

DIVERTIDAS

e-ISSN 2248-6941

L-ISSN 0121 - 6538

# ÁNFORA

**de las Ciencias Sociales y Humanas**

Interculturality and Social Inclusion.  
A Challenge for Social and Human Sciences



Revista científica de la  
Universidad Autónoma de Manizales  
Vol 30 · N°54 · enero - junio · 2023



PUBLINDEX  
DIALNET  
CLASE  
REDALYC  
ULRICH  
CITE FACTOR

EBSCO  
LATINDEX  
MIAR  
REDIB  
JOURNALTocs  
FUENTE ACADÉMICA  
ACADEMIC SEARCH

DOAJ  
BIBLAT  
CIRC  
ERIHPLUS  
BASE  
CORE

Revista **Ánfora** · Fundada en 1993  
L-ISSN 0121-6538 · ISSN electrónico 2248-6941  
Periodicidad semestral  
Vol. 30, N 54, 287 páginas enero - junio de 2023  
Manizales – Colombia

Universidad Autónoma de Manizales  
*Rector:* Carlos Eduardo Jaramillo Sanint  
*Vicerrector Académico:* Iván Escobar Escobar

La revista **Ánfora** es una publicación semestral con alcance regional, nacional e internacional. Difunde resultados de investigaciones en las áreas de las ciencias sociales y humanas, con el fin de fomentar el intercambio de conocimientos, opiniones y perspectivas culturales diversas.

Se dirige a investigadores, docentes y, en general, a estudiantes y profesionales de las disciplinas afines. La revista invita a presentar investigaciones interdisciplinarias que busquen interpretar y abordar soluciones a temas actuales desde distintas perspectivas de las áreas establecidas. El interés de **Ánfora** es aportar al enriquecimiento del acervo científico y a sus comunidades, a partir del debate y la colaboración.

### **Editora**

Angélica María Rodríguez Ortiz. Ph.D

Ánfora	Manizales - Colombia	Vol. 30	Nº 54	287 P.	enero-junio	2023	L-ISSN 0121-6538 E-ISSN 2248-6941
--------	----------------------	---------	-------	--------	-------------	------	--------------------------------------

### **Comité Editorial y Científico**

*Melina Vázquez.* PhD. Universidad de Buenos Aires, Argentina  
*Óscar Aguilera Ruiz.* PhD. Universidad Católica del Maule, Chile  
*Freddy Orlando Santamaría.* Ph.D. Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana, Colombia  
*Enrique Javier Díez Gutiérrez.* PhD. Universidad de León, España  
*Carlos Valerio Echavarría Grajales.* PhD. Universidad de La Salle, Colombia  
*Luis Antonio Gautier.* Ph.D. University of Texas at Tyler, Estados Unidos  
*Francisco Javier Ruiz.* Ph.D Universidad de Caldas, Colombia.  
*Maximiliano Bron.* Ph.D. Universidad Nacional de la Rioja, Argentina.  
*Héctor Claudio Farina.* Ph.D. Universidad de Guadalajara.  
*Felipe Arocena.* Ph.D. Universidad de la República de Uruguay.  
*Carlos Emilio García Duque.* PhD. Universidad de Caldas, Colombia  
*Germán Muñoz González.* PhD. Universidad de Manizales, Colombia  
*José Carlos Luque Brazán.* MA. Universidad Autónoma de Ciudad de México, México  
*Salomé Sola-Morales.* PhD. Universidad de Sevilla, España  
*José Manuel Saiz Álvarez.* PhD. Tecnológico de Monterrey, México  
*Jorge Colvin Díez.* PhD. IE Bussiness School, España  
*Juan Ramón Rodríguez Fernández.* PhD. Universidad de León, España  
*Ana Paula Penchazsadeh.* Ph.D. Universidad de Buenos Aires, Argentina.  
*María Verdeja Muñiz.* Ph.D. Universidad de Oviedo, España.  
*Jorge Guadalupe Arzate.* Ph.D. Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, México.  
*Diego Bentivegna.* Ph.D. Universidad de Buenos Aires, Argentina.

### **Comité Técnico**

*María del Carmen Vergara Quintero.* Coordinadora del Comité Técnico  
*Laura V. Obando Alzate.* Editora y Coordinadora Editorial de la Universidad Autónoma de Manizales  
*Angélica María Rodríguez Ortiz.* Editora de Ánfora  
*Leydi Daniela Hernández Buriticá.* Asistente Editorial de Ánfora  
*Juan Camilo Hernández Rodríguez.* Corrector de estilo  
*Sebastián López U.* Diagramación ([www.estratosferadesign.com](http://www.estratosferadesign.com))  
*Wbeimar Cano Restrepo.* Soporte Técnico  
*Ana Jael Merchán Villegas.* Auxiliar Administrativa

Ánfora	Manizales - Colombia	Vol. 30	Nº 54	287 P.	enero-junio	2023	L-ISSN 0121-6538 E-ISSN 2248-6941
--------	----------------------	---------	-------	--------	-------------	------	--------------------------------------

### **Autores edición 54 de la Revista Ánfora (enero-junio 2023)**

*Indira Andrea Quiroga Dallos* (Universidad de Santander).

*Ana Valeria Avalo* (Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Tecnológicas (CONICET), Unidad Ejecutora de Ciencias Sociales Regionales y Humanidades (UE-CISOR) de la Universidad Nacional de Jujuy.

*Juan Camilo Hernández Rodríguez* (Universidad Nacional de Colombia, sede Manizales).

*Angélica María Perlaza Moreno* (Institución Universitaria Antonio José Camacho).

*Paola Andrea González Vaquiro* (Institución Universitaria Antonio José Camacho).

*Luz América Martínez Álvarez* (Institución Universitaria Antonio José Camacho).

*Gustavo Adolfo Girón Restrepo* (Institución Universitaria Antonio José Camacho).

*Eduardo D. Puc Vázquez* (Escuela Nacional de Estudios Superiores-Mérida (ENES [UNAM])).

*María de Fátima Flores Palacios* (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México).

*Andrea Cetré Castilblanco* (Universidad del Sur de la Florida).

*María Claudia Vidal Coronel* (Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú).

*Alex Oswaldo Sánchez Huarcaya* (Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú).

*Javier Duque Daza* (Universidad del Valle).

*Anais Palacio Quejada* (Universidad Nacional, sede Medellín).

*Diana Paola Betancurth Loaiza* (Universidad de Caldas).

*Consuelo Vélez Álvarez* (Universidad de Caldas).

*Natalia Sánchez Palacio* (Universidad de Caldas).

*Adriana Julieth Olaya Torres* (Universidad del Desarrollo, Santiago, Chile).

*Diana Marcela Montoya Londoño* (Universidad de Caldas).

*Antonio P. Gutiérrez de Blume* (Georgia Southern University).

*Aníbal Puente Ferreras* (Universidad Andrés Bello, Chile).

*Fredyd Torres Oregón* (Centro de Estudios e Investigación en Desarrollo Sustentable (CEDeS), Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México).

### **Evaluadores**

*Doris Cristina Quintero Lesmes*. Fundación Cardiovascular de Colombia, Colombia.

*Felipe Torres-Torres*. Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, México.

*Suyai Malen García Gualda*. IPEHCS-CONICET/UNCo, Argentina.

*Jeanne W. Simon*. Universidad de Concepción, Chile.

*Josef Estermann*. Universidad de Lucerna, Suiza.

*Jorge Antonio Balladares Burgos*. Universidad Andina Simón Bolívar, Ecuador.

*Manuel Alejandro Prada Londoño*. Universidad Pedagógica Nacional, Colombia.

*Luis Felipe Granada Aguirre*. Universidad Libre, Colombia.

*Andrea Padilla-Muñoz*. Universidad del Rosario, Colombia.

*Silvia Gutiérrez Vidrio*. Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana, Unidad Xochimilco, México.

Ánfora	Manizales - Colombia	Vol. 30	Nº 54	287 P.	enero-junio	2023	L-ISSN 0121-6538 E-ISSN 2248-6941
--------	----------------------	---------	-------	--------	-------------	------	--------------------------------------

*Erika Tapia Nava.* Facultad de Ciencias Políticas y Sociales, UNAM, México.  
*Giampietro Schibotto.* Universidad Externado de Colombia, Colombia.  
*Alejandro Martínez.* Universidad Externado de Colombia, Colombia.  
*Yolanda Puyana.* Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Colombia.  
*Adolfo-Ignacio Calderón.* Pontificia Universidade Católica de Campinas, Brasil.  
*Samuel Mendonça.* Pontificia Universidade Católica de Campinas, Brasil.  
*Javier Sánchez Zapatero.* Universidad de Salamanca, España.  
*Claudia María Maya Franco.* Universidad de Medellín, Colombia.  
*Héctor Fernando Vizcarra Gómez.* Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, México.  
*Roberto-Martín Julián.* Universidad de Valencia, España.  
*Juan Guillermo Vieira Silva.* EAFIT, Colombia.  
*Felipe Arocena.* Universidad de la República, Uruguay.  
*Nelly Johanna Lobo Rodríguez.* Universidad de Antioquia, Colombia.  
*Fred Gustavo Manrique Abril.* Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Colombia.  
*Walter Lizandro Arias Gallegos.* Universidad Católica San Pablo, Perú.  
*María Inés Menjura Escobar.* Universidad de Manizales, Colombia.  
*Claudio Domingo Elórtegui Gómez.* Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso, Chile.  
*Olga Lucía Fernández* (Universidad Católica de Manizales, Colombia).  
*Napoleón Murcia Peña* (Universidad de Caldas).  
*Andrés Felipe López López* (Universidad San Buenaventura. Sede Medellín, Colombia).  
*Elkin Andrés Heredia* (Fundación Universitaria Autónoma de las Américas, Colombia).

### **Traducciones**

*Centro de Traducciones de la Universidad Autónoma de Manizales, UAM.*

#### **Traductores al inglés- Centro de traducción UAM**

Diana Lorena Giraldo O.  
 Inés Gabriela Guerrero U.  
 Julián Mauricio Marín H.  
 Mónica Naranjo R.  
 Susana Andrea Pérez R.  
 Alexandra Suaza R.  
 Juan Carlos Vinasco O.

**Revisión por Nativo al inglés**  
 Gregory Wallace Amos

**Revisión por Nativo al Portugués**  
 Rafael Tostes

#### **Traductor al portugués Centro de traducción UAM**

Juan Carlos Vinasco O.

Ánfora	Manizales - Colombia	Vol. 30	Nº 54	287 P.	enero-junio	2023	L-ISSN 0121-6538 E-ISSN 2248-6941
--------	----------------------	---------	-------	--------	-------------	------	--------------------------------------

### **Suscripciones, canjes y adquisiciones**

Ánfora es una revista de distribución gratuita electrónica.

anfora@autonoma.edu.co

Versión electrónica con acceso abierto mediante el sistema electrónico

Open Journal System (OJS): <https://publicaciones.autonoma.edu.co/index.php/anfora>

### **Redes Sociales**

Facebook: @RevistaAnforaUAMmanizales

### **Dirección postal (address):**

Universidad Autónoma de Manizales

Departamento de Ciencias Humanas

Grupo de investigación Ética y política

Tel.: (57) (6) 872 7272 Ext.: 166 ó 407 Fax: (6) 872 7670

E-mail: anfora@autonoma.edu.co

<https://publicaciones.autonoma.edu.co/index.php/anfora>

Antigua Estación del Ferrocarril - Manizales (Colombia)

“Vigilada Mineducación”

*Se permite su reproducción citando la fuente.*

*El contenido de los artículos es responsabilidad de los autores y no compromete la posición de la revista.*

Ánfora	Manizales - Colombia	Vol. 30	Nº 54	287 P.	enero-junio	2023	L-ISSN 0121-6538 E-ISSN 2248-6941
--------	----------------------	---------	-------	--------	-------------	------	--------------------------------------

### Indexada en

#### Bases de datos multidisciplinares

**EBSCO** Academic Search Complete

**EBSCO** Fuente Académica Plus

**EBSCO** Academic Search Ultimate

**DIALNET** Servicio de alertas sobre publicación de contenidos científicos

**CORE** La colección más amplia a nivel mundial de artículos de investigación en acceso abierto

### Recursos de evaluación

**PUBLINDEX** índice Nacional de publicaciones seriadas y científicas y tecnologías

**DOAJ** Directory of Open Access Journals

**ERIHPlus** Índice Europeo de Referencia para las Humanidades y las Ciencias Sociales

**LATINDEX** Sistema Regional de Información en Línea para Revistas Científicas

**RedAlyC** Red de Revistas Científicas de América Latina y el Caribe de América Latina, el Caribe, España y Portugal

**REDIB** Red Iberoamericana de Innovación y conocimiento científico

**CIRC** Clasificación integrada de Revistas Científicas

**BIBLAT** Bibliografía Latinoamericana

### Directorios

**JournalTOCs** La colección más amplia de búsqueda de revistas académicas, tablas de contenido

**Sherpa Romeo** Recurso en línea que agrega y analiza las políticas de acceso abierto de las editoriales de todo el mundo

**Ulrichsweb** fuente mundial de información periódicas desde 1932

**CLASE** Citas Latinoamericanas en Ciencias Sociales y Humanidades

**BASE** Bielefeld Academic Search engine

### Directorios de métricas de revistas

**Cite Factor** Servidor que proporciona la indexación de las principales revistas internacionales y memorias de evento

**MIAR** Matriz para el análisis de la información Revistas

Ánfora	Manizales - Colombia	Vol. 30	Nº 54	287 P.	enero-junio	2023	L-ISSN 0121-6538 E-ISSN 2248-6941
--------	----------------------	---------	-------	--------	-------------	------	--------------------------------------

# CONTENTS

## CONTENIDO • CONTEÚDO

### 13 EDITORIAL

Moisés Medrano

---

### RESEARCH • INVESTIGACIONES • INVESTIGAÇÕES

(INTERCULTURALITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION. A CHALLENGE FOR SOCIAL AND HUMAN SCIENCES)

#### 19 Women, Land and Food: Food Security from the Role of *Kamëntšá* Women [*English Version*]

*Mujer, tierra y alimento: una mirada a la seguridad alimentaria desde el rol de la mujer kamëntšá*

[*Versión en castellano*]

*Mulheres, terra e alimentos: um olhar sobre a segurança alimentar através do papel das mulheres kamëntšá*

Indira Andrea Quiroga Dallos

---

#### 41 Indigenous Peoples and Nations as Part of the “Subject-Object” of the Study of Political Science [*English Version*]

*Los pueblos y naciones indígenas como parte del «objeto-sujeto» de estudio de la ciencia política*

[*Versión en castellano*]

*Povos indígenas e nações como parte do "objeto-subjeto" dos estudos de ciência política*

Ana Valeria Avalo

---



58 Where are America, Africa and Asia?: A Call to Cross-cultural Philosophizing  
[English Version]

*¿Y dónde quedan América, África y Asia?: una invitación a filosofar interculturalmente*  
[Versión en castellano]

*Onde estão as Américas, a África e a Ásia?: um convite à filosofização intercultural*

Juan Camilo Hernández Rodríguez

.....

92 Essential Parameters for a Model of Workplace Accessibility for People with Disabilities  
[English Version]

*Parámetros indispensables para un modelo de inclusión laboral para personas con discapacidad*  
[Versión en castellano]

*Parâmetros indispensáveis para um modelo de inclusão laboral para pessoas com deficiência*

Angélica María Perlaza Moreno · Paola Andrea González Vaquiro ·  
Luz América Martínez Álvarez · Gustavo Adolfo Girón Restrepo

.....

109 Social Representations of Health in Artisanal Fishermen of Yucatan, Mexico [English Version]

*Representaciones sociales de la salud en pescadores artesanales de Yucatán, México*  
[Versión en castellano]

*Representações sociais de saúde entre pescadores artesanais em Yucatan, México*

Eduardo D. Puc Vázquez · María de Fátima Flores Palacios

.....

136 Care Policies in Some Latin American Countries. A Feminist Perspective  
[English Version]

*Las políticas de cuidado en algunos países de América Latina. Una mirada feminista*  
[Versión en castellano]

*Políticas de cuidado em alguns países da América Latina. Uma perspectiva feminista*

Andrea Cetré Castilblanco

.....

**RESEARCH ON OTHER TOPICS • INVESTIGACIONES EN OTRAS TEMÁTICAS • INVESTIGAÇÕES SOBRE OUTROS TÓPICOS**

162 Factors in the Educational Effectiveness of a Private University in Peru in times of Pandemic  
[English Version]

*Factores de la eficacia educativa de una universidad privada de Perú en tiempos de pandemia*  
[Versión en castellano]

*Fatores na eficácia educacional de uma universidade privada no Peru em tempos de pandemia*

María Claudia Vidal Coronel · Alex Oswaldo Sánchez Huarcaya

.....

183 Crime, criminality and fiction: the murder of Jimmy Hoffa, mafia and literature  
[English Version]

*Crimen, criminalidad y ficción: el asesinato de Jimmy Hoffa, mafia y la literatura*  
[Versión en castellano]

*Crime, criminalidade e ficção: o assassinato de Jimmy Hoffa, mafia e literatura*

Javier Duque Daza

---

210 The Perception of Corruption and Political Orientations: A Study of University Students (UAM)  
[*English Version*]

*La percepción sobre corrupción y las orientaciones políticas: un caso de estudio en jóvenes universitarios (UAM)*  
[*Versión en castellano*]

*Percepções de corrupção e orientações políticas: um estudo de caso de jovens estudantes universitários (UAM)*

Anais Palacio Quejada

---

236 Georeferencing at a Health Service, an Experience from Community Assets [*English Version*]

*La georreferenciación al servicio de la salud, una experiencia desde los activos comunitarios*  
[*Versión en castellano*]

*Georreferenciamento a serviço da saúde, uma experiência dos bens da comunidade*

Diana Paola Betancurth Loaiza · Consuelo Vélez Álvarez ·  
Natalia Sánchez Palacio

---

254 Metacognitive Judgments as an Emerging Research Trend. A  
Conceptual Review [*English Version*]

*Los juicios metacognitivos como tendencia emergente de investigación.  
Una revisión conceptual  
[Versión en castellano]*

*Julgamentos metacognitivos como uma tendência emergente de  
pesquisa. Uma revisão conceitual*

Adriana Julieth Olaya Torres · Diana Marcela Montoya Londoño  
Antonio P. Gutierrez de Blume · Aníbal Puente Ferreras

.....

## REVIEWS • RESEÑAS • RESENHAS

283 Populism as an Expression of Political Communication to  
Understand What is Happening in Latin America  
[a Critical Review]  
[*English Version*]

*Populismo y comunicación política para entender qué sucede en  
América Latina [reseña crítica]  
[Versión en castellano]*

*Populismo e comunicação política para entender o que está acontecendo  
na América Latina [revisão crítica]*

Fredyd Torres Oregón

.....

# EDITORIAL

## Interculturalidad e inclusión social: un desafío para las ciencias sociales y humanas

Moisés Medrano\*

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3203-5393>

Colombia

› Para citar este artículo:

Medrano, M. (2023).

Interculturalidad e inclusión social: un desafío para las ciencias sociales y humanas.

*Ánfora*, 30(54), 13-17.

<https://doi.org/10.30854/anfv30.n54.2023.1017>

Universidad Autónoma de Manizales. L-ISSN 0121-6538.

E-ISSN 2248-6941.

CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

*Sentipensar* la interculturalidad es un proceso demandante académica y personalmente; ello, por la ideologización a la que se ven sometidas las teorías y enfoques metodológicos que facultan su reflexión y por las implicaciones que los resultados de los análisis tienen en la vida de los sujetos de dichas reflexiones.

Tras los resultados del Informe Gulbenkian (Wallerstein, 1998), las recomendaciones de la Unesco posteriores a las convenciones de 2003 y 2005, así como las emanadas de la Misión de Sabios de Colombia (MinCiencias, 2019) las ciencias sociales en general han visto en su seno importantes debates de índole ético, así como esfuerzos por acometer compromisos inter y transdisciplinarios. Al interior de sus disciplinas se reflexionan las maneras de cumplir con sus compromisos disciplinarios, la profundización de sus campos disciplinares y enrolarse en la comunidad científica global a través de la investigación, la docencia y la proyección social de los centros académicos de las instituciones educativas de Colombia.

Los acentos en materia de interculturalidad se instalan en campos como la inclusión social, el cambio social, las poblaciones, las políticas públicas sectoriales y los principales obstáculos que enfrentan los sujetos de la interculturalidad. Estos debates se amplifican por la resistencia en sectores de la sociedad, los académicos parcelarios del conocimiento y sectores políticos que rechazan las transformaciones sociales emergentes y sus implicaciones en materia política.

---

\* Ph.D. Candidate in Educational Sciences. Bachelor in Social Work. Sociologist. Corporación Universitaria Rafael Núñez. [medrano@curnvvirtual.edu.co](mailto:medrano@curnvvirtual.edu.co)

México, Brasil y Colombia suelen ser observados en América Latina por razones demográficas y por erigirse en laboratorios de movimientos sociales, espacios de análisis y debates académicos que se plantean las tensiones entre lo local y lo global. En el caso de Colombia, las reflexiones coinciden con referentes de transformaciones político-culturales que son producto de las más de tres décadas de la Constitución de 1991: la reapertura de programas de ciencias sociales y la firma del acuerdo para la terminación del conflicto armado.

Con esta edición la revista *Ánfora* presenta a la comunidad científica un dossier temático sobre interculturalidad e inclusión social en el que se agrupan seis artículos producidos por investigadores de los campos de las ciencias sociales y las ciencias de la salud, honrando diálogos inter y transdisciplinares. En varios de los artículos se ocupan de examinar las situaciones de algunos sujetos históricos subalternos, como las mujeres indígenas, las personas con discapacidad, las mujeres latinoamericanas y los pueblos indígenas, los cuales evocan reflexiones sobre el lugar que ocupan dichos sujetos en la producción de conocimientos. Ello, en la línea de Ranajit Guha (1983) y la producción de ausencias/emergencias en la sociología de Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2006).

Las contribuciones presentan reflexiones relacionadas con la necesidad de filosofar interculturalmente, el papel de la mujer indígena en la seguridad alimentaria, el lugar de enunciación de los pueblos y naciones indígenas en el estudio de la ciencia política, las representaciones sociales de la salud en pescadores artesanales, las políticas del cuidado en algunos países de América Latina y los modelos de inclusión laboral para personas con discapacidad. El hilo conductor de esta variopinta producción intelectual es la interculturalidad y la inclusión social, al igual que los crecientes desafíos que la sociedad demanda a los científicos sociales (Giddens, 2007) y del campo de la salud.

En «Mujer, tierra y alimento: una mirada a la seguridad alimentaria desde el rol de la mujer *kamëntša*» la reflexión se enfoca en el relevante lugar que ocupa el mundo simbólico en la seguridad alimentaria y las relaciones entre las actividades, prácticas y saberes de las mujeres *kamëntšá*. La autora, Indira Andrea Quiroga Dallos (de Colombia), reitera el enorme valor de los trabajos etnográficos en los estudios de interculturalidad e inclusión y se alinea a reflexiones globales de entidades como la FAO y el lugar que reconocen a las mujeres indígenas en la construcción de la seguridad alimentaria global.

Las reflexiones sobre las ausencias de los pueblos y naciones indígenas en los estudios de la ciencia política corroboran la necesidad de reflexionar lo que Boaventura de Sousa Santos plantea en la «sociología de las ausencias», en el sentido del esfuerzo por producir dichas ausencias. La autora, Ana Valeria Avalo (de Argentina), analiza los antecedentes empíricos y metateóricos de los estudios de la ciencia política como disciplina y concluye que es necesario descolonizarla,

así como reivindicar a los pueblos y naciones indígenas en tanto sujeto colectivo en este campo de conocimiento disciplinar.

Juan Camilo Hernández Rodríguez (Colombia) se cuestiona el lugar de América, África y Asia en la acción de filosofar, a la vez que invita y propone la reflexión en torno a considerar los problemas filosóficos diversificando perspectivas, sin que ello signifique sacrificar el rigor académico. Esta invitación también señala la importancia de las nuevas preguntas ante los problemas no contemplados en la sociedad; precisamente, por el lugar que ocupan los pensadores de América, África y Asia en las consideraciones epistemológicas eurocéntricas.

Acompaña esta entrega de la revista *Ánfora* el trabajo colectivo de Angélica María Perlaza Moreno, Paola Andrea González Vaquiro, Luz América Martínez Álvarez y Gustavo Adolfo Girón Restrepo (Colombia), quienes se enfocan en conocer los parámetros propuestos en los modelos de discapacidad, identificando los siguientes: a) acompañamiento familiar, b) ajuste del puesto de trabajo, c) formación laboral en competencias, d) entrenamiento y acompañamiento en el puesto de trabajo, e) capacitación a los compañeros de trabajo y jefes sobre la inclusión de personas con discapacidad, f) seguimiento y evaluación del proceso de inclusión laboral y g) nivel de educación. Estos parámetros son indicativos de las limitaciones de política pública de inclusión de población con discapacidad, así como el subregistro de dicha población y los impactos que ello implica en materia de inclusión laboral.

A su vez, «Representaciones sociales de la salud en pescadores artesanales de Yucatán, México» es un trabajo elaborado por los investigadores Eduardo D. Puc Vázquez y María de Fátima Flores Palacios (México). En él se presenta un trabajo etnográfico que devela las tensiones entre los discursos de la salud y sus bases económicas, al igual que la invisibilización de los malestares de los pescadores. Los autores invitan a la humanización de las intervenciones del campo de la salud, reconociendo a los pescadores en su complejidad como sujetos históricos portadores de conocimiento, señalando para ello el enorme potencial del enfoque psicosociológico.

Por otra parte, Andrea Cetré Castilblanco (Colombia) plantea en su artículo «Las políticas de cuidado en algunos países de América Latina. Una mirada feminista» las limitaciones de referentes epistemológicos que no contemplen interseccionalidades (Crenshaw, 1989), los cuales dejan por fuera de sus análisis a las mujeres rurales latinoamericanas, sus cosmovisiones y se concentran en sectores privilegiados de la sociedad. La autora convoca a reflexiones alrededor de feminismo decolonial y los potenciales aportes analíticos de la filosofía y la psicología.

Los desafíos señalados en los trabajos participantes de esta edición refieren a las deudas históricas con sujetos sociales y demuestran cómo puede subvertirse el lugar de dichos sujetos en las investigaciones y análisis filosóficos, sociológicos, antropológicos, sociales, feministas, de salud pública e inclusión laboral. Los sujetos involucrados en estos análisis esbozan en su construcción histórica, luchas sociales que reivindican las realidades de exclusión y las desigualdades que persisten en América Latina con rostros y voces de comunidades rurales, mujeres indígenas, población con discapacidad, pueblos indígenas, mujeres empobrecidas y pescadores artesanales cuyas realidades son invisibilizadas, su presencia es segregada y sus demandas son respondidas desde matrices coloniales, clasistas, racistas, discriminatorias y patriarcales.

Así, pues, estos análisis invitan a continuar contribuyendo a los campos de conocimiento de la interculturalidad y la inclusión como categorías de estudio y de producción de pensamiento situado; es decir, construido con los sujetos históricamente sometidos a la subalternización de sus identidades y conocimientos. Ausentes del análisis están las personas LGBTIQ+, los pueblos afrodescendientes, las personas privadas de la libertad, los jóvenes en condición y situación de riesgo, los habitantes de calle, los migrantes, entre otros. Estas ausencias son también foco de análisis para interesar a las comunidades académicas a dialogar y construir investigaciones que aporten también al mayor conocimiento de dichos sujetos históricos.

## Referencias

- Crenshaw, K. (1989). *Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics*. University of Chicago Legal Forum.
- De Sousa Santos, B. (2006). *La sociología de las ausencias y la sociología de las emergencias: para una ecología de saberes*. Clacso.
- Giddens, A. (2007). *La constitución de la sociedad*. Amorrortú.
- Guha, R. (2002). *Las voces de la historia y otros estudios subalternos*. Crítica.
- MinCiencias. (2019). *Misión de Sabios*. Bogotá, Colombia.



Unesco. (2003). *Convención para la salvaguardia del patrimonio cultural inmaterial*. Unesco.

Unesco. (2005). *Convención sobre la protección y promoción de la diversidad de las expresiones culturales*. Unesco.

Wallerstein, I. (1998). *Impensar las ciencias sociales*. Siglo XXI.

INTERCULTURALITY  
AND SOCIAL  
INCLUSION.  
A CHALLENGE FOR  
SOCIAL AND HUMAN  
SCIENCES

# Re search chs

Investigaciones · Investigação

# Women, Land and Food: Food Security from the Role of *Kamëntšá* Women\*

[English Version]

Mujer, tierra y alimento: una mirada a la seguridad alimentaria desde el rol de la mujer *kamëntšá*

Mulheres, terra e alimentos: um olhar sobre a segurança alimentar através do papel das mulheres *kamëntšá*

Received 11 March, 2022. Accepted 8 April, 2022.

Indira Andrea Quiroga Dallos\*\*

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6511-9534>

Colombia

## Abstract

› To cite this article:

Quiroga Dallos, I. A. (2023). Women, Land and Food: Food Security from the Role of *Kamëntšá* Women.

*Ánfora*, 30(54). 19-40.

<https://doi.org/10.30854/anfv.30.n55.2023.918>

Universidad Autónoma de Manizales. L-ISSN 0121-6538.

E-ISSN 2248-6941.

CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

**Objective:** To present a reflection on the role played by indigenous women and the cultural aspects of community food security, specifically, from the experiences of the *Kamëntšá mamitas*. **Methodology:** The methodology used to develop the research from which this article is derived is ethnographic. Participant observation was carried out for three months living with eight *Kamëntšá mamitas* in their ancestral territory, the Sibundoy Valley in Putumayo, Colombia. Other research techniques were also employed, such as ethnographic interviewing, recording of formal and informal conversations, and secondary source review. **Results:** The relationship between the activities, practices, and knowledge of some *Kamëntšá* women with the land was identified, specifically, with the care and cultivation of the chagras or *jajañ*. Based on this relationship, it became clear that

\* This article is derived from the research project "Cozinhar bonito: uma etnografia de la cultura alimentaria *kamentsá*," carried out as a degree requirement for a Master's degree in Anthropology at the Universidade Federal da Bahia, Brazil.

\*\* Master in Anthropology, Anthropologist. Universidad de Santander. [in.quiroga@mail.udes.edu.co](mailto:in.quiroga@mail.udes.edu.co)

to achieve food security, it is necessary to consider the symbolic aspects that these women attribute to food plants such as maize, the classification they make of food, the search to maintain good health and, therefore, the importance of their role in food policies. **Conclusions:** To achieve food security, it is necessary to recognize community dynamics in relation to land, traditional subsistence production systems, culturally attributed meanings of food and the role of women. This, understanding that it is not only developed in the search for the reproduction of the group, but also the productive, public, and health systems.

**Keywords:** food; food security; ethnography; indigenous women; *Kamëntšá*; health.

## Resumen

**Objetivo:** presentar una reflexión sobre el rol que desempeñan las mujeres indígenas y los aspectos culturales para la seguridad alimentaria de la comunidad; específicamente, desde las experiencias de las *mamitas kamëntšá*. **Metodología:** la metodología empleada para el desarrollo de la investigación de la cual se deriva este artículo es de tipo etnográfico. Se realizó observación participante por un periodo de tres meses conviviendo con ocho *mamitas kamëntšá* en su territorio ancestral, el Valle del Sibundoy. Igualmente, se emplearon otras técnicas de investigación, como la entrevista etnográfica, el registro de conversaciones formales e informales y revisión de fuente secundaria. **Resultados:** se identificó la relación entre las actividades, prácticas y saberes de algunas mujeres *kamëntšá* con la tierra; específicamente, con el cuidado y cultivo en las chagras o *jajañ*. A partir de esta relación se visibilizó que en favor del alcance de la seguridad alimentaria es necesario considerar los aspectos simbólicos que estas mujeres le atribuyen a plantas alimentarias como el maíz, la clasificación que hacen sobre los alimentos, la búsqueda del mantenimiento de una buena salud y, por ende, la importancia de su papel en las políticas alimentarias. **Conclusiones:** para alcanzar la seguridad alimentaria es necesario reconocer las dinámicas de la comunidad con relación con la tierra, los sistemas productivos tradicionales de subsistencia, los significados atribuidos culturalmente a los alimentos y el papel de la mujer. Ello, entendiendo que no solo se desarrolla en la búsqueda de la reproducción del grupo, sino también en el sistema productivo, público y la salud.

**Palabras clave:** alimentación; seguridad alimentaria; etnografía; mujer indígena; *kamëntšá*; salud.

## Resumo

**Objetivo:** apresentar uma reflexão sobre o papel desempenhado pelas mulheres indígenas e os aspectos culturais para a segurança alimentar da comunidade; especificamente, a partir das experiências das *mamitas kamëntšá*. **Metodologia:** a metodologia utilizada para o desenvolvimento da pesquisa da qual este artigo é derivado é a etnográfica. A observação dos participantes foi realizada por um período de três meses vivendo com oito mulheres *kamëntšá* em seu território ancestral, o Vale Sibundoy. Outras técnicas de pesquisa também foram utilizadas, tais como entrevistas etnográficas, a gravação de conversas formais e informais e a revisão de fontes secundárias. **Resultados:** a relação entre as atividades, práticas e conhecimentos de algumas mulheres *kamëntšá* com a terra foi identificada; especificamente, com o cuidado e cultivo nos chagras ou jajañ. A partir desta relação ficou claro que em favor da segurança alimentar é necessário considerar os aspectos simbólicos que estas mulheres atribuem às plantas alimentícias como o milho, a classificação que fazem sobre a alimentação, a busca da manutenção da boa saúde e, portanto, a importância de seu papel nas políticas alimentares. **Conclusões:** para alcançar a segurança alimentar, é necessário reconhecer a dinâmica comunitária em relação à terra, aos sistemas tradicionais de produção de subsistência, aos significados culturalmente atribuídos à alimentação e ao papel da mulher. Isto, entendendo que não se desenvolve apenas na busca da reprodução do grupo, mas também nos sistemas produtivo, público e de saúde.

**Palavras chave:** alimentação; segurança alimentar; etnografia; mulheres indígenas; *kamëntšá*; saúde.

## Introducción

According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), more than 820 million people suffer hunger in the world. Approximately one person out of nine live in developing countries. The vulnerability of many populations and the decline in food production, access, or consumption places them at risk of food insecurity. Food insecurity involves different aspects of social life and, in many population groups, is related to the abandonment of subsistence agriculture for the production of market crops (Messer, 1995, pp. 60-61).

Maluf *et al.* (2000) state that rural hunger, rural poverty, and exodus result from the lack of small and medium-scale productive activity in the rural sector with an emphasis on agricultural production. Other factors are the concentration of land ownership, the precarious conditions of small and medium-sized urban commercial and industrial enterprises, the relatively lower average wages in the food industry, and the environmental impacts of the technological pattern.

On the FAO hunger map, Colombia appears with moderately low rates of hunger, between five and 14.9 percent. However, in 2022 this same organization published the report *Hunger Hotspots FAO-WFP early warnings on acute food insecurity* (WFP y FAO, 2022). It concludes that this country, after the pandemic, migratory crises, and continuous internal displacement, is at high risk of suffering from hunger.

The conditions of risk and vulnerability of the population in Colombia are associated with social inequalities that are reflected in the urban-rural distinction. “The departments with the highest proportion of poor people and/or the highest number of people with unsatisfied basic needs present the highest prevalences of food insecurity” (Díaz, 2013, p. 78).

In the case of Colombia, recognizing the increase in dependence on food imports, mainly corn, beans, tubers, and cereals is also relevant, together with the high import of inputs for agricultural production. According to Darío Fajardo (2002), imports went from representing 15.5% of GDP in 1990 to 46.9% in 1997 due to the decline in the production of transitory agricultural goods. Mara Alejandra Mejía (2017) stresses how the agricultural sector's contribution to GDP decreased from 22% in 1981 to 20% in 1990 to just 7.9% in 2000. The previous due to the neoliberal economic opening that occurred in the 1990s.

The above is grounded in the reality that the same food is no longer valued for its nutritional or symbolic qualities, but rather, as noted by María Eugenia

Arango in 2017, the economic theory has turned food into a commodity that may be purchased through trade or through humanitarian aid (in some cases).

In contrast to this last viewpoint, which is a product of economic theory, and in line with Maluf *et al.* (2000), the following factors need to be taken into consideration when discussing food security: a) The quality of food free of chemical components that may be harmful to human health; b) Respecting the customs of the culinary culture by taking into account the dimensions of the cultural heritage, culinary preferences, and preparation and consumption customs; c) System sustainability without compromising potential future levels of production, distribution, and consumption.

Due to the rent that women are able to get, at least one-third of all rural economies are able to overcome their food insecurity. However, these people own less than 2% of the world's land. These women, who typically handle land-related work directly, settle on parcels that are not their own. This prevents them from breaking the precarious circle they are now in (Espinosa & Diez-Urduñavia, 2006, p. 22).

The women who remain in the field fulfill a crucial role as producers of income and food. Typically, they focus on subsistence agriculture, producing basic crops like maize, rice, and tomatoes that can meet up to 90% of the nutritional needs of underprivileged groups. In this way, they carry out a crucial function for food security. This is also because they participate in the many stages of agriculture (Ballara & Valenzuela, 2012).

In keeping with Maluff *et al.*'s suggestion (2000), a brief reflection on the relevance of the deepening cultural components for achieving food security is presented in this article. This is made possible by the recognition of the contribution made by women to food production (Menasche *et al.*, 2008; Alvarez, 2005). In contrast, the commensality, a factor important to food security, "[...] is composed of complex processes that involve cultural and emotional values specifically tailored to historical and economic contexts, and that the absence of understanding on this issue precludes policies that minimize cultural elements" (Soares & Lopes, 2007, p. 78).

This reflection was specifically based on the experience of the indigenous *Kamntá Biyá* people who live in Putumayo, Colombia, and have seen changes in how they obtain their food (even though this is a situation that is well recognized throughout the nation). Currently, agriculture is a single-crop conventional system, as opposed to the traditional way of subsisting on the products of the *jaja* or the *chagra*. The primary goals of the economy are subsistence and self-consumption, and the agricultural system does not provide a material financial return (Juajibioy & Gómez, 2014). More than 50% of families now obtain their primary source of economic resources from

the sale of services; examples include Tamabioy and San Félix communities (Palacios & Barrientos, 2014).

Despite the fact that Colombia currently has high food import numbers, which were reflected in the decline in food products in 2020 and 2021 due to the pandemic's closure of air, sea, and land ports, the Putumayo department reports higher import numbers for basic industrial supplies, equipment, and machinery, while the agricultural sector experienced a negative variation of 100% in import prices (MinComercio, Oficina de Estudios Económicos, 2022). These figures do not mean that the overall Colombian context, in which food security is being threatened, should not be taken into consideration; rather, it is important to recognize that Putumayo economic dynamics still make it possible to demonstrate the use of domestic agricultural production for local and regional food supplies.

## Methodology

This article is derived from the research carried out in the Masters of Anthropology program. The research was carried out through an ethnographic approach. For the development of this, secondary sources were consulted, semi-structured ethnographic interviews, formal and informal conversations and participant observation were carried out.

In particular, a group of eight women was privileged in this work. They are called “*mamitas*” within the community. These women are recognized for their knowledge of culture, tradition, and reflection on the community’s current situation. They have a high status within the community. This reinforces the thesis put forward by José Alfonso de la Cruz-Melo and Lirian Astrid Ciro (2019), who, from their work with Afro-Colombian women, highlight how midwives through gastronomy keep the history of their community alive, as well as the visions of the world, and the use of the elements offered by the environment in their daily lives:

The role of women is vital in the family aspect, as well as socially; therefore, the consent for her ancestral knowledge is also necessary and peremptory, symbolically, as well as economically, which highlights the importance of the role of the midwife as a cohesive force in her community through her expertise and empowerment. (p.133).



The participant observation was carried out through the experience in the Sibundoy Valley in the department of Putumayo over a period of three months in 2015. There they shared moments of cultivation, harvest, preparation, transformation, and food consumption.

### ***Jajañ*: the Land, the Chagra, the Food**

Currently the economy of the *Kamëntša* town is based on salaried work, omitting the work of the land and individual production of food. This community lives from the payment of wages and the sale of handicrafts, which allows the generation of parallel sources of income.

The *kamëntša mamitas* are characterized by having a more traditional way of life and continuing to obtain most of their food from work in the *chagra* (Figure 1). The surpluses that are produced are sold in the town market. They buy gas and some industrial foods with the proceeds. They also pay for health contingencies.

**Figure 1.** *Mama Georgina* harvesting beans.



Note: Photograph taken on May 23, 2014.

The foods that comprise the mothers' meals, in good part, although differentiated by time, are obtained through the production of the chagra. However, this production is diminishing. According to Menasche *et al.* (2008), the factors that affect the decrease in food destined for self-consumption are: the reduction in the size of the properties, the concentration of agricultural activities in fewer crops destined for commercialization, too many local markets, the increase in the supply of food available there, mobility between the town and the countryside, and the flight of women from rural areas (especially young women).

The mothers have chagras where they can obtain up to 70 types of foods, forage plants, medicine, a way to conduct forestry, and a place to maintain livestock. From the plants they can obtain monetary income, food, medicine, fuel, and raw material for handicrafts, among other things. The home gardens are generally located in the back of the houses and are smaller than the chagras, which are located far from the houses and only go there "when they feel like it," according to the mothers.

When food produced in the chagra is not available, it must be purchased in town. Sometimes it is ordered through neighbors or acquaintances. Industrialized foods such as vegetable oil, sardines, pasta, coffee, sugar, salt, and rice, are purchased in the municipality market. In the market square, perishable foods that are not harvested, that were lost or that were not planted are purchased or exchanged through barter; for example: arracacha, corn, beans, carrots, onions, garlic, fruits, etc.

### **Corn: Food of Life and Hope**

From the indigenous perspective, the definition and importance of maize transcends its physical dimension. Its meaning implies symbolic elements that are even recognized by FAO. For the Mayans and Aztecs, both blood and human flesh have been formed by corn. Sedentary civilizations, for the most part, have reached a remarkable development and have managed to consolidate themselves thanks to the cultivation of a certain complex carbohydrate, such as: potato, rice, millet, wheat or corn (Mintz, 1996, p. 35).

It is the only species of the genus *zea*, a name that has several meanings. One refers to the grains and another to the sustenance of life. *Mays* in the Caribbean language means “that which provides life.” For the *Kamëntša* the *šboachan*, as it is called in their own language, is the fruit of strength and hope.

The *Kamëntša* mamitas make use of their capacity for agency through the deliberate actions they carry out to conserve the seeds of the varieties of maize that are being lost. In the case of Mama Pastora, her father, a well-known traditional doctor from the community, taught her to “[...] not let her culture, the tradition, be forgotten or lost.” She keeps four types of maize in her chagra (see Figure 2). The association of which she is a member has also organized *mingas* to share seeds. On these occasions each woman carries a plant planted for each of the members, they must be plants that they do not have in their chagras. For example, Mama Pastora shared garlic and the other types of corn that the other mothers don't currently plant.

**Figure 2.** Four types of corn that Mama Pastora preserves.



Note: Photograph taken on May 11, 2014.

The symbolic dimension of corn is also evident when some mothers report that corn talks, moves, sighs, and cries in the chagras at night. On a specific occasion, Mama Margarita heard how the corn said: “I’m left with a pity... They hit me and they hurt me.” Another voice replied: “Of course, I feel sorry too. They hit me and scratched me with a knife.” Then, another said: “We must talk to the taita so that he can take us to heaven. We are suffering a lot because he doesn’t love us. Why do they catch me, beat me, and burn me? They burn my whole side and then they hit me and throw me out.”

In addition, this human capacity that is attributed to corn also has the function of representing the situation of the community, since in the same way that this plant has undergone transformations in the territory since the pre-Hispanic period, the community has received similar actions. Corn, moreover, is present in the axis of life of the community. It allows the reproduction/production of thought as groups, as expressed by Sidney Mintz (1996), for whom what people eat expresses who they are for themselves as a group and for others (external to the group).

Once the corn is harvested by the women, they transport it in sacks to their homes. Sometimes they go on foot, other times, by motorcycle or on animal-drawn floats (“vixens”<sup>3</sup>). They sit on their traditional benches, in the kitchen or in the patio, and in the company of other women or alone they begin to shuck it, while they talk about their families, neighbors or the harvest.

Corn is transformed through the use of different techniques such as: boiling, roasting, steaming, peeling, and fermenting, among others. Some of the main preparations are: *uamesnen* or mote, *bishana*, *uandëtsajón* or roasted tamale, *jangnëntsna* [ / i ] or wrapped, *jangnëntsna tsëmbec* or bean wrapped, *enabsmacna* or corn broth with beans, *aco* or toasted corn, colada, *becoy ntsbonen* or chicha colada and *sangonan ou smen mesquenán* roasted millet colada.

### Food Classifications: Chemical additive food or Natural Food?

Human nutrition also involves rules, classifications, and categorizations that have their origin in culture. The foods chosen and preferred for daily and special consumption respond to the ways in which foods are classified (Douglas, 1995; Lévi-Strauss, 1964; 1981; Fischler, 1995; Contreras and Gracia, 2005).

---

3. The term ‘fox’ refers in the Colombian context to the use of different harnesses, means and vehicles for the transport of people, agricultural products and other materials with animal traction.

Likewise, it is proposed that to achieve a state of food security, considering how populations classify food is necessary.

The way food is categorized and classified also influences food perceptions and practices. From the field work, it was possible to identify two main categories under which the *Kamëntša* mamitas

group food: “natural food vs. food with chemicals” or “food from now vs. old food.”

These categories have a direct relationship with time. After more than 500 years of coexistence in the same territory with the white population, the impact and the differences between the indigenous *Kamëntša* and white people or settlers is revealed through food.

On the one hand, settlers plant under the monoculture modality, they use pesticides and fertilizers that have also affected the lands of the indigenous community, and do not respect the agricultural calendar for planting or harvesting. For the members of the *Kamëntša* community, these elements mean that food that is produced by the settlers are not considered “healthy,” but is food with a high content of chemicals that directly affect people’s quality of life.

Likewise, the way of relating to the land has been negatively impacted, since from the *Kamëntša* conception the land is affected by the actions that are committed against it and the results are the reduction of productivity and the deterioration of quality of food. “The earth is tired, it is sad, that’s why it doesn’t give like before and you can’t eat like before” (Luis Pujimuy, personal communication, May 21, 2014).

People who eat food that is classified within the category of “chemical additive food” are considered weak, prone to contracting diseases, since by eating this food, they are directly consuming poison, incorporating it into the most intimate of the being, both at a symbolic and physical level, polluting elements (Fishler, 1995).

The speeches and programs of professionals of the formal health sector (such as doctors and nutritionists) that recommend that the community have a balanced diet are questioned because, generally, the food they should eat is produced by the food industry or as food with chemical additives.

On the other hand, there is foods that come from the *chagras*, which generally have not been produced with fertilizers or pesticides and, in the cases that are used, they are made at home and are organic. These foods are considered “natural” products and they allow one to be stronger, healthy and to live longer. In addition, they are products that are sold easily in the market; mainly because white people also consider that they are produced through clean production.

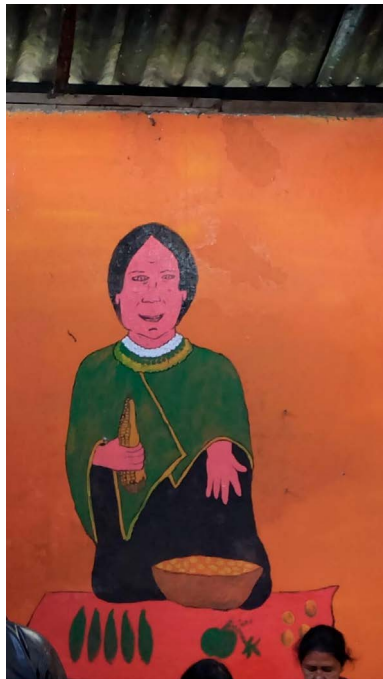
Usually, “old food” is clean food, it has been produced without chemical additives. It is also recognized as a traditional food and is made up, for example,

of *tumaqueño*, *arracacha*, *achira* and, in general, tubers. *Bishana* also falls into this category and it is recommended that children and sick people eat it.

### Woman, Land, and Food

To talk about food security of *Kamëntšá* people, explicitly recognizing the role of women in relation to food and nutrition is necessary (see Figure 3). According to the conversations held with the mothers, to be a *Kamëntšá* woman, to feel like a woman, you must have dogs, hens, chickens, ducks, pigs, and all kinds of animals at home.

**Figure 3.** Mural in the Sibundoy market square.



Note: Photograph taken on June 29, 2014.

The pig, the *cuy* and the hen coexist with the woman, because, at six in the morning, the woman is sleeping, but the pig is already squalling. The *cuyes* are chirping. Hens are singing, they are clucking, they are already hungry. The chicks are already yelling “cheep, cheep, cheep.” And that is the coexistence of women’s lives. (Mama Georgina, personal communication, June 18, 2014).

Since they were little girls, *Kamëntša* women learn that, in addition to domestic tasks, learning to live with the animals of the house and to plant corn, clean it and cook it is essential. With tools they helped with the work of the land and sowed the seeds of beans, *arracacha*, cabbage, etc., that their mothers gave them. The planting of corn and other seeds is similar to the development of the *rondador*, a wind musical instrument. The growth process of the sown plant is a simile of the growth of the woman.

*Kamëntša* woman expresses to be in a close correlation with the “*bastana mama*” or mother earth. The recognition of her work as a reproductive of the group is similar to that of the land, producer of food. That is why the earth grieves and suffers when mistreated. “Because one day she is going to be like mother earth, productive. And she is going to create many generations and for that she has to learn to work with the earth” (Mamá Georgina, personal communication, June 18, 2014).

Groups from the Colombian Amazon, such as the Murui, believe that girls are formed as models of mothers: mother of *chagra*, because she supports her children and contributes to feeding her community; mother of nature, for her duty to take care of the vegetation; mother of her own children, for the training that her fertile character gives them; and mother of people as an example of work, kindness and human simplicity (Bríñez, 2002).

In the case of the mamitas, there is an acceptance and concern in cases of losing this model. Their way they related with the land, animals and other beings are a form of reproduction of the group. But the manifestation of an expectation is also identified. To be a woman, they must have and know how to raise animals, clean the house, follow certain behavior patterns, know the work of the *chagra*, know and develop the sowing of corn, other food plants, and cook.

Gender expectations in relation to food have effects on the expression of conflict and on relationships of service and deference (DeVault, 2008). Men demand results in taste and quality of meals. However, in most cases, the mamitas with whom the research was carried out did not have any male figure in their residence.

Marjorie DeVault (2008) states that women accept their husbands’ demands and are sensitive to their evaluation of their meals. However, in what was

observed with the Kamëntšá mamitas, they do not depend on the relationship with their husbands. And in the case of the mamitas, more than a tool of male domination, food fulfills the function of sociability and enables social relationships with members outside their nucleus. Food and drink make it easier to access the men's labor.

The possession of land allows the *Kamëntšá* mamitas to get their food and independence for their subsistence and, if they require any help, they have the support of relatives. For them, the domestic and the economic spheres are interdependent. Women and work are polyvalent, they oscillate between the reproductive/productive and the simultaneity of their activities. This sense of polyvalence is the particular feature of their economic and social participation from the group toward society and different productive sectors (Espinosa and Diez-Urdanivia 2006, p. 14). In all cases, to strengthen the activities of these women favors the possibility of maintaining autonomy and food security. It ensures both the production of food diversity and monetary income to getting additional products and the payment of health services (not included in the mandatory health plan).

In their role as producers of food and transformers of these products into food, the *Kamëntšá* mamitas become consumers-producers and also users of what is eaten. They produce cultural notions that belong to them, they are translated into user operations with particular combinations that seek to describe a given fact (Aguilar, 2001, pp. 15-16).

These women are creators, although sometimes anonymous, they give meaning to food in daily practice through related determinations that may be incoherent: multiform, fragmentary practices, related to events, insinuated, or hidden that respond to a logic (Certeau, 1996, pp. 17-18).

*Kamëntšá* women invent their own styles, they emphasize some element in practice, create personal ways to continue their routines, they take new ingredients and give each one special flavors, a special way of eating them, a particular way of getting them. With respect to corn, the diversity of food preparations made from a single product was identified, thus increasing the possibility of use and consumption by community members.

According to Penny Van Esterik (1999), women should be the key in the formulation of food policies because of their special relationship with food, with the land (essential in food production) and, in many cases, their tendency toward malnutrition. Additionally, when they categorize food, they assign meanings to foods that foster the consumption of the "healthy" foods by cleaner production.

Women are in charge of the different stages required for the proper food system development: production, transportation, processing and consumption



and, above all, daily meals. They are the ones who, once the food has been transformed into meals, choose the portions for each family member, the food order, composition, and compatibility (Fischler, 1995). They are also in charge of giving meaning to food and make it part of the culture. The food system has not been considered a cultural right (Van Esterik, 1999), on the contrary, it has been used to justify the deprivation of women's and girls' rights to food and, therefore, their health conditions.

## Health and Nutrition

Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that “Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services” (UN General Assembly, 1948, p. 5). Thus, the rights to health and food are certainly considered basic rights and their lack prevent the achievement of a decent standard of living.

Food transformations – which lead to the population loss of food security – create risky and vulnerable circumstances for health conditions, mainly for children and women. The lack of agricultural production and economic resources to buy food that is not produced on the farms and the loss of agrobiodiversity have led to malnutrition and obesity, resulting in an increase in cardiovascular diseases and diabetes.

The right to health is closely associated with the right to water and food, not only in theory, but also explicitly. Several indigenous communities consider the relationship between health and food. In the *Diagnosis of the Kamëntšá safeguard plan* (Cabildo Indígena Camentsá Biyá, 2012), food security is described as part of this component, to the extent that the community's health problems are explained by difficulties associated with the poor nutrition and the scarcity of traditional products for obtaining nutrients.

In relation to this, there is a need of territory to plant traditional products considered part of the diet and good nutrition of the Kamëntšá people. At present, a high percentage of indigenous families of the Kamëntšá people do not consume the food of the jajañ resulting in malnutrition of children, teenagers and seniors who are more vulnerable to this situation. Likewise, illnesses related to mental health can be caused by the lack of a good diet, because there is no chagra with a variety of natural products. (Cabildo Indígena Kamëntšá Biyá, 2012, p. 244).

In this regard, other studies on indigenous women from Cumbal and Guachucal from the Andean and rural areas of Nariño, have defined food security as the possibility of having access to a balanced diet made up of sufficient food, providing good health and culturally appropriate for the type and production method (Sinclair *et al.*, 2022).

Particularly, the case of the *Kamëntša* mamitas evidences a clear concern for good health through the observations of the community's youth and children, to whom they express that to "[...] have good health and reach old age, they must consume traditional foods such as, *bishana*; a soup made with corn and cabbage, with a recognition as the most traditional soup by the community members" (Quiroga, 2020, p. 58).

Added to the aforementioned food categories, there are chemical additive food vs. natural food. The latter refers to food produced in the chagra under organic production methods by the mamitas. As a result, healthy, wholesome foods are obtained that strengthen the construction of the person and the maintenance of optimal health. There, seed conservation and cultivation of medicinal and food plants are promoted, ensuring the different food nutrients to satisfy nutritional and cultural needs.

Guaranteeing food security based on the recognition of cultural elements means guarantying the right to health. This to the extent that it involves reducing risk conditions for the loss of food security, because good healthy food expectations and perceptions are satisfied, thus agrobiodiversity is fostered and food from clean production is consumed.

## Conclusions

Difficulties accessing land and economic and social transformations have led to a decrease in the use of traditional subsistence systems as the chagra, which are fundamental for food security. These lands are used to grow and harvest foodstuffs, medicinal products, raw materials for handicrafts and fuel, among others. This land also has a great social and cultural significance. Strengthening these lands allows local communities and populations obtain different and sufficient food for self-sufficiency without having to depend on monetary resources for the purchase of industrialized products with high purchase costs, considered "unhealthy" and with an impact on the reduction of culinary diversity.

The *Kamëntšá* mamitas – senior women with cultural recognition (most of them with better access to land) – play a decisive role in the continuity, transmission, knowledge and use of this land. They are interested in providing continuity and have the knowledge of working the land from polyculture and symbiosis with plant and animal species. The role of women is not just a reproductive and private one, it is a productive and public one.

The mamitas' productive activities mainly occur in the chagra and home gardens. These lands produce “healthy” foods as opposed to the foods produced by the colonists, which are linked to the notion of poison, human and environmental pollution.

The food processing (culturally consumable), the composition of a “good meal” (healthy) and its distribution within the members of the group are also women's tasks. Therefore, food availability is not just regarded as a group need. Instead, it is the understanding of the relationships and the social dynamics within these groups, the construction of categories and classifications around food and their introduction process into what is considered “food.”

With respect to the *Kamëntša* people, the symbolic dimension of food, the relationship with the land and the role of women are important to understand the meaning of having healthy, sufficient, and sustainable foods and, a possible food security within the framework of food habits and practices. Similarly, these aspects are considered for improving current diets by including other foods in the symbolic system to reduce malnutrition and obesity.

This article is an invitation to recognize the importance of cultural aspects for food security and, in particular, the role of women, their relationship with the land, classification of food, and concern and care for the other (human and non-human). It is the start of researching in the place of food in cultural rights, in the right to health and the role of women in a possible food sovereignty project.

## References

- Aguilar-Piña, P. (2001). Por un marco teórico conceptual para los estudios de antropología de la alimentación. *Anales de Antropología*, 35(1), 11-29. <http://www.revistas.unam.mx/index.php/antropologia/article/view/14884/14183>.

- Álvarez, A. (2005). Mujeres zenú: manejo, uso y conocimiento de la biodiversidad: un aporte a la soberanía alimentaria, la medicina y la cultura material. In Escobar, E. M. Pazmiño, A. Escobar, P. y Ulloa, A. (Eds.). *Las mujeres indígenas en los escenarios de la biodiversidad* (pp. 91-104). UICN, Fundación Natura Colombia, ICANH. <http://ibdigital.uib.es/greenstone/sites/localsite/collect/cd2/index/assoc/uicn0010.dir/uicn0010.pdf>
- Asamblea General de la ONU. (1948). *Declaración Universal de los Derechos Humanos*. Naciones Unidas.
- Arango Ospina, M. E. (2017). Efectos negativos de la globalización sobre la seguridad alimentaria en los países latinoamericanos. *Ánfora*, 11(19), 102–118. <https://doi.org/10.30854/anf.v11.n19.2004.248>
- Ballara, M. N.; Valenzuela, R. (2012). *Mujer, agricultura y seguridad alimentaria: una mirada para el fortalecimiento de las políticas públicas en América Latina*. <https://www.marcelaballara.cl/genydes/2012%20Mujer,%20agricultura%20y%20seguridad%20alimentaria%20Ballara%20Damianovic%20Valenzuel.pdf>
- Bríñez, A. H. (2002). *Casabe: símbolo cohesionador de la cultura Uitoto*. Ministerio de Cultura de Colombia.
- Cabildo Indígena Camentsá Biyá. (2012). *Sboachan jtabouashentsam natjēmban nýestkang jtsyññengam. Sembrando el maíz, fruto de la fuerza y la esperanza para asegurar el buen vivir camëntšá*. Ministerio del Interior de Colombia.
- Contreras Hernández, J. y Gracia Arnáiz, M. (2005). *Alimentación y cultura: perspectivas antropológicas*. Ariel.
- Certeau, M.(1996). *La invención de lo cotidiano: artes de hacer*. Universidad Iberoamericana.
- DeVault, M. (2008). Conflict and deference. In Van Esterik, P, y Counihan, C. (Eds.). *Food and culture: A reader* (pp. 240-258). Routledge.
- De la Cruz-Melo, J. A. y Ciro, L. A. (2019). Caracterización de un glosario sobre el léxico gastronómico de las matronas de Mulaló. *Ánfora*, 26(46), 111-135. <https://doi.org/10.30854/anf.v26.n46.2019.555>.

- Díaz, J. M. (2013). *Inseguridad alimentaria en población indígena y afrodescendiente en Colombia* [memoria final de maestría]. Universidad de Barcelona. <http://diposit.ub.edu/dspace/bitstream/2445/55530/1/Diaz%20Scarpetta%20C%20Javier%20Mauricio.%20Inseguridad%20alimentaria%20en%20la%20poblaci%C3%B3n%20ind%C3%ADgena%20y%20afrodescendiente%20en%20Colombia.pdf>.
- Douglas, M. (1995). Las estructuras de lo culinario. In Contreras, J. (Ed.). *Alimentación y cultura: necesidades, gustos y costumbres* (pp. 171-197). Universidad de Barcelona.
- Espinosa Cortés, L. M. y Diez-Urdanivia, S. (2006). Notas sobre la contribución de la mujer a la seguridad alimentaria de la unidad doméstica campesina. *Nueva antropología*, 20(66), 12-31. <https://revistas-colaboracion.juridicas.unam.mx/index.php/nueva-antropologia/article/view/15883>
- Fajardo, D. (2002). *Para sembrar la paz, hay que aflojar la tierra: comunidades, tierras y territorios en la construcción de un país*. Universidad Nacional de Colombia.
- Fischler, C. (1995). *El (h)omnívoro. El gusto, la cocina y el cuerpo*. Anagrama.
- Juajibioy, D.A; Gómez, J. (2014). *Análisis socio-ambiental de los sistemas de producción agraria en la comunidad indígena camentsa-íya en la vereda las Plamas Sibundoy-Putumayo* [tesis de pregrado]. Universidad Piloto de Colombia, Bogotá. <http://repository.unipiloto.edu.co/bitstream/handle/20.500.12277/837/00001926.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>
- Lévi-Strauss, C. (1964). *El pensamiento salvaje* (trad. F. González-Aramburo). Fondo de Cultura Económica.
- Lévi-Strauss, C. (1981). *El origen de las maneras de mesa*. Siglo XXI.
- Maluf, R. S., Menezes, F., Bleil-Marques, S. (2000). *Caderno segurança alimentar*. <http://docplayer.com.br/423030-Caderno-seguranca-alimentar.html>.
- Mejía, M. A. (2017). *La seguridad alimentaria en Colombia: cambios y vulnerabilidades*. Universidad Central, Facultad de Ciencias Administrativas, Económicas y Contables. [https://www.ucentral.edu.co/sites/default/files/inline-files/2017\\_Seguridad\\_alimentaria\\_001.pdf](https://www.ucentral.edu.co/sites/default/files/inline-files/2017_Seguridad_alimentaria_001.pdf)

- Menasche, R., Charão-Marques, F., y Zanetti, C. (2008). Autoconsumo e segurança alimentar: a agricultura familiar a partir dos saberes e práticas da alimentação. *Revista de Nutrição*, 21, 145-158. <https://www.scielo.br/j/rn/a/SzrvBZQwb3N63QfhjtG4fcf/?lang=pt>.
- Messer, E. (1995). Un estado de la cuestión. Perspectivas antropológicas sobre la dieta. En Contreras, J. (Ed.). *Alimentación y cultura: necesidades, gustos y costumbres* (pp. 27-84). Universitat de Barcelona.
- MinComercio, Oficina de Estudios Económicos. (2022). *Información: perfiles económicos departamentales 2022*. <https://www.mincit.gov.co/getattachment/35f426f4-7a95-4dd7-8b8a-f7d7b7919906/Putumayo.aspx>
- Mintz, S. W. (1996). *Dulzura y poder: el lugar del azúcar en la historia moderna*. Siglo XXI.
- Palacios Bucheli, V. J. y Barrientos Fuentes, J. C. (2014). Caracterización técnica y económica de los agrosistemas de producción en dos resguardos indígenas del Putumayo (Colombia). *Acta Agronómica*, 63(2), 91-100. <https://doi.org/10.15446/acag.v63n2.29358>
- Quiroga, I. (2020). Aproximación etnográfica a la alimentación y la comida de las mamitas kamëntšá en el Valle de Sibundoy. *Maguaré*, 34(2), 49-83. <https://revistas.unal.edu.co/index.php/maguare/article/view/92580/77607>
- Sinclair, K., Thompson-Colón, T., Bastidas-Farm, A., Matamoros, S. E. D. C., Olaya, E.; Melgar-Quiñonez, H. (2022). Women's Autonomy and Food Security: Connecting the Dots from the Perspective of Indigenous Women in Rural Colombia. *SSM-Qualitative Research in Health*, 2, 1-13. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2667321522000403>
- Soares, M. C.; Lopes, P. G. (2007). Segurança alimentar e nutricional: a produção do conhecimento com ênfase nos aspectos da cultura. *Revista de Nutrição*, 20(1), 69-81. <https://www.scielo.br/j/rn/a/tScWCNKLLh9QJtZsbRFCM4n/?lang=pt>.
- Van Esterik, P. (1999). Right to Food; Right to Feed; Right to Be Fed. The Intersection of Women's Rights and the Right to Food. *Agriculture and*

*Human Values*, 16, 225–232. <http://laps-dept.apps01.yorku.ca/anth/faculty/esterik/documents/1999Righttofood.pdf>

World Food Program (WFP) & Food and Agriculture Organization of United Nation (FAO). (2022). *Hunger Hotspots. FAO-WFP Early Warnings on Acute Food Insecurity: February to May 2022 Outlook*. World Food Program & Food and Agriculture Organization of United Nation. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cb8376en>

Quiroga Dallos, I. A. (2023). Women, Land and Food: Food Security from the Role of Kamëntšá Women. *Ánfora*, 30(54), 19-40.  
<https://doi.org/10.30854/anf.v30.n55.2023.918>





# Indigenous Peoples and Nations as Part of the "Subject-Object" of the Study of Political Science\*

[English Version]

Los pueblos y naciones indígenas como parte del «objeto-sujeto» de estudio de la ciencia política

Povos indígenas e nações como parte do "objeto-sujeto" dos estudos de ciência política

Received 15 September, 2021. Accepted 01 February, 2022.

Ana Valeria Avalo\*\*

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6409-8356>

Argentina

› To cite this article:

Avalo, A. V. (2023). Indigenous Peoples and Nations as Part of the "Subject-Object" of the Study of Political Science.

*Ánfora*, 30(54). 41-57.

<https://doi.org/10.30854/anfv30n54.2023.846>

Universidad Autónoma de Manizales. L-ISSN 0121-6538.

E-ISSN 2248-6941.

CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

## Abstract

**Objective:** To reflect upon the objects of study of political science in Latin America to understand the limitations arising from research on issues related to indigenous peoples in the region under this discipline. **Methodology:** A literature review on critical epistemologies was conducted and a corpus of empirical and meta-theoretical studies on political science as a discipline was created. **Results:** The majority of studies in political science tend toward a positivist, quantitative and empiricist approach.

This trend is consistent with U.S political science which molds the predominant approach of this discipline supported by the contributions of epistemologies of the South and decolonial theories for rethinking political science in Latin America.

---

\* This article is part of the research project "Citizenship, political and gender identities: participation of indigenous peoples in State institutions from a comparative perspective" with Dra. Andrea Gigena (CONICET/CCONFINES – UNVM) in charge.

\*\* PhD. fellow of Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas (CONICET) in the Unidad Ejecutora de Ciencias Sociales Regionales y Humanidades (UE-CISOR) of the Universidad Nacional de Jujuy (UNJu), Argentina, Bachelor's degree of Political Sciences. [avalovaleria@gmail.com](mailto:avalovaleria@gmail.com)

**Conclusions:** Indigenous peoples are absent subjects from the hegemonic perspective of political science, in terms of Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2009; 2010). Therefore, a first step to decolonize (from a decolonial theoretical perspective) the sciences—in particular, political science—is to claim the importance of studying these subjects.

**Keywords:** coloniality; absent subjects; political science; indigenous people.

## Resumen

**Objetivo:** reflexionar sobre los objetos de estudio de la ciencia política en América Latina en aras de comprender las limitaciones que surgen a la hora de investigar bajo esta disciplina temáticas relacionadas con los pueblos indígenas en la región. **Metodología:** se realizó una revisión bibliográfica de estudios sobre epistemologías críticas y se conformó un corpus de análisis compuesto por antecedentes empíricos y meta-teóricos de estudios sobre la ciencia política como disciplina. **Resultados:** se encontró que los estudios mayoritarios en ciencia política tienden hacia un enfoque positivista, cuantitativo y empirista. Esta tendencia es afín a lo que sucede en la ciencia política estadounidense, que es el lugar desde donde se configura el enfoque predominante en la disciplina. Se sostiene que las epistemologías del sur y las teorías decoloniales realizan un aporte para repensar a la ciencia política en América Latina. **Conclusiones:** los sujetos indígenas son sujetos ausentes desde la mirada hegemónica de la politología, en los términos en los que señala Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2009; 2010). Por ello, un primer paso para descolonizar (en el sentido de los teóricos decoloniales) las ciencias —en particular, la ciencia política— es reivindicar la importancia que tiene el estudio acerca de dichos sujetos.

**Palabras clave:** colonialidad; sujetos ausentes; ciencia política; indígenas.

## Resumo

**Objetivo:** Refletir sobre os objetos de estudo da ciência política na América Latina, a fim de compreender as limitações que surgem ao pesquisar questões relacionadas aos povos indígenas na região sob esta disciplina. **Metodologia:** Foi realizada uma revisão bibliográfica de estudos sobre epistemologias críticas e foi formado um corpo de análise composto de estudos empíricos e metateóricos de fundo sobre a ciência política como disciplina. **Resultados:** Verificou-se que a maioria dos estudos

em ciência política tende para uma abordagem positivista, quantitativa e empírica. Esta tendência é semelhante ao que acontece na ciência política americana, que é o lugar onde a abordagem predominante na disciplina é moldada. Argumenta-se que as epistemologias do sul e as teorias descoloniais contribuem para repensar a ciência política na América Latina. **Conclusões:** Os sujeitos indígenas são sujeitos ausentes do olhar hegemônico da ciência política, nos termos em que Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2009; 2010) aponta. Portanto, um primeiro passo para descolonizar (no sentido dos teóricos descoloniais) as ciências - em particular a ciência política - é reivindicar a importância do estudo destas matérias.

**Palavras chave:** colonialidade; temas ausentes; ciência política; povos indígenas.

## Introduction

Political science was born as a result of the social sciences' division in the 19th century (Wallerstein, 1996). This process refers to a positivist paradigm of the sciences, which presents a universal criterion to differentiate between scientific knowledge and non-scientific knowledge. This criterion is valid for both natural sciences and social sciences, whereas philosophy is placed outside the scientific field.

Within this framework, political science has taken up the positivist paradigm since its emergence and, even today it is still the most used paradigm. Although in recent decades other epistemologies have emerged from the global South questioning the positivist paradigm and its universal criterion of "truth."

The epistemologies of the South and the postcolonial and decolonial paradigms consider that a universally valid scientific method makes other types of knowledge and knowledge production existing in latitudes beyond Western Europe invisible.

These epistemologies are a critique of the Eurocentrism that prevails in the ways of knowledge production in academia and call for a decolonial thinking. Thus, political science is imbued with this positivist paradigm and its concomitant Eurocentric vision.

This paper argues the hypothesis that in the delimitation of the objects of study of political science there are processes resulting in topics and subjects becoming invisible, which have not been taken into account by the discipline despite their relevance and relationship with some central concepts for the subject since its constitution.

In particular, the problem of the topics studied by political science in Latin America and how this topic selection is permeated by an Eurocentric vision of knowledge is addressed. The analysis aims to argue that the indigenous peoples and the "indigenous issue" are relevant to political science and draws attention to the assumptions behind the assertion that this issue is mainly the object of study of anthropology, archaeology, and history, or secondarily, of sociology.

## Methodology

An empirical and metatheoretical corpus of analysis on political science as a discipline was created and a critical analysis was conducted based on the theoretical framework on critical epistemologies.

This corpus was comprised of 594 articles and reviews, selected on the basis of a descriptive analysis of the scientific production in political science whose object of study or theme was “the indigenous.” For this purpose, 149 scientific research journals in political science or public administration belonging to institutions in Latin America or Spain, indexed in Latindex, Redalyc, Biblat, and/or Scielo from 1982 (the year of the first work registered on indigenous issues) to 2018 were reviewed. Based on the relevant theoretical contributions of the epistemologies of the South and the theories, scopes, and approaches of political science, the objective was to rethink the discipline *in* and *from* Latin America.

## Results

### **Eurocentrism, Decoloniality, and Epistemology of Absent Subjects**

Decolonial perspectives sustain the existence and persistence of colonial relations in those peripheral territories that suffered from colonialism driven by the Central American countries. In other words, the administrative and political independence of the peripheral nation-states did not bring about a transformation of core-peripheral relationships on a worldwide scale. These relationships were characterized by the “[...] international division of labor between core and periphery [and by] [...] the ethnic/racial hierarchization of populations” (Castro-Gómez and Grosfoguel, 2007, p. 13).

Thus, there is a difference between the concepts of “coloniality” and “colonialism.” As previously mentioned, “colonialism” refers to a political-administrative system of imperial domination of one country toward other territories. From these perspectives, colonialism is constituted as a world system from the conquest and colonization of America from 1492 onward. The concept is also used to describe imperial relations between “metropolis” and “colony,” not only between Europe and America, but also between Europe and territories in Africa and Asia. The end of colonialism implies political independence and the formation of nation-states of colonized territories (Gigena, 2013).

However, the colonization of America is a process that begins together with the constitution of the capitalist world-economy. Both historical processes are mutually constitutive. Since colonization, production relationships have been based on a global racial/ethnic hierarchy, giving rise to an international division of labor between the populations of the Central American countries (metropolises) and those of the peripheral countries (colonies). Within this framework, the notion of "coloniality" describes the process by which "[...] the international division of labor networked a series of power hierarchies: ethno-racial, spiritual, epistemic, sexual, and gender relations" (Castro-Gómez and Grosfoguel, 2007, p. 19).

Therefore, the end of colonialism did not signify the end of coloniality. Decolonial authors are currently witnessing "[...] a transition from a modern/colonial to global/colonial world-system" (Castro-Gómez and Grosfoguel, 2007, p. 13). This statement emphasizes that the political-administrative independence did not transform the structure of core-periphery domination.

Thus, these perspectives revisit Aníbal Quijano (2000), who discusses the concept of "Modernity" based on European philosophies and theories. Quijano places the origins of Modernity in the Conquest of America and argues that for "the modern" to exist, there must be something that is defined as "non-modern." This process created a racial hierarchization of the world's populations, where Europe is placed as superior, the center. This process consists of structuring a pattern of world power called "coloniality of power." Consequently, modernity is not an intra-European phenomenon, but rather a manifestation based on the superiority of the European over the non-European. This process resulted in the subalternization of knowledge and cultures of those who were not produced under the modern Western European paradigm (Baquero and Rico, 2013).

On the basis of the principle of racial classification, the superiority of white populations was not only manifested, but also stated on the types of knowledge produced in and from Europe. Thus, the European colonialism was political-administrative and constituted a system of thought that advocated for the European moral and intellectual superiority. This view of European superiority over the rest of the world is called "eurocentrism" (Quijano, 2000).

Eurocentrism, a type of ethnocentrism, states that modern Europe seems to predate the historical constitution of the pattern of power, the process of conquest and colonization. Therefore, Eurocentrism is "[...] a colonial attitude toward knowledge, articulated simultaneously with the process of core-periphery relationships and racial/ethnic hierarchies" (Castro-Gómez and Grosfoguel, 2007, p. 20). This system excludes, silences, and omits other different types of knowledge of those that sustain the principles of universal

modern rationality. Eurocentrism is the type of knowledge of Western modernity. As Castro-Gómez and Grosfoguel (2007) state:

Subaltern knowledges were excluded, omitted, silenced and ignored. Since the Enlightenment, in the 18th century, silencing was legitimized by the idea that such knowledges represented a mythical, inferior, pre-modern, and prescientific stage of human knowledge. Only the knowledge generated by the scientific and philosophical elite of Europe was considered “true” knowledge, since it was capable of abstracting from its own spatio-temporal conditioning to place itself on a neutral platform of observation (p. 20).

These authors follow Quijano and state that “[...] colonial power relations are not only limited to the economic-political and juridical-administrative domination of the centers over the peripheries, but also have an epistemic, i.e., cultural dimension” (Castro Gómez and Grosfoguel, 2007, p. 19). That is, there is a privilege of Western culture over all others.

In this line, Lander (2000) affirms that modern social knowledge is sustained by the metanarrative of Modernity. In the author’s words:

This meta-narrative of modernity is a device of colonial and imperial knowledge in which the totality of peoples, time and space is articulated as part of the colonial/imperial organization of the world. A form of organization and being of society is transformed by this colonizing device of knowledge into the “normal” form of the human being and society. The other ways of being, the other forms of organization of society and knowledge are transformed not only into different, but also into lacking, archaic, primitive, traditional, and premodern forms. They are placed in an earlier moment in the historical development of humanity, which within the imaginary of progress emphasizes their inferiority (p. 10).

Based on this diagnosis, the author detects that the social sciences in Latin America functioned based on the contrast with the European experience instead of dealing with the knowledge of the historical-cultural specificities of Latin American societies. This critique of the coloniality of knowledge has been taken up again in this region by the social sciences in the last two decades. This knowledge also implied rethinking in epistemic and methodological terms, as well as in terms of subjects that are recognized as producers of knowledge and not only as objects. It is argued that political science is still lagging behind when it comes to incorporating the critique of the coloniality of knowledge. It is also invited to open the umbrella toward specific subjects-objects of study of

Latin American societies. In particular, the study of/with indigenous peoples and nations is unavoidable. For his part, the Portuguese sociologist Boaventura de Sousa Santos presents a perspective that complements this critical vision of Eurocentrism. The author contrasts the dominant epistemologies of the global North with an epistemology of the South.

For De Sousa Santos (2010), modern Western thought is an abysmal thought, founded on an invisible line that separates metropolitan societies and colonial territories. The former are on the visible side, while the latter are made invisible. Modern knowledge is a consummate form of this abyssal thinking. In this framework, popular, secular, plebeian, peasant or indigenous knowledge are not valid forms of knowledge from the point of view of abyssal thinking.

The sociologist understands modern science as just another form of knowledge, and not the only one; moreover, he claims the validity of knowledge discarded by hegemonic scientific knowledge and formulates an epistemology of absent knowledge, which postulates that "Social practices are knowledge practices. Practices that are not grounded in science are not ignorant ones, but rather practices of alternative rival knowledge" (De Sousa Santos, 2009, p. 88).

In a similar vein, decolonial theorists express that the first decolonization (juridical-administrative) must be followed by a second decolonization, which they call "decoloniality." It consists of a long-term process of resignification of ethnic, racial, sexual, epistemic, economic and gender relations. A hetero-ethnicity of these multiple relations is necessary. To this end, a new language and new concepts must be developed to account for the complexity between the hierarchies of these relations. Therefore, the proposal is "To enter into dialogue with non-Western forms of knowledge that see the world as a totality in which everything is related to everything" (Castro Gómez and Grosfoguel, 2007, p. 17). With a view to seeking civilizing alternatives, Lander (2000) proposes to question the pretension of universal truth that social sciences wield, since they are one of the main mechanisms of naturalization and legitimization of the current colonial and neoliberal social order.

## **North American and Latin American Political Science**

This section reviews the predominant theories and objects of study in Latin American political science. To this end, metatheoretical studies that focus on the history of Latin American political science and reflect on the discipline itself are presented.



Fernando Barrientos del Monte (2009) distinguishes three periods in Latin American political science. The first period, prior to the 1960s, is called the “juridical-institutionalist period.” It is characterized by the study of norms and laws and is based on classical institutionalism, so that the empirical object of political science is not yet distinguished from law. Then, the author points to the “sociological period,” since the predominant approaches are Marxist and structural functionalist. At this stage (60s and 70s), it is still difficult to differentiate the studies that come from history, economics, and sociology from those that are properly political science. For the author, it is from the return to democracies in the 1980s that political science in Latin America began to study political institutions and have a differentiated empirical object.

For her part, Victoria Murillo (2015) analyzes the history of American political science and its repercussions in Latin America. The author associates the predominant scientific theories with United States foreign policy and worries about the lack of contextualization of theories, where globalization has as its banner an apparent “uniformity” of the world.

The political scientist argues that there is little interest in understanding how globalization affects political science and that even from the United States academy there is no incentive to contextualization. The above, despite the fact that political science in the United States has had an “exacerbated attention” for the rest of the world since the postwar period.

Thus, the theory of modernization arose in the North in the context of the Cold War, where the government was eager to obtain information about the rest of the world. This theory sustained “[...] a normative effort to drive capitalist democracy to what was labeled as the ‘less developed’ world” (Murillo, 2015, p. 578). The author notes that the policies that were promoted from the theory of modernization were associated with the “Alliance for Progress.”

Years later, in the 70s and 80s, neoinstitutionalist theories (historical institutionalism and rational choice institutionalism) experienced a boom in United States political science. These theories focused on how institutions constrain human action. This line supports the policies and institutions promoted by the Washington Consensus, which promoted structural institutional reforms and generated incentives that sanctioned human action to achieve “economic development” (Murillo, 2015).

Murillo (2015) points out that neoinstitutionalist theories are associated with the policies promoted by the Washington Consensus insofar as they propose economic reforms that tend to make Latin America achieve more prosperous markets and “economic development.” According to the author, the impact of these reforms was not as expected. This, in part, was due to the institutional weaknesses that hindered the achievement of the objectives. It should be noted

that considering "institutional weakness" as a variable to explain the obstacle to "development" reproduces a positivist way of interpreting political phenomena. It would be worth paying attention to the contextual, cultural and academic conditions that allow these modes of understanding political phenomena to be taken for granted.

Regarding the objects of study and methodology, in the existing bibliography on the subject, the authors agree that the majority of studies in political science generally tend toward a quantitative and empiricist approach. This tendency is similar to what happens in United States political science, which is the predominant place from where the predominant approach in the discipline is configured. Giovanni Sartori (2005) is concerned about this eagerness to quantify, as he considers that this process leads to a false precision and irrelevance of the studies. The author criticizes the mold of the United States political science.

In a similar vein, Murillo draws attention to the difficulty of "field studies" to understand political science phenomena:

The emphasis on method is particularly troubling in this case given the limitation to conduct field experiments for the study of many important issues in political science, such as wars, revolutions, recessions, democratization, and military coups, to name but a few. (Murillo, 2015, p. 583).

On the other hand, the work of Santiago Basabe-Serrano and Sergio Huertas-Hernández (2018) is one of the studies that inquiries about the topics mostly studied by the discipline in Latin America. The authors collected articles published in journals in Spanish and Portuguese that are in the JCR or Scimago indexes between 2011 and 2016 that refer to Latin America. They found that the most studied topics are: political parties, electoral processes and democracy. The second group includes studies of the structure, functioning and interactions of legislatures, courts of justice and the executive branch, political theory and public policy. Finally, there are some works that analyze the presence of women in different arenas of political decision-making, the transformations of the State, public opinion studies and political elites.

On his part, Nelson Cardozo (2011) analyzes the history of American political science and its repercussions in Latin America: Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay, with some references to Chile. The topics studied that he detects in his analysis are: "government," "democracy," "public policies," "social opinions" and "external action of the government."

On the other hand, Simón Pachano (2008) compiles papers presented at the Latin American and Caribbean Congress of Social Sciences held in Quito to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of Flacso in 2007. The political scientist

affirms that in Latin America, studies on democracy, political parties, relations between branches of government, political elites, electoral processes, policy formulation and decision-making processes have multiplied (p. 9).

It should be noted that the work of Pachano (2008) aims to provide a sample of the papers presented at the congress as examples of what is being studied in political science in Latin America today. The author distinguishes four thematic axes: the emergence of new political actors, forms of direct democracy, political reform and the balance of political science. Of the seven papers compiled, three deal with the emergence of new political actors, specifically, actors of “ethnic origin.” In other words, the author identifies the emergence of new actors as a relevant topic for political science in this region. This is an important reference despite the fact that it uses the generic concept “ethnic” and does not refer to indigenous people, although the three works do.

Although these works allow knowing the result of a systematization of the most worked topics in Latin American political science, the dominant criterion in their proposals refers to an accounting and, therefore, displaces interpretations that contemplate qualitative dimensions for the understanding of these choices. For the purpose of this paper, it is worth raising the problematic dimension of this issue, because the possibility of focusing attention on these other dimensions brings the analysis closer to the approaches of decolonial authors.

The following section refers to works that question the idea that Latin American political science academies follow North American political science influences closely. As can be seen, most of the works do deal with the study of “classic” topics; however, there are other approaches.

## **The Other Side of Political Science in Latin America**

The following is a reflection on the theory of dependency, as a counterpart of the theory of modernization. This dependency theory is studied as one of the antecedents of decolonial theories. It then describes the context of the return to democracy in Latin America and the topics of study that aroused the interest of political science. Finally, research on political science and indigenous people is presented.

In Latin America, modernization theory was criticized by dependency theory in the 1970s:

Dependency theory emphasized the interconnectedness involved in power relations between countries and highlighted the possibility of “underdevelopment”

while distinguishing the different types of "peripheries" that had emerged in Latin America given the relationship between internal elites and international markets. (Murillo, 2015, p. 579).

Dependency theory was developed by Latin American theorists such as Cardoso and Faletto (1969) and Theotonio Dos Santos (1970). It is a contribution fundamentally linked to what will later be known as "world-system theories" (Wallerstein, 1979). Faced with the imperialist assumptions of modernization theory, dependency theorists redefined the concepts of "development," making visible the consequences of this approach for Latin America. These authors came mainly from economics and sociology.

The following stage, in the 80s, was characterized by the return to democracy of Latin American countries where governments that had broken with democratic institutions, led by the armed forces and supported by part of civil society, had been installed. This scenario was propitious for neoinstitutionalist studies, since the main inquiry concerned the new institutional forms that contribute to consolidate democracy. Murillo (2015) argues that in this process there was a lack of contextualization of such theories, since "New institutionalist theory tended to assume that similar formal institutions operated in the same way in diverse contexts" (p. 579). However, the author does not link this fact with the hegemony of the philosophical-epistemological tradition of positivism in Latin American social sciences.

In the framework of the democratic reopening, multiculturalism is established as the dominant discourse on cultural diversity adopted by Latin American states since neoliberalism as a response to various struggles, among them, the Indian-indigenous struggles that had been taking place since the late 70s (Zapata, 2019). These struggles challenged the political system demanding recognition, inclusion, and/or autonomy. In this context, the claims of the Indian-indigenous subjects initiated in previous decades were reactivated in the 80s and 90s, giving rise to what is understood as a re-emergence of the plural indigenous movement, with positions in dialogue and also confronting the new multicultural model (Cruz, 2018). It is worth clarifying that the indigenous demands of this entire period had broader scopes than what has been achieved so far with multicultural policies (Zapata, 2019).

Based on this, the importance of the study of the "indigenous issue" for political science in the region is postulated. There is a long and complex relationship between the State, the Government and indigenous people. Andrea Gigena (2017) points out four milestones that reaffirm the importance that the indigenous issue has had for the State in Latin America:

- The emergence, in the 40s, of a “doctrinal body” that defines the relationship between the State and the indigenous populations;
- the emergence and consolidation of a specific state institutional framework for indigenous peoples (a phenomenon most visible in 1990);
- the emergence of an indigenous bureaucracy: ethno-bureaucracy (Bocacara and Bolados) or plurinational bureaucracy (Soruco Sologuren, 2015);
- the recognition of different modes of indigenous government and self-government throughout Latin America (phenomena that became more visible in the 2000s).

In a subsequent work, Avalo and Gigena (2019) reviewed the proceedings of the Congresses of the Latin American Association of Political Science (Alacip), those of the Congresses of the Argentine Society of Political Analysis, as well as articles published by 149 Latin American and Spanish journals rated as “political science” or “public administration” by the Latindex, Scielo, Biblat and/or Redalyc repositories. It follows that Latin American political science has a lot to say about indigenous people, as was discovered, nearly 300 papers presented at conferences and 592 articles published in journals.

The 592 publications belong to 149 journals and were published between 1982 and 2018. In other words, there are approximately 16 publications per year and almost four publications per journal. Most of these works were produced after 2010 in a context of recognition of indigenous rights in the constitutions of several countries in the region and, in addition, most of the studies refer to the Bolivian process in particular.

Evidencing the existence of these works is a first step to breaking with the hegemonic idea that Latin American political science does not deal with its own issues, such as indigenous peoples. This process is the result of the invisibilization processes referred to by Castro-Gómez and Grosfoguel (2007), Lander (2000), Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2009; 2010) and the epistemologies of the South in general.

## **Conclusions**

The fact that “classical” or “mainstream” Latin American political science mechanically studies democracy, parties, and institutions without taking into account a long history – the long history of Modernity/coloniality – leads to a reduced vision of the problems and objects. This absence is paradoxical in democratic societies that consider themselves pluri/multicultural. It is understood that such mechanistic view does not refer to a research inertia in the discipline, but is related to conditions, resources and forms of international distribution of knowledge production.

Epistemologies of the south and decolonial theories make a contribution to rethinking political science in Latin America. Indigenous subjects are absent subjects from the hegemonic viewpoint of political science in the terms referred to by Boaventura De Sousa Santos (2009; 2010). Therefore, a first step to decolonize (in the sense of decolonial theorists) the sciences – in particular, political science – is to claim the importance of the study of these subjects.

Furthermore, these epistemologies and theoretical proposals show that using and copying theories and objects of study produced in the center tends to decontextualize research and reproduce situations of inequality and exclusion typical of the Latin American contexts. Secondly, they encourage creating specific theoretical and epistemological frameworks to understand political phenomena from perspectives that question Eurocentric Western Modernity. This problematization does not necessarily imply disregarding what “Eurocentric” political science has developed before, but it does imply putting tension on its hegemonic condition.

## Referencias

- Avalo, A. & Gigena, A. (2019). Lo indígena como campo problemático en la ciencia política contemporánea: aproximaciones a partir de las producciones científicas en idioma español. En *XIV Congreso Nacional de Ciencia Política*. Sociedad Argentina de Análisis Político (SAAP), Argentina.
- Baquero, S. & Rico, J. (2013). Trazos para una decolonización de la teoría política. *Crítica Contemporánea*, 3, 1-20. <http://www.criticacontemporanea.org/2014/01/trazos-para-una-decolonizacion-de-la.html>.

- Barrientos del Monte, F. (2009). La ciencia política en América Latina: apuntes para una historia (estructural e intelectual) de la disciplina en la región. En *Seminario de Investigación del Área de Ciencia Política y de la Administración*. Universidad de Salamanca, Salamanca. <https://campus.usal.es/~dpublico/areacp/Posgrado2009-2010/Barrientos.pdf>.
- Basabe-Serrano, S. & Huertas-Hernández, S. (2018). El estado de la investigación en ciencia política sobre América Latina. *Revista Española de Ciencia política*, 47, 153-170. <https://dialnet.unirioja.es/servlet/articulo?codigo=6544457>.
- Cardoso, F. & Faletto, E. (1969). *Dependencia y desarrollo en América Latina*. Siglo XXI Editores.
- Cardozo, N. (2011). Del Centenario al Bicentenario: algunas reflexiones sobre el desarrollo de la ciencia política en los países del Cono Sur. *Revista Argentina de Ciencia política*, 13/14, 229-253. [https://www.academia.edu/3690456/Del\\_Centenario\\_al\\_Bicentenario\\_algunas\\_reflexiones\\_sobre\\_el\\_desarrollo\\_de\\_la\\_ciencia\\_politica\\_en\\_los\\_paises\\_del\\_Cono\\_Sur](https://www.academia.edu/3690456/Del_Centenario_al_Bicentenario_algunas_reflexiones_sobre_el_desarrollo_de_la_ciencia_politica_en_los_paises_del_Cono_Sur).
- Castro Gómez, S. & Grosfoguel, R. (2007). *El giro decolonial Reflexiones para una diversidad epistémica más allá del capitalismo global*. Siglo del Hombre Editores.
- Cruz, G. (2018). Indigenismo, blanquitud y nación. In G. Cruz (coord.). *Sujetos políticos indígenas: indigenismos, mestizaje y colonialismo* (pp. 23-52). Teseo.
- De Sousa Santos, B. (2009). *Una epistemología del Sur: la reinención del conocimiento y la emancipación social*. Clacso Ediciones.
- De Sousa Santos, B. (2010). *Descolonizar el saber, reinventar el poder*. Ediciones Trilce.
- Dos Santos, T. (1970). *Dependencia y cambio social*. Cuadernos de Estudios Socio Económicos.
- Gigena, A. (2013). *Procesos de subjetivación de campesinos e indígenas en las luchas por la tierra en el noroeste argentino*. EDUCC.

- Gigena, A. (2017). Los-as sujetos-as y los temas ausentes en la ciencia política contemporánea. En *XIII Congreso Nacional de Ciencia política*. Sociedad Argentina de Análisis Político (SAAP), Argentina.
- Lander, E. (2000). Ciencias sociales: saberes coloniales y eurocéntricos. In E. Lander (comp.). *La colonialidad del saber: eurocentrismo y ciencias sociales. Perspectivas latinoamericanas* (pp. 4-23). Clacso.
- Murillo, M. (2015). La contextualización en la ciencia política: una perspectiva latinoamericana. *Foro Internacional* 220, 55(2), 576-594. <http://forointernacional.colmex.mx/index.php/fi/article/view/2251>
- Pachano, S. (2008). *Temas actuales y tendencias en la ciencia política*. Flacso.
- Quijano, A. (2000). Colonialidad del poder, eurocentrismo y América Latina. In E. Lander (Comp.). *La colonialidad del saber: eurocentrismo y ciencias sociales. Perspectivas latinoamericanas* (pp. 201-246). Clacso.
- Sartori, G. (2005). ¿Hacia dónde va la ciencia política? *Revista Española de Ciencia Política*, 12, 9-13. <https://dialnet.unirioja.es/servlet/articulo?codigo=1256809>.
- Soruco Sologuren, X. (2015). La nueva burocracia plurinacional en Bolivia. Entre la democratización y la institucionalización. *Revista Nueva Sociedad*, 257, 131-145. <https://nuso.org/autor/ximena-soruco-sologuren/>
- Wallerstein, I. (1979). *El moderno sistema mundial*. Siglo XXI Editores.
- Wallerstein, I. (1996). *Abrir las ciencias sociales*. Siglo XXI Editores.
- Zapata, C. (2019). *Crisis del multiculturalismo en América Latina*. CALAS.





# Where are America, Africa and Asia? A Call to Cross-cultural Philosophizing

*(English Version)*

¿Y dónde quedan América, África y Asia?: una invitación a filosofar interculturalmente

Onde estão as Américas, a África e a Ásia?: um convite à filosofização intercultural

*Received 11 March, 2022. Accepted 9 April, 2022.*

Juan Camilo Hernández Rodríguez\*

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6675-3636>

Colombia

› To cite this article:

Hernández Rodríguez, J. C.  
(2023). Where are America,  
Africa and Asia? A call to Cross-  
cultural Philosophizing.  
*Ánfora*, 30(54). 58-91.

<https://doi.org/10.30854/anfv30.n54.2023.919>

Universidad Autónoma de  
Manizales. L-ISSN 0121-6538.  
E-ISSN 2248-6941.  
CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

## Abstract

In this essay, I hope to formally invite readers to consider becoming interested in the study of other philosophical traditions other than the “Western” (European). For this reason, I conducted a general analysis of a number of the main objections to “non-Western philosophy” (Kant, Hegel, Heidegger, Russell, and McLuhan). Then I refuted those arguments with other sources and rationales. I will sum up by mentioning a few points worth considering for anyone interested in learning more about any of these traditions. The conclusion is that adopting interculturality as a guiding principle or method could significantly enrich philosophical reflection, or “philosophizing.” However, to do so, acknowledging these cultural traditions as having equal philosophical weight to that of Europeans, and normalizing their research without sacrificing rigor and analysis is necessary.

---

\* Master's student in Science Teaching, Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy. Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Manizales. [fl\\_jchernandez540@pedagogica.edu.co](mailto:fl_jchernandez540@pedagogica.edu.co)

**Keywords:** intercultural philosophy; Indian philosophy; Chinese philosophy; African philosophy; Amerindian philosophy.

## Resumen

En este texto pretendo realizar una invitación al lector a interesarse por el estudio de algunas tradiciones filosóficas distintas a la «occidental» (europea). Para ello, realizo un análisis general de varios de los argumentos de los principales detractores de las «filosofías no occidentales» (Kant, Hegel, Heidegger, Russell, and McLuhan). Luego, objeto dichos argumentos con diversas fuentes y razonamientos. Finalmente, menciono algunos puntos de reflexión que podrían ser interesantes para aquel que desee investigar a fondo alguna de estas tradiciones. Se concluirá que asumir a la interculturalidad como principio o método podría enriquecer fuertemente la reflexión filosófica o «el filosofar»; sin embargo, para ello es necesario un reconocimiento de estas tradiciones como interlocutores de igual peso filosófico que los europeos y, por lo mismo, se debería normalizar su estudio sin que por ello se pierda el rigor y el análisis.

**Palabras clave:** filosofía intercultural; filosofía de la India; filosofía china; filosofía africana; filosofía amerindia.

## Resumo

Neste texto, pretendo convidar o leitor a interessar-se pelo estudo de algumas tradições filosóficas que não a "ocidental" (européia). Para este fim, faço uma análise geral de vários dos argumentos dos principais detratores das "filosofias não-ocidentais" (Kant, Hegel, Heidegger, Russell, e McLuhan). Então, me oponho a esses argumentos com várias fontes e raciocínios. Finalmente, menciono alguns pontos para reflexão que podem ser de interesse para qualquer pessoa que deseje investigar qualquer uma dessas tradições em profundidade. Conclui-se que assumir a interculturalidade como princípio ou método poderia enriquecer fortemente a reflexão filosófica ou "filosofante"; no entanto, isso requer o reconhecimento dessas tradições como interlocutores de igual peso filosófico que os europeus e, portanto, seu estudo deve ser padronizado sem perder o rigor e a análise.

Hernández Rodríguez, J. C. (2023). Where are America, Africa and Asia? A call to Cross-cultural Philosophizing. *Ánfora*, 30(54), 58-91.  
<https://doi.org/10.30854/anfv30.n54.2023.919>



**Palavras chave:** filosofia intercultural; filosofia indiana; filosofia chinesa; filosofia africana; filosofia ameríndia.

## Introduction

If we open a textbook on the history of philosophy or attend a university lecture on the same subject, it is highly probable that we will read or hear that “Philosophy was born in Greece” or “Philosophy is strictly Western.” It is likely that someone has asked: “What happens to other cultures? Why didn't they have any traditions, authors, treatises, schools, or issues that we could deem philosophical?” However, it is also likely that the teacher or author resorted to arguments that did not fully persuade; or that he or she gave evasive answers or simply replied: “Because that’s the way it is and that’s it.”

This seemingly insignificant change to a philosophical education is more problematic than it first appears since it motivates us to avoid reading philosophers outside of Europe (meaning: Greek, Roman, English, French and German). Furthermore, because we were raised with these kinds of beliefs, we disregarded any chance of opening classrooms, seminars, inaugural conferences, conventions, designing middle and high school curricula, etc. That even included the option of studying philosophy other than those usually read. This is only worse when we consider that these prejudices are perpetuated over generations and in every field where philosophy is studied due to dogmatism.

Well, I make this text available to the reader with the intention of inviting him/her to assume philosophy and the exercise of philosophizing in an intercultural way; that is, not to judge what has already been learned as “official philosophy” or “Western philosophy,” but to open up to discussion with other types of voices *with the same rigor, effort, interest and depth as he/she would with the other texts with which he/she is already in dialogue*. As an invitation, the style of this text departs a little from the typical strictly impersonal argumentative works and, rather, a first-person voice emerges in which, without discarding the references and philosophical analysis, a specific form (of many that exist) is suggested in which one can — and, I consider it desirable to do so — assume the study of philosophy.

In order to accomplish this task, I will carry out this exercise in three stages: first, I will refute arguments that non-European philosophies (Indian, Chinese, Japanese, African, Amerindian) cannot be considered “authentic philosophies.” Second, I will outline generally problems, traditions and authors of these non-Western traditions. And third, I will suggest an introductory bibliography based on primary and secondary sources. The first stage will allow us to put aside prejudices, stereotypes, and other biases that prevent us from opening to dialogue. The second will offer minimal tools so that the reader can, in the future, if desired, study these authors or schools and even introduce them into

their work and classes. In this way, the reader will be able to transition from a position that clearly rejects any possibility of the existence of other types of philosophies different from the European one to a new conception from which the exploration of these other traditions is stimulated.

## “Non-European Philosophies? Never!”

I will start by going over the objections that claim there can't be Western philosophical traditions before addressing them in the following section. To this end, I will analyze the positions of five European philosophers who have had an impact on western academics in one way or another. I list them in roman numerals to facilitate the reader's referral of objections to the arguments. It is likely that one of these opponents of non-Western philosophy will be seen as being reflected (or perhaps directly influenced) by Martin Heidegger's words [I]:

The term “European Western Philosophy,” which is used so frequently, is actually a tautology. Why? Because philosophy is fundamentally Greek; Greek means here: philosophy is the source of its essence, and to begin its dissipation, it was necessary to draw on the world of the Greeks and only this world. (Heidegger, 2006 [*WiP*], S. 7)

I have the first argument, then: “The word φιλοσοφία tells us that philosophy is something that for the first time determines the existence of the Greek world” (S. 6); attributing philosophy to other cultures is a loose contextualization. In this order of ideas, it is inappropriate to discuss non-European or “non-Western” philosophy; instead, we should discuss “Western Thought” or “Western Wisdom” (and, who knows, even Indigenous or African Wisdom).

However, this essentialism defended by Heidegger in this article seems to have its roots in Immanuel Kant [II], who

[...] classified humans into whites (Europeans), yellows (Asians), blacks (Africans) and reds (Americans), attributing to them essential characteristics inscribed in human nature: *American Indians lack affection and passion, nothing matters to them, they are lazy; blacks, on the contrary, are full of passion and affection, they are vain and can be educated, but only as servant-slaves; “Hindus” are passive, they can be educated in the arts but not in science because they do not reach the level of abstract*

concepts. [...] “The white race possesses in itself all the motivating forces and talents”<sup>1</sup>. (Eze, cited by Garcés, 2005, p. 143)..

In this sense, the other cultures did not develop philosophical systems for random reasons, but because, in fact, *they failed because, quite simply, they could not do it*; “it was not part of their nature.” Because non-Europeans are incapable of developing an abstract thought, it is nonsensical to seek out a philosophical thought, which is by definition abstract. That would be the second argument.

Currently, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (III) has developed this position about non-Europeans’ inability to have an abstract thought in more detail in his *Lessons in the Philosophy of Universal History*. On the one hand, about the “new world” (America), he states:

[...] This culture had a wholly natural character and was destined to vanish as soon as the spirit approached. America has consistently exposed itself as being spiritually and physically flawed. The main character of the Americans of these provinces is a meekness and lack of impetus, as well as humility and creeping submission before a Creole and even more before a European, and it will be a long time yet before the Europeans come to instill in them a little self-respect. It is possible to recognize that those people are inferior in all respects, including with regard to appearance. (Hegel, 2010, p. 396).

On the other hand, about Africa he states:

The African, in his undifferentiated and withdrawn unity, has not yet achieved this distinction between his individuality and his essential universality. Therefore, the knowledge of an absolute being, which would be another being, and superior to the self, is completely absent. As we have already stated, the black person is a representation of the completely barbaric and indolent human being. (p. 408).

And then he says: “[...] [Africa] is not a historic continent. It has offered no movement or evolution” (p. 415). But, even this “pre-history” is applicable to China and India:

China and India continue to exist outside of world history, which is to say that they are a presumption of the historical events whose combination will create historical progress in real time. The unity of substance and subjective freedom

---

1. Look in particular at Eze’s (2001) miniscule work, where this position of Kant is analyzed *in depth* throughout his complete work, which was studied in German.

is characterized by such opposition from both sides that it is impossible for the substance to reach the level of subjective reflection (p. 434).

For Hegel, the reason China could not realize philosophy was the absolute authority of the emperor (*Huángdì* [皇帝]: wise god king/*Tiānzǐ* [天子]: son of Heaven). This firm state structure would not have allowed China to develop free thought, since, in fact, there was no genuine freedom in the empire. To put it another way, democracy was necessary for China to arrive at a genuine philosophical mindset. On the other hand, in India religion ended up absorbing thought in such a way that, as Hegel points out, attempts at abstract thought led to a reduction of the universal and immaterial to matter and the empirical. There is idealism, but it is an idealism of fantasy and imagination.

In this order of ideas, one can summarize Hegel's objections as follows. First, to the Indians and Africans: their natural state and lack of universality prevents them from thinking abstractly. Second, to the Chinese: the absence of democracy made the development of their spirit impossible and prevented free thought. Third, to the Indians: the subjectivist idealism they hold is not based on the abstract and the empirical; they are unable to reach a conceptual thought, only an imaginary and fanciful one. This would then be the third argument used to refute the existence of non-Western philosophical systems.

Now, this conception of non-European peoples as pre-historical and, therefore, pre-philosophical can also be found in the works on the history of philosophy by Bertrand Russell (1964) [IV]:

Philosophy and science, as we know them now, are Greek inventions. This emergence and development of Greek civilization was one of history's most stunning events. Nothing like it has ever happened before or since. [...] Certain knowledges were passed down from Egypt to Babylonia, which the Greeks afterward used. However, neither science nor philosophy flourished in either of the two. The significance here is that the function of religion did not lead to the pursuit of intellectual adventure. (pp. 10-11).

In this sense, the cause of the delay of which Kant spoke could be explained for Russell — besides a possible lack of genius and the prevailing social conditions — by religion as an obstacle to the development of a secular, independent, purely rational thought, based more on logic than on dogma and faith. So, one has the third argument: in these traditions, thought cannot separate the philosophical from the religious. The non-Western philosophies (Asian, American, and African) are a mystical, esoteric thought; there was no “passage of the μῦθος



(*mythos*) to λόγος (*lógos*) ”. As a result, Russell (1971) expanded his thesis as follows:

Much of what constitutes civilization existed thousands of years ago in Egypt and Mesopotamia, and it had spread to neighboring countries. However, several elements that the Greeks added were missing. What they accomplished in art and literature is well known around the world, but what they accomplished in pure intellectual fields is even more extraordinary. They invented mathematics (in Egypt and Babylon arithmetic and geometry existed but in rudimentary form<sup>2</sup>). The Greeks introduced deductive reasoning (starting from general premises), science and philosophy, they were the first to write history instead of mere annals, they speculated freely about the nature of the world and the purposes of life, without being chained to any inherited orthodoxy. What happened was so incredible that folks are still amazed and speak mystically of Greek genius now. (p. 23).

Precisely because of the mentioned religious restriction, it appears that the Greeks were able to overcome their congeneric religious limitations and, as a result, achieve knowledge. Thus, scientific development seems to be *conditio sine qua non* of the emergence of philosophy. In that at least, there seems to be an agreement between Russell and Heidegger:

The statement “philosophy is Greek in its essence” says nothing more than: The West and Europe, and they alone, are in the depths of their historical course originally “philosophical.” The rise and dominance of the sciences testify to this. Precisely because of the fact of emerging from the deepest layers of the historical course of the European West, that is, of the philosophical course, the sciences are today in a position to print their particular stamp on the history of man throughout the earth. (Heidegger, 2006 [WiP], S. 7).

To this respect, the obstacle of all the other traditions is that their religiosity prevents them from developing scientific advances. This is perfectly articulated with the position of Marshall McLuhan [V], who explains that the cause of this spontaneous Greek intellectual development could only be generated there, due to the invention of abstract alphabetic writing. Overcoming the orality of ancient (“tribal”) traditions and the representation of pictograms or “less abstract” alphabets — such as sinograms (Chinese *hànzì* and *kanji*

---

2. See the paper by Frankfort et al. (1954). Although it is titled *El pensamiento prefilosófico* (*The Prefilosophic Mind* in its Spanish translation), the original title is *The Intellectual Adventure of Ancient Man*, which, when compared to the book's content, appears to be a translation error.

*japanese*)— *the Greek civilizations could have developed an abstract thought, complex and rich in formal structures that made possible the emergence of philosophy, science and technology.* He says:

In fact, of all the hybrid unions that engender tremendous changes and releases of energy, there is none that surpasses the encounter between an oral and a literate culture. Giving man an eye for an ear with phonetic literacy is, socially and politically, the most radical explosion that can occur in any social structure. This explosion of the eye, often repeated in “backward areas,” is called Westernization. With literacy poised to produce the hybridization of Chinese, Indian, and African culture, we are about to witness a release of human force and aggressive violence that will make history before the phonetic alphabet seem especially calm. This will only happen in the East, since the electrical implosion is bringing to the literate West the oral and tribal culture of hearing. Now the visual, specialized, and fragmented Westerner will not only have to live in close daily relationship with all the ancient oral cultures of the earth, but his own electrical technology is beginning to return visual, or eye, man to tribal patterns and oral with its continuous web of links and interdependencies. (McLuhan, 1994, pp. 70-71).

In this sense, with the “orientalization of the West” developed cultures would obtain a reconnection with their ancient heritages from a rediscovery of the oral and listening. While with “the westernization of the East” these would obtain the Western technological and social development, thanks to the fact that these, unlike the Eastern ones, did manage to develop a visual expression — and, therefore, abstract — that was consolidated in the construction of a literate writing free of any representation or orality. The letters do not represent symbols or things in the world, but from the construction of complex structures from these the creation of complex concepts and meanings is possible. For this very reason, “[...] the inability of oriental culture, oral and intuitive, to coincide with European patterns of experience, rational and visual” (p. 36) would explain why in those cultures a philosophy could not develop in the authentic sense of the word (although with the subsequent Westernization of the East it probably has [as is the Kyoto school]). The East has religion, myth, intuition (auditory, symbolic); the West, science, theories, reason (the visual, alphabetical). Although with Modernity there has been a mutual influence, it is undeniable that as a starting point, the East could not have had philosophical thought; they lacked the alphabet, the visual, the abstract.

There are five arguments by which *it seems* that it is imprecise to speak of “non-Western philosophies.” First: that the term ‘φιλοσοφία’ comes from the

Greek. This reflects that the Greeks, and only they, managed to have such a level of reflection that they discovered, systematized and named their work explicitly. Second: essentially, no one other than the white race (the European) has in the essence of their human nature the fundamental conditions to develop a genuinely philosophical thought. Third: Precisely, these peoples did not meet those conditions because: a) they did not overcome the state of nature (America and Africa); b) its political organization did not know freedom and democracy (China); and c) the metaphysics failed to reach the abstraction of the concept, but lagged behind in imagination and fantasy. Fourth: religion was an obstacle to scientific development, and this was reflected in philosophy. And fifth: by not reaching the development of an alphabet and abilities mainly linked to vision, the Eastern man (and, perhaps, also the African and the Amerindian) could not develop an abstract thought, but an intuitive one, symbolic and mostly linked to listening.

Now, once the main objections have been collected through which it seems that it is impossible to speak of “non-Western philosophies,” it is time to see the objections that can be made to them and, with this, open the possibility of studying other philosophical traditions, different from the European.

## **But Why Not...?**

Once the objections have been exposed, I will analyze them one by one in order to evaluate whether or not it is pertinent to sustain the thesis that the study of “non-Western philosophies” is possible and desirable:

In the first argument (I) it is argued that the term “philosophy” is Greek and that only the Greeks were self-aware of their philosophical work. The problem with this premise is that it seems to assume from the outset a certain linguistic solipsism according to which it is not possible to translate terms from one language to another. For example, the term “four” to indicate the fourth natural number comes from the Latin “*quattuor*,” but it does not follow that before the Romans people did not know the number as such. Moreover, if what one talks about in philosophy is about concepts — as in fact one does — since these are universal, the particular names or languages one uses as long as the meaning is the same. As Frege (2016) indicated, the concept of “green” or the proposition “x is green” mean the same thing regardless of the language or grammar we use (p. 279). The same happens with the term “philosophy”; the fact that it was historically nominated like this for the first time in Greece does not mean that

before Pythagoras there was no philosophy or that in other parts of the world it had not arisen but with another name.

On the other hand, in China the term 哲學 (*zhéxué*) (“doctrine of wisdom”) (Bauer, 2009, p. 20) was already used to refer to one who he has a fondness for learning or, in the words of Confucius (or his students): 「可謂好學也已」 (“you can say he is eager to learn”) (Confucius, 1861, I, 14).<sup>3</sup> Likewise, although it was not until the 19th century that the term 哲学 (*tetsugaku*), was coined in Japan, as Bouso shows in the “Introductory framework” of *Japanese Philosophy: A Sourcebook*, “[...] long before Japan already had a solid philosophical tradition” (Bouso, 2016, p. 40). In that order of ideas, it does not seem to be something exclusive to the Greeks to name philosophy with the traditional — and, therefore, ambiguous — characterization of “love [φιλία] of wisdom”.

Now, it is not so clear either that for the Greeks the concept of *philosophy* was clearly defined and delimited. For example, the terms “sage” and “philosopher” were not differentiated until Plato and, above all, Aristotle. Hence, as narrated by Aristides, various poets, pre-Socratics, Socrates, Plato and Aristotle were called σοφιστής (“he who knows”) (Aristides, quoted in: Melero, 1999, DK 79 A 1). “The problem is complicated by the fact that, together with the term ‘philosopher’, they used other words: ‘sage,’ ‘sophist,’ ‘historian,’ ‘physicist,’ ‘physiologist’” (Ferrater, 1975, t. 2, p. 661, voice “philosophy”). Although the Platonic effort to differentiate itself from sophistry is understood, the definition of “philosophy” as if it were already something closed and absolute is not entirely clear (and still is not). Precisely this problem constitutes the object of reflection of “metaphilosophy” or “periphilosophy” (the branch that deals with what philosophy itself is) (pp. 397 et seq., voice “periphilosophy”). For example, philosophy could be understood as science (Husserl, 2009), as a way of life (Hadot, 2006), as desire (Lyotard, 1994), creation (Deleuze and Guattari, 1991), etc. In this sense, if there is no clear criterion or definition of what philosophy is, demanding that other traditions have done so, is simply incoherent.

On the other hand, it is evident that the arguments II and III of Kant and Hegel, respectively, are based on racial prejudices in which non-biological characteristics are attributed (social, for example), to a simple adaptation effect of the human body and skin when exposed to UV rays. Without going into details, it does not seem evident that from the skin color of a person or society it can be deduced that they are “lazy, meek, courageous, less intelligent, etc.” (Wade, 2011, p. 210-12). Furthermore, this racial essentialism is dangerous,

---

3. On the other hand, Oriol Fina Sanglós translates directly: “This man can be called a philosopher, that is, a lover or student of wisdom” (Confucius, 1975 [LY], p.116).

since, based on it, slavery (as seen in the authors' quote) or racial supremacy have been justified.

Now, for the sake of the discussion, I will not focus too much on the immense problem that this type of racial prejudice has of its own; although, without a doubt, it is a problem that deserves several in-depth studies, such as the one carried out by Appiah (2019). However, it would be expected that with the current scientific and social advances, fewer people would defend this type of position. It is probable that most of the readers reject the theses from those authors; however, it seems that there are categories created from those colonial theories that continue to operate in our imaginations and that would be worth questioning: "West," "East" and "New World."

Leaving aside the aforementioned ethnic prejudices, it seems that Hegel's position adds a greater problem: he attributes essential qualities to each culture by attributing categories —according to him, "universal" — to encompass the world from two differentiating categories: for on the one hand, the concept of "New World," referring to the American continent as something without development, as raw material, as the habitat of savages. On the other hand, the concept of "Orient" is associated with magical, irrational, "mystical" thinking.

Regarding the first aspect, it is worth making an exception to the norm to this modern colonial thought: Michel de Montaigne (1984),<sup>4</sup> who in his essay "Of the Cannibales" states:

To be honest, we have no other measure of truth and reason than the opinions and customs of the country in which we live and where we always believe that there is the perfect religion, the perfect politics and the perfect and fulfilled management of all things. Those people are wild in the sense that we call wild the fruits that nature has spontaneously produced, while in truth the really wild are those that we have diverted, with artifice, from the common ones. (t. 1, p. 153).

Actually, the fact that the criterion about what is considered correct, valid or true is stipulated from one's own belief system, can be considered perhaps the greatest epistemological obstacle to recognizing the philosophical theories of other cultures for what they are: *philosophical theories*. To judge the others as wild is, after all, to completely reject their thought for who they are and not for what they think. This is the danger of the aforementioned racial essentialism. Paradoxically, that prejudice derived from that feeling of European superiority

---

4. It is also worth mentioning the opinion of Voltaire in his *Philosophy of History* (2001), Leibniz in his *Discourse on the Natural Theology of the Chinese* (2000) or the *Notes on the East* by Schopenhauer (2011).

(or “Eurocentrism”) is, as Dussel (1999) explains, *effect — and not cause — of the processes of conquest and colonization*:

[...] the centrality of Europe in the world-system is not the result of an internal superiority accumulated during medieval Europe over and against other cultures. Instead, it is a fundamental effect of the simple fact of the discovery, conquest, colonization, and integration (subsumption) of Amerindia. This simple fact will give Europe the determining comparative advantage over the Ottoman-Islamic world, India and China. Modernity is the result of these events, not their cause. Consequently, it is the administration of the centrality of the world-system that will allow Europe to transform itself into something like the “reflexive consciousness” (modern philosophy) of world history [...]. Even capitalism is the result and not the cause of this conjunction between European planetarization and the centralization of the world system. (pp. 148-149).

One could reply to both Hegel and Kant — and their followers — that even that moral and intellectual superiority to which they appeal so much to reaffirm Europe’s hegemony over the world is the result of the plundering and appropriation of those other colonized cultures. As Castro Gómez (2005) explained in the work Said:

The great merit of Said is to have seen that the discourses of the human sciences are sustained by a geopolitical machinery of knowledge/power that has subalternized the other voices of humanity from a cognitive point of view, it means, that it has declared as “illegitimate” the simultaneous existence of different ways of knowing and producing knowledge. Said shows that the birth of the human sciences in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries meant the invisibilization of the historical multivocality of humanity. Europe’s territorial and economic expropriation of the colonies was matched by an epistemic expropriation that condemned the knowledge in them to be only the “past” of modern science (p. 47).

In this sense, Eugenio Nkogo Ondó (2006), James (2001) —and, especially, Martin Bernal’s extensive three-volume work (1987; 1991; 2006), as well as the response to detractors (2001)— have shown how Western thought has not only been based on Afro-Asian cultures, but even it has appropriated them to present them as autochthonous creations.

Regarding the supposed “mystical” spirit attributed to the philosophical systems of Asia, the extensive and profound work that Tola and Dragonetti (2008) carried out in their work *Filosofía de la India (Philosophy of India)*, in

addition to responding to Hegel's criticisms, analyzes common aspects between different Indian and European philosophical schools. The same can be said of *La filosofía nahuatl estudiada en sus fuentes (The Nahuatl Philosophy Studied at its Source)* by Miguel León-Portilla (2017). In both cases, as in previous works (Hernández, 2019; 2020a; 2020b; 2020c) it is possible to see how in Indian and indigenous philosophical traditions there is a high level of abstraction, rationality and formal logical thinking; but naturally, with peculiarities that differentiate them from Europeans.

This very point refers us to the fourth objection (IV), that of Russell, which appeals to the religiosity of these cultures to affirm that this prevented their development of a rational philosophy. In addition to the aforementioned sources that show extensive examples of rationality in these traditions, it would be worth asking why the European religiosity of the ancient and medieval world was not an obstacle, but a catalyst for philosophical thought. Even if one were to appeal to the obsolete account of Zeller's (1968) "passage from mythos to logos," it has already been refuted by Jaeger (2001, p. 151; 2003) or Kathryn Morgan (2004) who names numerous examples of how religious and mythical thought influenced Greek thought, so that, rather than speaking of "a passage from myth to logos" it is more appropriate to speak of a "logicization" of myth.

However, the distinction in Indian literature between the श्रुति (*śruti*) or religious texts (such as the Vedas, the *Upaniṣad*, etc.) and philosophical treatises is also mentioned (Tola and Dragonetti, 2008). The same could be said of the five Chinese classics with respect to the *Analects* of Confucius or the Daoists (Bauer, 2009); as well as the myths of the Mexican gods with respect to the philosophical poems of the *Tlamatinime* (wise Nahua ["Aztec"] philosophers) (León-Portilla, 2017); or, even, between religious texts of Kemetic (Egyptian) philosophy such as the *Egyptian Book of Dead* with respect to the *Sebayt* (philosophical texts of ethics, mainly) (Tamosauskas, 2020).

Now, moving on to McLuhan's argument (V), there does not seem to be a clear relationship between writing systems and cognitive development *as the author wants to show*. It has been clear that writing contributed to the development and evolution of human thought (Watson, 2005, pp. 63-85), but it is not entirely clear why symbolic thought could be less rational than the conceptual or formal thought. There are several reasons for this:

Firstly, that other thoughts, such as that of India, were structured in alphabets that fulfill the conditions McLuhan says; even Mayan or hieroglyphics are a mixture between ideograms and phonograms... Secondly, because it is well known that writing was initially developed for non-academic purposes — curiously, in India it was the opposite (Sanskrit was a cultured language) and its theories are not usually recognized as philosophical. This is explained

by Dupont (1994), who points out that, even if there was an abstract alphabet among the Greeks, it was used for technical purposes (accounting, etc.), while orality and memory were only for poetry and philosophy. Plato himself states this in *Phaedrus* by appealing to a supposed Egyptian myth in which Theuth (Thoth) (God of wisdom, writing, science, magic, etc.) puts writing before Thamus (Amon) (superior god, later identified with Ra) to consider whether or not it is a good gift for humans. After exposing such a gift, Thamus replies:

For it is forgetfulness that they will produce in the souls of those who learn them, not caring about memory, since trusting what is written, they will arrive at the memory from outside, through foreign characters, not from inside but from themselves and by themselves. It is not, therefore, a memory drug that you have found, but a simple reminder. Appearance of wisdom is what you provide to your students, not truth. (Platón, 2010 [*Phaedr.*], 275a).

And, thirdly, it has not been demonstrated why the symbol could not cover up a complex abstract idea. It means, it has not been said that a symbol — graphic or narrative (as it has been the Greek golden number [ $\Phi$ ], the Cartesian evil genius, the Platonic demiurge, etc.) — a set of highly complex reflections with a high philosophical content could not be found; for example, the *om* indian ( $\text{Om}$ ), the *tajítú* ("yin-yang") Chinese ( $\text{☯}$ ) or the Abyayalense origen law<sup>5</sup> ( $\text{☯}$ ). As Urbina (2004) states:

He [an indigenous grandfather] was able to dismantle the partial story, to see its structures and to see that those stories were basically telling the same thing. This is going strictly in the direction of philosophy. [...] There is a strict code, an internal logic that underlies the appearances that show diversities and even contradictions. These mythical meta-codes are those perceived and managed by some indigenous scholars, very few, as are the few true philosophers of the West. (p. 144).

Without wishing to be redundant, numerous counterexamples and questions emerge to refute each of the initial arguments. After all, it seems that it is not so rational to think that in Europe, and only Europe, is and has been possible to develop a philosophical thought. After all, let us reason: what is more absurd — or, in their terms, "mythical" — to believe that in the face of conditions and

---

5. "In Tule, Kuna language Abya-Yala means 'land-in-full-maturity,' a formula totally contrary to the New World, it is imposed by those who were interested in forging it to their ambitious liking" (Urbina and Peña, 2016, pp. 8-9). In this sense, it is an indigenous native name that could be given to this continent as opposed to the mentioned European category.



needs of human existence the human being from different cultures has questioned and speculated on philosophical problems; or, to believe that a culture (not as old as others) has awakened from the dogmatic dream of myth and, almost as a miracle, it discovered the use of reason without the help of anything but themselves?

## **“But and Where to Start?”**

So far two stages have been reviewed for those who approach non-European philosophies: first, to categorically deny any possibility of a philosophy other than the European one; and second, to open a small door by critically evaluating those beliefs or prejudices that prevent us from recognizing them. It is necessary to overcome the third epistemological obstacle: to know where to start the research.

Increasingly more institutes and curricula are beginning to recognize the importance of studies of the philosophies of Asia, America and Africa, as they have not been properly articulated to official curricula, there is still a lack of information about which authors, problems and critical studies can be studied. With a propaedeutic spirit in mind — and recognizing the sacrifice in detail and precision of the terms — I will offer a general explanation and recommend a bibliography<sup>6</sup>:

### **About America**

It is possible to differentiate at least four general lines — although, as so *broad* the Amerindian thought, even to speak of these four aspects would be “daring”: the Nahuatl philosophy (misnamed “Aztec”), the Mayan and Tojolabal, the Inca (also called “Andean” or “Quechua”) and the Colombian Abyayalense.

With respect to the first, the most notable and valuable study is that of Miguel León-Portilla, in the doctoral thesis *The Nahuatl philosophy studied in its sources* (2017) which showed how the *Tlamatinime* (Nahua philosophers) achieved great philosophical ideas about the dual Absolute (*Ometeotl*), the human being, education, etc. In this research, several fragments are collected in their original language (Nahuatl) and their corresponding translation. Also, in *Fifteen*

---

6. It is remarked that this suggestion is made from the gathered documentation so far. Lots of critical studies —even the primary sources— are difficult to access, either by translations or even to access to material itself.

*Poets of the Nahuatl World* (1994) full bilingual poems can be found so that the reader can refer to the primary sources. As current researches the studies of Maffie (2000; 2002; 2005; 2014) and Hernández (2019) can be referred to on how to interpret such thinking.

And regarding Mayan philosophy, the valuable work of José Mata Gavidia (1950) must be recognized. His doctoral thesis *Existence and Perdurance in the Popol-Vuh* has shown how concepts such as existence, persistence, the God-cosmos relationship and coexistence (or “community existence”) are fundamental to Mayan philosophical thought. This topic has also been extensively studied by Carlos Lenkersdorf (2003; 2005), who shows how the idea of “we” is key in Tojolabal Mayan thought. Likewise, León-Portilla (1994) on the time-reality relationship or the work of Mercedes de la Garza (1987) on the shamanic vision in Mayans are of great relevance. As is that of Alexis McLeod (2018) regarding their metaphysical thought.

With respect to philosophy in the Tahuantinsuyo (the Inca or “Andean”), ideas such as the relationships between space-time (*pacha*) or matter (*cay*) and idea (*camac*) are addressed. (Bouysse-Cassagne *et al.*, 1987). As a rigorous, extensive, detailed and comprehensive analysis, the book *Andean Philosophy* by Josef Estermann (2009) is worth reviewing. Similarly, worth highlighting on the same subject are Mario Mejía Huamán (2005), Yáñez del Pozo (2002) or Rojas (2019) on the Huarochirí manuscript and, mainly, Víctor Mazzi *Inkas and Philosophers: Postures, Theories, Source Studies, and Reinterpretation* (2016) and *Presentation of Juan Yunpa: An Inka Philosopher in the 17th Century* (2015).

Finally, from an “Amazonian” perspective, but that *it is not reducible to it*. In reserach it has been called “Abyayalense,” although it seems to be just as generic as “Amerindian.” In the Colombian case, Urbina (2004; 2010, ed.), Torres (2004a; 2004b) and Reichel-Dolmatoff (1997; 2005) are remarkable for introducing themselves to this type of thought in a general way; mainly, to refer to shamanism. Páramo (2004) on the logic of myths; Pabón (2002), on the aesthetic and cosmological conception of cruelty; or Hernández (2020c), on metaphysics, offer a documented introduction. The valuable work Castaño Uribe (2020) has performed in making the thinking behind Chiribiquete mountain range visible, just as Urbina has done in Lindosa (Urbina and Peña, 2016). The interviews conducted by James and Jiménez with specialists on the subject (2004) or Ortiz (2005) with the mamos (“elders”) of Sierra Nevada also provide valuable information. Finally, it is important to mention Chindoy (2020) regarding the Kamëntšá community’s philosophy on the concepts of time, beauty, and spirit.

## About Asia

If Korea, Tibet, the Middle East, etc. have a wide culture, and probably, philosophical tradition, it is enough here to name authors regarding their three greatest philosophical cultures: India, China, and Japan, as well as Babylonian philosophy in Asia Minor.

Regarding India, many texts have been published. Its classification into more than 12 schools (each with sub-schools; and these, into doctrines) throughout more than 23 centuries turns into something extremely demanding. Different topics as the logic and the nature of knowledge, the matter and spirit relationship, atoms, a happy life, the I-Absolute relationship, destiny, and emptiness etc. are addressed. However, as introductory materials, the work of Mahadevan (1991) as well as that of Tola and Dragonetti (1999; 2010), and Williams et al. (2013) and de Arnau (2005; 2008; 2012) are noteworthy. As primary sources, the translations of the different *Upaniṣad* (1998; 2002; 2009a; 2009b) or the *vedānta* (2000), a study of the *Brahma sūtras*, by Consuelo Martín Díaz (ed.), or the translations of Nāgārjuna (2006; 2011) or Vasubandhu by Juan Arnau (Arnau, 2011), or the *Sāṃkhyakārikā* by Laia Villegas (Īśvarakṛṣṇa, 2016), or the critical study of the *Yoga sūtras* of Patañjali by the B. K. S. S. Iyengar (2003) are also remarkable. The critical selection of the *Prajñāpāramitā* of Costero (ed., 2006), and Hurie et al. (1993) and Tola & Dragonetti (1999) are also important; as well as the selection of the Buddha *sūtras* by Tola & Dragonetti (1999; 2012), Dragonetti (2006) and the Bhikkhu Bodhi (2019).

With respect to China, although many issues are also discussed, there is a marked interest for associating them with politics, righteous governance and a virtuous ethical life, over a short or long term period. For example, in Indian theories called for liberation from suffering. In general, six major schools of thought are recognized: Confucianism, Daoism, Buddhism, Legalism, Mohism and the School of Names; although, the *Sourcebook* of Wing-Tsit Chan (1963) has at least 44 schools. In addition to this work — paramount and remarkable as a primary source and as a critical study — the valuable study of Anne Cheng (2002) as well as the studies of Bauer (2009), Berger (2019), and Feng Youlan (1989) should be highlighted, and in particular, the study of Chinese metaphysics by Li and Perkins (2015). As primary sources, one can find the *Analects* of Confucius (1997), and the *Four Classic Books of Confucianism* by Perez (2002) and Fina Sanglas (1998). The classics of Daoism are also fundamental: Laozi or the *Daò Dé Jīng* (2015), the *Zhuangzì* (1996) and the *Liezì* (2006), as well as *The Four Canons of the Yellow Emperor* (2010). Cleary's anthology (1983) on *Huayan* Buddhism, and Han Fei Zi's *Art of Rulership* (2010) or Mo Ti's *Mozi* (1987) are also considered.

Since Japanese philosophy is also quite broad, the recommendation is to consult the *Sourcebook* by Heisig, Kasulis and Maraldo (2011), edited into Spanish by Bouso (2016). Both as a critical study and as a compendium of fragments of primary sources. Also worth mentioning is the work of Buddhist philosopher Ehei Dōgen, the *Shobogenzo* (2015), as well as the works of some philosophers of the Kyoto school: Kitarō Nishida (1985; 2006), Hajime Tanabe (2014) and Keiji Nishitani (1999), as well as the anthology by Agustín Zavala (1995; 1997). This school is characterized by establishing bridges between elements of Buddhist and Western philosophical thought (Nietzsche, Heidegger, Husserl, Hegel, existentialism, etc.) with respect to broad topics as nihilism, freedom, and unity.

Little is known about Babylonian philosophy. Besides the study of Frankfort *et al.* (1954), and the translation of a philosophical dialogue on divine justice by Silva (1972), a very recent in-depth and detailed study by Marc Van de Mieroop (2015; 2018) on this tradition is available.

## About Africa

Regarding Africa, the least studied traditions in Spanish-speaking countries compared to those from Asia and America, one may recommend a bibliography on three groups: Kemetic (Egyptian) philosophy, Babylonian philosophy and African philosophies. As expected, these traditions cover varied topics. In Egypt it covers the hexapartition of the soul, transcendence, and ethics. In other traditions, the bibliography deals with destiny in the *Ifá* divination system of the Yoruba, the soul-body relationship or the concept of “truth” of the Akan, and *chi* in Igbo cosmology.

On Kemetic philosophy, the work of Frankfort *et al.* is worth considering (1954), as well as the works of Wallis Budge (2006), Proto (2012), James (2001), Kete Asante (2000), and Bolanno (2017). Regarding primary sources, although access to papyri, and their analysis is difficult, as an introduction, the *Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts* (Allen, 2005), the different translations and analysis of the *Egyptian Book of the Dead* (Anonymous, 1898; 1981; 2003; 2017) — although it is not by nature a philosophical text, some concepts may be applicable — can be considered as well as the most valuable anthology in Spanish regarding Egyptian texts: *Literature on Ancient Egypt: A Brief Anthology* by Sánchez Rodríguez (2003).

In addition to the previously mentioned authors, Eugenio Nkogo Ondó (2006; 2017), Fernando Susaeta (2010), Brown (2004) and the compilation book of critical studies edited by Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze (ed., 2002) are worth reviewing. As specialized critical studies, the works of Gordon (2008),

Hamminga (2005), Tamosauskas (2020), Ukpokolo (2017), Wiredu (2004), and Afolayan and Falola (eds., 2017) are remarkable. In particular, Tempels' (1959) study of Bantu philosophy deserves special mention, because, despite its antiquity, it reveals important information of his thought such as his ontology, his concept of *muntu* or "person," and his ideas regarding ethics and morality.

## Conclusions

So far, I have covered the stages of those who approach non-European philosophies: firstly, to reject them undoubtedly; then, to critically evaluate the arguments that are usually put forward regarding the impossibility of their existence, subsequently, to overcome them; and, finally, to superficially identify what materials and problems can be found to start studying and researching them.

To conclude and remain consistent with this invitation, the author proposes this reflection: if philosophers critically search for truth, think reflectively about the ideas and theories themselves, fairly, objectively, and impartially problematize concepts, then the most consistent thing is that, before saying "[whatever it is] is not philosophy" the most appropriate response should be a first approach to that kind of thinking, its works, postulates, etc. and then evaluate, with *well-founded criteria*, whether this or that thesis is really worthy of being considered valid, solid, or even genuinely philosophical.

The glorification here presented does not intend to validate every non-European theory because of their differences or novelties. Instead, as previously mentioned, it is an invitation for readers to open themselves to the vast world and to continue addressing the same problems that are still of concern and, that have probably been investigated (justice, truth, existence, beauty, etc.), only diversifying the perspectives, voices and positions; but, of course, without forgetting the rigor or academic demands when studying these postulates. This may not solve most of the philosophical problems people already are aware of, but to refine a little better the attempted answers they already have or, better, raise new questions to problems they had not previously considered.

## References

- Appiah, K. A. (2019). *Las mentiras que nos unen: replanteando la identidad*. Taurus.
- Bauer, W. (2009). *Historia de la filosofía china*. Trad. Daniel Romero. Barcelona: Herder.
- Bernal, M. (1987). *Black Athena The Afroasiatic Roots of Classical Civilization*. Vol. 1. Rutgers University Press.
- Bernal, M. (1991). *Black Athena The Afroasiatic Roots of Classical Civilization*. Vol. 2. Rutgers University Press.
- Bernal, M. (2001). *Black Athena Writes Back: Martin Bernal Responds to his Critics*. Duke University Press.
- Bernal, M. (2006). *Black Athena The Afroasiatic Roots of Classical Civilization*. Vol. 3. Rutgers University Press.
- Bouso García, R. (2016). "Marco introductorio." In: Heisig, J. W., Kasulis, T. P., Maraldo, J. C., Bouso, R. (Eds.). *La filosofía japonesa en sus textos*. Herder.
- Castro Gómez, S. (2005). *La hybris del punto cero: ciencia, raza e ilustración en la Nueva Granada (1750-1816)*. Pontificia Universidad Javeriana.
- Confucio. (1975). *Lun Yu o Comentarios filosóficos*. In: *Los cuatro libros clásicos*. Trad. Oriol Fina Sanglas. Bruguera.
- Confucius. (1861). *The Analects*. Trans. James Legge. In: *Chinese Text Project [CTP]*. <https://ctext.org/analects>.
- Deleuze, G. & Guattari, F. (1991). *¿Qué es la filosofía?* (trad. Thomas Kauf). Anagrama.
- Dupont, F. (1994). *L'invention de la littérature. De l'ivresse grecque au livre latin*. La Découverte.
- Dussel, E. (1999). Más allá del eurocentrismo: El sistema-mundo y los límites de la modernidad. In: S. Castro-Gómez, Ó. Guardiola-Rivera y C. Millán

de Benavides. (Eds.). *Pensar (en) los intersticios. Teoría y práctica de la crítica poscolonial*. CEJA.

Eze, E. C. (2001). “El color de la razón.” In: Mignolo, W. (Ed.). *Capitalismo y geopolítica del conocimiento. El eurocentrismo y la filosofía de la liberación en el debate intelectual contemporáneo* (pp. 201-521). Ediciones del Signo.

Ferrater Mora, J. (1975). *Diccionario de filosofía*. Sudamericana.

Frankfort, H. A., Wilson, J. A. & T. Jacobsen. (1954). *El pensamiento prefilosófico I: Egipto y Mesopotamia*. Trad. Eli de Gortari. Fondo de Cultura Económica.

Frege, G. (2016). “Concepto y objeto.” In: *Escritos sobre lógica, semántica y filosofía de las matemáticas*. Instituto de Investigaciones Filosóficas, UNAM.

Garcés, F. (2005). “Las políticas del conocimiento y la colonialidad lingüística y epistémica.” In: Walsh, C. (Ed.). *Pensamiento crítico y matriz de(colonial): reflexiones latinoamericanas*. Universidad Andina Simón Bolívar.

Hadot, P. (2006). *Ejercicios espirituales y filosofía antigua*. Trad. Javier Palacio. Siruela.

Hegel, G. W. F. (2010). *Lecciones de la filosofía de la historia*. Trad. Josep María Quintana. In: Rühle, V. (Ed.). *Obras completas 2: Líneas fundamentales de la filosofía del derecho. Lecciones de la filosofía de la historia*. Biblioteca de Grandes Pensadores. Gredos.

Hernández Rodríguez, J. C. (2019). El Omoteotl: la dualidad como fundamento metafísico trascendental. *Perseitas*, 7(2), 248–273. <https://doi.org/10.21501/23461780.3290>

Hernández Rodríguez, J. C. (2020a). Advaita vedānta: la no-dualidad como fundamento de la realidad. *Aporía Revista Internacional de Investigaciones Filosóficas*, 18, 73–91. <https://doi.org/10.7764/aporia.18.1129>

Hernández Rodríguez, J. C. (2020b). La función de la palabra: el lenguaje en la relación pensamiento-realidad de algunas escuelas filosóficas indias. *Polisemia*, 16(30), 24–40. <https://doi.org/10.26620/uniminuto.polisemia.16.30.2020.24-40>

- Hernández Rodríguez, J. C. (2020c). Principios metafísicos fundamentales de la cosmología chamánica abyayalense. *Principios: Revista de Filosofía (UFRN)*, 27(53), 63–89. <https://doi.org/10.21680/1983-2109.2020v27n53ID20151>
- Heidegger, M. (2006). *¿Qué es la filosofía?* Trad. Jesús Adrián Escudero. Herder.
- Husserl, E. (2009). *La filosofía, ciencia rigurosa*. Trad. M. García Baró. Encuentro.
- Jaeger, W. (2001). *Paideia: los ideales de la cultura griega*. Trad. Joaquín Xirau y Wenceslao Roces. Fondo de la Cultura Económica.
- Jaeger, W. (2003). *La teología de los primeros filósofos griegos*. Fondo de Cultura Económica.
- James, G. G. (2001). *Legado robado: la filosofía griega es filosofía egipcia robada*. Trad. Georgina Falú. Falú Foundation Edition.
- Leibniz, G. W. (2000). *Discurso sobre la teología natural de los chinos*. Trad. Lourdes Rensoli. Biblioteca Internacional Martin Heidegger.
- León-Portilla, M. (2017). *La filosofía náhuatl estudiada en sus fuentes* (11th ed.). Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México.
- Liotard, J. F. (1994). *¿Por qué filosofar?* Trad. Godofredo González. Altaya.
- McLuhan, M. (1994). *Comprender los medios de comunicación: las extensiones del ser humano*. Trad. Patrick Ducher. Paidós.
- Melero Ballido, A. (Ed. y trad.) (1999). *Sofistas. Testimonios y fragmentos*. Planeta-DeAgostini.
- Montaigne, M. de. (1984). *Ensayos completos*. Trad. J. de Luaces. Tomo 1. Orbis.
- Morgan, K. (2004). *Myth and Philosophy from de Presocratics to Plato*. Cambridge University Press.
- Nkogo Ondó, E. (2006). *Síntesis sistemática de la filosofía africana*. Ediciones Carena.



- Russell, B. (1964). *La sabiduría de Occidente*. Trad. Juan García Puente. Aguilar.
- Russell, B. (1971). *Historia de la filosofía occidental*. Tomo 1. Trad. Julio Gómez de La Serna y Antonio Dorta. Espasa.
- Schopenhauer, A. (2011). *Notas sobre Oriente*. Trad. Adela Muñoz. Alianza.
- Tamosauskas, T. (2020). *Filosofía africana: pensadores africanos de todos os tempos* [e-book]. Amazon Kindle.
- Tempels, Placide. 1995. "Bantu Philosophy." In: Mosley, A. (Ed.). *African Philosophy: Selected Readings*. Edited by Albert Mosely. Prentice Hall.
- Tola, F. y Dragonetti, C. (2008). *Filosofía de la India: del veda al vedānta, el sistema sāmkhya. El mito entre la oposición entre el "pensamiento" indio y la "filosofía" occidental*. Kairós.
- Urbina, F. (2004). "Chamanismo y pensamiento abyayalense." In: James, A. J. y Jiménez, D. A. (Eds.). *Chamanismo: el otro hombre, la otra selva, el otro mundo* (pp. 83-124). Instituto Colombiano de Antropología e Historia.
- Urbina, F. y Peña, J. E. (2016). Perros de guerra, caballos, vacunos y otros temas en el arte rupestre de la Serranía de La Lindosa (Río Guayabero, Guaviare, Colombia): Una conversación. *Ensayos. Historia y teoría del arte*, 20 (31). 7-37. <https://revistas.unal.edu.co/index.php/ensayo/article/view/62026>.
- Voltaire. (2001). *Filosofía de la historia*. Trad. Martín Caparrós. Tecnos.
- Wade, P. (2011). Raza y naturaleza humana. *Tabula Rasa*, 14(1), 205-56. <http://www.scielo.org.co/pdf/tara/n14/n14a09.pdf>.
- Watson, P. (2005). *Ideas: historia intelectual de la humanidad*. Crítica.
- Zeller, E. (1968). *Fundamentos de la filosofía griega*. Trad. Alfredo Llanos. Ediciones Siglo XX.

## Recommended Bibliography

### About América

#### Primary Sources (critical studies).

- Castaño Uribe, C. (2020). *Chiribiquete: la maloka cósmica de los hombres jaguar*. Sura.
- Chindoy, A. (2020). *A Decolonial Philosophy of Indigenous Colombia: Time, Beauty, and Spirit in Kamëntšá Culture (Global Critical Caribbean Thought)*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- León-Portilla, M. (1994). *Quince poetas del mundo náhuatl*. Booket.
- León-Portilla, M. (2017). *La filosofía náhuatl estudiada en sus fuentes* (11th ed.). Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México.
- Mazzi Huaycucho, V. (2016). *Inkas y filósofos: posturas, teorías, estudios de fuentes y reinterpretación*. (Edición del autor).
- Ortiz, J. (Comp.). (2005). *Tratados e historias primitivas. Universo Arhuaco*. Ediciones Mestizas.
- Urbina, F. (Ed.). (2010). *Palabras del origen: breve compendio de la mitología de los uitotos*. Ministerio de Cultura.

#### Secondary Sources

- Bouysse-Cassagne, T. Harris, O., Platt, T. y Cereceda, V. (1987). *Tres reflexiones sobre el pensamiento andino*. Hisbol.
- De la Garza, M. (1987). «Los mayas. Antiguas y nuevas palabras sobre el origen». In: Monjarás-Ruiz, J. (Ed.). *Mitos cosmogónicos del México indígena* (pp. 15-86). Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia.
- Estermann, J. (2009). *Filosofía andina: sabiduría indígena para un nuevo mundo*. Instituto Superior Ecuménico Andino de Teología.

- Hernández Rodríguez, J. C. (2019). El *Ometeotl*: la dualidad como fundamento metafísico trascendental. *Perseitas*, 7(2), 248–273. <https://doi.org/10.21501/23461780.3290>
- Hernández Rodríguez, J. C. (2020c). Principios metafísicos fundamentales de la cosmología chamánica abyayalense. *Principios: Revista de Filosofía (UFRN)*, 27(53), 63–89. <https://doi.org/10.21680/1983-2109.2020v27n53ID20151>
- James, A. J. y Jiménez, D. A. (Eds.). (2004). *Chamanismo: el otro hombre, la otra selva, el otro mundo*. Bogotá: Instituto Colombiano de Antropología e Historia.
- Lenkersdorf, C. (2003). *Cosmovisión maya*. Centro de Estudios Antropológicos, Científicos, Artísticos, Tradicionales y Lingüísticos “CeAcatl”.
- Lenkersdorf, C. (2005). *Filosofar en clave tojolabal*. Centro de Estudios Antropológicos, Científicos, Artísticos, Tradicionales y Lingüísticos “CeAcatl”.
- León-Portilla, M. (1994). *Tiempo y realidad en el pensamiento maya: ensayo de acercamiento*. Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México.
- Maffie, J. (2000). ‘Like a Painting, We Will Be Erased; Like a Flower, We Will Dry Up Here on Earth’: Ultimate Reality and Meaning According to Nahua Philosophy in the Age of Conquest. *Ultimate Reality and Meaning* 23(4), 205–318. <https://www.utpjournals.press/doi/pdf/10.3138/uram.23.4.295>.
- Maffie, J. (2002). Why Care about Nezahualcoyotl?: Veritism and Nahua Philosophy. *Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, 32, 73–93. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/004839310203200104>.
- Maffie, J. (2005). “Aztec Philosophy”. In: *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. <https://www.iep.utm.edu/aztec/#H9>.
- Maffie, J. (2014). *Aztec Philosophy: Understanding a World in Motion*. University of Colorado Press.
- Mata Gavidia, J. (1950). *Existencia y perduración en el Popol-Vuh*. Guatemala, C. A.

- Mazzi Huaycucho, V. (2015). *Presentación de Juan Yunpa. Un filósofo inka en el siglo XVII* [e-book]. Librosperuanos.com.
- McLeod, A. (2018). *Philosophy of the Ancient Maya: Lords of Time*. Lexington Books.
- Mejía Huamán, M. (2005). *Hacia una filosofía andina: doce ensayos sobre el componente andino de nuestro pensamiento*. (Edición del autor).
- Pabón, M. C. (2002). América cruel: una aproximación al doble. *Nova et Vetera*, 46(1), 6-17.
- Páramo, G. (2004). «Lógica paraconsistente y el mito chamánico». In: James, A. J. y Jiménez, D. A. (Eds.). *Chamanismo: el otro hombre, la otra selva, el otro mundo* (pp. 39-68). Instituto Colombiano de Antropología e Historia.
- Reichel-Dolmatoff, G. (1997). «Cristales de roca de los chamanes Desana y el universo hexagonal». En: *Chamanes de la selva pluvial* (pp. 149-162). Trad. E. Sánchez. Guildford. Themis Books.
- Reichel-Dolmatoff, G. (2005). «La cosmovisión chamánica». In: *Orfebrería y chamanismo* (pp. 23-31). Banco de la República-Villegas Editores.
- Rojas, C. (2019). *Ontología andina desde el manuscrito del Huarochiri* [texto inédito]. [https://www.academia.edu/40033709/ONTOLOGÍA\\_ANDINA\\_DESDE\\_EL\\_MANUSCRITO\\_DE\\_HUAROCHIRI](https://www.academia.edu/40033709/ONTOLOGÍA_ANDINA_DESDE_EL_MANUSCRITO_DE_HUAROCHIRI).
- Torres, W. (2004a). «El chamán, el tigre y el cuerpo sin órganos». In: James, A. J. y Jiménez, D. A. (Eds.). *Chamanismo: el otro hombre, la otra selva, el otro mundo* (pp. 125-149). Instituto Colombiano de Antropología e Historia.
- Torres, W. (2004b). *Uturunco Runa: historias de la gente jaguar*. Ediciones Zahir.
- Urbina, F. (2004). «Chamanismo y pensamiento abyayalense». In: James, A. J. y Jiménez, D. A. (Eds.). *Chamanismo: el otro hombre, la otra selva, el otro mundo* (pp. 83-124). Instituto Colombiano de Antropología e Historia.
- Urbina, F. y Peña, J. E. (2016). Perros de guerra, caballos, vacunos y otros temas en el arte rupestre de la Serranía de La Lindosa (Río Guayabero, Guaviare, Colombia): Una conversación. *Ensayos. Historia y teoría del arte*,

20 (31). 7-37. <https://revistas.unal.edu.co/index.php/ensayo/article/view/62026>.

Yáñez del Pozo, J. (2002). *Yanantin: La filosofía dialógica intercultural del Manuscrito del Huarochiri*. Abya-Yala.

## About Asia

### Primary Sources (Critical studies).

Arnau, J. (2011). La Vimśatikākārikā de Vasubandhu. *Estudios de Asia y África*, 46(2), 287-302.

Bhikkhu Bodhi. (2019). *En palabras del Buddha: una antología de Discursos del canon pali*. Trads. Abraham Vélez, Aleix Ruiz y Ricardo Guerrero. Kairós.

Chan, W.-T. (Ed.). (1963). *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*. Princeton University Press.

Cleary, T. (1983). *Entry Into the Inconceivable: An Introduction to Hua-yen Buddhism*. University of Hawaii Press.

Confucio. (1975). *Los cuatro libros clásicos*. Trad. Oriol Fina Sanglás. Bruguera.

Confucio. (1997). *Lun Yu: reflexiones y enseñanzas*. Trad. Anne-Hélène Suárez. Kairós.

Confucio. (2009). *Los cuatro libros*. Trad. Joaquín Pérez Arroyo. Paidós.

Costero, J. I. (Ed.). *La perfección de la sabiduría. Textos breves Prajñāparamita*. Biblioteca Nueva.

Dōgen, E. (2015). *Shōbōgenzō. La preciosa visión del Dharma verdadero*. Trad. D. Villalba. Kairós.

Dragonetti, C. (Ed.). (2006). *Udāna: la palabra de Buda*. Trotta.

- Han Fei Zi. (1998). [HF] *El arte de la política (los hombres y la ley)*. Trad. Y. Ning & G. García Noblejas. Tecnos.
- Heisig, J. W., Kasulis, T. P., Maraldo, J. C. y Bouso, R. (Eds.). *La filosofía japonesa en sus textos*. Herder.
- Heisig, J. W., Kasulis, T. P., y Maraldo, J. C. (Eds.). *Japanese Philosophy: A Sourcebook*. University of Hawai'i Press.
- Hurie, A., Mundy, S. y Calle, R. (Eds.). (2006). *Sutra de la atención. Sutra del diamante*. EDAF.
- Īśvarakṛṣṇa. (2016). [SK] *Sāṃkhyakārikā: las estrofas del Sāṃkhya* (L. Villegas, Trad.). Kairós.
- Iyengar, B. K. S. (2003). *Luz sobre los Yoga Sūtras de Patañjali*. Kairós, edición crítica bilingüe.
- Lao Tsé. (2015). *Tao Te Ching. Los libros del Tao*. Trad. I. Preciado Idoeta. Trotta.
- Lie Zi. (2006). [Liezi] *Lie Zi: El libro sobre la perfecta vacuidad*. Trad. I. Preciado Idoeta. RBA.
- Martín Díaz, C. (Ed.). (1998). [Māñ. Up.] *Conciencia y Realidad. Estudio sobre la metafísica advaita con la Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad, las kārikā de Gauḍapāda y comentarios de Śaṅkara*. Trotta.
- Martín Díaz, C. (Ed.). (2000). [Ved. S.] *Brahma-Sūtras Upaniṣad con los comentarios advaita de Śaṅkara*. Trotta.
- Martín Díaz, C. (Ed.). (2002). [Brh. Up.] *Gran Upaniṣad del Bosque Upaniṣad con los comentarios advaita de Śaṅkara*. Trotta.
- Martín Díaz, C. (Ed.). (2009a). [BG] *Bhagavad Gītā Upaniṣad con los comentarios advaita de Śaṅkara*. Trotta.
- Martín Díaz, C. (Ed.). (2009b). *Upaniṣad con los comentarios advaita de Śaṅkara*. Trotta.

- Mo Ti. (2002). [Mozi] *Mo Ti. Política del amor universal*. Trad. C. Elorduy. Tecnos.
- Nāgārjuna. (2006). [VV] *Abandono de la discusión* (J. Arnau, Trad.). Siruela.
- Nāgārjuna. (2011). [MK] *Fundamentos de la vía media* (J. Arnau, Trad.). Siruela.
- Nishida, K. (1985). *Indagación del bien*. Trad. A. L. Bixio. Gedisa.
- Nishida, K. (2006). *Pensar desde la nada*. Trad. J. Masiá y J. Haidar. Sígueme.
- Nishitani, K. (1999). *La religión y la nada*. Trad. R. Bouso. Siruela.
- Preciado Idoeta, I. (Ed.). (2012). *Los cuatro libros del emperador amarillo*. Trotta.
- Silva, J. (1972). Diálogo sobre la justicia divina. La teodicea babilonia. *Estudios orientales*, 7(2), 211-225.
- Tanabe, H. (2014). *La filosofía como metanoética*. Trad. R. Maldonado. Herder.
- Tola, F. y Dragonetti, C. (Eds.). (1999). *El sūtra del loto de la verdadera doctrina: Saddharmapundarikasūtra*. México: El Colegio de México, Asociación Latinoamericana de Estudios Budistas.
- Tola, F. y Dragonetti, C. (Eds.). (1999). *Majjhima Nikāya: Los sermones medios del Buddha*. Kairós.
- Tola, F. y Dragonetti, C. (Eds.). (2012). *Diálogos mayores de Buda [Digha Nikāya]*. Trotta.
- Zavala, A. J. (Ed.). (1995). *Textos de la filosofía japonesa moderna. Antología*. El Colegio de Michoacán.
- Zavala, A. J. (Ed.). (1997). *Ensayos filosóficos japoneses*. Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes.
- Zhuang Zi. (1996). [Zhuangzi] *Zhuang Zi «Maestro Zhuang»*. Trad. I. Preciado Idoeta. Kairós.

### Secondary Sources.

- Arnau, J. (2005). *La palabra frente al vacío: la filosofía de Nāgārjuna*. Fondo de Cultura Económica.
- Arnau, J. (2008). *El arte de probar: ironía y lógica en la India antigua*. Fondo de Cultura Económica.
- Arnau, J. (2012). *Cosmologías de la India*. Fondo de Cultura Económica.
- Bauer, W. (2009). *Historia de la filosofía china*. Trad. Daniel Romero. Trotta.
- Berger, D. (2019). *Introducción a la filosofía asiática*. Trad. Alejandro Flórez y Juliana Acosta. Universidad de Caldas.
- Cheng, A. (2002). *Historia del pensamiento chino*. Edicions Bellaterra.
- Li, C. y Perkins, F. (2015). *Chinese Metaphysics and its Problems*. Cambridge University Press.
- Mahadevan, T. M. P. (1991). *Invitación a la filosofía de la India* (L. García Urriza, Trad.). Fondo de Cultura Económica.
- Tola, F. (1999). Filosofía de la India I. Vedismo, brahmanismo, hinduismo. En M. Cruz Hernández (Ed.), *Filosofías no occidentales* (pp. 97-136). Trotta.
- Tola, F., y Dragonetti, C. (2010). *La filosofía de la India. Del veda al vedānta. El sistema sāmkhya. El mito de la oposición entre el «pensamiento» indio y «filosofía» occidental*. Kairós.
- Van de Mieroop, M. (2015). *Philosophy before the Greeks: The Pursuit of Truth in Ancient Babylonia*. Princeton University Press.
- Van de Mieroop, M. (2018). Theses on Babylonian Philosophy, *Journal of Ancient Near Eastern History*, 5(1-2), 15-39. <https://doi.org/10.1515/janeh-2018-0004>.
- Williams, P., Tribe, A. y Wynne, A. (2013). *Pensamiento budista: una introducción completa a la tradición india*. Trad. Agustina Luengo. Herder.



Youlan, F. (1989). *Breve historia de la filosofía china*. Ediciones en Lenguas Extranjeras.

## About África

### Primary Sources (Critical studies).

Allen, J. P. (2005). *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts*. Society of Biblical Literature.

Anónimo. (1898). *The Egyptian Book of The Dead. The Chapters of Coming Forth by Day*. Ed. Ernest A. Wallis Budge. Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner y Co., Ltd.

Anónimo. (1981). *Libro egipcio de los muertos*. Trad. Albert Chapmdor. EDAF.

Anónimo. (2003). *Libro egipcio de los muertos: primera versión poética según el texto jeroglífico, publicado por Wallis Budge*. Trad. A. Laurent. Editorial Astri S. A.

Anónimo. (2017). *Libro de los muertos*. Trad. Federico Lara Peinado. Tecnos.

Sánchez Rodríguez, Á. (Ed.). (2003). *La literatura en el Antiguo Egipto (breve antología)*. Egiptomanía S. L.

### Secondary Sources.

Afolayan, A. y Falola, T. (2017). *The Palgrave Handbook of African Philosophy*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Bolanno, M. (2017). Tiempo y espacio en la Duat: observaciones respecto de los *Libros del más allá del Reino Nuevo*. *Estudios de Asia y África*, 52(1), 119-140.

Brown, L. (2004). *African Philosophy: New and Traditional Perspectives*. Oxford University Press.

- Eze, E. C. (Ed.). (2002). *Pensamiento africano: cultura y sociedad*. Ediciones Bellaterra.
- Frankfort, H. A., Wilson, J. A. Y T. Jacobsen. (1954). *El pensamiento prefilosófico I: Egipto y Mesopotamia*. Trad. Eli de Gortari. Fondo de Cultura Económica.
- Gordon, L. (2008). *An Introduction to Africana Philosophy*. Cambridge University Press.
- Hamminga, B. (Ed.). (2005). *Knowledge Cultures: Comparative Western and African Epistemology*. Rodopi.
- James, G. G. (2001). *Legado robado: la filosofía griega es filosofía egipcia robada*. Trad. Georgina Falú. Falú Foundation Edition.
- Kete Asante, M. (2000). *The Egyptian Philosophers: Ancient African Voices from Imhotep to Akhenaten*. Sussex Academic Press.
- Nkogo Ondó, E. (2006). *Síntesis sistemática de la filosofía africana*. Ediciones Carena.
- Nkogo Ondó, E. (2017). Introducción a la filosofía africana. *Faia*, 7(28-29), 1-15.
- Proto, F. (2012). La teología kemética (La esencial del pensamiento kemético. A Eugenio Nkogo Ondó 2/6). *Faia*, 1(2), 1-13.
- Susaeta Montoya, F. (2010). *Introducción a la filosofía africana: un pensamiento desde el cogito de la supervivencia*. Ediciones IDEA.
- Tamosauskas, T. (2020). *Filosofía africana: pensadores africanos de todos os tempos [e-book]*. Amazon Kindle.
- Tempels, P. (1959). *Bantu Philosophy*.
- Ukpololo, I. (Ed.) (2017). *Themes, Issues and Problems in African Philosophy*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Wallis Budge, E. A. (2006). *Ideas de los egipcios sobre el más allá*. Trad. Esteve Serra. El Barquero.

Wiredu, K. (Ed.). (2004). *A Companion to African Philosophy*. Blackwell Publishing.

# Essential Parameters for a Model of Workplace Accessibility for People with Disabilities\*

(English Version)

Parámetros indispensables para un modelo de inclusión laboral para personas con discapacidad

Parâmetros indispensáveis para um modelo de inclusão laboral para pessoas com deficiência

Received 31 August, 2021. Accepted 18 April, 2022.

› To cite this article:

Perlaza, A. M., González, P. A.,  
Martínez-Álvarez, L-A & Girón, G.  
A. (2023). Essential Parameters for  
a Model of Workplace Accessibility  
for People with Disabilities.  
*Ánfora*, 30(54). 92-108.  
<https://doi.org/10.30854/anfv30.n54.2023.857>  
Universidad Autónoma de  
Manizales. L-ISSN 0121-6538.  
E-ISSN 2248-6941.  
CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

Angélica María Perlaza Moreno\*\*  
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8643-1172>  
Colombia

Paola Andrea González Vaquiro\*\*\*  
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7760-0149>  
Colombia

Luz América Martínez Álvarez\*\*\*\*  
<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5305-1280>  
Colombia

Gustavo Adolfo Girón Restrepo\*\*\*\*\*  
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3812-0537>  
Colombia

\* This research is the result of the degree project conducted by Angélica María Perlaza and Paola Andrea Gonzales between 2018 and 2020, with which they obtained the title of professionals in Occupational Health at the Institución Universitaria Antonio José Camacho. This project was directed by Research Professor Luz América Martínez Álvarez, coordinator of the SERGOS Ergonomics Research Seminar Group and co-directed by Research Professor Gustavo Adolfo Girón, coordinator of the SIGES Health Management Research Seminar, which is part of the SIGES Health, Environment and Productivity Research Group.

\*\* Occupational Health Professional. Institución Universitaria Antonio José Camacho, Cali, Colombia. [angiemp610@gmail.com](mailto:angiemp610@gmail.com)

\*\*\* Occupational Health Professional. Institución Universitaria Antonio José Camacho, Cali, Colombia. [andregonzalez97@hotmail.com](mailto:andregonzalez97@hotmail.com)

\*\*\*\* Master's Degree in Ergonomics, Industrial Designer. Institución Universitaria Antonio José Camacho, Cali, Colombia. [lamericamartinez@admon.uniajc.edu.co](mailto:lamericamartinez@admon.uniajc.edu.co)

\*\*\*\*\* Master in Public Health, Specialist in Health Services Management, Dentist. Institución Universitaria Antonio José Camacho, Colombia. [gagiron@admon.uniajc.edu.co](mailto:gagiron@admon.uniajc.edu.co)

## Abstract

To achieve effective labor inclusion for people with disabilities, several models have been proposed that, depending on the historical period, have undergone changes. These models have been proposed to lessen inequalities by adding or removing parameters from disability models. **Objective:** To identify the parameters put forth in disability models and which, based on their frequency, are essential in employment inclusion models. **Materials and Methods:** sixty-three articles were reviewed in the Scopus, Pubmed, Dialnet, and Google Scholar databases, of which 50 containing disability models were chosen. These models were set up, and the variables in each one examined to obtain their parameters so that the ones that appeared most frequently could then be identified. **Results and Discussion:** Seven parameters were identified with a high frequency of occurrence in the disability models: a) family support; b) workplace Adjustments; c) competency-based training; d) on-the-job training and support; e) training coworkers and managers on the inclusion of people with disabilities; f) follow-up and evaluation of the labor inclusion process; and g) education level. These parameters serve as a crucial foundation for the development of inclusive models for people with disabilities.

**Keywords:** disability studies; social integration; person with disability.

## Resumen

Con el ánimo de lograr una inclusión laboral efectiva para personas con discapacidad se han propuesto diversos modelos que, según la época histórica, han sufrido cambios. Estos modelos se han planteado añadiendo y eliminando parámetros provenientes de los modelos de discapacidad, intentando reducir las desigualdades. **Objetivo:** identificar los parámetros propuestos en los modelos de discapacidad y que, según su frecuencia, son indispensables en los modelos de inclusión laboral. **Materiales y métodos:** se seleccionaron 63 artículos de las bases de datos Scopus, Pubmed, Dialnet y Google Académico, de los cuales se escogieron 50 que contenían modelos de discapacidad. Estos modelos fueron organizados y sus variables se analizaron obteniendo los parámetros de cada uno para luego identificar los de mayor frecuencia de aparición. **Resultados y discusión:** se identificaron siete parámetros con alta frecuencia de aparición en los modelos de discapacidad: a) acompañamiento familiar; b) ajuste del puesto de trabajo; c) formación laboral en competencias; d) entrenamiento y acompañamiento en el puesto de trabajo; e) capacitación a los compañeros de trabajo y jefes sobre la inclusión de personas con discapacidad; f)

seguimiento y evaluación del proceso de inclusión laboral; y g) nivel de educación. Estos parámetros son una base importante para el diseño de los modelos de inclusión de personas con discapacidad.

**Palabras clave:** estudios de la discapacidad; integración social; persona con discapacidad.

## Resumo

A fim de alcançar uma efetiva inclusão laboral das pessoas com deficiência, vários modelos foram propostos, os quais, dependendo do período histórico, sofreram mudanças. Estes modelos foram propostos adicionando e eliminando parâmetros dos modelos de deficiência, numa tentativa de reduzir as desigualdades. **Objetivo:** identificar os parâmetros propostos nos modelos de deficiência e que, de acordo com sua frequência, são indispensáveis nos modelos de inclusão no trabalho. **Materiais e métodos:** 63 artigos foram selecionados dos bancos de dados Scopus, Pubmed, Dialnet e Google Scholar, dos quais 50 artigos contendo modelos de deficiência foram escolhidos. Estes modelos foram organizados e suas variáveis foram analisadas através da obtenção dos parâmetros de cada um, a fim de identificar aqueles com a maior frequência de ocorrência. **Resultados e discussão:** sete parâmetros foram identificados com uma alta frequência de ocorrência nos modelos de deficiência: a) apoio familiar; b) ajuste de emprego; c) treinamento em habilidades; d) treinamento e apoio no trabalho; e) treinamento para colegas de trabalho e gerentes sobre a inclusão de pessoas com deficiência; f) monitoramento e avaliação do processo de inclusão no emprego; e g) nível de educação. Estes parâmetros são uma base importante para o projeto de modelos de inclusão de deficiências.

**Palavras chave:** estudos sobre deficiência; inclusão social; pessoa com deficiência; integração social.

## Introduction

The Political Constitution of Colombia refers to the fact that "All persons are born free and equal before the law, shall receive the same protection and treatment from the authorities and shall enjoy the same rights, freedoms and opportunities without any discrimination for reasons of sex, race, national or family origin, language, religion, political, or philosophical opinion" (a. 13). Persons with disabilities (PwDs) are part of society and include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairments which, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others (United Nations, 2008).

Disability is the objectification of the impairment in the subject that has a direct impact on his/her ability to perform activities in terms considered "normal" for any subject according to his/her characteristics (age, gender, etc.) (Egea & Sarabia, 2001). However, what is not taken into account is that this is a process of discrimination of opportunities, as described by Arzate (2022) quoting Fernández-Enguita. Disability is considered part of the human condition. Some people may have a certain type of temporary or permanent disability that will affect their psychosocial environment (WHO, World report on disability, 2011). The World Health Organization (WHO) published the International Classification of Functioning (ICF) (WHO, 2001) in May 2001. In this paper, functioning and disability are understood as a dynamic interaction between health conditions and contextual factors, both personal and environmental (WHO, 2011).

The concept of "disability" has undergone major changes over time (Padilla-Muñoz, 2010). The new approach to disability ceases to be a quality of the individual—which in some opportunities is the distinctive feature that identifies him/her in a specific community—to become the result of complex relationships between the conditions of the subject and those of the environment created by society (Gómez and Castillo, 2016). Thus, the term "PwD" ("person with disability") turns out to be the most appropriate term to describe a human reality, as it poses a relational category and distorts its origin in impairment and limitation (Trajano, 2005).

According to the World Bank report (2019), one billion people—that is, 15% of the world's population—experience some form of disability, and the prevalence of disability is higher in developing countries. The WHO (2011) published the statistics of the Latin American countries where there is the highest prevalence of PwD, with Brazil occupying first place (23.9%), followed by Chile (12, 9%) and Ecuador (12.1%); and the lowest in Cuba (3.3%), Honduras

(2.3%) and Paraguay (0.99%). Colombia has an intermediate prevalence of 6.3%, according to the 2005 general census (INS, 2011). Figures from the National Administrative Department of Statistics (DANE, 2015) indicate that the overall employment rate in the country is 58.2%, that 12% of women are still unemployed, that 16% are young and that 19% are Afro-descendants, and that 70% of people have some degree of disability (Profession Leader Writing, 2018).

In Colombia, Statutory Law 1618 seeks to guarantee the full exercise of PwD in development of the precepts of the Convention on Human Rights of PwD, the National Council of Economic and Social Policy 166 (CONPES, 2013), among others. With this, society wants to guarantee PwD's rights in all dimensions; for example, the National Apprenticeship Service (SENA) is explicitly required to guarantee the effective access of the population with disabilities to all its services.

Previous studies have analyzed the qualities of special employment centers for the professional and personal development of PwD. These pay special attention to the functioning and characteristics of the entities belonging to the so-called *Basque model of social and labor inclusion* (Echebarria Rubio, 2020). Specific inclusion models have also been proposed for a type of disability (Arcos *et al.*, 2018), along with other models where it is stated that self-determination has a mediating effect between the conflict of roles and social inclusion (Salvador-Ferrer, 2020), as well as promoting a relevant space in the design and implementation of public policies to improve the conditions of the population and contribute to social equity (Tamayo *et al.*, 2018).

Furthermore, and based on the previous premises, the population with disabilities has been able to access training programs where their characteristics are taken into account and the reasonable adjustments required according to their needs are guaranteed, increasing the possibilities of them exercising a productive activity through labor inclusion in the business sector (Productivity Pact, 2018). However, a study carried out in the city of Cali (2017-2019), revealed that out of 227 companies that have hired people with disabilities, none have a professional in charge of labor inclusion or workers with disabilities in the telework modality (Martínez-Álvarez *et al.*, 2020).

PwD have been at a disadvantage compared to the rest of society, since they must face various barriers placed by the social environment. Society assumes that those PwD cannot participate fully and effectively in their work, violating one of the most important fundamental rights: the right to work (ONU, 1948). At the same time, for those who live with disabilities, accessing competitive



employment is a primary opportunity (Vidal *et al.*, 2013), their labor inclusion being part of a broader process—social inclusion; which is based on equal opportunities and full social participation, for which having a job is a necessity (Zondek Darmstadter, 2015). Such inclusion should occur following a model.

The description of inclusion models has become very important. PageGroup conducted a survey of more than 300 employers from different economic sectors to find out the status of labor inclusion in the country; especially in the city of Bogotá. When employers were asked about whether the company where they work has a defined diversity and inclusion program, 52.6% of those surveyed responded affirmatively, while 47.4% said they were not aware of any program related to this topic (Labor Inclusion in Colombia, 2018).

Inclusion models appear later in time, linked to disability models. At the beginning of the 20th century, the rehabilitative model or medical model considered that PwD were no longer condemned by the gods, but that disability is a physical, psychic, or sensory abnormality, which can occur at from birth or be acquired (Palacios, 2008). From the end of the 1980s to date, the social or inclusive model (Pérez & Chhabra, 2019) has been developed, which has the objective that the person can live for many years and in the best manner possible; in addition to having a broad and organized social life to satisfy human needs (Garay *et al.*, 2019).

The following are the types of labor inclusion models that have been used over time:

- Dispensation or care: A product of Ancient and Middle Ages, which, according to Palacios (2008), is based on two essential characteristics: the religious justification of disability and the consideration that PwD have nothing to contribute to their community. Within this model, two sub-models are contemplated: the Eugenic model, where a PwD is determined as a being whose life is not allow to be lived; and that of Marginalization, whose characteristic is exclusion, due to fear or compassion, as the best solution and social response that generates more peace of mind.
- Rehabilitation doctor: A product of the Modern Age, where the conception of disability is individualistic, focused exclusively on the person, their specific health condition, and the limitations that this generates for the performance of certain activities. This model considers PwD as useful to society to the extent that the individuals are rehabilitated or normalized Palacios (2008). It was also called the “Individual Model of Disability” in the interpretation made by sociologists (Oliver, 1996).

- Biopsychosocial: The medical or rehabilitative model and the social model of disability are integrated. This new model precedes the biopsychosocial model of the illness in 1977, when Engel, from the University of Rochester, proposes a paradigm capable of scientifically including the human domain in the experience of disease (Engel, 1977).
- Social: Part of a conception of disability as a social construction that results from the interaction between a person's functional diversity and the barriers of the environment to the full exercise of their rights and freedoms. The origins of disability are in the social barriers that generate schemes of exclusion of this section of the population. It is a model that has as its core the will of the PwDs and gives them the full power to be agents of their own destiny (Ministry of Work, 2016).
- Ecological Model: Proposes four systems that influence people, each of them included in the other. These systems and the forces in them combine and interact in a complex way and in it functions arise that are unique to each person (Pisonero, 2007).
- Universal model: "Postulates that disability is a universal fact, that is, anyone is at risk due to the various environments of a community whether it is acquired by inheritance or by accident" (López, 2016, par. 13).
- Model of Diversity: "Proposes a terminological change, the acceptance of functional diversity as part of enriching human diversity and the achievement of full dignity in functional diversity. For this, the model establishes two fundamental ideas or values: provides the same value to the lives of all human beings and to guarantee the same rights and opportunities to all people" (Velarde, 2012, p. 132).

This research aims to identify the parameters proposed in disability models and that, according to their frequency, are indispensable in labor inclusion models.

# Methodology

## Materials and Methods

A mixed cross-sectional descriptive non-experimental study was developed. Quantitative variables were presented in terms of percentage, and qualitative variables in terms of frequency.

### Search for Information

The review of the existing literature on disability models was carried out considering only articles published between 2010 and 2020 in journals indexed worldwide. The following descriptors were used: "Disability Studies," "Social Integration," and "Disabled Persons." For the search for information, the Scopus, Pubmed, Dialnet, and Google Scholar databases were chosen. Within the inclusion criteria of the search, only labor inclusion or social integration were considered, highlighting the models used in each case.

## Selection of Information

Sixty-three articles were selected and organized in Mendeley to facilitate organization by title, author, applied disability model, journal, year, and country, and to be able to complete the information matrix of the selected articles. After the search with the established inclusion and exclusion criteria, the total number of articles was selected.

## Inclusion Criteria

Studies dealing with models proposed and applied to workers with disabilities, and which met the following conditions:

- Articles that describe and identify models of disability;
- Full text articles;
- Articles written in English and Spanish;
- Study population: disability models;
- Year of publication: between 2010 and 2020;
- Geographical location: worldwide; and
- Articles indexed in selected databases.

## Exclusion Criteria

- Articles not related to disability or social integration; and
- PwDs under 18 years of age.
- Fifty articles met the inclusion and selection criteria.

## Data Extraction

From the selected articles, the information was extracted into a comparative matrix and similarities and differences were analyzed to define the parameters of each of the models.

## Analysis of Information

First, a bibliometric analysis was carried out to establish an overview of the 50 articles selected in the databases: Scopus, Pubmed, Dialnet, and Google Scholar. Then, a classification of the parameters used in each disability model was made. Next, an analysis of the frequency of appearance of the parameters in the different models was carried out.

## Results

Most of the selected publications on disability models were found to have been carried out in Spain ( $n=28$ ; 56%). The following are the subsequent number and occurrences: Colombia ( $n=5$ ; 10%), Ecuador ( $n=5$ ; 10%), and Chile ( $n=3$ ; 6%); Paraguay, Argentina, and Mexico ( $n=2$ ; 4%); followed by Peru, Costa Rica, and Venezuela: ( $n=1$ ; 2%); each with one publication.

The articles that met the inclusion criteria mostly name the social model as a reference in their inclusion processes ( $n=23$ ; 46%), the rehabilitative model ( $n=10$ ; 23%), the activist political model ( $n=10$ ; 23%), the biopsychosocial model ( $n=3$ ; 6%), the ecological model ( $n=2$ ; 4%) and the universal and diversity models, one each ( $n=2$ ; 4%). Due to the heterogeneity and design of the studies, conducting a meta-analysis of the parameters used in each disability model was not possible.

Once the disability models were identified, identifying the breakdown of models was possible: the rehabilitation model is made up of 11 parameters; the social model 13 parameters; biopsychosocial, 8; the activist politician, 3; the universal, 6; the ecological, 9; and functional diversity, 2; for a total of 52 parameters. By the contrast of the identified parameters, the frequency of appearance of each of them in the models was determined as a total of 26 parameters.

Of these 26 parameters it was found that n=17; 65.3% have an appearance frequency of less than 33% of the models. This means that they are parameters used specifically for each type of model. Two or three inclusion models shared the n=2; 7.69% parameters, while the n=7; 26.9% parameters appeared in more than 66% of the disability models..

**Table 1.** *Frequency of Occurrence of Parameters in Disability Models.*

<b>Frequency of Models of Disability</b>	<b>Parameters</b>
More than 66%	Family support.
	Workplace adjustments.
	Competency-based training.
	On-the-job training and support.
	Training to co-workers and managers on the inclusion of PwD.
	Follow-up and evaluation of the labor inclusion process
	Education levels
Between 33% and 66 %	Individualized support at the workplace provided by specialized job coaches.
	Supported employment programs.

	Rehabilitation service.
	Personal and home care support.
	Foundations' Support during the inclusion process
	Inclusive workforce planning process. This consists of: establishing the company's disability inclusion policies and creating an inclusion committee.
	Support on daily occupational practice.
	Consultancy for employers.
	Accessibility.
	Inclusion activities.
Less than 33%	Psychological support.
	Recognition of disability as a human rights issue.
	Include the discrimination definition, its causes and the mechanisms to guarantee equality.
	Implement equalization strategies to reduce structural inequalities based on both physical and mental barriers.
	Offer forms of human or animal assistance and intermediaries.
	Participation of representative cultural and sports groups.
	Community involvement.
	Based on Human Rights.
	Capacity of the PwD.

Source: Authors' Elaboration

## Discussion

The social model's background is the dispensing and medical models. It encompasses socio-political aspects and considers PwD as citizens with rights (Garay and Carhuancho, 2019). The social model as an inclusion implementation reference was mentioned in 46% of the articles. This model is made up of eleven parameters and seven out of the those were established as fundamental for designing a PwD inclusion model.

“Los Centros Especiales de Empleo de Euskadi” (Echebarria, 2020), which constitute the so-called “Basque model of social and labor inclusion,” have been working with the purpose of creating quality employment for people with greater

support needs and helping the transition to the ordinary employment market for the group. This model's main feature is that all the entities that belong to it are grouped around Ehlabe (Euskal Herriko Lan Babestuaren Elkartea),<sup>1</sup> the Basque association of non-profit entities that foster the PwD social and labor inclusion. Currently, they have more than 10,000 PwD with employment, or participating in employability services. Of all the models analyzed for this study, the rehabilitator model is the only one with a parameter that monitors the support provided by foundations during the inclusion process. This support occurs occasionally (less than 33%) in the disability models. However, the Basque model of social and labor inclusion has proven to be an effective parameter and has achieved that the entities with employability capacity work together with the intention of achieving inclusion for workers with disabilities and productivity for companies.

Salvador-Ferrer (2020) analyzed whether the existence of labor conflicts could condition the social inclusion of workers with disabilities in his study on the quality of life of workers with disabilities. Data showed that role conflict in the workplace could hinder social inclusion. Although workers reported the lack of role conflict, there was a statistically significant and inversely proportional relationship between role conflict and social inclusion. This study showed a "training of coworkers and bosses on the inclusion of PwD" as a fundamental parameter in a model of labor inclusion. This parameter is of great importance: it avoids rejection due to the non-disabled population's ignorance, achieves effective inclusion and has a positive impact on the workplace.

## Conclusions

Seven parameters were identified as having a high frequency of occurrence in the disability models:

- a. *Family support*: maintains constant communication between the family and employers to propose joint measures that improve labor inclusion processes.

---

1. This model accounts for 95% all employment initiatives, 14 entities and more than 100 work centers, in the Basque Autonomous Community (CAE).

- b. *Workplace Adjustments*: applies adequate adaptations to favor access to spaces, machines and technologies that are necessary for perform the tasks.
- c. *Competency-based training*: ascertains the competencies of the person for the definition of the job profile.
- d. *On-the-job training and support*: favors learning and reducing the possibility of human errors during the tasks.
- e. *Training co-workers and managers on the inclusion of people with disabilities*: provides an adequate and respectful working environment for the inclusion processes.
- f. *Follow-up and evaluation of the labor inclusion process*: establishes training plans and reinforces working techniques. And
- g. *Education level*: assesses the skills of workers with a disability for employment.

These parameters serve as a crucial foundation for the development of inclusive models for people with disabilities. Seven out of the eight disability models of this study are applied in current studies (2017-2020) without considering the dispensation model. Although some experts consider that one should not speak of PwD rehabilitation, some studies consider the rehabilitation model with the purpose of avoiding injuries of other parts of the body and/or mind of the employed PwD that may worsen their condition.

When contrasting the disability models, most of the parameters (65.3%) are present in less than 33% of the models herein studied; that is, in one or two of them. This means that disability models are proposed with the purpose of identifying a difference to prove it as an appropriate model for the correct classification and representation of this population.

## References

Arcos, L. J., Martínez Álvarez, L.-A., & Restrepo Bedoya, J. C. (2018). Propuesta de un modelo de inclusión laboral para personas con discapacidad. *Revista Colombiana de Salud Ocupacional*, 8(1), 1-6. [https://doi.org/10.18041/2322-634X/rc\\_salud\\_ocupa.1.2018.5115](https://doi.org/10.18041/2322-634X/rc_salud_ocupa.1.2018.5115).

Arzate-Salgado, J. G. (2022). Herramientas para la comprensión sociológica del bienestar: analítica de las formas de precariedad social y visibilización



del continua desigualdad(es) violencia(s). *Ánfora*, 29(53), 42-62.  
<https://doi.org/10.30854/anf.v29.n53.2022.915>

Banco Mundial. (2019). *Discapacidad*. Banco Mundial.

Chiavenato, I. (2002). *Comportamiento Organizacional. La dinámica de éxito en las Organizaciones*. McGraw-Hill.

CONPES. (2013). *Consejo Nacional de Política Económica y Social 166*. Departamento Nacional de Planeación.

DANE. (2015). *Empleabilidad*. Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística.

Echebarria, A. (2020). Centros especiales de empleo de Euskadi. El modelo vasco de inclusión sociolaboral. *Revista Jurídica de Economía Social y Cooperativa*, 36, 153-175. <https://doi.org/10.7203/CIRIEC-JUR.36.17249>.

Egea, C., & Sarabia, A. (2001). Clasificaciones de la OMS sobre discapacidad. *Boletín Real Patronato sobre Discapacidad*, 50, 15-30. [https://sidinico.usal.es/idocs/F8/ART6594/clasificacion\\_oms.pdf](https://sidinico.usal.es/idocs/F8/ART6594/clasificacion_oms.pdf)

El Espectador. (23 de dic. de 2018). *Redacción profesión inclusión laboral en Colombia, un camino por recorrer*. <https://www.elespectador.com/noticias/economia/inclusion-laboral-en-colombia-un-camino-por-recorrer/>

Engel, G. L. (1977). The Need of a New Medical Model: A Challenge for Biomedicine. *Science*. 196(4286), 129-136. <http://meagherlab.tamu.edu/MMeagher/Health360/Psyc360h/articles/Engel1977360h.pdf>

Escobar, D. M. (2014). *La inclusión de las personas con discapacidad en el mercado laboral colombiano, una acción conjunta* (tesis de Maestría). Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Bogotá, Colombia. <http://bdigital.unal.edu.co/46075/1/52646657.2014.pdf>

Garay, F. D. & Carhuancho, I. M. (2019). Modelo social como alternativa para el desarrollo de la persona con discapacidad, Callao. Perú. *Telos*, 21(3), 681-709. <https://doi.org/10.36390/tehos213.10>.

Gómez, E. & Castillo, D. (2016). *Sociología de la discapacidad*. Tla-melaua.

- Instituto Nacional de Salud, Observatorio Nacional de Salud. (2011). *Primer Informe ONS, aspectos relacionados con la frecuencia de uso de los servicios de salud, mortalidad y discapacidad en Colombia, 2013*. <https://www.minsalud.gov.co/sites/rid/Lists/BibliotecaDigital/RIDE/IA/INS/informefinal.pdf>
- Keith, D. & Newstrom, J. W. (1999). *El comportamiento humano en el trabajo*. McGraw-Hill.
- López, M. del C. (2016). *Modelos de la discapacidad*. <https://es.slideshare.net/MaraDelCarmenLpezCrd/modelos-de-la-discapacidad-68651708#:~:text=MODELO%20UNIVERSAL%20DE%20LA%20DISCAPACIDAD,por%20herencia%20o%20alg%C3%BAn%20accidente>.
- Ley Estatutaria 1618 de 2013. *Por medio de la cual se establecen las disposiciones para garantizar el pleno ejercicio de los derechos de las personas con discapacidad*. Febrero 17 de 2013. DO: 48717. <https://www.funcionpublica.gov.co/eva/gestornormativo/norma.php?i=52081>
- Martínez-Álvarez, L.-A., Restrepo Bedoya, J. C., Ordoñez Hernández, C. A., Granada Aguirre, L. F., & Ayora Díaz, F. (2020). *Inclusión de los trabajadores con discapacidad en el Sistema de Gestión en Seguridad y Salud en el Trabajo en las empresas de Santiago de Cali, Valle del Cauca, Colombia*. UniCamacho.
- Ministerio de Trabajo de Colombia. (2016). Guía para el proceso de inclusión laboral de personas con discapacidad. <https://www.mintrabajo.gov.co/documents/20147/59111836/GUIA+PARA+EL+PROCESO+DE+INCLUSION+LABORAL+DE+PCD.pdf/1d8631c0-58d5-8626-69cb-780b169fcd7?version=1.0>
- Oliver, M. (1996). *Understanding Disability, from Theory to Practice*. Macmillan.
- Organización de las Naciones Unidas. (2008). *Convención Internacional sobre los Derechos de las Personas con Discapacidad*. Organización de las Naciones Unidas.
- Organización Mundial de la Salud. (2001). *Clasificación internacional del funcionamiento*. OMS.

- Organización Mundial de la Salud. (2011). *Informe mundial sobre la discapacidad*. OMS.
- Organización de las Naciones Unidas. (1948). *Declaración Universal de Derechos Humanos*. Organización de Naciones Unidas.
- Pacto de Productividad. (2018). *Los servicios de formación para el trabajo como parte del Modelo de Inclusión Laboral de Personas con Discapacidad "Pacto De Productividad"*. SENA.
- Pacto de Productividad. (2010). (s. f.). *Programa Empresarial de Promoción Laboral para Personas con Discapacidad. Estudio diagnóstico sobre barreras para la inclusión laboral*. <http://www.pactodeproductividad.com/pdf/documentodiagnosticopactodeproductividad.pdf>
- Padilla Muñoz, A. (2010). Discapacidad: contexto, concepto y modelos. *International Law: Revista Colombiana de Derecho Internacional*, 16, 381- 414. <https://www.redalyc.org/pdf/824/82420041012.pdf>
- Palacios, A. (2008). *El modelo social de discapacidad: orígenes, caracterización y plasmación en la Convención Internacional sobre los Derechos de las Personas con Discapacidad*. CINCA.
- Pérez Dalmeda, M. E. & Chhabra, G. (2019). Modelos teóricos de discapacidad: un seguimiento del desarrollo histórico del concepto de discapacidad en las últimas cinco décadas. *Revista Española de Discapacidad*, 7(21), 7-27. <https://www.cedid.es/redis/index.php/redis/article/view/429>
- Pisonero, S. (2007). *La discapacidad social, un modelo para la comprensión de los procesos de exclusión*. Ekaina.
- Ripollés Arnau, M. & Martín Toboso, M. (2008). La discapacidad dentro del enfoque de capacidades y funcionamientos de Amartya Sen. *Araucaria*, 10(20), 1-39. [https://idus.us.es/bitstream/handle/11441/46027/file\\_1.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](https://idus.us.es/bitstream/handle/11441/46027/file_1.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y)
- Salvador-Ferrer, C. M. (2020). Inclusión social de las personas con discapacidad: estudio piloto en el contexto laboral del papel mediador de la autodeterminación entre el conflicto de rol. *Siglo Cero*, 51(4), 25-37. <https://doi.org/10.14201/scero20205142537>

Tamayo, M., Besoain, Á. & Rebolledo, J. (2018). Determinantes sociales de la salud y discapacidad: actualizando el modelo de determinación. *Gaceta Sanitaria*, 31(2), 96-100. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gaceta.2016.12.004>.

Velarde, V. (2012). Los modelos de la discapacidad: un recorrido histórico. *Revista Empresa y Humanismo*, 15(1), 115-136. <https://dadun.unav.edu/bitstream/10171/29153/1/REYH%2015-1-12Velarde%20Lizama.pdf>

Vidal E, R., Cornejo V. C. & Arroyo H, L. (2013). La inserción laboral de las personas con discapacidad intelectual en Chile. *Convergencia educativa*, 2, 93-102. <https://dds.cepal.org/redesoc/publicacion?id=4067>

Zondek Darmstadter, A. (2015). *Manual para una inclusión laboral efectiva*. INICO

# Social Representations of Health in Artisanal Fishermen of Yucatan, Mexico\*

(English Version)

Representaciones sociales de la salud en pescadores artesanales de Yucatán, México

Representações sociais de saúde entre pescadores artesanais em Yucatan, México

Received 23 March, 2022. Accepted 19 May, 2022.

› To cite this article:

Puc Vázquez, E. D. & Flores Palacios, M. de F. (2023). Social Representations of Health in Artisanal Fishermen of Yucatan, México. *Ánfora*, 30(54). 109-135.

<https://doi.org/10.30854/anfv30.n54.2023.926>

Universidad Autónoma de Manizales. L-ISSN 0121-6538.

E-ISSN 2248-6941.

CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

Eduardo D. Puc Vázquez\*\*

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9893-7050>

México

María de Fátima Flores Palacios\*\*\*

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6492-4710>

México

## Abstract

**Objective:** In this article, the significance of health and health practices in a group of artisanal fishermen from Yucatan, Mexico, are analyzed from the theory of social representations. **Methodology:** With a qualitative approach and ethnographic design, indirect observation was carried out in social networks (Facebook), direct observation in the community, and interviews with 10 artisanal fishermen, having as an axis of conversation discomfort, well-being and affectivity. Collection ended when saturation was reached. The information was typed

---

\* Research concluded in 2022, within the Master's and Doctoral program in Psychology at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM). Project carried out thanks to the support granted by the National Council of Science and Technology (Conacyt). The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest in the elaboration of the research.

\*\* Master in Social Work. Escuela Nacional de Estudios Superiores-Mérida (ENES-UNAM). Mérida, Yucatán, México. [eduardo.puc@enesmerida.unam.mx](mailto:eduardo.puc@enesmerida.unam.mx)

\*\*\* PhD in Psychology. Centro Peninsular en Humanidades y Ciencias Sociales. Mérida, Yucatán, México. [fatimafpalacios@gmail.com](mailto:fatimafpalacios@gmail.com)

for later content analysis using the ATLAS.ti 8 program. **Results:** The representative content is obscured by the dominant medical discourse, which emphasizes disease and its treatment. The body becomes the repository of discomfort. At the same time, it serves as the object that reflects it. At the affective level, there is a contradiction between living happily without worries and living with the fear and uncertainty of having a good catch or returning home. **Conclusion:** The discourse on fishermen's health protects contextual references that are built on an economic foundation that obscures the fishermen's problems.

**Keywords:** social representations; health; fishing; common sense; discomfort.

## Resumen

**Objetivo:** en este artículo se analizan desde la teoría de las representaciones sociales los significados y las prácticas de la salud en un grupo de pescadores artesanales de Yucatán, México. **Metodología:** con un enfoque cualitativo y diseño etnográfico se realizó observación indirecta en redes sociales (Facebook), observación directa en la comunidad y entrevistas a 10 pescadores artesanales, teniendo como eje de conversación el malestar, el bienestar y la afectividad. La recolección finalizó al llegar a la saturación. El material fue transcrito para su posterior análisis de contenido mediante el software ATLAS.ti 8. **Resultados:** el contenido representacional aparece atravesado por el discurso médico hegemónico, que enfatiza la enfermedad y su curación. El cuerpo se convierte en el repositorio de los malestares. Al mismo tiempo, funge como el objeto que la refleja. A nivel afectivo, se encuentra una contradicción entre vivir feliz y sin preocupaciones junto con el miedo e incertidumbre por tener una buena pesca o regresar a casa. **Conclusión:** el discurso de la salud de los pescadores resguarda referentes contextuales que se construyen sobre una base económica que invisibiliza los malestares del pescador.

**Palabras clave:** representaciones sociales; salud; pesca; sentido común; malestar.

## Resumo

**Objetivo:** este artigo analisa os significados e práticas de saúde de um grupo de pescadores artesanais em Yucatán, México, utilizando a teoria das representações sociais. **Metodologia:** com uma abordagem qualitativa e desenho etnográfico, foi realizada observação indireta em redes sociais (Facebook), observação direta na comunidade e entrevistas com 10 pescadores artesanais, sendo o eixo da conversa o desconforto, o bem-estar e a afetividade. A coleta terminou quando a saturação foi atingida. O material foi transcrito para posterior análise de conteúdo utilizando o software ATLAS.ti 8. **Resultados:** o conteúdo representativo parece ser atravessado pelo discurso médico hegemônico, que enfatiza a doença e sua cura. O corpo se torna o repositório do desconforto. Ao mesmo tempo, ele serve como o objeto que o reflete. No nível afetivo, há uma contradição entre viver feliz e despreocupado e o medo e a incerteza de ter uma boa pescaria ou voltar para casa. **Conclusão:** o discurso da saúde dos pescadores salvaguarda referências contextuais que são construídas sobre uma base econômica que invisibiliza o desconforto dos pescadores.

**Palavras chave:** representações sociais; saúde; pesca; senso comum; desconforto.

## Introduction

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) estimates that there are just over 59 million people engaged in fishing and aquaculture worldwide. Behind Asia and Africa, the American continent comes in third with 2,843,000 people employed in the industry. The importance of fisheries stands out for contributing to food welfare and prosperity, providing a way of life, and direct and indirect income to a large part of the population in the world, in addition to providing a traditional cultural identity (FAO, 2016; 2020).

However, several authors agree that fishing is one of the most dangerous occupations, due to the conditions in which it is carried out. Fishermen are prone to face hazards and suffer from dermatological, respiratory, musculoskeletal, auditory, allergic, and psychosocial diseases (Matheson *et al.*, 2001; Yanes and Primera, 2006; Jacob *et al.*, 2013; INSHT, 2016; Jiang *et al.*, 2018; Woodhead *et al.*, 2018).

The dominant perspective in studies on fishermen's health is framed within the biomedical model, characterized by a pathogenic approach where disease is the result of the interaction between a biological agent and the individual's response (Arredondo, 1992; Madrid, 2011). Menéndez (1984; 2018) calls this a "hegemonic medical" model and characterizes it as:

- Biologist, by focusing on the relationship between agent and individual.
- Ahistorical, asocial, and individualistic, for not considering the context, the processes of production and means of living.
- Consumerist, considering health as a commodity, which is distributed as a good through economic exchange by means of consultations, treatments, and/or medicines.
- Asymmetric between the patient's and the expert's knowledge.
- Scientist for upholding the hegemony of medical-scientific-positivist knowledge.

One of the questions that arises from this model relates to the knowledge and expertise of the fishermen, specifically: what are they and where do they stand in the process of disease? how do they construct their meanings in relation to this process? Therefore, it is necessary to recover the voice and experiences of fishermen who have been traditionally made invisible, particularly in Mexico, where history was written with "[...] their backs to the sea" (Alcalá, 2003, p. 17), moving "[...]" between the paths of mountains, valleys and inland deserts and only rarely between the edges of its coasts" (Fraga *et al.*, 2009, p. 182).



Mexican coastal communities make up one of the poorest and most unprotected groups in the region. The fishermen lead a precarious existence under demanding working conditions, reduced remunerations, and without basic service benefits; factors that contribute to a situation of uncertainty, worry, and permanent vulnerability (Marín, 2007; Fraga *et al.*, 2009; Munguía *et al.*, 2013; Soares *et al.*, 2014; Perea and Flores, 2016; Puc, 2018; Munguía, 2019).

Thus, the objective of this text is to recover from the processual approach (Arruda, 2010; Banchs, 2000) of the theory of social representations, the practices, and meanings of a group of artisanal fishermen from Yucatan, Mexico in relation to their health-illness process anchored in their context.

### **Health-illness as an Object of Social Representation**

An item of social representation is one that has a connection to the social practices of a group, is culturally significant, causes controversy, and carries an emotional charge (Pereira de Sá, 1998; Flores, 2010). From this perspective, the health-disease process results in a dynamic and complex phenomenon anchored in everyday thinking that represents great social interest as it is related to life (Alcántara, 2008; Robledo, 2015). Therefore, it is assumed as an object of representation. According to Banchs (2007), health transcends the organicist medical model by affecting or changing each person's life, their social integration, and their sense of group harmony.

In this sense, it is acknowledged that social representations refer to specific ways of creating reality while taking both social and cognitive factors into account (Knapp *et al.*, 2003). For his part, Jodelet (1986a) maintains that they are a form of social and practical thinking “[...] oriented toward communication, understanding, and mastery of the social, material, and ideal environment” (p. 474).

With the publication of Moscovici's work in 1979, the theory has established itself as a new paradigm for knowledge that enables understanding of the subjective processes of social thought construction as well as situating the processes people use to give situations meaning (Flores, 2001). The characteristics of social representations include being the outcome of the creation of an item (whether material or not), a condensed form of knowledge, and a directive for action. They allow for the sharing of social processes between individuals and society as a whole (Jodelet, 1986b; Guimelli, 2004).

The topic of health has become a line of research within theory since the work of Herzlich (1973), who focused his interest on the ways of organizing, interpreting, and constructing the meanings of health and illness beyond

behavior; as did Jodelet (1986a), in analyzing the social representations of madness in a rural community.

In Latin America, contributions from authors in this field deserve special mention. Examples include: Viveros (1993) in a rural Colombian community; Nascimento *et al.* (1995) with Brazilian university professors, students, physicians, psychologists, and university officials; or Álvarez (2006), who compares the representation between health operators and patients. Recently, Sanmartino *et al.* (2018) and Garelli *et al.* (2017) conducted studies on Chagas; Cáceres *et al.* (2017) studied the social representations of malaria in indigenous people from the Guna de Madungandi comarca of Panama. In Mexico, the current works of Torres *et al.* (2017) on influenza, and that of Gonzalez (2020) on COVID-19.

In particular, in the triangulation fishing-health-social representations, the authors found the study by Santos *et al.* (2017) which aimed to analyze the structure of social representations of the life history of artisanal fishermen with spinal cord injuries due to a diving accident in Brazil. The limited scientific production in this population, and from the theoretical point of view, reveals the challenge of studying health-illness from a constructivist and contextualized approach.

### **A Place with God's Mercy: the Context of the Study**

In Mexico, the coastal zone includes a geomorphic franca that extends 20 km (12.43 miles) inland from the coastline (Secretary of Ecology, 2007). The coast of Yucatán extends about 340 kilometers, being bordered by 17 localities spread among 13 of the 106 municipalities that make up the state. The study's working area is in the adjacent region, covering an area of 868.63 km<sup>2</sup> (335.38 sq mi) and a population of 7,836 people (3,991 men and 3,845 women) (INEGI, 2017).

In the past, the productive activities in the study community have been linked to the salt mining and fishing industries, making the first one an example of the local economy at the time (Cortés, 2012). Currently, the percentage of population engaged in salt harvesting is low; in addition to being considered a low status employment (Salas *et al.*, 2006), unlike the tourism activity, which has emerged in recent years as an important economic option (INEGI, 2016). Currently, fishing represents the main source of economy, with 1,712 people who are designated as fishermen, representing 55.57% of the economically active people (EAP) (INEGI, 2017).

The type of fishing practiced is called "artisanal," characterized by the use of small boats and ice to catch the product, smaller catch amounts, and

less specialized tasks (Quezada and Breton, 1996; Alcalá, 1999, Marín, 2007). Generally, they work for boat owners, whom they call “bosses,” who provide them with supplies and equipment with the commitment that the catch will be sold to them at a cost that the bosses set. The fishermen lack an employment contract and basic benefits, such as social security.

Women also occupy a space within the fishing chain, although their activities are carried out on land or fishing in nearby places, such as the estuary, since these spaces are considered safe. There women take charge of capturing, cleaning or selling the product.

In relation to poverty and social backwardness, the Ministry of Social Development (2016) reported 487 homes with some deficiency: 2.4% had dirt floors, 6.3% had roofs of flimsy material, 6.8% had walls of flimsy material and 18.2% of homes were overcrowded. A total of 663 homes lack some basic service such as water (61.3%), drainage (9.4%), sanitation (8.5%) or electricity (1.35%). As for the indicators associated with food, 20.6% suffer from deprivation, of which 22% have mild food insecurity, 12.6% moderate, and 8.4% severe.

Regarding health services, 88% of the population are affiliated with some public service. Of these, 96.5% are part of Seguro Popular, followed by the Mexican Institute of Social Security with 3.5%, the Institute of Security and Social Services for State Workers with 0.5%, Petróleos Mexicanos/Defensa/Marina with 0.1%, and 0.3% have private insurance. Regarding the level of schooling, 73.8% have basic training, 14% upper secondary, and 4.1% a higher degree. In contrast, 8% are illiterate. Ninety-nine percent of people between 15 and 24 years old and 89.9% of people over 25 years old know how to read and write (INEGI, 2016).

## Methodology

The methodology was ethnographic, taking as a conceptual axis the theory of social representations. The participating group was made up of 10 artisanal fishermen from the coastal community of Yucatan, selected intentionally (Centeno and De la Garza, 2014). The inclusion criteria were: to be a fisherman, that fishing represents their main source of economic income and the voluntary desire to participate. Table 1 specifies the characteristics of the participants:

**Table 1.** *Characteristics of the Participating group.*

Gender	Age	Marital status	Children	Years of living in the community	Education	Years dedicated to fishing
M	48	Married	3	48	Incomplete high school	35
M	25	Single	0	25	Undergraduate intern	18
M	58	Married	4	58	Incomplete high school	35
M	38	Married	2	30	Incomplete high school	23
M	65	Free Union	4	45	None	45
M	32	Married	1	One month	High school	18
M	47	Married	3	17	High school	17
M	54	Married	3	36	Incomplete high school	30
M	44	Married	2	27	Incomplete primary school	7
M	38	Married	2	38	High school	25

Source: Authors' Elaboration

## Information Gathering Techniques

For the collection of information, the process began with the non-participant observation technique in community Facebook groups, since due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the entrance and exit to the port was closed for non-inhabitants. Through an exploration and analysis of the pages with the greatest interaction, the weekly publications related to health were collected for three months, to explore what is communicated on the subject. Subsequently, with the opening of the port, participant observation was used (Jociles, 2018) for three weeks, selecting as locations the home, the flea market, the boardwalk, the main park, and the boat during two work tasks. Similarly, interviews were conducted regarding the fishermen's health experience (Taylor and Bogdan, 1994). The number of interviews ended when reaching saturation and the topics that guided the conversation were:

- Well-being: condition of feeling and being in harmony with oneself and what surrounds them, including physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, environmental, and social aspects.
- Discomfort: condition of lack of harmony with themselves and that which surrounds them, including physical, mental, affective, spiritual, environmental, and social aspects.
- Self-care: set of actions carried out by people to ensure their well-being.
- Affectivity: set of emotions and feelings related to health.
- For the collection of information, ethical guidelines, transparency of information and informed consent were considered.<sup>1</sup>

### **Analysis of the Information**

The collected material was audio-recorded and/or recorded on paper for later transcription. Following the codification proposal of Bardin (1996), through repeated readings of the material, the decomposition of the text was carried out taking the theme as the registration unit; that is, the “[...] nuclei of meaning that make up communication” (p. 79). Subsequently, a process of constant comparison between codes was followed to find relationships and/or contrasts, as well as to generate broader sets of content. This process allowed the emergence of new categories. The ATLAS.ti 8 software was used for the analysis.

## **Results**

In order to maintain a proposal for the presentation of results, three components present in the social representations and consistent with the objective are taken up for analysis, such as: meanings and practices (Jodelet, 1986a) and affectivity (Banchs, 2007; Flores, 2010). Additionally, a section of emerging categories found is included.

---

1. The ethical components of this research are based on the principles presented in the “Belmont Report: Ethical Principles and Guidelines for the Protection of Human Research Subjects,” for which a letter of informed consent proposed by the Ethics Committee of the Master’s and Doctorate in Psychology program was delivered to each informant.

### **More there than over here: Meanings of Health**

Health appears in the fishermen’s discourse with materialized references; that is, those that are visible and can be verified by the senses, specifically, by pain and/or discomfort, as can be seen in Figure 1:

Figure 1. *Semantic Set of Health-disease.*



Source: Authors' Elaboration

Based on the above, it can be stated that the body becomes central in the social representation of fishermen’s health, since it is a place-repository where health is present (or, rather, absent). At the same time, the body serves as a monitor where a harmful situation is reflected and in which, based on individual or collective judgment, a decision is made to carry out the practice of care, whether internal or external. This is how the following participant refers to his bodily situation: “When I feel that my colon is bad, I ask my wife to prepare my herbalise [Herbalife], because she sells it” (Fisherman, 54 years old).

The body is also represented as a work instrument by which the means of life are obtained. Weakness or illness makes it impossible to earn for the day, both for the fisherman and for his work team. For this reason, some discomforts are minimized, as long as they do not impede fishing work or require permanent treatment. “I have a nephew who is skinny, *pasumare* (local expression of wonder) that bastard constantly decompresses, but since nothing strong has affected him, pure pain, pure pain pills, injections the next day, they are gone” (Fisherman, 44 years).

Coinciding with the hegemonic medical model, the disease is presented as the main reference of health. Within the group, it can be classified by chronicity

and/or degree of disability. In relation to the first, this is distinguished between those temporary diseases – such as the flu, diarrhea, back pain – and those chronic-degenerative, such as diabetes and arthritis. Due to the degree of incapacity, illnesses can be partial, when the fisherman can continue working; or total, when rest is required.

In this sense, the disease is recognizable from the affectation to work and the duration of the disease; that is, if it totally incapacitates the fisherman or if permanent treatment is required. One participant mentions in this regard: “I’m not sick, because I don’t have a disease like diabetes or hypertension” (Fisherman, 65 years old).

The main health risks present in the fishermen’s discourse are related to accidents and their consequences; particularly, by decompression sickness, suffered mainly by divers. Decompression consists of the dissolution of nitrogen in the blood and tissues when exposed to high pressures, forming bubbles that, in turn, can cause a set of physical-chemical, hemodynamic, and rheological alterations (Durán *et al.* [ /i], 2019).

In the study group, most of the fishermen have dedicated themselves to diving at some point in their lives; above all, because in the 2000s the Asian market bought the species *Isostichopus badionotus* and *Holothuria Florida*, known as “sea cucumber,” at very high prices. This factor was motivating for many people dedicated to fishing on the surface to become scuba divers. This change was made without adequate preparation by the fishermen, who, faced with a possible niche of economic income, chose to assume the risks of diving without knowing how to swim, exceeding the physiological limits allowed by the body underwater, and exposing themselves to death. Although the product is already banned, it continues to be extracted furtively, which causes a double risk: death or being imprisoned for violating federal regulations. In general, decompression sickness is narrated as an experience that moves between pain, despair, and the need to return to work, as can be read in the following experiences:

When I had the first one, I think I was in bed for about nine hours and had three sessions. In the second, the same, from eight to nine hours. The third time, the same, but the third time it was because oil passed through, spots like that began to appear on my body and my chest swelled, nothing more than arm pain. (Fisherman, 38 years old).

I grabbed and spent eight days like this and I already felt more or less, I already wanted to go out on the street. In one of those, they were going to the longline to cast a line. Well, that’s how I grabbed it and I said: “You know what? I will go with you. Is there a chance? You may?” “Yes, I can,” I tell him, but I couldn’t

because it still made me dizzy, like that until it happened to me, but it was horrible. (Fisherman, 44 years old).

Illness as an element that disturbs health is represented as an obstacle (“bumps,” “kicks,” and “blows”), which can be overcome with an abundant diet based on seafood, the physical effort derived from fishing, and the heat and salinity of the place. On the other hand, religion plays an important role in the representation of health-illness. The community “possesses God’s mercy” as long as they are not affected by natural or health events. In the face of the COVID pandemic, they mention that: “By the grace of God the disease did not have an impact, because in the end it is God who decides how you do at the fair.” As for fishing, both safety and production go with a “Thank God,” reducing care to a prayer.

### **Close Your Eyes and Hold on: Care and Attention Practices**

Facing the question “How do artisanal fishermen take care of their health?” it was found that to opt for a practice of care and/or self-care, there must be a model material that directs the action. In this case it’s the body. Fishermen objectify care based on injuries and sequelae from accidents.

Injuries considered “minor” include those that do not prevent them from continuing to work, regardless of pain levels. These may be cuts on feet, hands, or other parts of the body, caused by tools, objects thrown into the sea or marine species.

Cuts are usually treated by cleaning the blood, washing the wound with seawater, squeezing the lacerated body part, adding gasoline or sand and, in the best case, using a bandage to prevent bleeding and continue working. Injuries caused by marine species are common. These experiences in turn contribute to preventing future accidents and specific practices for healing. For example, mishandling of catfish (*Bagra Marinus*) frequently causes cuts, because it has very sharp fins that pierce the skin “like butter,” but are difficult to remove. When an incision occurs, the recommendations suggested by a participant are:

When you cut yourself, you keep working. If you cannot continue, close your eyes and then ask a partner to pull the flap. You wash it. Some even get fever. On land you can go to be treated as it should be, but almost no one goes. (Fisherman, 25 years old).

For its part, the devil ray (*Mobula mobular*), which has a stinger in its tail, hides under the sand and when someone moves it, the fish inserts its stinger



into the skin. Like the catfish, it is removed manually, with the difference that its healing method consists of tapping the wound so that the “bad blood” comes out.

Another common accident is hooking. This happens more frequently to inexperienced fishermen who are starting out in the job, as they lack expertise and may pay more attention to not falling than to hook handling. The hook is composed of six parts and it is, in particular, the burr located behind the point that prevents it from coming out easily. Doing so would cause internal tearing of the skin. Therefore, the procedure used is to cut it with a hacksaw on the eyelet side.

In general, seamen do not have first aid kits, which makes it difficult to use specialized equipment. Thus, for self-treatment, elements of nature are used, such as sea water, sand to rub the wound or elements found in the boat. A subject tells the following:

In one of those moments, the hook was broken, and the point broke. Of course, when it came back it got buried in my finger, but they didn't have the reed it had already stayed (alluding to the captured stripe). Just pull it, just pull it and it came out. But the pain, well, it's mostly there. You knock on the gunwale of the boat and there are others who pour gasoline with oil to make you hold the pain. (Fisherman, 44 years old).

The use of the line involves the skill of combining balance to stand on the boat at the rhythm of the sea, manipulating a line in each hand, following the direction of the sea currents to avoid entanglement. Therefore, cuts to a phalanx of the hand are common due to the tension generated when a fish is hooked and tries to escape. In this regard, the case of a fisherman who lost a finger was documented. By the time he felt the tension he could no longer cut the line with his other hand and ended up tearing off his appendage, which he picked up and put on ice while waiting for the return. Because of the return time nothing could be done and he lost finger.

Regarding accidents, the marks they leave on the being can be considered as a symbol of the risks of the work performed. This is what a fisherman says:

Besides, my feet won't let me lie. This is basically catfish, snail footprint, crab bites, because it is at night and you are in the shallows, you are in the mud at the moment that the snail is there, you step on it, because it has already broken your soul, you step on the crab and logically the crab grabs you, and you remove it and it is stuck there. Also it was a little catfish that left me without work for a week. Your hand is left like a toad. (Fisherman, 47 years old).

Finally, it was found that in the land space to attend to their health they go to the health center when some discomfort or disease is already present, which again speaks of the validity of the biomedical model.

### **Even the Most Terrible Shakes His Feet: Affectivity in Fishermen**

In the fishermen's speech, the trade is a practice that is learned on the move with the only requirement of "having the desire." In the journey to become and remain a fisherman, affectivity is presented. The courage to overcome the fear of the sea is reflected in fishing without knowing how to swim. From 27 fishermen interviewed from 2018 to 2021, 70.37% do not know how to swim. In this regard, a fisherman with 34 years of experience mentions:

Me, I'm a fisherman and I can't swim. I don't know if I can swim against the current, I have had some carelessness and I have fallen into the sea, but in good times. You know that when you fall to the bottom, it brings you up again, then like a puppy to get to the boat. (Fisherman, 54 years old).

Likewise, fear remains present since fishing is characterized by the daily possibility of finding dangers during the work; in particular, weather conditions (winds, high tides, hurricanes), contact with animal species, technology, and lack of expertise in technical handling, such as driving the boat at high tide or handling the hose that provides air in the diving fishery.

These are the experiences you go through sometimes. Bastard, it's scary, but you get used to it. When the northerly winds come, then you are not afraid, but it is dangerous, so with strong winds sometimes you hit a swell and you go to the bottom. Not just anyone can steer a boat. (Fisherman, 44 years old).

For many fishermen who have been in an accident situation, it can become a traumatic event that even prevents them from returning to work. Thus, fear is materialized by events that have cost the lives of colleagues who have died in their arms, by experiencing firsthand what it means to lose a finger, by spending eight hours or more inside the hyperbaric chamber and even by being at sea in the middle of an unexpected storm.

Yes, their feet shake, even the most terrible ones say ... At that hour they see the black cloud that raised the wind, the swell and the wind, the feet of any fisherman begin to tremble [...] I know that there is north and I am on fire out there and there are no other *Pasumae* boats, you feel your legs trembling, when you feel that

you begin to go down and you begin to go down, well, it calms down. As you run for more minutes and more hours, you feel when your fear subsides. Actually, it's fear. (Fisherman, 65 years old).

Likewise, fear is related to the proximity of death in each day, which awakens the feeling of uncertainty. This can be understood when daily and frequently phrases are heard such as: "The only safe thing to do is to go fishing, but not to return home" or "How ugly is my community, but how nice it is to return to the family." The most common way to meet this feeling of fear is through the consumption of drugs and alcohol, which are also used as a source of immediate pleasure. Intake seems to be justified and meant by the fishermen as a means to not feel anxious or empty. "Marijuana helps to relax," says one of them.

Uncertainty also appears in more practical areas, such as the amount of the catch, and the day's profit. The fisherman goes out to work with the hope of catching as much as possible, but with the uncertainty of achieving it and/or even that the purchase price upon return will not change. In addition to the above, there are feelings of lack of protection and loneliness, which extend from the personal when they are alone at sea to the institutional, when the only support is the so-called "sea insurance," which grants the amount of approximately \$1,000 USD as support to the fisherman's family in case of death.

On the other hand, it was found that fishermen are calm and at peace, particularly those who have been able to build up a patrimony. Someone with the possibility of having saved some money during fishing time constraints can make up for the need to feed himself by going fishing daily for the day's meal and keep their savings for difficult times. However, those who were not able to save money in times of abundance, underwent a feeling of uneasiness to the extent of committing illegal acts, such as fish poaching, robberies, and assaults of passers-by, as reported in the following Facebook publication.

Figure 2. Publication on Insecurity within the Population.



Source: Authors' Elaboration

## Time and Spaces: Emerging Categories

Space refers to the physical and symbolic places that are anchored in the fishermen's discourse and practices. This category emerged from observing the division of the areas where fishing is practiced. The clearest division is between the estuary and the sea; the former is considered feminine by its characteristics of being less dangerous (Puc, 2018). The boat is not only the means of work, but also the place of accomplishment within a larger setting, such as the sea. At the same time, the water territory can be broken down into "down, up, out, in, high, low," representing many physical places, but, above all, metaphorical ones. For example: it is said that the fisherman who goes out to sea "goes out farther." Therefore, position and length coexist to show a sense of understanding from the lived experience of the space category.

Another aspect is directionality; for example, winds are named according to the direction from which they originate. Additionally, they trace the route. When northerly winds blow, fishing is forbidden and when the wind is calm, it is a good time for certain fisheries, a fish "bonanza." Location is important for preserving life within the fishing operation because it implies the need to identify reference points for a good catch, as well as for coming back home. Before, location was done through things like a lighthouse, the sky, and/or the clouds, but nowadays technology has a decisive role with the use of tools such as Global Positioning Systems (GPS).

In terms of time, the longing for the past remains, particularly for those fishermen who were originally from the municipality and who have witnessed

the transition from abundance to scarcity over the years. In the face of these tangible-focused representations, the “time” category serves as a cross-cutting element for health practices and meanings. Why investing in health instead of spending on illness when getting sick? (Maybe illness doesn't happen).

In the face of remaining uncertainties, the emphasis is on what is always happening. Dying healthy is a possibility rather than getting sick. According to this fact, the materialization of the malaise is what matters, not what could be or might happen. Concerning this social representation, the practice is conducive to palliate the present, because tomorrow will be another day. The argument is that time on the coast passes in long periods (epochs, mornings, nights, months, seasons) rather than in hours, minutes, or seconds.

## Conclusions

According to this study's objective, fishing transcends the simple action of extracting aquatic resources and is positioned as the structuring axis of the social life of coastal communities, therefore it is assumed as endowing meaning and identity (FAO, 2016; Fernández, 2018; Fernández *et al.*, 2021). From this perspective, fishermen are sentient beings who, if placed in a particular context, construct meaningful significance and practices for their reality.

Given that a culture is always related to physical, social, and symbolic aspects, the proposal to understand coastal communities as a socio-ecological system becomes relevant; that is, as a “[...] set of integrated socio-bio-physical components that interrelatedly operate and evolve” (Maas, 2015, p. 3), although it is worth adding that the psychological and affective aspects also converge as here demonstrated. In this sense, coasts can be understood as interspaces between the sea and the land which have historically constructed and generated practices, discourses and affectivities that allow for the weaving of an interrelational network between the people who inhabit it, and their context, resulting in particular dynamics (Ther, 2012).

Then, the coast is not only a place of work, but a place where relationships and daily affectivities are woven; a place where day and night exist by looking at the sun and the moon rather than for the seconds of the clock. In this regard, Ooms (2006) mentions that fishermen locate themselves from “the limited,” “the unlimited,” “the verticalities,” “the outside,” and “the inside” figures within the world and they build up distinct identities called “fishing” which are characterized by the uncertainty of the marine environment. On land, on the one hand,

one lives and lives together with the family, celebrating life, bearing in mind that one will always have to return to the sea.

On the other hand, for the population of this study, the hegemonic medical model permeates its practices and meanings of health-illness by driving the idea that health decisions and behaviors are individualized and respond to their particular lifestyles; overlooking the sociohistorical structure that has built a pathogenic system, and according to Breilh (2013), it implies ways of living and getting sick according to that system.

The works conducted by Borowiec and Lignowska (2015) are consistent with this study's findings. These authors mention three dimensions of social representations that function independently. Lacking disease and having a biological reservoir to combat disease (p. 521). In another study by Torres *et al.* (2010) for older adults, health is based on the absence of physical and psychological discomfort, as well as vices.

This shows that the health mechanisms in force maintain a strong influence on the production and dissemination of social representations of health, which are particularly materialized according to the contexts. The contextualization of health-illness coincides with the study of Vergara (2009), who links young people's social representations of health to the environment, and the study of Moreno (2016), who mentions context as one of the main aspects in the construction of health social representations in a rural Colombian population.

Unlike the meanings that have been objectified and anchored in the biomedical model, the practices of care and self-care at sea have been created in relation to their need to survive, therefore they take up transmitted and learned contextual aspects in praxis. This idea of survival is the result of a historical community process in which the older settlers share the natural wealth that existed four decades ago. Since 2000, the boom in sea cucumber capture (López *et al.*, 2012), consumerist, and extractivist policies are factors that contributed to place the fishermen as land-based survivors in the sense of "looking for bread to take home." They even carried out illicit activities and endangered their lives by risky practices such as diving deeper than allowed and going farther out to sea.

Additionally, survival at sea refers to the sense of alertness and uncertainty in the face of a sudden weather change, an accident or simply working without knowing how to swim. These situations allow for considering fishermen as affective subjects who, behind that figure of strength, courage, and joy, are people with fears, feelings of closeness to death, lack of protection and loneliness. Whereas some studies have been conducted in fishermen's mental health, such as those of Jiang *et al.* (2018) – who found a high prevalence of stress in a sample of 1,068 Chinese fishermen – or those studies of Dörner *et al.* 2017 – who found depressive symptoms and substance abuse in the population studied

– the affectivity in fishermen appears to be as a vein of mental health study hitherto neglected in this group of people.

Based on what has been presented, fishing is the vital reference point for fishing populations. In these, the biomedical model remains valid in its discourse and practice. In the case study, health is the hegemonic referent, responding to the current capitalist economic model in which the obtaining of resources prevails over physical, psychological, and contextual well-being, hence placing the fishermen as a capture machine capable of satisfying the needs of the employer and making their own discomfort invisible. From this perspective, drug consumption (legal and illegal) serves as a palliative in the face of adversity, therefore it is not sanctioned and, on the contrary, is completely accepted. Recognizing fishermen as people who, with their own practices, affectivities, and knowledge, contribute to planetary welfare, despite their lacking of means, mechanisms, and tools that favor their own welfare is important.

Additionally, health studies recommend approaches based on the referents and contexts of the working populations, which would lead to the recognition that health is built on complexity and interaction. In this way, the psychosociological approach is an option that displays the emergence and the need to create prevention and promotion interventions linked to fishermen's health contextually and comprehensively.

Among the main limitations encountered in this study, there was limited time for field work, because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

## **Acknowledgments**

The authors thank the National Council of Science and Technology (Conacyt) for the scholarship granted to conduct this research within the Master's and Doctoral Program in Psychology at the National Autonomous University of Mexico. In particular, they thank the people in the community who contributed with their experiences.

## References

- Alcalá, G. (1999). *Con el agua hasta los aparejos. Pescadores y pesquerías en El Soconusco, Chiapas*. CIESAS-CESMECA.
- Alcalá, G. (2003). *Políticas pesqueras en México 1946-2000: contradicciones y aciertos en la planificación de la pesca nacional*. El Colegio de México/Centro de Investigación Científica y de Educación Superior/El Colegio de Michoacán.
- Alcántara, G. (2008) La definición de salud de la Organización Mundial de la Salud y la interdisciplinariedad. *Sapiens*, 9, 93-107. <https://www.redalyc.org/pdf/410/41011135004.pdf>
- Álvarez, L. (2006). Representaciones sociales de la salud y la enfermedad: un estudio comparativo entre operadores de la salud y pacientes hospitalizados en Bucaramanga y Floridablanca. *MedUNAB*, 9, 211-220. <https://revistas.unab.edu.co/index.php/medunab/article/view/137>
- Arredondo, A. (1992). Análisis y reflexión sobre modelos teóricos del proceso salud-enfermedad. *Cadernos de Saúde Pública*, 8, 254-261. <https://www.scielo.br/j/csp/a/8bsQRMHDrQqWspcjLfhB8Qh/?format=pdf&lang=es>
- Arruda, A. (2010). Teoría de las representaciones sociales y teorías de género. En: N. Blázquez Graf, F. Flores Palacios y M. Ríos Everardo (coords.), *Investigación feminista. Epistemología, metodología y representaciones sociales* (pp. 317- 338). UNAM/CEIICH/CRIM/Facultad de Psicología.
- Banchs, M. A. (2000). Aproximaciones procesuales y estructurales al estudio de las representaciones sociales. *Papers on Social Representations*, 9, 3.1-3.15. [http://www.psr.jku.at/PSR2000/9\\_3Banch.pdf](http://www.psr.jku.at/PSR2000/9_3Banch.pdf).
- Banchs, M. A. (2007). Entre la ciencia y el sentido común: representaciones sociales y salud. En Tania Rodríguez Salazar y María de Lourdes García Curiel (coords.), *Representaciones Sociales. Teoría e Investigación* (pp. 219-254). Universidad de Guadalajara.
- Bardin, L. (1996). *El análisis de contenido*. Akal.



- Borowiec, A. & Lignowska, I. (2015). How Do Poles Perceive Health? The Social Representation of Health and its Importance for the Social Order. *Polish Sociological Review*, 4(192), 511-528. <https://polish-sociological-review.eu/How-Do-Poles-Perceive-Health-The-Social-Representation-of-Health-and-its-Importance,119734,0,2.html>.
- Breilh, J. (2013). La determinación social de la salud como herramienta de transformación hacia una nueva salud pública (salud colectiva) *Rev. Fac. Nac. Salud*, 31(supl. 1), 13-27. [http://www.scielo.org.co/scielo.php?script=sci\\_arttext&pid=S0120-386X2013000400002&lng=en&tlng=es](http://www.scielo.org.co/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S0120-386X2013000400002&lng=en&tlng=es).
- Cáceres, L., Calzada, J., Gabster, A., Young, J., Márquez, R., Torres, R. & Griffith, M. (2017). Social Representations of Malaria in the Guna Indigenous Population of Comarca Guna de Madungandi, Panama. *Malaria journal*, 16(256), 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12936-017-1899-4>.
- Centeno, J. & De la Garza, D. (2014). Observación. En Karla Sáenz López y Gerardo Tamez González (coords.). *Métodos y técnicas cualitativas y cuantitativas aplicables a la investigación en ciencias sociales* (pp. 204-220). Tirant Humanidades México.
- Cortés, I. (2012). Aspectos agrarios de la producción de sal en Yucatán en el presente neoliberal. *Temas Antropológicos*, 34(2), 101-127. <https://www.redalyc.org/pdf/4558/455845081005.pdf>.
- Dörner, A., Riquelme, V., Véliz, A., & Ripoll, M. (2017). Perfil de salud general de pescadores artesanales de la región de Los Lagos. *Revista Finlay*, 7(2), 99-106. <http://revfinlay.sld.cu/index.php/finlay/article/view/489>.
- Durán Fernández, S., Fonseca Sarmiento, J. & Leyva Urquiza, F. (2019). Enfermedad descompresiva grave en buzo aficionado. *Revista Cubana de Medicina Militar*, 48(1), 98-103. <http://www.revmedmilitar.sld.cu/index.php/mil/article/view/197/270>.
- Fernández, A. (2018). *Jóvenes de arena. Pesca artesanal, esquemas culturales e identidad en Armería, Colima, México*. Universidad de Colima.
- Fernández, C., Brito, P., Mendoza, G. & Villavicencio, C. (2021). Tradición pesquera artesanal e identidad sociocultural de Puerto Bolívar contexto

del Golfo de Guayaquil-Ecuador. *Revista de ciencias sociales*, 27(2), 386-400. <https://produccioncientificaluz.org/index.php/rcs/index>

- Flores, F. (2001). Representación social, género y salud mental. In N. Callejo Bello y G. Gómez Pérez-Mitre (eds.), *Psicología Social: Investigación y aplicaciones en México* (pp. 194-228). Fondo de Cultura Económica.
- Flores, F. (2010). Representación social y género: una relación de sentido común. In N. Blázquez Graff, F. Flores Palacios y M. Ríos Everardo (coords.), *Investigación feminista. Epistemología, metodología y representaciones sociales* (pp. 339-358). UNAM/CEIICH/CRIM/Facultad de Psicología.
- Fraga, J., Salas, S., & Mexicano-Cíntora, G. (2009). La pesca en Yucatán: De la abundancia a la escasez, a la fragilidad de las estructuras institucionales. En J. Fraga, G. J. Villalobos, S. Doyon y A. García (eds.), *Descentralización y manejo ambiental, gobernanza costera en México* (pp. 57-78). Plaza y Valdés/IDRC.
- Garelli, F., Zucchi, M., Mordeglia, C. & Dumrauf, A. (2017). Representaciones sociales sobre dengue en docentes de Argentina en dos contextos epidemiológicos: aportes para la formación docente. *Revista Eureka sobre Enseñanza y Divulgación de las Ciencias*, 4(2), 458-472. <https://www.redalyc.org/journal/920/92050579012/html/>
- González, M. A. (2020). Representación social del coronavirus y de la epidemia masiva de COVID-19 en México. *Psicologías*, 4: 1-27. <https://revistas.upr.edu/index.php/psicologias/article/view/18467>.
- Guimelli, C. (2004). *El pensamiento social*. UNAM.
- Herzlich, C. (1973). *Health and Illness: A Social Psychological Analysis*. Academic Press.
- Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI). (2016). *Panorama sociodemográfico de Yucatán 2015*. INEGI. [http://coespo.yucatan.gob.mx/general/31\\_Panorama\\_Yuc.pdf](http://coespo.yucatan.gob.mx/general/31_Panorama_Yuc.pdf)
- Instituto Nacional de Seguridad e Higiene en el Trabajo (INSHT). (2016). *Identificación y caracterización de factores psicosociales presentes en la pesca de bajura y altura*. INSHT. <https://www.insst.es/documentacion/>

catalogo-de-publicaciones/identificacion-y-caracterizacion-de-factores-psicosociales-presentes-en-la-pesca-de-bajura-y-altura.

Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI). (2017). *Anuario estadístico y geográfico de Yucatán 2017*. INEGI.

Jacob, J., George, L. & Savitha, T. (2013). Job, Stress and Coping among Fishermen. *NUJHS*, 3(4), 93-96. <https://www.nitte.edu.in/journal/dec%202013/93-96%20Janella%20Mariam.pdf>.

Jiang, H., Li, S. & Yang, J. (2018). Work Stress and Depressive Symptoms in Fishermen With a Smoking Habit: A Mediator Role of Nicotine Dependence and Possible Moderator Role of Expressive Suppression and Cognitive Reappraisal. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 9, 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.00386>.

Jociles, M. (2018). La observación participante en el estudio etnográfico de las prácticas sociales. *Revista Colombiana de Antropología*, 54(1), 121-150. <https://doi.org/10.22380/2539472X.386>.

Jodelet, D. (1986a). *Loco y locura en un medio rural francés: una aproximación monográfica* (trad. F. Flores Palacios). UNAM.

Jodelet, D. (1986b). Las representaciones sociales: fenómenos, conceptos y teoría. In: S. Moscovici (coord.), *Psicología Social II: Pensamiento y vida social. Psicología social y problemas sociales* (pp. 469-494). Paidós.

Knapp, E., León, I., Mesa, M. & Suarez, M. (2003). Representación social de la salud humana. *Revista cubana de psicología*, 20(2), 153-165. <http://pepsic.bvsalud.org/pdf/rcp/v20n2/07.pdf>.

López, J. A., Cisneros, H. & Arreguín, F. (2012). Aspectos pesqueros y sociales de la nueva pesquería de pepino de mar en la península de Yucatán. In: *Proceedings of the 65th Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute* (pp. 427-433). Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute.

Maas, M. (2015). El manejo de cuenca desde un enfoque socioecosistémico. *Cuencas de México*, 1(1), 3-8. [https://www.riob.org/sites/default/files/IMG/pdf/cuencas\\_de\\_Mexico\\_web-3.pdf](https://www.riob.org/sites/default/files/IMG/pdf/cuencas_de_Mexico_web-3.pdf).

- Madrid, L. (2011). Realizando “diagnósticos diferenciales” de los modelos teóricos del proceso salud-enfermedad. *KAIROS. Revista de temas sociales*, 15(28), 6-13. <https://dialnet.unirioja.es/servlet/articulo?codigo=4347726>.
- Marín, G. (2007). *Vidas a contramarea: pesca artesanal, desarrollo y cultura*. CIESAS/ El Colegio de Michoacán.
- Matheson, C., Morrison, S., Murphy, E., Lawrie, T., Ritchie, L. & Bond, C. (2001). The Health of Fishermen in the Catching Sector of the Fishing Industry: A Gap Analysis. *Occupational Medicine*, 51(5), 305-311. <https://doi.org/10.1093/occmed/51.5.305>.
- Menéndez, E. L. (1984). El modelo médico hegemónico: transacciones y alternativas hacia una fundamentación teórica del modelo de autoatención en salud. *Arxiu d'Etnografia De Catalunya*, (3), 84-119.
- Menéndez, E. (2018). Autoatención de los padecimientos y algunos imaginarios antropológicos. *Desacatos*, 58, 104-113. <https://doi.org/10.29340/58.1999>.
- Moreno, J. (2016). Representaciones sociales de la salud de una comunidad rural de Colombia. *Revista De Psicología Universidad De Antioquia*, 7(2), 47-62. <https://revistas.udea.edu.co/index.php/psicologia/article/view/32520>.
- Moscovici, S. (1979). *El Psicoanálisis, su imagen y su público*. Paidós.
- Munguía, M. T. (2019). Y sucedió...mujeres trabajadoras del mar. In F. Flores Palacios y A. Rubio Herrera (coords.), *Género, transdisciplina e intervención social* (pp. 71-102). UNAM.
- Munguía Gil, M. T., Méndez, G. & Soares, D. (2013). Condiciones de vulnerabilidad de género en la crisis ambiental y el cambio climático en Yucatán, México. In F. López Castellano (coord.), *Medio Ambiente y Desarrollo. Miradas Feministas Desde Ambos Hemisferios* (pp. 289-312). Universidad de Granada y Fundación IPADE.
- Nascimento, C., Fontes, Y. & Costa, D. (1995). Health Paradigms Social Representations of Health and Illness and their Central Nucleus. *Papers on Social Representations*, 4(2), 1-12. <https://psr.iscte-iul.pt/index.php/PSR/article/view/202/166>

- Ooms, N. (2006). De la transformación de un pescador en piscicultor: una mirada desde la filosofía. *Península*, 1(1), 45-66. <https://www.scielo.org.mx/pdf/peni/v1n1/v1n1a3.pdf>
- Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la Alimentación y la Agricultura (FAO). (2016). *El estado mundial de la pesca y la acuicultura 2016. Contribución a la seguridad alimentaria y la nutrición para todos*. FAO. <https://www.fao.org/3/i5555s/i5555s.pdf>.
- Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la Alimentación y la Agricultura (FAO). (2020). *El estado mundial de la pesca y la acuicultura 2020. La sostenibilidad en acción*. FAO. <https://www.fao.org/3/ca9229es/ca9229es.pdf>
- Perea, A. & Flores, F. (2016). Participación de las mujeres en la pesca: nuevos roles de género, ingresos económicos y doble jornada. *Sociedad y Ambiente*, 1(9): 121-141. <https://revistas.ecosur.mx/sociedadyambiente/index.php/sya/article/view/1636/1577>
- Pereira de Sá, C. (1998). *A construção do objeto de pesquisa em representações sociais*. Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro.
- Puc, E. (2018). Representaciones sociales y dimensiones de vulnerabilidad en un grupo de personas de la pesca, desde un contexto situado (tesis de maestría). Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México. <http://132.248.9.195/ptd2018/mayo/0774038/Index.html>.
- Quezada, D. & Bretón, Y. (1996). *Antropología marítima: pesca y actores sociales*. Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán/Fomes.
- Robledo, L. (2015). Representaciones sociales de la salud: la salud como objeto de representación. *Agathos*, 3, 44-51. <https://roderic.uv.es/bitstream/handle/10550/54386/113315.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>
- Salas, S., Mexicano-Cíntora, G. & Cabrera, M. A. (2006). *¿Hacia dónde van las pesquerías en Yucatán? Tendencias, Retos y Perspectivas*. Cinvestav.
- Sanmartino, M., Amieva, C. & Medone, P. (2018). Representaciones sociales sobre la problemática de Chagas en un servicio de salud comunitaria del

Gran La Plata, Buenos Aires, Argentina. *Global Health Promotion*, 25(3), 102-110. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1757975916677189>

Santos, E., Pessoa, J. M., Silvéiro, I. L., Alves, C. A. & Nunes, F. A. (2017). Representações sociais de pescadores com lesão medular: repercussões e trajetória de vida. *Revista Brasileira de Enfermagem*, 70(1), 139-145. <https://doi.org/10.1590/0034-7167-2016-0436>

Secretaría de Desarrollo Social (Sedesol). (2016). *Informe anual sobre la situación de pobreza y rezago social 2015*. Sedesol. [https://www.gob.mx/cms/uploads/attachment/file/31643/Yucatan\\_1\\_.pdf](https://www.gob.mx/cms/uploads/attachment/file/31643/Yucatan_1_.pdf).

Secretaría de Ecología, Secretaría de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales y Corredor Biológico Mesoamericano. (2007). *Programa de Ordenamiento Ecológico Territorial de la Costa de Yucatán (POETCY)*. SE/SEMARNAT/ Corredor Biológico Mesoamericano.

Soares, D., Murillo, D., Romero, R. & Millán, G. (2014). Amenazas y vulnerabilidades: las dos caras de los desastres en Celestún, Yucatán. *Desacatos*, 44, 159-177. <https://doi.org/10.29340/44.454>.

Taylor, S. & Bogdan, R. (1994). *Introducción a los métodos cualitativos de investigación*. Paidós.

Ther, F. (2012). Antropología del territorio. *Polis*, 11(32), 493-510. <http://journals.openedition.org/polis/6674>.

Torres, T. M., Munguía, J., Pozos, B. & Aguilera, M. (2010). Representaciones sociales sobre la salud y la enfermedad de la población adulta de Guadalajara, México. *Atención primaria*, 42(3), 154-161. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.aprim.2009.07.002>.

Torres, T. M., Nuñez, Y. C. & De la Cruz, A. (2017). Representaciones sociales de la influenza humana de adolescentes de la ciudad de Guadalajara, México. *Actualidades en Psicología*, 31(122), 17-30. <https://doi.org/10.15517/ap.v31i122.24578>.

Vergara, M. C. (2009). Representaciones sociales sobre salud, de algunos grupos de jóvenes de Manizales, Colombia. *Revista Latinoamericana de Ciencias*

*Sociales, Niñez y Juventud*, 7(1), 105-133. <http://www.scielo.org.co/pdf/rllcs/v7n1/v7n1a05.pdf>.

Viveros, M. (1993). La noción de representación social y su utilización en los estudios sobre salud y enfermedad. *Revista Colombiana de Antropología*, 30, 238-260. <https://doi.org/10.22380/2539472X.1833>.

Woodhead, A., Abernethy, K., Szaboova, L. & Turner, R. (2018). Health in Fishing Communities: A Global Perspective. *Fish and Fisheries*, 19(5), 839-852. <https://doi.org/10.1111/faf.12295>.

Yanes, L. & Primera, C. (2006). Condiciones de trabajo y salud de los pescadores artesanales del occidente de Venezuela. *Salud de los Trabajadores*, 14(2), 13-28. <https://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=375839276002>.

# Care Policies in Some Latin American Countries. A Feminist Perspective

*(English Version)*

Las políticas de cuidado en algunos países de América Latina. Una mirada feminista

Políticas de cuidado em alguns países da América Latina. Uma perspectiva feminista

*Received 26 August, 2021. Accepted 7 May, 2022.*

Andrea Cetré Castilblanco\*

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6546-3282>

Colombia

› To cite this article:

Cetré Castilblanco, A. (2023).

Care Policies in Some Latin American Countries. A Feminist Perspective.

*Ánfora*, 30(54). 136-160.

<https://doi.org/10.30854/anfv30.n54.2023.856>

Universidad Autónoma de Manizales. L-ISSN 0121-6538.

E-ISSN 2248-6941.

CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

## Abstract

**Objective:** One of the objectives of this research was to highlight that in the Latin American region the dominant care regime is family-based, with women carrying the -household chores (in comparison to males). The role of public interventions is to facilitate subsidies. **Methodology:** Discussing care policies leads to theorizing that has roots in Nordic countries and is based on wellbeing theories, therefore its applicability to Latin America continues to be a topic of discussion. This literature review is positioned from feminist theory – especially from care economy – by presenting authors who question care policies from a standpoint of logic that goes beyond welfare theories and interconnects with feminism. **Results:** An analysis of care policies was carried out based on the basic concepts proposed by the economist Shahra Razavi as the “care diamond,” understood as those institutions involved in providing care to population groups that demand it. This meant providing an estimate of which institutions in Latin

---

\* Master in Social Policy, Master in Latin American, Caribbean, and Latino Studies. Institute of Latin American and Caribbean Studies, University of South Florida, Tampa, USA. [acetre@usf.edu](mailto:acetre@usf.edu)



America provide most of the care. **Conclusions:** Strengthen the region's health policies by broadening their overall perspective is important, as well as understanding them as a collection of programs that cover everything from providing basic infrastructure and health measures to ensuring workers' rights in the labor market, such as through maternity and paternity licenses among other measures. To ensure care as a component of human rights and the sustainability of human life, numerous collective actions must be taken.

**Keywords:** care policies; care economy; welfare theories; feminisms; family regime.

## Resumen

**Objective:** uno de los objetivos que se tuvieron con la presente investigación fue destacar que en la región latinoamericana el régimen de cuidado que domina es de corte familista, donde quienes llevan la carga de cuidado son las mujeres (en comparación con los hombres) y el rol de las intervenciones públicas se enfoca en facilitar un subsidio. **Metodología:** hablar de políticas de cuidado conduce a acceder a construcciones teóricas con raíces en países nórdicos que parten de las teorías de bienestar, por lo que su aplicabilidad en la región latinoamericana sigue siendo un debate en construcción. La presente revisión de literatura se posiciona desde la teoría feminista —en especial, desde la economía de cuidado— al presentar autoras que cuestionen las políticas de cuidados desde una lógica que va más allá de las teorías de bienestar interconectándose con el feminismo. **Resultados:** se realizó un análisis de las políticas de cuidado partiendo de los conceptos básicos propuestos por la economista Shahra Razavi como el 'diamante de cuidado', entendido como aquellas instituciones involucradas en brindar cuidados a grupos de población que son demandantes de estos. Esto significó ofrecer una aproximación sobre cuál es la principal institución proveedora de cuidados en América Latina. **Conclusiones:** se destaca la necesidad de fortalecer las políticas de cuidado en la región ampliando su visión de manera integral, entendiéndolas como un conjunto de programas que van desde proporcionar infraestructura básica y medidas de saneamiento hasta garantizar derechos en el mercado laboral, como son las licencias de maternidad y paternidad, entre otras medidas. Muchas acciones conjuntas se deben realizar para poder garantizar el cuidado como parte de los derechos humanos y el sustento de la vida humana.

**Palabras clave:** políticas de cuidado; economía de cuidado; teorías de bienestar; feminismos; régimen familista.

## Resumo

**Objetivo:** um dos objetivos desta pesquisa foi destacar que na região da América Latina o regime de cuidado dominante é o familiar, onde o fardo do cuidado é suportado pelas mulheres (em oposição aos homens) e o papel das intervenções públicas é focado na concessão de subsídios. **Metodologia:** falar de políticas de cuidado leva ao acesso a construções teóricas enraizadas nos países nórdicos que se baseiam em teorias de bem-estar, de modo que sua aplicabilidade na região da América Latina ainda é um debate em construção. Esta revisão da literatura é posicionada com base na teoria feminista - especialmente a economia do cuidado - apresentando autores que questionam as políticas de cuidado a partir de uma lógica que vai além das teorias de bem-estar e se interconecta com o feminismo. **Resultados:** uma análise das políticas de cuidado foi realizada com base nos conceitos básicos propostos pelo economista Shahra Razavi como o "diamante de cuidado", entendido como as instituições envolvidas na prestação de cuidados a grupos populacionais que os demandam. Isto significou oferecer uma aproximação da qual é a principal instituição provedora de cuidados na América Latina. **Conclusões:** é destacada a necessidade de fortalecer as políticas de cuidado na região, ampliando sua visão de forma abrangente, entendendo-as como um conjunto de programas que vão desde o fornecimento de infra-estrutura básica e medidas sanitárias até a garantia de direitos no mercado de trabalho, como a licença maternidade e paternidade, entre outras medidas. Muitas ações conjuntas devem ser tomadas a fim de garantir o cuidado como parte dos direitos humanos e o sustento da vida humana.

**Palavras chave:** políticas de cuidados; economia dos cuidados; teorias de bem-estar; feminismos; regime familiar.

## Introduction

When discussing care policies globally and at the regional level (Latin America), several issues must be kept in mind. Above all, there are two aspects that are crucial and cannot be ignored: first, care policies are still in the early stages of theoretical development. In this sense, authors such as Esquivel (2011a; 2011b; 2013), Esquivel and Kaufmann (2017), Folbre (2006; 2008), Razavi (2007; 2016), and Elson (2017) are correct and affirm that care policies are complex realities in Latin American countries. Second, when it comes to performing a thorough analysis that considers various realities, encounters a serious inconvenience. This is due to a lack of structured statistical information at the rural level and a lack of systematized metropolitan statistics.

In this initial setting, understanding that a literature review is a component of a state that requires construction and reconstruction is important. Strictly speaking, there is much to be done. Because of this, certain United Nations agencies have emphasized the idea of “care policies” and how it relates to women’s economic autonomy. Indeed, the UN assembly in the so-called “Beijing Platform for Action of 1995” invited countries to make efforts to account for the invisible work carried out by women in their households (UN Women 2014). This international mechanism calls for recognition of the structural barriers that unequally affect women and calls on States to take joint actions to guarantee women greater autonomy – including economic autonomy. From 2000, this led to the creation of various proposals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Today, there is the agenda 2030, also known as “the Sustainable Development Goals”.

## Methodology

The overall goal of the work is to conduct a literature review of authors who have approached care policy from a feminist perspective, particularly from the perspective of the care economy. To understand the dimension of care from other theoretical currents that emphasize the *ethos* of care, for example, works such as those of Berenice Fisher and Joan C. Tronto (1990), Tronto (1993), Pascale Molinier (2011), and Carol F. Gilligan (1982) stand out. From ecofeminism, such as sustaining the life of the planet or mother earth, the studies of Shiva Vandana (1995, 2006) and an experience for the Colombian case of the

Nasa community and the liberation of mother earth review López-Camacho (2021) and, from an anthropological view, the works of Pérez-Bustos (2018), Rosaldo (1980) and Pérez-Bustos *et al.* (2014) can be identified.

Additionally, by reviewing the overall academic results that have advanced in some of the region's countries, it was determined that the region's childcare policies are family-centered, meaning that women are primarily responsible for childcare inside of homes. The literary review combines various methods. The figures provided are the results of research advanced by statistical agencies of each of the States and other highly prestigious sources, such as the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) (United Nations and ECLAC, 2016; 2017; Ponte and Nicole-Calderón, 2018; ECLAC, 2010).

In this order of ideas, elements that comprise the literature on care policies in the Latin American panorama are introduced, starting from the theories of the welfare state, translated in the feminist literature as “care regimes” to expose existing programs in the region and, finally, to record conclusions and recommendations.

## Theoretical Review

### Welfare States and Care Policies

At the end of the 1980s, states of wellbeing theories started to emerge in European countries. One of the most well-known works is Gosta Esping-Andersen (2002). According to this author, governments not only guarantee citizens' legal rights but also their general wellbeing. States are not the only ones to assume this role, but there are a series of entities or institutions – such as families, the market, and even non-governmental organizations (NGOs) – that can take on the responsibility of providing welfare. In his book *Why We Need a New Welfare State?*, Esping-Andersen (2002) analyzes the role of families as one of the main sources of care toward welfare demands, as the following quote shows:

The family can theoretically absorb market failures, just like the government can; similarly, the market (or the government) can make up for family failure. Where neither is able to substitute for the 'failure' in the other two, it is when we encounter an acute welfare crisis or deficit. (Esping-Andersen, 2002, p. 11).

The role of families as a primary source of care is part of the advancements that feminist theory, and within that the care economy, postulate as the branch of the economy that invites discussion on how much time women devote to domestic activities. According to economist Valeria Esquivel (2013), caring for others creates value that is regarded as productive or economic but is undetectable to standard estimates of the growth in the country's internal gross domestic product (GDP). It involves raising the topic of economic responsibility with a gendered focus as a naturalized and accepted duty in society in academic and political discourse. In this perspective, the states of well-being will first be described from the perspective of Nordic countries, and then a feminist analysis will be provided. Finally, the study ends in the Latin American context, which will be addressed in another section.

The theory of the welfare state is founded by European countries where conditions began to be developed for full employment of citizens in exchange for agricultural subsidies. This situation occurred especially in countries like Norway and Sweden, where agriculture was very precarious and state aid was necessary (Esping-Andersen, 1990). Likewise, within the literature review, and according to Esping-Andersen (1990) in his article "The Three Political Economies of the Welfare State," three welfare states are identified (pp. 96-99):

- The first is the systemic (or structuralist) theory, given the pre-industrial advance of societies where entities such as the family, the church, etc. are displaced by modernization and urbanization. Welfare states in these scenarios are necessary as means of managing collective goods and will promote their growth using means such as bureaucracy.
- The second approach is institutional, criticized for being socialist in nature. In this, the role of the State is to compensate for market failures.
- The last approach is the so-called 'social democratic' one. As an obligation, the State provides resources for the salaried society and, therefore, strengthens the labor movement.

Feminists such as the sociologist Sainsbury (1999) perform a critical review of the Social Democratic Welfare State, a regime where the costs of care of children, the elderly and the defenseless are subsidized through the strong participation of the State. However, feminist criticism questions the Esping-Andersen (1990) model incorporating the gender analysis that

emphasizes women who are left out of the labor market without receiving help from the State because they are doing unpaid care and domestic work. Based on this, Sainsbury (1999) builds a proposal to understand the connection between regimes and gender roles, as can be seen in Table 1:

**Table 1.** *Three Gender Policy Regimes.*

Regime Attributes	Male Breadwinner	Gender Roles	Individual Caregiver
Ideology	Strict division of labor	Strict division of labor	Shared tasks
	Husband = salaried person	Husband = salaried person	Father = wage earner- caregiver
	Wife = caregiver	Wife = caregiver	Mother = wage earner-caregiver
Rights	Inequality between spouses	Differentiation by gender roles	Equitable
Principles of Rights	The principle of maintenance	Family responsibilities	Citizenship or residency
Benefit Recipients	Head of household	Men as household providers	Individual
	Add-on for dependents	Women as caregivers	
Taxation	Joint taxation	Joint taxation	Separate taxation
	Deductions for dependents	Deductions for dependents for both partners	Equal Tax Relief
Labor and Salary Policies	Prioritization toward the man	Prioritization toward the man	Aimed at both genders
Sphere of Care	Mainly private	Mainly private	Strong state presence

Regime Attributes	Male Breadwinner	Gender Roles	Individual Caregiver
Care Work	Unpaid	Payment to caregivers for the home	Payment of caregivers at home and outside of it

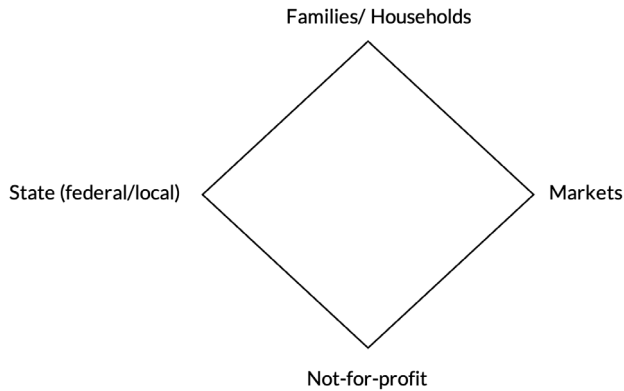
Source: Sainsbury (1999, p. 78 [author's translation])

The table above analyzes three models. The first is the model that makes the role of care within the home invisible, known as the male-breadwinner or male-supported family. Its emphasis is on the fact that it privileges men in terms of labor rights, such as pensions, and exempts them from assuming care work. Second, in the regime of gender roles or sexual division of labor, unlike the male provider model, women receive care benefits through the private sphere; that is, they hire a third person to take care of the home. However, this type of policy continues to prioritize men because they are the main providers of income. Finally, in the salaried-caregiver model, women and men are sources of income and policies allow both women and men to be workers/caregivers. In this third model, a strong presence of the State is noted to provide care services for any population group that requires it.

### Understanding the Logic of Care Policies

Following the third model, the salaried-caregiver regime, the term “care policies” is introduced which is part of the feminist proposal that looks at welfare regimes critically. In the words of Standing (cited by Razavi, 2007), to overcome gender bias deeply rooted in social protection systems and make citizenship truly inclusive, care must become a dimension of citizenship at the level of rights equal to those linked to paid work. This is expressed in the following figure, known as the “Diamond of Care”:

Figure 1. *Diamond of Care.*



Source: Razavi (2007, p. 21).

According to Razavi (2007), care diamonds are those institutions involved in providing care. In them families/households, markets, the public sector, and the non-profit sector would include voluntary and community provision of care. According to the same author, the diamonds of care in developing countries are the families that assume a role of care at a more dominant level, while other institutions (such as the State, community organizations, and markets) play a secondary role in the provision of care. In this sense, it is important to highlight the role of care policies, which are those services that come from the State to even the balance of care among all the actors of the diamond so that families are not overloaded.

According to Esquivel (2013), talking about care policies from a Latin American perspective implies understanding social protection and the availability of necessary care to guarantee social wellbeing. In this sense, common income transfers do not include money for care, but instead, aim to provide income that supports the consumption of the basic basket of minimum goods and services, which does not include care (implying a broader sense of thinking about social protection). Based on this discussion, Esquivel and Kaufmann (2017) propose four subgroups of care policies:

1. *Care services* which redistribute part of the workload of caregivers from the private to the public sector: early childhood care and development services, more care services for sick people, people with disabilities and older adults.



2. *Relevant infrastructure for care* that reduces the workload of women, such as: obtaining water, sanitation, and purchasing energy.
3. *Social protection policies* involving policies like cash transfer programs and public works programs.
4. *Labor market policies* including maternity benefits and parental leave. (p. 7).

Speaking of a *comprehensive* care policy, the ECLAC research carried out by María Nieves Rico and Claudia Robles (2018) is added. This work recounts care policies that, following the line of Esquivel and Kaufmann (2017), promote gender equality and women's autonomy. The proposals are a combination of measures. In the first place, they incorporate parental leaves that do not place the responsibility of care exclusively on women but instead, share it with their partners. Secondly, although monetary transfers are part of the policy, they are not the center of it, since they reinforce caregiving roles toward women. Regarding monetary transfers, Puyana Villamizar (2018) argues that in this type of social programs that are created to facilitate care work, the States reinforce policies based on the naturalized traditional roles of women as the main caregivers for generations.

Understanding the idea of care policies is a definition that goes beyond the standardized ideas of social protection measures. Care policies focus on the effect on gender roles and stereotypes that promote the patriarchal idea that women should be the first care providers, staying home to meet the demand for care or family networks. Pribble (2006) suggests that while some welfare regimes reproduce traditional gender roles, other systems provide women with opportunities to reduce their reliance on being primary caregivers in sectors such as the private/market and family. On the other hand, women's unpaid domestic and care work is becoming increasingly recognizable as part of any social protection system and raises awareness of their shared responsibility within the home.

## Latin American Scenario of Care Policies

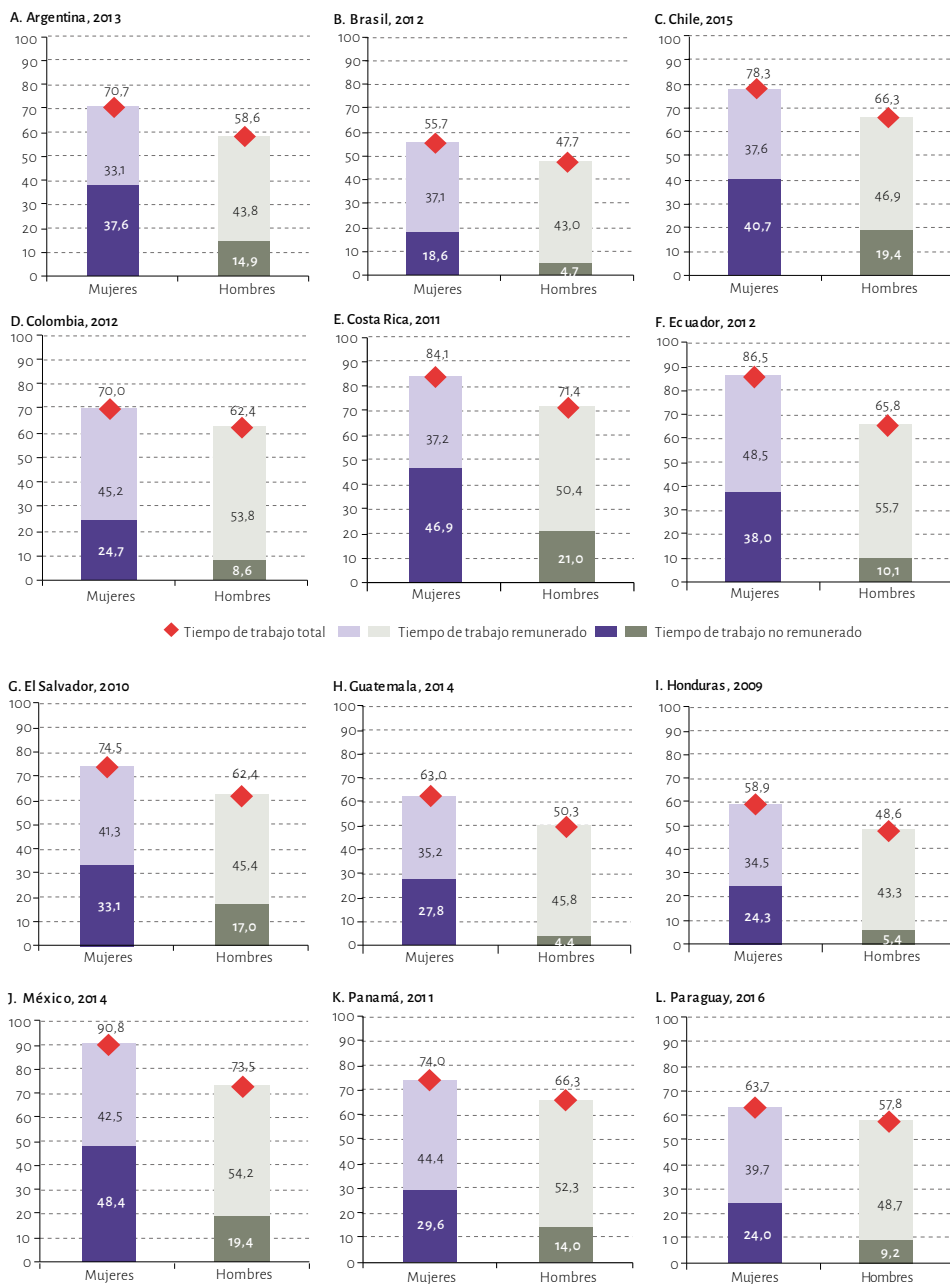
The “Action platform” adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in September 1995 exposed how millions of people in the world continue to live in poverty and the majority are women. In the same way, studies carried out in 1977 by Clair Vickery point out how time poverty is based on the idea that poor working men and women (compared to those who are not poor) need to spend more hours doing paid work if they want to guarantee enough income to rise above the poverty line. Only based on these longer hours can they buy a basket of goods that allows them a minimum level of consumption.

Vickery (1977) argues that governments calculate the minimum “economic food basket” assuming that there is enough time left after such long hours of paid work to do the necessary domestic work (turning purchased goods into meals, for example). In this context, studies by the United Nations and ECLAC indicate that poverty is structural and is an issue that directly affects women and has a double impact depending on how they can organize their time. As part of the determinants to combat it, they propose the following:

If policies are not formulated from the beginning with a gender perspective, considering the sexual division of labor, discrimination and the access barriers that women face in the labor market, they may be ineffective in achieving their objectives. (United Nations and ECLAC, 2016, pp. 42-43).

In the same way, an ECLAC report (Ponte and Nicole-Calderón, 2018) highlights the problem of gender inequality in the way in which the time that women dedicate to paid work is distributed, as well as to domestic and housework, i.e., unpaid care. In all the countries of the region, the burden of care is assumed by women. This can be seen in Figure 2, where purple and dark gray represent the weekly hours that women and men, respectively, spend on unpaid domestic and care work:

**Figure 2. Total of Paid and Unpaid Work Time of the Employed Population Aged 15 and over in Latin America (12 Countries) by Sex (per Weekly Hours).**



Source: (2018, p. 77) Ponte & Nicole-Calderón.

Understanding part of the challenges overview that the region presents to achieve greater gender equality requires seeing what type of wellbeing regime is in force. According to that, the feminist critique of wellbeing regimes in Latin America, such as the study carried out by Soledad Salvador (2007) in countries such as Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Uruguay, highlights that the predominant type is the “familist”<sup>1</sup> with the bias of the “male support,” where the family is protective and responsible for the well-being of its members. The system assumes that, thanks to the income insured through the man, the family can take over most of the wellbeing functions.

To understand the familistic system model a little more, feminist academics such as Sarraceno and Sainsbury (cited in Salvador, 2007) emphasize two predominant typical models: familistic and defamilization. In the familistic system, the main responsibility for wellbeing falls on families and women in kinship networks. Public interventions have a subsidiary character. When women work in the world of the market, they develop different strategies to articulate the juggling between work and family. In the defamilization system there is a derivation of care toward public institutions and the market. This depends on the impact of state services, the scope of market services, and the participation of families and informal networks.

According to Pribble (2006), changes in the family structure have occurred due to the increase in the divorce rate and the increase in single-parent households (generally headed by women). In addition, it affirms that no State in the Latin American region provides wellbeing to citizens and concludes that Latin American social policy tends to vary with respect to the strength of the model of the male provider. In this area, the academic Martínez Franzoni (2008) analyzed the prevailing wellbeing states in Latin America using six indicators to measure the level of correlation of the defamilization model. The study determined the differences between the countries relating to the presence of the State or the role of the families that assume the roles of care, as well as making two main findings: first, the systems in Latin America need the support of the families and, within these, of women due to the lack of social policies and the strong presence of the informal market that does not guarantee the rights of workers; second, in his analysis of indicators, which divided the Latin American countries

---

1. Due to sociodemographic and employment issues, in countries of the region this family model dominates. However, other authors such as Cienfuegos (2014) in “Family trends in Latin America: Differences and interlinking” mentions a transition from the breadwinner model to the model of two people working – men as well as women – inside the home:

Now in 2005 this model saw its presence weakened and constituted 34% of nuclear families, 24.6% of all families and 20.9% of homes (Arriagada, 2007). The idea of a transition of the region toward a family model of two providers has even been postulated, which would be explained fundamentally due to the incorporation of women into the labor market. (Sunkel, 2006, p. 20).

into groups, for the third cluster – which includes countries such as Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Colombia, Venezuela, Peru and the Dominican Republic – Martínez Franzoni (2008 ) states the following:

The third group, population depends largely on family arrangements since social public policies are inadequate or non-existent. This cluster is a true family wellbeing system. As the system becomes more informal, it is considered necessary to further investigate public policies and consider defamilization as a central dimension of wellbeing. (p.89).

The Martínez Franzoni (2008) study states the idea that talking about a wellbeing system was a utopia in the Latin American context. It also emphasizes that the bridges between the analysis and design of wellbeing systems in the region are still quite weak.

In this order, the familistic system reinforces gender roles and makes gaps grow, promoting greater inequality. Alternatively, analyzing the wellbeing system in the region invites understanding how social programs are built. According to Martínez Franzoni and Sánchez-Ancochea (2013), countries with universal social programs (including childcare) facilitate the incorporation of women into the labor market.

To end this section, the research by Puyana Villamizar (2018) studies the Colombian case with the More Families in Action social program, which restrict the delivery of the subsidy through the mothers, “[...] who generally tend to distribute household income toward food consumption, education and health” (p. 259). The conclusions of this, Puyana Villamizar demonstrates the lack of a gender approach in this social program due to its maternal essence, since it reproduces the traditional roles of care at home and lacks a vision to enhance the role of women as citizens.

## **Current Debates on Care Policy in the Region**

The care services agenda in the region demands a double or triple challenge to move toward a context of social inclusion. For example, in the rural context, the International Labor Office describes those rural women:

[...] often spend less time on average than men in the paid labor market, while they are largely responsible for collecting water and fuel, food preparation, household chores, childcare, and sick and elderly care. (FAO, IFAD e ILO, 2010, p. 17).

These questions arise from a partial understanding of rural dimension challenges: how can more inclusive policies that embrace rural context within its multiculturalism be created? How can sensitivities to the different ethnic groups that comprise the region be enhanced, and attention be focused on the needs of those groups? These concerns should be included in future research that seeks answers to the growing debates around care policies from a broader geographic coverage and social inclusion perspective.

The main trends in the region, according to Valeria Esquivel and Andrea Kaufmann (2017), who compiled the main advances in social public policies for the empowerment of women, can be seen in the following Table:

**Table 2.** *Politics of Care.*

Region		Latin America and the Caribbean
Context	Main trends and issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— High inequality in incomes</li> <li>— Mild poverty</li> <li>— Early demographic transition</li> <li>— Economic slowdown</li> <li>— High social protection coverage</li> </ul>
	Cash transfer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Conditional cash transfers, generalized despite their disadvantages for women</li> <li>— The conditionalities work with public policies</li> </ul>
Protection and Social Care	Public jobs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Few programs on public works</li> <li>— If they are implemented, they have a high participation of women and most of the time include the provision of childcare services</li> </ul>

*Note.* Taken from Esquivel & Kaufmann (2017).

The current overview of care policies indicates that the cash transfer program is a pioneer in “poverty reduction” among women. As was previously analyzed, these types of programs cover the requirements of a basic food basket but are not focused on comprehensive care. Thanks to the results of the *Time Use Survey* and satellite accounts, to talk about care policies implies estimating the volume of unpaid work to the provision of goods and services that the State

should invest in health, education, transportation, water, sanitation, and care for children and other population groups requiring care.

In relation to childcare initiatives, there have been legislative advances in maternity and paternity leave that have been made in the region. See Table 3:

**Table 3.** *Care Laws Approved in Latin America & the Caribbean between 2015 and 2017 (12 Countries).*

Country	Year	Name	Content
Anguilla	2015	<i>Labor Code</i>	Details the right to maternity leave, the right to equal pay for men and women, and special conditions to be safeguarded for pregnant women.
Bolivia (Plurinational State of Bolivia)	2015	Supreme Decree No. 2480: Universal Prenatal Subsidy for Life.	Establishes a Universal Prenatal Subsidy for Life for pregnant women who are not registered in any short-term social security management entity to improve maternal health and lower neonatal mortality.
Brazil	2016	Law No. 13.257	Establishes provisions for public policies on early childhood, including early childhood care.
Chile	2016	Law No. 20.891	Perfects the right to postnatal parental leave and the right to a nursery for civil servants.
Colombia	2017	Law No. 1.822	An increase in the length of parental leave.

Country	Year	Name	Content
Cuba	2017	Decree Law No. 339: Female Workers' Maternity	Grants rights to mothers and fathers working in the state sector to foster co-responsibility in caregiving.
	2017	Decree No. 340: Amendments to the Special Social Security Schemes regarding Maternity Protection	Recognition of social security benefits during a period of disability.
Ecuador	2016	Organic Law for the Promotion of Youth Labor, Exceptional Regulation of Working Hours, Unemployment and Unemployment Insurance.	Extension of length of maternity leave
El Salvador	2016	Decree No. 143: Reform of the Labor Code	Extension of lengths of maternity leave and advance payment.
Paraguay	2015	Law No. 5. 508: Promotion, Maternity Protection and Support to Breastfeeding.	Extension of length of maternity leave
Perú	2015	Law No. 30367: Protecting Working Mothers against Arbitrary Dismissals and Extension of their Rest Period	Extension of lengths of maternity leave and labor protection
	2015	Legislative Resolution No. 30312, approving Maternity Protection Convention No. 183 of the International Labor Organization, 2000.	Maternity Protection Convention
Turks and Caicos Islands	2015	<i>Employment Bill</i>	Details the period of length of maternity leave.
Uruguay	2015	Law No. 19,353: National Integrated Care System (SNIC)	Creation of the National Integrated Care System (SNIC)

Source: Ponte & Nicole-Calderón (2018, p. 155).



Finally, care policies from a more comprehensive perspective remains under debate. Numerous collective actions must be taken to guarantee it care as part of human rights and the sustenance of human life. Achieving gender equality as part of women's autonomy is related to social programs and projects focused on public infrastructure, flexible working conditions that allow families to balance paid and unpaid work, and social protection policies with a gender focus. The list could be even longer. These initiatives are part of the minimal requirements to discuss women's economic empowerment.

Lastly, to understand those realities from geographic areas is an academic, political, and social requirement. In this author's opinion, rural women are a very vulnerable group because they have limited access to care and care services, among other deficiencies (e.g., basic infrastructure). If most of them are part of informal work networks and live with high financial instability, they constitute an extremely vulnerable group that needs greater assistance from the State. Understanding the realities of women's rural experiences in Latin America should be part of any feminist agenda for social inclusion.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

Noting that care policies in the region have prioritized monetary transfers is important. It has led to the reinforcement of the roles of sexual division of unpaid care work, it leaves apart a gender perspective to address care in a more comprehensive way and advances in proposals such as those presented by Esquivel and Kaufmann (2017). It is concluded that in the region a family-based care system prevails, there is a real burden of unpaid work assumed by families. To think about program or policy initiatives, various modalities could be included, since the facilitation of a minimum income to cover a basic food basket until the integration of other elements such as care services that include day centers assistance to any population group that demands it; and above all, still supporting parental leave to encourage the couple's shared responsibility in the duty of care. The main goal is to promote the *comprehensive agenda* of care policy, as has been discussed.

This leads to stating a work proposal for future research focused on care, not only as it has been done in urban analysis, but also considering the rural scenario from its cosmovision. Likewise, this research also proposes that other measures be considered, as will be seen below:

To understand the complexity of the situation of rural women, analyzing proposals from black feminism, such as Kimberlé Crenshaw's (1989) theory of intersectionality, that question hegemonic categories of power such

as: “ethnicity,” “race,” “gender,” “socioeconomic status,” “nationality,” and “geographic position,” among others is essential. For example, mixing these categories would invite a focused and racialized analysis of care policies that the region does not have yet. In this sense, feminist critics, such as Brisolará and Seigart (2012), consider that Latin American feminism is still concentrated in the elites of white, middle-class women of European descent, who have often been privileged. Based on that supposition the following questions arise: from what scenarios are feminist policies for rural areas being considered? Are the demands of rural women in Latin America really known? Who creates them and with what criteria is the definition of rural women made? These questions can be elements for analysis in future research.

Additionally, there is a call to approach care from decolonial feminism, where there is a growing critique in understanding how the gender roles of the male provider and female caregiver were imposed by the colonizers. Among the scholars who analyze this hegemonic colonizing model, Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui (2010) is recommended, who highlights the examples of Bolivian women who adopted these family patterns. Likewise, María Lugones (2007) states the influence of colonialism in familiar roles. Thus, it is possible to explore different analyses in search of the decolonization of care policies in Latin America and to propose new agendas from the region.

The literature review revealed a strong critique of a welfare model of Esping-Andersen (1990; 2002). From a feminist perspective, it is recommended that future studies delve more deeply into the subject and examine to what extent this theory is applicable in the Latin American context.

Choosing a population segment to analyze care policies, early childhood, adolescents, the elderly, and people with disabilities, among others is recommended. Likewise, this approach suggests advancing the state of the art at the Latin American level to consolidate minimum agreements on concepts such as “care economy,” “domestic work,” “unpaid care,” “care policies,” and other relevant instruments to make comparative analyses between countries, population groups and geographic dimension.

Lastly, the author invites analyzing other currents of thought to understand the politics of care from philosophy and psychology as they were not addressed in this literature review but have also been working on postulates from the *ethos* of care. Thus, connections could be made, and the debate could be fostered with terms such as “women’s economic autonomy.” These concepts must be grounded in the reality of women in their diversity and their own worldviews. It would be an interesting exercise to carry out to the available statistical information.

## References

- Brisolará, S. & Seigart, D. (2012). Feminist evaluation research. In S. N. Hesse-Biber (Ed.), *Handbook of feminist research: Theory and praxis* (pp. 290-312). SAGE.
- CEPAL & the Secretaría de Políticas para las Mujeres. (2010, 13 a 16 de julio). *¿Qué Estado para qué igualdad? XI Conferencia Regional sobre la Mujer de América Latina y el Caribe*. [https://www.cepal.org/sites/default/files/publication/files/16656/S1000327\\_es.pdf](https://www.cepal.org/sites/default/files/publication/files/16656/S1000327_es.pdf).
- Cienfuegos, J. (2014). Tendencias familiares en América Latina: diferencias y entrelazamientos. *Notas de Población*, 41(99), 11-36. [https://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/37632/np99011037\\_es.pdf?sequene](https://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/37632/np99011037_es.pdf?sequene)
- Crenshaw, K. (1989). Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics. *University of Chicago Legal Forum*, 1, 139-167. <https://chicagounbound.uchicago.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1052&context=uclf>.
- Elson, D. (2017). Recognize, Reduce, and Redistribute Unpaid Care Work: How to Close the Gender Gap. *New Labor Forum*, 26(2), 52-61. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1095796017700135>
- Esping-Andersen, G. (1990). The Three Political Economies of the Welfare State. *International Journal of Sociology*, 20(3), 92-123. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20630041>
- Esping-Andersen, G. (2002). Towards the Good Society, Once Again? En G. Esping-Andersen (Ed.), *Why We Need a New Welfare State* (pp. 1-25). Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/0199256438.003.0001>
- Esquivel, V. (2011a). *The Care Economy in Latin America: Putting Care at the Centre of the Agenda*. "Undoing Knots: Innovating for Change". United Nations Development Programme, Booklet No 2. PNUD.

- Esquivel, V. (2011b). Sixteen Years after Beijing: What are the New Policy Agendas for Time-Use Data Collection? *Feminist Economics*, 17(4), 215-238. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13545701.2011.616947>
- Esquivel, V. (2013). *Care in households and communities. Background paper on conceptual issues*. Oxfam Research Reports. Oxfam. <https://policy-practice.oxfam.org/resources/care-in-households-and-communities-background-paper-on-conceptual-issues-302287/>.
- Esquivel, V., Faur, E. & Jelin, E. (2012). Hacia la conceptualización del cuidado: familia, mercado y Estado. En V. Esquivel, E. Faur y E. Jelin (Eds.), *Las lógicas del cuidado infantil. Entre las familias, el Estado y el mercado* (pp. 11-43). IDES.
- Esquivel, V. & Kaufmann, A. (2017). *Innovations in Care. New Concepts, New Actors, New Policies*. Friedrich Ebert Stiftung. <http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/iez/13282.pdf>.
- Fisher, B. & Tronto, J. (1990). Toward a Feminist Theory of Caring. En E. K. Abel y M. K. Nelson (Eds.), *Circles of Care: Work and Identity in Women's Lives* (pp. 36-54). SUNY Press.
- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) y International Labour Office (ILO). (2010). *Gender Dimensions of Agricultural and Rural Employment: Differentiated Pathways out of Poverty: Status, Trends and Gaps*. FAO. <http://www.fao.org/3/i1638e/i1638e.pdf>.
- Folbre, N. (2006). Measuring Care: Gender, Empowerment, and the Care Economy. *Journal of Human Development*, 7(2), 183-199. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14649880600768512>.
- Folbre, N. (2008). *Valuing children: Rethinking the economics of the family*. Harvard University Press.
- Gilligan, C. (1982). *In a different voice: Psychological theory and women's development*. Harvard University Press.

- López-Camacho, A. (2021). La liberación de la Madre Tierra: Más que la toma de un territorio. *Anfora*, 28(51), 93–114. <https://doi.org/10.30854/anf.v28.n51.2021.783>
- Lugones, M. (2007). Toward a Decolonial Feminism. *Hypatia*, 25(4), 742–759. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1527-2001.2010.01137.x>.
- Martínez Franzoni, J. (2008). Welfare Regimes in Latin America: Capturing Constellations of Markets, Families, and Policies. *Latin American Politics and Society*, 50(2), 67–100. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1548-2456.2008.00013.x>.
- Martínez Franzoni, J. & Sánchez-Ancochea, D. (2013). Can Latin American Production Regimes Complement Universalistic Welfare Regimes? Implications from the Costa Rican Case. *Latin American Research Review*, 48(2), 148–173. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/43670080>.
- Molinier, P. (2011). Antes que todo, el cuidado es un trabajo. En L. G. Arango y P. Moliner (Eds.), *El trabajo y la ética del cuidado* (pp. 45–64). La Carreta Editores.
- Naciones Unidas & CEPAL. (2016). *Autonomía de las mujeres e igualdad en la agenda de desarrollo sostenible*. CEPAL. [https://www.cepal.org/sites/default/files/publication/files/40633/S1601248\\_es.pdf](https://www.cepal.org/sites/default/files/publication/files/40633/S1601248_es.pdf)
- Naciones Unidas & CEPAL. (2017). *40 años de agenda regional de género*. CEPAL. <https://www.cepal.org/es/publicaciones/40333-40-anos-agenda-regional-genero>.
- ONU Mujeres. (2014) *Declaración y plataforma de acción de Beijing. Declaración política y documentos resultados de Beijing+5* (obra original publicada en 1995). ONU Mujeres. [https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/CSW/BPA\\_S\\_Final\\_WEB.pdf](https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/CSW/BPA_S_Final_WEB.pdf).
- Pérez-Bustos, T. (2018). El *ethos* del cuidado en la producción de conocimiento, una aproximación desde la antropología feminista al campo científico. En L. G. Arango Gaviria, A. A. Urquijo, T. Pérez-Bustos y J. Pineda Duque (Eds.), *Género y cuidado: Teorías, escenarios y políticas* (pp. 50–69). Universidad Nacional de Colombia; Pontificia Universidad Javeriana; Universidad de los Andes.

- Pérez-Bustos, T., Olarte, M. F. & Diaz del Castillo, A. (2014). Working with Care: Experiences of Invisible Women Scientist Practicing Forensic Genetics in Colombia. En E. Medina, I. Marques y C. Holmes (Eds.), *Beyond Imported Magic: Essays on Science, and Technology in Latin America* (pp. 67-83). The MIT Press.
- Ponte, B. & C. Nicole-Calderón. (2018). *Los cuidados en América Latina y el Caribe. Textos seleccionados 2007-2018*. CEPAL. <https://www.cepal.org/es/publicaciones/44361-cuidados-america-latina-caribe-textos-seleccionados-2007-2018>.
- Pribble, J. (2006). Women and Welfare: The Politics of Coping with New Social Risks in Chile and Uruguay. *Latin American Research Review*, 41(2), 84–111. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3874670>.
- Puyana Villamizar, Y. (2018) Entre el asistencialismo y los derechos de las mujeres: un análisis de la justicia de género del programa Más Familias en Acción en Colombia. En L. G. Arango Gaviria, A. A. Urquijo, T. Pérez-Bustos y J. Pineda Duque (Eds.), *Género y cuidado: Teorías, escenarios y políticas* (pp. 253-272). Universidad Nacional de Colombia; Pontificia Universidad Javeriana; Universidad de los Andes.
- Razavi, S. (2007). *The political and social economy of care in a development context: Conceptual issues, research questions and policy options*. Programme on Gender and Development, Paper No 3. UNRISD.
- Razavi, S. (2016). The 2030 Agenda: Challenges of implementation to attain gender equality and women's rights. *Gender & Development*, 24(1), 25-41. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13552074.2016.1142229>
- Rico, M. & Robles, C. (2016). *Políticas de cuidado en América Latina: Forjando la igualdad*. CEPAL. <https://www.cepal.org/es/publicaciones/40628-politicas-cuidado-america-latina-forjando-la-igualdad>.
- Rivera Cusicanqui, S. (2010). The Notion of “Rights” and the Paradoxes of Postcolonial Modernity. Indigenous Peoples and Women in Bolivia. *Qui Parle: Critical Humanities and Social Sciences*, 18(2), 29-54. <https://doi.org/10.5250/quiparle.18.2.29>.

- Rosaldo, M. Z. (1980). The Use and Abuse of Anthropology: Reflections on Feminism and Cross-Cultural Understanding. *Signs*, 5(3), 389-417. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3173582>.
- Sainsbury, D. (1999). Gender and Social-Democratic Welfare States. En D. Sainsbury (Ed.), *Gender and Welfare State Regimes* (pp. 75-114). Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/0198294166.003.0004>.
- Salvador, S. (2007). *Estudio comparativo de la "economía del cuidado" en Argentina, Brasil, Chile, Colombia, México y Uruguay*. Capítulo Latinoamericano de la Red Internacional de Género y Comercio. <https://repositorio.unal.edu.co/bitstream/handle/unal/51458/comerciog%C3%A9neroyequidad.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>
- Shiva, V. (1995). *Abrazar la vida. Mujer, ecología y desarrollo*. Horas y Horas.
- Shiva, V. (2006): *Manifiesto para una democracia de la tierra. Justicia, sostenibilidad y paz*. Paidós.
- Tronto, J. (1993). *Moral Boundaries: A Political Argument for an Ethic of Care*. Routledge
- Vickery, C. (1977). The Time-Poor: A New Look at Poverty. *The Journal of Human Resources*, 12(1), 27-48. <https://doi.org/10.2307/145597>.

Cetré Castilblanco, A. (2023). Care Policies in Some Latin American Countries. A Feminist Perspective. *Ánfora*, 30(54). 136-160.  
<https://doi.org/10.30854/anf.v30.n54.2023.856>





Research  
— on other  
topics

Investigaciones en otras temáticas  
Pesquisa sobre outros tópicos

# Factors in the Educational Effectiveness of a Private University in Peru in times of Pandemic\*

*(English Version)*

Factores de la eficacia educativa de una universidad privada de Perú en tiempos de pandemia

Fatores na eficácia educacional de uma universidade privada no Peru em tempos de pandemia

*Received 21 March 2021. Accepted 29 June 2022.*

María Claudia Vidal Coronel\*\*

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6320-9165>

Perú

Alex Oswaldo Sánchez Huarcaya\*\*\*

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3902-5902>

Perú

› To cite this article:

Vidal Coronel, M. C.; Sánchez Huarcaya, A. (2023). Factors in the Educational Effectiveness of a Private University in Peru in times of Pandemic.

*Ánfora*, 30(54). 162-182.

<https://doi.org/10.30854/anfv30.n54.2023.868>

Universidad Autónoma de Manizales. L-ISSN 0121-6538.

E-ISSN 2248-6941.

CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

## Abstract

**Objective:** The focus of the current study is educational effectiveness. The purpose of this study was to describe the organizational factors related to the educational effectiveness of a private university in Peru during pandemic times. **Methods:** For this qualitative study, two categories were considered: “professor commitment and professional development” and “educational leadership.” A semistructured interviewing technique was used, along with a question guide that was validated by an educational administration expert and then applied to four academic coordinators from various

\* The research team behind this project is called “Aprendizaje, Innovación y Organizaciones Educativas”.

\*\* Post graduate student at the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, Bachelor's Degree in Management. [a20214678@pucp.pe](mailto:a20214678@pucp.pe)

\*\*\* Ph.D. in Educational Sciences. Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú. [aosanchezh@pucp.edu.pe](mailto:aosanchezh@pucp.edu.pe)

fields. The information collected was organized and examined using the *Open Coding* technique. **Results:** The respective analysis of the findings led to the conclusion that, although it is evident that the educational institution shows interest in and commitment to the professional development of professors—incentivizing their participation in training programs—it is perceived that a much more solid culture of lifelong learning still needs to be developed, since not all professors have shown the same interest and motivation toward their own training. **Conclusions:** Although it was discovered that the leader displays openness to creating collaborative spaces with key actors in the institution to gather information and make decisions that are geared toward improvement, it was also discovered that leadership is primarily focused on meeting administrative needs rather than pedagogical ones.

**Keywords:** educational effectiveness; learning; educational leadership; professional development.

## Resumen

**Objetivo:** el tema del presente estudio está enmarcado en la eficacia educativa. En esta investigación se tuvo como objetivo describir los factores organizacionales asociados a la eficacia educativa de una universidad privada de Perú en tiempos de pandemia. **Métodos:** para este estudio, de enfoque cualitativo, se consideraron dos categorías: ‘compromiso y desarrollo profesional docente’ y ‘liderazgo educativo’. Se empleó como técnica de investigación la entrevista semiestructurada y como instrumento la guía de preguntas, la cual fue validada por un especialista en gestión educativa y aplicada a cuatro coordinadores académicos de diferentes especialidades. La información recogida fue organizada y analizada usando la técnica del *Open Coding*. **Resultados:** el respectivo análisis de hallazgos permitió concluir que, si bien se evidencia que la Institución Educativa muestra interés y compromiso por el desarrollo profesional docente —incentivando la participación de los mismos en programas de capacitación—, se percibe que aún hace falta desarrollar una cultura de aprendizaje permanente mucho más sólida, ya que no todos los docentes han mostrado el mismo interés y motivación hacia su propia formación. **Conclusiones:** si bien se encontró que el líder muestra apertura para generar espacios colaborativos con actores claves de la institución con el fin de levantar información y tomar decisiones orientadas a la mejora, se evidenció que el liderazgo está centrado, principalmente, en responder requerimientos más administrativos que pedagógicos.

**Palabras clave:** eficacia educativa; aprendizaje; liderazgo educativo; desarrollo profesional.

## Resumo

**Objetivo:** o tema deste estudo está enquadrado no âmbito da eficácia educacional. O objetivo desta pesquisa foi descrever os fatores organizacionais associados à eficácia educacional de uma universidade privada no Peru em tempos de pandemia. **Métodos:** para este estudo qualitativo, foram consideradas duas categorias: 'compromisso dos professores e desenvolvimento profissional' e 'liderança educacional'. Uma entrevista semiestruturada foi utilizada como técnica de pesquisa e um guia de perguntas foi utilizado como instrumento, que foi validado por um especialista em gestão educacional e aplicado a quatro coordenadores acadêmicos de diferentes especialidades. As informações coletadas foram organizadas e analisadas utilizando a técnica de Codificação Aberta. **Resultados:** a respectiva análise dos resultados levou à conclusão de que, embora seja evidente que a instituição educacional demonstra interesse e compromisso com o desenvolvimento profissional dos professores - ao incentivar sua participação em programas de treinamento - percebe-se que ainda é necessário desenvolver uma cultura muito mais forte de aprendizagem ao longo da vida, pois nem todos os professores demonstraram o mesmo interesse e motivação para sua própria formação. **Conclusões:** embora se tenha constatado que o líder demonstra abertura para gerar espaços de colaboração com os principais atores da instituição a fim de coletar informações e tomar decisões visando melhorias, ficou evidente que a liderança se concentra principalmente em responder a exigências que são mais administrativas do que pedagógicas.

**Palavras chave:** eficácia educacional; aprendizagem; liderança educacional; desenvolvimento profissional.

## Introduction

According to López, cited by Alcántara (2007), the quality of higher education presents various concepts that highlight its complex, dynamic, and multidimensional nature; that is, its dimensions extend beyond the internal and into external spheres. According to Muñoz (cited in Alcántara, 2007), the significance of higher-quality education is largely dependent on these institutions' ability to carry out the societally assigned roles, which include those that are naturally academic, occupational, distributive, political, and cultural in nature. However, Tunnermann (cited in Alcántara, 2007) argues that the absence of an interconnected educational system between the various educational levels makes it impossible to speak of higher educational quality.

In Peru, the institutional licensing granted by the National Superintendence of Higher Education (Sunedu) guarantees that the country's universities comply with the basic conditions for offering educational services, resulting in a more organized university system that is more oriented toward continuous improvement. The fundamental conditions are a collection of minimal standards that together form a safety net for students, their families, and society as a whole.

## Conceptual Framework

According to Murillo (2003), two of the issues that have caused the most concern to educational effectiveness researchers are how much the institution influences the performance of its students and what generates differences between one organization and another. In response, the goal of the current article is to analyze the key elements of educational effectiveness, highlight their significance and key characteristics, and describe certain organizational factors that are related to them.

### Key Aspects of Educational Effectiveness

According to Murillo (2003) and Baez (1994), the educational efficacy studies emerge in response to Coleman's research, which contends that educational institutions have no bearing on students' academic performance. Following these findings, other researchers became interested in learning more

about the actual influence that organizations have on learning as well as the key characteristics that set these institutions apart.

When speaking of educational effectiveness, Mortimore (cited by Barba, 2006), agrees with Blanco (cited by Muñoz, 2010) and Murillo (2003) in referring to the capacity of educational institutions to ensure the integral development of each and every one of their students above what would be expected, considering their previous performance, improving their conditions, and compensating for the differences resulting from their social, cultural, and economic context and situation. This conceptualization proposal will conclude with three crucial characteristics that are detailed as follows:

- *Added value*: studies from Unesco (2008) and Gutiérrez and Chaparro (2017) support the idea that taking into account students' prior learning and sociocultural context is necessary to ensure they make progress. On the other hand, Fernández and Gonzáles (cited by Estévez, 2001) propose the use of statistical techniques to determine how the educational organization's performance changes over time and how this change affects the students' academic progress. He also mentions that this technique's goal is to determine which institutions are effective and which are not.
- *Principle of equity*: According to Barba (2006), education currently faces significant threats such as individualism and competitiveness, making it difficult for educational centers to establish themselves as social and cultural compensation systems. In this sense, a school cannot be effective if it is not fair and inclusive since it must support the growth of each and every one of its students while valuing diversity as a natural and desirable characteristic.
- *Concern for integral development*: the Department of Education, Culture, and Sports of the Government of the Canary Islands maintains that, in addition to good performance in compulsory disciplines, the aim is to develop training in values, interpersonal relationships, the development of self-concept, creative thinking and reflective and critical capacity. This is a concern that responds to a humanistic and socially committed approach. (Estévez, 2001).

According to the Unesco study (2008), the educational effectiveness movement has succeeded in restoring confidence in the educational system and in its potential to transform society, narrowing social differences and rethinking the principle of equal opportunities. In this sense, a school that "works better" for some students than for others is not effective; rather, it is discriminatory.

Along the same lines, Murillo (2003) points out that educational effectiveness has become the movement that has had the greatest influence on the design of educational policies and on decision-making in schools around the world, one of its main contributions being the change in the way education is seen, leading one to adopt a more positive view of it.

According to Murillo (2008), taking into account the findings from the various studies conducted, effective organizations are characterized by working toward a common goal, being structurally and culturally more united, and functioning as an organic system rather than as a collection of isolated elements. As well, Murillo and Krichesky (2014) assert that educational effectiveness identifies the factors that must be addressed in order to improve educational institutions. These factors are listed as follows:

- *Factors of entry*: include student characteristics like gender, prior academic performance, and family sociocultural situation, as well as professor characteristics like age and experience, and classroom characteristics like the number of students.
- *Process factors*: shared goals, educational leadership, institutional and classroom climate, high expectations, quality curriculum and teaching strategies, classroom organization, student monitoring and evaluation, professional development of professors, family involvement with the institution, and the resources the institution has.
- *Contextual factors*: characteristics of the educational system and the environment, and contextual characteristics of the center.

### **Organizational Factors Associated with Educational Effectiveness**

According to the studies cited by Fernández and González (1997), the most recent analyses of the factors of educational effectiveness are framed under a multilevel model, in which the characteristics of the student, classroom, center, and context are distinguished.

This article seeks to describe the organizational factors associated with educational effectiveness. For this, two factors have been selected: one, the commitment and professional development of professors; and the other, educational leadership. These are detailed as follows:

## **Professor Commitment and Professional Development.**

In the UNESCO publication (2008) the idea that the role of the professor is key has been confirmed, since they can collaborate and contribute to the personal and professional future of their students and, therefore, of society. In this sense, the educational institutions that show commitment and concern for their entire community—but, mainly, for their professors in such a way that they can continue training, learning, and improving—will be considered effective organizations, where their students, consequently, will be more likely to learn. For this reason, creating a culture of lifelong learning, encouraging professors to have a positive attitude toward their own training, as well as a high commitment to their students' learning is important.

An effective educational institution, according to Cancino and Vera (2016), cannot leave the development of their skills and competencies to improvisation or to the will of their professors. Rather, it must have educational improvement policies that seek to maximize the development of its professors, since, thanks to research on educational effectiveness, it is known that what most affects the learning results of students is determined by what happens inside the classroom. This, concurs with what Murillo (2003) maintains (Murillo & Krichesky, 2014).

Furthermore, research on teaching effectiveness in the United Kingdom, according to the study by Sammons and Bakkum (2011), shows some of the characteristics that define ineffective organizations: lack of vision, unfocused leadership, dysfunctional relationship between collaborators and ineffective practices in the classroom. They point out that in these organizations, students tend to perceive professors as people who do not care about their learning, do not provide help, do not congratulate, but rather frequently resort to criticism and negative comments about the students' performance.

Finally, it is important that the educational institutions generate a culture of lifelong learning and promote spaces that ensure the development of the knowledge and skills of their professors, who play an important role in the students' learning process. As Carvallo (2010) maintains, studies on educational effectiveness have shown that educational institutions do make a difference, identifying and prioritizing the factors that influence the students' performance.

## **Educational Leadership.**

According to studies by López and González (2011), an effective educational institution is one that has a clear mission and explicitly expresses its educational objectives, in such a way that the entire educational community knows and shares



it. Therefore, according to studies by UNESCO (2008), educational leadership is an important factor in achieving and maintaining effectiveness. In this sense, there are several characteristics of educational management that contribute to the students' performance:

- High commitment to the aim of the institution. A good professional has technical knowledge, as well as high leadership and influential qualities.
- Concern and interest in exercising the administrative direction, as well as the pedagogical one, getting involved in the development of the curriculum and showing commitment to the professional development of professors, paying attention and helping in the difficulties that arise and positively influencing their motivations, skills, and working conditions.
- The style must be directive and participatory, motivating the participation of professors, families, and students, sharing information, decisions and responsibilities, since management cannot be exercised in isolation.

As stated in the study by Pont *et al.* (2008), within any educational institution, leaders can contribute to student achievement by providing the necessary conditions in which learning is generated. Their impact on the students' progress is through the professors and the institutional environment. Likewise, this study mentions that for the OECD, effective leadership may not necessarily or exclusively be concentrated in formal positions, but rather may be shared among various agents of the educational organization, in such a way that other individuals can contribute as leaders in the objectives of the institution, achieving better results. This finding, when referring to "total leadership," is also shared by Leithwood *et al.* (2008).

Finally, as part of the role of the leader, the study highlights the importance of having a clear academic vision that is shared and internalized by all members of the organization, that has strategic planning, as well as the ability to generate a culture and community of learning, and a strong influence on all the members of the institution. In addition, leadership must be and must not be limited to administrative issues, but rather, it must be oriented to pedagogical issues.

## **Methodological Design**

This research corresponds to a qualitative approach, which, according to Salgado (2007), seeks to deeply understand the meanings and definitions of the

situations that people experience. In addition, for Taylor and Bogdan (cited by Quecedo & Castaño, 2002), this type of research studies people in the context and situations in which they find themselves; where people, contexts or groups are not reduced to variables, but rather are considered as a whole.

Taking this into account, this qualitative study begins with the following research question: *what are the organizational factors associated with the effectiveness of a private university in Peru in times of pandemic?* Likewise, based on this problem, the following study objective was proposed: *describe the organizational factors associated with the effectiveness of a private university in Peru in times of pandemic.*

In relation to the proposed objective, the following categories emerged. The first, refers to the commitment and professional development of professors. The second is related to educational leadership. These categories were selected because, as Espuna (2019) maintains, the impact achieved by effectiveness in educational institutions is measured based on success in educational management and good student performance. In this sense, the professor plays an important role.

The data collection technique used was the semi-structured interview, since, according to Diaz-Bravo *et al.* (2013), its flexibility allows adjusting the questions initially posed to the interviewees, having as an advantage the possibility of adapting to the subjects, motivating them, clarifying terms and ambiguities, as well as reducing formalisms. Next, a question guide was prepared in which three questions were considered for each category. The use of this instrument allowed developing cross-examination questions to maintain an in-depth dialogue with the interviewees and obtain relevant information. The instrument's validation process was carried out with a specialist in educational management who verified the relevance of the questions with respect to each category and objective.

Once the instrument was approved, the interview was applied using the Zoom platform. For this purpose, four academic coordinators were chosen, who, having been informed of the confidentiality of the interview, agreed to have it recorded. The choice of interviewing academic coordinators was made because they have a close relationship with both the director—since they report directly to her—and with the professors, whom they supervise. The criteria taken into account for their selection were their time in the institution and their area, since the researchers of this article sought to select employees who had been working in the organization for at least five years and, in addition, from different areas. It should be noted that each of the informants was assigned a code in order to maintain anonymity.

**Table 1.** *Characterization of the Interviewees.*

Academic Coordinator	Code	Gender	Age	Time in the Institution	Area
Interviewee 1	E1	Male	33	7 years	Math
Interviewee 2	E2	Male	37	9 years	Engineering
Interviewee 3	E3	Female	40	7 years	Humanities
Interviewee 4	E4	Female	38	5 years	Psychology and English

*Source:* Authors' Elaboration

It should be noted that the Higher University Educational Institution, to which the academic coordinators interviewed belong, has been in operation for more than 20 years, has more than 40 undergraduate and graduate study programs, and has more than five branches nationwide. In 2019, after a year of evaluations, the National Superintendence of University Higher Education (Sunedu) granted the licensing after verifying compliance with the basic conditions established by the university law. Some of the measures adopted in this process include the hiring of a higher percentage of full-time professors, as well as a larger budget for research.

After the interviews were conducted, all the responses were transcribed and organized in an analysis matrix that made identifying the most important findings of each category possible, which were then grouped by themes, thus obtaining the emerging elements. Organizing the information in this way made it easier to carry out the process of interpretation and discussion, using the conceptual framework as a reference.

## **Findings Interpretation**

The interpretation of findings was presented by category, considering the most significant testimonies of the interviewees and the in-depth reflection of the researcher.

In relation to the first category, “commitment and professional development of professors,” the academic coordinators expressed that due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the abrupt transition from the face-to-face to the virtual modality, many difficulties were discovered. As a result, the virtual teaching and learning processes, as well as the relationship between professors and students were

affected at the beginning of the health emergency. "Professors had problems trying to connect with the student and mastering the technological tools, but from the second period onward a very good experience occurred. The professors were then able to resolve doubts at the moment, in forums, etc." (E2).

The interviewees stated that the experience between students and professors improved thanks to the training courses offered permanently by the Quality Area. "There are trainings that professors receive from the Quality Area regarding teaching methodology, ICT, tools so that they can perform much better in the classroom" (E2). One of the interviewees stated that these trainings had always been provided; however, "Because of this situation, the courses are more technological in nature" (E3), since, as mentioned by another academic coordinator, "The professor had to learn about virtual tools, the use of Zoom and other tools to keep the student active in class" (E1).

In addition, the academic coordinators stated that the Educational Institution shows interest and concern for promoting the participation of professors in these training spaces. "The courses provided by the Quality Area are part of its evaluation system. To continue with the following period, we measure they have taken at least one course and whether this tool has been applied in the classroom" (E1). Likewise, that the university provides certificates of participation for the training received was identified: "We must take one course per cycle, but we can also take more, there is an incentive, for example, certificates" (E4). In addition, the institution recognizes professors who achieve good results in their general evaluation, providing recognition bonuses, as expressed by the following interviewee: "Professors are being evaluated by a series of points, the professors who occupy the first positions, receive a recognition bonus at the end of the period" (E2).

In relation to the attitude and good nature toward learning, an academic coordinator mentioned that most of the professors under her charge show interest in taking the training courses promoted by the university through the Quality Area, and that a minimum percentage do not show the same disposition because there are professors who work in other educational institutions where they have already been trained: "90% show interest; the others are not apathetic, but are not as open because they work in other universities or institutions and have already been trained in these tools" (E4). Another coordinator stated: "I am in charge of approximately 48 professors and approximately 30 show interest in training, there is willingness, on the one hand, but there are groups that are not willing. Why disguise the situation?" (E3).

One interviewee stated that most of his professors teach specialty courses and work in other educational institutions and do not have time to take the training courses. Many times they do it just to comply. "Most of them do it because they have to pass the teaching evaluation and not being removed from

the university, but they do it only for that reason" (E2). In addition, the same employee mentioned that the professors who show more initiative and willingness to take the trainings are those who do not have much experience and are interested in staying in the institution and showing good performance: "My professors are not motivated to take the trainings offered by the Quality Area; some are, especially those who are starting in teaching" (E2).

Regarding the attributes most valued by students, the interviewees expressed that the students appreciate the knowledge that the professors transmit in class, the experience, the treatment and the commitment for learning. "The students are quite happy when a professor carries out the topic corresponding to the syllabus, when he/she includes his/her experience on that topic, and when he/she shows predisposition to clear up doubts" (E2). Another academic coordinator corroborated this saying: "The treatment becomes a matter of assessment, as well as the knowledge and guidance provided to the students" (E3).

In summary, with respect to the "professor commitment and professional development" category, it can be affirmed that the educational institution shows interest and concern for including professor training programs as part of its evaluation system to ensure the development of skills and competencies and, in this way, respond adequately to the demands of the new virtual modality. Although these training courses allowed professors to gain knowledge on the use of different technological tools to improve their learning experience, professors did not take the courses with the same openness and willingness.

For example, the interviewees pointed out that the most experienced professors did not show a lot of interest, since they said they had received such training in the other educational institutions where they also work. Likewise, the interviewees indicated that there were professors without time or motivation to take the courses; but they took them because the courses were mandatory. Alternatively, during the teaching and learning process, students valued the professors' knowledge, as well as their experience and willingness to resolve problems.

According to the second category of "educational leadership," the academic coordinators expressed that since the pandemic, the meetings with the university management were held more frequently, therefore, there was more communication opportunities for revisions and decision making on academic issues. "Meeting is a good constant practice because it allows us to analyze academic issues and to respond immediately when inconveniences arise; especially, taking into account the changes implemented due to this novel situation" (E4).

Similarly, the interviewees added that during the meetings, they evaluated the improvements that may be offered to professors and students, as the information gathered from both parties was important for the president: "The

president asks us to organize meetings with professors and delegates to gather information, and thus knows what is happening and what can be improved” (E3). In this regard, results showed that because of the pandemic there was a need for informative talks on the current situation and health care for professors and administrative staff. “Talks are given on care for COVID patients and on other topics related to the situation” (E1). Likewise, results exhibited that the president was concerned with those coordinators who became infected. Therefore, constant communication was maintained: “When my family and I got sick with COVID, the president sent me daily motivational messages” (E3).

In addition to the above mentioned, the interviewees pointed out that remote work has favored joint work with peers from other campuses and the arrangement of complementary activities from different campuses organized by student specialty. One of the interviewees stated: “What the university management requests is that every faculty defines which conferences will be held. Even, remote work has allowed us to meet with our peers from other campuses, therefore, this type of activities can be carried out more frequently” (E1). Another interviewee considered that these activities had been well received by the students: “I feel that students learn more by participating in these workshops because they do not feel pressured by the grade” (E2).

Alternatively, another highlighted aspect was the president’s interest and concern for the improvement of the syllabi and course materials:

The campus leader was concerned about the revision and course materials updating that professors must review, since a lot of course materials had to be adapted to remote teaching. Updating the curriculum is also a concern, which is done every four years as required by Sunedu. (E1).

In contrast, another interviewee stated the following:

As academic coordinators, if we observe any weakness or if the professors send us any observation for improvement regarding the syllabus, we immediately inform the university management who informs the Quality Area. However its execution takes time: there are some aspects that coordinators cannot go any further. (E2).

Regarding the aforementioned, one of the interviewees stated that, although there are efforts to constantly improve the pedagogical part, there is still room for improvement: “The president should lead the academic area, I feel that the coordinators do only 30% of academic issues and 70% of administrative issues, and it should be the opposite” (E2). The same interviewee stated that the

university should work on the development of educational materials in order to standardize content and alleviate the professors' workload, giving them more time for their professional development:

It would be good for the leader to make a decision regarding the courses in which a base of materials can be worked on to provide the professor. Students realize that the contents of the same course are not the same and compare. The professor is stressed out. Preparing material for a two-hour class can take a whole day, instead, they should be trained. (E2).

Additionally, the workload was emphasized as an aspect to be improved due to problems arising with the platform and the changes that had to be made in course scheduling.

The system is not updated in real time and provides wrong information. This generates discomfort and loss of time therefore the work schedule is not often respected. One finishes the work day at seven o'clock, but receives emails at nine or ten o'clock at night with requests from the administrative staff. (E3).

Another academic coordinator confirmed: "Overnight they tell you: 'We are no longer going to work this way, but that way.' Of course, these changes in schedules are due to the situation, but we end up working twice as hard" (E1).

Alternatively, regarding the most valued aspects, the interviewees mentioned the trust, the accompaniment and the good working environment. "The president trusts in our good work, I think that is why we have a good working environment and we are part of the *Great Place To Work*. I value the trust and support I need" (E2). Another interviewee expressed his opinion along the same idea: "I greatly value the accompaniment. Even though we are working remotely, I know that my leader is supporting me" (E4).

Finally, this same interviewee expressed that there was a strong commitment to the purpose of the organization: "What helps us moving forward is that we believe that education is the key and that we can make real change. My professors really believe in their work of training future colleagues and such perspective has a great impact" (E4).

In summary, with respect to "educational leadership," although the president shows commitment to the pedagogical component by promoting meeting spaces with students and professors with the purpose of gathering information and implementing improvement actions. The president's involvement with the revision of materials is limited to a remote work adaptation and the demands of

this new situation. Similarly, their concern in updating curricula arises mainly from Sunedu request.

In this sense, there is not much involvement in academic matters, perhaps because there is already a specialized area that is responsible for ensuring the institution's educational quality. Likewise, the academic coordinators feel that their administrative work is more important than their pedagogical work, suggesting that this is due to their workload. Among the positive aspects, the openness to generating collaborative spaces, the commitment to remote education, the human leadership, the trust in the work done by the academic coordinators, the constant communication, and the pleasant environment despite the virtual environment are highlighted.

## Discussion

Based on the information provided by the academic coordinators, these findings have allowed learning more about the commitment and professional development of professors and educational leadership in a private university in Peru.

According to the first category, "professor commitment and professional development," when analyzing the teaching and learning process in a virtual context, as well as the relationship between professors and students, the institution pays special attention to the implementation of training programs that improve the classroom experience, providing the necessary tools to professors so that they can perform well in class sessions and keep their students active. This is consistent with Sammons and Bakkum (2011), who point out the effective practices carried out in class as one of the effective educational institution characteristics. In turn, a study conducted by Unesco (2008) mentions the idea that the role of professors is important, since they can contribute to the students' personal and professional future.

Likewise, according to Cancino and Vera (2016), an educational institution cannot leave the development of their skills and competencies to the will of its professors. Similarly, the study conducted by Unesco (2008) states that an educational organization will be considered effective as long as it shows commitment to its community, especially to its professors, so that they can continue learning and improving. In this sense, the findings show that the educational institution shows interest in encouraging the participation of professors in training spaces in order to maximize their performance. For this



purpose they resort to the evaluation system, awarding of certificates and recognitions.

Another finding found in this research warns that, although these training courses are provided on an ongoing basis, this does not ensure that all professors have a good attitude and willingness regarding their professional development. As evidenced in the interviews, a group of professors tend to show little interest and motivation in taking these courses; however, they do so because they feel obliged to pass the evaluations. In view of this, the Unesco study (2008) notes the importance of creating a culture of lifelong learning, fostering in professors a positive attitude toward their own training, as well as a high commitment to their students' learning. To achieve this, the academic coordinators expressed the need to alleviate the professors' burden in terms of preparing materials so that they have more time and disposition for their professional development. Likewise, it is proposed that complementary training oriented to the development of soft skills be provided, as currently the topics are mainly focused on teaching methodologies and technological tools.

In relation to the aspects that the students value in the professors, in their learning process there is not only knowledge, but also experience and predisposition to answer questions. This aligns with the results of the study by Sammons and Bakkum (2011), which indicate that one of the characteristics of ineffective educational institutions is the perception of professors as people who do not care about their students' learning, do not provide help, and do not congratulate them.

According to category two, "educational leadership," coordination and follow-up meetings have been identified as an important factor in the generation of spaces for communication and review of academic and administrative issues for the planning of activities and decision making. Likewise, these spaces are important to reinforce the vision of the organization in such a way that it is shared and internalized by the members of the organization, as mentioned by Murillo (2008).

In addition, it has been found that the information gathered from students and professors through the academic coordinators is very valuable, and that making them feel heard is likely to impact their commitment to the organization. Furthermore, the research has shown that in the context of the pandemic, the campuses have worked in a joint and coordinated manner. This coincides with what Murillo (2008) maintains in his study on effective educational organizations, where he points out that these are characterized by working toward a common goal and by being structurally and culturally more united, functioning organically and not as a compilation of isolated elements.

Likewise, the importance of having a pleasant and trusting environment has been identified as having a positive influence on employees, exercising a participative leadership in which everyone feels included and feels an important part of the organization. This coincides with what Unesco (2008) points out about the participative style of the leader who should share information, decisions, and responsibilities, since management should not be exercised in isolation; however, the study did not find evidence of shared leadership among several agents of the organization as mentioned by Pont *et al.* (2008). No information has been found regarding the existence of communication and interaction spaces with parents.

In turn, according to the Unesco study (2008), it is stated that in order to achieve and maintain effectiveness, the leader must show interest and concern for exercising not only administrative but also pedagogical direction, getting involved in the development of the curriculum, providing assistance to the difficulties that arise and positively influencing professors. The findings have shown that, although there is a perceived interest in updating materials and syllabi, this is limited to a response to the demands of the environment, whether it is a specific situation such as the pandemic or a mandatory requirement of the Sunedu. Along these lines, there is a need to pay more attention to the pedagogical aspect. For example, the importance of creating basic course materials to align content and ease the burden on professors, giving them the opportunity to focus more on their professional development, became evident.

## Conclusions

To summarize, with respect to the first category ("commitment and professional development of professors"), the interest and concern of the educational institution for the development of the capacities and competencies of its professors is visible when training opportunities are created and participation is encouraged through the evaluation system, as well as the awarding of certificates and recognition. This allows improving the professor's performance in the classroom sessions and, thus, ensures a good classroom experience. However, creating a much stronger culture of lifelong learning is important to achieving greater commitment and willingness in all professors, especially those who show little interest and motivation.

In relation to the second category, ("educational leadership"), it is perceived that the coordination of meetings and communication spaces with professors

and students for decision making, allow generating an environment of trust and permanent accompaniment, reflecting a participative leadership style that, in addition to promoting collaboration and sense of belonging, reinforces the vision, achieving that this is shared and internalized by the members of the organization. However, it is evident that leadership is oriented toward resolving mainly administrative issues. In that sense, there is interest and concern on the part of the leader for academic issues that is often exhibited as a response to the demands of the environment or compliance with certain regulations. Therefore, there is a need to strengthen pedagogical leadership.

## References

- Alcántara, A. (2007). Dimensiones de la calidad en educación superior. *Reencuentro. Análisis de Problemas Universitarios*, (50), 21-27. <https://reencuentro.xoc.uam.mx/index.php/reencuentro/article/view/630>
- Baez, B. (1994). El movimiento de escuelas eficaces: Implicaciones para la innovación educativa. *Revista Iberoamericana de Educación*, 4(2) 407-426. <http://rieoei.org/oeivirt/rie04a04.htm>
- Barba, B. (2006). Reseña de «La investigación sobre eficacia escolar» de Javier Murillo. *Revista Mexicana de Investigación Educativa*, 11(29), 677-686. <https://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=14002917>
- Cancino, V. & Vera, L. (2016). Políticas educativas de fortalecimiento del liderazgo directivo: desafíos para Chile en un análisis comparado con países OCDE. *Ensaio*, 25(94), 26-58. <https://doi.org/10.1590/S0104-40362017000100002>.
- Carvalho, M. (2010). Eficacia escolar: antecedentes, hallazgos y futuro. *Magis. Revista Internacional de Investigación en Educación*, 3(5), 199-213. <https://doi.org/10.11144/Javeriana.m3-5.eeah>
- Díaz-Bravo, L., Torruco García, U., Martínez-Hernández, M. y Ruiz-Varela, M. (2013). La entrevista, recurso flexible y dinámico. *Investigación en educación médica*, 2(7), 162-167. [http://www.scielo.org.mx/scielo.php?script=sci\\_arttext&pid=S2007-50572013000300009](http://www.scielo.org.mx/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S2007-50572013000300009)

- Espuna, T. (2019). Reflexión conceptual y un serio análisis sobre la eficacia educativa y su impacto en el rendimiento de los alumnos: ¿hasta dónde se ha llegado? *Daena: International Journal of Good Conscience*, 14(1), 69-79. [http://www.spentamexico.org/v14-n1/A5.14\(1\)69-79.pdf](http://www.spentamexico.org/v14-n1/A5.14(1)69-79.pdf)
- Estévez, B. (2001). Gerencia y organización escolar: herramientas que construyen la eficacia educativa. *Espacio Abierto*, 10(4), 575-596. <https://www.redalyc.org/pdf/122/12210403.pdf>
- Fernández, M. J. & González, A. (1997). Desarrollo y situación actual de los estudios de eficacia escolar. *Revista Electrónica de Investigación y Evaluación Educativa*, 3(1), 1-23. <https://ojs.uv.es/index.php/RELIEVE/article/view/6335/6095>
- Gutiérrez, G. & Chaparro, A. (2017). La organización escolar como variable asociada al logro educativo. *Journal Educational Innovation / Revista Innovación Educativa*, 17(74), 41-59. [http://www.scielo.org.mx/scielo.php?script=sci\\_arttext&pid=S1665-26732017000200041](http://www.scielo.org.mx/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1665-26732017000200041)
- Leithwood, K., Harris, A. & Hopkins, D. (2008). Seven Strong Claims about Successful School Leadership. *School Leadership and Management*, 28(1), 27-42. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13632430701800060>.
- López, I. & González, I. (2011). Aproximación a los factores de mejora de la eficacia escolar derivados del programa IQEA. *Revista de currículum y formación del profesorado*, 15(3), 1-17. <https://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=56722230021>
- Muñoz, G. (2010). Eficacia escolar. Aportaciones conceptuales y panorama de los estudios en México. *Revista Iberoamericana Educación*, 54(4), 1-11. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/285578257\\_Eficacia\\_escolar\\_Aportaciones\\_conceptuales\\_y\\_panorama\\_de\\_los\\_estudios\\_en\\_Mexico](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/285578257_Eficacia_escolar_Aportaciones_conceptuales_y_panorama_de_los_estudios_en_Mexico)
- Murillo. (2008). Hacia un modelo de eficacia escolar. Estudio multinivel sobre los factores de eficacia en las escuelas españolas. *REICE. Revista Iberoamericana sobre Calidad, Eficacia y Cambio en Educación*, 6(1), 4-28. <http://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=55160102>

- Murillo, J. (2003). El movimiento de investigación de eficacia escolar. In F. J. Murillo (coord.), *La investigación sobre eficacia escolar en Iberoamérica. Revisión internacional del estado del arte* (pp. 1-36). Convenio Andrés Bello. <https://www.educacionyfp.gob.es/va/dam/jcr:0116a891-585c-4cfc-a119-739843496ad8/murillotorrecillaeficaciaescolar-pdf.pdf>
- Murillo, J. & Krichesky, G. (2014). Mejora de la Escuela: Medio siglo de lecciones aprendidas. *REICE. Revista Iberoamericana sobre Calidad, Eficacia y Cambio en Educación*, 13(1), 69-102. <https://www.redalyc.org/pdf/551/55133776005.pdf>
- Pont, B., Nusche, D. & Moorman, H. (2008). *Improving School Leadership, Volume 1: Practice and Policy*. OECD. <https://www.oecd.org/education/school/44374889.pdf>
- Quecedo, R. & Castaño, C. (2002). Introducción a la metodología de investigación cualitativa. *Revista de Psicodidáctica*, (14), 5-39. <https://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=17501402>
- Salgado, A. (2007). Investigación cualitativa: diseños, evaluación del rigor metodológico y retos. *Liberabit*, 13(13), 71-78. [http://www.scielo.org.pe/scielo.php?script=sci\\_arttext&pid=S1729-48272007000100009](http://www.scielo.org.pe/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1729-48272007000100009)
- Sammons, P. & Bakkum, L. (2011). Escuelas eficaces, equidad y eficacia docente: una revisión de la literatura profesorado. *Revista de Currículum y Formación de Profesorado*, 15(3), 9-26. <https://revistaseug.ugr.es/index.php/profesorado/article/view/20404>
- Unesco. (2008). *Eficacia escolar y factores asociados en América Latina y El Caribe*. Unesco. [https://www.academia.edu/22070727/EFICACIA\\_ESCOLAR\\_Y\\_FACTORES\\_ASOCIADOS](https://www.academia.edu/22070727/EFICACIA_ESCOLAR_Y_FACTORES_ASOCIADOS)

Vidal Coronel, M. C.; Sánchez Huarcaya, A. (2023). Factors in the Educational Effectiveness of a Private University in Peru in times of Pandemic. *Ánfora*, 30(54). 162-182.  
<https://doi.org/10.30854/anfv30.n54.2023.868>.



# Crime, Criminality and Fiction: the Murder of Jimmy Hoffa, Mafia and Literature\*

(English Version)

Crimen, criminalidad y ficción: el asesinato de Jimmy Hoffa, mafia y la literatura

Crime, criminalidade e ficção: o assassinato de Jimmy Hoffa, mafia e literatura

*Received April 23, 2021. Accepted April 29, 2022.*

Javier Duque Daza\*\*

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9996-4835>

Colombia

› To cite this article:

Duque Daza, J. (2023). Crime, Criminality and Fiction: the Murder of Jimmy Hoffa, Mafia and Literature.

*Ánfora*, 30(54). 183-209

<https://doi.org/10.30854/anfv30.n54.2023.813>

Universidad Autónoma de

Manizales. L-ISSN 0121-6538.

E-ISSN 2248-6941.

CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

## Abstract

**Objective:** This article analyzes the book *I Heard You Paint Houses*, translated into Spanish as *El Irishman*. Hoffa, case closed. The book reconstructs various events in the recent history of organized crime and politics in the United States and presents a new version of the death of union leader Jimmy Hoffa.

**Methodology:** is an analysis and interpretation of a non-fiction work that is systematically contrasted with other similar works. The text locates the historical background of Francis Sheeran's biography on Hoffa,

presents some of the most relevant facts of the development of the mafia in the United States between 1957-1990 and the debates generated by the book. It serves as a pretext to return to analyzes of the relationships between fiction and non-fiction in the social sciences. **Results:** The result of the analysis is that this book presents a plausible version of the facts due to the handling of the sources, the verification of the facts and because it has not yet been refuted with new evidence.

---

\* Reflection article, derived from research. This text is part of the research "Criminality and Politics," funded by the Universidad del Valle, Colombia. Record CI-5317.

\*\* PhD in Political Science, Political Scientist. Universidad del Valle, Colombia. [Jduqued86@hotmail.com](mailto:Jduqued86@hotmail.com)

**Keywords:** mafia; organized crime; Frank Sheeran; Jimmy Hoffa; unionism.

## Resumen

**Objetivo:** en este artículo se analiza el libro *I Heard You Paint Houses*, traducido al español como *El irlandés*. Hoffa, caso cerrado. El libro reconstruye diversos eventos de la historia reciente del crimen organizado y de la política de Estados Unidos y presenta una nueva versión sobre la muerte del líder sindicalista Jimmy Hoffa. **Metodología:** es un análisis e interpretación de una obra de no ficción que se contrasta de forma sistemática con otras obras similares. El texto ubica el trasfondo histórico de la biografía de Francis Sheeran sobre Hoffa, presenta algunos de los hechos más relevantes del desarrollo de la mafia en Estados Unidos entre 1957-1990 y los debates generados por el libro. Sirve de pretexto para volver los análisis de las relaciones entre ficción y no ficción en las ciencias sociales. **Resultados:** este libro analizado presenta una versión verosímil de los hechos por el manejo de las fuentes, por la verificación de los hechos y porque no ha sido refutada aún con nuevas evidencias.

**Palabras clave:** mafia; crimen organizado; Jimmy Hoffa; literatura; biografía; sindicalismo.

## Resumo

**Objetivo:** Este artigo analisa o livro *I He Heard You Paint Houses*, traduzido do inglês como *El irlandés*. Hoffa, Caso Fechado. O livro reconstrói vários eventos da história recente do crime organizado e da política nos Estados Unidos e apresenta uma nova versão da morte do líder sindical Jimmy Hoffa. **Metodologia:** esta é uma análise e interpretação de uma obra de não-ficção que é sistematicamente contrastada com outras obras similares. O texto estabelece o contexto histórico da biografia de Francis Sheeran de Hoffa, apresenta alguns dos fatos mais relevantes do desenvolvimento da máfia nos Estados Unidos entre 1957-1990 e os debates gerados pelo livro. Serve como um pretexto para retornar às análises da relação entre ficção e não-ficção nas ciências sociais. **Resultados:** este livro apresenta uma versão plausível dos fatos por causa do manuseio das fontes, da verificação dos fatos e porque ainda não foi refutado por novas evidências.

**Palavras chave:** máfia; crime organizado; Jimmy Hoffa; literatura; biografia; sindicalismo.



## Introduction

Charles Brandt recently stated the following in an interview: “When Frank Sheeran left prison in 1991, he invited me to dinner and said, ‘I’m tired of reading everything they say about me in the Hoffa books.’ I immediately thought I was in front of a man who wanted to get a weight off his shoulders, something that was pressing on his chest” (El Mundo, 2019). This served as the impetus for a project that lasted over three decades and was completed in 2004 with the publication of the book, *I Heard You Paint Houses*, which was later translated into Spanish as *El Irlandés: Hoffa, Caso Cerrado*. A new version of Jimmy Hoffa’s death, the truck drivers’ union leader for over two decades, is presented in the book, which reconstructs a number of recent events in the history of organized crime and American politics.

This is not just another book about mafia bosses and their crimes. Its main goal is to explain Hoffa’s disappearance and death while also describing some of the ways the organized crime was carried out using one of his several armed brigades. The book also updates outdated theories about the election, the government, and John F. Kennedy’s assassination. It refers to Richard Nixon’s election and reelection as well as his alleged connections to the mafia and the focus on the labor unions’ practices (highly permeated by criminality). Brandt uses his biography as a justification for presenting the history of the United States as a whole, from the end of the 1950s to the middle of the 1970s.

This book has generated controversy since its publication due to its content, pretense of concluding the Hoffa case, and discussion of the hotly debated topic of the influence of the Italian-American mafia on politics and society in the United States. On the occasion of the screening of the film *The Irishman*, directed by Martin Scorsese and based on the book, the debates have resurfaced. Is it a true story or a mixture of fiction and reality? Is it a version of the facts that takes certain liberties to make the story more appealing and to attract more readers and viewers? Are the sources and methodology used by Brandt rigorous and reliable? Does the author respond convincingly to the questions?

This article addresses these issues. It is a reflection piece based on research that examines a significant non-fiction work that tells the life story of a person involved in some of the key organized crime events that occurred in the United States during the 1960s. The article also situates the work during the height of the mafia’s influence in the country, compares its content to that of other works and authors, establishes similarities and differences, and assesses the veracity of the narrative, which includes several historical events. As a central axis, it poses

a reflection on the ways of seeing the relationship between facts and imagination/creation in works that are considered “non-fiction.”

The method used to raster the sources started with reading the book and seeing the movie. Afterward, an exhaustive search was made of comments, reviews, articles referring to both book and movie in Spanish and English (Ebsco and Scopus databases for academic articles and an open search for journalistic articles). The versions were contrasted, and based on this, the text was structured taking as a perspective the debate on fiction, non-fiction works, and their purpose of providing an account of the facts, adjusting to the events, as invention and imagination have their limits when intending to relate historical facts. Additionally, lectures on organized crime were reviewed, specifically those on the Italo-American mafia, the partial findings of which are contained in this article.

This article is divided into four sections. In the first, the book is described in detail. The second section contrasts the criticisms that have been leveled at the book and strikes a balance between the positive and negative comments. The third section discusses the consensus surrounding some of the events described in the book as well as disagreements on other events that are raised. The fourth section offers a critical analysis of the sources and methodology Charles Brandt employed in his research. The discussion concludes with some thoughts on nonfiction literature, sources, truthfulness, and credibility.

### **Francis Sheeran: The Man who Painted Houses**

*I Heard You Paint Houses.* This is the original title of Charles Brandt’s book; such a peculiar title catches the eye. Throughout the book, this expression is quoted on several occasions and it is assumed that it was used in some organized crime circles in the United States to refer to someone who was a *contract killer*, a hit man. The blood that is discharged after an attack splash onto the walls, leaving them painted red. Painting houses was like firing a gun at someone at very close range to kill them.

The book is presented as a criminal biographical sketch and a map of organized crime. It reconstructs the life of Francis Joseph Sheeran (1920-2003), ex-military combatant of World War II, an adventurer, a hardened trade unionist and alleged murderer in the service of the Mafia. The book begins with the Italo-American Mafia’s history and provides a version of some of the events that occurred between 1955 and 1990. There are two additional central characters in addition to Sheeran: Russell Bufalino (1903-1994), for three decades

(1959-1989) head of one of the Pennsylvania-based mob families; and Jimmy Hoffa (1913-1975), the controversial U.S. Teamsters union leader with mob ties.

It's not a novel, but it reads like one. It's part of the genre referred to as "non-fiction literature." Charles Brandt – born in 1969, a former homicide prosecutor and deputy director of the Delaware State Attorney General's Office – had previously published the novel *The Right to Remain Silent* and since 1991 had come into contact with Sheeran as his attorney. This relationship is what gave rise to the need to write Sheeran's biography, especially regarding his eventual involvement in the 1975 assassination of Hoffa. After numerous encounters with Sheeran, lengthy conversations, deliberate silences, and extensive research, Brandt wrote the book, which was first published in 2004 – a year after Sheeran's passing. The work and the long wait produced a work that grips the reader and combines a very well-articulated and written account. It focuses on research that articulates the content of the numerous interviews recorded and filmed between 1999 and 2004 (which allows verifying many of the statements expressed in the book) with other sources that allowed him to cross-check Sheeran's version.

The book is divided into 31 chapters. The first seven chapters cover Sheeran's early years (which were difficult, with a strict and aggressive father), his early adolescence, and his enlistment in the military. He learned to kill in the war in order to defend himself. He later made it part of his trade and became a thug in the service of the mafia. He tells Brandt: "At some point while overseas, I hardened inside, and I would no longer be able to soften again. In the end you get used to death; you get used to killing" (Brandt, 2019, p. 85). His work for the truck drivers' union would thereafter be divided between various errands and "painting houses" (the manner in which assassination orders were received). At times, he also engaged in "carpentry work" (an allusion to making coffins, translated as burying and disappearing bodies).

Sheeran worked on numerous projects after returning to the United States in 1945. He was a nightclub security guard, a clandestine gambling distributor, and even a dance hall instructor. When driving a car, he met Russell Bufalino, who helped him turn his car into a petrol station. It was 1955; they were both 35 years old, and neither of them could have predicted that they would end up being close friends for almost four decades. Italian-born Bufalino had been involved in organized crime since he was a young child, and he had grown up in his family to become the head of the organization by the middle of the 1950s. He was connected to the five most powerful mafia families in New York as well as other crime families spread across the entire nation. He also had the position, influence, and power of a godfather. Bufalino became Sheeran's boss, protector, and godfather.

The Irishman (as Bufalino had nicknamed Sheeran) would be one of his trusted assassins. Nearly two meters tall, powerful, knowledgeable of weapons, a skilled fighter, a coldblooded killer, loyal, and efficient. According to Sheeran himself, while working with Bufalino, he committed at least two dozen homicides, served as a confidential messenger, and committed numerous more crimes, intimidations, fires, extorsions, and assaults. Parallel to this, starting in 1959, he also served as Jimmy Hoffa's armed bodyguard. He was his bodyguard, his goon, his union player, and the executor of sabotages and intimidations against rivals and enemies. He was a friend of both. He kept the loyalty of subordinates to their bosses, located at the top of their organizations: a mafia family and the most powerful labor union in the United States.

From Chapter VIII, while following the thread of Sheeran's life, a sketch of Hoffa's life is presented: it tells of his rise in the union until he became its president in 1957 and a rich and very powerful man with links to the Mafia who used the truckers' funds for his business. He recounts his behavior, relationships, and confrontation with the Kennedy family (Brandt, 2019, chap. 11). Bufalino is also discussed, as are his legal and illegal connections, how he managed his family, and how he engaged with other leaders, thugs, politicians, and attorneys (chap. 9 and subsequent.). Chapter XII bears the title of the book: "I've been told you paint houses." He hears those words when he first speaks to Hoffa on the phone in 1957 and travels to work with him in Detroit. He would remain by his side and in his service for the ensuing 20 years. Systematic, cold, obedient, and loyal, Sheeran was an efficient and valued hitman. Following the trail of Sheeran's life, the book alludes to facts related to the actions of the Mafia, its ways of acting, its hierarchies, its structures and ceremonies; also, of the relations with the world of politics and the United States judicial system, with the powerful and their subordinates.

There are controversial versions of historical events. One of them is the version according to which Bufalino was one of the organizers of the famous Apalachin convention, an event held in a small town near New York in 1957. That event the *Commission* brought together, the highest instance of strategic coordination of the heads of the Mafia families in the United States (the same event periodically held by the Italian Mafia since the late nineteenth century). It is estimated that close to 100 chiefs, deputy chiefs and counselors attended, of which 58 were arrested. This was the first U.S. case involving organized crime in which the FBI intervened, an agency that under the leadership of John Edgar Hoover (1895-1972) had refused to acknowledge the existence of an organization of such scope and proportions. Up until that point, the FBI had concentrated its attention on tracking down communists and snooping on politicians (alleged or real). From this point on, the organized crime network's

organizational chart was developed, and the families, as well as their leaders, followers, capos, middlemen, and “soldiers” (the top tier of previously unknown criminal organizations), were pursued.

Based on the contributions of works by other authors – respectively included at the end of the book – conversations with FBI agents, testimonies and Sheeran’s account, Brandt reviews, the structure of organized crime in the United States. Throughout the book members of the five New York families (Bonano, Colombo, Gambino, Genovese and Lucchese) and others located in Chicago or in Las Vegas, California or Miami eventually appear as secondary protagonists.

There is still a record-testimony in Sheeran’s recounting of other significant recent American history events. The Kennedy family is linked to the Mafia. Joseph P. Kennedy is said to have made his fortune as a contrabandist during Prohibition by working with the Italian-American mafia, with which he maintained close ties throughout his life. Allegedly, his son, John F. Kennedy’s campaign for the presidency in 1960 was financed by his father and co-financed by Sam Giancana and other members of the Mafia to whom he had promised to return the casinos and other properties they had in Cuba and that were confiscated by Fidel Castro.

This agreement led to the unsuccessful Bay of Pigs invasion in April 1961 through a joint action with the CIA. The Mafia allegedly assassinated John F. Kennedy in 1963 to prevent his brother Robert, who was the attorney general, from continuing to prosecute the heads of the families and Jimmy Hoffa himself (who allegedly asked the Mafia to assassinate him). It is one of the various Kennedy assassination theories that includes a significant witness. Sheeran implied in his account that he was the one who delivered the guns used in the Dallas attack on behalf of the mob (Brandt, 2019, cc. 13-14).

Other facts related to this event are also reported. Jack Ruby killed Lee Harvey Oswald, President Kennedy’s assassin. The book claims that Oswald belonged to the mafia and had connections to Sam Giancana. This supports the theory that the president was assassinated on orders from organized crime syndicates; additionally, taking this into consideration, upon taking office, Vice President Gerald Ford replaced Attorney General Robert Kennedy and reduced pressure on organized crime and Hoffa. The author recalls that there were several Senate hearings in 1975 to clarify the government’s relationship with the Mafia, and that same year, the CIA publicly acknowledged their alliance with the aim of assassinating or derailing Fidel Castro (cc. 14-16).

There is also a reference to former President Richard Nixon, who is portrayed badly. According to the book, the 1968 Nixon campaign received mob money through Hoffa. Complicity and tolerance with organized crime

followed, and Hoffa – who had been in prison since 1967 for bribing a jury in a previous case – was pardoned by the president in 1971 when he had only served half his sentence. Hoffa had continued to run the union from prison for some time and Sheeran remained his right-hand man (Brandt, 2019, cc. 18-23). With the backing of these organizations, Nixon was re-elected in 1972, followed by the Watergate scandal and his resignation in August, 1974. Brandt affirms that Nixon himself prepared his departure with impunity: a few months before resigning, he appointed Gerald Ford as vice president to succeed him and when his resignation was presented, he was pardoned “for any crime of which he could be accused.” (DC. 19-23).

Even the then young and rookie Senate candidate Joe Biden appears in the book involved in an event in which the mob intervened to benefit him. A local Delaware newspaper published a series of denunciations about possible manipulations of information by Biden. Biden’s lawyer saw to it that the Union blocked the newspaper and prevented their trucks from delivering it. He won the elections in 1973 and remained in the Senate continuously until 2009, the year in which he became vice president during the two presidential terms of Barack Obama (2009-2017). In the 2020 elections, Biden was the Democratic candidate running against Republican President Donald Trump running for re-election.

“Jimmy was not a snitch, but he could pant” (Brandt, 2019, p. 343). This statement by Sheeran about Hoffa heralds the outcome of the story (cc. 14-21). The plot is woven expectantly by Charles Brandt: “hell is going to break loose,” he foreshadows for the reader.

Hell did break loose with Hoffa’s bid for Union presidency again in the 1976 election. Disadvantaged by having lost influence and stopped pulling some strings of power in the Union while in prison, Hoffa began the campaign aggressively with frequent public statements about the Union’s relations with the Mafia and denouncing loans to different mobster families to finance his Las Vegas hotel projects (many of which he himself had facilitated). Trying to protect himself from retaliation by his former friends in organized crime, he warned that he knew a lot about the bosses and the families; that he had insurance in case something happened to him. He announced that they would not dare to mess with him.

However, they did dare. On July 3, 1975, Hoffa disappeared forever. The FBI and other authorities searched for him on land, sea, and air. Establishments were raided in vain, dozens of hectares were excavated, foundations were removed, more than seventy suspects were interrogated (from mafia bosses to drivers, friends, and mafia soldiers). Versions of his disappearance and death were invented for almost three decades and there were at least a dozen people

who declared themselves to be the perpetrators of the murder. The subtitle of the Spanish version of the book anticipates its end: “Jimmy Hoffa, *caso cerrado*” (Jimmy Hoffa, case closed). This is announced because Sheeran himself acknowledged in 2003 that he had murdered his friend and protector on the orders of his godfather, Russell Bufalino.

Sheeran had been granting Brandt recorded interviews for five years and only with the proximity of his death was he encouraged to confess the crime. He detailed how Hoffa was led to a vacant house for an alleged mob meeting. Confident that Sheeran would protect him, Hoffa agreed to go on the date. When they entered the house, his former friend and right hand shot him twice in the head. The body was then transported and cremated in the oven of a nearby funeral home. His body never appeared nor was there evidence to clarify the crime.

Brandt says that he traveled with Sheeran to the house and verified the story he had told him. He had also verified all the events related by him through written sources, conversations with FBI agents, and through newspaper archive work. Brandt affirms that the FBI has not declassified the case files or allowed him access to them, which would allow the Irishman’s version to be corroborated with certainty.

When the first edition of the book was published in 2004, the Fox News network followed the trail of the story and visited the house where the attack supposedly had taken place and requested that a forensic examination be carried out. Blood residue was found on the floor, where Sheeran had reported that Hoffa’s body had fallen, although the DNA test did not clarify whether or not it was Hoffa’s blood. Likewise, in 2001 the FBI had examined a hair and traces of skin found in the vehicle in which Hoffa had gone to an alleged appointment in a restaurant near the house and after almost three decades they verified that they were Hoffa’s. Sheeran’s account, this evidence and the inference from the connection between events allowed Brandt to present his version of the trade unionist’s death.

Officially, the FBI has not accepted this version of the death of the union leader, nor that the murderer was Sheeran. Neither has this version been denied. Nor has the FBI allowed access to its files.

## **Versions of a Crime**

The book is a biography supported by an investigation that aims to reconstruct past events on which there is no consensus. The story catches the reader from the beginning by the use of language, by the way it builds an almost police

plot and the way it gives a look at the society and politics of the United States over several decades.

As is often the case with this type of book that deals with crucial events about which different versions have been raised, *I Heard You Paint Houses* has defenders and detractors. Among the first are the journalist and writer Arthur Sloane (1991), who met Hoffa in the 1960s and is the author of a biography of him. When Brandt's book appeared in 2004, Sloane sent a message to the author – included in the epilogue of the next edition of the book – in which he states that he is convinced that Sheeran was the author of the murder and stresses the accuracy of the narrative.

Likewise, veteran journalist Jerry Capeci, author of *The Complete Idiot's Guide to the Mob* and who covered mob attacks between the 1960s and 1970s, lends credence to the book and believes that Sheeran indeed murdered both Joseph “*Crazy Joe*” Gallo and Hoffa, found the book convincing. After reviewing the facts, he states: “The account that Frank Sheeran provided about the disappearance of Hoffa, – to use an expression that I have heard repeatedly in the murders and trials of organized crime – rings true” (Capeci, 2005, p. 410). Capeci points out that Sheeran's statements for the book differ from those before him that were made under the promise of immunity from authorities. In addition, the book provides many details of the relationship between Hoffa and Bufalino, the operation and internal dynamics of the truckers' union and Joe Gallo's Hoffa's murders that no one had done before. Capeci claims he believes everything the book says.

But there are also detractors who question its veracity. Andy Petepiece (2004) was the first to dispute claims made in the book. He clarifies that the Apalachin was not a raid; it was by chance that the FBI came to that house and ran into the mob convention. Likewise, he questions Brandt's claim that Bufalino was an important mob boss. To Petepiece, Bufalino was just the boss of a small Pennsylvania mafia family and therefore could not have the impact assigned to him in the Commission.

This would demonstrate Brandt's lack of knowledge about the *Cosa Nostra* and affects the content of the work as a whole. Petepiece points out other inaccuracies in names and dates. He questions Sheeran's claims, such as that Jack Ruby (Lee Harvey Oswald's killer) was a member of the mob, stating that he was just a small showbusiness owner. This affects Sheeran's version of the assassination of J. F. Kennedy by the mob.

Other inaccuracies exist, according to Petepiece (2004). For example, when Sheeran claims to have taken Bufalino to the Apalachin meeting (it was proven that Hoffa arrived driving himself); or when he indicates having killed the mobster Joe Gallo, there are testimonies that say the opposite (such as that



of his bodyguard). In addition, at one point Sheeran tried to trick Brandt with a false letter from Hoffa that reaffirmed his stories (Brandt himself recounts it in his book and Sheeran justifies it by stating that it was insurance to deny everything to the authorities if they decided to involve him). Petepiece concludes that, ultimately, there is no way to corroborate whether Sheeran's story about Hoffa is true or false. There is not sufficient evidence to prove it either way.

Veteran journalist Dan Moldea (1993), another expert on the life of Jimmy Hoffa and author of *The Hoffa Wars: The Rise and Fall of Jimmy Hoffa*. In a later edition of that book, an annex is published in which he also disputes the veracity of what Brandt's book postulates. Moldea considers that Sheeran was one of those who took part in the murder, but not the one who committed it. Moldea believes the primary assassin was Sal Briguglio. Considering that Sheeran always denied having been Hoffa's murderer, that the FBI tests did not confirm that the blood in the house where everything supposedly happened belonged to the Union leader, that Sheeran changed his version in the end seeking to sell his story well, and that he had forged a letter from Hoffa that would confirm some of his accounts (which Brandt acknowledges in the book). Finally, Moldea highlights that there is no evidence of the alleged incineration of the body. The FBI checked and found no evidence in the area. Disgusted with the success of the book, Moldea states that there is a lack of rigor and sources, since the story was based only on the interview with Sheeran without contrasting or verifying what he said.

An article by Bill Tonelli (2019) also questions the content of Brandt's book. Tonelli wonders, referring to Sheeran, *how is it that for two decades a criminal was under the radar of justice and was not convicted (although in fact he was investigated, charged, and sentenced in 1991 to 23 years in prison)?* Tonelli also points out that Sheeran was not a top member of the mob; he was a step at the bottom of any hierarchy and was very little known. For this he died in the dark in a nursing home (actually, Brandt's book paints him as a frequently drunken thug who was in the service of Bufalino and Hoffa). Tonelli disputes the book and wonders: how is it that at the end of his life Sheeran began to confess incredible secrets that he had kept for decades, revealing that he was actually the unseen figure behind some of the biggest mob murders of all time? For Tonelli the answer is: to not get involved and not go to prison; furthermore, out of loyalty to Bufalino – who died only in 1992 – and others who survived him. Tonelli also questions if Sheeran was Joe Gallo's murderer. He quotes Gallo's wife, who describes the killer in a way that is very different from Sheeran's appearance. Tonelli also doubts Sheeran's language; he denies ever hearing anyone mention painting houses and doing carpentry work. Sheeran made it up. Brandt points

out, in defense of this, that the gangsters of some cities and states tend to have their own jargon.

The editor of *I Heard You Paint Houses*, Chip Fleischer (Brandt, 2019) responded to this criticism, calling it “a simplistic and intellectually dishonest mockery.” Fleischer maintains that the reviewer is unaware of the abundant evidence contained in the book. These are opinions, not serious analysis. Tonelli does not know that Hoffa’s own son affirmed that only with his father would he have agreed to go to the place where he was murdered. A judge had urged Sheeran to admit his participation in the crime. Tonelli ignores and minimizes the importance of Bufalino in the mafia network and does not refute anything said in the book. Tonelli also ignores Brandt’s expertise as a former prosecutor and misrepresents what the FBI reported about Sheeran. In addition to this, Fleischer emphasizes that the book does not take into account the annex to the 2005 edition, which contains the addition of corroborations to clarify doubts. Fleischer closes by saying that the book was published 15 years ago and no one has offered any evidence to refute any of the facts narrated there.

Another recent article kept the controversy going. Jack Goldsmith (2019) in *The New York Times* questions various aspects of the book and takes up Moldea’s (1993) and Tonelli’s (2019) criticisms. First, Goldsmith recounts that Sheeran had always pleaded not guilty and had told different stories accusing others of being the killers, but from 1995 Sheeran started changing his story in an apparent effort to get a book deal. Brandt writes that only in 2003, at the end of his life and in filmed testimony, did Sheeran admit to having killed Hoffa (when he could no longer be prosecuted, a reason that led him to plead his innocence).

Second, Goldsmith doesn’t think Bufalino and Sheeran were close enough, or that the former accompanied the latter on the plane that took him to Detroit to kill Hoffa. For him, no mob boss would do that (Brandt describes this closeness and includes photos of the two, including one in 1986 together in a nursing home with Bufalino in a wheelchair). Third, the book offers no direct corroborating evidence of Sheeran’s involvement in the murder or other novel elements, apart from the confession (the author believes Sheeran; contrast to the fact that the FBI listed Sheeran as early as 1975 as one of the likely killers. In addition, Goldsmith verified the story when they visited the house where the murder supposedly occurred and the FBI also confirmed that the traces of blood found corresponded to Hoffa).

The critic wonders why would the mob conspirators involve Sheeran, a long-time Hoffa loyalist, with the attendant uncertainty about how he might behave and with so many unnecessary loose ends. (Sheeran claims it’s because Bufalino was loyal to Hoffa and was used by the mob. There was no other way

to get close to Hoffa without him suspecting, since he totally trusted Sheeran. In addition, to involve Sheeran at once prevented him from later betraying them, since he would implicate himself). Goldsmith recognizes that Hoffa was killed at the behest of the Mafia; that bosses feared, among other things, that Hoffa could regain control of the union's multimillion-dollar pension fund that the family would use as its own major fund, but Goldsmith does not think that Sheeran was the murderer and considers that Sheeran tried to sell a story for profit.

In this same way, the reporter and documentarian Vincent Wade (2020), who at the time revealed the story of Hoffa's disappearance, wrote an article in a 2019 Daily Beast issue stating that he did not believe in Sheeran's version. Although Wade accepts that this was a mob hitman and close friend of Hoffa, Wade points out that Sheeran was a liar. Wade believes there is no evidence to place Sheeran at the scene of the crime. He believes a narrative about three mafia men from New Jersey had murdered and disappeared Hoffa on Tony Provenzano order (a capo). Sheeran was considered by the FBI to be the last of six suspects out of Michigan; mainly, due to his close association with Hoffa and his links with members of the mafia.

Between credits and discredits, the debate is back on the front page. It was fueled by the recent Scorsese film. The script was written by Charles Brandt and is faithful to the content of the book.

## **Agreements and Disagreements about the Mafia and Hoffa**

*I Heard You Paint Houses* recounts many facts from recent American history from the late 1950s to the late 1980s. There is an important biography of Hoffa's life, rise to power, and death (Walter, 1972; Sloane, 1991; Moldea, 1993; Rivers, 2015) and, in greater number and scope, books on the Italian-American mafia in this period (Sondern Jr, 1974; Warren Commission, 1964; Kennedy, 1968; Maas, 1969; Diapuolos and Linakis, 1976; Giancana and Giancana, 1992; Mustain and Capecci, 1992; Hersh, 1998; Dallek, 2001; Mike, 2009; Dash, 2009; Raab, 2015). Historical and sociological research, biographies and non-fiction research on the subject and the period join some facts that no one disputes anymore.

- a. The life of Jimmy Hoffa, his dedication to the truck drivers' cause and his rise in the union organization to achieve great power as president over the most important union in the United States.
- b. The infiltration of the mafia into the unions – including that of the truck drivers – manipulating strikes, extorting businessmen, exercising violence by competing with each other and mobilized their hosts

according to the interests of the mafia kingpins, their leaders and their relations with the political class. A million members, their families and relatives, was an important electorate.

- c. Illegal and violent methods used by unions against employers, competitors and those who hindered their leaders in corruption management of the truckers' funds. Hoffa's predecessor in the presidency of truck drivers' union (David Beck) was jailed for bribery, as were Hoffa and many other trade unionists.
- d. The crimes committed by Hoffa, his arrest, and conviction for jury manipulation (he was in prison between 1967-1971) and the pardon granted by President Richard Nixon in 1972 with the initial ban on being candidate again as president of the union organization.
- e. The indirect management of millions in union resources by the mafia were used to finance their investments in construction, casinos, and other sectors of the economy without being pressured: it was the Mafia's private bank.
- f. The relationship of the Kennedy clan with the Mafia, of Father Joseph P. Kennedy, who made his fortune illegally at the time of Prohibition (1920-1933) by importing liquor from Scotland and by associating with mafia bosses (Sam Giancana and Frank Costello, especially), and of son John F. Kennedy, elected with economic and logistical support from the Mafia (in addition to the manipulation of the votes in Illinois) in exchange for favoring and protecting their illegal interests and activities and to try to rescue their expropriated properties in Cuba.
- g. The action of Robert Kennedy (1925-1968) against the mafia and against Hoffa when he served as attorney general named by his brother (1961-1964). Prosecutor Kennedy with his actions and research revealed organized crime and from then organized crime began to be fought by the Justice Department and FBI. Before Robert Kennedy and in the following two decades there was a collusion and tolerance of the mafia by the authorities.
- h. The Appalachian meet more than a hundred mafia bosses and chiefs from all over the country in 1957 (the same year Hoffa was elected president of the truck drivers' union). This convention was intended to stop a new wave of violence among families that had led to the death bosses such as Francesco Scalice and Umberto Anastasia, and soldiers and middlemen, as well as to rethink the distribution of business areas.
- i. The alliance between the Kennedy administration, the mafia, and the CIA in the attempt to overthrow Fidel Castro in the frustrated Bay of

Pigs invasion. In 1975 there was official research into this. Just before testifying, Samuel Giancana was murdered.

- j. The recognition that Joseph Valachi (1904-1971), a member of the Genovese family, was the first member of Italian-American mafia to break the *omertà* (law or oath of silence) and revealed unknown aspects of the organization and its ways of behaving when he became a protected witness in 1963. With the *Valachi Papers*, the structure of organized crime, its ritual, hierarchies and ways of acting began to be revealed.
- k. Hoffa's ambition to regain his position in the union upon his release from prison led him to act recklessly and threaten to denounce and reveal his successor's links to the Mafia. It put at risk the Mafia's access to the union's pension fund millions in resources.
- l. The Mafia's prevention of Hoffa's eventual re-election to the union's presidency and his assassination. This reaffirms that in Mafia affairs violence was organized. The murders were authorized exclusively by the bosses. Only when there were disputes between families and their bosses was the established order broken. It could only return to its usual "normality" through new agreements.
- m. Participation in the conspiracy led to Hoffa's murder by people linked to organized crime: Mafia bosses Russell Bufalino, Anthony "Tony" Provenzano, of the Genovese family (and his hitman lieutenant Salvatore "Sal" Briguglio); Mafia operatives Anthony Giacalone, Samuel and Paul Vitale, as well as Chuckie O'Brien (in the past, very close to the union leader).
- n. Frank Sheeran was on the FBI's list of suspects in Hoffa's murder and disappearance.

Regarding other facts there are partial agreements and open disagreements. Thus, the imaginative capacity, intentional distortion, or certain liberties in making stories more attractive comes into play, but also keeps the core attached to the facts. The following are the most relevant disagreements of the book:

- a. Sheeran's claim that he brought Russell Bufalino to the Appalachian meeting and that it was a raid is questioned. Various sources suggest that the Mafia boss arrived by his own means and that there was no raid by the authorities. The mafia bosses were discovered by chance in the investigation of a different case.

- b. On the intervention of the Mafia in the assassination of John F. Kennedy (as stated in Brandt's book) there is no clarity as yet. There are different theories:
- Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson was involved, as he was to be removed for Kennedy's re-election (he was implicated in four major criminal investigations)
  - The CIA associated with Cuban exiles because Kennedy intended to dismantle the agency for its involvement in the assassinations of foreign leaders. The agency would use Cubans who did not agree with the government's policy toward the island.
  - Israelis who organized the strike because Israel was uncomfortable with Kennedy's pressure against its secret nuclear program and annoyed by Kennedy's sympathies for Arabs and the use of ex-Nazis in the US space program.
  - Kennedy was assassinated because powerful actors in the U.S. economic, military, and political sectors and Cuban exiles did not share their supposed condescension toward Cuba and because of his intention to withdraw troops from Vietnam (which affected their business, economic and strategic interests).<sup>1</sup>
  - There was a conspiracy. According to Warren Commission: it found no evidence that Lee Harvey Oswald (the assassin) or Jack Ruby (the assassin's assassin) were part of any conspiracy (domestic or foreign) to assassinate President Kennedy. The commission claimed the assassins acted alone.
  - The Mafia who thought that if it killed the president, it would remove his brother from the Prosecutor's Office and it would stop pressuring and persecuting them (a thesis supported by Brandt's book [2019], that includes Sheeran in the plot).
- c. Jacob Rubenstein, alias Jack Ruby (1911-1967), is identified by Brandt's book as someone close to Sam Giancana and who had links to the Dallas Mafia. This version is denied by others, who identify him as a nightclub manager and businessman, who claimed to have killed Oswald because he was confused and unbalanced when he fired, and that he had not planned it. The Warren Commission established that there was no connection between Ruby and Oswald and that they were not in an alleged mafia conspiracy.

---

1. A partial summary is published in Time magazine (1964, August 21).

- d. The book states that Hoffa and the union – and, eventually, the Mafia – supported Richard Nixon’s election in 1968. Some books claim that Nixon’s links to the truck drivers’ union and with mobsters such as Mickey Cohen, Meyer Lansky, Frank Costello and Tony Provenzano were strong. Some people deny these relationships and recall that Nixon pressed the Congress on comprehensive legislation to fight organized crime in 1970. The government launched the bill that gave federal prosecutors the right to indict criminal conspirators for crimes such as threats, murder, bribery, extortion, or embezzlement (it became known as the RICO [Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act] of 1970).
- e. Certain expressions that are supposed to be part of mafia slang at that time are not clear, such as the one used in the title of the book: *I Heard You Paint Houses*. Some people argue that Sheeran invented them; others do not refer to these expressions.
- f. There is no agreement that Frank Sheeran was an acknowledged mob killer. Some people do not know him, other people recognize him as a drunk and a little close to Hoffa. He is profiled by FBI as a hitman and a syndicate criminal. And lastly, Brandt (2019) highlights him as an expert assassin under Bufalino and Hoffa.
- g. There is no agreement on who and how Hoffa was killed. It is said that he was killed and then buried in a barrel with cement, or that he was killed and then put in a car that was then taken to a scrap metal compressor, or that he was shot and then buried at sea, or that he was killed and sent on a ship to the Middle East, or that *he had been thrown alive from a plane in the Great Lakes region*. It is also said he was crushed by a lumber machine, that he was killed by Richard Kuklinski with an ice pick and then buried in the trunk of a car. Frank Sheeran claims he shot him twice in a house on July 30, 1975, and then he had him cremated in a funeral home furnace.

What is fiction and what is fact in the Hoffa murder story? As it is a mystery that has remained unclear for almost three decades, and because the book mentions important facts about organized crime and its relationship with politics and power, the debate about these facts remains open.

## The Debate between Fiction and Reality in Biographical Accounts – Sources, Truthfulness, and Credibility

A particularly relevant issue to take into account in the analysis of any research on social facts – regardless of the genre chosen for its writing – is related to the sources, their treatment and the possibilities of verifying the statements. The truthfulness and credibility that an investigation can achieve depend on these. This issue is immersed in the debate around the question of fiction and reality in biographical narratives, which are works considered “non-fiction”.

About what has been called “non-fiction works” – also called, in a more restrictive way, “literary journalism” (a more restrictive term because it excludes historical works, biographies, stories about real events not conducted by journalists) – there is a dichotomy in the different versions. At one extreme exists those that state that any story is partially immersed – to a greater or lesser extent – in fiction, since there are only versions of the facts filtered through subjectivity issues, the language, the way of interpreting, the belief system, convictions and imagination. It is a relativistic position on the knowledge of social reality that, ultimately, expresses skepticism about the possibility of knowing and does not consider necessary a marked criterion between the fiction and the reality.

On the other hand, there is extreme radical realism, which states that one can reach an absolute, unquestionable, and objective knowledge of reality in which subjectivity does not intervene at all and what one does is to conceptually reproduce the world and facts to faithfully portray reality. Any narrative of events, characters and processes must correspond to facts and story. That is what objectivity is all about.

Figure 1. Contrast between reality and fiction



Source: Authors' Elaboration



The first view assumes that the subject recreates reality through language, and also creates it. When narrating facts, one takes the liberties of imagining, inventing, “complementing” facts about which one does not have complete information and, as usually happens especially with the testimonies of people as part of the events, as sources for different interpretations. Although the intention is to narrate something real, imagination exists and the aim is to make the story believable. The second version is conveyed in the corresponding conception of knowledge, which states that there is a relationship between science and reality. Writers should claim a strong relationship to make their accounts reliable and persuasive, able to withstand disputes, debates and possible questioning. Knowledge is a conceptual reconstruction of the world which aims to argue its validity as a socio-scientific representation of reality; it is sufficient, in terms of rigorous methodologies, reliable sources and verifiable versions. Finally, a narration of events can be reconstructed through the sources used (Agazzi, 2020).

The issue is not that easy to present as a dichotomy; although it is useful to clarify the differences of the two extreme and opposing views. In this regard, the approaches of John Hersey (1980) and Roberto Herrscher (2018) are important to analyzing the relationships between works of facts and fiction that are considered “non-fiction” and that include different modalities, such as stories, biographies, historical novels, and chronicles.

There are four perspectives:

1. Non-fiction strictly adheres to the facts. It is the result of well-documented inquiries, with cross-referenced sources, verified data, testimonies contrasted with documented sources; in short, a wide network of empirical evidence. Here, there is no room for literary liberties that affect or distort the core of the facts. Herrscher (2018) states, “When there is not enough information, no matter how hard one rummages, sometimes one must make the decision to abandon the realm of nonfiction or to abandon the project outright” (p. 283). There is no place for speculation or conjecture. One must be faithful to the facts and maintain all the references that allow for the verification of statements’ accuracies, as expressed by Domenico Chiappe (2010) in his work *Tan real como la ficción (As Real as Fiction)*. When there is a lack of sufficient, verifiable, and reliable information, this affects the basic core of the story that intends to provide an account of the facts therefore, giving up or postponing writing is the best solution. Information deficits should be carefully weighed before inclusion.
2. Nonfiction with literary liberties may include the invention of characters or the invention of attributes or thoughts assigned to characters

or conversations, or places or events that never existed (although they may have existed). The stories gain in dramatic tension. These stories are made more attractive to readers; even the facts are presented as if the work were a novel. However, rigorousness is lost and the correspondence between what is reported and what happened is forgotten. Ramón Tijeras (2011) asks and answers:

How does one transform reality into a novel? In a simple way: inventing dialogues that may have been but that did not take place, describing moods and landscapes with such subjectivity that they do not correspond to reality and transferring to the reader thoughts and appreciations that have nothing to do with contrasted and true facts to give a sensation of environmental realism (p. 4).

Similarly, Roberto Herrsche (2018) states, “We can make our pen fly so that what we saw and what we heard shines through. But what we did not see, what we did not hear belongs to the realm of the novel” (p. 246). Nevertheless, many authors defend this type of work. Truman Capote himself responded to his early critics by calling them “sweaty typists” who took it upon themselves to describe reality without style or much imagination.<sup>2</sup>

3. Discard the non-fiction genre and present the work as fiction based on true stories. They can be historical novels, biographical accounts, biographies reconstructed with the testimonies of the character and other people close to the author. John Hersey’s criticism of the founding triad of nonfiction literature (Truman Capote, Tom Wolf and Norman Mailer) is that their works ended up falling into fiction, even though they dealt with true stories. Their excuse was that they were giving an account of facts through a novelty style that did not fit into the classical genre molds, but they resorted to wrong information, or invented facts and dialogues, forgetting that everything that is written must be rigorously true; if it is not, the most honest thing to do is to declare that they are novels based on true stories.<sup>3</sup>
4. To fully accept that these are fictitious or invented works without the intention to reconstruct facts, even though the characters may have

---

2. Included in *El oficio de escritor* (González, 1959).

3. Hersey’s reviews are directed at Truman Capote (1988) *Ataúdes tallados a mano*, Tom Wolf (2010) and Norman Mailer (2006). All three cases resorted to dubious, invented, imagined or simulated sources. What they reported was shown as true stories, but in reality, they were embellished versions, inaccurate statements, or lies and fabrications. Roberto Herrscher (2018) analyzes these cases in the light of Hersey’s approaches in his book on literary journalism.

existed. They are fictionalized versions of facts, but do not claim to correspond to what was told and what happened. These are made-up stories. In Domenico Chiappe's (2010) words: "The fiction writer creates a story that appears to be true, while the journalist (and those who write non-fiction stories) ignores everything that does not seem to have happened. The fiction maker, even when inspired by reality, separates the references. Invents, imagines" (p. 10).

According to Charles Brandt (2019), the book *I Heard You Paint Houses* corresponds to the first genre; non-fiction literature strictly adhering to facts, although it can be read almost like a novel. On the contrary, for its critics, it is a non-fiction work with a lot of liberties and without a rigorous contrast of sources, testimonies, or analysis of evidence. It mixes truths (many of them widely spread) and lies, fabrications or misrepresentations of the facts.

If the work falls into the first category, there are fundamental aspects to comply with, as it is always the case with social research. Serious and rigorous research has some fundamental attributes:

- a. Statements should be subjected to verification with other sources. A single source is not acceptable (especially if it is a testimony).
- b. Cross-referencing should be used. This is because there are usually several sources for the same fact. The sources should be investigated and their validity, content and coherence should be analyzed.
- c. Previous contributions that have been accepted as valid because of their managed rigorousness and seriousness, and their methodologies cannot be disregarded. They should be verified or refuted.
- d. Credit must be given to sources and traces should be left so that they can be consulted and verified.
- e. The methodology used, how sources and informants were located, who they were and why their versions are credible and reliable should be detailed.
- f. Compare versions and establish why one is preferred over the other(s).
- g. Relevant information may not be omitted or misrepresented. And
- h. Impartiality must be specified in the investigation.

Moreover, in a biography – as is the case here – methodological aspects should be considered to provide a convincing, accepted, and reliable reconstruction of the facts (Balán, 1974; Bourdieu, 1989; Denzin, 1989; De Miguel, 1995). On the one hand, to keep in mind that there are different levels of truth: the life actually lived, the life told, and the life recorded in writing that is complemented

by other sources. On the other hand, in the relationship between the life lived and the life told, there are usually omissions, misrepresentations, lies, and interests in affecting third parties or exonerating them; it signifies unspoken intentions. The researcher is faced with the task of uncovering the truth, looking for inconsistencies, contradictions, falsehoods and manipulations.

One should also consider that memory is often faulty, selective, or intentionally managed. The perspective of facts and of life changes greatly with the person's age. Similarly, one must always ask oneself why someone wishes to relate his or her life, what the purpose is, if there is any undisclosed interest, why a certain moment or juncture is chosen and how it affects what is going to be told.

In addition, this type of work includes a double subjectivity: that of the main character who selectively presents and recreates his/her own life and with his/her own way of seeing the facts and the world (affected by the time that has passed); and that of the writer, who questions, transcribes, writes, provides logic, and orders the story. There is always a need to cut, select, include, or exclude events. All of this has implications for the work as a whole.

As these types of works tell life stories, they often combine socio-scientific analysis and art-literature. Writing is often particularly difficult. Fiction and non-fiction must have clearly defined boundaries.

## Closing with Questions

In light of the previous considerations: Is the story told in *I Heard You Paint Houses* true? Are the sources reliable and well used? Is the methodology used by the author in the construction of the story relevant and rigorous? Are Brandt's responses to his critics convincing?

As previously reviewed, there are several questionings of Charles Brandt's (2019) book and some of them refer to the methodology and sources. Dan Moldea (1993) has been one of those who has questioned the book the most. He disputes the credibility of its contents, especially, Sheeran's version of having been present and having participated in many events related to Hoffa and his death. Moldea states that in his research and for many years, he interviewed more than a thousand people and consulted different written sources, and their versions do not correspond to Sheeran's. He expresses that a work based on a single source is not reliable, especially if it is of a convicted felon and a liar who claims to have understood and seen everything, to have been at all the important events of Hoffa's life, and have seen the actions of the Mafia for three decades.

Similarly, critics point out that Sheeran changed his version several times. In addition, he went so far as to forge Hoffa's signature to try to lend credibility to his version of certain events, therefore he lied or made up an ending to make himself seem more important and to be able to profit financially from the sale of his story. In this case, there is a gap in the truth lived and the truth told by Sheeran and recorded by Brandt. The author may have been careless in verifying the facts by cross-checking sources and inquiring further. Critics also criticize the fact that only at the end of his life (almost octogenarian) did Sheeran begin to tell things he had kept quiet for decades. Suddenly, he remembered and left a record of events lived for more than fifty years. This suggests selectivity, intentionality, manipulation, and self-serving testimony.

Brandt's answer to these questions is based on a statement made in the epilogue to the 2005 edition and included in subsequent reprints:

In some jurisdictions, the reliability of a confession is enough to be convicted, in others, some corroborating evidence should be added. In this case, in 1999, Sheeran had confessed to me that he had lured Hoffa into the seat of a maroon Mercury [...]. On September 7, 2001, the FBI announced that a hair had been recovered from the car's back seat headrest and, after all these years, it had been DNA tested, effectively confirming that it was Hoffa's hair. Sheeran's confession and that important piece of forensic evidence had been more than enough to convict Sheeran. I myself have sent four defendants to death row with less evidence than all the evidence I have amassed against Sheeran, based on his own words. (Brandt: 2014, p. 427).

This quotation raises several considerations. First, that for the author Sheeran's confession was convincing. He states that he is not a novice in the field, as he has wide experience in judicial work and corroborating evidence. Therefore, he is supposed to be an expert on interrogation and false confession, lies, and inconsistencies. Second, Brandt had forensic evidence, was able to verify Sheeran's account of Hoffa's death by visiting the house where it occurred, and had evidence of a blood trail on the floor of the house. All this led him to infer that Sheeran's version of the union leader's death was true. Third, throughout the book, Sheeran's assertions are contrasted with other bibliographical sources, from accounts, press reports, documents, Hoffa's biographies, the *Warren Commission Report*, and Robert Kennedy's book-testimony. Fourth, Brandt himself revealed Sheeran's attempt to forge a letter from Hoffa attesting to various events recounted by him. In doing so, he did not give up the investigation; on the contrary, he insisted that Sheeran relate facts that only he knew because he had been the main character. This insistence is not a lack or a

weak point of the work and of the book; on the contrary, it allows readers to appreciate the persistence of the researcher and writer to unveil facts that had not been verified.

However, having read and reread the book, there is a feeling that Brandt gave full credibility to Sheeran, despite the fact that Sheeran had previously lied to him and others. This could be justified because he avoided going to jail as a confessed criminal, but also – as several critics claim – because he was looking for money and waited until he was close to death to make the final confession; or both.

There is also the feeling that Sheeran was always conveniently on the scene at important moments: in the prelude to the Commission meeting at Apalachin (leading Bufalino to it); in the plot to assassinate J. F. Kennedy (delivering the weapons); in delivering weapons and money for the foiled Bay of Pigs invasion; in delivering money to finance Richard Nixon's campaign; and then, in securing a pardon for Hoffa at the place where Joey Gallo was assassinated, claiming to be the assassin. Too many coincidences or events that made a critic claimed that Sheeran looked like the Forrest Gump of the Mafia, alluding to the famous character of the eponymous film that always appeared in the climaxes next to important characters of the story.

Brandt's critics will try to prove that their arguments are true with new inquiries and Brandt will respond by defending his version. Until this version of Hoffa's death is conclusively refuted, it will stand.

## References

- Agazzi, E. (2020). *La objetividad científica y sus contextos*. Fondo de Cultura Económica.
- Balán, J. (Ed.). (1974) *Las historias de vida en ciencias sociales. Teoría y técnicas*. Nuestra visión.
- Bourdieu, P. (1989). La ilusión biográfica. *Historia y fuente oral*, 2, 27-33. <http://dx.doi.org/10.22201/fcpys.24484938e.2011.56.29460>.
- Brandt, C. (2019). *El irlandés. Jimmy Hoffa. Caso cerrado*. Crítica.
- Brill, S. (1978). *The Teamsters*. Simon and Schuster.

- Capeci, J. (2005). *The Complete Idiot's Guide to the Mafia*. Penguin Random House.
- Capote, T. (1988). *Ataúdes tallados a mano, en música para camaleones*. Anagrama.
- Chiappe, D. (2010). *Tal real como la ficción*. Laertes.
- Comisión Warren. (1964). *Informe de la Comisión Warren sobre el asesinato del presidente Kennedy*. Seix Barral.
- Dash, M. (2009). *The First Family: Terror, Extortion and the Bird of the American Mafia*. Simon & Shuster.
- Dallek, R. (2001). *An unfinished life: John F. Kennedy, 1917-1963*. A Back Bay Book.
- Diapuolos, P. & Linakis, S. (1976). *The Sixth Family*. Dutton.
- De Miguel, J. M. (1995). *Auto/biografías*. Cuadernos Metodológicos.
- Denzin, N. K. (1989). *Interpretative Biography*. Nebury Park.
- El Mundo. (27 de noviembre de 2019). *Interrogatorios, amenazas y asesinatos: la verdadera historia detrás de El irlandés*. <https://www.elmundo.es/cultura/literatura/2019/11/27/5ddd47a0fc6c836f438b457d>
- Fleische, C. (16 de agosto de 2019). *The Publisher of I Heard You Paint Houses Responds to "The Lies of the Irishman"*. Slate. <https://slate.com/culture/2019/08/the-irishman-book-publisher-reply-bill-tonelli.html>
- Giancana, S. & Giancana, C. (1992). *Fuego cruzado*. Grijalbo.
- Goldsmith, J. (2019). *Jimmy Hoffa y The Irishman. A True Crimen Story?* The New York Review of Books. <https://www.nybooks.com/daily/2019/09/26/jimmy-hoffa-and-the-irishman-a-true-crime-story/>
- González, J. L. (1959). *El oficio de escritor*. Ediciones Era.
- Herrscher, R. (2018). *Periodismo narrativo*. Ícono.

- Hersey, J. (1980). The Legend on the License. In *Tom Goldstein, Killing the Messenger* (pp. 213-232). Columbia University Press.
- Hersh, S. M. (1998). *The Dark Side of Camelot*. Little Brown & Co.
- Kennedy, R. (1968). *El enemigo en casa*. Plaza y Janés.
- Maas, P. (1969). *Las revelaciones de Joe Valachi*. Noguer.
- Mailer, N. (2006). *La canción del verdugo*. Barcelona.
- Moldea, D. E. (1993). *The Hoffa Wars: The Rise and Fall of Jimmy Hoffa*. Shpolksy Publishers.
- Mustain, G. & Capeci, J. (1992). *Murder Machine. A True Story of Madness and the Mafia*. Dutton.
- Petepiece, A. (2004). *Mobology scholar Andy Petepiece's review of I Heard You Paint Houses by Charles Brandt*. <https://www.moldea.com/PetepieceOnSheeran.html>.
- Raab, S. (2015). *Five Families: The Rise, Decline and Resurgence of America's Most Powerful Mafia Empires*. Thomas Dunne Books.
- Revista Time. (1964, 21 de agosto). *A Compendium of Curious Coincidences*. <https://web.archive.org/web/20070129102012/http://jcgi.pathfinder.com/time/magazine/article/0%2C9171%2C876021%2C00.html>.
- Rivers, C. (2015). *Jimmy Hoffa. The Controversial Life and Disappearance of the Godfather of the Teamsters*. Charles Rivers Editor.
- Sheridan, W. (1972). *The Fall and Rise of Jimmy Hoffa*. Saturday Review Press.
- Sondern Jr., F. (1974). *La mafia*. Bruguera.
- Sloane, A. A. (1991). *Hoffa*. MIT Press.



Tonelli, B. (2019). *The Lies of the Irish Man*, *Slate*. Slate. <https://slate.com/culture/2019/08/the-irishman-scorsese-netflix-movie-true-story-lies.html>.

Wade, V. (2020). *The Irishman Didn't Kill Jimmy Hoffa*. <https://vincewade.net/the-irishman-didnt-kill-jimmy-hoffa/>.

Wolf, T. (2010). *Lo que hay que tener*. Anagrama.

# The Perception of Corruption and Political Orientations: A Study of University Students (UAM)\*

*(English Version)*

La percepción sobre corrupción y las orientaciones políticas: un caso de estudio en jóvenes universitarios (UAM)

Percepções de corrupção e orientações políticas: um estudo de caso de jovens estudantes universitários (UAM)

*Received 11 March 2022. Accepted 19 April 2022.*

Anais Palacio Quejada\*\*

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7731-7917>

Colombia

› To cite this article:

Palacio, A. (2023). The Perception of Corruption and Political Orientations: A Study of University Students (UAM).

<https://doi.org/10.30854/anfv.30.n54.2023.882>

Universidad Autónoma de Manizales. L-ISSN 0121-6538.

E-ISSN 2248-6941.

CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

## Abstract

**Objective:** The goal was to examine how a group of students from the Universidad Autónoma de Manizales saw political corruption and determine if they had a tendency to accept or reject it. **Methodology:** A typology of perceptions/orientations was constructed based on the most relevant bibliography on the subject, which made it possible to characterize five types of perceptions/orientations: cynical, conformist, fugitive, renovator, and rebel. In addition, criteria such as political effectiveness, interest in politics, affiliation with political groups, and exposure to various media were taken into consideration. Also, a survey was conducted for a display of 586 freshman students in the 2018 academic year. The SPSS program was used to analyze the survey's responses, and through regressions, frequency

\* This article is a result of the University of Manizales's research project, "Política y corrupción: percepciones y disposiciones en jóvenes universitarios como líderes del futuro," de la Universidad Autónoma de Manizales. The investigation was carried out between June 2018 and December 2020.

\*\* Master in International Relations, Specialist in University Education, Political Scientist. Universidad Nacional, Medellín. [aapalaci@unal.edu.co](mailto:aapalaci@unal.edu.co)

analyses, and percentage calculations, a relationship between the responses and perceptions and orientations was established. **Results:** In contrast to popular belief, young people tend to be interested in political issues. They believe that even though the corruption phenomenon makes them unpopular, things will get better from within their own environment. **Conclusion:** The young people in the exhibit oscillate between conformists and innovators; yet, the university should foster students' interest in political issues to foster discussion and the development of opinions based on democratic principles.

**Keywords:** perception; orientations; political corruption; political efficacy; interest in politics.

## Resumen

**Objetivo:** el objetivo fue analizar cómo un grupo de estudiantes de la Universidad Autónoma de Manizales percibían la corrupción política y validar si presentaban una tendencia de aceptar o rechazar la corrupción. **Metodología:** se construyó una tipología de percepciones/orientaciones soportadas en la bibliografía más relevante en la materia, lo cual permitió caracterizar cinco tipos de percepciones/orientaciones: cínico, conformista, fugitivo, renovador y rebelde. Adicionalmente, se tomaron como variables la *eficacia política*, *el interés en la política*, *la asociación a grupos políticos* y *la exposición a distintos medios de comunicación*. También se realizó una encuesta para una muestra de 586 estudiantes de pregrado en el año 2018. Las respuestas del cuestionario fueron corridas en el software SPSS y por medio de regresiones, análisis de frecuencia y porcentajes se consolidó un marco de relaciones entre respuestas y percepciones/orientaciones. **Resultados:** contrario a lo que se piensa, los jóvenes tienden a interesarse por los temas políticos. Aunque el fenómeno de la corrupción les genera rechazo, piensan que la situación mejorará desde el propio entorno. **Conclusión:** los jóvenes de la muestra se oscilan entre conformistas y renovadores; sin embargo, la universidad debe promover el interés por los temas políticos para el debate y la construcción de opiniones fundadas en principios democráticos.

**Palabras clave:** percepción; orientaciones; corrupción política; eficacia política; interés por la política.

## Resumo

**Objetivo:** o objetivo era analisar como um grupo de estudantes da Universidade Autônoma de Manizales percebeu a corrupção política e validar se eles demonstravam uma tendência a aceitar ou rejeitar a corrupção. **Metodologia:** uma tipologia de percepções/orientações foi construída com base na literatura mais relevante sobre o assunto, o que permitiu caracterizar cinco tipos de percepções/orientações: cínica, conformista, fugitiva, renovadora e rebelde. Além disso, a eficácia política, o interesse pela política, a associação com grupos políticos e a exposição a diferentes meios de comunicação foram tomados como variáveis. Também foi realizada uma pesquisa para uma amostra de 586 estudantes de graduação em 2018. As respostas ao questionário foram executadas no software SPSS e através de regressões, análises de frequência e percentuais foi consolidada uma estrutura de relações entre respostas e percepções/orientações. **Resultados:** Ao contrário da crença popular, os jovens tendem a se interessar por questões políticas. Apesar de serem repelidos pelo fenômeno da corrupção, eles acreditam que a situação irá melhorar a partir de seu próprio ambiente. **Conclusão:** os jovens da amostra oscilam entre conformistas e renovadores; entretanto, a universidade deve promover o interesse pelas questões políticas para o debate e a construção de opiniões baseadas em princípios democráticos.

**Palavras chave:** percepção; orientações; corrupção política; eficácia política; interesse em política.

## Introduction

The perception of corruption is strongly correlated with political ideologies (Arkehede, 2014). The aforementioned statement supports the notion that, in general, when one thinks about a political issue, one could act in ways that are allusive to that issue. These issues relating to perception and behavior are significant because they help understand the context in which various behaviors, whether critical, passive, aligned with political institutions, or hostile, develop. For example, why does the juvenile agitation over public issues emerge? How is high or low electoral participation understood? Why is there a widespread rejection of some political institutions? Etc. The relationship between perception and orientation can be used to explain the above questions.

Analyzing how political corruption affects perception and how it later shapes attitude and behavior in university students is extremely important in the current situation of Colombia. This, first, because Colombia appears in some statistics<sup>1</sup> as a country with a high level of corruption; and second, because university environments train professionals to address the general problems of society.

The goal of this article is to analyze and provide the findings from research on perception-related topics related to corruption. Due to the increasing level of corruption present in government institutions, the analysis therefore focuses on how students perceive and behave in a crisis-related environment.

The theoretical proposals made by Hirschman (1970), Paige (1971), Woolcock and Narayan (2000), and Mierina are evaluated in the article to a significant extent (2014). Based on the previous authors, a typology is constructed that characterizes perception/orientation in five types: cynical, conformist, renovator, fugitive, and rebel. Regarding the most problematic behavioral types, educational environments can provide solutions. From this point on, academia assumes a significant role in reflecting on the availability of complementary courses.

The data related to the population of the statistical display are shown throughout this work in relation to their perceptions of political corruption.

---

1. Data from Transparencia Internacional Colombia (2012), which measures citizens' perceptions of a country's corruption, show that the region of Latin America as a whole is worrisome. Given that its citizens perceive the Colombian State negatively, the case in question never stops receiving attention. In addition, a number of newsworthy cases and ongoing legal investigations might be mentioned, including the health care cartel, Reficar, Odebrecht, and the toga cartel, among others. What stands out the most is the study by the Comptroller's Office, which shows how in Colombia corruption costs the State between 40 and 50 billion a year (El Tiempo, 2017).

Data are collected based on questions that include variables such as media exposure (referred to as "media"), political effectiveness (referred to as "EFIPOL"), interest in politics (referred to as "IAPOL"), and citizen support networks and participation in political institutions (referred to as "networks"). It is important to note that the study's most important variables are the ones mentioned above because they are related to the sociopolitical environment in which the participants are embedded. To put it another way, it emphasizes who individuals establish relationships with or the various community organizations in which they participate. It also shows the information sources individuals choose, identifies the institutions they think are not very helpful to the community (or, conversely, those they trust), and emphasizes the general interest that people have in political issues.

The first section of this article demonstrates how the concepts guiding the investigation have been conceptualized in relation to perception, corruption, and political behavior. The findings and discussions from the investigation on the perceptions and orientations held by Universidad Autónoma de Manizales (UAM) undergraduate students are presented in a second appendix. The most critical university environment variables are highlighted in this section. Finally, some conclusions are drawn.

### **Conceptual Framework: Perception of Corruption and Disposition to Political Behavior**

Almond and Verba's contributions set the stage for the discussion of political perception as a research avenue (1963). In general terms, the evolution of the analysis of political culture went from being understood as a set of values, perceptions, and representations that individuals have about the political system to a broader consideration conditioned to the contexts in which it is analyzed.

For instance, according to Morán and Benedicto (1995), political culture is understood in four dimensions: 1. The individual as a political actor; 2. The relationship between the citizen and the political; 3. Citizens' perceptions of the political system; and 4. Conclusive assessments of the institutional framework. The focus of the previous categories was on perceptions, with a particular focus on those that are related to the phenomenon of political corruption in the public sphere.

The diverse body of literature has made it possible to support the idea that perception should be understood as a sensory process by which people choose and interpret environmental information (Coren *et al.*, 2001). As a result, the

sensory messages transform into something understandable and provide the person with an action function (Wittig, 1979). In other words, individuals have the ability to think about and make decisions that will allow them to behave in their immediate circumstances. Although internal factors affect perception, it is essential to comprehend the external, or environmental, factors.

According to Coren *et al.* (2001), the analysis of perception should not be done by analyzing isolated units, but should take into account global configurations. The above idea leads to the understanding that individuals are immersed in dynamic environments in which there is an interaction between the individual and society. In that sense, it is recognized that through different experiences people build their particular perceptions and it is there where the preferences, priorities, and motivations of the individual about what he/she perceives are evidenced. Therefore, perception involves ideological and cultural references that help to explain reality.

According to Vargas (1994), perception involves the "[...] recognition of everyday experience that makes it possible to evoke experiences and knowledge previously acquired throughout life" (p. 49). On the other hand, it relates its performance with the environment:

Perception must be understood as relative to the social-historical situation because it has a spatial and temporal location and depends on changing circumstances and the acquisition of new experiences that incorporate other elements into the previous perceptual structures, modifying and adapting to the conditions. (Vargas, 1994, p. 50).

To identify perception, four unchangeable elements are proposed by the earlier authors. One is the sensory process of organizing information; the other, the existence of an environment that delivers the information; the third, the relationship between past and present; and finally, action. On this final topic, it is suggested that in order to fully understand perception, one must also consider how people might behave in the future in light of their beliefs.

The term "corruption" has also been the subject of a lengthy dispute, particularly in studies of corruption in Colombia (Neuman and Engel, 2017; Lindarte, 2017). This research defines corruption as:

The violation of a duty by a decision-maker with the aim of obtaining extra-legal personal benefits for the offender or victim in exchange for the grant of benefits to the offender or victim that outweigh the costs of the offence or of the offended payment or service. (Garzón, 1997, p. 47).

Or, to put it more simply, it is understood as: "the abuse of public power for private gain."

It is important to note that the idea of "corruption" is not what is important, but rather its unique adjective,<sup>2</sup> in this case, "perception about corruption." The latter is defined as a sensory process<sup>3</sup> by which an individual interprets, defines, and qualifies the information received from the environment about the unethical actions of those operating in political institutions. The previous idea tries to address the environment as a place where things like school, family, and friends/groups, among others, collide.

Regarding "orientations," the contributions of Albert Hirschman (1970), Jeffrey Paige (1971), Woolcock and Narayan (2000), and Mierina (2014). They forced one to take into account the analytical elements that can help understand how UAM students perceive corruption. First, the relationship between perception and behavior orientation was established. Next, a typology specific to the university setting was developed. Finally, the responses were examined to determine whether they were representative of a democratic environment or whether they accepted corrupting conditions. The university<sup>4</sup> students as future professionals and social leaders thus voiced criticisms of how the Colombian political system functions (specifically, their views on its legitimacy). The key is to analyze whether their perception/orientation reinforces support for or rejection of corruption.

## Perception/Orientation Model

In Hirschman's model (1970) there are three types of behavior regarding perception called citizen responses. According to the author, the citizen's perception of the political system can be classified into three categories: "withdrawal," "voice" and "loyalty." The first response occurs when citizens feel powerless and distrustful, but their behavior is passive. It is there that apathy, indignation, rejection and alienation can be seen. In other words, citizens are not encouraged to vote because they think that they do not make

---

2. According to Sartori (1984), a commensurable concept can be constructed by adapting it according to the research approach. That is to say, in a research process it is possible to construct one's own concept, which must be coherent in terms of meaning and adequacy to the context of study.

3. According to Wittig (1979), sensory processes are what translate messages into actionable information that may be understood.

4. According to the update booklet of the youth policy of the department of Caldas 2018-2028, young people are less interested in political issues and there is an institutional challenge regarding the political culture in the department (Salazar [i] *et al.*, 2018).



any difference and that everything will continue to be the same. The second response is the voice. In this, citizens are active, but their activity is divided between those who propose reforms and those who propose changes from an extreme or non-institutionalized path. Finally, the third response is that of loyalty. Here the citizens are conformists because they present two types of situations: one, that they benefit from the system; or another, that they are committed to it from values of continuity, even if they do not perceive benefits. That is, they develop a conformist response as long as they go with the flow, even when they conceive it as harmful.

The previous proposal was one of the pioneers, since it showed the relationship between perception and political behavior. However, advances in these studies led to reconsider these ideas involving more characteristics of the phenomenon being discussed.

For its part, Paige's model (1971) supports four attitudes: the first, loyalty, in which the citizen actively supports the government structure; the second, dissident, when the citizen is interested in politics, but distrusts the leaders; the third, of subordination, when the citizen is not interested in politics, but trusts that the leaders can change things eventually; and finally, that of alienated, when he/she does not trust the institutions or the political leaders.

As can be seen, Paige adds another criterion to the typology with respect to the one constructed by Hirschman, complementing the analysis. However, it is Mierina (2014) who manages to focus on a more general typology regarding the political environment, for which she takes up the ideas of David Easton (1992) on the entry and exit processes<sup>5</sup> that the political system has. In this model, it is argued that each type of orientation corresponds to how the citizen identifies the political system in the face of its inputs and outputs. In this sense, efficacy is related to the input process; and confidence, with the output. The first occurs when citizens feel that they can influence the most important government decisions (internal effectiveness) and when they observe that the government responds to citizen influence (external effectiveness). For its part, trust is the good performance of the Government that can lead to social welfare.

When the performance of the State is deficient, it can lead to *coping*, which consists of the social construction of informal private networks of cooperation and reciprocity that allow covering what the State does not do (Woolcock and Narayan, 2000). This can also be understood as alternative networks. Therefore, Mierina builds four types of attitudes directly connected to the State actions.

---

5. According to Easton (1992), the behavior of the political system can respond to the needs (output) and demands (input) of its citizens. This allows its stability or continuity.

The attitudes are:

1. Loyalty attitude: high efficiency and high trust.
2. Dissident attitude: high efficiency and low trust.
3. Subordinate attitude: low efficiency and high trust.
4. Alienated attitude: low efficiency and low trust.

The use of these models has highlighted that more educated young people are more inclined to attitudes of alienation; that is, young people think that their actions do not influence political decisions (Seeman, 1959), they feel powerless (Roberts, 1987), they show self-distancing behavior (Korzeniowski, 1994) and the lack of confidence in political institutions and inefficiency lead them to challenge the system (Bowler and Donovan, 2002).

The previous models are situated from the classic postures to the most contemporary ones. Mierina's orientation model is related to Hirschman's proposal, but connects more directly to the action of the State, in addition to proposing an additional category.

The model built for this research includes the advances of the authors previously highlighted; especially, considering two criteria: 1. There is a relationship between perception and disposition to political behavior; and 2. An additional category to Mierina's vision is necessary. This is the "critical subject to the system"; however, its action is the escape, for which the following categories are established: "cynical," "conformist," "renovator," "fugitive" and "rebellious."

The expansion of the categories allows understanding that the phenomena increasingly present distinctive elements, so it is significant to qualify the social aspects of the contemporary and particular context. The following proposed orientation model leads to the idea that in a context where individuals are permeated by the same problem—such as corruption—there are different perceptions/orientations: "cynical", "conformist", "renovator", "fugitive" and "rebellious". These types of perceptions make up, in turn, identities that go beyond social class, showing a motley crossover related to the different ways in which the personality of the social group is expressed. In this sense, the citizen takes advantage, conforms, transforms, flees, or is against the system.

**Table 1.** *Perception Regarding Corruption and Orientation to Political Behavior.*

Dependent Variable	Perception/Orientation Categories	Variables
UAM students' perception of corruption	Cynicism <sup>6</sup>	Classified as a perception/orientation of negative nature. The citizen considers corruption as something bad, but tries to accommodate to this reality and take advantage of it.
	conformism	Classified as a perception/orientation of negative nature. The citizen considers corruption as something natural that exists in a society, recognizes that there are aspects that must be improved but their participation in change processes will be mediated by the level of importance of the fact.
	Renewal	Classified as a perception/orientation of positive nature. The citizen considers corruption as something serious; therefore, he/she is interested in political issues and proposes changes through participation in organizations, etc.
	Breakout	Classified as a perception/orientation of negative nature. The citizen considers corruption as something important to solve, but does not see him/herself as part of the changes, does not have any proposals and is not related to political issues.
	Rebellion	Classified as a perception/orientation of negative nature. The citizen considers corruption as something extremely serious and proposes root changes in the structure of the State through violent actions.

Source: Authors' Elaboration

6. Regarding cynicism, authors such as Schyns et al. (2005) state that it is the attitude of an individual who observes the political system with a deep-rooted conviction of evil, therefore, they believe that the government is irresponsible, does not respond to the interests of its citizens and that there is no way to transform the political situation for the better.

This model is based on operationalizing key concepts to build an association between perception and disposition to political behavior. The varied discussion of the sources employed is contained in the model, where the questions from the surveys prepared by Campbell and Thomas (2019) are rescued. For its part, the operationalization process indicated the importance of the following variables: “political efficacy,” “political participation networks,” “exposure to the media,” and “interest in political issues.”

The sources and their empirical studies show that the environment of participation networks influences political perceptions and these, in turn, condition forms of action. Also, the current forms of socialization of young people are mediated. Social changes have led to the use of the media on a more daily basis, which understands the individual as a receiver and producer of information (Castells, 2009). One of the assumptions about the media is its role in generating discontent regarding corruption issues in the country. Therefore, one of its effects is citizen criticism of political institutions in which they see corrupt action (Arkehede, 2014).

However, these conclusions are valued in the process of analyzing the results, which maintain consistency with previous studies, but in other cases indicate differences due to the particularities of the context where the sample is taken. The results show the relationship with respect to the questions and the construction of direct correlation matrices amongst the categories.

## Methodology

To ascertain the type of perception about corruption of the UAM students and its relationship with the disposition to political behavior, a model of orientations was built based on the relationship between “perception” and “disposition to behavior,” for which the categories used in the survey allow identifying which answers are associated with a certain typology.

The results of the research were taken from a representative survey applied to 586 students from each of the classroom courses<sup>7</sup> that the Autonomous University of Manizales has. The sampled population was that of classroom students in undergraduate professional careers. This excluded students in

---

7. Business Administration, Culinary Arts and Gastronomy, Fashion Design, Industrial Design, Economics, Physiotherapy, Biomedical Engineering, Electronic Engineering, Industrial Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, International Business, Political Science, Systems Engineering and Dentistry.

virtual programs, intermediate technological careers and postgraduate degrees (specializations, master's degrees, and doctorates).

The survey questions were based on analyses of extensive literature on the topic of perception. From there, the questions regarding the object of study were formulated and addressed. Focus groups were formed that allowed clarifying the questions and response options of the survey. The collection of information made it possible to operationalize the concepts and variables to later relate and explain the phenomenon studied.

The research was based on the quantitative and qualitative (mixed) methodological combination. Therefore, the applied survey started from a probabilistic and representative sample that incorporated a total of 51 questions concentrated in seven sessions according to the combination of variables. Finally, SPSS was used as a systematization strategy where the topic of the description of variables and their association with each other was explicitly addressed from frequency distributions, histograms, cross tables, correlation matrices, and regression analysis, among others. This methodology provides a better view of the degree of association between the perception of corruption and orientation to political behavior.

A considerable number of variables that are part of the student's environment were considered, however, the ones with the greatest association were included according to the following classifications: "IAPOL": current interest in politics; "media": exposure to media, "networks": political participation; and "EFIPOL": political effectiveness.

## Discussion

### Description of the Sample

The following table identifies general categories to describe the sample. These include data on place of residence, social stratification, age of students, biological sex and academic area to which they belong. General reflections on the percentage data are included at the end of the table.

**Table 2. Emerging Category**

Place of Residence before College			
Place	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Manizales	210	35.8%	35.8
Town or city of Caldas	58	9.9%	45.7
City or town of the country	281	48.0%	93.7
Rural area	24	4.1%	97.8
Abroad	13	2.2%	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>586</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
Pre-university Social Class			
Place	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Stratum 1	121	20.6%	20.8
Stratum 2	139	23.7%	44.7
Stratum 3	172	29.4%	74.2
Stratum 4	73	12.5%	86.8
Stratum 5	33	5.6%	92.4
Stratum 6	42	7.2%	99.7
Don't know	2	0.3%	99.8
Abroad	4	0.7%	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>586</b>	<b>100</b>	
Student's Age			
Place	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
18 years old	85	14.5%	14.5
19 years old	190	32.4%	46.9
20 years old	112	19.1%	66.0
21 years old	84	14.3%	80.4
22 years old	46	7.8%	88.2
23 years old	26	4.4%	92.7
24 years old	19	3.2%	95.9
25 years old	7	1.2%	97.1
26 years old	7	1.2%	98.3
27 years old	1	0.2%	98.5

Place	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
28 years old	2	0.3%	98.8
29 years old	2	0.3%	99.1
30 years old or more	5	0.9%	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>586</b>	<b>100</b>	

Biological Sex			
Place	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Female	314	53.6%	53.6
Male	272	46.4%	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>586</b>	<b>100</b>	

Academic Area			
Place	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Engineering	221	37.7%	37.7
Health, 22(2), 84-98	170	29.0%	66.7
Social and Business	137	23.4%	90.1
Professional Arts and Crafts	58	9.9%	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>586</b>	<b>100</b>	

Source: Author's elaboration

The Autónoma University of Manizales is located in the interior of Colombia; however, it attracts young people from different regions of the country. According to the Registry and Registration Office indices, it appears that the percentage of undergraduate students belonging to Manizales and areas of Caldas constitutes 40%, while undergraduate students who are not from the city or the department represent 60% (these figures are general). In its initial part, the table above shows the places of residence of the sample members during their last year of high school. Almost half of them lived outside of Manizales and Caldas.

Compared to economic stratum data, it is interesting to note that, contrary to what is expected from a private university such as UAM, almost three quarters of the sample reported living in a home located in social strata 1-3 in the year prior to admission, with stratum 3 having the highest frequency. Of course, the classification by strata represents a very imperfect indicator of social level, since it only characterizes the area of residence. However, provide a gross indicator that reveals that the University currently has a dominant focus

of concentration in its undergraduate that could be termed "middle class," as almost two-thirds of its enrollment (66%) is in strata 2 to 4, with 21% in strata 1 and the remaining 13% in strata 5 and 6. Evaluating the above composition, it is worth taking into account the university programs of the Plan Estudia or the State program Ser Pilo Paga<sup>8</sup>.

Regarding the age, the youth of the sample stands out. The age percentages are shown as follows: 45% are between 18-19 years of age; the second highest, at 33.8%, are between 20-21 years of age; while a smaller group between 22-29 years of age represents 20% of the sample. The data on biological sex show a slightly greater predominance of women (53%) compared to men (43%) in the composition of the sample. Finally, the University's academic offerings are distributed in three major academic areas, which are conformed by its deanships: social and business studies, engineering, and health. It is considerable that the health and engineering areas have the highest enrollment. This is due to the fact that they are the oldest academic programs at UAM and have consolidated a trajectory in the area.

The application of the survey allowed collecting extensive information on student perceptions of corruption. Despite the breadth of the information, the analysis has concentrated on variables that affect or are related to political behavior. The following is an analysis and reflection on the results obtained.

## **Variables Analyzed**

The variables involved are: "EFIPOL" (political efficiency), "networks" (political participation), "IAPOL" (current interest in political issues) and "media" (media exposure), associated to a set of specific questions that, finally, indicate an orientation.

### **Political Efficiency (EFIPOL)**

The political efficiency dimension indicates whether or not students trust the government's management. Also, if their concerns, interests and needs are taken into account, as well as if there is an affirmative response to their demands. In order to approach this topic, five questions were formulated to express the following themes: citizen influence on political issues, trust in the actions of

---

8. This program was sponsored by the Ministry of National Education between 2014 and 2018 with the purpose of giving access to higher education to young people from low socioeconomic status.



public employees, trust in electoral processes, and the government's effective response to citizen demands.

**Table 3.** *Percentage Efficiency*

Efficiency		
Variable (EFIPOL)	Percentage	
How strongly do you agree with the following statement? "People like me have no influence on what the government does."	Strongly disagree	22.0%
	Disagree	51.5%
	Irrelevant	12.6%
	Agree	11.4%
	strongly agree	2.4
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>
How strongly do you agree with the following statement? "The political figures we elect keep the promises they make."	Strongly disagree	42.3
	Disagree	46.1
	Irrelevant	7.8
	Agree	2.2
	strongly agree	1.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>
How strongly do you agree with the following statement? "Ordinary citizens have a significant influence on political decisions."	Strongly disagree	3.6
	Disagree	18.9
	Irrelevant	11.3
	Agree	43.3
	strongly agree	22.9
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>
How strongly do you agree with the following statement? "Most elected public officials can be trusted to do what is in the best interest of the country."	Strongly disagree	22.7
	Disagree	56.7
	Irrelevant	11.6
	Agree	8.2
	strongly agree	0.9
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

Efficiency		
Variable (EFIPOL)	Percentage	
How transparent do you think the electoral processes are?	Little transparent	35.0
	Intermediate	55.0
	Very transparent	10.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Authors' Elaboration

Regarding to this block of results, in terms of understanding political effectiveness it is important to note that a large proportion (72%) of the respondents indicate that they have some influence; this means, they consider that they can affect the government with their actions; on the one hand, a fact that highlights a high internal effectiveness. On the other hand, the question if the citizens influence on political decisions, again shows that they have a high external efficiency (66%), given that they expect decisions from the governmental level to be related to citizen influence.

However, the questions that directly target political leaders and public employees show a different trend. Noticed that with the second and fourth questions, 88% of the sample indicates that there is little trust in political leaders, since they consider leaders do not do what is in the best for the country and do not keep their promises. This dichotomous plane between a high confidence to influence institutions—as well as a positive response to their needs—versus a low confidence in leaders indicates that students distinguish two actions: one is the State institutions and the other the figures of political leaders, therefore, although they distrust the leaders, they identify that the processes within the institutions can respond to the needs of the citizenship.

Correlating “EFIPOL” with friends group conversations “networks” reveals that “EFIPOL” maintains a significant association with all the previous categories. Table 5 highlights the importance in political efficiency of discussing political issues with friends and also in political participation networks, which have a positive impact on 20% and indicate that those who have high efficacy show a high interest in political issues generating spaces for conversation in the groups to which they belong.

Table 4. "EFIPOL" Regression with "Networks."

Independent variables	Betas	Meaning
Networks	.109	.007
Circle	.396	.000
Equation		.000
R2 adapted	20.2	

Source: Authors' Elaboration

### Political Participation ("Networks")

Participation in community spaces, sports, political, religious, cultural spaces among many others, evidence, on the one hand, the way in which a society develops its social structure. On the other hand, it shows that citizens generate coping alternatives through these institutions (Woolcock & Narayan, 2000).

The percentages of the variable "networks," show that a significant portion does not approach political parties (89%); however, in front of the question if they have attended a meeting with a political party, the percentage changes, but the trend of distancing themselves from this institution continues. From the sample, 37% said they had attended a meeting with a party and 62% said they had not. For its part, the question of whether they have mobilized or attended a protest on general issues remains low. Sixty-seven percent say they will not mobilize, while 32% say they will go out to protest. Regarding the question of whether the parties promote citizen participation, 65% disagreed, 33% agreed and the rest were indifferent. In response to the question of what estimate is thought to be lost from the national budget each year due to corruption? Half of the sample considers that between 50 and 70% is lost, while a quarter of the sample considers that between 10 and 40% is lost. The other quarter of the respondents consider that between 80 and 100% is lost.

In the same way, with respect to how many people are affected by corruption in the political sector, a high percentage indicated that "many" (95%). To the question of whether Colombians respect the rules, half of the respondents said "no" and only a quarter said "yes." The previous responses provide a frequency that indicates that the majority are removed from political parties and community institutions, in addition to expressing low trust in citizenship. However, when asked if they had voted, the frequency indicated that the majority had gone to the polls (79%). Once again, a major impasse has arisen. First, there is

a low relationship with respect to party and community trust, without affecting voting culture, given that it is high among respondents.

This aspect led to correlations between “networks” and current interest in politics (“IAPOL”). This category includes a set of broader variables; for example, the circle of friends (“circle”), the level to discuss political issues in networks (“issues 1”) and the level to discuss political issues with friends (“issues 2”).

**Table 5.** Correlation Matrix between Interest in Politics and Networks.

	<b>IAPOL</b>	<b>Circle</b>	<b>Networks</b>	<b>Topic 1</b>	<b>Topic 2</b>
<b>IAPOL</b>	1	.094*	.016	.279**	.487**
<b>Circle</b>	.094*	1	.142**	.069	.158**
<b>Networks</b>	.013	.138**	1	.113**	.038
<b>Topic 1</b>	.282**	.143	.093*	1	.390**
<b>Topic 2</b>	.491**	.159**	.031	.386**	1

Source: Authors' Elaboration

Note: on the unit diagonal, Pearson coefficients- under the diagonal Sperman coefficients

\* The correlation is significant at level 0.05 (bilateral).

\*\* The correlation is significant at level 0.01 (bilateral).

A high and positive correlation index shows the degree to which political issues are addressed among friends (Issues 2) with interest in politics. Therefore, this correlation accounts for 24%. On the other hand, the degree to which political issues are dealt with in the networks accounts for 8%; and to a lower degree, the amount of friends. What the matrix highlights is that the percentage of students interested in political issues increases the participation of social, civic and cultural organizations. It means that among those with a high interest in politics there is also a high percentage of their participation in networks. In general, the political aspect in the relationships with students is remarkable.

## Media Exposure (Media) and Current Interest in Politics (IAPOL).

One of the hypotheses at present in research on perceptions/orientations is that the influence of media on the political orientations of citizens is very strong. This thesis is confirmed in this research results since it shows that the effect of the media by news and information affect the interest in political issues; however, the percentage of affectation is not as high as expected.

Metrics between networks and IAPOL indicate that about half of students maintain a high level of interest. And a quarter increases it and other decreases it; this, probably, is due to the processes of adaptation to the university (that is, students who have to do with socio-humanistic courses oriented to the ethical behavior of the profession and political history). The average interest in politics (IAPOL) was 57% for those in the first five semesters and 61.7 for the rest. These criteria are strongly related to the academic program and age. Therefore, students who are part of socio-administrative academic programs have a greater interest in politics than those who are part of engineering and, even lower, in health students. On the other hand, the variable age reported a low value (-.017); that is, age had no influence on interest in politics. The variables of exposure to the media (physical press, physical magazines, radio and television) were also examined.

Table 6. Regression of IAPOL with Media Type Categories..

Media type	Betas	Meaning
Television	-.196	.000
Digitals	.269	.000
Expomed (other news)	.168	.002
Equation		.000
R2 adjusted	12.6%	

Source: Authors' Elaboration

Digital media have the highest positive impact followed by Expomed while television shows a negative impact on interest in politics. According to the stated hypotheses, there was the signaling in the use of the media due to the high interaction with mobile devices, since with this type of devices political issues regarding corruption are reported, reproduced, or criticized. It is also important to note the low incidence of television use. That is, those respondents

who have a high interest in politics turn to other types of non-television sources of information. As a whole, the final equation accounts for 12.6% (adjusted R<sup>2</sup>) of the variation in IAPOL, a rather reduced incidence in general terms for the media.

The same exercise was used to check the type of news that the interviewee follows. Social, political, and fashion news are highlighted more frequently.

### The Perception of Corruption by UAM Students

To analyze students' perception of corruption, involving the variables previously considered, in addition to other specific questions related to corruption was necessary (Campbell and Thomas, 2019). Therefore, other main questions are included that provide important information associated with the perception/orientation model.

*Question:* Choose the option that you most identify with:

- *This is the reality of the country. You have to be practical and I have to accommodate myself to it to take advantage of it. Favoritism is not bad in itself, but rather not participating in it. I will support the policy to the extent that I can take advantage of it.*
- *I think that corruption is greatly exaggerated, but, when necessary, we must also improve the policy from itself. It seems to me that we must reform the parties from within by encouraging the selection of better candidates and proposals and that is what I will support.*
- *Corruption is a terrible thing for society, it is important to change the system with totally new and independent and uncontaminated movements, parties and candidates. I will participate only in that way.*
- *Politics with its corruption is disgusting and I don't want to know anything about it. I'm not going to honor it by participating in it as long as that's the case. I have other, more important things to take care of.*
- *There is a lot of corruption in the country. The problem should be nipped in the bud, from the armed organizations, and by force. Only in that way will I participate in political processes.*

According to the results, students are mostly in the perception of renovators with 58%. In second place are the conformists with 21.7%; in third place, there are the rebels at 11.9%; and the last two with very low percentages: fugitive 4.9% and cynical with 3.4%.

The renewal aspect is not forceful if it relates to the variables: “Efipol,” “IAPOL,” “networks,” and “media.” The combined analysis of the above variables provides a perception that is more conformist than renewing. With “Efipol” it is highlighted that the answers given are more related to orientations of conformism and flight, while they place great hopes in the institutional processes, although they reject the political leaders, showing a high distrust in the rulers and their management. On the other hand, “networks” shows that the trend rebounds in the face of the character of conformism, because participation in community, sports, cultural institutions, among others is very low. These indicators show that they are individuals who are not very participatory, but that in their network of friends they generate conversations on political issues (IAPOL). This shows on the one hand that, although they are not interested in participating directly in community spaces, they can be mobilized in the face of an issue of their interest in a clear feature of conformism.

On the other hand, the proliferation of news about corruption (“media”) generates impacts on interest in politics (“IAPOL”), but exposure to the media did not show forcefulness in generating a negative effect regarding the rejection of corruption.

The most latent trend continues to be conformism, which indicates low participation in networks and very isolated from change projects. On the other hand, the orientation of renewal is evidenced in a slight way when the students recognize that there is a problem associated with corruption, while trusting in political processes such as participation in the electoral process.

In general terms, the perception/orientation of the surveyed students revolves between conformists and renovators. The perception indicates that, although they perceive corruption as having a major problem, it does not directly affect them as social subjects, but that corruption is part of a scheme of the state structure that permeates it indirectly. This may explain why even when they recognize the problem of corruption, they will not join any group to change this problem.

The combination of conformist and renewing perception indicates that if everything works well and there is no direct affectation, it makes no sense to mobilize, because even when there are problems it does not provide the feeling that they are deep and it is better to wait for it to be fixed on its own. The answers are indicative that a behavioral disposition of a subject accommodated to the system of corruption may be developing while waiting for something to change without carrying out direct activities that contribute to it. It expresses conformity, but it is not ruled out that in the face of problems that directly affect them, they can generate participation activity. Renewal is slight as they prefer changes and reject corruption, but participation with organizations is

low. Having this in mind, it is important to encourage interest in politics and the willingness to participate in democratic process, especially in social and community organizations. This is revealed by the loss of interest of those who indicated trends such as cynical, rebellious and fugitive, they isolate themselves from the democratic game.

## Conclusions

These results have several conclusive aspects. One is that perceptions of corruption should be characterized on more inclusive categories than in literature, since it is important to involve elements of context, such as place and time. Moreover, the five types of perception/orientation (cynicism, conformism, renovation, escape and rebellion) are a typological construct for analysis.

The research results show that students' perception of corruption is a function mediated by interest in politics, political efficacy, media exposure and political participation in networks, although the most influential is interest in politics. Those students who showed a high interest in politics also tended to be more active in their community networks or groups, their exposure to media such as digital media, and their orientation to political and social news. On the contrary, those who were more tolerant to corruption show low tendencies of interest in political issues as well as low participation.

Digital media are the most used by UAM students to get information about political issues, disregarding information available on television. In addition, relating in groups is where issues are discussed and is what helps to generate a critical perception of the corruption scenario.

Although most of the students see corruption as negative, they have no participation or association with networks to propose change; this indicates a certain alienation from political efficiency and a tendency toward conformism, while at the same time they perceive confidence in democratic public institutions.

The context of corruption can generate conformist and renovationist orientations, but without spaces for discussion it is possible for renovators to become apathetic. As an academic space, UAM should provide platforms to discuss sensitive political issues, to update and propose courses on democracy and the role of professionals. The university should be committed to training in transformative political culture. It should also take advantage of the trend showing increased interest in politics as young people move through academic terms.



It is important for the university system to influence interest in politics. It would favor democratic participation in it. Those who lose this interest would turn to the use of violence or marginalize themselves from democratic participation. Strengthening the interest in politics will be the basis for political action, participation, and its renewal.

## References

- Almond, G. & Verba, S. (1963). *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations*. Princeton University Press.
- Arkehede, S. (2014, November 12). Corruption and Political Participation a Multilevel Analysis. *Qog the Quality of Government Institute*, 12, 3-53. [https://www.gu.se/sites/default/files/2020-05/QoGWP\\_2014\\_12\\_Arkhede%20Olsson.pdf](https://www.gu.se/sites/default/files/2020-05/QoGWP_2014_12_Arkhede%20Olsson.pdf)
- Bowler, S. & Donovan, T. (2002). Democracy, Institutions and Attitudes about Citizen Influence on Government. *British Journal of Political Science*, 2(32), 371-90. [https://cedar.wvu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1005&context=politicalscience\\_facpubs](https://cedar.wvu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1005&context=politicalscience_facpubs)
- Campbell, L., & Thomas, A. (2019). *People's Experiences of Corruption: Implications for Business in South-East Asia*. Transparency International.
- Castells, M. (2009). *Comunicación y poder*. Alianza Editorial.
- Coren, S., Ward, L. & Enns, J. (2001). *Sensación y percepción*. McGraw-Hill.
- Easton, D. (1992). Categorías para el análisis sistémico de la política. En: A. Batlle (Ed.), *Diez textos básicos de ciencia política* (pp. 221-230). Ariel.
- El Tiempo. (2017, February 26). Saqueo de la corrupción equivale a casi un billón de pesos por semana. *El Tiempo*. <https://www.eltiempo.com/justicia/delitos/precio-de-la-corrupcion-en-colombia-61749>.
- Garzón Valdés, E. (1997). Acerca del concepto de corrupción. En F. Laporta y S. Álvarez (Eds.), *La corrupción política* (pp. 39-70). Alianza Editorial.

- Hirschman, A. (1970). *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty: Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations and States*. Harvard University Press.
- Korzeniowski, K. (1994). Political Alienation in Poland in Days of Systemic Transformation. *Polish Psychological Bulletin*, 25(3), 187–200.  
<https://psycnet.apa.org/record/1995-43582-001>.
- Lindarte, E. (2017, February 5). ¿Por qué tanta corrupción en Colombia?: Un análisis sociológico. *Razón Pública*. <https://www.razonpublica.com/index.php/conflicto-drogas-y-paz-temas-30/10015-%C2%BFpor-qu%C3%A9-tanta-corrupci%C3%B3n-en-colombia-una-respuesta-sociol%C3%B3gica.html>
- Mierina, I. (2014). Political Alienation and Government-Society Relations in Pos-Communist Countries. *Polish Sociological Review*, 185(1), 3–24. <https://polish-sociological-review.eu/Political-Alienation-and-Government-Society-Relations-in-Post-Communist-Countries,125047,0,2.html>
- Morán, M. & Benedicto, J. (1995). *La cultura política de los españoles*. CIS.
- Neuman, V. & Ángel, M. (2017). *Sobre la corrupción en Colombia: marco conceptual, diagnóstico y propuestas de política*. Fedesarrollo.
- Paige, J. (1971). Political Orientation and Riot Participation, *American Sociological Review*, 36(5), 810–820. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2093668>.
- Roberts, B. (1987). A Confirmatory Factor-Analytic Model of Alienation. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 50(4), 346–351. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2786819>
- Salazar, V., Gonzales, T., Buitrago, L., Bernal, M., Quintero, M., Herrera, G., Sánchez J. & Aguirre, L. (2018, April 1). Actualización de la política pública de juventud del departamento de Caldas 2018-2028. Universidad Autónoma de Manizales.
- Sartori, G. (1984). *La política. lógica y método en las ciencias sociales*. Fondo de Cultura Económica.
- Schyns, P, Nuus, M. & Dekker, H. (2005). *Political Cynicism the Measurability of a Disputed Concept*. Leiden University, Department of Political Science.

- Seeman, M. (1959). On the Meaning of Alienation. *American Sociological Review*, 24(6), 783–791. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2088565>
- Transparencia Internacional Colombia. (2012). *Índice de Percepción de la corrupción 2012*. <https://transparenciacolombia.org.co/2012/12/02/indice-de-percepcion-de-la-corrupcion-2012/>
- Vargas, L. (1994). Sobre el concepto de percepción. *Alteridades*, 4(8), 47-53. <https://alteridades.izt.uam.mx/index.php/alte/article/view/588>
- Wittig, A. (1979). *Introducción a la psicología*. McGraw-Hill.
- Woolcock, M., & Narayan, D. (2000). Social Capital: Implications for Development Theory, Research, and Policy *Econpapers*, 15(2), 25-49. [https://econpapers.repec.org/article/oupwbrobs/v\\_3a15\\_3ay\\_3a2000\\_3ai\\_3a2\\_3ap\\_3a225-49.htm](https://econpapers.repec.org/article/oupwbrobs/v_3a15_3ay_3a2000_3ai_3a2_3ap_3a225-49.htm)

# Georeferencing at a Health Service, an Experience from Community Assets\* \*\*

*(English Version)*

La georreferenciación al servicio de la salud, una experiencia desde los activos comunitarios

Georreferenciamento a serviço da saúde, uma experiência dos bens da comunidade

*Received 3 March, 2022. Accepted 9 May, 2022.*

› To cite this article:

Betancurth, D. P., Vélez, C. & Sánchez, N. (2023).

Georeferencing at the health service, an experience from community assets.

*Ánfora*, 30(54). 236-253.

<https://doi.org/10.30854/anfv30.n54.2023.912>

Universidad Autónoma de Manizales. L-ISSN 0121-6538.

E-ISSN 2248-6941.

CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

**Diana Paola Betancurth Loaiza\*\*\***

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7620-2336>

**Colombia**

**Consuelo Vélez Álvarez\*\*\*\***

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7274-7304>

**Colombia**

**Natalia Sánchez Palacio\*\*\*\*\***

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3405-5144>

**Colombia**

---

\* Article derived from the research project "Activos comunitarios en salud en dos municipios de Caldas: un aporte para la Atención Primaria en Salud" funded by the Universidad de Caldas (0211718) conducted between 2018 and 2020.

\*\* This research was financed by the Universidad de Caldas under the research project "Community health assets in two municipalities of Caldas within the framework of Primary Health Care". Code 0211718. The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

\*\*\* PhD in Public Health, Nurse. Universidad de Caldas, Manizales, Colombia. [diana.betancurth@ucaldas.edu.co](mailto:diana.betancurth@ucaldas.edu.co)

\*\*\*\* PhD in Public Health, Nurse. Universidad de Caldas, Manizales, Colombia. [consuelo.velez@ucaldas.edu.co](mailto:consuelo.velez@ucaldas.edu.co)

\*\*\*\*\* Master in Public Health, Nurse. Universidad de Caldas, Manizales, Colombia. [natalia.sanchez@ucaldas.edu.co](mailto:natalia.sanchez@ucaldas.edu.co)

## Abstract

**Objective:** to analyze the use of physical and digital georeferencing techniques in the service of health from a community asset experience. **Methods:** in the framework of an exploratory study with a mixed method, with a recurrent transformative design, a social cartography was carried out that included the analysis of physical and digital georeferencing. **Results:** the community territorial experience is part of the concrete experience, digital mappings as a result of technological tools and ICT development were used, with social mappings that directly linked the communities. On the one hand, it is an input that allowed to know the general context to streamline processes and on the other hand, other elements were highlighted in the practices, such as socio-cultural, economic and political elements. **Conclusions:** in the globalized world, the use of physical and digital maps enrich the processes of assessment and community participation, they are configured as a means, but not an end, which provides decision-makers with a tool to dynamize interaction and community empowerment processes.

**Keywords:** Community; Community health; Sense of Coherence; Geographical locations; Geographic mapping (MeSH, NCBI).

## Resumen

**Objetivo:** analizar el uso de técnicas de georreferenciación física y digital al servicio de la salud desde una experiencia de activos comunitarios. **Métodos:** en el marco de un estudio exploratorio con método mixto, de diseño transformativo recurrente, se realizó una cartografía social que incluyó el análisis de la georreferenciación física y digital. **Resultados:** la experiencia territorial comunitaria hace parte de la vivencia concreta, se utilizaron mapeos digitales producto de herramientas tecnológicas y desarrollo en TICS, con los mapeos sociales que vincularon las comunidades directamente. Por un lado, es un insumo que permitió conocer el contexto general para agilizar procesos y de otro lado, se destacaron otros elementos en las prácticas, como las socio-culturales, económicas y políticas. **Conclusiones:** en el mundo globalizado la utilización de los mapas físicos y digitales enriquecen los procesos de valoración y participación comunitaria, se configuran como un medio, más no un fin, que sin lugar a dudas aporta a los tomadores de decisiones como herramienta para dinamizar procesos de interacción y empoderamiento comunitario.

**Palabras clave:** Comunidad; salud comunitaria; Sentido de Coherencia; Ubicaciones Geográficas; mapeo geográfico (DeCS, BIREME).

## Resumo

**Objetivo:** analisar o uso de técnicas de georreferenciamento físico e digital a serviço da saúde a partir de uma experiência de bens comunitários. **Métodos:** no âmbito de um estudo exploratório de método misto com um desenho transformador recorrente, foi realizado um mapeamento social que incluiu a análise de georreferenciamento físico e digital. **Resultados:** a experiência territorial comunitária é parte da experiência concreta, os mapeamentos digitais foram utilizados como produto de ferramentas tecnológicas e de desenvolvimento de TIC, com mapeamentos sociais que ligavam diretamente as comunidades. Por um lado, é um input que permitiu conhecer o contexto geral para agilizar os processos e, por outro, outros elementos foram destacados nas práticas, tais como socioculturais, econômicas e políticas. **Conclusões:** no mundo globalizado, o uso de mapas físicos e digitais enriquece os processos de avaliação e participação comunitária e se configura como um meio e não como um fim, o que sem dúvida contribui para os tomadores de decisão como uma ferramenta para dinamizar os processos de interação e empoeiramento comunitário.

**Palavras chave:** comunidade; saúde comunitária; Senso de coerência; localizações geográficas; mapeamento geográfico (DeCS, BIREME).

## Introduction

Georeferencing is considered the basic way to introduce plans and maps into an information system (Solanas, 2018). The combination of physical and digital georeferencing as a result of technological development and the demands for studying social phenomena in recent years has developed information analysis tools that enable decision-makers to identify groups of greater vulnerability and thus the targeting of actions and the management of intersectoral strategies based on existing resources to improve living conditions (Yumisaca *et al.*, 2018).

The use of georeferencing systems has allowed citizens to participate and agree on recognizing and locating information that has been stored and that can become a valuable resource to strengthen community interactions (Cascón & Ruiz, 2016).

In the health context, Geographic Information Systems (GIS) have been highlighted by the World Health Organization (WHO) for their contribution to public health, insofar as they allow the spatio-temporal location of events (Carvalho & OPAS, 2006). Geoprocessing generates more than technical benefits. It creates the possibilities of visualizing the response capacity of the health sector to the needs of the population and the resources that communities can contribute to devise solutions (Salinas *et al.*, 2018).

Traditionally, georeferencing systems have been used to identify risks in communities and thus prioritize vulnerable populations, analyzed from variables such as housing, working conditions, environmental problems, and access to the health system, among others (Aguirre, 2016; Ramasco-Gutiérrez *et al.*, 2017). At present and under the salutogenic perspective, the importance of its use is highlighted for the identification of community assets in health. The concept focuses on those material and human resources that can improve communities' capacities to maintain health and well-being, which when located in the territorial space add value and facilitate lifestyle (Cubillo-Llanes *et al.*, 2018).

Social cartography as a method of physical georeferencing and a methodological approach to the recognition and analysis of the territory allows understanding it and representing it through maps. Therefore, it is possible to affirm that this is a social and political tool at the service of communities and policyholders, as well as a tool for decision making (Barragán-León, 2019).

The processes of physical or digital georeferencing of community assets make sense, insofar as they allow placing those assets in the perspective of health promotion, and incorporating positive health by seeking to promote participatory actions with transformative capacity and intersectoral vision (Cofiño *et al.*, 2016).

Based on the previous approaches, the objective of this work is to analyze the use of physical and digital georeferencing techniques at the service of health from an experience of community assets.

## Methods

Within the framework of an exploratory study with a mixed method, with a recurrent transformative design, a social mapping was carried out that included, the analysis of physical and digital georeferencing for the identification of community assets.

Cartography is a methodological route, which can nest different techniques. It is woven from the relationships that emerge in the space/territory context in health (Silva *et al.*, 2020). On the one hand, it is understood that the construction of the social map of community assets is a process that allows “the approach to a conception of a certain territory in permanent change, while allowing consolidating a sense of belonging from graphic representations of the community existing reality in the community” (Betancurth *et al.*, 2020, p. 140). On the other hand, it is worth reflecting that georeferencing tools are fundamental for the public agency. As a whole, their analysis allows proposing reducing the gaps, attacking inequality and tending toward better levels of well-being (Longhi, 2020). The tools per se are a dead letter if they do not derive focused and effective actions.

1. Selection criteria used. The immersion in the territory by the researchers-subject was carried out between May 2018 and May 2019, in four neighborhoods of the department of Caldas (Colombia). Within the selection criteria used, was the identification of risk by Family record. For this case it was an accumulated risk with ratings between 3.29 and 3.89 indicting a medium-low risk. This study was carried out within the framework of the implementation of the Primary Health Care strategy.
2. Analysis unit. The unit of analysis focused on the community. The key actors were community leaders, with whom the logistics of the mapping activities were structured, planned, and executed.
3. Techniques used. Cartographic techniques were used through seven workshops and interviews with 40 community leaders and the



community in general, in addition to the analysis of electronic georeferencing in the four neighborhoods where it was decided to carry out the research.

- d. In the first instance, four physical neighborhood maps were prepared based on the tours with the community. Later they were contrasted with the georeferencing of the Caldas Social Observatory (APS) and with Google Maps tools.
  - e. The field diaries kept during each visit were taken into account as analytical devices for the apprehension (Silva *et al.*, 2020).
4. Analysis. For the analysis, the geocoding and georeferencing process was taken into account, with which the content analysis was performed.
  5. Ethical aspects. By virtue of compliance with the parameters expressed in the Declaration of Helsinki and in Resolution 08430 of 1993 for the Colombian territory, the study was approved by the ethics committee of the University of Caldas with the code CBCS-065 where it realized the required parameters and principles for working with the community.

## Results

The community territorial experience is part of the specific experience. It is a necessary complement that was evidenced in this research. The digital mapping product of technological tools and ICT development was put into dialogue, with the social mapping that linked the communities directly. Both were of interest as methodological devices that were incorporated and complemented within the social cartography framework whose purpose in a critical aspect sought to provide the best alternatives for decision-making and targeting of the institutional offer.

In the study for the identification of community assets, the research team started from the knowledge of a geo-positioning and geo-referencing system of the Social Observatory of Caldas<sup>1</sup>, Google Maps tools and the geographic referrer of the ATLAS.ti software, to access digitally to the properties to visit (four neighborhoods) in terms of space-time location – in the sense of place – which simultaneously could be contrasted with the characterization in terms of

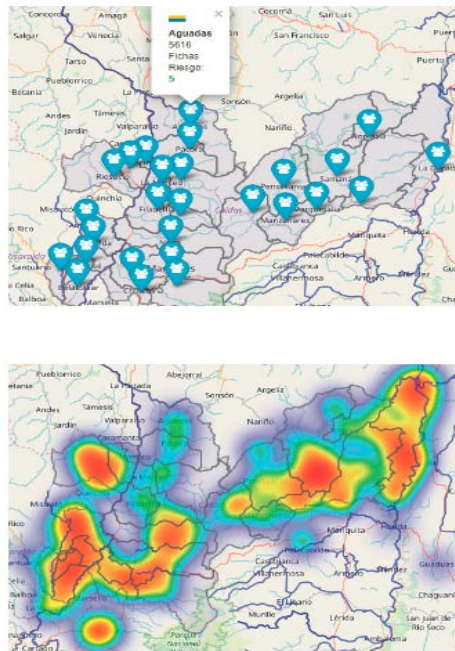
---

1. <http://observatorio.saluddecaldas.gov.co/Linhum/public/login>

number of families. This characterization was obtained from the observatory and permitted knowing the families and their main public health problems in each of the neighborhoods. It is noteworthy that this is a procedure that the Territorial Directorate of Health of Caldas carries out in the Municipalities.

This input allowed previously ascertaining, and as a general approximation, the social situation of the subject population. Outlining the points where people with a similar condition were located (for example, health conditions, disability conditions, minors, older adults, population of special vulnerability) with this system through filters was possible..

Figure 1. Digital Mapping.



Source: Social Observatory of Caldas

The physical map was built directly with the people of the neighborhood (collective mapping). To create it, the researchers motivated the participants to highlight other aspects to take into account in the practices in the field, such as social, cultural, temporal, and circumstantial elements, which are invisible in digital mapping (traditionally analyzed to identify risks).

This methodology beyond the traditional, allows communities to recognize and build knowledge about their territory, by valuing their heritage, wealth, and resources (community garden, parks, courts, educational centers, representative people, etc.), so that they can motivate themselves and trend toward healthier lifestyles. In other words, this type of work with the communities makes gradually developing love for the territory possible, as a way of establishing emotional relationships among the residents, the neighborhoods, and the cities they inhabit. The mappings carried out went beyond the micro-territory. They were socialized with community leaders and representatives in workshops and meetings, which allowed recognizing, highlighting, prioritizing, agreeing and focusing on specific processes, with the aim of strengthening them or purposefully setting needs, whose solutions integrate the participation of the inhabitants and decision makers of each territory.

Figure 2. Map of Assets La Floresta, Villamaría (Neighborhood 2).



Source: Authors' elaboration.

The preceding implied the rapprochement, as well as the articulation with the municipal offices (including all their secretariats), the municipal hospitals and local health directorates, both municipalities and the Departmental Health Directorate. This intersectoriality allowed the articulation to negotiate/build together, formulating the actions to follow. The interconnection of all the actors

led to more structured processes, such as the formulation of specific proposals based on exposure factors, as well as on community assets that would make dynamizing and strengthening protective factors possible.

For example, there is the progress in the second phase of community gardens within the framework of the Good Living project. In the mapping it was identified as the greatest asset along with their homes. Alternatively, it allowed showing the strengthening of assets related to the local economy as a greater need (this is considered an intermediary social determinant) and associative group assets, that would allow greater political participation of the communities.

The end of the process was complemented with metaplans on future situations to continue working. The results of the community work were left in the neighborhoods, since they are by and for the community, and are expected to become the input and starting point for both public and private institutions and agencies to speed up their actions to benefit the quality of life and living conditions of the inhabitants of these prioritized neighborhoods.

**Table 1.** Contributions of Georeferencing within the Framework of the Experience of Identifying Community Assets.

Contributions of Physical Georeferencing	Contribution of Digital Georeferencing
Visual schemes that allowed community interpretations.	Visual diagrams that allowed decision-makers to interpret and locate specific situations by locality
Dialogues were established with the community as a producer of knowledge; it is the community that is in charge of contributing and validating the maps, since no one knows its environment better than it does and can value its relevance for a better quality of life.	There was evidence of empirical progress in the use of geoprocessing (benefits of the use of technology) in the management of Primary Health Care (PHC) services, given that it was previously done only manually, which leaves a precedent of the importance of articulating digital georeferencing in the area to improve and make more timely decision.

Contributions of Physical Georeferencing	Contribution of Digital Georeferencing
<p>The mapping allowed the community to become visible and have recognition, which contributed to the creation of a neighborhood identity.</p>	<p>It provided a rich set of tools (location, filtering by events, identification of points of deepening or focalization) and virtual procedures for the treatment and analysis of health data, under a territorial analytical approach, which enables its implementation and dynamization as part of social epidemiology, in which the georeferencing of events related to the Social Determinants of health is a current challenge.</p>
<p>There was participation in the construction and validation of the maps, as well as giving the community a voice by listening to their perceptions of how they see their neighborhood and what it means to them.</p>	
<p>Values such as solidarity, dialogue and trust, which are consolidated and built into community work, were promoted.</p>	<p>The time performance is efficient (given that the research was carried out in four neighborhoods in different municipalities), this allowed for a great advance prior to the visits, since the information is available in real time and digitally geo-referenced.</p>
<p>The social fabric was strengthened through neighborhood networks (they know each other and interact). They also recognize each other's potential so that in the future they can complement each other to solve problems and activate protective factors.</p>	<p>When entering, the platforms are equipped. The satellite data can be seen in real time (global positioning system or GPS). So, the most accurate and updated information is being received, and thus can guide the health manager ensuring that their actions are direct and specific to the needs and vulnerable populations and thus more effective.</p>
<p>Symbolically, the community values its territory and its perception complements what in digital georeferencing is systematized in the software.</p>	<p>It is dynamic, agile, and easy to access, available at all times.</p>
<p>It accounts for settlements or invasions, which the digital maps did not detect (in one of the neighborhoods this situation was detected).</p>	<p>The dynamism is related to the platforms and the possibility of manipulating the information; it must also be continually updated so that the information is real.</p>
<p>The maps made permit representing potentialities and/or principal needs of the community, which in the future become inputs for those actors working with these prioritized communities.</p>	<p>The access was digital, under the assumption that it corresponds to updated information.</p>

Source: Authors' elaboration.

Both mappings allowed knowing, recognizing, and valuing the territories inhabited by the people in the neighborhoods. The resources and needs were integrally identified (Table 1), which made adjusting community processes possible which in the beginning were weakened and became stronger through autonomy and commitment. Those processes improve residents' living space, allow them to feel more identified and united with the territory they inhabit.

These types of processes can be interrelated with the aim of expediting the identification of needs and vulnerabilities in populations through digital mapping, which can be complemented with the community vision expressed in the work developed with them through physical georeferencing and thus make a more effective intervention of the different actors and sectors that wish to act on their benefit possible.

## Discussion

The use of physical and digital georeferencing in health has experienced rapid growth in recent decades. It has become an additional tool for decision makers to apply the required measures of the events being analyzed and epidemiological studies that allow for the inclusion of spatial variability by identifying disease clusters or the distribution of the population by age groups for subsequent interventions (Valbuena-García & Rodríguez-Villamizar, 2018). In this regard, Salinas *et al.* (2018) presented a project in PHC in which the use of geolocation as a powerful technical tool to improve health response capacity is evidenced.

The approximation to the social conditions of greater vulnerability and their location on the maps as georeferencing techniques of location and spatialization, are opportunities that should be taken into account by the public agency to reduce gaps between groups of equal conditions, as confirmed by Longhi in his study about living conditions in Argentina (Longhi, 2020). As such, Jaramillo-Delgado *et al.* (2022) show that the social, cultural, and anthropological relationships that the population creates as a source of solutions to personal and collective health needs can be understood.

Participation processes constitute a challenge for states to the extent that they allow the strengthening of the social fabric. In this sense, under the gaze of the communities, the construction of physical maps in which the community assets are located through participatory methods, are another important source of participation and information. They are configured as a possibility

of valuing their heritage, wealth, and expressing their relationship with the immediate environment, which is their neighborhood or city. In this sense, social cartography can be affirmed as contributing to the development of life routes at the community level (Betancurth *et al.*, 2020). In addition, they can be used as a strategy that stimulates the processes of promoting lifestyles in the territory (Calpa *et al.*, 2019; Valencia *et al.*, 2019). The starting point of these processes is the recognition and participation of the social actors. The territorial study invites one to rethink health, even more so when it is framed through community ownership (Betancurth *et al.*, 2020; Spinelli, 2016).

The preceding is evidenced in the study carried out by Ospina (2014) concerning the reconfiguration of spatial practices. In this study, mapping implies the reconstruction of the meanings, actions, and discourses that integrate people and their way of living. Additionally, it broadens the vision of the subject as an instrumental being that appropriates and represents its environment and its socio-territorial relations. This allows conceding value and a sense of belonging to the territory and the community that inhabits it, while at the same time fostering the construction of images, stories, memories, and knowledge that arise from collective spaces where the members of the community are ready to intervene and promote those links that articulate the social-personal plane with the spatial-geographical plane.

Another important aspect within the framework of using mapping is the possibility of identifying the sectors that are configured as a contribution to the development of the daily life of the communities supported under the guise of how each of them makes significant contributions to the communities' quality of life and therefore better health indicators (Ramos Herrera *et al.*, 2019). In relation to the previous, studies such as the one carried out by Jaramillo-Delgado *et al.* (2022) show how the territory, which is graphically represented, is a space with relationships and forms of connection on a personal level, as well as on environmental and physical levels that promote the daily activities of the people who occupy it, by redefining their values, beliefs, knowledge, and popular practices that allow generating cultural responses and appropriation of their territories.

This is how, in the words of Feo-Ardila and Espinel-Rubio (2022), the territory is configured as a space of discoveries where behaviors, actions and thoughts converge and sprout, as well as individual and collective practices, which allows the territory to be associated as a physical and symbolic area, in which they can establish an interpersonal and family daily life, as well as the creation of community fabric and ties that start from social and community dynamics, which are consolidated through cultural practices and the relationship with the inhabited space. In this sense, through mapping, the communities and

their actors determine their social, political, and cultural identity, which allows the territory to be identified as an emblematic and strong space, where meeting points are established either from oppression/vulnerability or empowerment/appropriation of common interest. This is confirmed by the results of the study carried out by Barragán which states that cartography is a social product with political intentions.

As can be evidenced in the results of the studies contrasted with the research experience, the characteristics of the individuals predominate. In effect, there is a gap in the recognition of the territory when understanding that the place is decisive for the community analysis in the framework of public health. In this sense georeferencing is a strategy of great contribution.

Both physical community mappings and digital ones according to the research experience, have allowed understanding that they are configured as a means and not the end. They are not static techniques that reflect the inhabited place or spatial information as a source of information. On the contrary, they go far beyond those limits that define it; it is a joint analysis of living spaces and social relationships that need to be known in order to manage their resources in a positive way (Castillo & Quiñones, 2017; Arenas-Monreal *et al.*, 2019; Esteban y Peña *et al.*, 2020; Molina-Betancur *et al.*, 2020). In this sense, one of the contributions of the developed work confirms that stated by Radicelli *et al.* (2019) who affirm that the cartographic processes allow the different disciplines of the social sciences to interrelate and recognize their potentialities to analyze and understand the social dynamics that allow for improving their quality of life. Other authors expose the importance of knowing the dynamics of the public and private health sectors through mechanisms of networks and physical and digital georeferences for the success of any public health initiative, as they allow the identification of relationships, variations in the phenomena, as well as helping to focus the actions aimed at impacting them.

For Buzai (2019), the quantitative spatial analysis through the Geographic Information System (GIS) through the use of cartographic modeling, turns out to be very useful in the identification of central elements and the definition of critical work areas for their strengthening. In addition, it allows integrating social, cultural, and psychological elements into the geographic context (Domínguez *et al.*, 2018). In this sense, digital advances in the service of community health allow those who use the tools and devices the freedom for holistic analysis and the flexibility to leverage these types of resources in a way that generates constructive and collaborative learning. What stands out is the importance of geographic data to arrive at concrete analyzes of phenomena, the



establishment of alliances with government institutions, and with this, adequately influence community intervention policies (Shah *et al.*, 2020).

The authors recognize as a possible limitation of the work developed, the non-use of maps of time (past, present, and future) as a connection that may allow carrying out in-depth understandings or interpretations of the reality lived by the communities in future investigations.

## Conclusions

In the globalized world, the use of physical and digital maps enrich valuation and community participation processes. The location and recognition of assets favors synergy with their environment, however, georeferencing is a means and not an end, which contributes to decision-makers and becomes a tool to stimulate processes of interaction and community empowerment.

In community mapping, it is evident that it is the populations know their territory best, therefore, proposals that are generated have a greater possibility of being accepted and providing continuity if those populations are included.

In the context of innovation in health, digital georeferencing becomes an opportunity for the development of thematic maps (starting point), and generates new dynamics of participation when analyzing health conditions and situations with communities through physical georeferencing.

**Funds:** This research was funded by the University of Caldas within the framework of the research project "Community health assets in two municipalities of Caldas within the framework of Primary Health Care." Code: 0211718.

**Acknowledgements:** To the University of Caldas – Vice-rectory for Research and Postgraduate Studies, to the communities and community leaders participating in the study.

**Conflicts of interest:** The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

## References

- Aguirre, J. (2016). La aplicación de las tecnologías de información y comunicación en la prevención comunitaria del delito: los casos de georeferenciación en Monterrey, México. *Rev.Relac.Int.Estrateg.Segur*, 11(2), 239–270. <https://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=92746462011>
- Arenas-Monreal, L., Pacheco-Magaña, L., Parada-Toro, I., Rueda-Neria, C., & Cortez-Lugo, M. (2019). Mapeo Comunitario para impulsar la participación comunitaria dentro del diagnóstico de salud poblacional. *Enfermería Universitaria*, 16(2), 120–127. <https://doi.org/10.22201/eneo.23958421e.2019.2.636>
- Barragán-León, A. N. (2019). Cartografía social: lenguaje creativo para la investigación cualitativa. *Sociedad y Economía*, 36, 139–159. <https://doi.org/10.25100/sye.v0i36.7457>
- Betancurth, D. P., Vélez Álvarez, C., & Palacio, N. (2020). Cartografía social: construyendo territorio a partir de los activos comunitarios en salud. *Entramado*, 16(1), 138–151. <https://doi.org/10.18041/1900-3803/entramado.1.6081>
- Buzai, G. D. (2019). Condicionantes socioespaciales de la salud. Definición de áreas críticas en la cuenca del río Luján, Argentina. *Geofocus: Revista Internacional de Ciencia y Tecnología de La Información Geográfica*, ISSN-e 1578-5157, N°. 24, 2019, 24, 99–116. <https://doi.org/10.21138/GF.650>
- Calpa, M., Santacruz, G., Álvarez, M., Zambrano, C., Hernández, E., & Matabanchoy, S. (2019). Promoción de estilos de vida saludables: estrategias y escenarios. *Hacia. Promoc. Salud.*, 24(2), 139–155. <https://doi.org/10.17151/hpsal.2019.24.2.11>
- Carvalho, M. S., & OPAS. (2006). *Conceitos básicos de sistemas de informação geográfica e cartografia aplicados à saúde, 2000*. <https://pesquisa.bvsalud.org/portal/resource/pt/lis-19398>
- Cascón Katchadourian, J. D., & Ruiz Rodríguez, A. Á. (2016). Descripción y valoración del software MapTiler del mapa escaneado a la capa interactiva publicada en la Web. *El Profesional de La Información*, 25–26. <https://dialnet.unirioja.es/servlet/articulo?codigo=5730199>
- Castillo, J. R., & Quiñones, J. (2017). Contexto y perspectivas socio-culturales. *ÁNFORA*, 7(13), 32–36. <https://doi.org/10.30854/anfv7.n13.1999.320>

- Cofiño, R., Aviñó, D., Benedé, C. B., Botello, B., Cubillo, J., Morgan, A., Paredes-Carbonell, J. J., & Hernán, M. (2016). Promoción de la salud basada en activos: ¿cómo trabajar con esta perspectiva en intervenciones locales? *Gaceta Sanitaria*, 30(s1), 93–98. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gaceta.2016.06.004>
- Cubillo-Llanes, J., Botello-Díaz, B., Gea-Caballero, V., March, S., Segura-Benedicto, A., & Hernán-García, M. (2018). Assets: from maps to territory. SESPAS Report 2018. In *Gaceta Sanitaria* (Vol. 32, pp. 98–102). Ediciones Doyma, S.L. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gaceta.2018.06.006>
- Domínguez, D. L., Hermosillo, A., Méndez, C., Sahagún, M., & Palacios, P. (2018). Mapa Digital de México para el análisis de riesgo suicida. *Investigación Y Práctica En Psicología Del Desarrollo*, 2, 90–102. <https://revistas.uaa.mx/index.php/ippd/article/view/690/667>
- Esteban y Peña, M., Fernández, E., Jiménez, R., Hernández, V., & Fernandez del Pozo, I. (2020). Salud e incidencia y diferencias en vulnerabilidad territorial de la ciudad de Madrid. *Rev Esp Salud Pública.*, 94(7), 1–14. [https://www.msbs.gob.es/biblioPublic/publicaciones/recursos\\_propios/resp/revista\\_cdrom/VOL94/ORIGINALES/RS94C\\_202004020.pdf](https://www.msbs.gob.es/biblioPublic/publicaciones/recursos_propios/resp/revista_cdrom/VOL94/ORIGINALES/RS94C_202004020.pdf)
- Espinel-Rubio, G. A., y Feo-Ardila, D. (2022). Territorio e identidad de resistencia en jóvenes del Catatumbo (Colombia), constructores de paces imperfectas. *Investigación & Desarrollo*, 30(1), 40–68. <https://doi.org/10.14482/INDES.30.1.303.661>
- Jaramillo-Delgado, G., Agudelo-Arias, M., Jaramillo-Vargas, J., & Moreno-Villa, F. (2022). Reconocimiento de agentes reproductores de saberes y prácticas populares en salud. *Hacia Promoc. Salud*, 27(1), 159–175. <http://www.scielo.org.co/pdf/hpsal/v27n1/0121-7577-hpsal-27-01-159.pdf>
- Longhi, F. (2020). Condiciones de vida y contextos de salud. Un análisis territorial aplicado a la población argentina (2001–2010). *Huellas*, 24(1), 133–156. <https://dialnet.unirioja.es/servlet/articulo?codigo=7499252>
- Molina-Betancur, J. C., Agudelo-Suárez, A. A., & Martínez-Herrera, E. (2020). Community health assets mapping in a slum in Medellín (Colombia). *Gaceta Sanitaria*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gaceta.2020.04.012>

- Ospina, B. (2014). Reconfiguración de prácticas espaciales: análisis socioespacial a los procesos de desplazamiento y retorno campesino. *Ánfora*, 21(37), 151-177. <https://www.redalyc.org/pdf/3578/357833888007.pdf>
- Radicelli, C., Pomboza, M., Villacrés, P., y Bodero, E. (2019). Sistemas de información geográfica y su aplicación en las ciencias sociales: Una revisión bibliográfica. *Revista Chakiñan de Ciencias Sociales y Humanidades*, (8), 24-35. <https://www.redalyc.org/journal/5717/571760747003/html/>
- Ramasco-Gutiérrez, M., Heras-Mosteiro, J., Garabato-González, S., Aránguez-Ruiz, E., y Aguirre Martín-Gil, R. (2017). Implementación del mapa de la vulnerabilidad en salud en la Comunidad de Madrid. *Gaceta Sanitaria*, 31(5), 432-435. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gaceta.2016.07.026>
- Ramos-Herrera, I., Portugal-Zegarra, F., González-Castañeda, M., & Robles-Pastrana, J. (2019). Distribución geoespacial de la salud en Jalisco: análisis sobre los Objetivos de Desarrollo del Milenio. *Salud Jalisco*, 6(3), 147-156. <https://www.medigraphic.com/cgi-bin/new/resumen.cgi?IDARTICULO=92038>
- Salinas, E. A., Chiaravalotti, F., & Giatti, L. L. (2018). Experiencias, beneficios y desafíos del uso de geoprocésamiento para el desarrollo de la atención primaria de salud. *Rev Panam Salud Pública*, 42, 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.26633/RPSP.2018.153>
- Shah, D., Vijayan, S., Chopra, R., Salve, J., Gandhi, R. K., Jondhale, V., Kandasamy, P., Mahapatra, S., & Kumta, S. (2020). Map, know dynamics and act; a better way to engage private health sector in TB management. A report from Mumbai, India. *Indian Journal of Tuberculosis*, 67(1), 65-72. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijtb.2019.07.001>
- Silva, V. M., Lopes, J. M. R., Dantas, R. T., Abreu, S. M. B. de, & Pinto, N. V. (2020). Cartografía do programa de atividade física desenvolvido no Núcleo Ampliado de Saúde da Família e Atenção Básica de Canindé, Ceará. *Research, Society and Development*, 9(7), e986975076. <https://doi.org/10.33448/rsd-v9i7.5076>
- Solanas Jiménez, J. (2018). Tratamiento de cartografía histórica para el análisis de la forma urbana en sistemas de información geográfica. *Biblio3W*,

XXIII(1), 742–798. <https://revistes.ub.edu/index.php/b3w/article/view/26475>

Spinelli, H. (2016). Volver a pensar en salud: Programas y territorios. *Salud Colectiva*, 12(2), 149–171. <https://doi.org/10.18294/sc.2016.976>

Valbuena-García, A. M., & Rodríguez-Villamizar, L. A. (2018). Análisis espacial en epidemiología: revisión de métodos. *Rev. Univ. Ind. Santander. Salud*, 50(4), 358–365. <http://www.scielo.org.co/pdf/suis/v50n4/0121-0807-suis-50-04-358.pdf>

Valencia, A., Hincapié, M., Gómez, G., & Molano, P. E. (2019). Tendencias de evaluación en promoción de la salud. Actualización del debate en la década 2005-2015. *Hacia Promoc. Salud.*, 24(1), 123–137. 10.17151/hpsal.2019.24.1.11 [http://promocionsalud.ucaldas.edu.co/downloads/Revista24\(1\)\\_11.pdf](http://promocionsalud.ucaldas.edu.co/downloads/Revista24(1)_11.pdf)

Yumisaca, J., Ruiz, F., & Orrala, O. (2018). Propuesta metodológica basada en herramientas gis para el inventario de recursos turísticos en la Provincia de Santa Elena. *Revista de Estrategias Del Desarrollo Empresarial*, 4(11), 1–11. [www.ecorfan.org/spain](http://www.ecorfan.org/spain)

# Metacognitive Judgments as an Emerging Research Trend. A Conceptual Review\*

(English Version)

Los juicios metacognitivos como tendencia emergente de investigación. Una revisión conceptual

Julgamentos metacognitivos como uma tendência emergente de pesquisa. Uma revisão conceitual

*Received 22 March, 2022. Accepted 31 April, 2022.*

› To cite this article:

Olaya Torres, A. J., Montoya Londoño, D. M., Gutierrez, A. P. & Puente, A. (2023). Metacognitive Judgments as an Emerging Research Trend. A Conceptual Review.

*Ánfora*, 30(54). 254-281.

<https://doi.org/10.30854/anfv30.n54.2023.910>

Universidad Autónoma de Manizales. L-ISSN 0121-6538.

E-ISSN 2248-6941.

CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

**Adriana Julieth Olaya Torres\*\***

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1376-9383>

**Chile**

**Diana Marcela Montoya Londoño\*\*\***

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8007-0102>

**Colombia**

**Antonio P. Gutierrez de Blume\*\*\*\***

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6809-1728>

**United States**

**Aníbal Puente Ferreras\*\*\*\*\***

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3994-0553>

**Chile**

\* None of the authors have any conflict of interest to report.

\*\* PhD student in Developmental Sciences and Psychopathology at Universidad del Desarrollo, Santiago, Chile. [aolayat@udd.cl](mailto:aolayat@udd.cl)

\*\*\* PhD in Cognitive Sciences. University of Manizales, University of Caldas, Colombia. [diana.montoya@ucaldas.edu.co](mailto:diana.montoya@ucaldas.edu.co)

\*\*\*\* PhD in Educational Psychology, Foundations. Georgia Southern University, Department of Curriculum, Foundations, and Reading, United States. [agutierrez@georgiasouthern.edu](mailto:agutierrez@georgiasouthern.edu)

\*\*\*\*\* PhD in Education and Society, Master in Reading Comprehension and Text Production. Universidad Andrés Bello, Viña del Mar, Chile. [anibal.puente@unab.cl](mailto:anibal.puente@unab.cl)

## Abstract

**Objective:** The purpose of the current article is to conduct a conceptual revision of the term “metacognitive judgment.” **Methodology:** For the thematic review of the literature written by some of the most important authors in the field, 55 archival sources were taken into consideration. These sources were examined through the following stages: introduction, reflection, and establishment of conclusions. **Results:** It is established that metacognitive judgments are seen as the construct that brings together the students’ beliefs about what they know and do not know, as well as their control and regulation over their learning. **Conclusion:** The study of metacognitive judgments is put out as an alternative to aid students in self-regulating their learning so they can become gradually more accurate in assessing their performance.

**Keywords:** metacognitive judgments; calibration; accuracy; confidence level; performance; metacognitive monitoring.

## Resumen

**Objetivo:** en el presente artículo se tuvo como objetivo realizar una revisión conceptual del constructo ‘juicio metacognitivo’. **Metodología:** para la revisión temática de la literatura producida por algunos de los autores más relevantes del campo se consideraron 55 fuentes documentales que fueron analizadas mediante las siguientes etapas: introducción, reflexión y establecimiento de conclusiones. **Resultados:** se establece que los juicios metacognitivos son entendidos como el constructo que agrupa el conjunto de creencias que tienen los estudiantes acerca de lo que saben, y no saben; y también, respecto a cómo controlan y regulan su aprendizaje. **Conclusión:** el estudio de los juicios metacognitivos se presenta como una alternativa para favorecer el proceso de autorregulación del aprendizaje de los estudiantes a fin de que puedan ser progresivamente más precisos en la calibración de su desempeño.

**Palabras clave:** juicios metacognitivos; calibración; precisión; nivel de confianza; desempeño; monitoreo metacognitivo.

## Resumo

**Objetivo:** o objetivo deste artigo era realizar uma revisão conceitual da construção "juízo metacognitivo". **Metodologia:** para a revisão temática da literatura produzida por alguns dos autores mais relevantes na área, 55 fontes documentais foram consideradas e analisadas através das seguintes etapas: introdução, reflexão e estabelecimento de conclusões. **Resultados:** é estabelecido que os juízos metacognitivos são entendidos como a construção que agrupa o conjunto de crenças que os estudantes têm sobre o que sabem e não sabem, e também sobre como eles controlam e regulam seu aprendizado. **Conclusão:** o estudo dos juízos metacognitivos é apresentado como uma alternativa para favorecer o processo de auto-regulamentação da aprendizagem dos estudantes para que eles possam ser progressivamente mais precisos na calibração de seu desempenho.

**Palavras chave:** juízos metacognitivos; calibração; precisão; nível de confiança; desempenho; monitoramento metacognitivo.



## Introduction

A category of research known as “metacognition” emerged as a subject of study in the 1960s, which is when people began to recognize its significance for learning and cognitive performance in areas like problem-solving and critical thinking (Gourgey, 2002; Schraw, 2002; Sawyer, 2014). Since then, research into this construct has been a focus of educational researchers, leading to the current view that it should be included in the curriculum as a cross-cutting subject that should support instruction in all curricular areas (Zohar & Dori, 2012).

In this sense, the student is acknowledged as a self-aware agent who is capable of knowing his or her own thoughts and controlling them. He or she is also capable of assessing their own cognitive performance, motivating themselves, and developing strategies to adjust to changes (Hacker *et al.*, 2009). According to some researchers, students who have greater metacognitive awareness also have greater capacity for developing accurate metacognitive judgments with appropriate levels of self-confidence over their performance (Gutierrez, 2012). As a result, it is believed that the development of metacognitive awareness is essential because it enables students to participate in learning situations while having a greater understanding of and control over their performance. This allows those who create more accurate judgments to develop their monitoring and control skills while also improving their performance and confidence in academic tasks (Gutierrez, 2012).

In this regard, it has been suggested that understanding the elements of metacognitive awareness, which likely serve as the foundation upon which students develop their metacognitive judgments regarding the learning process, may help students reflect on themselves and achieve academic goals (Shaw *et al.*, 2018).

The term “metacognitive awareness” is derived from Flavell’s (1979) concept of “metacognition.” Researchers have defined it as “the capacity to reflect on one’s own learning, understand it, and manage it” (Schraw & Dennison, 1994). “Learning consciousness” refers to the understanding of how to use the information at hand to accomplish a goal, the ability to judge the cognitive demands of a given task, and the assessment of one’s progress prior to, during, and after performance (Flavell, 1979; Gourgey, 2002).

Many researchers in the field have reported on Flavell’s distinction between knowledge and regulation, which he made in the beginning. They agree that these two are the essential elements of metacognition (Schraw, 2002). However, as presented by Peña-Ayala and Cárdenas (2015), other authors have also posited additional components to those already cited, including skills (Veenman, 2013),

control (Finley *et al.*, 2010), monitoring (Touroutoglou & Efklides, 2010), reflection (Van den Boom *et al.*, 2004), and alertness (Koriat, 2000), among others.

As a result of the pioneering metacognition research, a field of study was established, opening the way for the construct to begin to be connected to other conceptual categories such as affect (Efklides, 2006), cognitive processing (Veenman, 2012), executive control (Schwartz *et al.*, 2013), critical thinking (Ford & Yore, 2012), theory of mind (Flavell, 2004; Misailidi, 2010), cognitive load (Scott & Schwartz, 2007), and motivation (Maier & Richter, 2014).

Research trends on metacognition generally focus on understanding its role in learning processes in various domains of expertise or knowledge, assessing the level of metacognitive awareness among students of various ages, understanding its significance for authorized learning, and, more recently, understanding the role of metacognitive monitoring in relation to student assessments of their confidence in their performance. The purpose of the current article is to provide a general reflection on the calibration issue by describing and analyzing the conceptual underpinnings of the term “metacognitive judgment.”

### **A Current Alternative to Work on Metacognition in Classroom Processes: Metacognitive Judgments**

According to Schraw (2009), several terms have been established to address various metacognitive aspects. The study of metacognitive judgments, which is seen as the construct that brings together students' beliefs about what they know and how to control and regulate their learning, is perhaps one of the more novel conceptual categories at the time. This collection of beliefs serves as a legitimate introduction to metacognitive action. In experimental research, judgments about one's own knowledge have been examined in a variety of application areas, including perception, memory, metacognition, decision-making, and work with eyewitnesses (Koriat, 2012).

It is possible to say that specifically in application of the work with metacognitive judgments in education that these are defined as *judgments of probability that inform the student of their own learning and performance before, during, or after certain tests or exams* (Schraw, 2009). According to various authors, the research questions that have received the most attention in the field of studying metacognitive judgments in laboratory and educational settings have been those related to the foundations of judgment, accuracy, reliability, stability, measurement, and control of those judgments (Koriat, 2012; Dunlosky & Thiede, 2013).

In relation to these viewpoints, it has been discovered that students who are diligent in keeping track of their knowledge may discern when they know

something and when they do not. In addition, they can judge when people are rational and when they are confused (Koriat, 2012). The accuracy or precision of the judgments indicates how well a student's judgment corresponds to his actual performance from two important aspects: first, from the degree to which the magnitude of the judgments are related to the actual magnitude of the performance, which is known as "absolute accuracy"; and second, from the degree to which the judgments discriminate between the different levels of performance through the items, that is, the "relative accuracy" (Dunlosky & Thiede, 2013).

In relation to the findings regarding the basis on which students establish the formulation of their metacognitive judgments, according to Koriat (2007), at least three types of perspectives have been pointed out: the direct access approach, the one based on the information, and the experience-based approach.

In Koriat's (2007) opinion, from the direct access approach, metacognitive judgments focus on the activation of an underlying objective. That is, stimuli that are activated in memory increase their strength, which produces high judgments of sensation of knowledge and enhances the precision of decisions. According to the direct access theory approach, people will judge that they know the answer and cannot remember it when the strength of the target is below the recall threshold but above the sense-of-knowledge threshold. If the strength of a target response in memory is below the threshold of awareness sensation, they will judge that they do not recognize the target or stimulus (Dunlosky & Metcalfe, 2009).

Likewise, in relation to the information-based approach, it has been pointed out that in this perspective, emphasis is placed on the content of the specific beliefs and knowledge that the student has about their own skills and competencies. This, to the extent that metacognitive judgments are proposed to be based on the person's theories about how various characteristics of the study material or learning conditions influence memory performance (Koriat, 2007). For example, when students are asked to judge how well they have performed on a test, their judgments may be based on data such as their preconceived notions about their competence in the domain tested, the amount of time they have spent studying for a test or its difficulty, etc. (Koriat *et al.*, 2008).

For its part, the experience-based approach allows for the consideration that mnemonic signals contribute to task performance and, therefore, to constructing judgments while reflecting memories and feelings of knowledge. Trials based on this approach involve a two-stage process. In the first, a subjective feeling is given place; and in the second, that feeling is used to make predictions about memory; for example, by asking the student to evaluate his performance on the test, he may have the experience of detecting the presence of the target, similar to what occurs in the "tip of the tongue" phenomenon, in which the

person may feel that the memory is imminent and may experience frustration at not retrieving the goal that is proving elusive. These feelings can serve as the basis for reported feeling of knowing judgments (*Feeling of Knowing* or *FOK* judgments) (Koriat *et al.*, 2008).

On the other hand, regarding the reliability and stability of metacognitive judgments, authors such as Dunlosky and Thiede (2013) point out that these two aspects have probably been the least addressed at the research level, indicating that, although evidence of stability has been found in judgments in some contexts, generating greater knowledge in this regard is necessary. This, to the extent that students use their confidence judgments to regulate information retrieval, so the use of judgments may have limited effectiveness if they are inaccurate.

In this sense, authors suggest that knowing why stability in the accuracy of the judgments varies is important—for example, between two exams—since this could contribute to the student’s achievement. For example, it may be the case that in a first exam some of the students can demonstrate exact accuracy, but in the second exam these same students may present a lower score than in the first (Hadwin & Webster, 2013). This situation reveals the need to continue delving into the link between monitoring and control of decisions in relation to the study (Dunlosky & Thiede, 2013). It can be accomplished with different variables that can influence the accuracy of monitoring—such as the level of confidence and performance—that are related to the person, such as: personality, motivation, and positive or negative emotions; and in relation to the tasks (the difficulty of the item, the length and format of the test, etc.).

## Classification of Metacognitive Judgments

One of the aspects related to the understanding and explanation of metacognitive judgments and their importance in learning has to do with their classification or with the approach of the different typologies.

Table 1 presents the classification proposed by Schraw (2009), which is considered the most used classification by researchers in the world. The categories for the typology respond to the moment in which the judgments are made, from a temporal analysis framework and, accordingly, metacognitive judgments can be of the following type: prospective, concurrent, or retrospective (Dunlosky & Metcalfe, 2009; Schraw, 2009).

**Table 1.** *Taxonomy of Metacognitive Judgments.*

Time of Judgment	Type of Judgment	Description
Prospective (judgments made before the test)	Judgments of learning (JOL).	Judgments about one's ability to retain information.
	Ease of learning judgments (EOL).	Judgments about the relative ease of learning the information.
	Feeling of Knowing judgments (FOK).	Judgments about later recognition of information that could not be recalled.
Concurrent (judgments made during the test)	Online trust judgments <sup>1</sup> .	
	Ease of solution judgements.	Judgments of confidence in one's own performance.
	Online judgments of performance accuracy (performance calibration).	Judgments about the accuracy of one's own performance.
Retrospective (judgments made after the test)	Ease of learning/solution.	Post-test judgments about the relative ease of learning information
	Hindsight judgments of performance accuracy, also called "hindsight judgments of confidence"	Judgments about adequate task performance after completing all items.

Source: Schraw (2009, p. 37).

Prospective judgments are predictions that the student makes about performance, which can be evaluated in three ways: a) judgments of learning (JOL), which are predictions about the future performance of the test based on recently studied items or articles (Nelson & Narens, 1994) and imply that the student reviews the information to be learned and makes predictions about how much information will be remembered; b) judgments of feeling of knowledge (FOK), which are presented when the student is asked to predict whether he or she will recognize information that cannot be remembered (these types of judgments assess a person's ability to monitor memory content and ability to retrieve information); and c) judgments of ease of learning (EOL), which involve the ability

1. They are the so-called *learning judgments*.

to judge the amount of time or effort needed to learn the material; that is, they measure the ability to monitor perceived difficulty during the comprehension process (Schraw, 2009).

Alternatively, concurrent judgments are the evaluations made during the learning task. Schraw's (2009) perspective includes confidence judgments, which assess the learner's ability to trust his or her own performance; judgments of ease solution, which refer to the person's ability to monitor the difficulty of the task according to one's cognitive resources; and judgments of accuracy of performance, which measure the subject's ability to monitor his or her performance on the task. In this type of judgments, the student is always asked to give his or her judgment item by item during the test.

In retrospective judgments, the evaluation is made item by item or generally about the set of items on the test after this has been completed. This type of judgment follows the same pattern as the learning judgment, easy to learn/solution, performance, and confidence described previously with the only difference being that the student is asked to make them after taking the test. For this typology, the best known have been called "Judgments of Retrospective Confidence" (JRC).

For the purposes of the present conceptual review, two of the types of judgments are described. The research has been focused on metacognition: learning and confidence judgments (Dunlosky Metcalfe, 2009; Hadwin & Webster, 2013; Narens *et al.*, 2008; Schraw, 2009).

### **Learning Judgments: a Prospective Type of Judgment**

During the last two decades, the approach to learning judgments in classroom processes has been consolidated as an object of research. Developments derived from this type of study have allowed understanding its use in the regulation of study hours, given its function demonstrated in the control of learning that allows people monitoring to guide or indicate which items to study and for how long they need to do it (Dunlosky & Metcalfe, 2009). This typology of judgments allows them to be positioned as a prospective type of judgment in which the person makes predictions about the probability to correctly recover the studied items recently (Dunlosky *et al.*, 2015; Schraw, 2009). This type of judgments has also been called "concurrent," about the execution of the judgments, which can be on-line, while the person performs the task.

The typical experimental format to evaluate JOLs involves asking the person to study the information to be learned (e.g., a list of words), and then

to make predictions about the possibility of recovering each item. This type of judgment involves the person's ability to encode and retain information (Schraw, 2009). The main interest of researchers in the study of learning judgments has been focused on the accuracy of the judgments; that is, the level of the relationship between predicted performance and observed performance on the final test (Narens *et al.*, 2008).

On the accuracy of learning judgments, two factors have received full attention from researchers, as they have found it to be of significant influence: one, the number of trials; and the other, the duration of the trials.

First, the number of trials refers to how extra study sessions seem to improve memory performance (Dunlosky & Metcalfe, 2009). Accordingly, when people study few items and make learning judgments on several tests using the same items, performance on the second test is expected to increase; and with it, the accuracy of the judgments (Koriat, 2000). Thus, at first, one could conclude that people apparently base their learning judgments on the results of the previous trial, which are powerful predictors of performance on the next trial (Finn & Metcalfe, 2014; Vessonder & Voss, 1985).

Second, trial duration as a factor that highly influences learning judgments has been studied as the effect of delayed learning judgments (Dunlosky *et al.*, 2015). This effect consists of asking test takers to make their learning judgments several minutes after having studied the items. The delayed learning trial effect has been replicated several times with high school and university students. Waiting a certain amount of time to make judgments was found to improve judgment accuracy significantly, especially in cases of moderate time delays (Dunlosky & Metcalfe, 2009; Dunlosky *et al.*, 2015).

To understand how learning judgments are developed, several hypotheses have been proposed from the perspective of Dunlosky and Metcalfe (2009). The first of these is the processing facilitation hypothesis, which suggests that the basis of these judgments is the use of heuristics; in other words, the consideration of a type of rule can be valid or incorrect. According to this hypothesis, people make their judgments based on whether the items are easy or not to process, which would lead them to make more accurate judgments about performance.

The second hypothesis is the memory fluency hypothesis, which also assumes that learning judgments are heuristic by nature and that memory answer is a sign of good memory capacity. In this way, it is considered that when information is kept in mind more quickly, then memory is fluid. Finally, the hypothesis of the use of cues is recognized, from which it is proposed that people's learning judgments are significantly different according to three types of cues. In Koriat's (2000) perspective, these cues can be intrinsic (as characteristics of the items that may decrease the learning difficulty), extrinsic (those involving

encoding ability or other non-intrinsic learning conditions for the items), and mnemonic (understood as internal cues based on subjective experiences that suggest that an item will be remembered).

## **Learning Judgments: a Concurrent Type of Judgment**

Dunlosky and Metcalfe (2009) pose that Judgments of Confidence (JOCs) require people to rate the probability that their answers are correct. The confidence people have in their beliefs and knowledge is considered important. This defines whether an answer is shared or not, considering whether others believe in it. According to Hadwin and Webster (2013), JOCs are considered indicators of metacognitive monitoring because they represent students' perception or awareness of their own cognitive processes.

According to Winne (2011), confidence judgments exert self-regulatory action by triggering If-Then-Else sequences, implying that if the learner does not feel safe, then they will adjust their expectations or do something to improve their chances of being successful on the task. In the same way, if one does not reach the goal, one may be less confident in future judgments or may set goals that are easier to achieve. These aspects represent the importance of confidence judgments for control and metacognitive regulation.

In the same approach, Dinsmore and Parkinson (2013) note that students' confidence ratings include both person elements (such as their prior knowledge) and task elements (e.g., text features), which led them to conclude that students base their confidence on a combination of person and environmental characteristics. These results are consistent with findings derived from studies in self-efficacy, in which confidence judgments emerge in response to past experiences and in which personal performance and achievements are a prominent source for constructing new judgments (Hadwin & Webster, 2013).

Like the basis that explains how students construct their metacognitive judgments, Koriat (2012) posits that feelings of confidence may be based on recognition of the question (direct access approach), inferences about the task at hand (information-based approach), memories and feelings of knowledge derived from the task (experience-based approach), or memories of past performance rather than content-specific knowledge (self-consistency approach).

The confidence judgments raised by students are rarely considered to be perfect, which triggers two biases, known as "overconfidence" and



“under-confidence” (Dunlosky & Metcalfe, 2009). In this regard, Hadwin and Webster (2013) consider that overconfidence may lead students to fail to recognize when to regulate strategies to increase their successful performance, while under-confidence would lead to the unnecessary use of cognitive and affective resources to achieve goals that have already been attained.

## **Explanatory Models of Metacognitive Judgments that Highlight the Importance of Metacognitive Monitoring**

### **Tobias and Everson (2002) Model.**

This model emphasizes monitoring before learning as a requirement for the metacognitive process, which implies the ability to evaluate learning, choose strategies, and make plans for one’s learning process, as shown in Figure 1.

In the perspective of Tobias and Everson (2002), three components are recognized as necessary to regulate learning effectively: knowledge of metacognition, the ability to monitor learning processes, and the meta-ability to control such processes.

The basic premise of Tobias and Everson’s model (2002) is that knowledge monitoring is the ability to know what one knows, as well as knowing what one does not know. Thus, students who correctly distinguish between what they have learned and what they still need to learn have an advantage during instruction because they can skip the more familiar material and focus on the less familiar content they have yet to master; whereas students with less metacognitive awareness, i.e., those with less accurate knowledge monitoring skills, often spend too much time reviewing familiar material at the expense of mastering unfamiliar or new content (Tobias & Everson, 1996; 2009).

**Figure 1.** Hierarchy of Metacognitive Processes.



Source: Tobias & Everson (2009, p. 115).

### **Nelson and Narens (1990) Model.**

According to Schraw *et al.* (2013), in studies on metacognition the model of Nelson and Narens (1990) has served as an initial theoretical framework for its conceptualization. Hacker *et al.* (2009) argue that three aspects underlie their model:

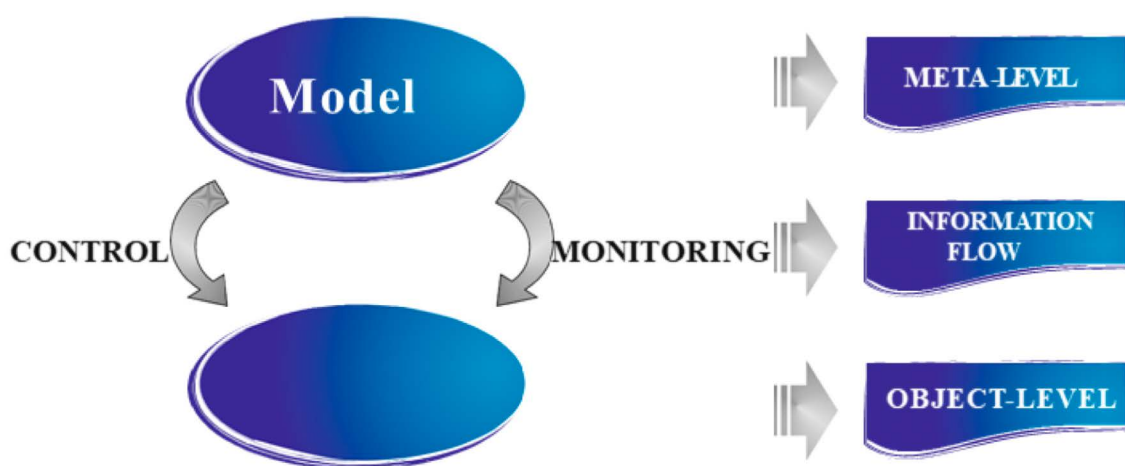
- a) Mental processes are divided into two or more specifically interrelated levels: a cognitive level and a metacognitive level.
- b) The metacognitive level contains a representation or dynamic mental model of the cognitive level; and in turn, the cognitive level is responsible for the activity of the cognitive processes themselves.
- c) There are two reciprocal relationships between the two levels: monitoring and control. These are defined in terms of the direction of information flow between the meta-level and the object-level (p. 161).

The elements that form the model include two levels of metacognition. One is the object-level, characterized by the mastery of task-relevant knowledge and the use of a repertoire of automated strategies. The other is the meta-level, characterized by an explicit mental model of strategy use that controls and regulates learning (Schraw & Gutierrez, 2015).

Monitoring refers to the type and quality of information received from the object-level so that the target level can make the necessary changes. That is, monitoring is the process through which the learner uses information from the object-level to assess progress toward a learning goal at the meta-level (Gutierrez, 2012). This process involves information gathering and represents the ongoing flow between the meta-level and the object-level, allowing the learner to construct plans and assess meta-level accuracy or performance when carrying out a learning task.

In turn, the control, which can also be understood as an executive process, involves the interventions that students make in their environment to achieve a goal and indicates the ability of the meta-level to make adaptations at the object-level. Thus, the meta-level reacts to stimuli by generating a control flow that starts, alters, or finishes the mental actions performed at the object-level (Nelson & Narens, 1994; Hacker *et al.*, 2009). Figure 2 shows the representation of the Nelson and Narens (1994) model.

Figure 2. Representation of the Nelson and Narens Metacognition Model (1990).



Source: Nelson & Narens (1990); Gutierrez (2012, p. 7).

To exemplify this model, Dunlosky and Thiede (2013) posit that when students are studying for an exam, they may decide to start by reading the assigned chapters. As they do so, they can evaluate their progress and judge how well they understand the concepts, so that if they judge they have learned them well, they can stop when they feel it is necessary. Conversely, if they judge that they do not understand some concepts, they will resort to strategies such as rereading chapters or seeking help from peers or teachers. According to Dunlosky and Thiede's (2013) perspective, these monitoring and control mechanisms may influence students' achievements, on the one hand, because those who are overconfident in their understanding may not be sufficiently prepared, as they prematurely culminate their study hours; and on the other hand, because, even if students' judgments are accurate, if they do not use them effectively to control their learning they may even obtain low results.

From this perspective, Gutierrez (2012) notes that thinkers with greater metacognitive awareness have more refined monitoring (information-gathering) of the environment (the object-level) that continuously informs the meta-level model (environment representation) about the state of the object-level. Thus, these students have a more perfect representation of the environment and a greater awareness of their metacognitive processes, so they will have a greater ability to produce more accurate metacognitive judgments with more appropriate levels of confidence regarding their performance than their less metacognitively aware peers (Gutierrez, 2012).

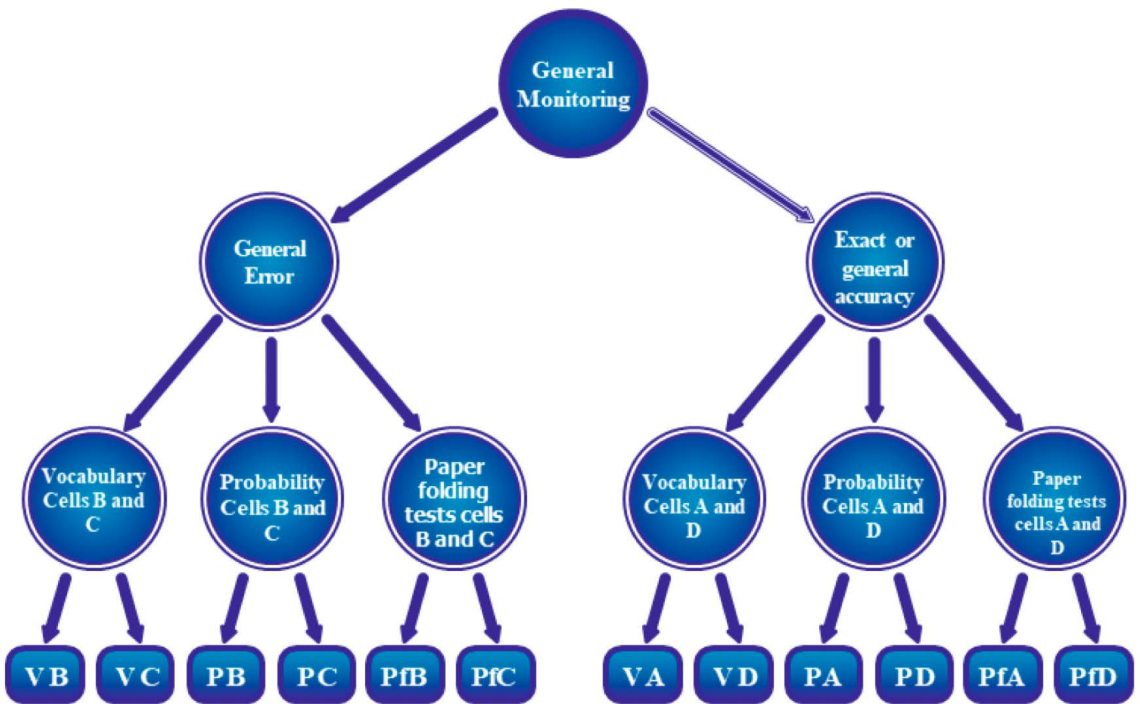
### **Third-order General Monitoring Model (Schraw et al., 2013; Gutierrez et al., 2016; 2021)**

This model demonstrates the existence of two different types of metacognitive monitoring: one for accuracy and the other for errors. Thus, metacognitive judgments derived from accurate monitoring are different from those formulated from error; a form of processing that, in turn, can be evidenced in overconfidence or under-confidence biases (Gutierrez et al., 2016).

Gutierrez et al. (2016), through factor analysis, provided evidence for the existence of two different factors involved in metacognitive monitoring: overall accuracy and overall error (see Figure 3). Thus, they found error and accuracy factors specific to certain domains (vocabulary, paper folding, and probability tasks) (first order), which loaded to domain-general error and accuracy factors (second order), which then loaded to a general monitoring factor (third order). Considering that from this theoretical model it has been shown that overall

accuracy and error are treated as separate latent dimensions, future interventions in metacognitive monitoring should be oriented toward improving accuracy or decreasing error, but not in the direction of both goals necessarily (Gutierrez, 2020; Gutierrez *et al.*, 2020).

Figure 3. Representation of the Gutierrez *et al.* (2016) General Third-order Monitoring Model.



Source: Gutierrez *et al.* (2016, p. 4).

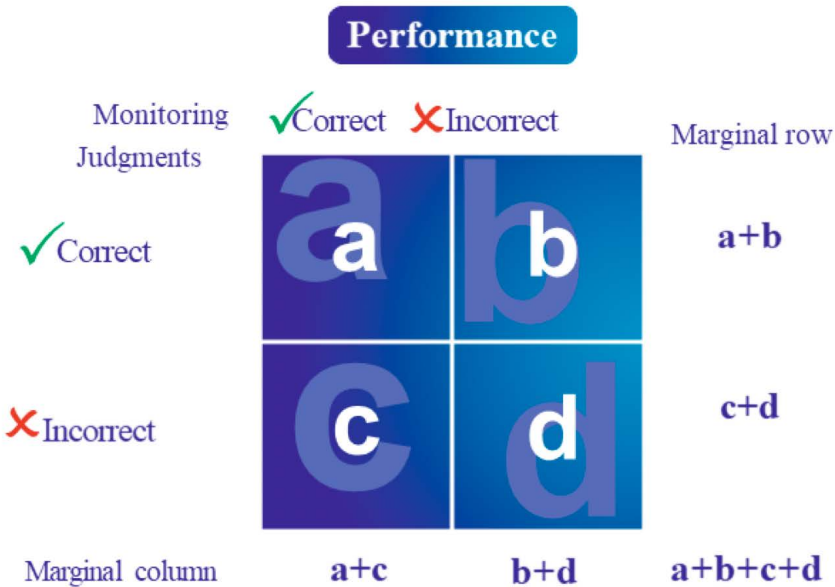
## The Role of Metacognitive Judgments in Metacognitive Monitoring.

Schwartz and Perfect (2004) state that metacognitive monitoring refers to the processes that allow individuals to observe, experience, or reflect on their own cognitive processes. These processes also aid in knowing how much or how little to be learned, whether individuals have mastered, for example, the multiplication tables, or the feeling of having understood the text they have just read. Therefore, it has been indicated that monitoring is the learners' ability to successfully judge their own cognitive processes as well as their own performance.

Additionally, metacognitive monitoring has been understood as the relationship between task performance and judgment about that performance (Gutierrez *et al.*, 2016). Such relationship has been researched in studies on calibration that is the process of accuracy or alignment between a judgment and a meaningful standard which is the performance on a given task or performance test (Dinsmore & Parkinson, 2013; Hadwin & Webster, 2013). Metacognitive monitoring is exhibited by asking students to make metacognitive judgments about their assessments or assignments, and therefore, they may know about the state of their cognition.

The traditional procedure for studying metacognitive monitoring involves completing a test item and asking the students to judge their performance on answers. According to Gutierrez *et al.* (2016), in their research on a 2 x 2 matrix, the four monitoring outcomes that arise after the students complete the test items and make the metacognitive judgments is depicted in Figure 4.

Figure 4. Relationships between the Four Types of Performance-Judgements Outcomes.



Source: Gutierrez *et al.* (2016, p. 2).

In line with Gutierrez *et al.* (2016), the double-entry matrix is proposed for the analysis of the two monitoring mechanisms: hits and misses processing. Cell *a* shows the first outcome and corresponds to correct performance that is judged as “correct,” i.e. accurate monitoring. Cell *d* represents incorrect performance that is judged as incorrect, which would also imply an accurate monitoring of the process itself. Cell *b* indicates an incorrect performance that is judged as correct; and cell *c* reflects a correct performance that is judged as incorrect, representing inaccurate monitoring. This inaccurate monitoring has been characterized as “over or under-confidence,” or as “illusion of knowing” and “illusion of not knowing” (Gutierrez *et al.*, 2016; Gutierrez *et al.*, 2020; Gutierrez, 2020).

According to the findings from the third-order general monitoring model, metacognitive monitoring can be explained by either the domain-specific monitoring hypothesis or the domain-general monitoring hypothesis. The first hypothesis suggests that monitoring accuracy is situated within a specific content domain, for example, mathematics as the domain, algebra as the subdomain or a task, such as proofreading. Similarly, the domain-general monitoring hypothesis

posits that students construct a repertoire of general skills that allow them to make accurate judgments about their performance. This repertoire may comprise skills such as goal setting, strategy management, and self-explanation, among others (Gutierrez *et al.*, 2016; Gutierrez *et al.*, 2020).

### Evaluation of Metacognitive Judgments.

Judgment accuracy is one of the most studied metacognitive judgments, that is, with the question “how well are the people’s judgments related to their real performance?” (Dunlosky & Thiede, 2013).

In this regard, Hadwin and Webster (2013) state that metacognitive judgments have been studied as predictions made prior to completing a task or question. For example, by asking the individuals to indicate their degree of confidence in their ability to recall the second word in tasks of associated pairs (Nelson & Dunlosky, 1991); and, as predictions after completing the task. This time by asking how confident they are that their answers are correct (Dinsmore & Parkinson, 2013). Similarly, as global predictions, in which the percentage of questions answered correctly have been examined, and as local predictions, in which confidence for a specific item or question is examined (Pieschl, 2009).

In this regard, Schraw (2009) states that most of the studies on metacognitive monitoring focus on the relationship between metacognitive judgments and performance. For this purpose, measures of absolute accuracy and relative accuracy have been used.

Absolute accuracy measures whether a metacognitive judgment exactly matches performance, providing a measure of how accurately a person can judge performance on the test item. This implies that the students’ confidence judgments are compared in an absolute fashion to their performance on the same task (Gutierrez, 2012). Relative accuracy, on the other hand, provides a measure of both the relationship between correct and incorrect metacognitive judgments and a set of metacognitive judgments and the results on a performance test. This allows describing the consistency of judgments or how well individuals can discriminate better learned material from less learned material (Schraw, 2009). This type of accuracy is assessed using correlational coefficient measures, such as “Pearson” or “Gamma” (Nelson & Narens, 1994).

Table 2 depicts the traditional classification of the measures in the statistical analysis of judgments and the interpretation for each score.



Table 2. . Types of Outcome Measures.

Measured Construct	Outcome Measure	Interpretation of Punctuation.
Absolute accuracy	Absolute accuracy index	Discrepancy between a confidence judgment and performance.
	Hamann Coefficient	Discrepancy between hits and misses in a contingency table.
	Bias Index	The degree of over or under- confidence in judgments.
Relative accuracy	Correlation Coefficient	Relationship between set of judgments and corresponding performances scores.
	Gamma Coefficient	Dependence between judgments and performance.
	Discrimination Index	Ability to discriminate between correct and incorrect outcomes.

Source: Schraw (2009, p. 39).

These outcome scores are calculated based on different computational formulas and statistical measures that combine the information of the four cells for an estimation of the calibration process (Schraw *et al.*, 2013). Among the most commonly used measures are: G-index, Gamma,  $d'$ , and sensitivity and specificity. However, as Schraw *et al.* (2014) state, researchers tend to consider them as mutually exclusive. This is framed within a current debate. From the perspective of Nelson (1984), the Gamma measure has been proposed as superior to the other measures, indicating the problem as unidimensional; while from Schraw's (1995) initial findings and many of his later works (Schraw *et al.*, 2013; Schraw *et al.*, 2020), the problem of measuring judgments is regarded as multi-dimensional, therefore the need to combine the power of different statistical measures.

## Conclusions

Calibration studies address the relationship between metacognition and the students' own performance as an alternative to favor self-regulated learning. Therefore, calibration is understood as the degree to which individuals judge their performance and how this judgment or belief corresponds or adjusts to their actual level of performance (Gutierrez, 2012).

Studies on calibration and metacognition to achieve and/or improve the students agency capacity and self-regulation of learning have been considered important because calibration is assumed to measure important attributes of effective metacognitive monitoring (Nelson, 1996), among which confidence and accuracy of metacognitive judgments could be considered. Traditionally, studies in this line have been oriented to review calibration processes in text comprehension, multimedia learning, test preparation, learning in computer environments, as well as in collaborative learning processes (Hacker *et al.*, 2008; Hacker *et al.*, 2009; Zimmerman & Moylan, 2009; Winne & Azevedo, 2014).

This article aimed to provide a comprehensive view of the problem of calibration from the description and analysis of some of the conceptual aspects of the construct "metacognitive judgment," understood as an inductor of metacognitive action and to favor the students' calibration accuracy with respect to their own learning process.

## References

- Dinsmore, D., L. & Parkinson, M., M. (2013). What are Confidence Judgments Made of? Students' Explanations for their Confidence Ratings and what that Means for Calibration. *Learning and Instruction*, 24, 4-14. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.learninstruc.2012.06.001>
- Dunlosky, J. & Thiede, K., W. (2013). Four Cornerstones of Calibration Research: Why Understanding Students' Judgments can Improve their Achievement. *Learning and Instruction*, 24, 58-61. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.learninstruc.2012.05.002>
- Dunlosky, J & Metcalfe, J. (2009). *Metacognition*. SAGE Publications Ltd.

- Dunlosky, J., Serra, M., J., Matvey, G. & Rawson, K., A. (2015). Second-Order Judgments About Judgments of Learning. *The Journal of General Psychology*, 132(4), 335–346. <https://doi.org/10.3200/GENP.132.4.335-346>
- Efklides, A. (2006). Metacognition and Affect: What can Metacognitive Experiences Tell Us About the Learning Process? *Educational Research Review*, 1, 3-14. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2005.11.001>
- Flavell, J., H. (1979). Metacognition and Cognitive Monitoring: A New Area of Cognitive–Developmental Inquiry. *American Psychologist*, 34(10), 906-911. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.34.10.906>
- Flavell, J. (2004). Theory of Mind Development: Retrospect and Prospect. *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly*, 50(3), 274-290. <https://doi.org/10.1353/mpq.2004.0018>
- Finley, J. R., Tullis, J. G., & Benjamin, A. S. (2010). Metacognitive Control of Learning and Remembering. In *New Science of Learning: Cognition, Computers and Collaboration in Education* (pp. 109-131). Springer. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4419-5716-0\\_6](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4419-5716-0_6)
- Finn, B. & Metcalfe, J. (2014). Overconfidence in Children’s Multi-Trial Judgments of Learning. *Learning and Instruction*, 32, 1-9. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.learninstruc.2014.01.001>
- Ford, C. L. & Yore, L. D. (2012). Toward Convergence of Critical Thinking, Metacognition and Reflection: Illustrations from Natural and Social Sciences, Teacher Education, and Classroom Practice. En A., Zohar & Y.J., Dori, (Eds.), *Metacognition in Science Education: Trends in Current Research, Contemporary Trends and Issues in Science Education*, (pp. 251-272). Springer. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10763-016-9726-x>.
- Gourgey, A. (2002). Metacognition in Basic Skills Instruction. In H. Hartman (Ed.), *Metacognition in learning and instruction* (pp. 17-32). Springer–Science. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-017-2243-8>
- Gutierrez, A. (2012). *Enhancing the Calibration Accuracy of Adult Learners: A Multifaceted Intervention* (tesis doctoral). University of Nevada, Las Vegas. <http://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2569&context=thesisdissertations>

- Gutierrez, A., Schraw, G., Kuch, F. & Richmond, A. (2016). A Two-Process Model of Metacognitive Monitoring: Evidence for General Accuracy and Error Factors. *Learning and Instruction*, 44, 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.learninstruc.2016.02.006>
- Gutierrez, A., Schraw, G., Kuch, F. & Richmond, A. (2021). General Accuracy and General Error Factors in Metacognitive Monitoring and the Role of Time on Task in Predicting Metacognitive Judgments. *Revista de Psicología CES*, 21(1), 1-42. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/346408081\\_General\\_Accuracy\\_and\\_General\\_Error\\_Factors\\_in\\_Metacognitive\\_Monitoring\\_and\\_the\\_Role\\_of\\_Time\\_on\\_Task\\_in\\_Predicting\\_Metacognitive\\_Judgments](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/346408081_General_Accuracy_and_General_Error_Factors_in_Metacognitive_Monitoring_and_the_Role_of_Time_on_Task_in_Predicting_Metacognitive_Judgments)
- Gutierrez de Blume, A. P. (2020). Efecto de la instrucción de estrategias cognitivas en la precisión del monitoreo metacognitivo de los alumnos universitarios estadounidenses. *Revista Tesis Psicológica*, 15(2), 1-29. <https://doi.org/10.37511/tesis.v15n2a12>
- Hacker, D., Bol, L. & Bahbahani, K. (2008). Explaining Calibration Accuracy in Classroom Contexts: The Effects of Incentives, Reflection, and Explanatory Style. *Metacognition Learning*, 3, 101-121. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11409-008-9021-5>
- Hacker, D., Dunlosky, J. & Graesser, A., C. (2009). A Growing Sense of “Agency”. In D. Hacker, J. Dunlosky y A. Graesser (eds.), *Handbook of metacognition education* (pp. 1-4). Routledge Taylor & Francis Group.
- Hacker, D., J., Keener, M., C. & Kircher, J., C. (2009). Writing is Applied Metacognition. In D. Hacker, J. Dunlosky & A. Graesser (Eds.), *Handbook of Metacognition in Education* (pp. 154-172). Routledge Taylor & Francis Group.
- Hadwin, A., F. & Webster, E., A. (2013). Calibration in Goal Setting: Examining the Nature of Judgments of Confidence. *Learning and instruction*, 24, 37-47. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.learninstruc.2012.10.001>
- Koriat, A. (2000). The Feeling of Knowing: Some Metatheoretical Implications for Consciousness and Control. *Consciousness and Cognition*, 9, 149-171. <https://doi.org/10.1006/ccog.2000.0433>

- Koriat, A. (2007). Metacognition and Consciousness. In P. D. Zelazo, M. Moscovitch, & E. Thompson (Eds.), *The Cambridge Handbook of Consciousness* (pp. 289-325). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511816789.012>
- Koriat, A., Nussinson, R., Bless, H. & Shaked, N. (2008). Information-Based and Experience- Based Metacognitive Judgments: Evidence from Subjective Confidence. En J. Dunlosky & R. Bjork (Eds.). *Handbook of Metamemory and Memory* (pp. 117-136). Psychology Press.
- Koriat, A. (2012). The Subjective Confidence in One's Knowledge and Judgements: Some Metatheoretical Considerations. En M., J., Beran, J., L. Brandl, J., Perner & J., Proust (Eds), *Foundations of Metacognition* (pp. 504-555). Oxford University Press.
- Maier, J. & Richter, T. (2014). Fostering Multiple Text Comprehension: How Metacognitive Strategies and Motivation Moderate the Text-Belief Consistency Effect. *Metacognition and Learning*, 9(1), 51-74. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11409-013-9111-x>
- Misailidi, P. (2010). Children's Metacognition and Theory of Mind: Bridging the Gap. In A., Efklides & P., Misailidi, (Eds.). *Trends and Prospects in Metacognition Research* (pp. 279-291). Springer Science+Business Media. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4419-6546-2\\_13](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4419-6546-2_13)
- Narens, L., Nelson, T. O., & Scheck, P. (2008). Memory Monitoring and the Delayed JOL Effect. In J. Dunlosky & R. A. Bjork (Eds.), *Handbook of Metamemory and Memory* (pp. 137-153). Psychology Press.
- Nelson, T. (1996). Gamma is a Measure of the Accuracy of Predicting Performance on One Item Relative to Another Item, Not of the Absolute Performance on an Individual Item. *Applied Cognitive Psychology*, 10, 257-260. [https://doi.org/10.1002/\(SICI\)1099-0720\(199606\)10:3<257::AID-ACP400>3.0.CO;2-9](https://doi.org/10.1002/(SICI)1099-0720(199606)10:3<257::AID-ACP400>3.0.CO;2-9)
- Nelson, T.O., & Narens, L. (1990). Metamemory: A Theoretical Framework and New Findings. *The Psychology of Learning and Motivation*, 26, 125-173. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0079-7421\(08\)60053-5](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0079-7421(08)60053-5)

- Nelson, T. O., & Dunlosky, J. (1991). When People's Judgments of Learning (JOLs) are Extremely Accurate at Predicting Subsequent Recall: The "Delayed-JOL Effect". *Psychological Science*, 2, 267-270. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9280.1991.tb00147.x>
- Nelson, T.O. & Narens, L. (1994). Why Investigate Metacognition? In J. Metcalfe & A. P. Shimamura (Eds.), *Metacognition* (pp. 1–25). The MIT Press.
- Peña-Ayala, A. & Cárdenas, L. (2015). A Conceptual Model of Metacognitive Activity. En A., Peña-Ayala (Ed.), *Metacognition: Fundamentals, Applications, and Trends: A profile of the current state of the art* (pp. 39-64). Springer.
- Pieschl, S. (2009). Metacognitive Calibration and Extended Conceptualization and Potential Applications. *Metacognition and Learning*, 4, 3-31. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11409-008-9030-4>.
- Sawyer, R., K. (2014). Introduction: The New Science of Learning. In R., K. Sawyer (Ed.), *The Cambridge Handbook of the Learning Sciences* (pp. 1-20). Cambridge University Press.
- Schraw, G. & Dennison, R. S. (1994). Assessing Metacognitive Awareness. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 19, 460-475. <https://doi.org/10.1006/ceps.1994.1033>
- Schraw, G. (2002). Promoting General Metacognitive Awareness. In H. Hartman (Ed.), *Metacognition in Learning and Instruction* (pp. 3- 16). Springer – Science.
- Schraw, G. (2009). Measuring Metacognitive Judgment. In D. Hacker, J. Dunlosky & A. Graesser (Eds.), *Handbook of Metacognition in Education* (pp. 415-429). Routledge Taylor & Francis Group.
- Schraw, G., Kuch, F. & Gutierrez, A.P. (2013). Measure for Measure: Calibrating Ten Commonly Used Calibration Scores. *Learning and Instruction*, 24(48-57). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.learninstruc.2012.08.007>
- Schraw, G., Kuch, F., Gutierrez, A.P. & Richmond (2014). Exploring a Three-Level Model of Calibration Accuracy. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 106(4), 1192–1202. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0036653>.

- Schraw, A. & Gutierrez, A. (2015). Metacognitive Strategy Instruction that Highlights the Role of Monitoring and Control Processes. In: A. Peña-Ayala (Ed.), *Metacognition: Fundamentals, Applications and Trends* (pp. 3-15).: Springer International Publishing Switzerland.
- Schwartz, N. H. & Perfect, T. (2004). Introduction: Toward an Applied Metacognition. En T., J. Perfect & D., S. Lindsay (Eds.), *The SAGE Handbook of Applied Metacognition* (pp. 3-19). SAGE Publications Inc.
- Schwartz, N.H., Scott, B.M. & Holzberger, D. (2013). Metacognition: A Closed-Loop Model of Biased Competition—Evidence from Neuroscience, Cognition, and Instructional Research. En R., Azevedo & V., Aleven, (Eds.) *International Handbook of Metacognition and Learning Technologies* (pp. 79-94). Springer International Handbooks of Education. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4419-5546-3\\_6](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4419-5546-3_6)
- Scott, B.M. & Schwartz, N.H. (2007). Navigational spatial displays: the role of metacognition as cognitive load. *Learning and Instruction*, 1(17), 89–105. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.learninstruc.2006.11.008>
- Shaw, S., Kuvalja, M., & Suto, I. (2018). An Exploration of Nature and Evaluation of Student Reflection. *Research Matters: A Cambridge Assessment publication*, 25, 2-8.
- Tobias, S. & Everson, H. T. (1996). *Assessing Metacognitive Knowledge Monitoring*. College Entrance Examination Board.
- Tobias, S. & Everson, H. T. (2002). The Ability to Estimate Knowledge and Performance in College: A Metacognitive Analysis. En H. J. Hartman (Ed.), *Metacognition in learning and instruction: Theory, research and practice* (pp. 69-84). Kluwer Academic. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-017-2243-8>
- Tobias, S. & Everson, H., T. (2009). The Importance of Knowing What You Know: A Knowledge Monitoring Framework for Studying Metacognition in Education. In D. Hacker, J. Dunlosky & A. Graesser (Eds.), *Handbook of Metacognition in Education* (pp. 107-128). Routledge Taylor & Francis Group.
- Touroutoglou, A. & Efklides, A. (2010). Cognitive Interruption as an Object of Metacognitive Monitoring: Feeling of Difficulty and Surprise. En

- A., Efklides & P., Misailidi, (Eds.). *Trends and Prospects in Metacognition Research* (pp. 171-208). Springer Science+Business Media.
- Van den Boom, G., Paas, F., Van Merriënboer, J. J. G., & Van Gog, T. (2004). Reflection Prompts and Tutor Feedback in a Web-Based Learning Environment: Effects on Students Self-Regulated Learning Competence. *Computers in Human. Behavior*, 20, 551–567. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2003.10.001>
- Veenman, M., J. (2012). Metacognition in Science Education: Definitions, Constituents, and Their Intricate Relation with Cognition. In A., Zohar & Y.J., Dori, (Eds.), *Metacognition in Science Education: Trends in Current Research, Contemporary Trends and Issues in Science Education* (pp. 21-36). Springer.
- Veenman, M.V.J. (2013). Assessing Metacognitive Skills in Computerized Learning Environments. En R., Azevedo & V., Aleven, (Eds.) *International Handbook of Metacognition and Learning Technologies* (pp. 157-168). Springer Science+Business Media.
- Vesonder, G. T., & Voss, J. F. (1985). On the Ability to Predict One's Own Responses While Learning. *Journal of Memory and Language*, 24, 363–376. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0749-596X\(85\)90034-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/0749-596X(85)90034-8)
- Winne, P. H. (2011). A Cognitive and Metacognitive Analysis of Self-Regulated Learning. En B. J. Zimmerman & D. H. Schunk (Eds.), *Handbook of self-regulation of learning and performance* (pp. 15-32). Routledge.
- Winne, P. H, & Azevedo, R. (2014). Metacognition. In: T. Sawyer. (Ed), *The Handbook of the Learning Sciences* (pp. 63- 87). Cambridge University Press.
- Zohar, A. & Dori, Y., J. (2012). Metacognition in Science Education Trends in Current Research. In A. Zohar & Y. J. Dori (Eds.), *Metacognition in Science Education: Trends in Current Research, Contemporary Trends and Issues in Science Education* (pp. 1-20). Springer.
- Zimmerman, B. J & Moylan, A. R. (2009). Self-Regulation: Where Metacognition and Motivation Intersect. In: D. Hacker, J. Dunlosky, & A. Graesser (Eds.), *Handbook of Metacognition in Education* (pp. 299-315). Routledge.





# Re views

Reseñas · Resenhas

# Populism as an Expression of Political Communication to Understand What is Happening in Latin America [a Critical Review]

(English Version)

Populismo y comunicación política para entender qué sucede en América Latina [reseña crítica]

Populismo e comunicação política para entender o que está acontecendo na América Latina [revisão crítica]

Received July 25, 2022. Accepted August 22, 2022.

› To cite this article:

Torres Oregón, F. (2023). Populism as an Expression of Political Communication to Understand What is Happening in Latin America [a Critical Review]. *Ánfora*, 30(54). 283-286.

<https://doi.org/10.30854/anfv30.n54.2023.981>

Universidad Autónoma de Manizales. L-ISSN 0121-6538.

E-ISSN 2248-6941.

CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

Fredyd Torres Oregón\*

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3156-0495>

México

## Critical Review of:

Mendieta Ramírez, A. and Estrada, J. L. (2021). *Comunicación Política y Populismo en América (Political Communication and Populism in Latin America)*. Tirant Humanidades, 195 pp.

Cross-sectional studies are important at any given time for the analysis of how media networks recreate its control mechanism via new narrative media. This media not only describes the current Latin American leaders, but also reports other examples of political discourse to attract the masses, such as those by: Mary Le Pen, in France; Víctor Orban, in Hungary; and Nayib Bukele, in El Salvador. These politicians act in favor of an ideological rhetoric based on the disputes between virtuous people and a corrupt elite. Although appealing to the emotion of the masses has been a long tradition by leaders or heads of state – whether democratic or totalitarian regimes – it is equally important or evident in current times, as is the case of some Latin

---

\*. PhD. in Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources. Centro de Estudios e Investigación en Desarrollo Sustentable (CEDeS), Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México. [ftorreso@uaemex.mx](mailto:ftorreso@uaemex.mx)

American leaders. For instant, this practice remains in force as part of the political communication within certain democratic regimes in Latin America to gain sympathizers; and on the other hand, it fosters social polarization. This type of discourse created by Latin American presidents is analyzed in this book.

Mendieta and Estrada (2021) compile the historical context in the populist discourse analysis in all Latin American countries. They find the common thread around the polarization and dispute of the discourses in the media to ensure a resurgence of political representation through popular consultations when the population comments on any topic in social networks and the media. The disqualification of populist leaders regarding opposition parties and leaders is understood by the authors as a reflection. According to their interpretation, these discourses create a hegemonic narrative.

The authors infer that the problem lies in the way in which a narrative is created and expanded by the media from analysts or specialists to the majority of the population according to who is a populist and who is not. In other words, insofar as Latin American presidents adapt their speeches to the hegemonic model of the global social economy, they can be democratic and progressive leaders. However, those who proclaim their actions in favor of the poorest can be labeled as populist. This analysis is a relevant contribution of the book's authors.

At the end, the authors contribute significantly to the metric and analysis of Latin American populism, as they propose a methodology for this social phenomenon based on different variables that characterize the governments of the current Latin American leaders. They clarify that there is not only populism with a "left-wing ideology," but there is a need to talk about "right-wing populism." Donald Trump is an example. He promoted a populist nationalism, conservatism, and a distorted view of reality through *Fake News* and the indiscriminate use of social networks.

In addition, the book explains how to understand the main features of populist regimes, i.e., the way in which information and state apparatuses are used to promote ideas and concepts that legitimize the government. Furthermore, the authors reconsider the concept of "populism" as a "thin ideology," understood as a form of political control through the media.

The authors find that, precisely, the ideological mechanisms developed by populist leaders feed polarization, but also, as mentioned above, appeal to the people as the origin of the popular will and the sovereignty of the Nation. "The people rule..." is usually said by governments under this idealistic model; although they also construct a narrative of the establishment of democracy without mediation, where the people rule and generate popular mobilizations in favor of the rescue of natural resources, the nationalization of public goods, and

the development of a paternalistic vision of the State that shelters and benefits the popular masses. Perhaps the common denominator of populism in Latin America is the vindication of the rights of poor and marginalized people, as well as the neediest social class. Therefore, favorability is sought through public policy actions and governmental support in favor of the demand for laws and justice.

In the discussion of the concept “populism,” three variables that distinguish it are analyzed by the authors: a) “interests,” b) “identity,” and c) “values”; which constitute the way in which a change in democratic thinking is generated. According to Mendieta and Estrada (2021), the media operate in populism like a Facebook algorithm, that is, an artificial intelligence system that builds preferences and generates sympathies in users. All of this is contrary to the accountability and oversight of politicians promoted by liberalism. Therefore, an analysis of the ways in which populisms operate in Latin America is relevant and, of course, a commendable task that can be useful for politicians, but also for citizens.

Finally, this book raises the discussion about populism as a tool of political power and warns of the authoritarian characteristics that could derive from post-pandemic democratic regimes, which adopt a progressive – but also populist – vision in their discourse to gain followers and sympathizers.

It seems to me that a central aspect of the work is that beyond the fact that its authors reflect fears about the dangers of populist discourses, the objective of the study is to find the factors that define the construction of these discourses. In the last century the danger was communism, the Cold War. This was followed by the fight against terrorism, hunger, inequality, and poverty, among other issues to be addressed by the international community. Today, the latter continues to be the case, together with xenophobia, racism, and the migration of people from poor countries to the first world. In this sense, gimmicky (easy) speeches are made by candidates or leaders of governments magnified by social networks, which are difficult for citizens to discern during electoral campaigns. Additionally, I consider that these aforementioned factors should be further explored in future research to complete the ideas on the populism-political communication relationship. For all these reasons, this work is welcome and I hope it is read, discussed, and analyzed.



## Reference

Mendieta Ramírez, A. and Estrada, J. L. (2021). *Comunicación Política y Populismo en América Latina*. Tirant Humanidades.

This journal was published  
in january 2023

Manizales - Colombia