la Ley del Patrimonio Histórico Español de 1985, en la que el patrimonio cultural inmaterial tiene un papel poco reconocido, hasta que España ratifica la convención en 2016 y se aprueba la Ley para la Salvaguarda del Patrimonio Cultural Inmaterial de España en 2015, se recogen en este capítulo. Los autores analizan la centralidad necesaria para interactuar con Unesco y la diversidad de gestión en la realidad interna del país como una situación que genera desencuentros.

Desde que Adam Smith definiera las artes como actividades incapaces de generar riquezas y carentes de un valor económico, son muchas las teorías desarrolladas en torno al valor de las artes y la cultura, hasta llegar a este momento en el que los autores Juan José García del Hoyo y Celeste Jiménez de Madariaga analizan las teorías del valor y aplican métodos de estimación del valor económico sobre el patrimonio cultural inmaterial. El capítulo 7 trata sobre cómo las ideas ligadas al patrimonio, tales como el valor excepcional y autenticidad, se transforman en otras más inclusivas como la representatividad de las realidades sociales. En el contexto en el que la convención de 2003 se incluye, el del desarrollo sostenible, el patrimonio cultural inmaterial pasa a tener un papel protagonista como recurso y, a la vez, catalizador de la participación social que contribuye con tales propósitos de sostenibilidad.

Los capítulos que siguen tratan casos concretos cuyo estudio ha sido de excepcional importancia para la aportación de novedades en esta obra. El capítulo 8, escrito por Aniceto Delgado Méndez, analiza el papel de las comunidades portadoras en el proceso de salvaguarda y explora la posible existencia de una participación colaborativa, que, a pesar de ser una de las aportaciones más novedosas de la convención de 2003,

arrastra importantes dificultades para su aplicación. Esto es gracias al estudio de la Patum de Berga, elemento inscrito en la Lista Representativa. En el capítulo 9, Fermín Seño dedica su estudio a «La revitalización del saber tradicional de la cal artesanal en Morón de la Frontera», un elemento inscrito en el Registro de Buenas Prácticas, un ejemplo entre otros de cómo las candidaturas Unesco se personalizan a través de un grupo concreto de protagonistas que impulsan las acciones de salvaguarda. Se nos muestran aquí las dificultades burocráticas y económicas para cumplir con los requisitos Unesco cuando son los protagonistas los que promueven la candidatura.

El capítulo 10 trata sobre el Flamenco, una declaración en la Lista Representativa que, a pesar de un primer intento fallido de declaratoria, acaba por internacionalizarse e institucionalizarse de tal manera que, además, se suma a su protagonismo como parte del proyecto político de la autonomía andaluza, una de las tres comunidades que participan en esta candidatura. Esto será estudiado por los antropólogos Clara Macías Sánchez y Fermín Seño Asencio. El último de los casos españoles estudiados es el de la Fiesta de los Patios de Córdoba, un ejemplo de promoción de patrimonio con la marca Unesco empleado por los poderes locales como reclamo turístico y motor de desarrollo económico. En el capítulo 11, Juan José García del Hoyo, Celeste Jiménez de Madariaga y David Castilla Espino analizan cómo la declaración de este elemento influye en los precios de mercado de otros bienes de la economía local (viviendas cercanas a los patios), a través del método de los precios hedónicos.

El último capítulo está dedicado al estudio de dos de los casos internacionales incluidos en el proyecto, el Fado y el Mariachi, escrito por Clara Macías Sánchez y Enrique Fernando Nava López, participante internacional de la obra. Los dos elementos, inscritos en la Lista Representativa, son expresiones musicales populares que han pasado un proceso de instrumentalización como referentes identitarios nacionales a los que posteriormente se les adiciona su valor patrimonial con la declaración de la Unesco. Se trata en este capítulo un tema aún controvertido en este y otros ámbitos del patrimonio: la protección de los derechos de autoría y la mercantilización de elementos del patrimonio cultural inmaterial que se descontextualizan de sus realidades.

Las aportaciones de temas tan específicos se presentan de forma clara y cercana haciendo de la lectura un proceso catártico que proyecta una notable riqueza de conocimientos y reflexiones sobre el lector. De forma novedosa y actualizada, la obra trata campos tan importantes para el ámbito patrimonial como la teoría del patrimonio cultural inmaterial, el papel y funcionamiento de los organismos nacionales e internacionales materializados en la Unesco, y, sobre todo, las dificultades a las que se enfrentan grupos y comunidades para salvaguardar su patrimonio, preservar sus formas de vida y, en ocasiones, encajar con el sistema Unesco. Gracias a los estudios de caso, en la obra se presenta la notable importancia de la adecuación de las medidas y procedimientos de salvaguardia a cada realidad que, como ocurre con la búsqueda de la aplicación de los derechos culturales, a veces se da en sistemas tradicionales que no se organizan a través de Estados ni de su burocracia.

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