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Economic and Social Justice Proposals for Change



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EDITORIAL

Desarrollo social y sostenibilidad. Propuestas para el cambio

Olga Lucía Ocampo López *

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6394-977X>

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La sostenibilidad comúnmente es definida como el triple resultado (Elkington, 1997) del equilibrio entre tres dimensiones: la economía, el medio ambiente y la sociedad; mientras que para que el desarrollo sostenible sea sostenible debe «[...] asegurar que satisfaga las necesidades del presente sin comprometer la capacidad de las futuras generaciones para satisfacer las propias» (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987, p. 23).

La abundancia de marcos de referencia, así como de índices de sostenibilidad, ilustran la multiplicidad de significados e interpretaciones por efecto de los variados enfoques o visiones de diferentes disciplinas, campos de acción y contextos de aplicación (Brink et al., 2020). Es así como la polisemia en el término ‘sustentabilidad’ ha socavado su credibilidad, lo cual ocasiona la incapacidad de traducir el discurso en acciones concretas.

La ‘sostenibilidad’ es un concepto complejo e integrador que no se puede simplificar demasiado; sin embargo, debe ser lo más concreto y procesable posible para encontrar soluciones a los problemas del mundo real. Reconocer la sostenibilidad como ambigua, compleja, integrada y sistémica facilita la formulación de propuestas para su incorporación (Lima y Partidario, 2020). En este sentido, la

* PhD en Ingeniería. Docente Titular. Investigadora Senior. Universidad Autónoma de Manizales. olocampo@autonoma.edu.co

investigación, la experimentación y la práctica son fundamentales para avanzar en sostenibilidad, dado que en sistemas complejos no existen soluciones únicas para enfrentar un problema.

Desde esta perspectiva, la complejidad de los sistemas altamente interdependientes requiere ver los sistemas sociales anidados dentro de los sistemas naturales, dado que las organizaciones dependen del entorno natural para insumos y recursos, pero sus acciones impactan directamente la naturaleza a través de ciclos de retroalimentación. Por lo tanto, se reconocen los límites sistémicos del crecimiento dentro de los límites del planeta, los recursos finitos y la dependencia de la sociedad y la economía de la naturaleza (Williams et al., 2017). En efecto, para integrar la sostenibilidad se requiere adoptar un enfoque de pensamiento sistemático y transdisciplinario para apreciar la interconectividad de los aspectos económicos, políticos, sociales y ecológicos en las dimensiones temporales y espaciales.

Esta visión integral trató de incorporarse en los objetivos de la Agenda 2030 (ONU, 2015), que declaró los 17 Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS) junto con 169 metas relacionadas; las cuales buscan superar las deficiencias de integración de las políticas, estrategias y aplicaciones que fueron inconvenientes no superados en la anterior apuesta de Objetivos de Desarrollo del Milenio (Giannetti et al., 2020). La comprensión de los ODS y su incorporación representa un logro clave para evaluar propuestas y mejoras ambientales, sociales y económicas, al igual que dirigir los próximos desarrollos (ONU, 2015). En todo el mundo las autoridades e instituciones se han comprometido a salvaguardar el medio ambiente, fomentar la equidad y el desarrollo sostenible; mientras que, al mismo tiempo, reconocen las conexiones entre estos ODS para lograr el bienestar social (Giannetti et al., 2020).

Las perspectivas globales en ODS abordan desafíos sociales, políticos, económicos y ambientales que buscan la justicia social, la cual considera una visión de la sociedad en la que la distribución de los recursos es equitativa y todos los miembros están física y psicológicamente seguros y protegidos. Actualmente, la literatura científica exige un mayor enfoque en justicia social con énfasis en la ética, los valores, el cuidado, y el respeto.

Si bien la sostenibilidad es un tema complejo, el desarrollo sostenible es urgente y requiere acciones inmediatas y cambios de los gobiernos, la industria y la sociedad como un todo. Hay grandes desafíos y no hay consenso sobre qué hacer y cómo hacerlo; si se considera como un cambio del modelo de desarrollo actual a uno sostenible, se requieren adaptaciones, cambios, transformaciones e innovaciones razonables y soportadas en la técnica, según los niveles de desarrollo social.

En materia de desarrollo social, la Declaración de Copenhague establece la necesidad de lograr la erradicación de la pobreza, el empleo digno y la equidad de género, mejorar el acceso a la educación, promover la integración social e incrementar los recursos y la cooperación para el desarrollo social; mientras que en el Programa de Acción de la Cumbre Mundial sobre Desarrollo Social prioriza la erradicación de la pobreza, el empleo y la integración social. En general, hay consenso en que el desarrollo social comprende diversas áreas, como son: la educación, la salud, el empleo, el delito, la migración y el desarrollo humano.

Con esta edición, la revista *Ánfora* presenta a la comunidad científica un dossier temático sobre desarrollo social y sostenibilidad, que compila 13 artículos de múltiples disciplinas, elaborados por investigadores en ciencias sociales, administrativas y contables, agrarias, ciencias de la salud, filosofía e ingeniería. Varios artículos abordan el desarrollo social que promueve un enfoque de derechos y equidad; otros, describen sus propuestas de economía y justicia social para la sostenibilidad. Se incluyen, además, reflexiones basadas en la revisión de literatura, análisis de redes sociales, experiencias de enseñanza y aprendizaje, así como casos de estudio de investigación participativa con organizaciones sociales. Los análisis desde el cumplimiento de indicadores de los ODS se presentan en diferentes artículos, como se relaciona a continuación:

En «Situación de trabajo decente en las ciudades de Bogotá, Medellín y Bucaramanga 2018-2020» se analizan cuatro dimensiones recomendadas por la Organización Internacional del Trabajo (OIT) para un trabajo decente (ODS 8), como son: la oportunidad de empleo e ingresos, el derecho de los trabajadores, la seguridad y el diálogo social. Los autores evidencian altas tasas de informalidad y subempleo en las ciudades y la pérdida de beneficios laborables, así como brechas salariales por género, que pueden ser explicadas por múltiples factores.

Por su parte, en «Empresas sociales en países en desarrollo: un análisis bibliométrico y tendencias» se demuestra cómo las empresas sociales tienen un avance significativo para contrarrestar la desigualdad social. Estos avances son mayores en los países desarrollados; en especial, en los ODS 1: fin de la pobreza, OD 2: hambre cero, ODS 3: salud y bienestar, ODS 4: educación de calidad, ODS 5: igualdad de género, ODS 6: agua limpia y saneamiento, ODS 8: trabajo decente y crecimiento económico, ODS 10: reducción de la desigualdades y ODS 12: producción y consumo responsables.

En «Individualismo y colectivismo cultural en relación con la desigualdad socioeconómica desde un enfoque de psicología social evolutiva», a partir de una revisión de literatura científica se analizan los conceptos de 'individualismo' y 'colectivismo' cultural desde una perspectiva de psicología social evolutiva. Los autores exponen que en aquellas sociedades más colectivistas se presenta mayor desigualdad en la distribución de la riqueza por una mayor propensión al

conformismo, la pasividad, la obediencia y el sometimiento a las jerarquías sociales. Plantean que la desigualdad socioeconómica, más que un proceso puramente económico, es también un proceso político-cultural y evolutivo.

En cuanto a «Educación ambiental y producción agropecuaria sostenible: una estrategia para la seguridad alimentaria», a partir de una revisión documental se buscó comprender e interpretar el conocimiento y la realidad sobre la educación ambiental y la producción agraria. Los autores reflexionan sobre la necesidad de repensar y recuperar los valores compartidos como comunidades agropecuarias, así como retomar creencias en la capacidad y vocación del campo como una condición de vida y una construcción de sociedad.

El autor de «Nuevos horizontes para la investigación educativo crítico-emancipatoria: los aportes del realismo crítico de Roy Bhaskar» presenta las reflexiones para el análisis de la inclusión social a través del realismo crítico, el cual tiene gran potencial de transformación social. En este artículo se busca comprender la naturaleza estratificada de la realidad social y cómo el realismo crítico proporciona un fundamento filosófico que aborda rutas alternativas para lograr sociedades justas.

Referente a «Renta básica y justicia: reflexiones para un debate», a partir de un análisis del referente teórico que expone la pluralidad de funciones de la renta básica se analizan estas posturas diferentes frente a la justicia y la distribución, al igual que se sugiere la renta básica como instrumento de lucha por la justicia social en sociedades desiguales. El autor profundiza en el reto sociopolítico de la desigualdad económica a escala del Estado-Nación como a nivel global.

En «Primacía urbana en la región administrativa y de planificación del Eje Cafetero» se analizan las condiciones y dinámica primacial urbana en la región administrativa y de planificación del Eje Cafetero. Mediante el análisis de indicadores, los investigadores encuentran una organización policéntrica en la que sobresalen las capitales de departamento, al igual que concluyen que esta condición se convierte en una fortaleza y un activo de desarrollo de la región.

Con respecto a «La micofagia como alimento base de la gastronomía tradicional en Xalatlaco, Estado de México» los autores describen los resultados de una investigación de corte transversal, en la cual se analizó la información recolectada en una muestra etnográfica. La micofagia —o consumo de hongos silvestre comestibles— es la base de la gastronomía en Xalatlaco, Estado de México. En consecuencia, su manejo sustentable, así como la revalorización de los conocimientos tradicionales y el rescate de la cultura alimentaria son el soporte de la gastronomía regional.

En el caso de «El papel de la creación audiovisual en el fortalecimiento de la memoria intergeneracional: caso del corregimiento de San Diego, municipio de Samaná, Caldas» se presentan las experiencias de creación audiovisual con jóvenes,

como parte de una estrategia para la construcción de memoria intergeneracional. Los autores plantean que la construcción de la memoria se da en el diálogo cotidiano con los adultos mayores; los jóvenes se convierten no sólo en receptores de historias narradas, sino en autores de contenidos. Este diálogo amplía la visión del territorio, de la historia y los acontecimientos de significancia colectiva.

Ahora bien, en «Lenguajes del silencio como coexistencia pacífica en víctimas-sobrevivientes de la violencia armada en Chalán, Sucre, Colombia» se presentan los resultados de un estudio en el que se empleó el enfoque metodológico de investigación-acción-participación y la perspectiva epistemológica del construccionismo social. En este artículo el silencio es una forma de lenguaje articulado a la memoria y el olvido, a la coexistencia pacífica, al afrontamiento en contextos de violencia y como estrategia de protección y sobrevivencia. Los autores reflexionan sobre las voces del silencio y la memoria que se convierten en las bases del recuerdo.

Por su parte, «La resistencia civil: un acercamiento conceptual desde la experiencia de las organizaciones sociales en los Montes de María» es producto de una investigación desarrollada bajo el paradigma del construccionismo social y el enfoque de la investigación participativa. Los autores afirman que la resistencia civil es una forma de preservación de la vida y de lucha por las transformaciones del territorio desde las dimensiones sociales, económicas, políticas, ambientales, culturales. Indican que el conflicto armado, así como la pobreza extrema, el abandono institucional, el machismo y las discriminaciones culturales han sido los principales generadores de la resistencia civil por parte de las organizaciones.

En «Prácticas educativas incluyentes y conflicto armado en el oriente antioqueño colombiano: un estudio preliminar» los autores describen los avances en la educación inclusiva, por efecto del número de estudiantes en situación de vulnerabilidad matriculados. Afirman que es una oportunidad para atender las condiciones de los estudiantes de las zonas rurales víctimas del conflicto, aunque concluyen que es necesario fortalecer la educación inclusiva desde múltiples miradas pedagógicas y sociales.

Por último, los autores de «La posverdad y las redes sociales digitales como desafío al periodismo y la edificación de las instituciones democráticas» analizan el papel de los medios de comunicación y del periodismo en la mediación informativa entre emisores de redes sociales y receptores. Evidencian que las redes sociales intensifican la publicación de contenidos enmarcados en el concepto de 'posverdad'; que las emociones y la estética de las plataformas digitales reconfiguran la forma como se emiten y reciben los mensajes. Además, plantean la necesidad de recuperar el papel del periodismo en la edición de contenidos.

Estos artículos son un llamado a la comunidad académica y científica a continuar con las investigaciones y reflexiones en sostenibilidad y desarrollo

social inclusivo, así como la formulación de propuestas de economía y justicia social. Finalmente, como lo plantea la CEPAL (2015), «[...] lo social no se juega solo en lo social» (p.9); se requieren propuestas de participación e inclusión social y económica en Colombia y América Latina, pues el desarrollo social es una condición indispensable para la sostenibilidad.

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SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
AND SUSTAINABILITY.
ECONOMIC AND
SOCIAL JUSTICE
PROPOSALS FOR
CHANGE

Re
se
arch
& Re
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Investigaciones y reflexiones
Pesquisa e reflexão

Decent Work Situations in the Cities of Bogota, Medellin, and Bucaramanga 2018-2020*

[English Version]

Situación de trabajo decente en las ciudades de Bogotá, Medellín y Bucaramanga 2018-2020

Situação de trabalho decente nas cidades de Bogotá, Medellín e Bucaramanga 2018-2020

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Sara Sorangel Garavito Barragán**

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4420-561X>

CvLAC: https://scienti.minciencias.gov.co/cvlac/visualizador/generarCurriculoCv.do?cod_rh=0002065586

Colombia

Daniel Steven Jones Moreno***

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2894-5669?lang=es>

CvLAC: https://scienti.minciencias.gov.co/cvlac/visualizador/generarCurriculoCv.do?cod_rh=0002065693

Colombia

Isaac Guerrero Rincón****

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5794-2742>

CvLAC: https://scienti.minciencias.gov.co/cvlac/visualizador/generarCurriculoCv.do?cod_rh=0000076767

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** Economist. Universidad Industrial de Santander. sara.sgb.1@gmail.com

*** Economist. Universidad Industrial de Santander. djones@gmail.com

**** Professor at Escuela de Economía y Administración. Universidad Industrial de Santander. iguerrin@uis.edu.co

Abstract

Objective: The objective of this research is to measure the conditions of "decent work" for three of the main cities of Colombia (Bogota, Medellin, and Bucaramanga) during the period 2018-2020. **Methodology:** The different dimensions proposed by the ILO are used in reference to the necessary conditions that decent work must provide. The calculation and analysis of the behavior of the variables under study is based on information from the Great Integrated Household Survey (GIHS)) prepared by DANE. **Results:** According to indicators of income and employment, the results show an increase in the three cities' labor precarity. By city, Bogota has the best performance in terms of access to employment and social dialogue; Medellin best performs in terms of social security and job security; while Bucaramanga shows deficiencies in the four areas analyzed for the period under study. **Conclusions:** The main conclusion is that, in 2020, the year of the confinement decreed by the national government to face the COVID-19 pandemic, labor precariousness conditions increased.

Keywords: decent work; employment; labor market; economic development; informality.

Resumen

Objetivo: la presente investigación tiene como objetivo medir las condiciones de «trabajo decente» para tres de las principales ciudades de Colombia; Bogotá, Medellín y Bucaramanga en el periodo 2018-2020 **Metodología:** se hace uso de las diferentes dimensiones planteadas por la OIT en referencia a las condiciones necesarias que debería otorgar el trabajo digno. El cálculo y análisis del comportamiento de las variables objeto de estudio se realiza a partir de la información de la *Gran Encuesta Integrada de Hogares*, GEIH elaborada por el DANE. **Resultados:** los resultados muestran un aumento de la precariedad laboral para las tres ciudades en los indicadores de ingresos y desocupación, entre otros. Por ciudades, Bogotá posee el mejor rendimiento a nivel del eje de acceso al empleo y diálogo social; Medellín en seguridad social y seguridad en el empleo; mientras que Bucaramanga presenta en los cuatro ejes analizados deficiencias y variaciones negativas para el periodo de estudio. **Conclusiones:** la principal conclusión es que, en el 2020, año del confinamiento decretado por el gobierno nacional para hacerle frente a la pandemia del COVID-19, las condiciones de precarización laboral aumentaron.

Palabras clave: trabajo decente; empleo; mercado laboral; desarrollo económico; informalidad.

Resumo

Objetivo: esta pesquisa visa medir as condições de "trabalho digno" para três das principais cidades da Colômbia; Bogotá, Medellín e Bucaramanga no período 2018-2020. **Metodologia:** são utilizadas as diferentes dimensões propostas pela OIT em referência às condições necessárias que o trabalho digno deve proporcionar. O cálculo e análise do comportamento das variáveis em estudo baseia-se na informação do Grande Inquérito Integrado aos Agregados Familiares (GEIH) preparado pela DANE. **Resultados:** os resultados mostram um aumento do emprego precário para as três cidades nos indicadores de rendimento e desemprego, entre outros. Por cidade, Bogotá tem o melhor desempenho em termos de acesso ao emprego e ao diálogo social; Medellín em termos de segurança social e de segurança de emprego; enquanto Bucaramanga apresenta deficiências e variações negativas nos quatro eixos analisados para o período em estudo. **Conclusões:** a principal conclusão é que, em 2020, o ano da contenção decretada pelo governo nacional para enfrentar a pandemia da COVID-19, as condições de precariedade laboral aumentaram.

Palavras-chave: trabalho decente; emprego; mercado de trabalho; desenvolvimento económico; informalidade.

Introduction

In 1999, the International Labor Organization (ILO, 2004), under the leadership of its first director Juan Somavia, coined the term "decent work" and integrated it into four strategic objectives: the right to work, employment opportunities, protection, and social dialogue. These components contributed to the eradication of poverty, to general development, and to the sensation of personal realization by strengthening democracy. As a pillar of the social contract, work contributes to the progress of a development model that places the individual at the center of his or her integral condition and promotes multidimensional inclusion.

In 2020, the ILO published a report describing how the lack of "decent work," combined with rising unemployment and persistent inequalities, makes it increasingly difficult for people to improve their lives. This provides a broad overview of global and regional trends in employment, unemployment, labor force participation, and productivity. It also focuses its analysis and measurement on four axes that allow one to observe the problems associated with "decent work."

The first axis refers to both the quantity and quality of employment conditions by relating the sufficiency of employment to its remuneration and working conditions. The second is closely related to the collection of workplace regulations protecting workers' fundamental liberties and rights. The third component refers to the protection and social security of workers and their families. The last one outlines the importance of continuous and systematic communication and dialogue that should exist between the three actors involved in labor relations: workers, employers, and the State (ILO, 2013).

The measurement of these axes shows, by way of conclusion, the way in which, at a global level, work has deficiencies and a marked precariousness. The situation in Latin America is worsening and it is the region with the highest levels of inequality.

In the Latin American context, the Economic Commission for Latin America, and the Caribbean (ECLAC, 2013) highlights the underlying need for the State to promote employment policies, both active and passive, and to create conditions that ensure well-being through "decent work." It argues that social equality and economic dynamism, capable of transforming the productive structure, are not mutually exclusive, and that the great challenge is to discover synergies between the two.

Globalization, insertion into world trade, potentialization with an emphasis on the export sector, and inclusion because of joint initiatives of private and public bodies must constitute progress and advancement toward the multidimensional development of the region. ECLAC proposes a conceptual development of some

of the most important dimensions that integrate the variables of trade, growth, and equality, and the study of new evidence and methodologies. This makes proposing policies to increase the inclusive potential of international trade and labor in the region possible.

About "decent work" and its impact on the sustainable development of societies, research that articulates different social dimensions and provides a link between these concepts and their joint interaction can be highlighted. Sánchez (2014) addresses the conceptual links between the notions of "decent work" and "sustainable development," elaborated by the ILO, with the aim of exploring the importance of these in the orientation of processes focused on growth, development, and overcoming recurring problems in Latin American societies. This work characterizes and analyzes concepts based on the dimensions considered by the subject. The author concludes that millions of people have been excluded from "decent work" and are resorting to new forms of income. Likewise, the viability of development is questioned by its lack of focus on "decent work" as its fundamental axis.

Ballesteros (2016) conducted a documentary analysis of the concept of "decent work," its dimensions, and its relationship with supply chains. The research was carried out with a methodology based on the compilation of data from various documents and interviews. Overall, the author concluded that "decent work" should be the aspiration of the 21st century because it benefits both individuals and society. This translates into an increase in the quality of life and family income, which has a positive impact on economic growth with important benefits for society.

Highlighting that the advance of technology translates to the same structural change in terms of work and its variations is important. Rodríguez (2019) lays out the reality facing the world of work in the face of the potential threat posed by the immersion of automation in the decline of "decent work." The author establishes the compatibility that converges around technology and work, and its close relationship of strengthening the objectives of *Sustainable Development and the 2030 Agenda*. In addition, it proposes as a methodology a documentary survey supported by reports and publications, which provide information on how to integrate new forms of employment with "decent work" practices. The research concludes that amplifying and strengthening the work system to avoid and mitigate collateral damage caused by technological advances is necessary. Also, it recommends contemplating the standards and regulations that center around the conditions that encompass the concept of "decent work."

Likewise, a central theme of "decent work" is informality which, despite being one of the main limitations of high levels of decent work, today continues

to be a structural characteristic that persists in the labor markets of Latin America and the Caribbean. This is evidenced by a report published by the ILO (2019) which stated that by 2016, 140 out of the 263 million workers in the region remained in the informal sector, which confirms that these workers are not covered by social security or labor legislation, in addition to presenting almost zero training opportunities, longer working hours, and low income that do not constitute remuneration according to their productivity. According to this report, this job insecurity can also be explained by the increase in subcontracting and labor flexibility represented in forms of contracting that, although formal, affect the dignity of the worker by not having social security and income on a continuous or permanent basis. These are associated with economic inequality that makes achieving "decent work" as a project and basis for the development and competitiveness of the regions difficult.

The above statement is supported by Millones (2012), who evaluates the working conditions of Chile and Mexico through an analysis of secondary sources. It concludes that the neoliberal system in the region limits the "decent work" project, thus being a mere descriptive tool and not the promoter of a new type of work.

Colombia is not far from that situation. Although it has included the National Decent Work Policy, its results are still far from generating decent employment, guaranteeing the protection rights of workers, and formalizing the employment situation in the country. This situation of labor precariousness is the product of the reform introduced by Law 50 of 1990 to the Substantive Labor Code (CST).

The CST (1950) must have as its primary purpose "justice in the relationships that arise between employers and workers, within a spirit of economic coordination and social balance" (Decree Law 2663, art. 1). The code presents the definition of work as "all free human activity, whether material or intellectual, permanent or transitory, that a natural person consciously executes at the service of another, and whatever its purpose, provided that it is carried out in execution of an employment contract» (Decree Law 2663, 1950, art. 5).

In Colombia, several studies focus on "decent work" and serve as a theoretical and methodological guide for the development of this research. For example, Calle (2013) conducts his work through the methodological and conceptual reviews of reports on working conditions. To achieve the proposed objective, the author used the population over 15 years of age from the *Quality of Life Survey*, from which the following were taken: hours worked per week, income from the previous month, months of connection to a current job, and the time of the current contract. The type of contract and job stability faced by young people between the ages of 16 and 25 in Colombia is then considered. As a result, her research concludes that

young people tend to receive lower payment per hour worked and this worsens if they do not have a written contract. This because of the high rates of labor informality and precarious income.

Focusing the study on the Colombian case, a study applied to the city of Medellín in 2013 conducted by Gómez and Restrepo (2013) was analyzed. They built a methodology based on a literature review, with the objective of investigating the precariousness of employment in Colombia in terms of labor flexibility. As a result of the investigation, it was found that this flexibility is an instrument for the search for competitiveness and permanence of organizations, but it has resulted in a decrease in the well-being of the worker and their families. In addition, it was identified that labor flexibility occurs mostly through contracts to provide services or with a fixed term, which constitute employment as a response to the pressure to survive.

Similarly, Castro (2014) conducted a study on the gender perspective, which described the main quantitative and qualitative aspects that were generated for women workers in the informal sector, exposing the most relevant data on this phenomenon worldwide and nationally. At the same time, the legal strategies of Colombia were described to contextualize the legislative environment using a descriptive and explanatory research method. It showed how labor informality is the immediate alternative to generate income for the unemployed; however, the female sex is more likely to carry out activities of this type to fulfill their dual roles in society: to carry out a work activity and, simultaneously, attend to their family and reproductive obligations. This agrees with other works found at the Latin American level (Botello & López, 2015).

In relation to the conceptual referencing of this work, López (2020) published an article where — on data from the GIHS 2010 to 2018 and data from the RLDatos, among others — estimated employment and a set of "decent work" indicators for the national aggregate by analyzing each indicator over time and across geographic units. In turn, from the review of averages or trends for the expansion or reduction of gaps, the author concluded that, despite the advances in terms of decent employment, sufficient levels of efficiency had not yet been reached to affirm that work in Colombia is decent; this showed the significant differences between the studied territories.

As a methodological basis for this research, the bulletin *Situation of decent work in Mexico* published in 2013 is taken as a reference, which shows the evolution and results of the various indicators that make up the "decent work" index for Mexico. Under the descriptive analysis methodology, the variables that make up each axis are detailed: access to employment, job security, labor rights and social dialogue. Its variations are estimated, and it is determined whether there

is progress or regression in the chosen time periods. This bulletin provides the estimation methodology to calculate the data obtained for each axis according to the study cities, while highlighting how "decent work" combats labor informality to reduce social inequality (ILO, 2013).

When analyzing the background, it is evident that most of the studies reviewed to determine the methodological channel of previous works are exploratory and descriptive. There is a certain inclination for preliminary diagnoses or bibliographic review to situate the phenomenon in a particular context. The absence of explanatory studies indicates that this subject does not have sufficient research tradition and that, in this sense, there is still a conceptual gap, which has caused the slowdown in its application and the minimal intention of treatment.

In conclusive terms, both for Latin America and for the Colombian context, work is a generator of development and a basis for strengthening guarantees in terms of rights. In this way, welfare, equality, and quality of life can be achieved. The state is considered the promoter of these pillars and it is important to seek and implement public policies that have "decent work" as a cross-cutting theme, and the conditions that frame the social, political, and economic reality of citizens. Based on that, this research seeks to determine the status in terms of "decent work" for the cities of Bogota, Medellin, and Bucaramanga during the period 2018-2020 based on the calculation of the axes proposed by the ILO.

Methodology

Sources

Since the notion of "decent work" was first made known, the ILO has identified four axes or elements related to this concept: employment and income opportunities, workers' rights, social security, and social dialogue. The first axis analyzes all types of jobs performed, whether in homes, streets, factories, or companies, regardless of the type of remuneration received (in cash and/or in kind or working hours). In this sense, the indicators that can be useful for measuring this component are overall participation rates, unemployment, general pressure, underemployment, labor informality and salaried work. The second axis, related to human rights, seeks to ensure that workers perform their work with dignity, respect, equity and without discrimination; it is measured by indicators of child labor, population with a defined contract, unemployment, and gender wage gap.

The third axis concerns the levels of protection and insurance of workers, and the indicator of permanently insured workers is used to determine this. The last axis concerns the right of workers to continuous and systematic communication with their employers, using information from the GHIS on the percentage of union membership.

Therefore, to achieve the proposed objective of measuring decent work conditions in Bucaramanga, Medellin, and Bogota, the model presented by the ILO of the four axes of "decent work" is adapted. As an instrumental basis, data from the GHIS (2018-2020) administered by the National Statistics Department (DANE) is used, which provides information on each of the indicators suggested for this calculation. Initially, the calculation and analysis were performed for the years 2018 and 2019 to determine the "decent work" conditions in each of the three cities. Subsequently, an analysis was performed for the period 2019-2020, this time with the intention of observing the effect of the containment decreed by the national government to confront the pandemic of COVID-19.

Model

To determine the "decent work" indices and the behavior of the cities to be analyzed, the process was divided into two phases determined by the ILO country office for Mexico and Cuba. The first consists of calculating the indicators that correspond to each axis of "decent work" determined by the ILO, presented in Table 1 with their calculation method and unit of measurement. In this way, "decent work" levels are determined for each city.

Table 1. Process for Calculating Decent Work Indicators.

Indicator: DANE	Unit of Measure	Calculation Method
Axis 1. Access to Employment.		
Overall Rate of Labor Participation	Percentage	$(\text{Economically active population} / \text{Population 14 years and older}) \times 100$
Unemployment Rate	Percentage	$(\text{Unemployed population} / \text{Population Economically active}) \times 100$

Indicator: DANE	Unit of Measure	Calculation Method
Overall Pressure Rate	Percentage	$(\text{Unemployed population looking for work} + \text{Employed population looking for other employment}) / (\text{Economically active population}) \times 100$
Indicator of Underemployment Due to Insufficient Hours	Percentage	$(\text{Employed population working less than 48 hours per week} / \text{Total employed population})$
Underemployment Rate	Percentage	$(\text{Population that expressed the need and availability to work more hours than their current occupation allows} / \text{Employed population}) \times 100$
Rate of Labor Informality	Percentage	$(\text{Working population engaged in an informal occupation} / \text{Working population}) \times 100$
Rate of Salaried Job	Percentage	$(\text{Employed population receiving a wage salary or daily wage} / \text{Employed population}) \times 100$
Axis 2. Job Security		
Percentage of Permanently Insured as a Percentage of Employed Population	Percentage	$(\text{Number of permanently insured in the social security system} / \text{employed population}) \times 100$
Axis 3. Labor Rights.		
Child Labor	Percentage	$(\text{Population between 5 and 17 years old working} / \text{Total population between 5 and 17 years old}) \times 100$
Unemployment Rate by Gender	Percentage points	$(\text{Unemployment rate for women} - \text{Unemployment rate for men})$

Indicator: DANE	Unit of Measure	Calculation Method
Population with Defined Contract	Percentage	(Population with written, basic, permanent or indefinite-term contract / Employed population) × 100
Gender Wage Gap	Percentage	Average income of women / Average income of men
Axis 4: Social Dialogue		
Union Membership	Percentage	Total annual union membership.

Source: ILO (2019, p. 8).

The second phase consists of determining which of the three cities has the best "decent work" rates for each year of the study period. For this purpose, the minimum and maximum value of each variable must be calculated. The calculation of this difference will result in the K parameter to normalize the series considered, which allows standardizing and adjusting the indexes to obtain a common scale and thus establish parity in the calculations.

When the indicator is advantageous for "decent work," the minimum value is subtracted from the maximum value (equation 1). Alternatively, when the indicator is detrimental to the indicator, the minimum value is subtracted from the maximum value (equation 2), resulting in a negative K parameter. An example of a beneficial indicator would be the population with a defined contract: the higher it is, the better the "decent work" conditions. A negative indicator would be the informality rate, which, the higher it is, the greater the number of workers without the minimum labor guarantees.

- (1) Maximum value - minimum value = k parameter.
- (2) Maximum value - minimum value = k parameter.

Once the k parameters for each variable have been obtained, the entities (cities) are scored using equations 3 and 4, first for the variables with a positive effect and then for the variables with a negative effect:

$$(3) \frac{\textit{entity value} - \textit{minimum value}}{\textit{parameter k}} \times 10$$

$$(4) \frac{\textit{entity value} - \textit{maximum value}}{\textit{k parameter}} \times 10$$

The values obtained range from 0 to 10 depending on their proximity to the maximum and minimum values; the maximum value (10) is assigned to the entity (city) with the best "decent work" indexes, and the minimum value (0) to the city with the worst indexes for the selected year. Once the K parameters for each variable have been obtained, the entities (cities) are scored to determine their impact using formulas 3 and 4. In the first case, for variables with a positive impact and in the second, for variables with a negative impact:

$$\frac{\textit{entity value} - \textit{minimum value}}{\textit{k parameter}} \times 10$$

$$\frac{\textit{entity value} - \textit{maximum value}}{\textit{k parameter}} \times 10$$

The values obtained vary between 0 and 10 according to how they lie between the maximum and minimum values. Thus, the maximum value 10 is given to the entity (city) with the best "decent work" indexes, and the minimum value 0 to the city with the worst indexes according to the selected year. The calculation of each indicator and the respective arithmetic average, the partial index of each axis is generated. To determine the city's progress or regression over time, the difference in coefficient of the last year with respect to the previous year is estimated.

Results

Calculation of Indicators by Axis for Cities and Period

"Decent work" levels were obtained for each city based on the calculated indicators.

Table 2. Calculation of Indicators by Axis for the Cities and Period.

	2018			2019			2020		
	Bucaramanga	Bogotá	Medellín	Bucaramanga	Bogotá	Medellín	Bucaramanga	Bogotá	Medellín
Axis 1: Access to Employment. Indicators:									
Labor Force Participation Rate									
	67,1	69,1	65,4	67,1	69	64,8	60,9	62,6	61,5
Indicator: Unemployment Rate									
	8,8	10,5	11,7	10,2	10,9	12,2	18,2	17,7	19
Indicator: Overall Pressure Rate									
	11,33	14,3	16,1	13,9	15,4	16,8	15,9	15,8	16,9
Indicator: Underemployment Due to Insufficient Hours									
	32,29	33,2	30,4	32,1	35,8	28,9	32,4	32,7	28,7
Indicator: Underemployment Rate									
	5,75	9,72	12,6	8,2	10,9	12,1	12	10,2	11,1
Indicator: Labor Informality Rate									
	56,3	41,8	42	55,3	40,6	41,6	0	0	0
Indicator: Rate of Salaried Job									
	98,59	99,5	99	98,4	99,3	98,8	97,6	99,4	98,5

	2018			2019			2020		
	Bucaramanga	Bogotá	Medellín	Bucaramanga	Bogotá	Medellín	Bucaramanga	Bogotá	Medellín

Axis 2: Job Security

Indicator: Rate of Affiliation to Social Security System

185	175	192	184	175	191	187	175	195
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Axis 3: Labor Rights. Indicator: Child Labor

1,16	0,6	1,25	1,5	1,23	1,32	0	0	0
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Indicator: Unemployment Ratio by Gender (pp)

1,2	2	3,5	1,9	2,6	3,5	0,1	3,3	0,9
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Indicator: Population with Defined Contract

38,1	51,6	52,5	39,3	53,2	53,4	40,5	53,5	55,4
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Indicator: Gender Pay Gap

78,3	86,8	85,2	81,3	82,1	83,6	0	0	0
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Axis 4: Social Dialogue: Indicators: Union or Trade Association

1,6	1,9	2,6	2,2	2,5	2,5	3,2	1,8	3,3
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Source: own elaboration with data from Great Integrated Household Survey DANE 2018-2020.

For the years 2018 and 2019, axis 1, access to employment, Bucaramanga showed progress with respect to Bogota and Medellin, due to the decrease in the rate of informality and underemployment for insufficient hours. However, by the year 2020, the city presents a setback in all the indicators of this axis and in the labor market in general. This is a result of the measures implemented by the national and municipal governments to face COVID-19, especially in unemployment, underemployment, and labor participation.

For the years 2018 and 2019 Bogota presents a positive variation in its labor indicators, especially in the reduction of informality and underemployment. By the year 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic had taken affect by increasing the unemployment rate, underemployment, and decreasing salaried job, but less compared to Bucaramanga.

The decrease in access to employment axis for Medellin, in 2018 and 2019, is given by the increase in the general pressure rate and unemployment rate, it registers an increase of 0.5% and 0.7% respectively. During 2020, the labor market in Medellin was initially affected by the enacted confinement, but after the third quarter—with the establishment of the selective isolation decreed by the national government— there is a positive variation by the decrease in the underemployment and the underemployment rates due to insufficient hours.

Based on the indicator calculations, in terms of "decent work" in this axis, Bogota is the city with the best performance with an increase of 0.81 percentage points; while Bucaramanga decreased 3.52 percentage points, which indicates the deterioration in "decent work" conditions.

Briefly, "decent work" conditions related to access to employment and income show an improvement in their indicators for Bucaramanga and Bogota, but a deterioration for Medellin in 2018 and 2019, the pre-pandemic period. For 2019 and 2020, a deterioration of these conditions is observed for Bucaramanga because of the confinement, while for Bogotá and Medellín an improvement is recorded in this axis. It shows that the establishment for the third quarter of 2020 of the so-called "selective insulation" was positive for these cities.

Table 3. Behavior of Axis 1 Based on the Coefficients during the Study Period.

Axis 1. Access to Employment.						
	2018	2019	Variation	2019	2020	Variation
Bucaramanga	5,42	5,83	0,41 ↑	5,83	2,31	3,52 ↓
Bogotá	6	6,33	0,33 ↑	6,33	7,14	0,81 ↑
Medellín	3,47	3,35	0,12 ↓	3,35	3,41	0,06 ↑

Source: own elaboration with data from Great Integrated Household Survey DANE 2018-2020.

For the dimension of the second axis, employment security, Bucaramanga presents a positive variation for 2019 with respect to Bogota and Medellin. That city shows a better performance in social security affiliation. This was due to the null variation presented that considered Bogota with the worst performance in social security.

In 2020, the figures show a negative variation for Bucaramanga as the social security variable decreased with respect to 2019. It may be attributed to the pandemic and its implications at economic, political, and social levels for the measures implemented by the authorities. Alternatively, Medellin showed the greatest job security, with higher coverage in all the periods analyzed compared to the other two cities.

Table 4. Behavior of Axis 2 Based on the Coefficients during the Study Period.

Axis 2. Social Security						
	2018	2019	Variation	2019	2020	Variation
Bucaramanga	5,98	6,03	0,05 ↑	6,03	5,9	0,13 ↓
Bogotá	0	0	0	0	0	0
Medellín	10	10	0	10	10	0

Source: own elaboration with data from Great Integrated Household Survey DANE 2018-2020.

For Axis 3, in 2019, Bucaramanga presents a negative variation with respect to Bogota and Medellin. It is mainly explained by the variables of child labor and unemployment ratio by gender. Its behavior was substantially worse than the figures for the other two cities.

In 2020, the behavior of Medellin reflects a positive impact on the axis due to the reduction in unemployment ratio by gender and the increase in the population with a defined contract, even in the context of the contingency as labor market experienced precarious conditions.

Thus, Bogota presents the best performance at the level of labor rights, and it is configured as the city with the best performance in the axis for 2018 and 2019, due to variables such as the lowest rate of child labor and a high rate of population with a defined contract. By 2020, Medellin ranks first in this axis,

thanks to the fact that it has the highest rate of defined contracts and a low difference in unemployment ratio by gender compared to Bogota.

Table 5. Behavior of Axis 3 Based on the Coefficients during the Study Period.

Axis 3. Labor Rights.						
	2018	2019	Variation	2019	2020	Variation
Bucaramanga	5,34	5	0,34 ↓	5	2,5	2,5 ↓
Bogotá	6,48	8,01	1,53 ↑	8,01	2,19	5,82 ↓
Medellín	2,97	4,16	1,19 ↑	4,16	4,375	0,215 ↑

Source: own elaboration with data from Great Integrated Household Survey DANE 2018-2020.

Within the indicators of Axis 4, Medellin presented a negative variation in terms of union and trade union membership during the 2019 period, in contrast to the growth of this variable for Bucaramanga and Bogota.

For 2020, Medellin rebounded in this indicator, which presents the highest rate of union membership with 3.3%, representing a growth of 0.8%, as does Bucaramanga, which leads the ranking and stands at 3.2%, with an increase of 1%. This represents a setback compared to the figures for Medellín.

Thus, it can be inferred —according to the data collected, calculations and subsequent analysis— that Bogota can be considered as the city with the best performance during 2018 and 2019 at the axis level, according to the performance in each of the indicators that make up each division. By 2020, this perception leaned toward the city of Medellín.

The worst indicators in 2018 are for the city of Bucaramanga, while Medellín is the worst in 2019. In 2020, while Bucaramanga and Medellín showed progress in reducing the impact of the crisis, Bogota's impact on the axes fell back a considerable amount.

Table 6. Behavior of Axis 4 Based on the Coefficients during the Study Period.

Axis 4: Social Dialogue						
	2018	2019	Variation	2019	2020	Variation
Bucaramanga	0	10	10 ↑	10	9,33	0,67 ↓
Bogotá	3	10	7 ↑	10	0	10 ↓
Medellín	10	0	10 ↓	0	10	10 ↑

Source: own elaboration with data from Great Integrated Household Survey DANE 2018-2020.

Conclusions

The concept of “decent work” implies having productive work opportunities with a living wage, ensuring social security and protection for workers and their families, being inclusive in organizational structures and decision-making processes that affect workers, and providing equal opportunities and dignified treatment for men and women.

However, this is not reflected in the cities studied, as labor flexibilization results in precarious employment. This precariousness is evidenced by high rates of indicators such as informality and underemployment due to insufficient hours. This translates into a limiting factor for economic growth, as it generates a negative distribution of income, wages below the minimum living wage and the loss of labor benefits such as vacations and the insurance that the formal labor market provides.

Another significant variable is the unemployment rate, which maintained a constant two-digit behavior except for 2018 in the city of Bucaramanga, which presented 8.8%. This phenomenon, due to an evident lack of labor supply, is a clear limiting factor for "decent work," since it reduces household demand for goods and services and thus directly affects supply, which leads to low levels of production.

The gender pay gap also shows very large figures, which can be explained by multiple reasons. One of them could be the decrease in salary in a job position when it is occupied by a woman, behavior that goes against the principle of "decent

work" on equal opportunity and treatment between men and women. This has become a fundamental right to equal pay by gender and has been recognized since 1919 by the ILO.

In terms of union membership, it is particularly noticeable that the rate varies between 2% and 3%, which is the percentage of union members out of the total number of employees. This is a derisory figure that demonstrates the lack of social dialogue for the construction of improvements, since workers should enjoy adequate protection in relation to their employment in situations that seek to undermine their freedom of association. However, because of labor precariousness in terms of temporary hiring—which does not favor affiliation and in turn affects the labor integrity of the worker—there is evidence of a general rejection of participation, which is rooted by labor flexibilization that leads to persecution and social stigmatization. This undermines the negotiation processes they intend to carry out and directly affects employee rights.

These factors are the main reasons why the country's main cities do not have an optimal, or at least a minimum, level of "decent work." It is necessary that workers' rights are established and fully complied with, starting with hiring and decent wages that guarantee equality and a legal framework for labor protection. Working conditions are becoming increasingly precarious, not only in Colombia but around the world; statistics and studies confirm this. Access to employment becomes an odyssey, job security becomes increasingly volatile due to crises and economic conditions. Likewise, labor rights are violated due to the lack of policies and control that jeopardize their quality. This can be seen when reviewing statutes that cover the worker or projects that provide incentives from the congress. Improvement of conditions is practically null, without overlooking the union affiliation, whose purpose is to build substantial improvements but does not occur in most of the occasions.

However, the effect of the pandemic in 2020 should be noted. The Colombian government implemented a series of measures to contain the spread of the disease, establishing the mandatory preventive isolation of all people living in the national territory. These measures excluded certain economic sectors considered essential, such as: health care and services, the production of basic necessities, banking and financial services, childcare and assistance, the production of pharmaceuticals and cleaning products, and the provision of communications and public services, among others. The consequences of these mitigation policies negatively affected labor market indicators and deteriorated "decent work" conditions for the city of Bucaramanga. The opposite was the case in the cities of Bogotá and Medellín, where the selective isolation decreed by the government as of the third quarter of that year apparently managed to reverse this situation.

As a recommendation, encouraging the promotion of public policies from central governments is proposed. This can make the social problems faced by the labor market visible, and then its precariousness—which is becoming increasingly acute—can be addressed. In addition, reducing the tax burden on small and medium-sized companies would allow the creation of formal jobs within the framework of "decent work". This would decrease the rate of labor informality, increasing the employment rate, welfare, and quality of life of workers and their households.

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Social Enterprises in Developing Countries: Bibliometric Analysis and Trends*

[English Version]

Empresas sociales de países en desarrollo:
análisis bibliométrico y tendencia

Empresas sociais nos países em desenvolvimento:
análise bibliométrica e tendências

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Martha del Socorro Alzate Cárdenas**

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5683-7238>

CvLAC: [https://scienti.minciencias.gov.co/cvlac/
visualizador/generarCurriculoCv.do?cod_rh=0000942367](https://scienti.minciencias.gov.co/cvlac/visualizador/generarCurriculoCv.do?cod_rh=0000942367)

Colombia

Michel Andrés Otálora Montoya***

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2463-8407>

CvLAC: [https://scienti.minciencias.gov.co/
cvlac/visualizador/generarCurriculoCv.do?cod_
rh=0002068334](https://scienti.minciencias.gov.co/cvlac/visualizador/generarCurriculoCv.do?cod_rh=0002068334)

Colombia

Héctor Salgado Hernández****

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4572-8081>

CvLAC: [https://scienti.minciencias.gov.co/cvlac/
visualizador/generarCurriculoCv.do?cod_rh=0002068330](https://scienti.minciencias.gov.co/cvlac/visualizador/generarCurriculoCv.do?cod_rh=0002068330)

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** Master in Education. Professor of Administration at Universidad Católica Luis Amigó. martha.alzateca@amigo.edu.co

*** Financial Administrator. Universidad de Caldas. michael.2771810118@ucaldas.edu.co

**** Financial Administrator. Universidad de Caldas. hector.2771811345@ucaldas.edu.co

Abstract

Objective: This article provides a bibliographic analysis and review of trends on the subject of social enterprises in developing countries. The number of publications per year, countries, authors, journals and universities are taken into account. **Methodology:** Bibliometric techniques and tools were used: R, Tree of Science and a network analysis, which classifies the consulted material into three sections with a similarity in the image of a tree; where the root corresponds to classic documents, the trunk to structural documents and the leaves to emerging sub areas or trends. **Results:** The outcomes show three sub areas highlighted for future research on social enterprises: development, evolution, limitations of social enterprises, obtaining financial resources, organizational form and corporate social responsibility.

Keywords: social enterprises; social economy; solidarity economy.

Resumen

Objetivo: en este artículo se realiza un análisis bibliográfico y revisión de tendencias sobre la temática de empresas sociales de países en desarrollo. Se tienen en cuenta el número de publicaciones por año, países, autores, revistas y universidades. **Metodología:** se utilizaron técnicas y herramientas bibliométricas: R, Tree of Science y un análisis de red, que clasifica el material consultado en tres apartados con una similitud en la imagen de un árbol; donde la raíz se corresponde con documentos clásicos, el tronco con documentos estructurales y las hojas con subáreas emergentes o tendencias. **Resultados:** en los resultados se evidencian tres subáreas destacadas para futuras investigaciones de las Empresas Sociales: desarrollo, evolución, limitaciones de las empresas sociales, consecución de recursos financieros, forma organizacional y responsabilidad social empresarial.

Palabras clave: empresas sociales; economía social; economía solidaria

Resumo

Objetivo: este artigo realiza uma análise bibliográfica e uma revisão de tendências sobre o tema das empresas sociais nos países em desenvolvimento. Leva em conta o número de publicações por ano, países, autores, jornais e universidades. **Metodologia:** foram utilizadas técnicas e ferramentas bibliométricas: R, Tree of Science e uma análise em rede, que classifica o material consultado em três seções com uma semelhança na imagem de uma árvore; onde a raiz corresponde aos documentos clássicos, o tronco aos documentos estruturais e as folhas às sub-áreas ou tendências emergentes. **Resultados:** os resultados mostram três sub-áreas destacadas para futuras pesquisas sobre empreendimentos sociais: desenvolvimento, evolução, limitações dos empreendimentos sociais, recursos financeiros, forma organizacional e responsabilidade social corporativa.

Palavras-chave: empresas sociais; economia social; economia solidária.

Introduction

Social enterprise (SE) is a trend where companies have a positive environmental and/or social impact, generate economic benefit for stakeholders, and is particularly prevalent in developing countries. The rise of social enterprise is a new entrepreneurial form that combines financial resources with a focus on social values as the driving force behind economic growth. These values include honesty, transparency, social responsibility, democracy, equity, equality, concern for others, solidarity, associativity and mutual aid (Kruse, 2021). According to Bharti and Malik (2021), Social enterprise is expected to promote more equal economic growth and contribute to the development of developing countries. Lo anterior hace que se puedan desarrollar modelos de ES y se generen, así, nuevos emprendimientos. Esto relacionado, también con bases productivas y de consumo donde se practican además los valores de producción, consumo responsable y limpio, reciclaje, reparación, reutilización, renovación, o lo que comúnmente se denomina como economía circular; la cual implica compartir para generar valor agregado (Lekan et al., 2021).

This growing trend allows for the development of SE models and therefore create new ventures. In addition, social enterprise encompasses practices such as responsible and clean production, and circular economy principles like recycling, repair, and reuse. These collaborative models promote a sharing economy, which creates added value. (Lekan et al., 2021).

One of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations (UN) seeks to reduce poverty, which is approached in many different ways around the world (Sodhi and Knuckles, 2021). This is in line with making conceptual changes in how we understand/view one another and promoting and caring for the rights of minority populations, an issue that must be addressed with utmost urgency around the world (Hossein, 2021; Li et al. 2021).

The idea of SEs has been researched for a long time, is ever-expanding and becoming more relevant every day. To examine the background of this research, different literature reviews were analyzed: a trend in research focused on the need to include companies in the technology sector that collaborate with social development for common benefit (Zambiazzi et al., 2018). Research based on the development characteristics of studied countries have shown differences in the profile of social entrepreneurs compared to non-social entrepreneurs in developing countries. (Nicolás et al., 2018). In addition, the construction cooperatives in the transport sector have been studied as a means of promoting local

development by improving mobility and aligning the economy and employment with cooperativism. (Méndez-Reyes, 2017).

Similarly, a study was consulted that analyzed how traditional capital companies should break economic inequality gaps through sponsorship in HE incorporation where employees and entrepreneurs should be socially empowered (Prinsloo, 2018). Furthermore, a study related to investors was analyzed, what they look for to put their SE resources in and how to attract capital that produces and provides the expectations of any investor (McWade, 2012).

The similarities between all these studies are that in developing countries, through social and collaborative work, SEs are considered major drivers of the economy not only through social leadership, but also the relationship between the State and private enterprises.

Despite Social enterprises (SEs) being private initiatives, through social and collective interventions, SEs enable people in social collectives to have equal opportunities to achieve development goals which have a positive impact on a specific area.

This article, which aims to fill a gap in knowledge, performs a literature review of Scopus database between 2000 and 2021, using the definition of social enterprise (SE) —as a non-profit company that uses its surpluses for reinvestment, benefiting less privileged communities and protecting the environment—. The objective of this analysis is to review the trends of SEs in developing countries by examining the number of publications per year, countries, authors, journals and universities. The aim is to understand the significance of the subject, its conceptual evolution, and how these companies promote economic development in territories, and other emerging issues.

The structure of the document is based on four sections, the first one refers to the methodology of research development where scientific mapping and network analysis are privileged. The second includes research findings of an analysis of publications by year, the countries and journals with the most publications, the most significant authors and universities in the subject, word concurrence, author collaboration and network analysis. The third considers the conclusions of the research in terms of the variables under study, and the fourth provides the agenda for future research.

Methodology

The methodology of this research is made visible in two ways: the first is related to the bibliometric analysis or scientific mapping that takes documents from the

Scopus database. The second is based on a network analysis, where the most relevant documents from the perspective of SEs were identified and the most relevant research on this topic was examined. Details are described below.

Scientific Mapping

For this analysis, the research focused on five bibliometrics criteria proposed by Zupic and Čater (2015): citations, word co-occurrence, co-citations, co-authorships, and bibliographic coupling analysis. Scopus database was chosen for its wide range of journals and documents, as well as its relevance to the research topic (Echchakoui, 2020) and its reputation as one of the most respected databases globally (Bar-Ilan, 2008; Zhu & Liu, 2020).

Table 1. Search benchmark.

Database	Scopus
Query range	2000 – 2021
Consultation date	26-09-2021
Material type	All
Journal Classification	All
Search fields	Article title, abstract, keywords
Search terms	("social enterprise") and ("developing countries" or "economic development")
Results	244

The bibliographic exploration yielded 244 results in Scopus. The Bibliometrix tool was used for the analysis, which offers multiple functionalities and is widely used and validated by other researchers (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017; Acevedo et al., 2020; Aria et al., 2020; Bond et al., 2019; Demiroz & Haase, 2019; Duque et al., 2020a; Duque et al., 2021c; Tani et al., 2018).

Network Analysis

The documents extracted from Scopus were processed through R software to obtain the bibliographic references and construct the citation network. The graph-theoretic prototype was used, a technique that allows gathering information on the typology and characteristics of the network, as well as the records that constitute it (Wallis, 2007; Yang et al., 2016).

Subsequently, three bibliometric indicators were assessed: “indegree”, “Outdegree” and “betweenness” (Wallis, 2007). The first is related to the number of times a document has been cited by other people, the second with the number of times others are cited (Wallis, 2007); which corresponds to the network connections, and the third to the intermediation or center of the network (Freeman, 1977). This last index reveals when the document is referenced by others, and in turn, this references other authors (Zhang & Luo, 2017).

In short, it is the area-specific knowledge network made up of all the bibliographic materials extracted from Scopus with their respective references, which led to the involvement of works from various sources. This study of networks, with its respective map of co-citations, makes it possible to represent the area of specific knowledge related to the research object, which favors the typification of their sub-areas or currents of inquiry (Gurzki & Woisetschlager, 2017; Zuschke, 2020). To graphically represent the knowledge network on social enterprises, the Gephi tool addressed by Bastian et al. (2009) was used.

The indegree, outdegree and betweenness indices are measured for each of the documents on the network, which facilitate the generation of categories that are used in the metaphorical image of the tree (Robledo et al., 2014; Valencia et al., 2020). Three categories of analysis were born from this analogy. The roots, known as high “indegree”, which support the search results of classic documents, and serve as a theoretical reference on the subject. More specifically, the roots are related to publications that are cited, but that do not cite others (Wallis, 2007). Then, the trunk of the metaphorical image becomes visible, known as high “betweenness”, where the records that are cited are located, but are also cited by other people (Zhang & Luo, 2017). Here, research from a structural plane perspective means a blending between classic and contemporary studies. Finally, there is the metaphorical image of the leaves (high “outdegree”), focused on modern documents, which refer to the others (Wallis, 2007). These studies present novel trends which are pinpointed to an area, or similarly give us perspective, which integrate the emerging research perspectives. This methodological procedure has been used and validated in previous research (Buitrago et al., 2020; Clavijo-Tapia et al., 2021; Duque *et al*[/ *i*]., 2021a; Duque et al., 2021b; Duque

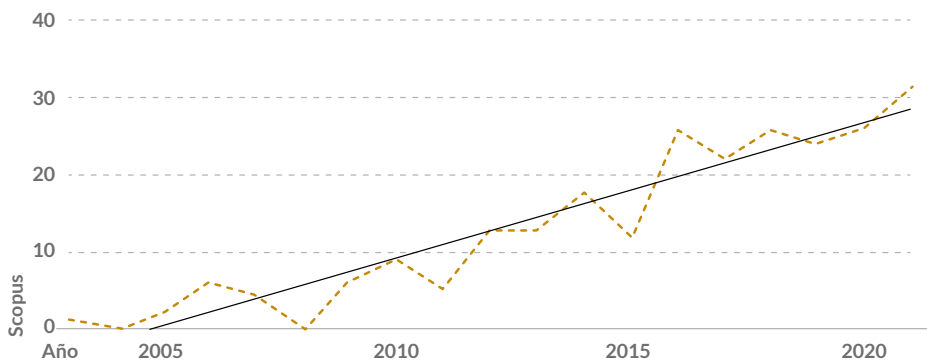
et al., 2020b; Duque and Cervantes, 2019; Hernández et al., 2020; Ramos et al., 2021; Trejos-Salazar et al., 2021).

Results

Publications Per Year

Within the analysis carried out on the documents, magazines or articles that are published each year related to the topic of “social enterprise”, “developing countries” or “economic development”, a positive trend is evident. This leads to the conclusion that it is a topic that has clearly gained strength and is more appealing to researchers and readers. Although a variation rate of 30 documents represents a small figure, the issue has become quite relevant as companies show a social focus to contribute to economic and territorial development. The literature search was conducted from 2000 to 2021 with the first and only publication found in 2003, however since then there has been an evident growing trend.


Figure 1. Publications per year.



Countries with the Highest Number of Publications

The country with the highest number of participation —that also has influence over other countries— is the United Kingdom, a nation made up of 4 countries (England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland). The USA however has a somewhat higher participation compared to the United Kingdom. Between the two nations, relevant information is obtained for the development of the topic: The US contributes 19.7% of articles and the United Kingdom 18.8%, therefore together they provide 38.5% of the overall publications. This information is correlated with the authors and universities that also contribute to the creation and evolution of the studies carried out. The most noteworthy is that the countries with the greatest economic development are the most interested in the subject of SE. This notion leads us to conclude that a large part of their evolution is due to the critical work that they have carried out through collective social development, but also, it is in these countries where the greatest possibilities are created to finance these types of initiatives.

Table 2. Network of countries.

Country/ Region	Scopus	% Participation	Country collaboration
United States	8	19,7	
United Kingdom	46	18,9%	
Canada	25	10,2%	
India	21	8,6%	
Australia	17	7,0%	
China	10	4,1%	
Italy	10	4,1%	
South Africa	9	3,7%	
New Zealand	7	2,9%	
Spain	7	2,9%	

Journals with the Largest Number of Publications

In this analysis, it was possible to show, in terms of publication of records, a similarity in the number of journals published with an average of 4.8. However, the prestige of each of the universities and their respective publications must also be taken into account: Q1 and Q2 are reliable and truthful sources, while Q3 and Q4 sources are in the process of being recognized and their information may not be as reliable. Most of these journals are avant-garde, with a socio-environmental focus and ecological economic development. For this reason, they attach great importance to all issues related to SE, sustainable economic development and socially responsible business. In short, they become a great source of information where you can consult the different advances in related topics.

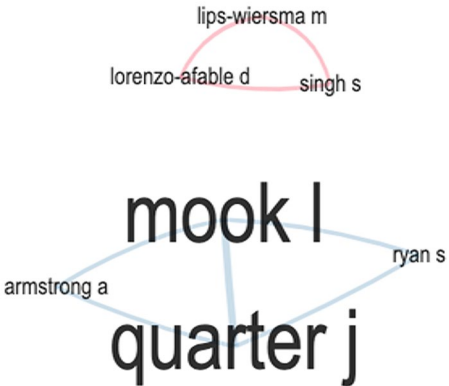
Table 3. Main magazines.

Source	Number of records	% Participation	SJR 2020	Quartiles SJR	h-index (SJR)	Countries
Sustainability Switzerland	9	3.69%	0.33	Q2	9	Singapore
Journal of Social Entrepreneurship	6	2.46%	0.61	Q2	25	United Kingdom
Emerald Emerging Markets Case Studies	5	2.05%	0.2	Q3	5	United Kingdom
Entrepreneurship and Regional Development	5	2.05%	1.67	Q1	90	United Kingdom
Social Enterprise Journal	5	2.05%	0.39	Q2	7	United Kingdom
International Journal of Social Economics	4	1.64%	0.29	Q2	39	United Kingdom
Journal of Business Ethics	4	1.64%	2.21	Q1	187	Netherlands
Local Economy	4	1.64%	0.39	Q2	37	United Kingdom
Calitatea Vietii	3	1.23%	0.16	Q3	5	Romania
IFIP Advances in Information and Communication Technology	3	1.23%	0.19	Q3	53	United States

Authors with the Largest Number of Publications

An analysis of the authors who have the largest number of publications on SE in developing countries was conducted. Most of these authors are economists with various publications focused on social sciences. This implies that their publications and different investigations are carried out by analyzing the economic and social situation of these countries. Relevant authors include Aoyama Yuko, Mook Laurie, and Richard Heeks. The first two are American authors while the last is a British author. The economies of both nations are very strong, but what they have in common is they both set out to develop their economies by incorporating SEs and cooperatives. This therefore implied that rapid development on any level can serve the needs of the communities that want to grow.

Table 4. Main authors.

Number	Author	Number of publications	Number of citations	h-index	Collaboration amongst authors
1	Mook, Laurie	47	546	14	
2	Quarter, Jack J.	56	554	14	
3	Luke, Belinda	42	476	13	
4	Aoyama, Yuko	39	878	18	
5	Armstrong, Ann	8	99	3	
6	Chikadzi, Victor	18	25	3	
7	Ciambotti, Giacomo	4	5	2	
8	Fernández-Laviada, Ana	16	20	7	
9	Haughton, Andre Yone	8	49	4	
10	Heeks, Richard	99	4.545	26	

Universities with the Largest Number of Publications

The following table illustrates the participation by universities that publish in Scopus on the addressed topic. There is a similarity in the publications of the various universities, with a range that oscillates between 3 and 5 files with a % participation of no more than 3%. Despite the similarity, in their statistical data it was possible to show a difference in publicity by university. The United States had a participation of 40%, higher than the other countries that scarcely reached 20% participation.

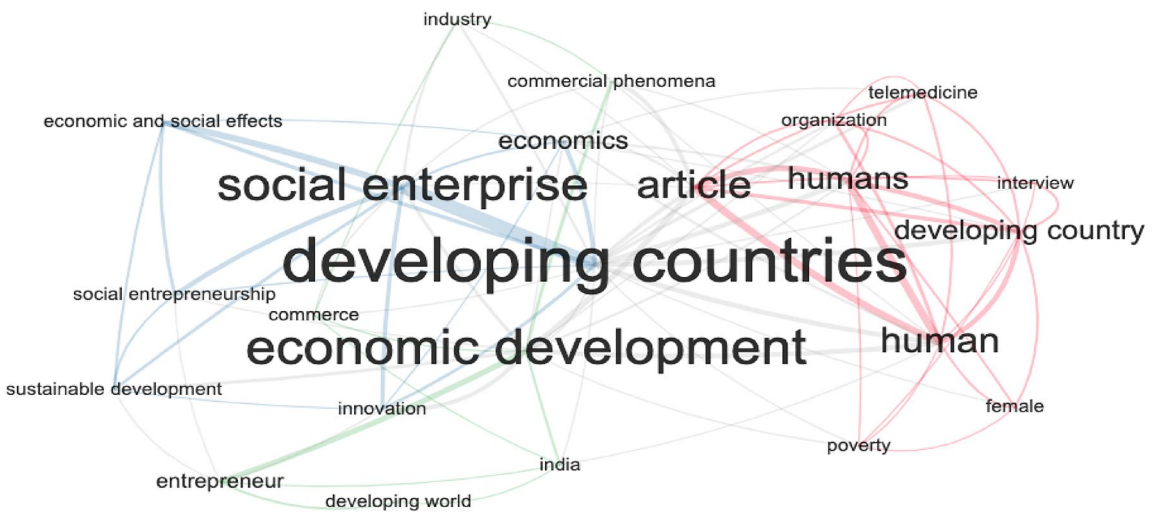
Table 5. Institutional network.

Organization	Number of publications	% Participation	Country
University of Toronto	5	2,05%	Canada
Arizona State University	4	1,64%	United States
Pennsylvania State University	3	1,23%	United States
Santa Clara University	3	1,23%	United States
University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg	3	1,23%	South Africa
Auckland University of Technology	3	1,23%	New Zealand
University of Technology Sydney	3	1,23%	Australia
University of Portsmouth	3	1,23%	United Kingdom
University of Oxford	3	1,23%	United States
Cape Breton University	3	1,23%	Canada

Word Cloud

The following illustration indicates the words that have an involvement within the work conducted. Each word is related to the development of the topic (“social enterprise” and “developing countries” or “economic development”). The words that have the most importance within the text are “Developing Countries”, “Economic Development” and “Social Enterprise”, words that in this research are the main axis for the outcome of the SEs. This information has been extracted from reliable sources such as Scopus and Bibliometrix.

Figure 2. Word concurrence.

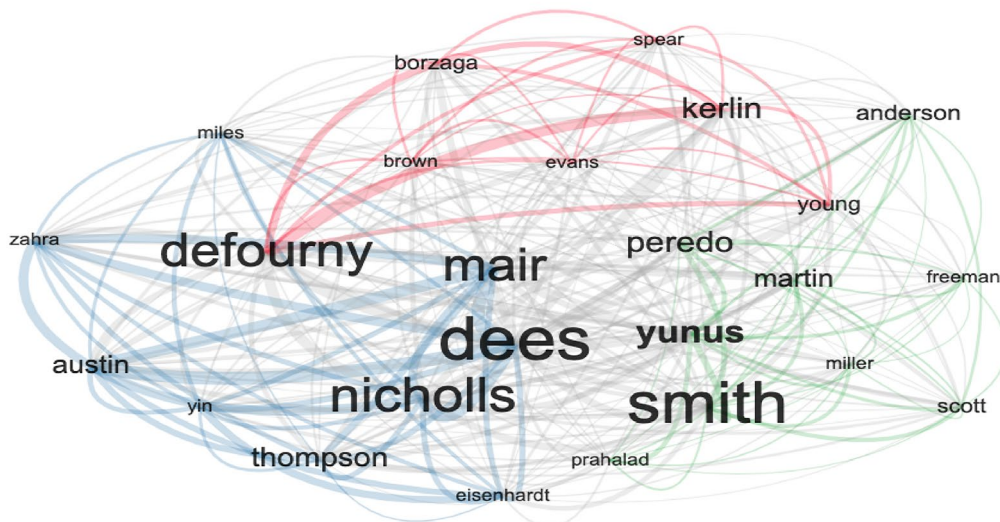


Collaboration Amongst Authors

Figure 3 shows the relationship between authors who contribute the most to the subject matter. It is important to highlight that many of these authors are economists who base the development of their consultations on the criteria of “large-scale enterprises and social welfare”, considered within the SE in countries that are economically developing Yunus is a great example, a Nobel Peace Prize winner for the creation of the Grameen Bank who focused on supporting SE and microfinance credit development. Yunus is highly cited in

his publications as he provides information of interest to other entrepreneurs and has several collaborative works with Smith, who is also a scholar in the researched area.

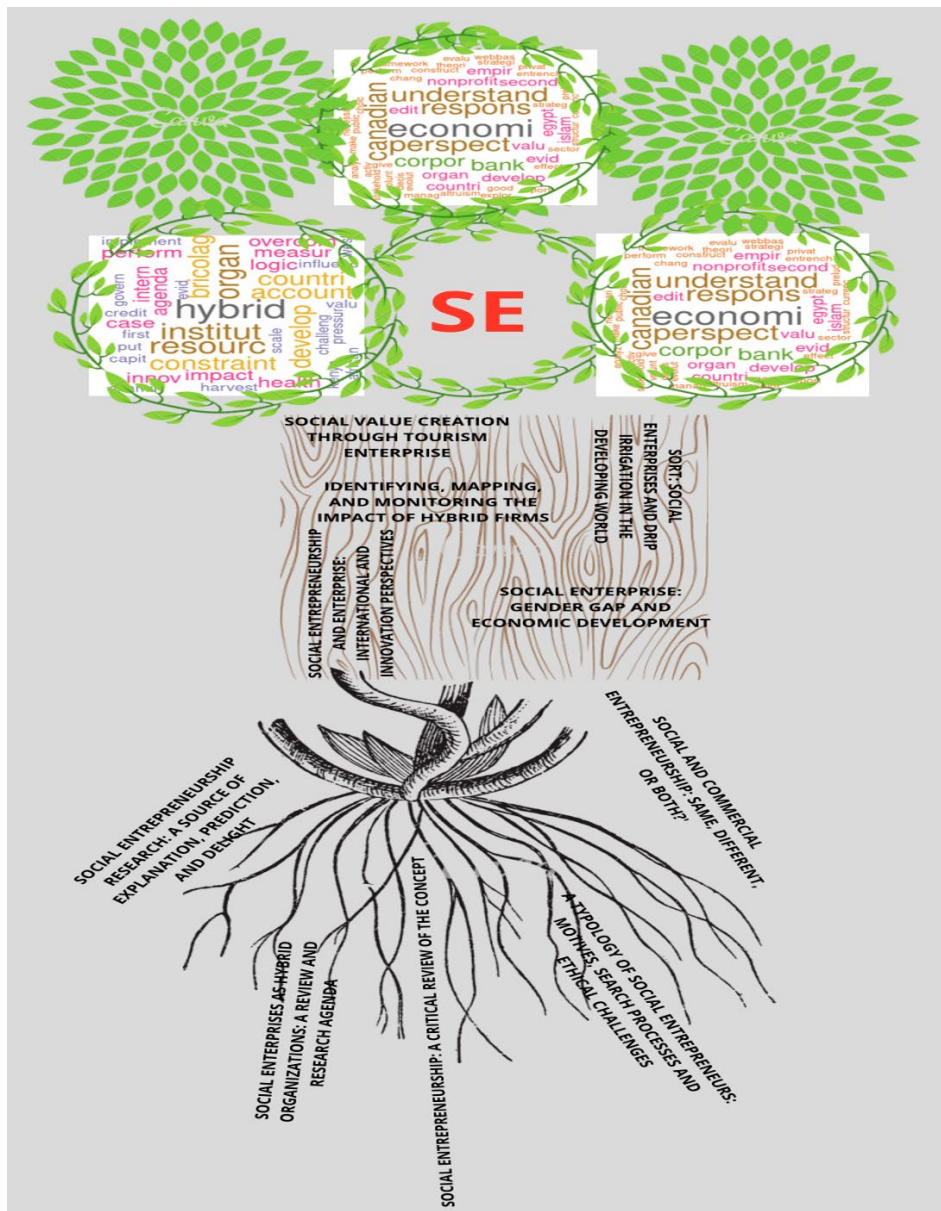
Figure 3. Authors' concurrence.



Network Analysis

This analysis allowed for the identification of the most relevant documents and to select five classic articles and five structural articles. The main ideas and the most relevant information of each article were then compared. The results of this analysis are depicted through the representation of a tree.

Figure 4. Network analysis - tree metaphor.



The Roots (Classics).

The articles addressed to develop the root (classics) of the research clarify the different doubts about the concepts used in the area of knowledge from the perspective of SEs, therefore providing a strong basis for understanding the publications made by the different authors. This opens the possibility for future professionals to analyze and create new research documents to expand this branch of knowledge, with the purpose of providing changes in the political, social and economic systems of different countries and regions.

It is important to clarify that the concepts 'social enterprise' and 'social entrepreneurship' are often compared, however, as suggested by Peredo and Maclean (2006), they are different terms. The same is true for the concepts of 'social businessmen' and 'social entrepreneurs'. In either case, in both circumstances, for companies and individuals, research acknowledges that talks between people and organizations or establishments that practice or make a social contribution. These people or organizations strategically allocate their resources toward financing social projects, resulting in significant contributions toward fostering social and environmental transformations.

Despite this conceptual similarity, it is clear that there are different ways of contributing to social change when dealing with SEs or social entrepreneurship. In the long term, these enterprises gather their efforts and common work to make special investments with changes to health, education, housing and culture, among other services. Such contributions in the long run bring benefits to achieve economic growth (Austin et al., 2006). Although many SEs do not make a profit, they do have a fundamental role in the social and economic change of a country. The social interventions carried out are generally accompanied by economic support with approaches that transform voices and lives. Mair and Martí (2006) suggest that there is a high content of social literature focused on solving problems through SEs.

All studies agree that SEs and social entrepreneurships around the world have introduced innovative models with commercial potential and approach them from a social problem perspective. Different agencies coordinate to propose solutions, even between governmental and non-governmental organizations. Similarly, studies coincide that in many underdeveloped countries, corruption conceals the needs of people in different local territories. In general, businessmen or social entrepreneurs have played a fundamental role for social and economic growth in these countries while also making visible improvements in all systems where social interventions have been developed (Zahra et al., 2009).

From this perspective, SEs look for social and governmental shortcomings and intend to solve problems through permanent changes. These changes provide development in all sectors benefiting communities living within the surrounding areas. Clear examples of this are agricultural companies where different landowners come together to create social value and constitute social enterprises. In addition, there are companies which secure resources through business models and a large part of their profits are used to benefit social projects. This type of business model is even becoming an attraction for many consumers who understand that the product is contributing to social changes and, therefore, to a more equitable development. It is social sensitivity and support for a social cause (Doherty et al., 2014).

The Trunk (structural).

For people who have immersed themselves into this kind of initiative, SEs have been very useful. This situation is influenced by external factors such as global unemployment, but also by internal factors associated with the limited job opportunities within the local community. These situations have been the incentive for SEs to be viewed as a mitigating tool of the bad economic situation of certain countries, as SEs not only create new jobs, but also employ people who other companies may not hire due to their level of education or a disability. (Nicolás & Rubio, 2016).

Following the social contribution approach, recent research makes a distinction between SE with a gender focus. It is argued that females have entered the entrepreneurial world in a positive way, which can be explained by the fact that more business ideas emerge in countries with a lower level of development (Holt & Littlewood, 2015).

Recent studies also agree, stating that from SE it is necessary to study approaches on how the company can address innovative social solutions alongside economic development (Altinay et al., 2016). From the perspective of social innovation, the most recent research also covers environmental problems and, in general, comparisons are made between the private capitalist companies with the SEs. When integrating the community, from the point of view of environmental problems and social interventions as part of the solution there are many similarities. (Chell et al., 2010)

Another perspective of the most recent research is associated with new facets of development, such as agricultural solutions from the social perspective. One

of these solutions is the integrated drip irrigation system, which is much more effective in the long run for farmers who are innovative in terms of technology (Venot, 2016). However, considering the company as a social creation and contribution, it depicts a promising future when associating it with the current poverty and lack of resources, social problems typical of sectors in poverty and social inequality. Most of the research on the drip irrigation system has encouraged the development of new ideas that contribute to agricultural development. These pioneering projects may guarantee the improvement of shelf life and allow more product freshness, but as mentioned above, regarding the companies from a social perspective.

Sheets (emerging categories).

Figure 5. Sheets (emerging categories).

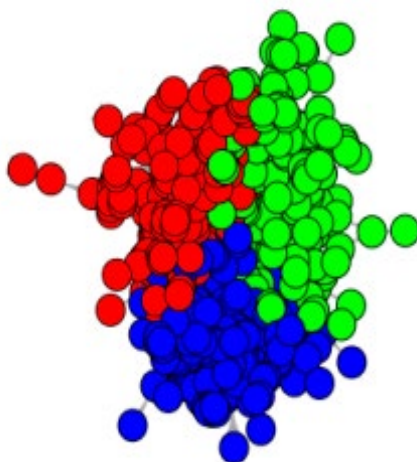


Figure 6. Perspective 1. Development, evolution, and limitations of social enterprises.



Overtime new business ideas emerge and many SEs are seeking to get off the ground. Despite this, it has been shown that around 45% of them fail largely due to inadequate management of resources or because they do not meet the needs of the market. Another factor to keep in mind is that they are not innovative enough, or they do not advance hand in hand with the needs of the environment. However, these limiting situations have not prevented more and more people from entering this business field (Zahra et al., 2009). Today, the SEs become an alternative for overcoming these problems when they work cooperatively with their stakeholders.

As mentioned above, gender-sensitive SEs have gained strength. What was once an advantage for males has now become an equality in the business and development field. From the female perspective, even though SEs have certain limitations such as cultural restrictions, gender inequality and few opportunities, women have been able to overcome these issues and make a change. This development is a positive aspect to highlight in this research and it goes hand in

hand with social issues of gender equality. According to one of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), there are several studies that ensure women adapt and lead companies more easily, which transforms SE with gender approach into social innovation and a great contribution to the development of people (Rosca et al., 2020).

Therefore, SEs show a significant evolution due to economic demand. Internal factors, such as the unemployment rate, and external factors, *e.i* economic downturns, are incentives to opt for entrepreneurship and mitigate the consequences. They also contribute to the development of a territory from the perspective of SEs (Piot-Lepetit & Nzongang, 2021).

In relation to competencies from the administrative discipline, some research has shown that in entrepreneurial processes applicants show lack in knowledge related to financial aspects. A sample of this is described and suggested by Arifin et al (2020) in a study conducted in Indonesia. 46% of village staff were awarded financial tools; however, only 5% used them, concluding that there was a lack of knowledge in economics.

Figure 7. Perspective 2. Procurement of financial resources and organizational structure.



SEs face a critical situation to overcome several financial barriers as well as those related to their own social purpose. The attainment or mobilization of financial resources must be taken into account, otherwise, SEs would be forced to close down. However, there are different supporting and financing systems to ensure that SEs are productive and can meet the needs that are not being met due to forgetfulness, or perhaps negligence by many governments.

An example of how SEs are financed takes place in the Middle East with Islamic banks that allocate significant resources to support or finance social projects led by SEs in order to meet common needs such as education, health, decent work, etc. These banks take on high financial risks, even more in countries where they bet on agricultural production. These motivating measures that do not allow SEs to decline also consider the common good, if social entrepreneurs do well, it will start to go well for many people whose lives can be changed (Kotb et al., 2021). In addition, they can also take advantage of government resources, as some generate economic and financial policies to promote them because they meet the needs which the government does not. This is one area where SEs are economically stronger while at the same time developing their social purpose (Li et al., 2020).

It is also important to note that financing of SE is done in practice through internal management that obeys to the administrative management form itself and with the formation to productive, commercial and industrial models and sectors, generally in agricultural industries. This practice stems economic growth so that they can quickly reach a break-even point and do not have to depend on external financing sources. Innovation becomes fundamental, if SEs are not innovative in their products or services, they will not be attractive to new clients, and they will not be able to internationalize easily.

In relation to professional work there are myths that SE is usually not very attractive as its financial reward is relatively low due to philanthropic thoughts (Li et al., 2020). If these companies were to think differently, they could obtain higher financial returns in developed countries and then apply them in developing countries.— where the target audience is generally located — the greatest shortages and needs for social change exist, the greatest social problems are centered and, in many cases, famine, scarce resources, lack of education and opportunities and precarious health; problems that the SE address (Mersland et al., 2020). Therefore, it is also clear that the best financing possibilities are in developed countries yet the greatest social problems that these types of companies solve are in developing countries.

With regard to receiving financing resources for SE, Desa and Basu (2013) suggest that social enterprises must break down barriers and adapt to hybrid models. They should consider the application of optimization and bricolage,

two main methods for pooling resources. Optimization in all respects is the sourcing of raw materials, manufacturing and resource management without losing quality and making products more expensive. Bricolage is the use of the resources available within the area, sometimes they are not adequately valued and combined, but they can be a bonus for the growth of these companies. Under this hybrid model, special care must be taken to ensure that profits are not used for social advances. Companies must be able to provide equity in seemingly conflicting issues such as commercial income and the distribution of profits in social benefits. Because of this, it is said that SEs are to reconcile and internalize new political and governmental changes, since these companies have legitimacy and recognition from their communities (Persaud et al., 2021). In this regard, Doherty et al. (2014) also state that adapting hybrid models is very easy, but there is a risk of changing their social goal and losing any progress made.

Other authors mention the potential of SEs in new economic trends such as circular economy. As SEs are a focus for growth and financial sustainability like recycling companies, jobs can be created providing economic stability to families as well as providing environmental impact and, of course, the intrinsic social purposes of these types of organizations are generally followed (Lekan et al., 2021). In sectors such as energy and agriculture, there are large SEs that account for a 53% of them (Kummitha, 2018). In Africa, Mckague and Harrison (2019) found a SE with significant advances in the health sector. They began by educating the population and then hiring, for the most part, women in hospitals and health positions, reducing gender inequality and also providing social welfare to millions of people.

In specific areas such as financing, it can be seen how every day there is more investment and support for SEs. Due to its organizational form and the efficiency with which they manage all the resources, both financial and human, it was evident that in 2020 the investment capital increased from 400 billion USD to 1 trillion USD in SEs and non-profit companies. However, these investments expect financial returns, this capital is much higher than philanthropic contributions, but it should be noted that it is still not enough to encourage the growth of many SEs. At the same time, getting investment capital is complex, since investors cannot perform adequate risk analysis and do not know what the rate of return on capital would be, notwithstanding the fact that these are high-risk investments (Phillips & Johnson, 2021).

Figure 8. Perspective 3. Social enterprises (SEs) and their corporate social responsibility.



Social enterprises (SEs) can make important advances in the economic and social development of developing countries. The thinking, social purpose and organizational form of SEs are closely linked to corporate social responsibility therefore they will have an optimistic future view for the consumer. SEs have been a potential driving force for environmental sustainability and for global social growth (Carroll, 2021). SEs focus on assisting their “stakeholders” (customers, suppliers, employees), and other groups that help the company grow. Many of these new SEs are focused on innovations on basic needs of health, education, famine, etc., and also on companies that reduce the environmental impact caused by mankind in different countries around the world.

When SEs are established in certain communities, they are crucial for the development of that region. They are community agents that promote social welfare and progress of the people whom they interact with. They also provide education, basic goods and services, and help reduce unemployment. Moreover, they expect to have social and economic rewards in the medium and long term.

(Quarter et al., 2017). In developing countries, such as Canada, important initiatives have been carried out to create SEs. Policies and laws have been established to foster the creation and growth of these companies providing public resources to contribute to an overall stability and sustainability. (Mook & Quarter, 2019).

Today, the philosophy of many companies is changing, therefore special attention must be paid to all their stakeholders. This means that both private and public companies, and in general, all non-profit companies, have become tough competitors for SEs. For this reason, SEs must demonstrate their social functions as a competitive advantage over other companies by showing that they are not solely something new, but they are driver for growth and social responsibility. For example, Islamic banks are clearly identified as SEs and provide unconditional support for their maintenance. Throughout the years, they have reduced environmental impacts while contributing to the social growth of their region. These banks are socially responsible for their communities by indirectly forming corporate social responsibility (Kotb et al., 2021).

Conclusions

This study reveals how the SE concept has been the object of study and a motivation for the creation of companies in developing countries. These companies are a crucial factor in mitigating social problems such as unemployment, famine, access to basic services, health, and education that governments have neglected. The investments these companies make also demonstrate a significant progress in combating social inequality.

The analysis is based on relevant information from each of the authors included, with a timeline from 2000 to 2021. The information was obtained from Scopus and the scientific papers of authors with an extensive trajectory in the area of knowledge.

The first decade of the research timeline, from 2000 to 2010, saw an average of 2.5 papers published per year, while the second decade saw an increase to 19.6. This suggests the importance of the topic.

The United States and the United Kingdom account for the majority of contributions to the subject, with significant participation rates of 19.7% and 18.9%, respectively. A remarkable aspect is that these developed countries value the importance of SE for the economic growth of any country. These countries also have the most important journals on the subject, with a contribution to the theoretical knowledge of the authors. This demonstrates the awareness on these issues and the close relationship to the fulfillment of the SDGs with respect to

poverty, food, health, education, gender equity, drinking water and sanitation, reduction of inequalities, employment, responsible consumption, and, in general, a solution for the associated environmental problems.

Social enterprises play an important role in meeting the existing needs in developing countries, for this reason more and more resources channeled by these organizations are used to reach the populations that require these services. Technological advances favor the creation of socially responsible enterprises that actively contribute to communities with potential for economic growth. Through collaborative work, it is possible to achieve a better economic and social evolution of a particular region. Since most of the SEs belong to the health, education, public services, and agriculture sectors, among others. In addition, more recently other sectors, such as industry and joint ventures, commercially speaking, have incorporated SEs without neglecting their corporate purpose.

The SE has been the main incentive for the foundation of new social entrepreneurship with the purpose of promoting economic growth through formal employment and new job opportunities. This is to reduce the economic limitations of the country, which are mainly the unemployment rate and labor informality. This type of business occupation has also benefited from increased female involvement, which has gradually drawn closer to that of males. According to the literature, females outperform males in leadership positions, while males outperform females in their capacity to discuss the business.

In conclusion, in order to integrate, grow, remain, and achieve sustainability social enterprises must address three critical areas. Firstly, these enterprises focus on the search for opportunities in which specific sectors of the economy and regions can be developed to achieve their goals. Secondly, philanthropic and governmental support is sought to obtain already scarce resources and finally, their economic purpose is pursued. The majority of these companies are hybrids with a commercial role and are appealing to customers because of their corporate names. The structure of the organization is crucial to avoid falling into corruption, which is denounced at all levels of society. The SEs serve as models for different companies, both public and private, that want to become socially responsible because of their importance in the current economy. In the future, topics such as corporate social responsibility will acquire the importance they deserve.

Limitations

Although scientific methods were used for this bibliometric review, biases and different opinions were evident due to the number of authors included as well as using Scopus as

the single database. This led to excluding many other important scientific articles in this area of knowledge. The timeline also limited the inclusion of studies published before the year 2000. Perhaps the essence or the emergence of the topic could be used as data that may be included in future research using different methodologies to expand knowledge about SE (Kotb et al., 2021).

Future Research Agenda

Table 6. Future Research Agenda.

Cluster/ perspective	Topic	Reference
Development, evolution, and limitations of social enterprises	In the current health context, social enterprises have great opportunities in supply chains. They are crucial in the commercial business.	(Sodhi y Knuckles, 2021)
	The level of education is a key factor in the financial progress of society because, in some countries and populations, there is a significant deficit in the management of resources, especially when entering the business world. Social enterprises play a significant role in this circumstance, and their solid knowledge and structure in the financial sector are decisive.	(Arifin et al., 2020)
Procurement of financial resources and organizational structure	Expansion of the dimensions covered by SEs in future research and how they can be applied, for example, to industries or other economic sectors.	(Li et al., 2020)
	Although the GINI coefficient is a measure to evaluate how social investments impact the growth of countries, it still deserves deep research, in addition to the net gains that can be generated from investments in social growth.	(Phillips y Johnson, 2021)

	In the future, corporate social responsibility will be an even more important factor for companies than it is today. Its guarantee of sustainability and optimism are key concepts for present and future companies.	(Carroll, 2021)
Social enterprises (SEs) and their corporate social responsibility	To deepen through research and support to countries that have recently been of great help for economic development, taking into account social responsibility, which has been a good contribution to its evolution.	(Quarter et al., 2017; McKague y Harrison, 2019)
	New developments in the care of social and corporate responsibility in developing countries that, through resources from banks, establish a timeline for the topic's advancements.	(Kotb et al., 2021)

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Cultural Individualism and Collectivism in relation to Socioeconomic Inequality from the Evolutionary Social Psychology Approach*

[English Version]

Individualismo y colectivismo cultural en relación con la desigualdad socioeconómica desde el enfoque de la psicología social evolutiva

Individualismo e coletivismo cultural em relação à desigualdade sócio-económica, na perspectiva da psicologia social evolutiva

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Pablo Chaverri Chaves**

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2639-4242>

Spain

Itziar Fernández Sedano***

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6905-2111>

Spain

Abstract

Objective: This reflection paper proposes to analyze the relationship between the individualist-collectivist orientation of culture and socioeconomic inequality from an evolutionary approach. **Method:** Consists of a

* Project 1-PSI-2022, Colectivismo e Individualismo Cultural y Desigualdad Distributiva en Adolescentes de Costa Rica, attached to the Department of Social and Organizational Psychology of the Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia (UNED), Spain, and the Instituto de Estudios Interdisciplinarios de la Niñez y la Adolescencia (INEINA) of the Universidad Nacional (UNA), Costa Rica. Declaration of interests: The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest. Data availability: All relevant data can be found in the paper.

** Master's Degree in Cognitive Sciences. Researcher at UNED Spain and UNA Costa Rica. pchaverri2@alumno.uned.es

*** PhD in Psychology. Researcher and Professor of Social Psychology at UNED, Spain. ifernandez@psi.uned.es

conceptual analysis based on a review of scientific literature, both classic and current, from which a critical interpretation was made. The paper begins with an introduction that places the subject in the context of evolutionary social psychology. After that, the distinction between biological and cultural evolution is raised. **Results:** Based on earlier conceptual references, cultural notions of individualism and collectivism are examined from an evolutionary social psychology perspective. Subsequently, an evolutionary view of inequality is presented and, finally, an overview is offered about cultural individualism-collectivism linked to inequality in the distribution of wealth, also from the perspective of evolutionary social psychology. **Conclusions:** General reflections derived from the previous analyses are postulated. These argue that the individualist-collectivist cultural orientation is a byproduct of society's evolution and can affect how societies are structured, organized, and distribute wealth. This can be understood in the context of the circumstances that people have encountered and how they have responded to those circumstances throughout their evolutionary history. The tendency for more collectivist societies to have greater inequality in the distribution of wealth could be permeated by a greater propensity to conformism, passivity, obedience, and submission to social hierarchies. This suggests that socioeconomic inequality, more than a purely economic process, is also a political-cultural and evolutionary process.

Keywords: cultural orientation; individualism; collectivism; socioeconomic inequality; evolutionary social psychology.

Resumen

Objetivo: en este artículo de reflexión se propone analizar la relación de la orientación individualista-colectivista de la cultura con la desigualdad socioeconómica desde un enfoque evolutivo. **Método:** consiste en un análisis conceptual basado en una revisión de literatura científica, tanto clásica como actual, de la cual se hizo una interpretación crítica. El trabajo comienza con una introducción que sitúa la temática en el contexto de la psicología social evolutiva. Luego se plantea la distinción entre evolución biológica y cultural. **Resultados:** con base en los referentes conceptuales anteriores, se analizan las nociones de individualismo y colectivismo cultural desde una perspectiva de psicología social evolutiva. Posteriormente, se plantea una visión evolutiva de la desigualdad y, por último, se ofrece una panorámica entre el individualismo-colectivismo cultural vinculado a la desigualdad en la distribución de la riqueza, también desde el enfoque de psicología social evolutiva. **Conclusiones:** se postulan algunas reflexiones generales derivadas de los análisis anteriores. Estas proponen que la orientación cultural individualista-colectivista es un producto evolutivo de las sociedades que puede influir en el modo en que estas se estructuran, organizan y distribuyen su riqueza. Ello puede ser entendido

en el contexto de las circunstancias que estas han enfrentado y la forma en que han respondido a las mismas a través de su historia evolutiva. La tendencia a que en las sociedades más colectivistas se presente mayor desigualdad en la distribución de la riqueza podría estar permeada por una mayor propensión al conformismo, la pasividad, la obediencia y el sometimiento a las jerarquías sociales, lo que sugiere que la desigualdad socioeconómica, más que un proceso puramente económico, es también un proceso político-cultural y evolutivo.

Palabras clave: orientación cultural; individualismo; colectivismo; desigualdad socioeconómica; psicología social evolutiva.

Resumo

Objetivo: neste artigo de reflexão propomos analisar a relação entre a orientação individualista-coletivista da cultura e a desigualdade sócio-económica a partir de uma abordagem evolutiva. **Método:** consiste numa análise conceitual baseada numa revisão da literatura científica, tanto clássica como actual, a partir da qual foi feita uma interpretação crítica. O artigo começa com uma introdução que situa o assunto no contexto da psicologia social evolutiva. Depois, é feita a distinção entre evolução biológica e evolução cultural. **Resultados:** com base nas referências conceituais acima referidas, as noções de individualismo e coletivismo cultural são analisadas de uma perspectiva de psicologia social evolutiva. Subsequentemente, é apresentada uma visão evolutiva da desigualdade e, finalmente, é oferecida uma visão geral do individualismo cultural - coletivismo ligado à desigualdade na distribuição da riqueza, também a partir de uma abordagem de psicologia social evolutiva. **Conclusões:** algumas reflexões gerais derivadas das análises acima referidas são postuladas. Propõem que a orientação cultural individualista-coletivista seja um produto evolutivo das sociedades que podem influenciar a forma como estruturam, organizam e distribuem a sua riqueza. Isto pode ser compreendido no contexto das circunstâncias que enfrentaram e da forma como responderam a eles ao longo da sua história evolutiva. A tendência para sociedades mais coletivistas terem maior desigualdade na distribuição da riqueza pode ser permeada por uma maior propensão para o conformismo, passividade, obediência e submissão às hierarquias sociais, sugerindo que a desigualdade sócio-económica, em vez de ser um processo puramente económico, é também um processo político-cultural e evolutivo.

Palavras-chave: orientação cultural; individualismo; coletivismo; desigualdade sócio-económica; psicología social evolutiva.

Introduction

Culture, from an evolutionary perspective, can be seen as the product of a collective adaptive response of human beings to the particular conditions and demands they have faced as a species (Boyer, 2018). Perhaps from the time when humans split off from their common ancestor with chimpanzees and decided to venture into the African bush to explore, they were faced to an increased need to work together in a way that was far more intense than what the known bush environment required (Buss, 2019). These increased cooperative needs were the demands that gave origin to culture, understood as an adaptation to new environments that demanded new skills and offered new opportunities, particularly in relation to social cooperation (Tomasello, 2019).

One of the most significant ways that cultures differ from one another is in the degree of individualist and collectivist behavior (Sapolsky, 2018). From an evolutionary perspective, this variation would be the expression of the diversity and adaptive flexibility of the human species, which is one of the few that can live in almost any part of the planet. In this way, it manifests the great power of the tool that is culture, and owes its origin and development to the ultra-social characteristics of the human being (Henrich & Muthukrishna, 2021).

In addition to being seen as a product and a consequence, culture can also be analyzed as a causal factor of human historical development, as is suggested by some theorists and empirical studies (Henrich, 2016). One such case is how individualist-collectivist variation in cultures can influence the degree of economic inequality in societies, which in turn can influence the cultural characteristics of societies (Chisholm & Burbank, 2001).

This paper proposes a theoretical discussion of how individualist-collectivist variation in culture relates to inequality from an evolutionary perspective. To that end, sources with conceptual content as well as more traditional and recent empirical studies that provide light on these complex interactions were reviewed.

Biological and Cultural Evolution

In the theory of evolution, Darwin (1996) argues that behaviors that increase an organism's chances of surviving and reproducing are adaptive, and as a result have a high likelihood of being passed on to the next generation. Contrarily,

behaviors that reduce chances of survival are maladaptive because they will not be passed on to future generations (Darwin, 1996; Pinker, 2009).

Although this process was understood at the individual level, it has since become clear that it can also be examined at the group level. This is being researched by sociobiology, a science that allows for a new perspective on natural selection that places more emphasis on the spread of the group's genes than the individual's (Wilson, 2000).

Complex capacities such as language, social behavior, and culture are not constructs that emerge from the brain simply because it is larger than that of other primates, such as chimpanzees—one of our closest evolutionary relatives—; rather, these capacities reflect specialized mechanisms that natural selection has built into human brains.

Individuals and groups within a species vary from one another, and if one of these variations results in a state of affairs that helps the brains make better decisions that contribute to reproductive success, then these abilities will survive (Gazzaniga et al., 2019).

Biological evolution poses a conundrum, since there has not been enough time for it to have created each of the cognitive abilities of modern humans to invent multiple tools and technologies, forms of symbolic and representational communication, and complex social organizations and institutions. Tomasello (1999) hypothesized that these astounding abilities, which are inaccessible to other species, are the product of a certain type of uniquely human social transmission mechanisms that enable the development of cultural evolution and outpace biological evolution. One of these unique social transmission mechanisms is symbolic communication, which is made possible by language, as well as other sociocognitive skills that support cultural learning, such as imitation, emulation, cooperation, and theory of mind.

The transmission of knowledge that can change people's behavior is what makes cultural evolution possible. People acquire this knowledge from other members of their species through education, imitation, cooperation, and other social transmission mechanisms. While biological evolution is passed down through DNA, cultural evolution is passed down through education and lifelong social learning (Richerson & Boyd, 2008).

While biological evolution is slow and measured in phylogenetic time, involving thousands and millions of years, cultural evolution is rapid and measured in ontogenetic and historical time—which occurs during the lifetime of the individual and from generation to generation—involving a time scale of decades and hundreds of years. While cultural evolution is a change in social information, biological evolution is a change in genetic information. That is to say, change is the only constant in evolution—both biological and cultural—. As

a result, it is clear that both genetic and cultural evolution have had an impact on human behavior.

Culture would not be possible without a series of psychological capacities that humans, and some other species, possess, such as imitation—or the capacity for social learning, in general—and communication (Gaviria & Fernandez, 2019), but which humans possess to a much more advanced and sophisticated degree. This is possibly due to a property called cultural intelligence (Herrmann et al., 2007). It consists of a set of species-specific socio-cognitive skills that emerge early in ontogeny and serve to participate in and exchange knowledge in cultural groups. These skills stem from a more fundamental ability known as shared intentionality, which enables participation with other people in cooperative activities with shared intentions.

The idea of cultural intelligence is based on the finding that, although children and other primates have similar cognitive abilities to deal with the physical world, children have more advanced and sophisticated socio-cognitive abilities that manifest in early childhood to deal with the social world. These empower them to learn from others in ways that enhance their understanding of the physical world through language and other forms of educational interaction, so that, by adulthood, they will have broad cognitive abilities (Tomasello, 2019). As mentioned before, among these skills are imitation, emulation—which focuses only on the results of the action and not on copying the whole process—(Whiten et al., 2009), cooperation, and theory of mind. These begin to develop in humans throughout infancy and are gradually perfected during development.

These sociocognitive skills enable the selection and development of cultural content, such as beliefs, norms, values, and narratives, making the dissemination among the members of a society possible and passing cultural content down from generation to generation. Such abilities are based on and develop thanks to processes of social cognition (understanding and predicting the intentions of others), social motivation (interest in other people and being oriented toward them), and social interaction (relating, communicating, cooperating, and sharing) (Gaviria & Fernández, 2019).

Sociocognitive abilities depend crucially on the inherited biological conditions that predispose the human species toward sociability (Baker, 2009; Dunbar, 2009; Gintis, 2011; Sapolsky, 2018), but the development of this predisposition will only occur in culturally enriched contexts (Tomasello, 2019). For this, learning skills are also necessary. In this regard, Tomasello (1999) highlights three basic types of cultural learning: imitative, by repetition or emulation of the behavior observed in others; instructive, by receiving linguistically mediated guidelines; and collaborative, due to involvement in cooperation processes with other people. These forms of sociocultural learning are possible thanks to a special form of

social cognition, which begins with the intersubjective sharing of the infant in its first weeks of birth and their subsequent ability to understand their peers as beings that have mental and intentional lives like theirs. This ability emerges at approximately nine months of life, when the child begins to be able to understand that he himself and other people have intentions (Moll et al., 2021).

The specific beliefs, values, norms, and other components of any culture are, by definition, shared by its members. Since they do not appear in people's minds as an act of "magic," a sociocultural learning process is necessary (Gaviria & Fernández, 2019) that requires special cognitive abilities for which humans seem to be especially prepared. Therefore, although in physical cognition abilities, related to the management of space, quantities or causation, two-year-old children are indistinguishable from bonobos and chimpanzees—the primate species genetically closest to humans—, regarding social cognition skills, such as imitation, communication and prediction of intentions, children already show a wide differentiation from this age with respect to their primate relatives (Tomasello, 2019). This expanded repository of sociocognitive skills would open the doors to the breadth of human diversity in its various cultural expressions.

Thus, neither the existence of universal psychological processes excludes the possibility that adaptations are expressed in different ways in different populations, nor vice versa; that is, cultural diversity does not exclude the possibility of universal psychological processes, which would be made possible by a universal human tendency to build social norms, but which are expressed differently in various social groups (Kanngiesser et al., 2022; House et al., 2020). The human brain has evolved to adapt to the environment and function in social groups, responding to other minds present in that specific environment (Gaviria & Fernández, 2019). For this it requires the speed of cultural evolution, which has a certain level of cognitive flexibility and cannot be explained only by biological evolution, which is very slow.

Culture is responsible for the skyrocketing evolution of the brain since the advent of the species, allowing changes to spread and stabilize at a much faster rate than would be possible through genetic transmission. If human beings did not have culture, they would be much more similar to chimpanzees than to modern humans. One way to look at this is with a thought experiment: if a person could be born, survive, and grow up completely devoid of culture, which is virtually impossible; this person would probably be more chimpanzee-like than a modern human (Tomasello, 2019).

Human beings possess highly complex psychosocial characteristics that are made possible by the coevolution between genes and culture, so that the biological and the social realms cannot be understood separately but are in

constant interaction. In this way, culture is both constrained and promoted by the human genome, and human cognitive, affective, and moral capacities are the product of an evolutionary dynamic involving the interaction of genes and culture. This process is called dynamic gene-culture coevolution. Thus, genetically inherited individual fitness depends on the structure of social life (Gintis, 2011).

This coevolutionary process has endowed humans with preferences that go beyond the selfish concerns emphasized in traditional biological and economic theory, as well as the sociocognitive capacity that facilitates the exchange of intentionality between minds. Gene-culture coevolution is responsible for the prominence of such sensitive values as a taste for cooperation, justice, and retribution; the ability to empathize, and the ability to value character virtues such as honesty, hard work, mercy, or loyalty (Gintis, 2011); this relevance may vary from one society to another, but depends at its base on a genome that enables human sociability.

Individualism-Collectivism and Evolution

Although it is not a sharp or bipolar differentiation, one of the important forms of variation in the cultural orientation of societies is the one that occurs in their level of individualism and collectivism (Triandis, 1993; Hofstede, 2001; Kağıtçıbaşı, 2005; Markus & Hamedani, 2007; Triandis & Gelfand, 2012; Inglehart, 2019), which has to do with the way in which members of a society see and feel about themselves with respect to their social group. While in the individualistic orientation the person is seen as separate and independent from their social group, in the collectivist orientation the person is seen as fused and dependent with respect to the social group. Despite the fact that this conceptualization comes from the social and psychological sciences, recent research advances suggest that the roots of this orientation are related to biological factors, such as genes and the historical prevalence of infectious diseases (Thornhill & Fincher, 2014; Chiao & Blizinsky, 2010; Fincher et al., 2008).

An important conceptual distinction is the one that has been made between allocentrism and idiocentrism (Triandis et al., 1985), which are the equivalents at the individual level, respectively, of cultural collectivism and individualism. These refer to group processes present in the inhabitants of societies. This differentiation is relevant because a person who lives in a society with a more collectivist tendency can be allocentric or idiocentric, just as a person can be idiocentric or allocentric in a society that tends more toward individualism. In

this sense, it is important to state that individualism and collectivism consist of cultural syndromes (Triandis, 1993) that are variable social tendencies and not rigid and generalizable bipolar categories in an absolute way, and that can change through historical time and the geographical-cultural space, in response to the needs and living conditions of individuals and groups.

It is important to note that, in the current context of globalization, it is difficult to speak of pure types of cultural orientation, since the great dynamics of migration, media influence, international economic interconnection and intercultural contact facilitate changes in cultural values (Inglehart, 2019) and the existence of intermediate or mixed types, such as autonomous relatedness (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2005)— which is a model resulting from the combination of autonomy and the relational self— where the needs for independence and interdependence coexist.

Another difficulty with the concepts of individualism and collectivism is the complexity of completely distinguishing them, since there are several related terms that are difficult to differentiate in a full sense. Thus, together with the conceptualization of individualism and collectivism is the image of oneself, combining autonomy and separation from the social group and from the interdependent self together with heteronomy and relationship with the social group (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2005). Added to this is the distinction between vertical and horizontal individualism and collectivism (Singelis et al., 1995), which add the normative element of whether it is culturally considered that the person should be subordinate (vertical relation) or not (horizontal relation) to the group. In the first case, relationships of equality are emphasized; in the second, those of hierarchy are emphasized.

The problem arises because these multiple dimensions can be confused and still be related to other categories. So, for example, although the dimensions of interpersonal distance and agency can be strongly correlated with each other in sociocultural contexts such as the United States —where being autonomous and separate from the group is highly valued—, this is not the case in other contexts where being connected does not imply losing autonomy (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2005); hence, mixed categories emerge, such as the proposal of autonomous relatedness.

However, despite these problems, the individualism–collectivism continuum is still valid for studying cultural differences (Triandis & Gelfand, 2012; Tomasello, 2019; Inglehart, 2019; Sapolsky, 2018; Miyamoto et al., 2018), both because it allows for correlational analyses related to various highly relevant topics —such as thinking (Nisbett et al., 2001), education (Shimizu, 2016), parenting (Lamm et al., 2018) or economics (Gorodnichenko & Roland, 2013)— and because it shows distinctive neurocognitive patterns (Kim & Sasaki, 2014). Possibly, a more

appropriate approach would be to consider individualism and collectivism not as two islands completely separated from each other, but as a corridor crossed by various factors, through which cultures and people can move in response to circumstances and demands they face throughout their history.

A culturally crucial area where patterns more consistent with individualism and collectivism can be seen is in parenting styles (Keller, 2022). While any two human beings, healthy and under normal conditions, are born with similar general biological dispositions to acquire socio-cognitive abilities —such as language capacity, shared intentionality, theory of mind, cooperation, empathy (Tomasello, 2019)— they arrive in different physical and cultural environments that, consequently, will tend to produce different levels and types of socio-cognitive skills, which can be understood as particular adaptations to contexts that present diverse challenges and affordances. In this sense, one of the key differences that is manifested in parenting processes has to do with the degree of autonomy and individual attention given to the child.

Thus, while in more individualistic cultures parenting is more focused on the child's individual needs and expression, in more collectivistic cultures parenting is more focused on the needs of the group, so that the pressure is oriented toward molding the child's conformity to the needs of others. Lamm et al. (2018) showed this in a comparative investigation between parenting processes in middle-class urban German families (individualistic orientation) and those of a rural indigenous Cameroonian tribe called "Nso" (collectivist orientation). While in the first case parenting revolves around the child, his or her needs and individual expression; in the second case parenting is based on individual repression and the needs of the group.

These culturally differentiated forms of parenting are consistent with the distinctive way in which people are motivated to seek a positive view of themselves in individualistic and collectivistic cultures, manifested as "being a good member within their culture," either as an individual, in the case of individualists, or as a member of a group, if living in a collectivistic culture.

The search for positive self-esteem is a characteristic motivation of individualistic cultures, while in collectivist cultures (such as East Asian countries), the search for self-improvement is predominant. Hence, for an American it is more stimulating to be praised for successes and for a Japanese it is more stimulating to be criticized for failures (Kim & Sasaki, 2014).

Although acceptance by the group was crucial for the survival of our ancestors (Gaviria & Fernández, 2019), this is distinctively manifested in individualistic and collectivistic cultures; in the first, competing and excelling individually is encouraged, while in the latter, cooperating and serving the group.

Evolutionarily speaking, cultural characteristics do not have an absolute value, but rather their value is measured by how well they contribute to enhancing the survival of the group in a particular environment (Gazzaniga et al., 2019).

Can individualism and collectivism be understood as forms of cultural evolution, and what would be the evolutionary advantage of their development? Individualism and collectivism can be seen as cultural strategies that were transmitted and survived in some groups and not in others because they were reproductively successful. In this regard, the parasite stress theory of values (Thornhill & Fincher, 2014; Nikolaev et al., 2017) proposes that regional variations in infectious diseases influence the degree of cultural collectivism and individualism. These lead to valuing in collectivism, to a greater or lesser degree, interdependent behaviors, thoughts, and feelings, and in individualism, independent behaviors, thoughts, and feelings.

Fincher et al. (2008) suggest that specific behavioral manifestations of collectivism, such as ethnocentrism and conformity, may inhibit the transmission of pathogens from exogroups; they propose the hypothesis that collectivism, as opposed to individualism, will more often characterize cultures in regions that have historically had a higher prevalence of pathogens. Based on epidemiological data and findings from global cross-national surveys of individualism/collectivism, research results support this hypothesis: regional prevalence of pathogens has a strong positive correlation with cultural indicators of collectivism and a strong negative correlation with individualism (Nikolaev et al., 2017).

Why does this relationship happen? Several investigations show that when people are exposed to infectious diseases, they are more likely to display attitudes associated with ethnocentrism and the avoidance of individuals from exogroups (Navarrete & Fesler, 2006; Faulkner et al., 2004), which makes the development of traits associated with collectivist values more likely (Fincher et al., 2008).

Implicitly, in the nature of the individualism-collectivism contrast, there are marked differences in the morality of ends and means. Collectivist cultures are more comfortable than individualist cultures with using people as means to a utilitarian purpose. Moral imperatives in collectivist cultures tend to be about social roles and duties to the group, whereas in individualistic cultures they are typically about individual rights (Sapolsky, 2018), which from an evolutionary perspective, would be the adaptive result of a collective behavioral strategy to stop the spread of contagious diseases.

Additionally, cultures differ in the way moral behavior is reinforced. Collectivist cultures reinforce shame (Jacquet, 2016), while individualistic cultures reinforce guilt (Katchadourian, 2010). Shame is external judgment on the part of the group, while guilt is internal judgment on the part of the individual. Shame

requires an audience and is about honor. Guilt is for cultures that treasure privacy and is about consciousness.

Effective shaming requires a conformist and homogeneous population. Effective guilt requires respect for the law. To feel shame is to want to hide. To feel guilt is to make amends. The punishment for shame is expulsion from the group. The punishment of guilt is an internal burden (Sapolsky, 2018).

The externalization and emphasis of external control of shame is consistent with the dependent and merged view of collectivist cultures. The internalization and emphasis on internal control of guilt is consistent with the independent and atomized view of individualistic cultures.

As shown by several researches (Nisbett et al., 2001; Hedden et al., 2008; Chiao, 2009), when an object is presented within a complex context, people from collectivist cultures, such as China, tend to observe and remember contextual information better; whereas people from individualistic cultures, such as the United States, tend to observe and remember the object more. If people are asked to focus on the domain inconsistent with their culture they show greater activity in the frontal cortex, suggesting greater cognitive effort. Cultural orientation shapes how and where attention is focused in the world. This is a cultural effect more than genetic, as Asian-Americans—for example, children of Chinese parents born in the United States—exhibit the typical American pattern; that is, they tend to focus more on the object than on its context.

Thus, cultural individualism and collectivism can be understood as the adaptive product of relatively differentiated behavioral strategies, which obey social and biological pressures that may push more toward one side of this individualist-collectivist continuum than the other. This means that, from an evolutionary perspective, individualism and collectivism are not fixed or monolithic entities, but adaptive processes capable of changing as a group's adaptive response to the contextual conditions of the ecosystem in which lives change, the purpose of which is to promote the survival and reproduction of its members.

Inequality and Evolution

Why, if humans evolved, unlike other primates, to become ultra-cooperative (Hamann et al., 2011) and show a universal dislike of inequality in the distribution of earnings (Engelmann and Tomasello, 2019), are there such high levels of inequality in the world today? It is estimated that the poorest half of the world's population owns only 2% of total wealth, while the richest 10% have 76% of the world's wealth (Chancel et al., 2022).

Humans are a massively and flexibly cooperative species, besides the fact that in their childhood and across cultures there is a distaste for inequality and a preference for equality (Engelmann & Tomasello, 2019), so socioeconomic inequality in the world appears to be an evolutionary anomaly (Chisholm & Burbank, 2001). However, it is important to consider that evolution is not a linear and monolithic process, but one in which various factors operate, among which tendencies toward authoritarianism, social dominance, endogroup bias, and the desire for power also play a role, all of which push toward greater inequality in the distribution of wealth.

When the future is objectively risky and uncertain, the optimal reproductive strategy will often be to reproduce early and at a high rate. This may contribute to reproduce inequality, as people in the lower levels of the wealth distribution would tend to have more children, which would create a situation of fewer relative resources divided among more people. Early reproduction often leads to poor health and shortened lives, and because inequality is a major source of environmental risk and uncertainty, the use of evolutionary theory to understand inequality must also consider health, well-being, and social and cultural capital, along with the more structural aspects associated with social hierarchies and the distribution of economic and political power (Chisholm & Burbank, 2001).

When resources are limited, parents are more likely to kill their children, especially the weaker ones, in order to increase the chances of survival of their healthier descendants, since these limited resources would then be distributed among fewer mouths. Infanticide occurs in monkeys, lions, birds, and humans, among other species (Gazzaniga et al., 2019).

What is a fair society? Contemporary concerns about social justice and equality are based on the way economic interactions are understood. This question deals with who produce goods, have access to them, under what conditions, or to what extent the rules under which people interact with each other might create fair or unfair differences (Boyer, 2018).

This can be seen as a question of human evolution, because natural selection can contribute to explaining various aspects of what justice and equality mean in a society. Evolution can help understand why humans have a sense of justice and why it triggers intense emotions. Evolution can also help understand why humans cooperate, exchange and trade, and what capabilities make the giant systems of cooperation and exploitation of the modern economy possible (Boyer, 2018).

For example, is there a right to private property? To what extent? Is it right for the individual to deploy profit interests above other considerations or not? Is individual freedom more important than collective interest? These economic

questions are rooted in the cultural evolution of human groups and cultural values that have been collectively constructed and vary from place to place and from time to time. Perhaps the key point relates to the way in which cooperation is understood and developed.

Boyd and Richerson (1992) stated that people cooperate because they are following social norms that include an aversion to inequality and a preference for prosocial behavior in themselves and others. One of the ways in which these rules are reinforced in human groups is by punishment, as there is evidence that people punish those who do not cooperate (“nonconformists”) and are willing to spend resources to diminish the profit of those who have not contributed in previous tasks. This is called “altruistic punishment” and emphasizes the fact that people are willing to lose resources to reinforce rules that benefit others (Fehr & Gächter, 2002).

Groups that cooperate to a greater extent can provide greater welfare to their members due to cooperation that achieves greater gains than non-cooperation, whereas groups with lower cooperative rules and less altruistic punishment of “cheaters” would be less successful. This would lead to an expansion of cooperative rules, as more supportive groups would outpace and absorb less cooperative ones, so that humanity would gradually shift toward increasingly collaborative populations (Boyer, 2018).

People, mostly groups, punish those who break the rules, but they do so mostly when they have been affected by the breach. In general, to the extent that people are not directly affected, they prefer to ignore those who break the rules of cooperation. In addition, this punishment would also have individual interest as those who punish can gain status and obtain resources (Baumard & Lienard, 2011). Thus, the reinforcement of cooperative rules would not only occur for altruistic motivations, but also for selfish reasons, as well as distal and proximal historical and ecological factors (Gelfand et al., 2011). This poses a complex interaction between individual, collective, historical, and ecological factors.

Human beings have evolved in groups and they can offer and receive cooperation from different individuals, so they have developed an intense interest in the affairs of others, so that the behavior of one person with another is transmitted beyond the interested parties. Thus, each person benefits from having a reputation for honesty and mutually advantageous behavior (Boyer, 2018).

Generous behaviors seem difficult to explain by narrow individual interest, but within the group context they would be a step in the construction of mutually beneficial arrangements. The possibility of choosing partners would explain that people are motivated to cooperate with individuals with whom they have the opportunity to return the benefit. When a defector is found, the simplest option is often to abandon any interaction with that person and seek others with

better provisions. In interactions with several peers, individuals can reward cooperation, punish defection, and acquire information about other individuals' past transgressions (Boyer, 2018).

Some experiments in Japan and the Turkana nomads in Kenya show that even five-year-old children have the intuition that rewards should be proportional to contributions. Clearly, people also take more than their fair share. It is universally considered abusive and people are motivated to avoid or run away from those who act this way (Chevallier et al., 2015).

If a partner becomes greedy and insists on an abusive exchange, then the other person can focus on others until he or she gets a better option, which would be close to half of the dividends. This seems to have deep ancestral roots, since hunter-gatherer societies have a clear correlation between proportional giving and receiving (Gurven, 2004).

So, what does it mean to be financially well off? How does one know if one is giving and getting the resources deserved? This response appears to be neither linear nor unidirectional, since after a certain threshold, the increased income does not predict increased welfare by itself.

According to the findings of Ed Diener's group (2002 & 2018), between the wealth of a country and the well-being of citizens there is no high correlation. In modern societies one can speak of a ceiling of around ten thousand dollars of per capita income, but, beyond that, the increase in per capita income no longer generates a parallel increase in welfare.

The increase in material standard of living —possession of goods and services— after a certain ceiling does not seem to translate into an improvement in people's well-being; on the contrary, there are signs of worsening, such as subjective perception of happiness, increased divorce, teenage pregnancy, and depression. Why are these paradoxical results? It is possible that the human capacity for adaptation and the desire for comparison play an important role in answering this question.

The evolutionary psychology states that there is a level of adaptation to refer to the tendency of human beings to evaluate their current experience, it compares with a neutral level defined by previous experience. People value their achievements more when they exceed the ones in the past, but they adapt quickly. Thus, higher achievements seem to lose value as they are achieved; what in the past was considered excellent now is just good and what was good becomes neutral. (Cuadrado et al., 2019).

The comparison is not only between what is achieved now and what was achieved in the past, but also with what is achieved by others in similar situations. What is known as relative deprivation, a phenomenon that can lead to social unrest and revolt, is no more than the experience from perceiving that what one

has or gets is less than what is considered reasonable or fair according to a given criterion. One of the criteria that people have has to do precisely with the results obtained by others when comparisons are made (Cuadrado et al., 2019).

Therefore, owning wealth is not something absolute, but it relates to the wealth of other people or similar groups. If the person could remove themselves from the relationships with others in the places they live in, in the community, in the city, in the country, they would evaluate with respect to some objective external criterion. As it does not happen, as there is a closed relationship with other people and groups and known incomes and life circumstances, there are comparisons used among them instead of an external criterion as standard of comparison for what these people or similar groups receive.

Thus why, if people show a tendency toward cooperation and a rejection of inequality, do the high levels of socioeconomic inequality that are seen today exist? As has been shown in this section, considering that evolution is not a linear, unidirectional, or monolithic process, but that it is influenced by several factors, along with processes that push toward greater inequality, such as the ones mentioned before, including tendencies toward authoritarianism, social dominance, endogroup bias and power desire is important. These are part of the broad human socio-cognitive repertoire (De Waal, 2006) and constitute pressures that favor greater inequality in the distribution of wealth, and that could take on greater force under conditions of resource scarcity (Inglehart, 2019).

Individualism-Collectivism, Inequality and Evolution

Individualist or collectivist cultural evolution —as a result of differential pressures to which human groups have been subjected through their history and geography— can be seen as an adaptive response to context, i.e., human groups can become more individualistic or more collectivistic depending on the circumstances they have faced over time and the characteristics of the environments they inhabit. For example, when resources are scarcer, groups may become more collectivistic because they become more interdependent to survive. On the contrary, when there are more resources, they may be more individualism-oriented as they feel more self-sufficient and less pressured by existential threats (Inglehart, 2019; Kraus et al., 2012).

Likewise, the Neolithic period's expansion in human groups and the agricultural revolution led to a demand for hierarchical organizations that would aid in social management. This fact reduced decision-making costs and created consensus time in larger groups, which resulted in different hierarchical levels

and created inequality in the allocation of resources because leaders used their influence to bias decisions in favor of their own interests (Perret et al., 2020). This social class hierarchy tends to promote attitudes of submission and conformism in lower-class individuals while fostering leadership, autonomy, and self-confidence in upper-class individuals. (Kraus et al., 2012).

Larger and more productive human groups move from distributed to centralized decision-making because, as they grow in size, coordination becomes more difficult. Hierarchy serves to limit the increase in organizational cost as group size grows, called scalar stress, which is defined as the ratio of time spent reaching consensus to the group size (Garfield et al., 2019).

Hierarchy reduces scalar stress by making group decision-making less time-consuming. This benefit arises because leaders and followers differ in their ability to influence each other which can drive the evolution of leader and follower behaviors and, finally, the transition from small to large hierarchical groups (Perret et al., 2020).

Political leaders inevitably emerge as a group expands to cope with the complexity of coordination. However, this allows such leaders to bias collective decisions in their favor, for example, in the distribution of resources or the use of armed force, which is an expression of the complexity of conflicts between individual and collective interests (Frank, 1998).

Sanfey (2003), Bandyopadhyay et al. (2013), and Engelmann and Tomasello (2019) have found that, contrary to the expected utility theory, people do not only consider individual gain criteria when relating to others, but they are also influenced by moral factors, such as the sense of justice, social factors, as hierarchy, or cultural factors, as well as the degree of individualism versus collectivism.

Are humans irrationally generous? It seems that people's behavior in economic games clashes with the idea of expected utility theory based on the idea of privileging self-interest in standard economic theory (Boyer, 2018).

In experiments with economic exchange games such as the *Ultimatum Game*—in which a responder can accept or reject the money offered by a proposer—if the offer is accepted, both the proposer and the responder receive the agreed amount but if the offer is rejected, nobody receives any money. The observed result is that proposers do not tend to maximize their gains; instead, they often offer half the money to the responder.

According to expected utility theory, responders should accept any offer greater than zero, which is their starting point, but they tend to reject offers that they perceive as unequal. This means that people do not act as expected by the idea of rational economic agents; as in this game, they privilege justice criteria over profit criteria (Boyer, 2018). This trend is a common pattern in diverse societies, from gatherers and farmers to industrialized societies. People generally justify

their generous offers and their rejection of unequal offers by saying that they are "not fair" (Henrich et al., 2001).

Following the idea of natural selection, if people tended to act only for their own individual benefit, they would pass these genes to the next generations. In this regard, prosocial behaviors would be extremely rare, and instead selfish behaviors would rule. However, cooperation does occur, indicating that selfishness does not explain these patterns of human behavior because it is not the only force at play (Boyer, 2018).

Cultural individualism and collectivism seem to be related to inequality via class stratification, as upper class tends to be more individualistic and lower class more collectivistic (Inglehart, 2019). Lower class individuals are more conditioned by threats, uncertainty, distrust, insecurity, and restrictions, as well as being more oriented toward conformism and obedience, whereas upper class individuals are more prone to developing self-confidence, leadership, agency, autonomy, freedom, control, and having more options to develop their initiatives (Kraus et al., 2012).

According to the parasite-stress theory of values, more collectivist societies have a higher prevalence of infectious-contagious diseases, leading to a preference for interdependence and endogroup fusion over exogroup closure and rejection as survival strategies. Whereas more individualist societies have a lower prevalence of infectious-contagious diseases, leading to a preference for independence and autonomy (Thornhill & Fincher, 2014). Interestingly, more collectivist societies show higher levels of economic inequality, while more individualist societies show lower levels of inequality (Nikolaev et al., 2017). This could be related to the fact that collectivism fosters obedience to authority and conformism, which would support the status quo and the unequal distribution of power and resources, while individualism fosters autonomy, individual rights, and respect for the law rather than arbitrariness, which would support a more conducive environment to equality (Gorodnichenko & Roland, 2013).

The coexistence of the humane orientation toward equality and unequal hierarchical structures seems to clash with each other, as hierarchies are opposed to equality. This could be psychologically balanced by the tendency toward collectivism among lower strata populations and, the tendency toward individualism among upper strata populations (Inglehart, 2018) in which balance would be preserved, if the majority of individuals believe that in the long term, they gain more resources than they lose by conforming to and obeying those with higher hierarchical positions (Perret et al., 2020). Hence, social conflict in the face of inequality would not be predicted solely by the mere existence of inequality, but rather by feelings about it. These, in turn, would be mediated by the positions of power and the degree of individualistic or collectivistic orientation (Kraus et al., 2012).

The fact that more unequal societies tend to produce higher levels of crime and violence and lower levels of trust can be interpreted as a consequence of the breakdown of this complex balance between the desire for equality and hierarchical efficiency. Additionally, making the distribution of economic resources more equal produces greater cooperation and trust, which means the achievement of socioeconomic equity tends to foster social balance through greater peace of mind for people (De Courson & Nettle, 2021) and lower levels of stress and anger (Sapolsky, 2018).

Conclusions

Humans, unlike other species, show greater capacities for cooperation, therefore they value equality more highly than other evolutionarily close species, such as chimpanzees and other large primates. However, the history of humanity is full of great inequalities that still persist, even in the most extreme forms, such as exploitation, trafficking, or slavery. Furthermore, from a macro-social perspective, humanity currently exhibits extremely high levels of inequality, with estimates claiming that only one percent of the population is significantly wealthier than the poorest half of the entire population. While the poorest 50% of the world's population have only 2% of all wealth, the richest 1% have 38% of the wealth; that is, this elite has 19 times more economic resources than the entire bottom half of the population structure (Chancel et al., 2022). How can this contradictory coexistence between cooperativeness, a sense of justice, and inequality be possible?

A possible explanation has to do with the fact that evolution is not a univocal or unidirectional force but rather entails the pressure of different factors that compete to define it and these vary from one group to another and from one epoch to another. Thus, just as human beings have developed a strong capacity for cooperation and the pursuit for equality and justice, so too have opposing forces, such as hierarchy orientation, desire for power, material ambition, authoritarianism, and social conformity, which have persisted throughout human history and are still very much part of today's world. These evolutionary trends are influenced by social hierarchies, because, while more individualistic attitudes are encouraged within the more powerful groups, in economic and political terms, more collectivist attitudes are favored within groups with less power.

This theoretical article states that the relationship between these forces is regulated by the individualist and collectivist cultural orientation, so that, although the sense of cooperation and equity has evolved everywhere, the tendency for more collectivist

societies to present greater inequality in the distribution of economic resources could be permeated by a greater propensity to conformism, passivity, obedience, and submission to social hierarchies. This suggests that socioeconomic inequality is more than a purely economic process; it is also a political-cultural, and evolutionary process.

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Environmental Education and Sustainable Agricultural Production: A Strategy for Food Security*

[English Version]

Educación ambiental y producción agropecuaria sostenible:
una estrategia para la seguridad alimentaria

Educação ambiental e produção agrícola sustentável:
uma estratégia para a segurança alimentar

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Alejandro Geobanny Jurado Mejía**

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4765-3482>

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Colombia

Claudia Estella Hernández Londoño***

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8812-6203>

CvLAC https://scienti.minciencias.gov.co/cvlac/visualizador/generarCurriculoCv.do?cod_rh=0000712809&lang=es

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** Master in Administration. Universidad de Guadalajara. ajurado@udla.edu.co

*** PhD in Chemical Engineering. Universidad de Cartagena. chernandezl@unicartagena.edu.co

Abstract

Objective: The objective of this article is to establish relationships between environmental education and agricultural production for food security, based on an agrarian foundation and a sustainable development approach. The guiding question was: how to understand environmental education, sustainable agricultural production and food security in light of current figures and events? **Methodology:** The hermeneutic methodology was used for the approach, from documentary content, as a source of information that allowed for an objective and scientific search on the guiding question. The research team aimed to comprehend and interpret the knowledge and reality surrounding environmental education and agricultural production, based on both general and scientific references related to the issue, as well as non-scientific reports that contextualize the problem. **Results:** The findings on population, hunger, food insecurity, malnutrition, obesity, poverty, extreme poverty and deforestation are presented globally in Caquetá, Colombia. The most contextualized interpretation in the research is made from the rural community of the municipality of Florencia, Caquetá, which presents high levels of food insecurity. In this context, environmental education and food production for food security represent a crucial aspect in achieving sustainable development. However, despite the emergence of environmental education and sustainable development several years ago, these subjects remain a topic of extensive scientific, academic, political, social, and economic debate, with numerous publications but relatively few positive outcomes to show. **Conclusion:** The issues of hunger, malnutrition, and poverty can be effectively addressed through practical training in environmental education and food production within the framework of sustainable development. Such an approach must be equitable and balanced in terms of environmental, economic, and social factors, with sustainable food production serving as the overarching theme for environmental and agricultural education in communities.

Keywords: environmental education; food production; ecological balance; food supply; hunger.

Resumen

Objetivo: en este artículo se tiene por objeto establecer relaciones entre la educación ambiental y la producción agropecuaria para la seguridad alimentaria, a partir de una fundamentación agraria y un enfoque de desarrollo sostenible. La pregunta orientadora fue: ¿cómo entender la educación ambiental, la producción agropecuaria sostenible y la seguridad alimentaria a la luz de las cifras y acontecimientos actuales? **Metodología:** para el abordaje se usó la metodología hermenéutica, desde contenido

documental, como fuente de información que permitió una búsqueda objetiva y científica sobre la pregunta orientadora. Se buscó comprender e interpretar el conocimiento y la realidad sobre la educación ambiental y la producción agraria, a partir de referentes de tipo generalista y científica afín al problema, e informes no científicos que sitúan el problema y el contexto. **Resultados:** los hallazgos en torno a población, hambre, inseguridad alimentaria, desnutrición, obesidad, pobreza, pobreza extrema y deforestación se presentan de modo global en Colombia y el Caquetá. La interpretación más contextualizada en la investigación se hace desde la comunidad rural del municipio de Florencia, Caquetá; la cual presenta altos niveles de inseguridad alimentaria. En este contexto, la educación ambiental y la producción de alimentos para la seguridad alimentaria son una fortaleza para lograr un desarrollo sostenible; aunque, luego de varios años de la aparición de la educación ambiental y el desarrollo sostenible, hoy por hoy son un amplio centro de debate científico, académico, político, social, económico, con innumerables publicaciones, pero con pocas realidades favorables que mostrar. **Conclusiones:** los problemas de hambre, malnutrición y pobreza se pueden mejorar con formación práctica en educación ambiental y producción de alimentos en el marco de un desarrollo sostenible, que sea equitativo y equilibrado en lo ambiental, económico y social; donde la producción sostenible de alimentos sea el eje transversal de la educación ambiental y agropecuaria en las comunidades.

Palabras clave: educación ambiental; producción alimentaria; equilibrio ecológico; suministro de alimentos; hambre.

Resumo

Objetivo: o objetivo deste artigo é estabelecer relações entre a educação ambiental e a produção agrícola para a segurança alimentar, com base numa fundação agrária e numa abordagem de desenvolvimento sustentável. A questão orientadora foi: como compreender a educação ambiental, a produção agrícola sustentável e a segurança alimentar, à luz dos números e desenvolvimentos atuais? **Metodologia:** a metodologia hermenêutica foi utilizada para a abordagem, a partir do conteúdo documental, como fonte de informação que permitiu uma pesquisa objetiva e científica sobre a questão orientadora. Procuramos compreender e interpretar o conhecimento e a realidade da educação ambiental e da produção agrícola, com base em referências gerais e científicas relacionadas ao problema, e em relatórios não científicos que situam o problema e o contexto. **Resultados:** as conclusões sobre população, fome, insegurança alimentar, subnutrição, obesidade, pobreza, pobreza extrema e desflorestação são apresentadas

globalmente na Colômbia e em Caquetá. A interpretação mais contextualizada na investigação é feita a partir da comunidade rural do município de Florencia, Caquetá, que apresenta elevados níveis de insegurança alimentar. Neste contexto, a educação ambiental e a produção alimentar para a segurança alimentar são uma força para alcançar o desenvolvimento sustentável; embora, após vários anos da emergência da educação ambiental e do desenvolvimento sustentável, são hoje um amplo centro de debate científico, acadêmico, político, social e econômico, com inúmeras publicações, mas com poucas realidades favoráveis a mostrar. **Conclusões:** os problemas da fome, subnutrição e pobreza podem ser melhorados com formação prática em educação ambiental e produção alimentar no âmbito do desenvolvimento sustentável, que é equitativo e equilibrado em termos ambientais, econômicos e sociais; onde a produção alimentar sustentável é o eixo transversal da educação ambiental e agrícola nas comunidades.

Palavras-chave: educação ambiental; produção alimentar; equilíbrio ecológico; abastecimento alimentar; fome.

Introduction

Population growth and limited food production have made food security a critical issue of global concern. Environmental problems such as inadequate land use, climate change, and water scarcity, among others, have led to 2.3 billion people experiencing food insecurity and 828 million suffering from hunger (FAO et al., 2022). This is the result of erroneous and unsustainable human actions that have exceeded the environment's capacity to produce enough food to feed an estimated global population of 9.7 billion people by 2050 (World Bank, 2022).

The negative impact on the Environment began with the Industrial Revolution (1850-1970), when various industries were created that allowed the accumulation of money, economic growth and gave rise to capitalism. The industrial boom gave rise to the green revolution and the agricultural boom motivated productivity with genetic improvements, the use of synthetic agrochemicals and mechanized food production, together with population growth. These events led to waste generation and pollution, which alter and extinguish biodiversity and native resources (Pita-Morales, 2016), and therefore, risk human balance and sustainability on the planet.

The effects of human actions and the rapid deterioration of the environment gave rise to concern for the care of nature. In 1970, the Club of Rome stated that the growth model of the moment will take the planet to the limit of its capacity in 100 years (Pita-Morales, 2016). This historical event has led to the discussion of sustainable development (SD) as a means of meeting present needs while ensuring the environmental, social, and economic components for future generations. This concept was officially introduced through the Environmental Summits in Stockholm in 1972 and Rio de Janeiro in 1992 (Madroñero-Palacios & Guzmán-Hernández, 2018).

Increased concern for the environment has underscored the importance of environmental education (EE) as a means of generating knowledge, raising awareness, and changing human behavior in ways that promote care for and sustainable interaction with nature, and ensure human-nature subsistence (Pita-Morales, 2016). In Colombia, EE began in the 1970s with the *National Code of Renewable Natural Resources and the Environment*. In the 1990s, the legal framework for EE originated with Law 115 of 1994, which, in 2002, allowed the participation of the social, educational, and environmental sectors (Alvear & Urbano, 2022).

Despite political advances made in environmental summits, extensive literature, and the development of regulations and policies on EE and SD over the last five decades, the results of human actions continue to exacerbate environmental problems, decrease natural resources, and compromise the minimum

food production required for human and planetary sustenance. The Biodiverse Colombia project, with 60 million hectares in forests, has logged 171,685 hectares of which 70% occurred in the Amazon (González, 2021). In this scenario, famine affects 7.5 million people (UN, 2022), with 54.2% experiencing food insecurity (Aristizábal, 2022). Additionally, 36.3% of the population live in poverty, 46.5% of the rural population live in poverty, and 19.5% live in extreme poverty (DANE, 2022).

While this study discusses EE, sustainable agricultural production, and food security globally, several data points are based on observational experiences in rural communities in Florencia, also known as the "Golden Gate of the Colombian Amazon." Florencia is the capital of the department of Caquetá and is located at 01°36'51.08" north latitude and 75°36'22.04" west longitude, 242 meters above sea level, with an average temperature of 27°C and an average annual rainfall of 3,840 mm. It comprises seven townships, 178 villages, has a population of 187,408 inhabitants, and covers an area of 2,292 km² (229,200 hectares). This gives Florencia a share of 0.2% of the total Colombian territory. (DANE, 2021; Jurado, 2016). This gives Florencia a share of 0.2% of the total Colombian territory.

However, through the implementation of EE, Florencia has been able to develop sustainable agricultural and livestock production alternatives that allow for the conservation of the water wealth and biodiversity of local ecosystems. Despite being currently exploited inappropriately, these alternatives have resulted in minimal technological development and low per capita income in the area. In addition, the availability of soils and MA makes it possible to meet human food needs, since fibers, plants, and biological inputs represent 50% of the world economy (Hernández, 2011).

Current and future challenges suggest that EE is a necessary strategy for regional development and sustainable, productive, technological, and competitive agricultural in food production (Mansilla-Obando et al., 2022). EE in communities becomes indispensable to creating dynamics and processes that allow contextualized solutions to face a global economy that imposes rules of production and consumption (Villadiego et al., 2017).

However, fifty years after the beginning of EE as a strategy to mitigate environmental problems, the reality presents great challenges for humanity. Mitigating climate change, global warming, deforestation, pollution, loss of biodiversity, overexploitation of resources, food insecurity, hunger, malnutrition, and poverty, among others, are evidence of anthropogenic actions that have failed to satisfy present human needs. This suggests that the EE strategy has been unsuccessful in light of the outcomes. For this reason, EE and sustainable agricultural and livestock production make sense to generate social, environmental,

and economic awareness that fosters knowledge, skills, and values that will allow addressing these difficulties.

Therefore, contextualized EE can be the best training strategy in food security to contribute to sustainable agricultural production practices, balanced nutrition, and healthy eating. To establish the context and interrelationships of "Environmental education and sustainable agricultural production: a strategy for food security," this paper provides a synthesis of the main theoretical contributions of various technical and conceptual elements that facilitate understanding of their contextualization and the different interrelationships that arise within and among them.

Environment

The Environment, with its natural resources, is an accumulation of interrelationships between biotic and abiotic factors acting on living beings, the atmosphere, and renewable natural resources. Adequate development of the physical, social, cultural, and economic aspects satisfies human needs. The Environment is a responsibility to be cared for and preserved, which concerns both the current and future population. This responsibility demands a change in behavior within the institutional economic structure so that political and social actors support and act to minimize global poverty (Guillén et al., 2021; Moreno & Domínguez, 2001).

Currently, bad anthropic actions have caused environmental damages that require integrated work to be overcome (Le Clercq & Cedillo, 2022). These require protection and commitment efforts, as well as urgent actions to mitigate negative impacts. An appropriate EE would motivate the transition to a culture of environmental awareness (Mansilla-Obando et al., 2022), because nature surrounds man and influences his development and actions (Martínez & Cruz, 2014).

Renewable and non-renewable natural resources, physical, biological, and human environmental factors have suffered from environmental exploitation, urban development, industrial, and agricultural production. This has led to changes and degradation of the environment and its resources to the point of altering its structure, relationship, composition and productivity (Durango et al., 2019).

In the end, the environment is the sum of everything; it is a space for the life of diverse living beings, where they interrelate and converge with non-living elements and others created by man. However, the negative environmental impacts

caused by man must be corrected and efforts must be made toward creating a sustainable environment to contribute to the reduction of hunger, poverty, malnutrition, and inequality gaps.

Education

When different governments are interested in conducting comparative studies on educational outcomes and opportunities, social and economic policies are created for improvement. This suggests that the government sees education as a means to improving the quality of human life. Education is a key tool for the development of a country, a community, or an individual, as it enables economic, social, cultural, family, and organizational benefits (Carrero et al., 2016). It is a systematic bidirectional communication that integrates didactic elements to promoting learning among the people of a community (Ladewig et al., 2022).

In Colombia, education is defined as a process of permanent, personal, cultural, and social formation that creates an integral concept of the human person in terms of dignity, rights, and duties. In formal, non-formal, and informal education for peasants, the government and territorial entities are responsible for technical training in agricultural, livestock, fishing, forestry, and agro-industrial activities that contribute to improving human conditions, work conditions, food production, and quality of life of the rural population (Law 115 of 1994).

Nonetheless, education as a process of cognitive exchange among society members, began 70 years ago in rural areas. Agrarian reform and rural development policies were annexed to initiate social change (Carrero et al., 2016). This exercise, as non-formal education, provides elements to training the rural population and promotes long-term knowledge as an efficient means of learning.

However, the non-formal education provided to rural communities is far from the reality of the producers, because it is shared in a general way without recognizing their own needs, and without including the knowledge that exists in each community (Arias, 2017). Thus, the training given denies participation and commitment in the construction of viable and sustainable projects (Villadiego et al., 2017). In addition, it denies the opportunity to intervene and transform the current agrarian worldview, which is permeated by processes of rural living and globalized agricultural marketing. This creates tensions that affect the social fabric and modify ways of thinking, acting, feeling, and living of Colombian peasants.

Environmental Education

The concept originates from environmental concern and related problems. In this sense, pedagogy, in the idea that every child experiences and relates to nature, assumed in 1930 the proposal "Progressive Education," which objective was to learn by doing.

In 1958, the EE appeared before a fragile environment that moved the world, and the need for a SD to preserve it. The environmental conferences appeared: 1) Stockholm, in 1972, stressed the urgency of knowing the environment and developing sustainable actions to make good use of its resources and provide opportunities to current and future generations; 2) Earth Summit, in 1992, promoted education toward SD; 3) The Johannesburg Summit, in 2002, proposed SD educational actions; 4) Nagoya-Japan, in 2015, suggested having more trainers, initiating policies, integrating sustainable practices, empowering young people and asking governments for EE programs for their communities (Ortiz-Torres, 2022; Orgaz-Agüera, 2018).

After several years with environmental problems, the alternative solution has to be EE. The objective should not only be to learn of environmental problems and their impact on people, but also to carry out a real analysis from a social, political, economic, ethical, legal, and cultural point of view (Rodríguez, 2022).

Development models have prioritized an unsustainable economy for the life of society and the planet (Martínez & Cruz, 2014), although some time before, it was warned that man with his actions would devastate the environment in a short time (Hardin, 1968). The current environmental crisis requires a good society-nature relationship, with sustainable models that recognize the limits of social development, economic growth, and the exploitation of natural resources. In this, EE is a precise means of energizing the interrelationships and the recognition of oneself and with others.

EE is a rational practice; it is a social, formative change and transformation of values, ethics, critical skills, policies, attitudes, and personal growth aimed at improving the quality of life of communities (Lomas, 2022; Sauv e, 2016). EE is an integral accumulation of knowledge, a dialogue of knowledge, cognitive ability, attitudes and values (Sauv e, 2016; Leff, 2006).

A more elaborate definition of EE states:

EE is the process that consists of recognizing values and clarifying concepts in order to promote the necessary attitudes to understand and appreciate the interrelationships between man, his culture and his biophysical environment. EE also entails participation in decision-making and in the very elaboration of a

behavior code with respect to issues related to the quality of the environment (Ayes-Ametller, 2010, p. 45).

Consequently, the purpose of EE is to change ways of acting, thinking, relating, taking advantage of, producing, and living with the natural environment. For this, it is necessary to learn the characteristics of the environment in which one lives, understand and comprehend the relationship of man with nature, and propose from his own reality, the construction of ethical environmental values, to act responsibly with nature, and for the good of this and human survival.

The EE in interdisciplinary work and dialogue makes it possible to identify the specific educational area, although in light of the current social, environmental and economic challenges it has not been impressive at all. In addition, man in his desire for economic development ignores environmental effects and limits the satisfaction of needs for future generations (Ortiz-Torres, 2022; Ortíz, 2013).

The importance of sustainable EE is to be an integrating force for the formation of communities, for the benefit of their own performance for food production (Jurado-Mejía et al., 2020). Thus, EE becomes an action component to train man in his social, cultural, and environmental context, and it also makes it possible to form a balanced transformative culture in its social, economic, environmental, and cultural axes. Additionally, it provides knowledge in production processes and the ability to solve environmental problems.

The current development model favors inequality, that the wealth and power of a few coexist with the hunger, poverty and need of many. In this, the man-environment relationship generates negative impacts that have the planet in crisis. For this reason, contextualized EE enables knowledge and production alternatives to comprehend, understand, and solve the social, environmental, and economic complexity of the reality of its environment. Therefore, the EE must be practical, transversal, and interdisciplinary, to make the environment a habitable living space, where obtaining and maintaining quality of life is possible.

Agricultural Production

The Colombian agricultural sector has deficient food production for reasons such as: misdirected government subsidies, expensive agrochemicals, low agricultural production, difficulties in marketing, low technical capacity and little financial capacity. Thus, bad production practices have negative environmental impact which show the competitive disadvantage of the small agricultural producer compared to imports and the sustainability of the sector.

The government promotes neoliberal economic policies that give large companies control of agricultural production and its process (Ray et al., 2021). Agricultural production is needed that improves planting infrastructure, reduces costs, and facilitates marketing (Valencia, 2022). In this reality, a friendly production with the environment is necessary, one that also involves economic and social aspects for the rural producer, that is, agricultural production with sustainable strategies (Fonseca, 2022). Likewise, also necessary are reconvert agricultural practices of traditional production for sustainable practices according to the needs of protection, sovereignty, protection of ecosystems and quality of rural life (Ávila-Foucat, 2017).

Currently, agricultural production is not sustainable, associated with the climate, nutritional, and economic crisis; it requires a good relationship between man and nature (UN. CEPAL et al., 2021). Hence, food production, in a healthy environment for food security, must work on natural infrastructure, social justice and extensive food production to reduce hunger in the population (Mohamed & Smith, 2013). The change to sustainable production systems is possible, as long as the small producer has available skilled labor, and they have the need to earn their own livelihood and that of their family when the State stops giving away money through social plans. (Fonseca, 2022).

In Colombia, there is the “*Familias en Acción*” program that supports less favored families. This promotes a welfare society that, waiting for government aid, is less and less interested in agricultural production. Thus, the environment is only seen as a provider of natural resources to bring economic benefits.

Colombia has primary economy production systems related to animal production systems and agricultural production systems to a lesser extent. However, bad work habits in these systems are altering the environment, since they are very profitable and production is insufficient to feed the population.

Agricultural Production Systems

The current globalization of the agricultural sector demands systems with high productivity and innovation in production and added value. For this, the environment, society and agrarian economy must be equitably sustainable with differentiating elements that allow them to be competitive and forge development for themselves and for their region. This is made possible with research, generation of knowledge, and permanent development (Jurado-Mejía, 2014).

In the Colombian context, experts believe that integrated agricultural production systems have the potential to generate productive proposals in

accordance with environmental capacities and sociocultural needs. But there is concern about an altered planet, scarce resources, man connected to what the earth can provide, scant food production and a growing population, and a State that does not encourage agricultural production, given its global economy model (Martínez & Palma, 2016). Food production can improve if it is no longer seen solely as family subsistence production systems (Villanueva, 2018) and if integrated food production systems are worked in the production of specialized sustainable foods (Russo et al., 2018).

Therefore, agricultural production systems must be a set or integration of elements, resources, techniques, land tenure, labor, and an organization of rural or peasant communities that permanently specialize in food production.

Sustainable Development

At the Stockholm Summits in 1972 promoting education and environmental problems was proposed, in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 Sustainable Development (SD) was the theme. However, given the increase in poverty, violence, inequality, and exploitation of natural resources, the United Nations Organization declared the “Decade of Education for Sustainable Development 2005-2014,” with the aim of integrating sustainable development principles, values, and practices in education and encouraging behavioral changes to preserve the environment and enable an equitable and fair economy for current and future generations.

In the same way, the “Brundtland Report” proposes satisfying needs now, without compromising the needs of future generations as the essence of SD. The following stand out: 1) the notion of needs (the essence of the poor); and 2) the idea of state restriction on the capacity of the environment to satisfy present and future needs (Handal et al., 2015). Achieving this implies that it is economically viable, environmentally sustainable, and socially equitable. Thus, SD is environmental, social, and economic progress (Rentería-Vera et al., 2022). It’s also cooperative sustainability with interactive economic, environmental, and social equity (Vildåsen et al., 2017).

Although it is believed that SD has an identity, is known, understood, and has applications in the reality of agricultural production systems, the way in which it is currently worked is not friendly to the environment. For this reason, agricultural production with SD is urgent and essential (Rentería-Vera et al., 2022). A healthy environment can indefinitely sustain whoever inhabits it (De los Milagros, 2015), with a vision of SD in: 1) meeting needs, 2) achieving quality, 3) achieving economic growth, 4) attending to demographic concerns, 5) choosing

appropriate technologies, and 6) use, protection, and restoring ecosystems for humanity (Miranda et al., 2017). This entails managing agricultural land, which currently accounts for less than 7.6% of the total (Hernández-Alemán et al., 2022).

Due to the foregoing, SD must be intergenerational when acting with the environment to address the issues of poverty and inequality (Vildsen et al., 2017). Equality, stability, and effectiveness as criteria for analyzing agricultural production provide sustainability that goes beyond economics by incorporating physical, biological, and social factors to address issues with poverty, hunger, and inequality (Rivera et al., 2017).

Food Security

The right to a healthy diet, —a basic component of human development— is not guaranteed in Colombia, particularly in Caquetá. The cause is ridiculous food losses and wastes that have significant economic, social, and environmental repercussions each year (Giménez et al., 2022; Guevara, 2021).

A lack of clarity regarding the socioeconomic backdrop, state social policies, production models, and market regulations has put the food security of households in danger (Salomone, 2016). In addition, the global financial crisis, the degraded state of the environment, the severity of natural disasters, food production, and affordable access to food are requirements for changing production methods and achieving a healthy, accessible, socially acceptable, and culturally appropriate level of food security (Martinez & Palma, 2016).

In terms of food safety, the term "availability" first appeared in the 1980s; later, in the 1990s, "access to food" was used to apply to both economic and physical factors. In the 1990s, "innocuity" as a notion and cultural preferences were added. From that point on, food security was considered a human right, which is now what we know it to be. But what exactly is food security?

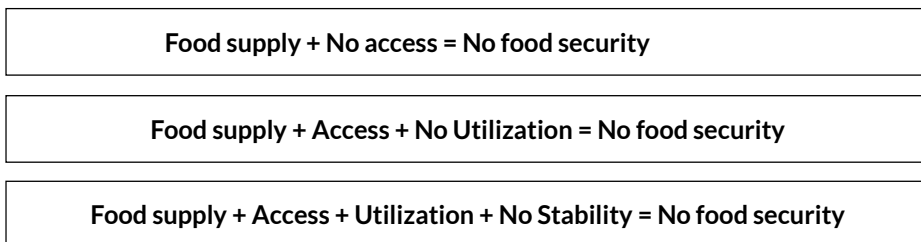
The definition of food security is when all members of a community have constant physical and financial access to enough healthy, nutrient-dense foods to meet their nutritional needs and food preferences to lead active, healthy lives with wholesome diets (Acosta et al., 2022; WFP, 2018). Clement et al. (2019) define ,availability, access, nutrition, sanitization, and stability of food as having constant physical, social, and economic access to sufficient uncontaminated and nutritious foods (WFP, 2018). On the other hand, healthy eating is understood as the satisfaction of energy and nutritional needs at all times. It is distinguished by being complete, balanced, sufficient, appropriate, varied, and unrestricted (MSPS & FAO, 2016). Accordingly, there is food security when every individual is never

hungry. This means having enough nutrients for a healthy, productive, active, and full-bodied life. It also means having a secure diet that is nourishing, acceptable, and sustainable within one's own culture. This means being self-sufficient and making decisions that are in line with social justice.

Now, the availability of food takes into account farming, harvesting inventory, production, absorption capacity, and distribution to the populace. Access to food refers to the population's ability to obtain adequate quantities of these through various management techniques —access must be both physically and financially feasible. The use of food refers to obtaining the necessary amount of nutritional value to achieve people's wellbeing. Finally, stability refers to the assurance of a food supply for the population even during times of economic or environmental adversity. Guarantying food security when the four dimensions are met simultaneously is possible.

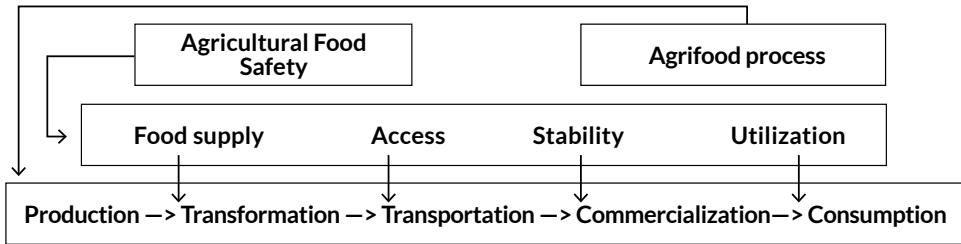
As a result, food security refers to a family's ability to obtain a sufficient quantity of food to meet all of its members' dietary and nutritional needs. If one of the requirements does not meet the standards, there is no food security. Figure 1 illustrates a thesis.

Figure 1. Completion of Food Security Dimensions.



The production of agricultural products, which forms the basis of food security, gains significance when key players are brought together and take part in the flow of agricultural products that address particular needs. Following is an illustration of the relationship between the stages of the agro-food production process and the dimensions of food safety:

Figure 2. Agricultural Food Safety and Production Processes.



The stages of the agro-food process function as a system, indicating interactions that are coherent from production to consumer expenditure. The cycle is repeated to demonstrate that the agricultural process is more than just mechanical; rather, it is a focus on healthy and sustainable living.

Communities in Florencia, Caquetá, demand an organized policy that protects the right to food. Reducing poverty, eradication of hunger, and eradicating all forms of corruption is possible thanks to a commitment from the government, businesses, institutions, and urban residents who work together on comprehensive reforms to improve the quality of life in rural areas. This commitment includes food production, formal employment, sustainable production, commercial viability, and a political, social, and ethical commitment.

Methodology

The research was conducted using a hermeneutic methodology from documentary content, allowing for the extraction and storage of objective and scientific data to better understand and interpret current knowledge and state of play regarding environmental education, sustainable agricultural production, and food security in light of a reality marked by hunger, poverty, and malnutrition. The findings made possible having a discussion and formulating conclusions.

The search was conducted using relevant scientific references and non-scientific reports that positioned the issue and its context. Research on the aforementioned topics is valuable and useful because it is supported by scientific evidence (Vera, 2009). As a result, the methodology was applied to the mentioned topics and it was successful in establishing the significance and originality of each topical selection from the perspective of the researcher, which was proposed in four stages: description, search, organization, and information analysis.

1. *Description:* It was decided to be clear, specific, and comprehensive. The document search was focused on finding an answer to the question: How should we understand environmental education, sustainable agricultural production, and food security in light of current statistics and events?

2. *Search:* To place the issue and its context, the referenced documents were (1) broad in nature, (2) scientific or specialized, (3) related to the issue, and (4) non-scientific.

The scientific search was carried out in various databases: the key words "environmental education AND agricultural production AND food security" were entered into ProQuest (p), ScienceDirect (sd), Scielo (sc), and Scopus (sp), and the following number of articles were found: p (2270), sd (11), sc (0), and sp (0). A "p" was added AND Colombia (1726), complete texts (1726), scientific journals (95), expert-evaluated articles (82), and the most recent 12 months (6). After reading the samples, two were eliminated because they were from Ecuador and Mexico, one was eliminated because it was about environmental education and contamination, and the end outcome was three articles. The following was added: AND Colombia (5), research article (4), most recent 12 months (0), and most recent 2016 (2) —were excluded because they refer to Cuba— ultimate outcome (1).

The Boolean operators used in the search strategy for SC were modified, however, the keywords "environmental education," OR "agricultural production," OR "food security" were retained (345 results). After including the term "Colombia" with the "AND" operator (22 results), the search was refined to the Colombia collection (19 results) and narrowed down to articles published between 2017 to 2019 (17 results) resulting in two relevant articles. Further, the search was conducted using the keywords "environmental education," OR "agricultural production," OR "food security" in Spanish, limiting the search results to publications between 2018 to 2021 (31 results), Colombia (five results) and refining the search to single articles only (75 results), resulting in two relevant articles. Lastly, to ensure that the search was up-to-date, a search in DOAJ for the years 2022 and 2023 was conducted, which completed the search.

3. *Organization:* Each document was systematically arranged in calculation journals that the researcher had designed. Then, the document's construction was started after creating thematic folders using the information management program Mendeley.

4. *Analysis:* The information that was gathered and organized was analyzed to determine which documents were most useful for the study's proposed theme.

The information was analyzed by determining the contribution that each paper would make, trying to do so with critical thought to support the description of the guiding question..

Results

The most notable findings are presented from the broad to the particular, beginning with the most extreme numbers and concluding with Colombian research assertions.

Each year, 130 billion tons of food are wasted globally, which is equal to one-third of global production (Guevara, 2021; FAO, 2012). In Colombia, where there is a national food supply of 28.5 million tons, there are losses of 9.76 million tons, or 34% of the total (NDP, 2016). Despite having extensive land areas, the Caquetá department only produces 12.49% of the food it consumes and relies on an external flow for 87.51% (Jurado-Mejía et al., 2020); the department's seat Florencia produces less than 13% of the food it needs and has inadequate food security (Garay, 2017).

Due to agricultural practices that do not meet this need, as well as the fact that a third of those practices are lost, the growth in population also increases food consumption (Amna et al., 2023). Globally, 200 billion people experience food insecurity due to lack of access to sufficient and nutritious food, increasing their risk of malnutrition and poor health. In Latin America, 42.5 million people were affected by hunger in 2018. This amounts to 6.5% of the total population, with Venezuela reaching a level of 21.2%, despite the fact that 55% of the region's population is undernourished. The official 2018 statistics are as follows: the world 10.8%, Africa 19.9%, South America 6.5%, Asia 11.2%, and Antarctica 6.2%. (FAO et al., 2019).

According to the Worldometer's 2022 estimate of the 798.13 billion people worldwide, 82.14 billion are undernourished, 73 billion are living in extreme poverty, 201.38 billion have moderate food insecurity, and 704.3 million have severe food insecurity. While extreme poverty decreased globally from 54% in 1990 to 41% in 2015, it increased in some parts of Africa from 277 to 413 million people (FAO et al., 2019). Worldwide, according to the Body Mass Index (BIM), 860.4 million people are undernourished, 808.1 million are with obese, 1.726 million are overweight, and 13,000 people per day die from famine (Worldometer, 2022).

Colombia has 60 million acres of forested land (González, 2021), 39,7 million acres are in the Amazonian region (Restrepo et al., 2020), and 1.5 million acres

are in the Amazonian piedmont (Arévalo et al., 2020). However, such wealth is impacted by deforestation: 219,973 acres in 2017, 197,159 in 2018, 158,894 in 2019, and 171,685 in 2020; of these, respectively, 65.5%, 70.1%, 70%, and 70% occurred in the Amazonia (Paz, 2018; IDEAM, 2019; González, 2020; MinAmbiente, 2021; González, 2021).

Famine affected 59.7 million Latin Americans and 7.3 million Colombians (United Nations, 2022); thus, Colombia has 14.6% of the total population suffering from famine, 54.2% from food security (Aristizábal, 2022), 36.3% from poverty (Nieto & Altamiranda, 2022), 46.5% from rural poverty, and 19.5% from extreme poverty. In Florencia, Caquetá, rural poverty reaches 50.1% of the population, although extreme rural poverty is lower, 12.9% of the people. (DANE, 2022).

After several years of implementation as a strategy for SD, EE does not show good results. Caquetá with food dependence of 87.51%, has land suitable for cultivation, food security and sustainable agricultural production which can be transversal EE topics that foster activities, skills, and environmental, cultural, social, and economic values in particularities of each community.

The National Survey for Situational Nutrition (2017) reveals economic and social inequalities in households, ethnic groups, social classes, regions, departments, municipalities, and various areas of Colombia. According to the figures, more than 54% of Colombian households live in food insecurity; 321 people die each year for malnutrition (Castro, 2018); monetary poverty in 2018 reached 24.4% in urban sectors and 36.1% in rural sectors; and multidimensional poverty in the city reached 13.8%, while in the countryside it reached 39.9%, with extreme poverty in 4.9% in the city and 15.4% in the countryside. For children, 62.5% between six and 11 months old suffer from anemia, 13.3% under five years old. Ten percent of Colombians between five and 17 years old are in a chronic malnutrition condition (ENSIN, 2017).

Data reveals the state of abandonment of our farmers. Regarding agricultural producers, 85.6% in Colombia have an average monthly income of \$296,000, 72% are in a subsidized health system, 91% have no employment risk affiliation and 88.3% do not have a pension affiliation (Osorio et al., 2019). Food in rural communities when there are no planned strategies from research, experiments, technological developments and innovations that facilitate models of sustainable production is a reason for concern (Asprilla-Perea & Díaz-Puente, 2020).

Colombia is an unequal country in land possession and low in peasant labor force. There are no opportunities for youth, and has endangered the existence of peasants thus food security. Agriculture imports grew from 1992 to 2015 by 9.1 times; from \$637 million to \$578.6 billion of dollars annually, with exports of minimal agricultural participation and ineffective agricultural laws regarding land ownership. (Villamizar, 2020).

The Amazon region in Caquetá—with its geostrategic position, biodiversity, water abundance and natural wealth—raises concerns about the environmental situation. In 2017, Caquetá had 6,442,745 hectares of stable forest surfaces, which corresponds to 11% of Colombia (58,341,095 hectares of stable forest area). However, Caquetá has unfavorable rates of deforestation with 60,373 hectares, 27.5% of the total of 219,973 hectares in Colombia. (IDEAM, 2018).

The agricultural sector in Caquetá and its capital imports the necessary food for the basic diet of its inhabitants. This complex situation does not allow for eradicating hunger or poverty. Although there are government programs, poor people are 26.9% of the total population; 24.2% in municipal headquarters and 36% in the rural sector (De Castro, 2017). In Caquetá, poverty in terms of unsatisfied basic needs (NBN) corresponds to 33.48% in urban areas and 59.20% in rural areas (OCHA, 2021).

In Colombia, sustainable agricultural production should be worked in agricultural systems for food alternatives in economic, social, cultural, and environmental contexts. (Pitta & Acevedo 2019). To prioritize educational and productive food needs in peasant families, from their environment and particularities, supporting family gardens is recommendable. They are essential reservoirs of agricultural variety and promote food security and nutrition of rural population (Villa & García, 2017).

Recognizing peasant wisdom becomes very strategic, since sustainable food development allows the farmer, as an actor in his own territory, to identify man-nature relationships and become a potential change in conservation and the protection of ecosystems, along with agricultural production techniques for rural development (Vásquez, 2018). Popular rural agriculture keeps its culture, networks and firmness alive in the values of the farmer, collector, craftsman, fisherman, etc., as an unceasing activity. Good agricultural practices are recognized in activities such as crop rotation, organic waste benefit, pest elimination, creating native food and tree seedings to preserve water sources and protect ecosystems (Vergara-Buitrago, 2018).

Also, in Colombia the food industry is described as a productive gamble with worldwide projection, but some aspects of competitiveness must be known and immediate improvements must be made. (Melo et al., 2019). Land distribution that has left several peasants without support demands agricultural and livestock activities (Villamizar, 2020). Thus, agriculture historically was a good space for peasant development, but has since lost its dynamic. The government does not create employment opportunities in the fields; it does not support transitional crops and does not drive the family economy, but rather creates supportive policies for a permanent use of technology in crops farming that generate less employment.

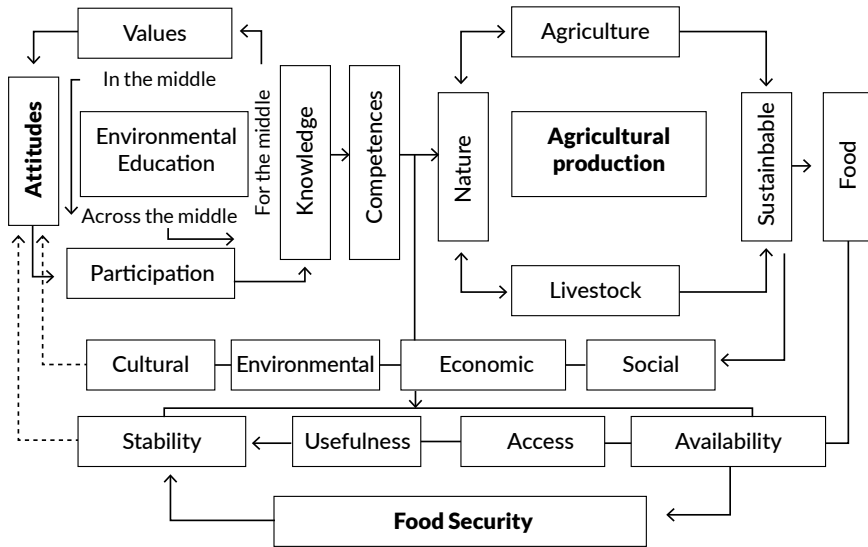
Discussion

From the findings, it is important to comprehensively consider environmental education, sustainable agricultural production, and food safety, to be systematically analyzed as a set of interrelated elements in which there is coherence and purpose, unity in searching for efficient results in food production, human quality of life and the protection of the environment.

Environmental education can be determined to be a major strategy with the ability to create knowledge, values, attitudes, participation, and competencies in and for the environment. It provides the input for sustainable agricultural production that, by making rational use of natural resources, generates agricultural, livestock, and forestry production systems to obtain food. With a sustainable vision, these elements must equitably balance social, environmental, economic, and cultural aspects, so that, harmoniously, EE does not alter the environment or food security in its dimensions of availability, access, use, and stability.

Integrated environmental education, sustainable agricultural production, and food security, as a systemic process, must be continuous and applied in every dimension to deal with environmental problems, such as deforestation, global warming, pollution, social problems such as hunger, and malnutrition, economic issues such as poverty, and housing, and cultural problems, like education and eradication. Figure 3 illustrates this interrelationship.

Figure 3. Integrated Environmental Education, Agricultural Production and Food Security System.



In today's society, the data described in Figure 3 is not comprehensively solving existing problems and it is one of the main reasons why poverty, hunger, food insecurity, global warming, malnutrition, etc. are increasing every day, even with all the advances and developments of modernity. These problems of the world in figures have a similar trend in Colombia. The Amazonía, Caquetá and Florencia relate in different ways, they share the same problems and failures in issues of environmental education, sustainable agricultural production and food security.

In this way, poor environmental education favors environmental problems, since it is not taught from practical and natural contexts. Nor are age, cultural or individual differences in interest undermined in people; it is not promoted to protect the environment from sustainable agriculture and other activities, or integrates all the participants in environmental Education (Rodriguez & Bezerra, 2016). Educating everyone about the environment is mandatory, but also teaching them how to care for their health, natural resources, and environment while growing crops and producing foods that serve as a means of practical environmental education and a source of local development is equally important (Rodriguez & Bezerra, 2016).

The universe of the integrated system (Figure 1) involves a variety of elements and phenomena that become cyclical and create the possibility of being

a good alternative solution, although, the data reveals the ability to meet the sustainable development goals in reducing poverty and hunger to zero (Herrero et al., 2018); as in Florencia rural poverty exceeds 50% (DANE, 2022). In EE, the topic for environmental training should be based on crops cultivated and managed environmentally, with agroecological knowledge that seeks balance between established production systems and performance environment, something that is not happening because it is being assigned, without any distinction, as a subject at primary education levels. (Marrugo et al., 2015).

As stated, EE and the SD are shown as a priority and a key connection to achieving a respectful investigation and a change of mindset on how to conceive of the environment and natural resources. However, several inhabitants of poverty and misery go unnoticed by political leaders who claim privileges and special forces with little or no sense of what really should be their representation in the State, to such an extent that the inequality of income or wealth measured in the Gini index exceeds 0.530 (DANE, 2022). Likewise, environmental degradation and alteration is a cause and consequence of poverty (Rodríguez, 2022).

Literature on EE, agricultural production and food security —related in figures and indicators associated with environmental problems, poverty, food insecurity, hunger, etc. is very broad and varied, but shows little encouraging results. This happens year after year; individuals have been talking about EE, SD, agrarian reform, security, and food sovereignty for decades, but the problems associated with these persist (Jurado-Mejía et al., 2020). Several years ago, SD was considered to provide humanity with the needed solutions for education, food, and equality, because it was thought to be able to achieve environmental, social, and economic balance. By the given concept of SD, everything seemed to face innovation capable of transforming humanity and creating environmentally healthy and socially more equitable communities.

Since then, the SD thesis has involved a variety of viewpoints, analyses and publications arguing about the SD conceptual appropriateness or inappropriateness and raising concerns such as sustainability (greater emphasis on environmental pillars), green economy (sustainability management), community eco-development (basic needs satisfaction and promotion of peoples' autonomy) and good living (living in harmony with the community and with the nature), among other perspectives widely discussed and systematized by scholars.

Nevertheless, these findings show that the discussions result in being more semantic than pragmatic. Regardless of the term or viewpoint, there is an evident lack of solution to the related problems, and to date, the political vision of SD education as a food security strategy has not caused the expected outcomes from the environmental, social, and economic components to achieve the desired equity

and social justice. SD is assumed to be isolated rather than aggregated with no participation from all members, despite age or gender (García et al., 2021).

Environmental summits, meetings and events have resulted in a plethora of publications that highlight the SD principles as a fundamental theory used to analyze how to advance at different performance levels. Despite the fact that SD seems to be widely discussed in intervention strategies, the Colombian reality has no significant implications for agricultural production systems in terms of food security.

Additionally, the current agricultural production model may be responsible for the lack of food, as the crisis in the sector is evident. The presence of intermediaries in the sales process, the large income gap, Colombia's high transportation costs and the disparity in productive capacities between small and medium producers are all factors to consider (Vanegas & Gaitán, 2020).

As a fundamental human right, food security must be ensured in all respects. However, statistics show a high correlation between food insecurity and extreme poverty with the inequity and social inequality being the source of the problem that several households face in overcoming obstacles, especially given that humidity is seen as the greatest threat to survival due to the damage caused to the planet (Sanchez, 2019).

According to the previous issues, EE makes sense because of its relevance in influencing significant changes in people's behavior, in the human-nature relationship, and the pursuit of optimal performance in sustainable agricultural production as an alternative solution to environmental, social, and economic problems. These are included in the dynamics of agricultural production and coexistence required for food security as a fundamental right.

Thus, the importance of EE becomes obvious in light of the decade's technological boom which has resulted in remarkable growth and profits at the expense of an increasingly deteriorating environment. This entails everyone on the planet becoming aware of the scope of the environmental damage, and taking the necessary actions to provide solutions from both individual and collective perspectives, thus, overcoming the greatest threat to survival (Sánchez, 2019).

In Caquetá, a developing region, the lack of technological capacity for the agricultural sector, the low productivity, and the short-sightedness of the long-term primary economy are the factors causing serious damage for the regional agricultural sector. This creates a structural transformation and a vision based on what a society needs to do with its farming communities, with its agro-industrial manufacturing, and with the rural sector to improve growth and maintain the populations' food security. In agricultural production systems, all of these factors are inextricably linked.

Perhaps the problems of the countryside rely on EE as an opportunity for creating alternative solutions for the Colombian agricultural sector and the department of Caquetá, not as a desire for perfection in the agricultural processes, but as a requirement for today's society's survival. Because it is critical to use appropriate language and a shared logic of thinking when it comes to sustainable agricultural production, the authors aim at understanding and seeking for a consensus to changing the country's focus which is collapsing into violence, opposition, power of ego, corruption, despair, and loneliness of a population that has dreams and still lives with the illusion of having a better world for their children.

Sustainable development emerges as a response to the growing concern of environmentally destructive actions, but its focus is lost when, from the capitalist's view, industrial and economic progress is achieved at the expense of the environmental damage without a balance among social, environmental, and economic dimensions. Because productivity and economic growth were prioritized in actions toward natural resource depletion, hindering agricultural production, creating environmental problems, and therefore, human famine and poverty.

Finally, the best strategy is to work on sustainable development, environmental education and agricultural production all at the same time. These are critical factors for achieving human food security, environmental protection, the reduction of social inequality, eradication of hunger, and poverty reduction, in other words, meeting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). These structural factors do not work independently; they would perform well if implemented as intended and in a simultaneous and integrated manner in achieving effective outcomes. These could become a system with elements such as sustainable development, environmental and agricultural production, which are integrated and interact coherently in order to achieve food security. However, if any of them underperforms, the system as a whole fails to function properly and fails to meet the expected SDGs.

Conclusions

Environmental Education (EE) must be based on the communities' own worldview which must be developed through a conscious and directed search for new knowledge in their own environment and reality. Thus, freedom and autonomy as well as competitiveness are generated. This process cannot be based on external values alien to the social structure of agricultural production without reasons of

state, religious mandates, or salvation discourses regarding unreal prosperities that are never realized but create increasingly difficult survival conditions for local communities.

EE architecture and sustainable agricultural production must begin with rethinking, redoing, believing, and reflecting on citizenship as a society, as well as recovering the agricultural communities' shared values and distancing itself from easy money, selfish, and deceptive attitudes toward fellow citizens. Because a way of life and a social construction are reclaiming beliefs in the capacity and vocation of the countryside, as well as rediscovering those values of bygone times rather than an aspect of right-wing or left-wing fundamentalisms that are forged as saving and excluding idolatries.

Real-world scenarios of food insecurity and low agricultural production prompt individuals to consider human nutrition in relation to the productive, cultural, environmental, cognitive, political, economic, and social contexts into which agricultural production dynamics are inserted and expanded to aid in the search for solutions to the structural problems of hunger, poverty, and human malnutrition. Agricultural output is therefore essential and critical to the world economy. In Colombia, agriculture is the backbone of its economic system, because it produces raw materials and food, as well as serves as a major opportunity for generating employment, income, trade, and forage, among other benefits.

Food security, as a human welfare issue, requires examining, analyzing and resolving the detrimental disparities in access to food, as well as understanding and emphasizing with the poor community's situation by recognizing and looking into the economic, social, and environmental issues brought on by the unequal distribution of wealth and the means of production. Similarly, food insecurity should be viewed as an opportunity for agricultural production based on environmental education and sustainability and as a social and environmental strategy to meet desired outcomes.

Food as a basic human need is a necessary condition for the quality of life, regardless of whether a country is underdeveloped or developed. The agricultural sector is critical for food production and ensuring people's food security.

Despite the fact that access to food is a fundamental human right and a governmental obligation, there is a remarkable disregard of this mandate and a lack of training support to strengthen it. The majority of global decisions have promised food as a right, with the goal of hunger elimination, inequality reduction, and food security assurance. There is, however, no coercive or effective system for monitoring and evaluating the level of compliance and commitment among the States. As a result, the first barrier to achieving food security—based on EE, and having sustainable agricultural production—is and will remain the

lack of work and genuine commitment required to materialize the aforementioned promises.

The success of a community's food security is dependent on the performance of a food production system as well as on SD, EE, and agricultural production. The implemented sustainable development must be socially, environmentally, and economically equitable to function coherently and guarantee resources for the present and the future of humanity. At the same time, it is founded on environmental education for people to recognize their environment and their values as well as to acquire the necessary skills, abilities, and attitudes to appreciate and comprehend the interrelationships between man, culture and environment. Similarly, if people work from a position of food autonomy returning to their culture and traditions, with native seeds and less reliance on agrochemicals in search of a healthy diet, that would be preferable to achieving food security in the dimensions of availability, access, utilization, and stability. If this process followed the implementation of the concepts, sustainable development goals would certainly be accomplished.

The integrated SD, EE, and agricultural production system achieves favorable outcomes if the government eliminates rural economic aid programs, improves infrastructure, regulates agrochemical costs and land tenure (maintains a reserve of 30% of the size of the land for environmental protection, requires cultivating 35% of the land owned and leaves the remaining 35% for other activities), fixes prices and guarantees purchase of primary production directly from small producers. This would eradicate logging, insufficient soil use, land accumulation, reliance on imported food, unemployment, poverty, famine, and other associated issues, such as the revision of free trade agreements with export production.

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New Horizons for Critical-emancipatory Educational Research: the Contributions of Roy Bhaskar's Critical Realism*

[English Version]

Nuevos horizontes para la investigación educativo crítico-emancipatoria: aportes del realismo crítico de Roy Bhaskar

Novos horizontes para a pesquisa em educação crítica-emancipatória: as contribuições do realismo crítico de Roy Bhaskar

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Juan Ramón Rodríguez Fernández**

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2523-0681>

Spain

Abstract

Objective: The following text shows the potential contributions offered by critical realism when it comes to generating an educational research structure that allows bringing to light knowledge that traditional educational research fails to show. **Methodology:** To do this, the following text reflects theoretically on how the study and analysis of social inclusion and anti-poverty programs existing in advanced Western societies could be approached through the analytical prism of critical realism. **Results:** Thus, from the analytical tools of critical realism, the limitations of these programs will be shown, both in their basic foundations and in their educational proposals for training for employability. **Conclusions:** Based on such limitations, alternative paths can be indicated in order to achieve a fairer society, among others the proposal for a

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** Professor. Universidad de León. jrodrf@unileon.es

universal basic income.

Key words: Critical Realism; Critical Education; Social Inclusion; Critical Educational Research; Marxism.

Resumen

Objetivo: el siguiente texto muestra los potenciales aportes que ofrece el realismo crítico a la hora de generar una estructura de investigación educativa que permita sacar a la luz conocimientos que la investigación educativa tradicional no logra mostrar.

Metodología: para ello, el siguiente texto reflexiona teóricamente sobre cómo podría abordarse el estudio y análisis de los programas de inclusión social y antipobreza existentes en las sociedades occidentales avanzadas a través del prisma analítico del realismo crítico. **Resultados:** así, desde las herramientas analíticas del realismo crítico, se mostrarán las limitaciones y carencias de estos programas, tanto en sus fundamentos básicos como en sus propuestas educativas de formación para la empleabilidad.

Conclusiones: a partir de tales limitaciones, se pueden señalar caminos alternativos para lograr una sociedad más justa, entre otros la propuesta de una renta básica universal.

Palabras clave: Realismo crítico; educación crítica; inclusión social; investigación educativa crítica; Marxismo.

Resumo

Objetivo: o texto a seguir mostra as contribuições potenciais oferecidas pelo realismo crítico quando se trata de gerar uma estrutura para a pesquisa educacional que traga à tona o conhecimento que a pesquisa educacional tradicional não consegue mostrar.

Metodologia: para esse fim, o texto a seguir reflete teoricamente sobre como o estudo e a análise dos programas de inclusão social e combate à pobreza existente nas sociedades ocidentais avançadas poderiam ser abordados pelo prisma analítico do realismo crítico. **Resultados:** assim, a partir das ferramentas analíticas do realismo crítico, serão mostradas as limitações e as deficiências desses programas, tanto em seus fundamentos básicos quanto em suas propostas educacionais de formação para a empregabilidade. **Conclusões:** com base nessas limitações, podem ser apontadas formas alternativas de alcançar uma sociedade mais justa, incluindo a proposta de uma renda básica universal.

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Palavras-chave: Realismo Crítico; Educação Crítica; Inclusão Social; Pesquisa Educacional Crítica; Marxismo.

Introduction¹

This paper showcases my first foray into critical realism. I aim to demonstrate its potential as a philosophical basis for research in the social sciences and especially in the field of education, where it has had an increasing influence and importance in recent years (Parra, 2015 & 2016). In doing so, I will show that critical realism offers tools for critical-emancipatory educational research, overcoming the limitations presented by traditional empiricist and subjectivist approaches (Khazem, 2018). My interest in critical realism has continued through my pre-academic professional career prior and into my work as a university professor where I have used it to research the issue of guaranteed minimum income as an arm of social and educational policy aimed at combating poverty.

My Journey to Critical Realism

My interest in critical realism began while a university student of Pedagogy. I always felt uncomfortable with visions presented that portrayed education as simply a technical activity. Approaching issues such as teaching methodologies, school organization, assessment and curricular design from a frame of reference of, what I now understand as, positivist science seemed limited. The assumptions of value freedom and commitment to empiricism underpinning positivism did not align with the reality of educational praxis: a complex social and ethical project built on communicative relationships for social justice. Not only did understanding education require more than noting what was apparent (the Domain of the Actual in Bhaskar's terms), but also that it could not be divorced from the world of values. Even as a student, I knew this. However, until engaging with critical realism, I did not have the language and concepts to explain what I intuitively knew: education had to be inserted into the real world and understood in its historical, cultural, ideological, and biographical contexts. And this insertion meant that education was more than what simply happened in classrooms. It had to be for something. It had to be grounded in real things that mattered and it had to express an inalienable ethical-political commitment to justice and social change. Against the language of positivism where education is too easily reduced to a mere mechanism for the transmission and accumulation of knowledge, critical

¹ I would like to express my gratitude to Grant Banfield for his suggestions and ideas for this paper, which is the result of an academic visit to the *Centre for Research in Educational and Social Inclusion* of the University of South Australia in 2019-2020, where Professor Grant Banfield was my academic host.

realism opened a conceptual space to see it as capacity building to read the world as well as change it.

Prior to my career as a university teacher and researcher, I worked as a social educator implementing social inclusion programs in Spain for almost 10 years. At first, I thought that these types of programs contributed powerfully to social change and the achievement of greater equality. However, as time went by, the limitations that these programs had in reducing (let alone eradicating) poverty became obvious to me. As a result of this discontent, I began to reflect on these social problems from a Marxist perspective. Though the relationship between critical realism and Marxism is a controversial one, to my mind there are clear links between both schools of thought, more especially with regard to their understanding of reality and the potential for emancipatory social change. I fully recognize that critical realism and Marxism are different, but also I argue that there are strong linkages between both and that critical realism provides solid philosophical foundations for Marxist theory. To know more about this heated debate on critical realism and Marxism, Gunn (1989) and Brown, A., Fleetwood, S., & Roberts, J. M. (2003), among others, can be consulted. I came to understand that these anti-poverty programs, as well as other socio-educational actions for the most disadvantaged, were not aimed at eradicating the root causes of social inequality, but rather designed (intentionally or not) to merely have a cosmetic effect. They were focused on the superficial and not any deep underlying causes. Both professional practice and educational research operated in the world of appearances or, as Marx would say, a fetishized world. Coming to understand the social world as structured where it is only partially open to both observations and direct experiences of it provided fertile ground for my future interest in critical realism.

The research I conducted through my PhD opened my mind to critical realism and its emancipatory possibilities. The surprise was unexpected, but pleasant. Critical realism became the methodological partner to Marxist theory I needed. It provided the means to unravel the causal mechanisms of the social phenomena that I was interested in understanding and changing.

In the following sections, I will outline the ways in which I have employed critical realism to understand and critique social exclusion programs. In particular, I will emphasize the point that the deep ontology of critical realism expresses the realism of Marx. This is what initially drew me to the philosophical resources of critical realism.

Pushing Beyond Positivism and Hermeneutics

Like many post-graduate social science and education students I was schooled in the view that the social and human sciences were framed within two competing philosophies: positivism and hermeneutics. I came to know them as representing significantly different philosophical and practical approaches to research. Not only did they hold opposing views of the nature of reality and knowledge but also that of the relationship between researcher and subjects researched. I recall being attracted to hermeneutics for its recognition of the humanness of the social world and the implication it carried of the possibility of human agency. However, reading Andrew Collier's (1994) excellent introductory text to critical realism brought new light to the positivism-hermeneutics problematic. I found his use of the metaphor of the ant and the spider particularly instructive.

According to Collier, the metaphor that best exemplifies the work of positivist researchers is that of the ant. These researchers labor like ants, gathering information as if it were part of a pre-determined puzzle. The positivist ants try to complete the puzzle by piecing together scraps of data extracted from an external reality. Their job, as they understand it, is to capture as much empirical data as possible with regard to a given phenomenon so as to piece together the most accurate and realistic picture possible of the object under study. Empirical data are understood to be snapshots of reality and researchers are like photographers taking those shots. Accordingly, positivist ants see a direct correspondence between the information collected about an object and the object itself. Or, in other words, they understand scientific knowledge as a pure and faithful reflection of a world completely external to and independent of the scientific investigator. In this way, it is thought that objectivity is secured by: a) an appropriate experimental design that ensures researcher neutrality, and (b) the use of data collection techniques that provide direct access to reality, as well as produce universally valid knowledge that can be replicated in other contexts. In the world of ants, the function of science and scientific knowledge is to formulate universal laws that allow for prediction and enable intervention. Positivism is unquestionably hegemonic in the experimental or "hard" sciences (Parada 2004, p. 409; Scott, 2010 & 2014; Parra, 2015). However, despite the difficulties entailed in applying positivism to open systems such as human societies, positivism remains influential in the social sciences (Bhaskar, 1998).

In contrast, Collier describes the work of hermeneutic researchers being more like that of the spider, as conceptions take a diametrically opposed view, believing that establishing a clear-cut separation between a researcher's conceptions and reality is impossible. This stance thus denies the existence of a sharply

defined divide between researcher and subject, or the possibility of direct, effective access to the reality investigated. Reality is not considered an external entity that can be broken into separate parts and studied in experimental contexts, as the positivists argue. According to hermeneutics, reality does not exist beyond one's understanding of it, since it is entirely constructed through one's ideas, concepts, practices, language and so on. It is the researcher's viewpoint that dictates a given conception of reality.

From the standpoint of hermeneutics, creating experimental situations that replicate a particular phenomenon is unnecessary; instead, the researcher's interpretations of the subject in context are what is important. The most extreme arguments within this conception deny the existence of a material reality beyond one's minds: those researchers who hold these conceptions can be well considered anti-realists.

Through interpretations one reaches a profound understanding of the subject under study and produces information that is meaningful in similar situations and contexts. The goal is not so much to make predictions that can be extrapolated to other settings, as to produce meaningful knowledge about a given social phenomenon through argumentation. According to Andrew Collier (1994), the metaphor that best reflects this conception is that of a spider weaving its web. Thus, hermeneutic researchers produce knowledge as a result of their reflections and conceptions, as if that knowledge were a thread emerging from their minds. To paraphrase the anthropologist Clifford Geertz (1973), researchers hang from the meaningful webs that they themselves have spun. This is the most commonly used approach in the social sciences and encompasses research strategies such as ethnography and data collection techniques such as participant observation (Taylor, 1985).

As regards how one approaches and understands reality, these two conceptions have a respective long and broad tradition in research in the natural sciences and in the human sciences. However, they each present a number of limitations in terms of their contributions to social change and emancipation.

Positivistic conceptions prioritize the aseptic collection of data and information, losing sight of the multiple ways in which the very action of research influences and conditions the reality investigated. A further limitation of these approaches is that the structural aspects that explain the reality investigated are relegated to the background. An emphasis on precise experimental design, exhaustive data collection and strictly observed experimental—and thus artificial—conditions means that the structural aspects which subtly construct the subject under study are overlooked.

Meanwhile, hermeneutic conceptions stress the production of idiographic knowledge derived from the subjectivity argued by the researcher (Nuñez, 2013).

This conception presents clear limitations, not least as regards emitting scientific conclusions whose validity can be generalized to other settings and contexts. Furthermore, a hermeneutic perspective tends to lead to relativistic positions that limit the capacity to reach scientific conclusions with any real predictive value.

Below, an attempt is made to demonstrate the possibilities offered by critical realism in the social sciences to overcome some of these limitations.

Lessons from Critical Realism

From a positivist perspective, the progress of science is seen as a linear accumulation of information gleaned from experimental procedures that ensure neutral access to a mind-independent reality. According to positivism the only reality of interest to science is that which is available empirically and thus can be measured and subdivided; it is empirical. In contrast, hermeneutics reduces reality to that which has meaning for the researcher, to the subjective. It is researchers, through their work of inquiry, who construct the subject under study, reality. Thus, meaning making is paramount in hermeneutic approaches.

However, critical realism offers a more complex conception of research and reality, one that is based on the idea that reality is stratified. According to Andrew Collier (1994):

[...] for empiricism, science collects discrete bits of knowledge and accumulates them in its mental bucket; for relativism, scientific changes are like gestalt switches 'coming to see the world differently.' Both of these metaphors have their place, but if transcendental realism is right, the metaphor of digging deeper catches far more essential features of the process (p. 50).

The Stratified Nature of Reality

According to critical realism, reality is essentially an open system, but it can sometimes be manipulated as if it were a closed system that conducts experiments and thus confirms or rejects theoretical hypotheses. Despite its fundamentally open nature, reality as theorized by Bhaskar (1975; 1998), is not chaotic or random

but is, instead, structured and orderly. He argues that reality, whether natural or social, is a stratified totality consisting of three overlapping levels or domains. The first of these is the empirical domain. Initially, Bhaskar described this domain referring exclusively to concrete experiences. However, as Hartwig (2007) notes, he “later extended the domain of the empirical to that of ‘the subjective,’ to embrace concepts as well as the empirical” (pp. 400 -401). The second is the actual domain. It refers to the world of events where various experiences and interpretations of them occur in defined spaces and time. The third is the real domain, which refers to the generating mechanisms and structures. These are enduring rather than episodic, are responsible for causal effects and ultimately explain the occurrence of observable events. Thus, the empirical domain is a subset of the actual domain, which in turn is a subset of the real domain. In this way, all domains are real. However, it is important to stress that causation does not occur in events, empirical phenomena, or subjective interpretations but in generative mechanisms.

This stratified conception of reality bears marked similarities to the logic of Marxist materialist thought (Banfield, 2010). Hidden forces and structures create certain conditions and generate a series of events, in which subjects' actions contribute in part to their reproduction and/or transformation. Therefore, according to critical realism, the subject is not the universal, ubiquitous subject of Cartesian thought: the ones at the generative center of the social fabric modifying the environment according to their subject's interests, desires, and objectives. Neither is the subject the determined outcome or product of the social fabric.

Furthermore, while taking reality to be structured and ordered, critical realism also insists it is ontologically emergent. In other words, the mechanisms that explain the social phenomena and events perceived appear ordered, from the most basic and distant mechanisms to the most concrete and closest to the event they generate. Thus, each of these mechanisms can be explained in emergent form by different scientific theories, in which those that correspond to the most basic levels neither exhaust nor reduce the theories located at the most concrete levels close to the event under study. For example, the explanation of human behavior is not reduced solely to a biological-physiological explanation (with the contributions of chemistry, biology or psychobiology), but also includes a cultural and social explanation (anthropology, sociology, linguistics, semiotics, etc.), a psychological-educational explanation (education, teaching, etc.) and so on, where each theory provides an explanation—in emergent form—that is relevant to the stratum to which it belongs.

Vertical and Horizontal Explanations of Reality

One way to analyze social reality that respects its stratified, ordered nature is by means of a vertical explanation and a horizontal explanation (Banfield, 2010 & 2016). This proposal is a highly innovative research strategy in the social sciences that goes beyond positivist and hermeneutic approaches. It is unquestionably one of critical realism's most original contributions to the philosophy and the practice of science.

In combination, the horizontal and vertical explanations shed light on the integrated nature of phenomena under study. They push beyond the empirical and the subjective to illuminate the role of hidden structures and mechanisms that give rise to the events and phenomena perceived in reality.

A Proposal for a Critical Realist Analysis. The Case of Social Inclusion Schemes against Poverty

The main socio-educational actions against poverty in countries within the European context are Minimum Incomes for Integration, here termed Guaranteed Minimum Incomes (G.M.I.s). Schemes of this sort emerged at the start of the 1990s thanks to Council Recommendation 92/441 of 24 June 1992, encouraging member States of the European Union (E.U.) to develop programs guaranteeing their citizens a minimum income. Throughout the 1990s and into the early 21st century various E.U. countries have gradually rolled out this type of scheme (EUROSTAT, 2018). They did so with considerable heterogeneity directing them, at least formally, toward combating social exclusion and achieving more cohesive and egalitarian European societies (Malgesini, 2017). Despite their heterogeneity, minimum income schemes —across Europe but in Spain in particular (Frazer & Marlier, 2016)— can be seen to have two common characteristics. In all, a periodical payment is made and every program (to a greater or lesser extent) links receipt of this payment to recipient performance across a range of activities related to social and work integration. These activities may take place in a number of contexts (for example, family, personal, health, educational, or workplace). They follow the completion of a Personalized Integration Route-map that includes the recipient's commitment to participate in certain activities proposed by social services. Amongst these, pride of place often prompts completing training courses enhancing employability. Here, it is worth noting the following quote by Marx (1894) “[...] vulgar economics feels completely at home, these

relationships appearing all the more self-evident to it, the more their inner connections remain hidden, even though they are comprehensible to the popular mind.” (p. 797). So, capitalism is the source of poverty and the solution to poverty is... more capitalism!

A Critical Realist Approach to the Study of Vocational Courses for the Unemployed. A Vertical and Horizontal Explanation

Positivistic approaches tend to analyze vocational programs by collecting data related to specific target populations. Thus, data might be collected on the number of unemployed people, statistics compiled on the duration of unemployment, and profiles constructed of socially excluded people along with the number of people in situations of mild, moderate, or severe exclusion. Questionnaires might be designed, survey interviews conducted, and previous reports consulted. The same information gathering process would be conducted in other dimensions that comprise the subject under study, such as the characteristics and amount of economic aid and the number and content of vocational courses. This is the model generally employed by public administrations and it is directly linked to the positivistic conception. It is necessary because it facilitates the collection of data on the selected event, but it is insufficient to reach a deep understanding of that event.

Meanwhile, hermeneutic approaches generally focus on exploring the subjective perceptions of the agents involved in the social event, including the course participants, the social service professionals responsible for organizing and managing these courses and the political representatives who approve their launch. To this end, interviews are conducted with the subjects involved, participant observation sessions are held during the courses and the researchers may undertake total immersion in the reality studied, accompanied by a field diary that provides a dense explanation of the context studied. The goal is to collect meaningful information that enables the researcher to construct an argument that explains the complexity of practices in this social reality. This approach to the event is based on the researcher's subjective —albeit reasoned— interpretation. The information yields an in-depth understanding of hidden aspects of the reality studied but is limited as regards extrapolation to other contexts: what is valid and relevant to the case study analyzed is not necessarily so in other cases.

Both approaches provide valuable insight but separately or in combination are insufficient. They lack the capacity to illuminate generative mechanisms underpinning the structured and experiential reality of poverty. In short, the approaches have limited explanatory power and are restricted in their potentials to contribute to meaningful social change and concrete human emancipation. In this light the attractiveness of critical realism became obvious. Critical realism offered ways of explaining how training programs might be employed to combat social exclusion. Horizontal explanation of the subject under study (i.e. an explanation of the event through mechanisms and the causes that these generate and are experienced) and vertical explanation of the subject under study (i.e. how one mechanism explains another, more causally efficacious mechanisms (Shipway, 2010). They could work dialectically to develop a deep understanding of social problems and are related to the real world, and with each horizontal and vertical move, new vantage points (Banfield, 2013 & 2016) emerge.

In combination, the horizontal and vertical explanations thus shed light on the integrated nature of the phenomena under study, going beyond the empirical, observable surface of positivist approaches and the subjective interpretations of hermeneutic approaches, both of which lose sight of the role of hidden structures and mechanisms that give rise to the events and phenomena we perceive in reality.

A vertical explanation—see table 1—of the event of guaranteed minimum incomes and their courses would have to take into account the role of the different strata and the corresponding emergent theories that shed light on this event. For example, from the most basic to the most concrete level, first there is the conception of subject and society in the stratum of neoliberal ideology. The neoliberal conception of the subject finds its maximum expression in social organization based on the model of the residual welfare state, in which public management plays a marginal role compared with the prominent role of private initiative and individual responsibility. Following these conceptions of subject and social organization is the economic theory of human capital, in which people compete for access to the world of work through individual investment in vocational qualifications. The stratum closest to the studied event is the model of professional competencies, with a focus on curriculum design.

Table 1. A vertical explanation proposal for vocational courses associated with Guaranteed Minimum Income Programs.

Event: training actions associated to anti poverty programs	
Curricular design	Expert education rationality
Education	Skills-based model of education
Economics	Human Capital Theory
Sociology	Residual Welfare State
Ideology	Neoliberalism
STRATA OF REALITY	EMERGENT THEORIES

Meanwhile, a horizontal explanation —see table 2— would have to show how a group of mechanisms (e.g. human capital theory, neoliberalism, and the skills-based model) explain the implementation of a series of events (i.e. training actions for people at social risk), and how they lead to a number of consequences and experiences associated with the subject under study (e.g. budget allocated for training, number of training actions, rates of new employment, unemployment rates, professional profiles of workers who organize the actions, public or private management of training actions and characteristics of training actions), in other words, the experiences that are lived and are located on the plane of the purely empirical.

Table 2. A horizontal explanation proposal for vocational courses associated with Guaranteed Minimum Income Programs.

Mechanisms	Events	Experiences
Expert curricular design		Type of course, contents, resources and teaching methods, role of teacher, educator-learner relationship, system of evaluation and certification, etc.
Skill-based education model	Training actions for socially excluded adults	Rates of unemployment, poverty, job insecurity, etc.
Human Capital Theory		Economic funding for policies against poverty.
Residual social welfare state		Amount of economic aid to recipients.
Neoliberalism		Type of management: public or private, public-private partnership, etc. Professional profiles, functions, tasks and instruments involved in these programs.

An Integrated Analysis of the Stratified Nature of Social Inclusion Policies to Combat Poverty

In line with neoliberal discourse, the subject is essentially individualistic, competitive, and calculating, and achieves self-realization and fulfilment by acquiring and possessing material goods, in competition with one’s counterparts. Given this essential nature, society should be organized according to the logic of private enterprise, because this is the model that is most conducive to the development of the neoliberal subject’s essential nature. This is at the root of the logic of privatization and commodification of the public sectors that form the backbone

of society —i.e. education, health, health care, and the labor market— because it favors the development of the subject's competitive, individualistic and entrepreneurial nature and ultimately the advance and progress of society. The logic of privatization is given tangible form in the neoliberal model of the social welfare state, which is essentially based on the provision of services by private entities, reducing the role of the State in the regulation and organization of society to an absolute minimum. This model lays stress on the subject's individual responsibility in decision-making.

These neoliberal ideas about society and the individual have given rise to human capital theory in the discipline of economics (Becker, 1964). According to this theory, education is an individual investment with exchange value in the labor market (Schultz, 1962). Thus, education increases a person's employability and is directly related to increased productivity, economic growth and ultimately to a higher quality and number of available jobs. Consequently, as reflected in the main European strategies and directives in the fight against poverty and social exclusion, poor people need to acquire the training and skills required by the productive system to increase their employability and thus effectively enter the labor market.

However, these approaches present serious difficulties as regards achieving their objectives. First, the existence of a direct, mechanical relationship between training, employment, increased productivity, and improved labor standards as a result of economic growth generated by better-educated workers is questionable (Chang, 2012). Young people in contemporary societies have received more and better education than previous generations, and yet there has been no reduction in unemployment or job insecurity in recent years. Working conditions and the number of jobs in a country or region do not depend on levels of training achieved or the education system, but on the power relations between capital and labor, a balance that has witnessed radical change in favor of the former as a result of neoliberal economic policies, especially since the 2008 crisis (Harvey, 2012 & 2013).

Second, education plays a passive role, devoted solely to providing training in the skills required by the labor market. Thus, the primary function of education at all levels of the education system —whether it be primary or secondary education, formal or non-formal education— is viewed as being that of equipping people to compete in the labor market. From this standpoint, the teaching method best suited to these approaches is the skills-based model. This model assumes that it is possible to break down a given profession into its various skills to subsequently design specific training actions for each competence or technique. This is a simplistic conception of the complex professional sphere, in which work is reduced to a mere stock of professional skills and workers to mere mechanics.

This mechanical conception loses sight of the ethical, social, and cultural factors that influence professionals and paints an artificial and simplified picture of the complexity of the tasks and processes that workers perform in their jobs, aspects which cannot be reduced solely to knowledge and use of professional skills (Schön, 1992).

Third, this approach to public education transforms education into a consumer product with an exchange value in the labor market, increasing the employability of the person who has acquired it, putting that person in competition with other people in that market. In turn, this promotes consumerism in education and the organization of education systems according to the principles of the market and free competition. The idea of life-long learning also reinforces this consumerism, driving people to consume education throughout their lives to remain productive and employable and taking individual responsibility for the costs involved in “life-long” training. Education thus becomes simply another private business niche, similar in terms of economic exploitation to the international car industry (Hill, 2013).

Lastly, human capital theory applied to education offers a purely technical and meritocratic vision of the relationship between employee and employer, without considering the ideological and structural aspects that influence recruitment conditions in the workplace (Bowles & Gintis, 1975).

The theory of human capital that forms the basis of social and educational policies to combat poverty assigns a core role to education, considering it a central element in facilitating the subject’s integration in society and the workforce. Thus, poverty and social inequality are viewed as social problems that can be solved simply with more education, and above all with an education more closely linked to the world of work. From this perspective, unemployment and poverty are variously the result of an education that is insufficiently tailored to market needs and demands, teachers who fail to employ methods that reflect the business management model in which students should be “trained,” educational institutions that are not organized according to the principles of a private entrepreneurial business, or individuals in situations of social exclusion or job insecurity who have failed to harness the learning, educational, and labor opportunities that have been available to them throughout their lives.

From the perspective of human capital theory and neoliberalism, the mechanical rationalization of education and the skills-based model are the most functional decisions in the field of education. Vocational training programs aimed at combating poverty thus emphasize the transmission of professional skills and/or diverse aspects of knowledge intended to instill “good citizenship” or create “good workers,” reinforcing the notion that social exclusion is the fault of the subject, who lacks such skills. Rather than being an educational action aimed at

critical reflection on questions that explain relations of oppression and workforce exploitation, it seeks to insert people into an increasingly precarious labor market with worse working conditions.

Conclusions

This contribution has explored the possibilities critical realism offers critical social science research via my experiences with vocational courses related to Guaranteed Minimum Income Schemes. Most common analysis in social science only scratches the surface, without paying attention to the social determining structures, which is a big limitation not only in terms of social science, but more importantly in terms of potentially emancipatory knowledge. This idea strongly resonates in the Marxist concept of mystification, a powerful concept which can be used to descriptively understand a condition in which there is prevailing perceptions that masks and obscures a deep reality of the capitalist mode of production that creates inequality (Maisuria, 2018, p. 436). Critical realism's aim is to shed light on the underlying mechanisms and by doing that, better understand the social and physical reality. It also has great potential for social transformation. The stratified nature of reality and the horizontal and vertical explanation in critical realism can be considered useful tools for a critical-emancipatory researcher's toolbox.

This paper is an introductory attempt to shed light on the potential of critical realism as an optical tool to critically read and change social reality. It is a first foray into this complex school of thought, in this particular case of the educational programs to combat poverty in the EU. In this sense it can be considered as a work in progress, which to improve in the future will have to fully recognize the key importance of the role of individual agency. This paper has focused on the relevance of understanding the layered nature of social reality and how critical realism provides a philosophical foundation to Marxism, leaving the importance of human agency without proper development. Future research work delving into critical realism will be necessary to include this aspect.

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Basic Income and Justice: Reflections for a Debate*

[English Version]

Renta básica y justicia: reflexiones para un debate

Rendimento Básico e Justiça: Reflexões para um Debate

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José Manuel Sánchez Ribas**

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2447-4190>

Spain

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Abstract

Basic income is the subject of an intense debate, which has been particularly relevant in relation to the concepts of 'distribution' and 'justice'. This is an idea that has developed into a transversal theory. Its scope is evidenced by the fact that it attracts not only left-wing political movements that understand the proposal to defend the extension of real freedom, but also liberals who advocate freedom for all, as opposed to dependence on the state. **Objective:** the purpose of this paper is to analyze and summarize various positions involved in this debate, which explores the relationship between justice and basic income. **Methodology:** the viewpoints of authors such as Van Parijs, Rawls, Dworkin, Nozick, Felipe Giménez Pérez, Daniel Raventós, Amartya Sen and Nancy Fraser were discussed and analyzed. The variety of authors and their analyses enabled for a diversified sample of positions. **Results:** Considering the limits and scope of some of the theoretical approaches focusing on the relationship between justice and basic income, the results of this research allow for a deeper understanding of the sociopolitical challenge of economic inequality through the idea of basic income, both

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** Master's student in Philosophy. Associate Member of CISI (Chartered Institute for Securities and Investments). Universitat Oberta de Catalunya. jmsrjarama@hotmail.com

on a nation-state scale and on a global scale. **Conclusions:** basic income is presented to us as an instrument in the struggle for social justice in increasingly unequal societies, despite the wealth they generate. In this way, this manuscript aims to understand and present the various positions on the problem of justice and distribution that may arise when discussing basic income. The purpose is therefore to initiate a debate on basic income and integrate it into a common project for creating an inclusive society that is more egalitarian and fair for all.

Keywords: basic income; liberalism; republicanism; utilitarianism; philosophical materialism.

Resumen

La renta básica es objeto de un intenso debate, el cual ha sido especialmente relevante en relación con los conceptos de 'distribución' y 'justicia'. Esta es una idea que se desarrolla como teoría transversal y su extensión se evidencia en el hecho de que atrae a movimientos políticos de izquierda, los cuales han comprendido la propuesta de defender la extensión de una libertad real; pero igualmente, atrae a los liberales, quienes defienden una libertad para todos, opuesta a la dependencia del Estado.

Objetivo: el objeto de este trabajo consistió en analizar y resumir las diversas posiciones participantes en ese debate, el cual indaga la relación entre la justicia y la renta básica.

Metodología: se trataron y analizaron las posiciones de autores como Van Parijs, Rawls, Dworkin, Nozick, Felipe Giménez Pérez, Daniel Raventós, Amartya Sen o Nancy Fraser. Este amplio abanico de autores y su análisis permitió tener una muestra diversificada de las posiciones que el asunto investigado permite. **Resultados:** a partir de considerar los límites y el alcance de algunos de los enfoques teóricos estudiados, que indagan en la relación entre la justicia y la renta básica, los resultados de esta investigación permiten profundizar en el reto sociopolítico de la desigualdad económica; tanto en la escala del Estado-Nación como en la escala global a través de la idea de renta básica.

Conclusiones: la renta básica se nos presenta como instrumento de lucha por la justicia social en sociedades cada vez más desiguales, a pesar de la riqueza que generan. De esta manera, con este manuscrito se ha tratado de entender y presentar las diferentes posturas que ante el problema de la justicia y la distribución se pueden plantear a la hora de tratar la discusión sobre la renta básica, y así debatirla para que se integren en un proyecto común de una sociedad inclusiva; más igualitaria y justa para todos.

Palabras clave: renta básica; liberalismo; republicanism; utilitarismo; materialismo filosófico.

Resumo

O rendimento básico é objeto de intenso debate, o que tem sido particularmente relevante em relação aos conceitos de "distribuição" e "justiça". Esta é uma ideia que se desenvolve como teoria transversal e a sua extensão é evidenciada pelo fato de atrair movimentos políticos de esquerda, que compreenderam a proposta de defender a extensão da liberdade real; mas igualmente, atrai os liberais, que defendem uma liberdade para todos, em oposição à dependência do Estado. **Objetivo:** o objetivo deste documento era analisar e resumir as várias posições envolvidas neste debate, que explora a relação entre a justiça e o rendimento básico. **Metodologia:** as posições de autores como Van Parijs, Rawls, Dworkin, Nozick, Felipe Giménez Pérez, Daniel Raventós, Amartya Sen e Nancy Fraser foram discutidas e analisadas. Esta vasta gama de autores e a sua análise permitiu ter uma amostra diversificada das posições que o assunto em investigação permite. **Resultados:** ao considerar os limites e o alcance de algumas das abordagens teóricas estudadas, que investigam a relação entre justiça e rendimento básico, os resultados desta investigação permitem-nos aprofundar o desafio sociopolítico da desigualdade económica, tanto à escala do Estado-nação como à escala global, através da ideia de rendimento básico. **Conclusões:** o rendimento básico é-nos apresentado como um instrumento na luta pela justiça social em sociedades cada vez mais desiguais, apesar da riqueza que geram. Desta forma, este manuscrito tentou compreender e apresentar as diferentes posições que podem ser tomadas sobre o problema da justiça e da distribuição quando se discute o rendimento básico, e debatê-lo para que possa ser integrado em um projeto comum para uma sociedade inclusiva; mais igualitária e mais justa para todos.

Palavras-chave: rendimento básico; liberalismo; republicanismo; utilitarismo; materialismo filosófico.

Introduction

Universal basic income has been the subject of intense debate from different political points of view as an economic-political, redistributive and a social justice instrument. In fact, there have been continuous discussions between liberal and leftist positions. We cannot underestimate the concept nor ignore its possible consequences, both of which are very relevant in relation to the concepts of 'distribution' and 'justice'.

Basic income has been presented as a potential solution to a variety of problems including poverty, precariousness, inequality, peacekeeping, climate change, domestic violence, gender discrimination, effective political participation, unemployment, the fulfillment of humanitarian duties, and distributive justice, among others. Laws have developed apparent basic incomes that do not meet such conditions; however, they have appropriated their denomination. This generates a false debate in which terms are confused. There are even those who have developed an alternative political economy theory based on basic income, as is the case of Ramiro Pinto Cañón (2003), author of *Los fundamentos de la renta Básica y la “perestroika” del capitalismo. Teoría alternativa sobre economía política en la sociedad tecnológica y del bienestar*.¹ Similarly, assumptions that oppose basic income for financial reasons have arisen. Such concerns include generating black money, facilitating informal work, encouraging unemployment, promoting welfarism, and prompting a pull factor of migration from developing countries, among others.

The concept of 'basic income'

In *Basic International Earth Network* (n. d.) (the international organization that concentrates a large part of the activity in relation to basic income) gives the following definition: “A Basic Income is a periodic cash payment given unconditionally to everyone on an individual basis, without means test or work requirement” (par. 1). In addition, five characteristics of basic income are indicated:

1. Periodic: paid at regular intervals, not as a one-time grant.

¹ The Fundamentals of Basic Income and the “perestroika” of Capitalism. An Alternative Theory on Political Economy in a Technological and Welfare Society.

Cash payment: payment is made in an appropriate medium of exchange, allowing those who receive it to decide what to spend it on. It is therefore paid neither in kind (such as food or services) nor in vouchers earmarked for a specific use.

3. Individual: paid on an individual basis and not, for example, to households.
4. Universal: paid to all, without means test.
5. Unconditional: paid with no requirement to work or demonstrate willingness to work. (BIEN, 2023, par. 2).

Today, there is a wide variety of basic income proposals circulating, which differ in aspects such as: the amount, the source of financing, certain measurers substituting basic income, etc. Further details exceed the purpose of this work therefore this study will be limited to accepting the general definition. Nonetheless, it is necessary to clarify that it is the plurality of functions described above that justifies the use of the different conceptions of basic income.

What is the justification for a basic income and what is its purpose?

Among the virtues that justify basic income, the most relevant are those that explain its capacity to reduce inequality and poverty. Additionally, it has the ability to intervene in the labor market and affect the development of a new concept of what work means within our society. However, basic income, as explained by Durán and quoted by Pinto (2003), can imply much more. “It does not, in itself, mean a radical transformation of the system since it is possible within capitalism. Nevertheless, it has the potential to be transformative since it attacks the basis of capital head-on, namely, wage labor as the sole source of income”. (Durán, as cited in Pinto, 2003, p. 25).

Basic income can be used to meet three goals: humanitarian, political legitimacy, and distributive justice. These three objectives can be used to eliminate extreme poverty by ensuring all the necessary resources for political rights and freedoms are effective and not just formal; or, to distribute profits or income in the correct way according to the concept of 'justice' The main focus of this paper is distributive justice, however these aspects related to basic income cannot be separated.

Basic Income, Justice and Distribution

Using basic income as a tool of justice requires the need to establish an understanding of it. In order for a global and balanced scope of application, it must be related to the opinion of the social group represented in democratic political institutions, that is, once legitimacy has been guaranteed.

Van Parijs (1995) has offered one of the most articulate defenses based on considerations of distributive justice, explaining that the goal of distributive justice is the distribution of real freedom. In this context, the equitable distribution would be an equal one or, otherwise, one that maximized the allowance for those who have less. This distribution would stem from the idea that some wages are lower due to arbitrary factors (place of birth, social class, talents, etc.). However, this arbitrariness could be eliminated in the distribution of income, as well as in the guarantee of a fair allocation of real freedom by taxing labor income with a high tax—the highest sustainable rate—and then distributing what is obtained among everyone—whether they work or not—in the form of universal basic income.

The idea of basic income arises in Van Parijs (2016) when identifying/discerning errors in leftist policies and thinking: “The left needed to find another perspective, one that went beyond the ways of rearranging the system” (par. 1). There is a lot of Marx in this commitment to praxis, given that it is fundamental human activity that defines man as such and the means by which he produces historical reality resulting in the development of an action and a project leading to a transformation, based on the knowledge of material reality. Van Parijs goes beyond the economy with the basic income and in order to solve them, he addresses the dehumanizing effects of the socioeconomic system. The origin of Van Parijs’ (2016) philosophy is clear when he states: “[...] Marx shared with the utopian socialists: a society in which everyone would contribute voluntarily according to their ability (what may be regarded as paid work or voluntary work) and would receive based on their needs” (par. 3).

Today, Van Parijs (2016) justifies the need for basic income in three main causes. Firstly, the mismatch between growth and unemployment, secondly, the extent of precariousness, and finally, the relationship between climate change and rapid growth. Basic income allows “[...] to propose a vision of the future that offers an alternative to neoliberal servitude as well as to nationalist retreat, to social-democratic bricolage as well as to communist millenarianism” (par. 9), with a global vision of “[...] a conception of social justice as “real freedom”

for everyone, which implies an unconditional income at the highest sustainable level” (par. 10).

Individuals have to discover what kind of society has connection with basic income, supported by both left-wing and liberal positions. That is why Van Parijs explains that “[...] the idea attracts a leftist that has understood that it is about defending the extension of real freedom” (para. 11) and that “[...] the idea appeals to liberals who are horrified by bureaucracy and state protection, and who really want to defend the freedom of all, and not only that of the rich” (par. 12).

It would be the object of another study to deal with what Raventós (2022) explains in this regard:

The main differences between the right-wing and left-wing BI proposals are: 1) In how the basic income is financed, 2) in the economic policy measures that are additionally proposed together with the BI and 3) in the way of understanding the neutrality of the State. (par. 6).

Van Parijs (2016) was clear that from John Rawls principles of justice he not only justified some kind of “social minimum”, but even more specifically its unconditional form. Primarily because Rawls’ *Theory of Justice* (1971), took the concept, the then pioneering, *negative income tax* to exemplify the institutional implementation of the principle of the difference, Van Parijs (2014) also explains that “[...] James Tobin used this concept in a broad sense that covered what he called *demogrant*², that is, precisely a universal basic income” (pp. 174-175). However, Rawls does not accept the idea of basic income:

John Rawls disagreed [...] telling me that contrary to what the difference principle may indeed suggest, his own better judgment was that Malibu surfers could not legitimately claim that public benefits subsidized their lifestyle. (Van Parijs, 2014, p. 175).

Van Parijs (2014) believes that Rawls’ Difference Principle justifies basic income, despite Rawls’ rejection “Ironically, the very move Rawls thought necessary to prevent his theory from granting an unconditional basic income actually made it more akin to the latter” (p. 182). Rawl’s rejection may be due to the belief that if the distribution of property is satisfactory then it is not necessary

2 «In various papers, James M. Buchanan presented a proposal for a '*demogrant*', a form of universal basic income that applied the principles of generality and non-discrimination to taxes and transfers from the scheme and had to be implemented as a constitutional rule outside the realm of everyday politics» (Lehto and Meadowcroft, 2021, p. 145, own translation).

to distribute more welfare. Therefore, the theory requires a division of property that does not require redistribution through universal income.

What about Dworkin and Nozick?

Dworkin's theory (1986) argues that legal practices of a Rule of law are only valid when based on the theoretical idea of equality. Dworkin believes legal conventionalism is presented as a possible interpretation of the determining bases of law. This implies that the ultimate goal of the rule of law is efficiency or similar values such as legal security or authority. The theory therefore presumes that there is a certain view that political and social life is determined by a commitment to the law and its enforcement. This view is based on a kind of pact between conflicting interests, which evolves into a «Community of Principles». In this circumstance, political rights and obligations are not dependent on specific decisions of its members or constituents, but are a consequence of the principles that determine and justify those decisions.

According to the above, basic income is compatible with Dworkin's (1986) statement, as it can be considered as an equal preliminary step to address underprivileged people and compensate for natural inequalities or disadvantages. In this context, people would have identical purchasing power, which would therefore establish a liberal society with equal individuals.

Taking a close look at Nozick's (1988) ideas, it appears he is largely inspired by the political philosophy of John Locke (2005) and offers a moral justification of liberalism and the idea that a maximal State is not any more morally permissible than a Minimum State. On the one hand, Nozick (1988) believes that a free system would be one in which individuals could exercise their rights without restrictions—it includes the right to sell themselves as slaves. On the other hand, the theory is based on the right of ownership that each person has on themselves - this is called "self-ownership". These rights legitimize that there is an unequal appropriation of external goods. Nozick (1988) argues that those who have "external" assets are as free as those who depend on others to live.

It seems clear that the basic income would be incompatible with this way of thinking, as it poses an unresolvable conflict with the legitimization of unequal appropriation. It may be argued that there would be a compatibility if we thought that basic income would contribute to greater autonomy of the individual. However, this viewpoint would be rejected by Nozick (1988) as he denies that there are true social goods — such as basic income — that for their own benefit require the postponement of individual projects.

Consequently, philosophical libertarianism is incompatible with the concept of basic income in contrast with the concept of freedom without conditions or limitations. Furthermore, libertarians believe in a minimum State and believe basic income would go beyond it, as it would imply an unacceptable level of state intervention in both the economy and social life. They even oppose laws that protect people from harming themselves. To oppose any income that could improve the economic situation would fall into a similar category.

Utilitarianism and Basic Income

Utilitarianism, on the other hand, defends that the major principle of morality consists in maximizing happiness for the largest number of people. The proposal for a universal and unconditional basic income from utilitarianism could be accepted because it would result in an increase in obvious general utility through the payment of a universal and unconditional periodic income. (It is completely consistent with the principles defended).

John Stuart Mill (2014) defines this trend as the tendency to seek the greatest possible happiness to human beings and to avoid suffering or pain. Therefore, the search for common happiness becomes the axis of this philosophical trend, as it is recognized in his work *The Utilitarianism*.

If the idea of basic income is accepted as a moral proposal, an ethical project of justice and freedom seeking common happiness, then it must relate to utilitarianism, which is also constructed and related to a moral and ethical way of life. The utilitarian theory can offer an effective justification to the right to a basic income.

The Basic Income from Philosophical Materialism

Giménez Pérez (2007) rejected the idea of basic income in *The basic income Philippe Van Parijs y el "liberalismo auténtico"*. Perez understands it as a link between the idea and the approaches of liberalism, yet also for its effectiveness and feasibility:

The problem is whether such a proposal is feasible. For me it is owned by an empty spirit that has not thought about the repercussions that its implementation

would have on welfare states, which are going through a fiscal crisis that one day could lead to bankruptcy. (p. 18).

This part of his approach is surprisingly similar to Rawls' (1971) theory, although there would be a lack of Malibu surfers in the argument that the American philosopher refers to.

Republicanism and Basic Income

Daniel Raventós exposes this topic in his book *El derecho a la existencia* (Raventós, 1999) and in *Renta Básica de ciudadanía. Filosofía, economía y política* (Raventós, 2006). He states that to have secure material income is indispensable for political independence and competence. The author argues:

A good basic income, understood as a way to guarantee the material conditions of existence, would increase the freedom of citizenship. Basic income would make poor and deprived people more independent, more able to make their voice heard, and to resist to the processes of deprivation that takes place all around in the name of globalization. Basic income would allow the possibility of living without having other peoples' permission. (Raventós, 2006, p. 23).

Furthermore, he believes that basic income “[...] fosters economic independence, and as a result prevents, even partially, a segment of the citizenry from succumbing to some forms of domination” (Raventós, 1999, p. 55).

Amartya Sen and Basic Income

Amartya Sen (2006) questions the concept of 'development' claiming that it is not enough to measure a society. Indeed, he asserts that the concept has a distinct conception of a “good human life”. Despite the fact that he claims, “[...] the promotion of the richness of the entire human life, before that of the economy in which human beings live” (par. 3) this is only part of the development concept. In another article, he suggested that:

[...] in the end, the real debate about globalization has nothing to do with the efficiency of markets or the significance of modern technology; rather the issue is the existence of power inequalities. (Sen, 2000, par. 13).

Sen (1997, 2000, 2006) criticizes inequality and argues that globalization may become a more equitable and effective phenomenon depending on how people act. In other words, institutions by themselves are neither good nor bad, meaning everything depends on how they are used, therefore people can intervene to reduce inequalities. However, the philosopher also believes that political and social commitment cannot be replaced, which is why people must delve into democracy.

According to Sen (2000; 2006), the basic income proposal has limitations. He states that basic income is a means to freedom that affects the set of choices from which a person can choose. However, if freedom is of interest Sen questions whether focusing on the type rather than the extent of freedom that a person truly has is sufficient. Sen believes that equal ownership of property or basic income can coexist with serious inequalities in real freedom. Would basic income solve this issue? He seems to doubt it in his book *Choice, Welfare and Measurement* (Sen, 1997).

Nancy Fraser and Basic Income

Nancy Fraser (2008) proposes redefining the concept of 'justice' in a welfare system. These justice theories must become three-dimensional by incorporating the political dimension of representation, the economic dimension of distribution and the cultural dimension of recognition. All three areas cause economic imbalances and social inequalities which must be addressed.

According to Fraser's theoretical proposal, basic income can make a significant contribution because it affects both the field of injustice in the resource distribution as well as the reduction and balance of iniquity in the areas of recognition and representation. By guaranteeing equal resources as a starting point, basic income would affect the material conditions of existence of the entire population as well as gender equality. In addition, because basic income affects both the objective economy as well as the «symbolic economy», it would also strengthen women's individuality and empowerment in the scope of their representation.

To consider gender equity and the convenience or not of basic income, Fraser establishes seven principles presented in the report *Allí donde se cruzan la renta básica y los feminismos* by Marcos (2018): anti-poverty, anti-exploitation,

income equality, equality of leisure-time, equality of respect, anti-marginalization, and anti-androcentrism.

Fraser contends that when recognition and redistribution are addressed, a conception of justice is complete. Otherwise, it will be cut off. That is why her socioeconomic and feminist concerns are brought together in the article, *Contradictions of Capital and Care*. Fraser (2016) states that:

The current “crisis of care” is rooted in capitalism's inherent social contradiction or, more precisely, in the acute form in which this contradiction is conceived today in financialized capitalism. If that is the case, then this crisis will not be resolved by making minor social policy changes; rather, the path to its resolution will require a profound structural transformation of this social order (p. 132).

As a result, Fraser advocates for «reinventing the distinction between production and reproduction, as well as reimagining the gender order» (Fraser, 2016, p. 132). Any reinvention necessitates ideas and, as she claims, «small social policy changes» are insufficient. The ideas presented must be novel and address unresolved issues, implying changes to the paradigm that is regarded as stable. Basic income is therefore completely consistent with Fraser's approaches (2008, 2016; Fraser & Butler, 2016), as it is presented as a necessary tool for transforming the economic-social order in an era of global feminist thought and practice.

Conclusion

When basic income is discussed, the concepts of 'justice' and 'distribution' are connected, which relates to the parallel idea of what a just society *is* or *should be*. However, as it is to be expected, different interpretations of this relationship exist. For some, basic income could be a tool to protect peoples' lives in a more just and supportive way, putting an end to the destructive globalization and the imposed market despotism, with its degraded labor relations and precarization. For others, basic income may represent a concrete vision of justice that strengthens those with less and, as a result, regulates market dysfunctions. Other points of view add their own nuances, arguments or doubts, but what can indeed be noted is that few people remain passive in the face of basic income.

In this context, basic income is a tool in the struggle for social justice in increasingly unequal societies, despite more and more wealth is constantly being produced in these societies. However, as demonstrated in this article, different

points of view regarding justice and distribution exist when discussing basic income. Once such perspectives have been understood and analyzed, they can be debated in order to be integrated into a larger project aimed at creating an inclusive, more egalitarian and just society for all.

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Levels of Urban Primacy in the Urban System of the Administrative and Planning Region of the Coffee Region*

[English Version]

Niveles de primacía urbana en el sistema urbano de la Región Administrativa y de Planificación del Eje Cafetero

Níveis de primazia urbana no sistema urbano da Região Administrativa e de Planejamento do Eje Cafetero

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Mario Alberto Gaviria Ríos**

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8495-4260>

https://scienti.minciencias.gov.co/cvlac/visualizador/generarCurriculoCv.do?cod_rh=0000391247

Colombia

Diana Milena Galvis Moreno***

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7744-3430>

https://scienti.minciencias.gov.co/cvlac/visualizador/generarCurriculoCv.do?cod_rh=0002021996

Colombia

Andrés Felipe Aristizábal Toro****

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3141-2123>

https://scienti.minciencias.gov.co/cvlac/visualizador/generarCurriculoCv.do?cod_rh=0001771264

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** PhD in Territorial Studies. Universidad Católica de Pereira. mario.gaviria@ucp.edu.co

*** Master's Degree in Regional Development Management. Universidad Católica de Pereira. diana.galvis@ucp.edu.co

**** Master in Regional Development Management. Universidad Alexander Von Humboldt. Aaristizabal22@cue.edu.co

Abstract

Objective: The article explores the existing scenarios and premium dynamics in the Coffee Axis Administrative and Planning Region (RAP EC) and its departmental entities. **Methodology:** For this purpose, researchers started from the range-size principle and distanced themselves from approaches that associated urban primacy with dysfunctionality in the spatial system under analysis, conceiving it as a particular aspect of urban concentration characteristic of capitalist development. The municipality was adopted as the spatial unit of analysis, and the population variable recorded by DANE in the 1985, 1993, 2005, and 2018 censuses was taken as input. **Results:** Indicators of inequality in the spatial distribution of this population were estimated, and indicators of urban primacy and chronological intensity in the evolution of this primacy condition were calculated. The information obtained in this way served to demonstrate the presence of primacy conditions at the departmental level, but the absence of such circumstances at the regional level. **Conclusions:** These results allowed concluding that there is a polycentric organization of the system of cities in the RAP EC, which constitutes a development asset favoring territorial cohesion in the region. This organization is based on the articulation of the departmental capitals.

Keywords: urban concentration; urban hierarchy; urban dynamics; city system; primacy.

Resumen

Objetivo: en el artículo se exploran los escenarios y la dinámica primacial existentes en la Región Administrativa y de Planificación del Eje Cafetero (RAP EC) y sus entidades departamentales. **Metodología:** para ese propósito se parte del principio rango-tamaño y se toma distancia de los planteamientos que asocian la primacía urbana con una disfuncionalidad en el sistema espacial en análisis, al concebirla como un aspecto particular de la concentración urbana característica del desarrollo capitalista. Se adopta como unidad espacial de análisis el municipio, y se toma como insumo la variable de población registrada por el DANE en los censos de 1985, 1993, 2005 y 2018. **Resultados:** se estiman indicadores de desigualdad en la distribución espacial de esa población, y se calculan indicadores de primacía urbana y de intensidad cronológica en la evolución de esa condición primacial. La información así obtenida sirvió para evidenciar la presencia de condiciones primaciales a nivel de departamentos, pero inexistencia de tales circunstancias en la escala regional. **Conclusiones:** estos resultados permiten concluir sobre la presencia de una organización policéntrica del sistema de ciudades de la RAP EC, que con fundamento en la articulación de las capitales de departamento se constituye en un activo de desarrollo que favorece la cohesión territorial en la región.

Palabras clave: concentración urbana; jerarquía urbana; dinámica urbana; sistema de ciudades; primacía.

Resumo

Objetivo: O artigo explora os cenários existentes e a dinâmica primacial na Região Administrativa e de Planejamento do Eixo Cafeeiro (RAP EC) e suas entidades departamentais. **Metodologia:** Para este fim, partimos do princípio do tamanho de faixa e nos distanciamos das abordagens que associam a primazia urbana à disfuncionalidade no sistema espacial em análise, concebendo-a como um aspecto particular da concentração urbana característica do desenvolvimento capitalista. O município é adotado como a unidade espacial de análise, e a variável populacional registrada pela DANE nos censos de 1985, 1993, 2005 e 2018 é utilizada como input. **Resultados:** São estimados indicadores de desigualdade na distribuição espacial desta população, e são calculados indicadores de primazia urbana e de intensidade cronológica na evolução desta condição de primazia. As informações assim obtidas serviram para demonstrar a presença de condições de primazia a nível departamental, mas a ausência de tais circunstâncias a nível regional. **Conclusões:** Estes resultados nos permitem concluir sobre a presença de uma organização policêntrica do sistema de cidades no RAP CE, que, com base na articulação das capitais departamentais, constitui um ativo de desenvolvimento que favorece a coesão territorial na região.

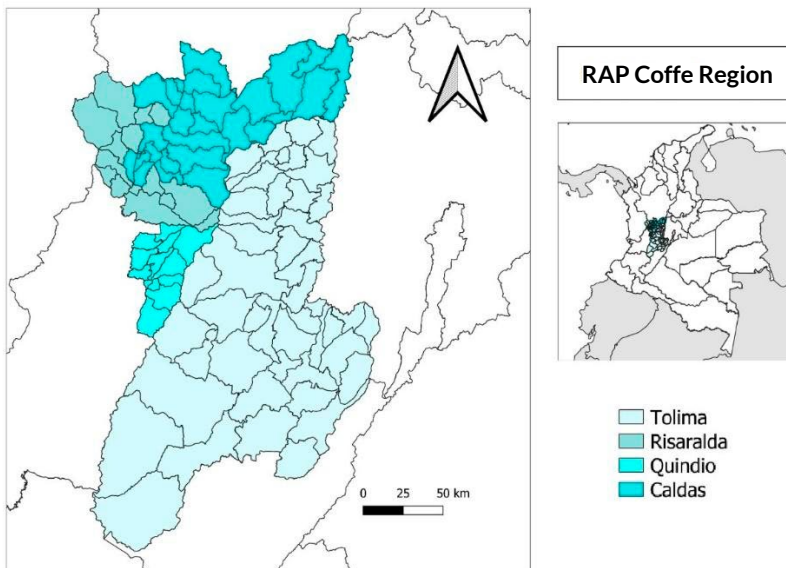
Palavras-chave: concentração urbana; hierarquia urbana; dinâmica urbana; sistema de cidades; primazia.

Introduction

In the study and understanding of urban dynamics, the socio-spatial condition of urban primacy has been of priority interest. In the interpretation of these results, some approaches observe it as a manifestation of dysfunctionality in the conformation of a system of cities. Others consider it a particular expression of the process of urban concentration characteristic of capitalist development.

In addition to the interest in studying this urban phenomenon at the regional level, there is a need to advance the identification and understanding of the various elements that influence the territorial planning of the Coffee Region Administrative and Planning Region (RAP EC). The Coffee Axis is a territorial association that integrates the Colombian departments of Caldas, Risaralda, Quindío, and Tolima, along with their 100 municipalities (Figure 1). Among its defining elements are the spatial distribution of the population and the phenomena of urban concentration.

Figure 1. Administrative and Planning Region of the Coffee-growing Axis (RAP EC).



Aligned with academic and regional development management concerns, this document presents the results of a study on the conditions and primary dynamics present in the RAP EC. The theoretical approach of this work is based

on the rank-size principle, which defines the population of a city (or municipality) according to the position it occupies, based on population size, in the group of cities within the region under study.

Urban primacy is understood as a specific structure of a city system in which the largest city has a significantly higher population than the other cities, indicating an excessive weight in the system's configuration and functioning. In addition to other approaches, Cuervo's proposal (2004) is accepted, interpreting urban primacy as contradicting the so-called "Zipf's Law" and as a specific aspect of urban concentration. In this way, it distances itself from approaches that associate it with dysfunctionality in the urban system under analysis.

The methodological design utilized the rank-size principle to estimate indicators of inequality in the spatial distribution of the population. This exercise was complemented by calculating conventional indicators of urban primacy, as well as an indicator of chronological intensity to analyze the evolution of these primacy conditions. Estimates and calculations of indicators were made at the departmental and regional levels.

In addition to this introduction, the structure of the document includes four other sections containing a review of the theoretical and study background. This section discusses the approach of urban primacy as dysfunctionality and also includes a review of some previous national and international works. Likewise, the document provides a description of the methodological aspects that guided the proposed analysis and the presentation of the results. It highlights that, unlike what was observed at the departmental scale, at the level of the RAP EC, the evidence obtained allows ruling out the presence of primacy conditions. Instead, a polycentric configuration is evident in its system of cities. Finally, the conclusions section proposes this polycentric condition as a development asset that favors territorial cohesion in the region.

Theoretical and Study Backgrounds

The concept of "urban primacy" emerged as counter-evidence to the consideration that the "desirable" behavior of an urban network requires that the size of cities behave as an arithmetic function of their rank, which is known in different fields as Zipf's Law. Given this normative condition, primacy has traditionally been interpreted as a symptom of dysfunctionality or disintegration of the urban network. However, this interpretation neglects the fact that this law corresponds more to a particular version of the rank-size principle, as proposed by Cuervo (2004).

The rank-size principle was initially proposed by Auerbach in 1913 (as cited in Cuervo, 2004). It explains the population P_i of city i as a function of its rank r_i , defined in decreasing order of size within the national or regional set of cities (equation 1).

$$(1) \quad P_i = \frac{K}{r_i^q}$$

The parameter q is close to one (1) in absolute value, and K corresponds to the size of the largest city; since $P_1 = K/1$.

G.K. Zipf (as cited in Pumain and Saint-Julien, 2014) popularized a particular version of the rank-size principle, known as Zipf's Law, based on his studies on city size distributions and observed regularities. In this case, he considered the value of parameter q equal to one (1), so that the relationship contained in equation 1 describes the population size of the cities as an inverse proportion of their rank: the second city has half the population of the first, the third one third, the fourth one fourth, and so on successively. This relationship in Zipf's approach assumed a normative character, as an expression of the degree of unity and integration of the respective urban system (Cuervo, 2004).

Urban primacy constitutes the main counter evidence to Zipf's Law. In the first place, because it constitutes a phenomenon in which the relationships between the first city of a country (region) and its urban network are characterized by an excessive weight in the way the latter is configured and functions. Secondly, the presence of primacy conditions in a system of cities is not necessarily indicative of dysfunctionality, as noted by Cuervo (2004).

Referring to urban primacy as an expression of abnormality in the configuration of a system of cities in Latin America, Manuel Castells (1973) introduced the term "macrocephaly" in urban research as part of his theory of dependent urbanization. This expression originates from medicine and refers to a pathological state that requires treatment. In Castells' approach, it is used to describe the existence of major cities or urban centers that are disproportionately larger than the rest of the cities in the system that support them.

In Castells' approach, urban macrocephaly is an expression of a structural dysfunction characteristic of Latin American urban systems. It corresponds to a social pathology that is considered peculiar to the Latin American case, and the possibility that it constitutes a generic disease of capitalist urbanization is ruled out. Therefore, speaking of urban macrocephaly implies, according to the theory of dependent urbanization, recognizing a particular "structural malformation" of the Latin American case.

However, the process of urban concentration, as a phenomenon associated with the primacy condition of a city, is inherent to industrial capitalist development (Singer, 1979). In reference to this, Neil Smith (2020) warns that uneven development and territorial inequality are phenomena closely linked to the capitalist system: “Uneven development is the concrete manifestation of the production of space in capitalism” (p. 129). In correspondence with the above, it cannot be affirmed that primacy as urban macrocephaly is a peculiar aspect of the Latin American urbanization process. In a historical-comparative analysis, Cuervo (2004) evidences the presence of these conditions in Western and Eastern European countries during the 19th and 20th centuries. Likewise, Pumain and Saint-Julien (2014) highlight the existence of this urban condition in all the countries of the world, although to a greater degree in developing countries. For this reason, they consider it a rule rather than an anomaly in the configuration of urban systems.

Similarly, it is not clear to argue that urban macrocephaly corresponds to a structural “dysfunctionality,” in the sense that it generates obstacles to the process of capitalist accumulation; on the contrary, the urban concentration that accompanies it, can generate advantages of agglomeration due to economies of urbanization. With this, exchange, correspondence and learning are facilitated (Fujita et al., 2000; Duranton & Puga, 2003).

In relation to the above, in the 2009 world development report, prepared by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank, 2009), it is argued that one of the transformations that has favored the good performance of economies, is the greater density of cities. In this way, proximity produces immense benefits and eases access to the world of agglomeration economies, and warns that the development of the territories will continue to be unbalanced, although it can and should be inclusive: “Growing cities, the mobile population and dynamic trade have been the catalysts of progress in the developed world for the past two centuries. Now these forces are driving the most dynamic parts of the developing world” (p. 13).

In Colombia, the mission of experts for the strengthening of the system of cities, created by the National Planning Department (DNP, 2014), bases its analysis on a conceptual framework focused on the urbanization and agglomeration phenomenon. From this, it is highlighted that cities have acquired and will continue to occupy a leading role as “engines of development” due to their ability to achieve better use of economies of scale. This favors an increase in integral development and the reduction of poverty in the country. Correspondingly, it formulates six strategic lines aimed at promoting from the nation the economic, social, and territorial development of cities as a system.

Therefore, like *Zipf's Law*, there is no normative basis to consider the presence of urban primacy as an expression of some abnormality. Consequently, in Cuervo's line (2004), this urban phenomenon is not assumed as dysfunctionality or abnormality, but is seen as a particular and specific dimension of a more general and comprehensive process: that of urban concentration. This orientation, it is intended to demonstrate that the relationships between the first cities of the RAP EC and the rest of the municipal entities are characterized by an excessive weight, in the way in which the urban system that they integrate works and is configured.

Among the factors associated with the condition of urban primacy, Cuervo (2004) argues that its historical trajectory has been related to socioeconomic transformations and industrialization phases, highlighting a certain inertia in the process that reduces the possibility of abrupt changes as a result of these transformations. Alternatively, the fundamental determinants of the synchronous function of urban primacy are related to the size of the country (region), the degree of territorial integration, the maturity of the urbanization process, and the urban network structure.

A larger area tends to reduce the degree of primacy, since it is more demanding for the larger city to impose a certain monopoly or hegemony of an economic, political, or social nature. Greater integration of the national (regional) space contributes to expanding the radius of influence of the primary city, thus expanding its possibilities of becoming a hegemonic city. In relation to the above, the disintegration of spaces may be associated with geographical accidents that isolate regions, with ethnic, socioeconomic, cultural, religious or linguistic differences. In turn, this may be the manifestation of a weak state intervention capacity at the regional level (Cuervo, 2004).

The urban phenomenon of primacy is the subject of research in different fields and scales. Some recent studies at the Latin American level are those of Parnreiter (2005), Antillón (2013), Navarrete (2017), and Gómez (2020). Parnreiter (2005) sets out to study the repercussions of globalization on urban development in Latin America in a comparative exercise for Mexico and Chile, and considers the development of urban primacy as one of the aspects to be analyzed. He observed a reduction in the demographic primacy of Mexico City, driven by integration into the North American economic zone, while in Santiago de Chile the growth of the advanced services sector was decisive for the conservation of its primary condition.

In a historical analysis, Antillón (2013) reviewed the evolution of urban primacy in Nicaragua between 1870 and 1950—a period in which the city of Managua consolidated itself as the primary city of its urban system—in a process linked to the transition of the Nicaraguan economy from commercial capitalism, oriented to the export of raw materials and agricultural products, to

an incipient industrial capitalism. In his statements, the author highlighted “the importance of considering primacy, not only in demographic terms, but also in political, administrative and infrastructure terms” (p. 27), phenomena that were widely related.

With a different approach, Gómez (2020) explored the relationship between public spending, subnational taxation and reduction of urban primacy. For the analysis, he used a sample of 38 countries (16 from Latin America and 22 from other regions around the world), considering primacy as the dependent variable, and spending and the decentralized public finances as the independent variables. In this way, he was able to show an inverse relationship that suggests that more efficient decentralized public spending contributes to the reduction of urban primacy.

Another variant in the analysis is the one proposed in the works of Navarrete (2017) and Schweitzer (2020). The first conducts a study with a historical-chronological approach in which the impact that was and still is generated by the conflicts for urban primacy in Honduras is explored. The second identifies the roots of urban concentration, primacy, and macrocephaly in Argentina, relating these processes to the development models that the country went through to advance in proposals for territorial reorganization.

In the Colombian case, recent works include those by Montoya (2013), Gallego and Suárez (2017) and Rubiano and Eligio (2019). Montoya (2013) argues that with the momentum of globalization, at the national level, centripetal forces tend to prevail over centrifugal ones. This makes evident the transformation of the urban model, in force until the eighties of the 20th century, toward an urban network with a central axis in Bogotá, which gradually strengthens its position as a primary city at the national level. It also warns that urban systems, such as the Coffee Axis, have lost their relevance in the national context.

Gallego and Suárez (2017) suggest that the current characterization of Colombia's urban concentration process is one of “First nature” configuration, in which Bogotá established itself as the country's most important economic hub as a result of initial relief conditions, state intervention, and an economic transformation process focused on industrialization. The authors advise that “for the Colombian case, the primary process of urbanization led to an enlargement of regional disparities, limiting as a result the country's economic development” (p. 56).

Finally, in a comparative study, Rubiano and Eligio (2019) discuss the revision of the population, economic, and state-level fundamentals in the Administrative and Special Central Planning Region (RAP Central) and the Administrative and Pacific Planning Region (RAP Pacific), from which they identify the presence of what they refer to as “urban macrocephalites” produced by Bogota and Cali.

According to their interpretation, this is an inappropriate configuration that leads to asymmetries with the cities over which they have immediate influence. As a result, it is necessary to put into practice a model that deconcentrates and takes note of this phenomenon.

Pioneering studies include those by Goueset (1998) and Cuervo (2004). The first provides evidence that shows that in Colombia, the first take off in the area around Bogota began in the 1950s. Goueset advises that the two periods of greatest intensity for the primary concentration of the country's capital took place between 1964 and 1973 and 1985 and 1990. This allows saying that this is a relatively recent socio-political development in the country, unlike its counterparts in Latin America, where this process has roots that go back to the early 20th century or even earlier.

Cuervo's (2004) is a substantial theoretical and methodological foundation for many earlier works; in it, the historical and spatial factors that determine urban primacy are discussed for 19 countries, including Colombia, three from western Europe, three from eastern Europe, seven from central America, and six from southern America. It is important to note that, in contrast to other continents, Latin America does not exhibit the same degree of industrial decline and urbanization as other continents. Colombia, however, exhibits a direct correlation between economic growth and urbanization, with levels and intensities that are lower than those of other countries in the region but higher than those of European countries.

Methodology

In RAP EC, which is made up of four departments, the following municipal conditions and dynamics are studied: A group of 100 territorial city entities, including Caldas, Quindío, Risaralda, and Tolima. The analysis' spatial unit is the municipality, and the observational variable is the population as recorded in the National Statistical Office's 1985, 1993, 2005, and 2018 censuses (DANE).

Beginning with the range-size principle, and using a univariate lineal regression exercise, the parameter q is estimated. It is a measure of the size disparity between cities based on their populations, with the more pronounced disparity being greater than its absolute value. Due to this, equation 1 is linearized by applying natural logarithms to both sides of the equation, resulting in equation 2¹.

¹ According to Pumain and Saint-Julien (2014), this estimate attempts to adjust the observed distribution of the population to a statistical distribution model before establishing a dependency relationship between the population and the range of the cities, which is inappropriate given that, in the construction of the initial

$$(2) \quad \text{Ln}P_i = A - q\text{Ln}r_i$$

An absolute value of q that is different from one (1) is evidence against the Zipf Law, so a value above the unit is a first sign of the presence of fundamental conditions in the studied city system. To determine this final point, the regional and departmental population indices for the two (S_2), four (S_4), and one (S_{11}) cities are calculated.

$$S_2 = \frac{P_1}{P_2}$$

$$S_4 = \frac{P_1}{P_2 + P_3 + P_4}$$

$$S_{11} = \frac{2P_1}{P_2 + P_3 + \dots \dots P_{11}}$$

The populations of the cities in ranges 1, 2, 3, 4, ..., and 11 are represented by $P_1, P_2, P_3, P_4, \dots$, and P_{11} , respectively.

Analyzing the results of these calculations, it is taken into consideration that the distribution of the population and the size of the cities are in accordance with the so-called Zipf Law when $S_2=2, S_4=1$, and $S_{11}=1$. When $S_2>2$ (S_{22}), $S_4>1$ (S_{41}), and $S_{11}>1$ ($S_{11}<1$) occur, the urban system exhibits a tendency toward concentration (dispersion), meaning that there are larger (small) cities than those that adhere to the rule of range-size. In this sense, fundamental conditions in the city system can be seen (Zhuoyong, 2008).

Finally, the Coefficient of Chronological Intensity (CIC), proposed by Cuervo (2004) and calculated using the index of the four cities, is used to estimate the Chronological intensity in the evolution of those initial conditions:

$$CIC = \frac{S_{4i} - S_{4j}}{i - j}$$

With S_{4i} y S_{4j} the primacy index for the four cities for years i and j , with i marking the conclusion of a period of urban primacy evolution and j marking the year that the period's evolution first began.

equation, the range is determined from the population.

Primacy Conditions in the RAP EC

According to data from the 2018 DANE national census of population and housing, there are 3,811,747 people living in the RAP EC, with about 75% of them living in the city and the remaining 25% living in urban centers and rural areas. This geographical area contains 7.9% of the country's population, with Tolima having the most residents there (34.9%), followed by Caldas, Risaralda, and Quindío (departmental entities accounting for 26.2%, 24.7%, and 14.2% of the population, respectively) (Table 1).

Table 1. RAP EC. Population by departments.

	1985		1993		2005		2018		Municipios
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	
Caldas	960.260	29.3	993.536	28.5	996.434	27.0	998.255	26.2	27
Risaralda	681.414	20.8	775.112	22.2	877.974	23.8	943.401	24.7	14
Quindío	450.100	13.7	477.438	13.7	511.181	13.9	539.904	14.2	12
Tolima	1.186.822	36.2	1.244.218	35.6	1.304.216	35.3	1.330.187	34.9	47
RAP	3.278.596	100	3.490.304	100	3.689.805	100	3.811.747	100	100

Source: calculations based on DANE census data.

The municipalities' largest cities are their respective departments' capitals: The four municipalities where 45.3% of the RAP EC's population is concentrated are Ibagué (529,635 residents), Pereira (467,269 residents), Manizales (434,403 residents), and Armenia (295,208 residents). Another town that stands out for its population is Dosquebradas, which has 217,178 residents. The remaining towns all have populations under 100,000, with eight of them having more than 50,000 residents, ten having between 30,000 and 50,000, and 77 having fewer than 30,000.

Recent data show that between 2005 and 2018, the region's population grew by 0.25 percent annually on average, significantly less than the 0.9% national average. Tolima and Caldas, the two departments with the highest population in the RAP, registered a lower population dynamic throughout the analysis period, and they reached annual growth rates of 0.15% and 0.01%, respectively, in the most recent intercensal period. These numbers were lower than those of Quindío (0.42%) and Risaralda (0.55%). This resulted in their sustained loss of participation in the region's overall population.

The municipalities of Villamaria and Riosucio in Caldas are the ones that exhibit the most dynamic growth on a local level, with intercensal population growth rates ranging between 1% and 1.55%. The first is adjacent to Manizales city and both of these municipalities have significant commercial activity. Dosquebradas, a Risaraldense municipality adds significant industrial activity to the commercial development, and the other is Pueblo Rico. The final two, Melgar (Tolima) and Salento (Quindío), have distinctive tourist attractions that define their dynamics.

Table 2 shows the results of the estimation of the parameter q for departments and RAP EC are recorded, in all cases the estimated coefficient is statistically different from zero. Its absolute value is greater for the departments of Quindío and Risaralda. This denotes greater inequality in the population size of its municipalities. According to the national census in 1993, Caldas, Tolima, and the RAP EC there was an absolute value of q lower than the unit; that evidenced a more balanced distribution of the population between its territorial entities, but, after the census, only the department of Tolima retained that condition.

The position of Risaralda and Quindío has to do with the size and degree of integration of their territory. The reduced size of Quindío and the fact that both departments have a strong connection between their municipalities and the capital cities and urban area favored the economic, political, and social hegemony of Pereira and Armenia. Another reason is that in these departments, the capital is imposed as the only regional center of provision of services and attractions, and the corresponding subcenters are located in the municipalities of Dosquebradas and Calarcá. Manizales, as the capital city of Caldas, shares the condition of regional center with La Dorada, a municipality in the Northeast of the department, and two of its subcenters, Riosucio and Supía, they are equally distanced north of the departmental entity (Gaviria & Aristizábal, 2020).

In the case of Tolima, its large size and limited territorial integration of its capital Ibagué join to explain its condition of department with a greater and persistent population dispersion. This is shown by the low degree of labor disruption of the population of the neighboring municipalities, it led it to be classified by the Mission for the strengthening of the City System as an only cluster city (DNP, 2014).

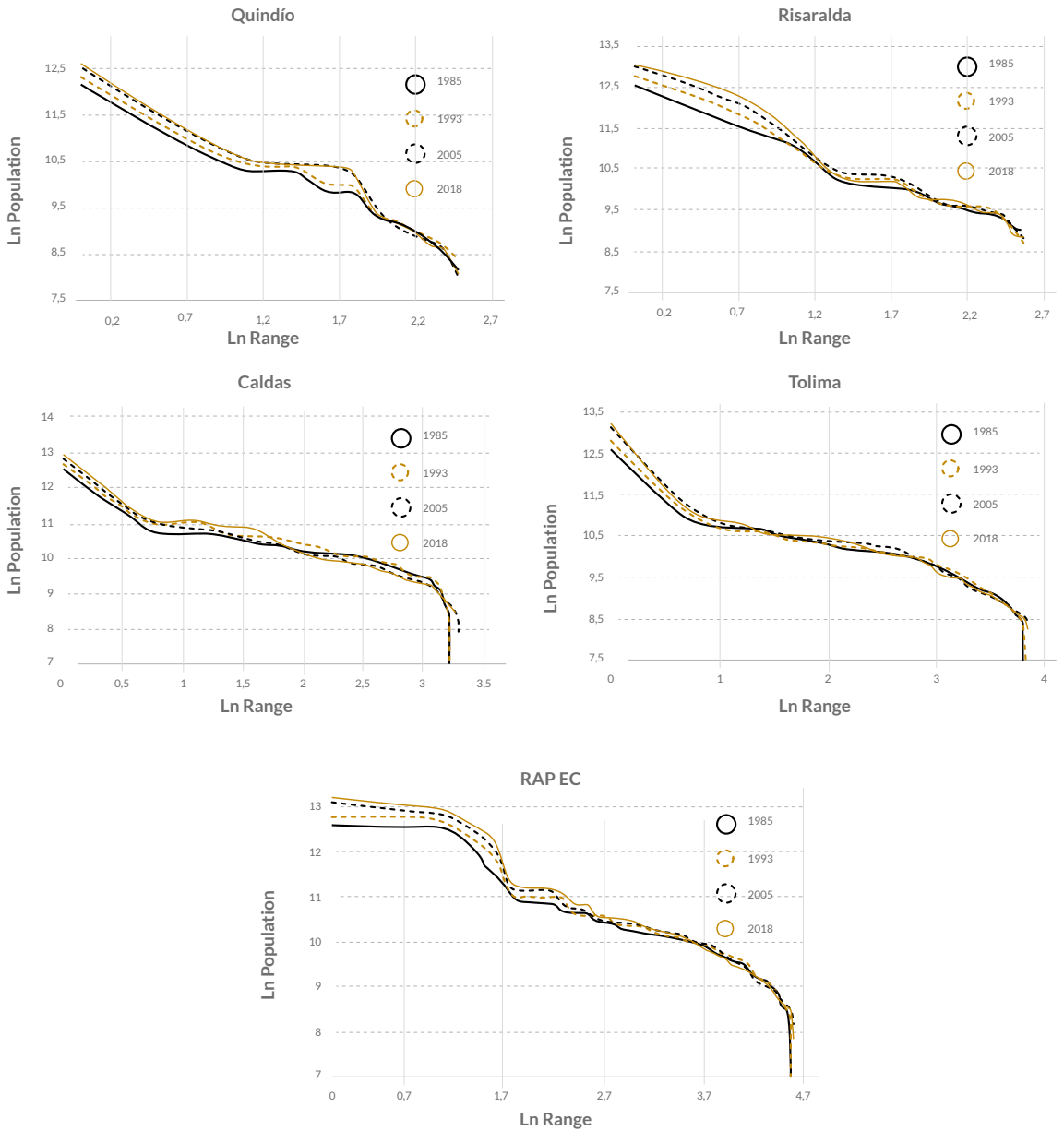
Table 2. RAP EC. Coefficient of size inequality of cities.

	Quindío				Risaralda			
	1985	1993	2005	2018	1985	1993	2005	2018
q	-1.466	-1.489	-1.489	-1.646	-1.299	-1.402	-1.507	-1.538
R²	0.974	0.974	0.974	0.921	0.980	0.969	0.972	0.931
Std error	0.081	0.077	0.077	0.152	0.054	0.073	0.074	0.121
Prob	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	Caldas				Tolima			
	1985	1993	2005	2018	1985	1993	2005	2018
q	-0.910	-0.982	-1.044	-1.114	-0.853	-0.891	-0.898	-0.909
R²	0.868	0.889	0.858	0.856	0.912	0.895	0.816	0.801
Std error	0.074	0.073	0.085	0.091	0.040	0.046	0.064	0.068
Prob	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
RAP EC								
	1985		1993		2005		2018	
q	-0.918		-0.972		-1.049		-1.091	
R²	0.931		0.932		0.952		0.956	
Std error	0.026		0.027		0.024		0.024	
Prob	0.000		0.000		0.000		0.000	

Source: Calculations based on DANE census data.

A common fact among the four departments and the RAP EC is the growing trend that shows the parameter q in its absolute value; it is reflected in the upward behavior of the curve slope that relates the natural logarithm of the range and the size of the municipalities (Figure 2). At the regional level, both behaviors show an increase in inequality in population distribution between their municipalities. It suggests an advance in population concentration processes that may be configuring or deepening primacy conditions on departmental and/or regional scales.

Figure 2. RAP EC, Range relationship – size, departments and region.



Source: Calculations based on DANE census data.

To review the presence of primacy conditions in the EC RAP, departments and dynamics of evolution, the primacy indices S_2 , S_4 , S_{11} and the Chronological Intensity Coefficient (CIC) recorded in Table 3 and Figure 3 were calculated. On the departmental scale, although with significant differences in their degrees, the four entities that are part of the planning region show primacy conditions of their capital due to $S_2 > 2$, $S_4 > 1$ and $S_{11} > 1$ values.

The lowest primacy condition is observed in Risaralda and it has decreased in the last intercensal periods. This is largely explained by the population expansion of the municipality of Dosquebradas, connected to the capital city Pereira, it has the largest recent annual intercensal growth of 1.23% in the department; it is higher by 0.53 percentage points to its capital. This department entity registered its largest primacy dynamic between 1993 and 2000 due to the migration to the capital and its urban area driven by the crisis of the coffee sector. Thus, while S_2 decreased, S_4 and S_{11} indicators showed higher increase.

Contrary to what Cuervo (2004) stated on fundamental determinants of synchronous function of urban primacy, Tolima and Caldas showed the highest degree of primacy. In both cases, the extension and minor territorial integration suggest a limit to the preponderance of their capitals in the way the city systems that comprise them are configured and functioned. However, in the observed situation, the fact that the peripheral municipalities of these departmental entities have been high expellers of population for violence and agricultural crisis weighs more (Dulcey, 2009). It allowed a population growth of the capitals quite higher than the departmental average.

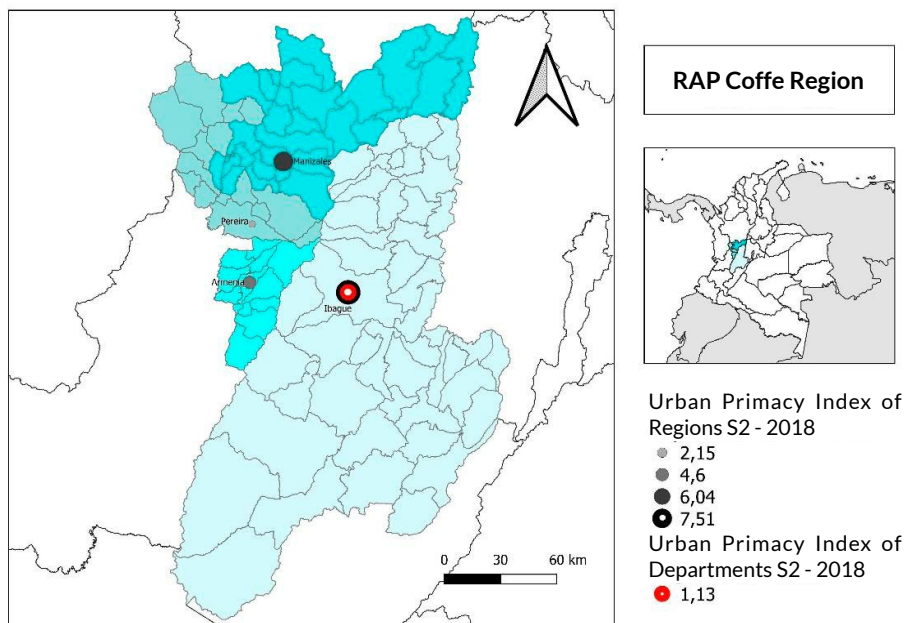
In Caldas, although its primacy condition showed a reduction in 1985 and 1993, the coffee crisis of the end of the last century accelerated this relative depopulation of peripheral municipalities and a greater concentration in the capital. It stopped the population dispersion process and promoted the intense resumption of primacy dynamics in the department at the regional level only surpassed by Tolima.

Table 3. RAP EC: Indicators of Urban Primacy.

Entity	Indicator	1985	1993	2005	2018
Quindío	S2	3.57	3.78	3.81	4.06
	S4	1.68	1.81	1.90	2.06
	S11	1.99	2.15	2.24	2.44
	CIC	0.016	0.008	0.012	
Risaralda	S2	2.84	2.54	2.47	2.15
	S4	1.52	1.53	1.57	1.45
	S11	1.86	1.95	2.11	2.08
	CIC	0.0014	0.0031	-0.0095	
Caldas	S2	5.52	5.13	5.23	6.04
	S4	2.13	1.95	2.21	2.31
	S11	1.76	1.67	2.09	2.24
	CIC	-0.023	0.022	0.008	
Tolima	S2	5.35	5.72	6.57	7.51
	S4	2.08	2.53	3.04	3.34
	S11	1.73	2.11	2.61	2.75
	CIC	0.056	0.043	0.023	
RAP EC	S2	1.02	1.03	1.16	1.13
	S4	0.39	0.40	0.46	0.44
	S11	0.51	0.52	0.61	0.58
	CIC	0.002	0.005	-0.002	

Source: Calculations based on DANE census data.

Figure 3. RAP EC, S2 Urban Primacy Index, 2018.



Source: Calculations based on DANE census data.

To an average degree, Quindío presents a primacy condition with sustained growth, although with a chronological intensity lower than Caldas and Tolima; it is coherent with its smaller geographical extension and greater integration of its territory. As in the previous cases, this rise of urban primacy was widely linked to migration that favored the population concentration in the capital and was driven by the coffee crisis of the late 20th century.

On the regional scale, according to values of the indicators $S2 < 2$, $S4 < 1$ and $S11 < 1$ observed for the RAP EC, no primacy conditions are revealed in the bigger city, Ibagué. By the influence of the presence and size of the capitals Pereira, Manizales, Armenia, and the municipality of Dosquebradas in which each of them houses more than 200,000 inhabitants. The largest dynamics of primacy rise lived between 1993 and 2005 that was influenced by migratory process toward the main urban centers, and this was motivated by the sudden fall of grain prices and the resulting crisis in the coffee activity when Ibagué was a clear recipient of population influxes. (Dulcey, 2009). However, the trend was slowed down in the last intercensal period; it helped to stabilize the levels of dispersion in the spatial distribution of RAP population.

Contrary to the reported in RAP EC, researches for other regions of the country such as the Central and the Pacific RAP, that covers a similar period (Rubiano & Eligio, 2019), show the existence of broad primacy conditions in these territories. In Central RAP whose main city is Bogotá, the S2 indicator reached levels with values between 13 and 15.03; while S4 and S11 values that fluctuated between 5.28 and 7.88. S2 values in the Pacific RAP, whose main city is Cali, ranged from 6.27 to 6.79; S4 values ranged from 2.38 to 2.62; while S11 values ranged from 2.33 to 2.53. In addition to the extensive primacy conditions, the urban system has a population concentration in the main city.

As previously discussed, there is no reason to assign a normative content to this spatial fact and qualify its presence as a dysfunctionality or abnormality in the urban system under consideration given the current state of knowledge on urban primacy. According to Cuervo's (2004) reflection, primacy is assumed to be a specific manifestation of a larger and more general process: urban concentration.

From this perspective, an examination of the phenomenon in the EC RAP revealed a distinct trend toward urban concentration in the capital cities of each of its constituent departments. In the case of Risaralda and its connected areas, there is a concentration of population and economic activity in which the capital cities gain weight in both configuration and functionality of the city system to which they belong. At the regional scale, centrifugal forces continue to supersede centripetal forces, leading to the configuration of an urban network comprising four dominant cities. Furthermore, the spatial distribution of the population within the region exhibits a significant degree of dispersion. The state of dispersion is influenced by the presence of functional centers (La Dorada) and subregional (Riosucio and Supía) of regional organization; and of tourist attraction nodes (Melgar) located in peripheral areas relative to the respective departmental capitals of Caldas and Tolima.

Therefore, the EC RAP shows a “polycentric” arrangement² in its urban network wherein the cities of Ibagué, Pereira, Manizales, and Armenia are the primary centers that foster and integrate the system, with the capacity to take turns in leading this endeavor. This condition can undoubtedly serve as a strength and a developmental asset, given that progress is achieved in the integration of these capital cities. In general terms, it is widely accepted that a regional structure comprising different interrelated centers is not only inherently more democratic, but also potentially better equipped to advance its developmental process. Because this structure allows for a conscious and active participation in its processes. (Maturana & Vial, 2011). Due to the same cause, the European

2 The term 'quadriccephaly' has been replaced with a more appropriate term for the current situation, because the focus in this study is on an abnormality in the arrangement of cities within the RAP EC system.

Union has incorporated polycentrism into its territorial strategy for mitigating the consequences of an inequitable development, and promoting territorial cohesion.

In relation to the latter, the *Territorial Agenda of the European Union 2020* “promotes polycentric and balanced territorial development” as a first priority, because “it is a key instrument for territorial development and cohesion.” It warns that when the most developed cities collaborate as parts of a polycentric system, they add value and act as centers that contribute to the regional development (European Union, 2011, p. 8).

Conclusions

The estimated indicator of inequality in city size allowed the RAP EC to be characterized as a region with a relatively dispersed population among the municipal entities that comprise it, and with special influence of this arrangement of departments of Caldas and Tolima. However, the last two intercensal periods showed that the process was reversed, changing the population distribution conditions among its municipalities. This fact suggests the presence of population concentration processes and the possibility of primacy conditions.

The evidence collected through traditional indicators of urban primacy indicates that, despite the observed decline in population dispersion, there is no presence of primacy conditions on a regional scale in its largest city: Ibagué. On the contrary, the EC RAP city system has a polycentric organization in which the four departmental capitals stand out: Ibagué, Pereira, Manizales, and Armenia all have functional characteristics that allow them to exercise regional development leadership.

This polycentric condition is a strength and a developmental asset for the administrative and planning region, because, based on the structures of the centers, urban nuclei with varying degrees of spatial interaction are favored. This is evident in various aspects, such as population mobility, the flow of information, and the exchange of goods and services, which collectively establish an interdependent regional system that relies on the interconnection of different centers. Currently, the latter is reinforced by various factors including the presence of transportation infrastructure, specifically the Coffee Highway and Bogotá-Buenaventura trunk road; the alignment of environmental goals in the vicinity of the Nevados National Natural Park; and the robust historical and cultural connections.

This interconnection mentioned here plays a significant role in the organization of the RAP EC's city system which facilitates agglomeration advantages for the smaller municipalities, thereby moving toward a more equitable and territorial cohesive development. The RAP EC is characterized by a significant number of small municipalities with 77% of them having fewer than 30,000 inhabitants. As a result, these municipalities are exempt from the issues associated with population concentration, such as pollution, road congestion, urban deterioration, and social exclusion. However, this situation also creates a spatial separation between these municipalities and the benefits of agglomeration economies for productive investment. How can these entities avail themselves of the agglomeration advantages enjoyed by their capital cities? The solution is to encourage collaboration, interaction and interconnectivity between these municipalities and their major cities.

The Regional Administrative Program for Economic Cooperation (RAP EC) must prioritize the development of interconnectivity among its territorial entities leading to the consolidation of a polycentric network in order that these small municipalities benefit from the productivity increase of economic concentration. In accordance with the provisions of the Law on Regions—specifically Law 1962 of 2019—which establishes the functions of the Administrative and Planning regions to promote the creation and strengthening of city networks as drivers of regional development (Art. 4). This highlights the importance of promoting relationships amongst territorial entities, grounded in both physical and digital connectivity. Additionally, establishing a regional university system geared toward the creation of a research and innovation network, as well as the consolidation of business alliances, among other considerations.

The “Technical Support Document” was presented to the Territorial Planning Commission of the Senate of the Republic of Colombia to establish the RAP EC. It outlined seven strategic planning and management axes. The “Regional Strategic Plan” for RAP EC, 2021 identified three regional facts based on these axes, namely equity, knowledge economy, and sustainable territory. As part of the regional fact of the knowledge economy, one of the objectives is the development of a modern and competitive digital and intermodal infrastructure that strengthens the region’s connectivity with the rest of the country and the world. The consolidation of an intermodal system is also being planned to improve the region's connectivity with the main consumption centers of the country and its seaports, thereby positioning itself as the central node through which 70% of the country's cargo passes. However, these proposals primarily emphasize interregional linkages, while relegating the intraregional articulation to a secondary position despite the latter favoring territorial cohesion and equitable development within the region.

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Mycophagy as a Basic Food of Traditional Gastronomy in Xalatlaco, State of Mexico*

[English Version]

La micofagia como alimento base de la gastronomía tradicional en Xalatlaco, Estado de México

A micofagia como alimento básico na gastronomia tradicional de Xalatlaco, Estado do México

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Javier Perete Lara**

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8026-3713>

México

Ana Luisa Velázquez Torres***

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6483-2573>

México

Abstract

Gastronomy determines the history and culture of a country or region, is transmitted from generation to generation, and builds identity and food heritage **Objective:** To analyze the traditional knowledge, consumption and gastronomic importance of wild mushrooms in the municipality of Xalatlaco, State of Mexico. **Methodology:** Cross-sectional-ethnographic. Target population: collectors, traditional cooks, and consumers of wild mushrooms. The sampling statistic was by

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** Student of Gastronomy at the Tecnológico de Estudios Superiores de Tianguistenco, Santiago Tianguistenco, Mexico. javier_201827044@test.edu.mx

*** PhD in Agricultural Sciences and Rural Development. Tecnológico de Estudios Superiores de Tianguistenco, Centro Universitario de Tenancingo, Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México. avelazqueztorres8@gmail.com.

snowball to saturation and qualitative data analysis by percentile. The identification and classification of mushrooms by their common names were based on the collectors. The culinary use of these mushrooms was determined by the cooks, who recognized the mushrooms that were collected. **Results:** Traditional knowledge is inherited and transmitted through mushroom consumption. Culinary identity is at risk due to the generational gap and the evolution of eating habits. Seventeen varieties of edible wild mushrooms, seven types of preparation, 17 recipes and one preservation method were documented. *Chilpaztle* is recognized as a gastronomic identity dish. Likewise, the living memory, traditional, and collective culinary knowledge is preserved in “*La danza de los Tlaxinquis*” (The dance of the Tlaxinquis). **Conclusions:** Xalatlaco is immersed in globalization, preserving its traditional knowledge in the hongueros and cooks. It maintains the living memory of its past through gastronomy, as well as its artistic and religious representations, which reaffirm its identity and ethnicity. Mycophagy has been and continues to be the basis of gastronomy in this municipality. Therefore, sustainable management, the reevaluation of traditional knowledge, and the rescue of food culture should be the main focus of regional gastronomy.

Keywords: edible wild mushrooms; traditional knowledge; culinary identity.

Resumen

La gastronomía determina la historia y cultura de un país o región, se transmite de generación en generación, y construye la identidad y el patrimonio alimentario. **Objetivo:** analizar el conocimiento tradicional, consumo de hongos silvestres e importancia gastronómica en el municipio de Xalatlaco, Estado de México. **Metodología:** de corte transversal-etnográfica. Población objetivo: recolectores, cocineras tradicionales y consumidores de hongos silvestres. El estadístico muestral fue por bola de nieve hasta la saturación, y análisis de datos cualitativo por percentil. La identificación y clasificación por nombre común de los hongos fue con base en los recolectores, y el uso culinario determinado por las cocineras a partir del reconocimiento de los hongos colectados. **Resultados:** el conocimiento tradicional es heredado y transmitido bajo el consumo de hongos; identidad culinaria que está en riesgo por el salto generacional y la evolución de hábitos alimenticios. Se documentaron diecisiete variedades de hongos silvestres comestibles y siete tipos de preparación, diecisiete recetas y un método de conservación. Se reconoce al «Chilpaztle» como plato identitario gastronómico. Asimismo, se preserva la memoria viva, conocimiento tradicional y culinario colectivo en «La danza de los Tlaxinquis». **Conclusiones:** Xalatlaco está inmerso en la globalización, resguarda su conocimiento tradicional en los hongueros y cocineras, manteniendo la memoria viva de su pasado a través de la gastronomía y sus representaciones artísticas y

religiosas; las cuales reafirman su identidad y origen étnico. La micofagia ha sido y sigue siendo la base de la gastronomía en este municipio, por ende, el manejo sustentable, la revalorización de los conocimientos tradicionales y el rescate de la cultura alimentaria deben ser los ejes de la gastronomía regional.

Palabras clave: hongos silvestres comestibles; conocimiento tradicional; identidad culinaria.

Resumo

A gastronomia determina a história e a cultura de um país ou região, é transmitida de geração em geração e constrói a identidade e o patrimônio alimentar. **Objetivo:** analisar o conhecimento tradicional, o consumo de cogumelos silvestres e a importância gastronômica no município de Xalatlaco, Estado do México. **Metodologia:** estudo etnográfico transversal. População alvo: colecionadores, cozinheiros tradicionais e consumidores de cogumelos silvestres. A estatística da amostragem foi por bola de neve até a saturação, e a análise de dados qualitativos por porcentagem. A identificação e classificação por nome comum dos cogumelos foi baseada nos coletores, e o uso culinário foi determinado pelos cozinheiros a partir do reconhecimento dos cogumelos coletados.

Resultados: o conhecimento tradicional é herdado e transmitido através do consumo de cogumelos; uma identidade culinária que está em risco devido ao salto geracional e à evolução dos hábitos alimentares. Dezesete variedades de cogumelos silvestres comestíveis e sete tipos de preparação, dezessete receitas e um método de conservação foram documentados. O "Chilpaztle" é reconhecido como um prato de identidade gastronômica. Além disso, a memória viva, o conhecimento culinário tradicional e coletivo é preservado em "La danza de los Tlaxinquis". **Conclusões:** Xalatlaco está imerso na globalização, preserva seus conhecimentos tradicionais nos cogumelheiros e cozinheiros, mantendo a memória viva de seu passado através da gastronomia e suas representações artísticas e religiosas, que reafirmam sua identidade e origem étnica. A micofagia tem sido e continua sendo a base da gastronomia neste município, portanto, a gestão sustentável, a revalorização dos conhecimentos tradicionais e o resgate da cultura alimentar devem ser os eixos da gastronomia regional.

Palavras-chave: cogumelos silvestres comestíveis; conhecimento tradicional; identidade culinária.

Introduction

Gastronomy determines the history and culture of a country and generates its own identity from traditions that mature over time. Food appeals to both the interior and exterior senses, evoking memories that go beyond the confines of the personal and physical. It incorporates the collective and evokes the culture of the people who transmit it from generation to generation as part of their identity, which becomes engraved in the memory and provokes nostalgia (Triviño & Forero, 2019; Padilla, 2020). Mexican gastronomy has been recognized as an intangible heritage of humanity not only for the dishes it represents, but also for the techniques, flavors, ingredients, and recipes that it embodies, as well as the rituals required for its conception. It is a symbol for Mexicans (Mejía et al., 2014).

According to Garibay et al. (2018), Mexican food has historically been a fusion of ingredients readily available in the local area. Mexican cuisine is currently one of the most popular in the world, known for its wide variety of delicacies that include herbs, plants, insects, and field animals. However, its greatest distinction lies in its great diversity of wild fungi.

There are approximately 2,300 species of edible and medicinal wild mushrooms worldwide, with an estimated 450 species consumed in Mexico and 350 used in traditional medicine by the different native groups that inhabit the country (González et al., 2021). Edible wild mushrooms are considered non-timber forest resources, which provide income to communities and contribute to the diet. In this sense, communities possess biological, ecological, and cultural knowledge regarding aspects such as the morphological structures of wild mushrooms, their place and time of growth, the substrates where they develop, the types of vegetation conducive to their development, and their forms of use and cultural importance (Burrola et al., 2012).

Various authors have investigated the cultural, economic and biological implications of edible wild mushrooms. Authors such as García et al. (2019) conducted a review of ethnomycology, including its medicinal, food, and economic uses. Burrola et al. (2012) documented the use of mushrooms, local ecological knowledge, the requirements for their growth, the collection process, sale, and use. For their part, Jasso et al. (2019) analyzed the ecological-cultural context of wild edible mushrooms in a community in central Mexico. In their studies, they recorded 17 species of culturally significant wild edible mushrooms, and 27 mushroom dishes that are enjoyed from June to October. Molina et al. (2019) identified the use and Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) on wild edible mushrooms possessed by collectors from an indigenous community in central Mexico. From another perspective, in 2018, Ruan conducted a study on the

collection practices of the Tzotzils of Chamula Chiapas, Mexico, examining how these practices have changed over time and exploring strategies for identifying edible and toxic species. Likewise, in 2006, Arteaga and Moreno conducted a study to assess the phenology and appearance of fungal species, as well as the production per surface unit and economic value per hectare of the forest where the fungi develop. They also examined the ecological conditions of the forest. Pinzón et al. (2021) presented a bibliographic compilation of edible wild mushroom species from the Yucatan peninsula with potential for human consumption. Cano and Romero (2016), as well as González et al. (2021) studied the chemical composition, biological activity, and therapeutic and nutritional benefits of wild mushrooms from Mexico.

The effects of globalization on Mexican food culture have led to the loss of pre-Hispanic culinary roots, which has impacted people's health and quality of life (Garibay et al., 2018). In this context, gastronomy —as a contemporary evolutionary concept of human eating habits, art, or science of good eating and drinking, and cultural tradition, society, and civilization (Bahls et al., 2019)— seeks to answer questions such as where, how, when, and why food is consumed and prepared. In this sense, mycophagy is especially relevant due to its nutritional importance.

Mycophagy consists of two Greek words, *myco* (fungus) and *phagein* (eat). It can be defined as the act of eating mushrooms or any of their parts. This term specifically refers to the consumption of macromycetes, which are the basis of gastronomy in Xalatlaco, Mexico. In this regard, few investigations have delved into the analysis of consumption and culinary contributions of traditional cooks. Therefore, the objective of this work is to analyze traditional knowledge, the consumption of wild mushrooms, and gastronomic importance in the municipality of Xalatlaco, Mexico.

Methodology

The analysis was carried out in the municipality of Xalatlaco, State of Mexico, located between parallels 19°08' and 19°14' north latitude, and meridians 99°41' and 99°20' west longitude. With altitudes ranging from 2,600 to 3,800 meters above sea level, the climate is semi-cold with abundant rain in summer. The forest area comprises little more than 50% of the municipality's territorial extension. Due to the rugged terrain, there is a diversity of microclimates that favor the

flora of the area, including conifers, shrubs, and wild mushrooms. The latter predominates during the rainy season, which lasts from June to November.

The investigation was cross-sectional and constitutes the study of an event at a given moment. The time unit is given by the research conditions to collect and analyze data from an ethnographic sample (Cabrera et al., 2006).

In this study, the researcher selects the place and participants by collecting the information and analyzing the data (Hernández et al., 2014). Its compilation was based on semi-structured interviews during the period July-August 2021. And, finally, the statistical method for the selection of the sample from the target populations was non-probabilistic snowball, determined with the saturation criterion (Elorza, 2008). Regarding the analysis of the information, it was qualitative and quantitative based on percentiles.

The target population were wild mushroom collectors, consumers, and traditional cooks in Xalatlaco, State of Mexico. The selection criteria of the collectors (mushroom hunters) was the age range of 38-50 years, with the knowledge of edible wild mushrooms. The sample was made up of 15 people, and the variable for this group was knowledge of wild mushrooms, and perception of consumption by the population.

Alternatively, the sample of consumers consisted of 30 subjects aged 20-50 years. The variables were knowledge, consumption, preference, perception of flavors, and culture of consumption of edible wild mushrooms. Regarding the traditional cooks, the selection criteria consisted of individuals 70 years or older with culinary knowledge of wild mushrooms and wood cooking, made up of seven participants.

The collection of the mushrooms was carried out in the *Agua Grande* area—with a preponderant vegetation cover of oyamel pine, oaks and bushes—during the morning in the company of traditional mushroom hunters, who, before starting the search and collection, performed a ritual asking the forest for permission to enter and cut the specimens. Once the fungi were identified, they were collected trying to leave a part of the volva, without completely extracting the mycelium. The specimens were transferred to the house of one of the collectors, according to the methodology proposed by Cifuentes et al. (1986), so that the specimens did not suffer any damage. The identification of the fungi was carried out by the mushroom hunters. The classification was made according to their common name and the assignment of the scientific name was carried out through photographic galleries (Naturalista, 2022; Institute of Biology, 2022; Malacara, 2019; Cuesta & Santamaría, 2012; Arteaga & Moreno, 2006)

Finally, the culinary use of edible wild mushrooms was determined by the traditional cooks, who independently identified the type of mushroom from the photographic memory of previously collected mushrooms. During the patron

saint festivities of the San Juan neighborhood (June 22) in Xalatlaco, Mexico, *La danza de los Tlaxinquis* (the dance of the Tlaxinquis) was observed and documented.

Results

Xalatlaco has ceased to be an indigenous town. However, it preserves knowledge and traditions that provide it identity (González, 2015). In this sense, it is worth mentioning that a considerable number of species of wild edible fungi, mycophilic and mycophagic patterns, as well as knowledge and traditional culinary heritage is found and protected in the rural forest ethnic communities of Mexico (García & Thomé, 2019) as can be seen in the results of this research.

Traditional Knowledge and Gathering of Wild Mushrooms

The collection of edible wild mushrooms (EWM) is an activity that dates back to ancient times, which was complemented by the collection of firewood. It is said that formerly, the natural production of fungus was abundant. However, according to Orozco et al. (2018), as the vegetation cover has decreased, the organisms have been losing ground in their natural habitat. According to the participants, the knowledge of edible species was passed from generation to generation, and currently, only traditional collectors have this information.

The foregoing is in accordance with what was stated by Estrada et al. (2009) and Burrola et al. (2012), who documented the importance of traditional knowledge inherited through generations and defined it as the set of knowledge and practices collectively generated, selected, and accumulated over time, which are stored in memory and transmitted along generations. This knowledge gives its holders a place in the social structure and gives them a defined identity. Likewise, Jasso et al. (2019) mention that it is men who safeguard traditional knowledge and are in charge of collecting. In contrast, the Institute of Biology (2022) cites that collecting is not limited to the male gender since both men and women carry out this activity. However, women are present in the entire process of using the mushrooms, being the main individuals responsible for conserving and transmitting the knowledge of this heritage (Ruan, 2018).

In this regard, Mejía et al. (2014) define heritage as a cultural aspect that a society attributes to certain specific, historical, aesthetic, and use values. Therefore,

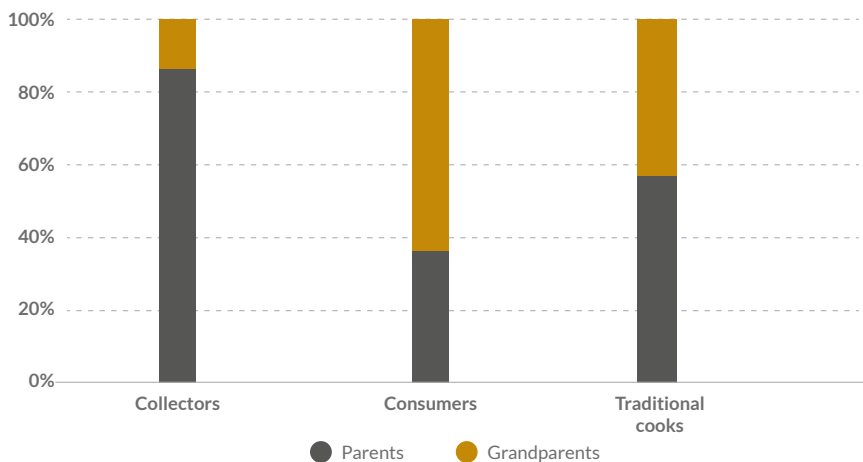
due to heritage, knowledge, values, emotions, and ideals, among other aspects, are inherited from one generation to another through symbols where the past, present, and future coexist.

Consumption and Identification of Edible Wild Mushrooms

Both the taste for consumption and the identification of edible wild mushrooms is inherited. In the case of collectors, 86.6% consumed mushrooms in the family provided by their parents, while 13.3% remember that it was their grandparents who fed them. In this sense, the “mushroom hunters” are people with knowledge of habitats, growing season of the species of interest, environmental factors that favor their development, and practices related to the identification, collection, transportation, conservation, and preparation of wild mushrooms (Institute of Biology, 2022).

Alternatively, 63.3% of the participants consumed mushrooms with their grandparents, while the other 36.6% with their parents. Regarding traditional cooks, 57.1% of the participants reported that identification and consumption was provided by their parents, while 42.9% stated that it was instilled by their grandparents (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Generational Chain of Food Culture of Edible Wild Mushrooms, Transmitted in Three Study Populations in Xalatlaco, State of Mexico.



The above data highlight the transmission of knowledge directly from one generation to another. Additionally, it shows the generation gap in the consuming population, which shows the risk of culinary identity. In this sense, gastronomy evolves in accordance with existing social needs (Reyes et al., 2017).

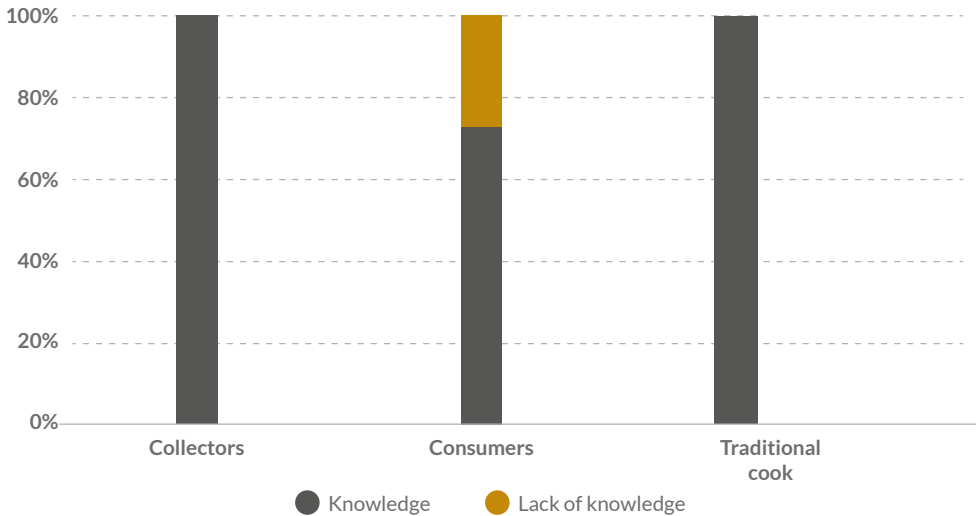
The change in eating habits can be explained through economic and social factors suffered in Xalatlaco and in the original peoples of Mexico over the second half of the 20th century. This occurred due to the increase in schooling, loss of the native language, abandonment of agriculture, massive migration, as well as the diversification of economic activities for survival. Consequently, the effects of globalization have directly influenced the detriment of culinary roots. According to Fierro et al. (2019), the hegemonic effect of the market has led to a change in eating habits, where parents eat lunch at work and children at school forgetting about the homemade food, losing the habit of cooking and thus, the associated culinary skills. According to Reyes et al. (2017), the connotation and recognition of gastronomy as an intangible heritage of society is important because the beliefs, ways of life, practices, experiences, and food customs are part of the heritage of the protected culture.

In terms of the transmission of traditional-intergenerational knowledge (as can be seen in Figure 2), the traditional collectors and cooks were fully able to identify EWM. In this regard, Cano and Romero (2016) point out that cultural heritage includes not only the cooking of EWM, but also the categorization and identification based on their shape, color, or consistency, location of origin, and time of development during wet weather.

In contrast, 73.3% of the consumers surveyed correctly identified the wild mushrooms, as opposed to 26.7% who did not. According to Gutierrez et al. (2019) and Ruan (2018), the traditional use and collection of wild mushrooms is linked to the condition of poverty experienced by rural families, and it is accompanied by a forgetting of wild resources and traditional methods of taking advantage of them.

Finally, consumers do not understand the distinction between wild and cultivated mushroom, and there is even confusion between the two species. According to Ceron et al. (2020) and Cano and Romero (2016), the most well-known macromycetes among the population are those edible and cultivable like Champignon and Oyster (*Agaricus bisporus*, *Pleurotus ostreatus*), followed by *Lentinus edodes* and *Flammulina velutipes*, *Amanita caesaria*, *Boletus edulis*, *Cantharellus cibarius*, *Thicholoma magnivelare*, *Lactarius deliciosus*, and *Tuber melanosporum*.

Figure 2. Knowledge Edible Wild Mushrooms from Three Study Communities in Xalatlaco, Mexico.



Currently, in the community of Xalatlaco, the traditional gathering and cooking groups that were surveyed reported learning about 17 different types of edible mushrooms that were collected during the rainy season that lasts from June to November. (Figure 3). The results agree with what Jasso and others reported. (2019) and Martínez et al. (2019) in San Jerónimo, Acahualco, and Agua Blanca, Mexico where culturally and traditionally, the same number of EWM varieties are consumed.

Figure 3. Morphology of the 10 Different Types of Edible Wild Mushrooms Found in Xalatlaco, Mexico.

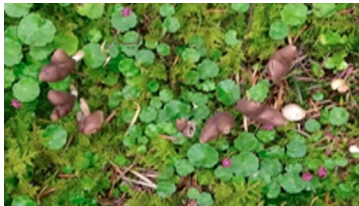
1. Scaly chanterell (*Gomphus floccosus*)



2. Clustered coral (*Ramaria formosa*)



3. Fried chicken mushroom (*Lyophyllum decastes*)



4. Fly amanita (*Amuscaria colours*)



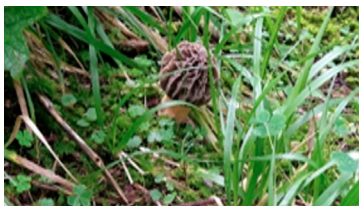
5. Blackening russula (*Russula nigricans*)



6. Xocoyol (*Laccaria laccata*)



7. Blushing morel (*Morchella esculenta*)



8. Mosaic puffball (*Clavantia utriformis*)



9. Enchilados (*Cantharellus friesii*)



10. Tejamalinerio (*Citocybe geotropa*)



Source: Author's elaboration based on field information, Naturalista (2022), Instituto de Biología (2022), Malacara (2019), Cuesta y Santamaría (2012) y Arteaga y Moreno (2006).
Photos by Perete Lara Javier.

Ruan (2018), alternatively, identified 21 species of edible mushrooms in the Totzil communities in Chiapas (Pinzón et al.). Nineteen edible mushrooms species were identified in the southeast of Mexico in 2021 (Estrada & colleagues). In 2009 just over 67 varieties of wild edible mushrooms were documented in markets around the Sierra Nevada of central Mexico.

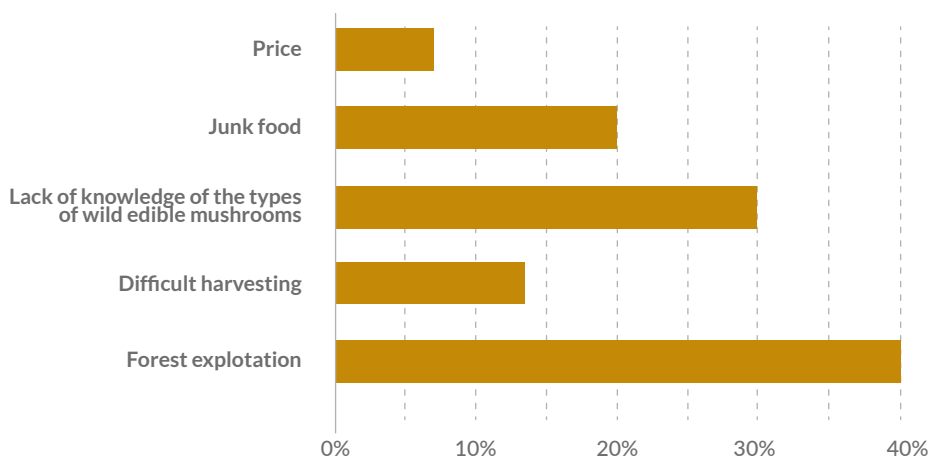
The most common EWM varieties identified by the survey groups were, in accordance with its morphology and traditional names: Clavo, Panza or Pancita, Mazorca and Chilero. According to Gutierrez et al. (2019) and Cano and Romero (2016), the residents identify the species by their traditional names, which is crucial for understanding the classification criteria that allow for cataloging them in hierarchical systems that are quite similar to western ones. Cano and Romero (2016) as well as Estrada et al. (2009) mention that the preference for some varieties is due to the easily recognizable morphology (panzas [bulging, convex shape] and escobetas [brush shape]), making it impossible to confuse it with poisonous fungus, as well as the consistency, flavor, and culinary preparation.

The number of food varieties that have been identified and incorporated into the diets of forest-rural communities reveals the cultural diversity and distinctiveness of the microscopic resources and their use. It is significant to note that because there is no official taxonomic classification in the research community, confirming that the species are identical to those described in other studies is challenging. Additionally, it is possible that there are other edible species in the area besides the 17 different varieties of wild mushrooms.

It is common for men to collect mushrooms, but women are in charge of selling them; in this context, it was identified that the consumption of edible wild mushrooms has decreased (Figure 4). According to the mushroom's hunters, 40.0% of consumers believe that eating wild mushrooms contributes to the resource of forests degradation and the loss of biodiversity; 13.3% believe the difficulty in gathering wild mushrooms is to blame; 20.0% mentioned the lack of knowledge of the types of wild edible mushrooms; 20.0% attributes this to the consumption and introduction of junk food; and 6.7% to the high price of wild mushrooms. According to Ruan (2018), the consumption of mushrooms is an unsustainable type of forest exploitation that helps to sustainably feed and generate resources for local communities. In the same way, Garca and Thomé (2019) mention that consumption is organized, can generate resources for communities, and contribute to local development. Estrada and others (2009) support the hypothesis that selling these products at high prices will generate economic resources.

The art of good eating and drinking has changed as a result of the evolution of dietary habits in a globalized society. In this sense, the consumption and preparation of plates represent a “food habit” part of the culinary culture; a collection of rules and customary methods for choosing, preparing, and consuming foods (Mejia et al. 2014). According to that stated earlier, Bahls et al. (2009) mention that the culinary field of gastronomy is a refinement of cooking in which the middle- and upper-class Meridians separate dishes that, in their opinion, reflect the sophistication and globalism of society. In this regard, it is vital to have knowledge of the Xalatlaco community's cuisine, which promotes authenticity and culture, produced rationally based on traditional knowledge.

Figure 4. Factors Affecting the Consumption of Edible Mushrooms in Xalatlaco, Mexico.



Use of Wild Edible Mushroom in Cooking

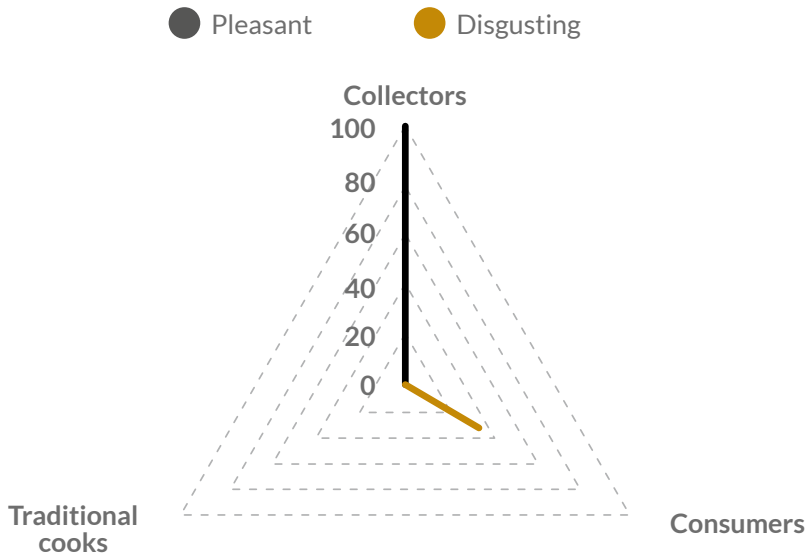
Flavor Perception.

The perception of flavors is connected to the traditional knowledge that has been passed down from one generation to the next and is a part of food culture. Food consumption is an activity, where biological, social, cultural, economic, and political factors are intertwined ranging from the selection of food to its preparation (Noguera et al., 2017). According to the groups polled, the flavor of the EWM is what makes people eat or consume them (Figure 6); both traditional cooks and samplers thought the taste was pleasant. However, none of the groups mentioned a particular flavor. Instead, 66.6% of consumers described it as enjoyable and 34.4% as unpleasant. According to Cano and Romero, and Jasso et al. (2016), the use of mushrooms in human diets has become more prevalent because of their distinctive flavor and aroma. Jasso et al. (2019) state that the cultural importance of fungi is associated with nutritional value, because people with ethnomycological knowledge perceive fungi as a natural meat; they evidenced that in some mushrooms the taste is similar to the meat of chicken, charal (freshwater fish of the genus *Chirostoma*), or frog.

According to Cano and Romero (2016), the perception of meat taste is attributable to its chemical composition and nutritional value; generally, mushrooms contain 90% water and 10% dry matter. Protein comprises 27-48% of EWM, with carbohydrates (especially dietary fiber: D-Glucans, chitin and Pectic substances) adding up to approximately 60%. Lipids comprise 2-8% within which linoleic acid stands out. According to the authors, the high protein (15 to 35% of dry weight) reflects the belief that mushrooms are an effective substitute for meat, although not all wild fungi have this characteristic. It should be noted that fungi are an important source of minerals and antioxidants, such as phytoesters; they are considered as functional foods (Cano & Romero, 2016). In this way, human beings have been accompanied by an evolution in nutrition that turns food into a cultural act, a more faithful expression of traditions of a people (Mejía et al., 2014).

The perception of flavors in a culture is inherited and preserved; however, this perception is dynamic and changes over time, not only in its physical and chemical elements, but also via social and cultural transformations (Mejía et al., 2014).

Figure 5. Cultural Perception of the Flavor of Edible Wild Fungus in Xalatlaco, Mexico.



Cuisines go beyond the consumption of local food, as they contain the social, cultural, and technical aspects, as well as the knowledge and culinary history (Brito & Botelho, 2018). The transmission of culinary knowledge was carried out by traditional chefs, usually at the time of the sale of mushrooms. In accordance with the Institute of Biology (2022) and Jasso et al. (2019) that mention that the transfer of ancestral culinary knowledge is granted at the time of its commercialization, and by older women. Ancestral culinary knowledge integrates a collective knowledge, it recognizes the taste and nutrition of mushrooms and evidences the diversity of productive activities that determine the conservation of biodiversity (Jasso et al. 2019).

Of the 17 varieties of mushrooms, seven types of preparation or culinary techniques (Table 1) were identified: stews, strong dishes, salted, roasted, filled tamales, *tlacoyos* and cheesecakes (entrées). Seventeen recipes of the traditional chefs were documented: entrées: pork ear quesadilla, egg quesadilla; roasted: mosaic puffball; blackening russula: stew of enchillados, *xocoyol* stews, fly amanita stews and agave stew; main dishes: *chilpaztle*, filled *mazorquita* and filled clustered coral; tamales: of fried chicken mushrooms tamal and *clavito* tamal; tacos: *pancita encebollada*; garnishes: *pancita encebollada*, and *pan de mosco*.

Other referred recipes were: green sauce tamales with carvings and pork meat, bread fungus quesadillas and cheese Oaxaca or cheese, broad beans *tlacoyos* with *clavitos*, cloves in green sauce with pork, filled clustered coral with *guajillo* sauce, *mazorquita* filled

with ground beef and red mole (Table 2). Alternatively, Jasso et al. (2019) identified 27 edible wild mushroom recipes according to their preparation. They were classified into nine groups: stews, main courses, quesadilla, peeled mushroom tortilla, mushrooms salad, fried or salted mushrooms, broad beans wraps and filled mushrooms.

Table 1. Culinary Use of Edible Wild Mushrooms in Xalatlaco, Mexico.

Common Name	Scientific Name	Availability	Culinary Techniques
Chilero	<i>Lactarius deliciosus</i>	July – November	Salted or stews.
Scaly Chanterelle	<i>Gomphus floccosus</i>	July – November	Salted or stews.
Clavito	<i>Entoloma lividoalbum</i>	July – November	Salted or stews, tamales and soups.
Pan de mosco	<i>amanita muscaria colors</i>	July – November	Salted or stews.
Pork ear or tolumbo	<i>Russula nigricans</i>	July – November	Salted or stews and in quesadillas.
Clustered coral	<i>Ramaria formosa</i>	July – November	Salted or stews, in tamales, filled and stews.
Fried Chicken mushroom	<i>Lyophyllum decastes</i>	July – November	Salted or stews, in soups and tamales.
Agave mushroom	<i>Ciuperclor Pleurotus</i>	July – November	Salted or stews and in quesadillas.
Huevito	<i>Calvatia utriformis</i>	July – November	Salted or stews.
Fly amanita or fly agaric	<i>Amuscaria colours</i>	July – November	Salted or stews.
Blackening russula	<i>Russula nigricans</i>	July – November	Salted or stews.
Xocoyol	<i>Laccaria laccata</i>	July – November	Salted or stews.
Morel	<i>Morchella esculenta</i>	July – November	Salted or stews, and stuffing.
Bread or panza	<i>Boletus loyo</i>	July – November	Salted or stews.
Mosaic puffball	<i>Calvatia utriformis</i>	July – November	Salted, stews and grilled.
Enchiladas	<i>Cantharellus friesii</i>	July – November	Salted or stews.

Common Name	Scientific Name	Availability	Culinary Techniques
Tejamanilero	<i>Clitocybe geotropa</i>	July – November	Salted or stews, in soups and tamales.

Recipes are a set of cooking knowledge; they are transmitted orally or in writing from generation to generation. This knowledge resides in the memory of the inhabitants, who will protect and transmit it; this ensures its permanence and extends its recognition as an identity factor (Mejía et al. 2014). For traditional Xalatlaco dishes, EWMs are the main ingredient based on recipes and culinary creations. This coincides with that expoused by Cano and Romero (2016). They documented that macromycetes are considered main ingredients of gourmet and traditional dishes, as well as excellent garnish in countless preparations.

Table 2. Recipes Based on Edible Wild Mushrooms from the Traditional Chefs of Xalatlaco, Mexico.

Common Name	Scientific name	Time of service	Name of the recipe	Ingredients
<i>Pork ear or tolumbo</i>	<i>Russula nigricans</i>	Starter	Pork ear quesadilla	Onions, serrano chili, salt or pork butter, epazote, garlic, corn tortilla or cheese.
<i>Huevito</i>	<i>Calvatia utriformis</i>		Quesadilla of huevito	
<i>Mosaic puffball</i>	<i>Calvatia utriformis</i>	Roasted	Roasted mosaic puffball	Salt and pork butter.
<i>Galletita</i>	<i>Russula nigricans</i>		Roasted galletita	

Common Name	Scientific name	Time of service	Name of the recipe	Ingredients
Enchilada	<i>Cantharellus fresii</i>	Soup, stews and creams	Soups of enchiladas	Onions, veins of chili pass, salt, <i>epazote</i> , garlic and water.
Xocoyol o xocoyotl	<i>Laccaria laccata</i>		Soup of xocoyol	Onions, <i>epazote</i> salt, garlic and water.
Fly amanita	<i>schrums</i>		Soup of fly amanita	
Agave mushroom	<i>Ciuperclor Pleurotus</i>		Soup of agave	Onions, salt, <i>epazote</i> , garlic, water, veins of chili pass and dry charal.
Tejamanilero	<i>Clitocybe geotropa</i>	Mains course	Chilpaztle	Onion stalk, salt, dried fish (popocha), dried charal, <i>epazote</i> , garlic and chilaca.
Mazorquitas	<i>Morchella esculenta</i>		Filled mazorquita	Onion, <i>jitomate</i> , salt, garlic, <i>epazote</i> and cheese.
Clustered coral	<i>Romaria formosa</i>		Filled escobetita	Onions, <i>jitomate</i> , salt, garlic, <i>epazote</i> , pork meat and egg.
Fried chicken mushroom	<i>Lyophyllum decastes</i>	Tamales	Tamales of fried chicken mushroom	Onions, salt, pig butter, <i>jitomate</i> , pork meat, serrano chili, nixtamalized corn mass and hydrated corn leaf.
Clavito	<i>Entoloma lividoalbum</i>		Tamales of clavitos	<i>Jitomate</i> , pork meat, serrano chili, nixtamalized corn mass and hydrated corn leaf.
Bread or panza	<i>Boletus loyo</i>	Tacos	Pancito encebollado	Onions, chili veins, salt, oil or pork butter, <i>epazote</i> and garlic.
Chilero	<i>Lactarius deliciosus</i>		Pancito encebollado	Onions, garlic, <i>epazote</i> , salt, oil or butter.
Scaly Chanterelle	<i>Gomphus floccosus</i>	Garnish	Cornetitas	Onions, serrano chili, salt, oil or pork butter, <i>epazote</i> , garlic and chilaca.
Pan de mosco	<i>Amanita muscaria colors</i>		Pan de mosco	Onions, salt, veins of pasilla chili, oil or pork butter, <i>epazote</i> and garlic.

Another finding linked with wild mushrooms was *La danza de los Tlaxinquis* or *Tejamanileros*. A theatre (dance of Pre-Hispanic Origin) with parliament in *náhuatl*, typical from the municipality of Xalatlaco, represents the living legend of wild mushrooms. *Otrora*, caregivers of the forest, promote the balance between the mankind and nature.

The story begins with a portrayal of the work undertaken by men in the forest at *El Cerro del Quepil*, (The Quepil mountain) the site where the first settlers established their community. This is a remarkable summit covered in branches, moss, and some edible wild mushrooms that are distinct features of the Mexican dance landscape. The main character in this story is *Cuajtlachane*, the lord of the forest, who is accompanied by the *Tlaxinquis*, the men of the forest. As part of a ritual of reverence and respect, Cuajtlachane sings to acknowledge the neighboring sites, while the Tlaxinquis dance around him. The dancers are attired in white blanket underpants, huaraches and hats and mushroom necklaces (commonly referred to as rosaries). The Tlaxinquis used to produce *tejamanil*, wooden sheets made from oyamel trees which gave the dance its name. These wooden sheets are still used as roofing material for houses in the village.

Presently, the local inhabitants continue to use mushrooms necklaces (also known as rosaries) to preserve them as a vital source of sustenance for their households, given that these mushrooms can only be harvested during the rainy season. The mushrooms used for this purpose include *clavitos* (*Entoloma lividoalbum*), *negritos* (*Lyophyllum decastes*), *mazorquitas* (*Morchella esculenta*) and *tejamanileros* (*Clitocybe gibba*). Once dried, these mushrooms are stored until a *Tlacualera* or traditional cook, uses them to prepare food. The larger edible wild mushrooms, which have a higher water content, are bartered for non-perishable foods, such as dried chili, charal, and dried fish (popocha). Once mushrooms have been cleaned and selected, bartering takes place in the village market which has been the traditional way of life for the forest caretakers.

While the dance is taking place, a broth called *chilpaztle* is prepared, believed to cure jaundice or weakness. The ingredients used to prepare chilpaztle broth are readily available and easily preserved. This broth is prepared with dried chiles, dried fish (popocha), dried charales, garlic, onions, epazote and EWMs harvested by the community's mushroom farmers as the main ingredient.

Toward the end of the dance, a wedding ceremony takes place, in which *Xoco*, the youngest son of the town marries *Sohualxoxóchitl*, the maiden. The ceremony is officiated by the *Cuajtlachane*, known as the lord of the forest, who presents the bride's traditional activities including making tortillas, grinding corn in a *metate*, and preparing sauces in a *molcajete*. As for the groom's part, he is tasked with making *tejamanil* and receives instructions on the duties he will assume from now on as a man of the forest. At the end of the wedding ceremony, the Cuajtlachane presents his "son" with a piece of *tejamanil* and all the necessary ingredients for

preparing the *tlaxinque* or chilpaztle broth. As part of the ceremony, the lord of the forest dances with the ingredients, in full view of all the local inhabitants, as a gesture of sustenance for the community. At the end of the dance, the Tlacualera and the Tlaxinquis distribute the food prepared with the locally-harvested herbs, seeds, vegetables, and mushrooms. Afterward, the chilpaztle broth is shared as a symbol of the community's harmony with the forest and continued reliance on its sustaining resources.

The dance-theater performances of the Tlaxinquis comprise three movements. The first depicts the arrival and settlement of the earliest inhabitants along with their veneration of local deities and the surrounding hills as sources of sustenance. Paoli (1991) argued that the migration to *Las Cruces* in the central mountain range, which is now known as the municipality of Xalatlaco, located at an altitude of 2,700 meters above sea level, was a logical consequence of the conquest of the Mexican Empire in 1476, as settlers from the great city moved southeast to the Toluca Valley. The religious and mythical significance of the dance is enhanced in the personification of El Cerro del Quepil. In Mesoamerican cultures, hills were honored as sacred entities believed to protect and benefit the population, and the worship of these entities is shown in the dance (Jarquín, 2011). According to the world view of ancient Mexico, the *Cuajtlachane* plays the role of representing the highest deity, while the Tlaxinquis are believed to represent trees which were seen as men with rational souls in past life (González, 2015).

The second part of the performance can be understood as entailing family life, daily work, food, and the preservation of life. The dance-theater performances intertwine the mythical and everyday aspects with the EWM serving as the core of the ceremony. The religious practices in Mesoamerican culture are commonly associated with the cultivation of corn which is the basis of Mexican cuisine. Religious festivals and ceremonies are often timed to coincide with the phenological stages of the corn crop (González, 2015). "The Dance of the Tlaxinquis" is traditionally performed during the summer solstice, a time when the onset of rainfall indicates the beginning of mushroom production which is the source of sustenance and livelihood for the forest caretakers.

The concluding part of the dance ceremony encompasses expressions of appreciation, elation, and wealthiness. This celebratory symbol creates an immersive atmosphere that depicts wealth, generosity, resilience, companionship and community trust (Paoli, 1991). The symbolic collective dance and the consumption of chilpaztle broth serve to contemporize a shared history rooted in the culinary arts and flavors, thereby asserting the community's identity and ethnic heritage. According to González (2015), "The dance of Tlaxinquis" represents a form of resistance against the loss of cultural identity and helps to affirm the community's values, nourishing the spirit and preserving the living memory of the community.

Conclusions

The municipality of Xalatlaco finds itself located within a globalized world where it must struggle between ancient and modern ways of life. Nonetheless the community manages to preserve its traditional knowledge through the efforts of mushroom growers and cooks who are the repositories of the past. Gastronomy as well as artistic and religious representations serve to reaffirm the community's identity and ethnic origins.

Gastronomy interweaves a complex set of symbolic systems and faithfully reflects its culture, thus being a meaningful aspect of intangible cultural heritage. The knowledge of mushrooms including their harvesting, consumption, and preparation is an inherited process, with women playing a critical role in safeguarding and transmitting this culinary tradition. However, globalization has had the harmful effect of changing consumers' eating habits, and a generational shift has led to a loss of culinary skills and knowledge. Despite this, mushroom growers and cooks preserve the identification of EWM. The latter group maintains the culinary cultural heritage of preparing EWM through their recipes.

Similarly, "The dance of Tlaxinquis," the use of EWM in the dancers' rosaries and the performance of *El Cerro del Quepil* all serve to preserve living memory, traditional and collective culinary knowledge as cultural heritage. These are symbolic of sustenance and livelihood. Meanwhile, the chilpaztle broth, the town's signature culinary dish, serves as a reminder of the cultural exchange between ethnic groups in the Toluca Valley, as it incorporates dried fish into the main dish. The addition of new ingredients to traditional culinary techniques contributes to the know-how of traditional cuisines. Therefore, chilpaztle broth is an identifying symbol of Xalatlaco's gastronomy.

Mycophagy, or the consumption of EWM, has been and continues to be the foundation of Xalatlaco's gastronomy in the State of Mexico. As such, the sustainable management, the revaluation of traditional knowledge, and the preservation of food culture must be the core of the regional gastronomy.

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The Role of Audiovisual Creation in the Strengthening of Intergenerational Memory: The Case of the Village of San Diego, Municipality of Samaná, Caldas*

[English Version]

El papel de la creación audiovisual en el fortalecimiento de la memoria intergeneracional: caso del corregimiento de San Diego, municipio de Samaná – Caldas

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María Clemencia Vallejo Jiménez**

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9305-8070>
CvLAC https://scienti.minciencias.gov.co/cvlac/visualizador/generarCurriculoCv.do?cod_rh=0000472832
Colombia

Zuly Katherine Moreno Lozano***

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4888-3706>
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** Master's degree in History and Memory from the Universidad de la Plata, Field Researcher in the municipality of Samaná. Universidad de Caldas. mariac.vallejo@ucaldas.edu.co

*** Professional in Cultural and Communication Management. Communications Professional for the municipality of Samaná. Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Manizales. zmorenol@unal.edu.co

Abstract

This article presents the results of research based on the experience of training in audiovisual creation led by 15 young people from the village of San Diego in Samaná, Caldas. **Objective:** To show how opening up learning scenarios around the audiovisual language enhances dialogue between different generations and promotes reflections on the meaning of the community's past. **Methodology:** The process is framed within the postulates of Participatory Action Research (PAR). Its development takes place through Create Communication workshops, which have two objectives: 1) to train young people in theoretical, technical, and practical knowledge for audiovisual production through the use of mobile devices with "Smartphone" technology; 2) to link the technical knowledge acquired by young people, their interests with respect to the historical memory, and the collective memory of the township for the creation of audiovisual products. **Results:** The creation of audiovisual narrative content made it possible to facilitate reflections and dialogue between young people and members of the community, as well as generate learning scenarios and foster appropriation of different events that have left their mark on the community of San Diego.

Keywords: memory; collective memory; youth; creation.

Resumen

En este artículo se presentan los resultados de una investigación basada en la experiencia de formación en creación audiovisual, protagonizada por quince jóvenes del corregimiento de San Diego en Samaná, Caldas. **Objetivo:** el objetivo es mostrar cómo la apertura de escenarios de aprendizaje en torno al lenguaje audiovisual potencia diálogos entre distintas generaciones, y promueve reflexiones en torno al sentido del pasado de la comunidad. **Metodología:** el proceso se enmarca en los postulados de la Investigación Acción Participativa (IAP). Su desarrollo se da a través de los talleres *Crear comunicación* que tienen dos objetivos: 1) capacitar a los jóvenes en conocimientos teóricos, técnicos y prácticos para la realización de producción audiovisual a través del uso de dispositivos móviles con tecnología "Smartphone". 2) Vincular los conocimientos técnicos adquiridos por los jóvenes, sus intereses con respecto a la memoria histórica y memoria colectiva del corregimiento para la creación de productos audiovisuales. **Resultados:** la creación de contenidos narrativos audiovisuales posibilitó reflexiones y diálogos entre los jóvenes y los miembros de la comunidad, asimismo, generó escenarios de aprendizaje y apropiación de los distintos acontecimientos que han dejado huella

en la comunidad de San Diego. **Conclusiones:** el proceso de formación dispone a los jóvenes participantes a escuchar a los adultos, y gesta las condiciones para la construcción de memoria a partir de la promoción del diálogo intergeneracional y el fortalecimiento de los vínculos comunitarios.

Palabras clave: memoria; memoria colectiva; jóvenes; creación.

Resumo

Este artigo apresenta os resultados de uma pesquisa baseada na experiência de formação em criação audiovisual, conduzida por quinze jovens da aldeia de San Diego, em Samaná, Caldas. **Objetivo:** o objetivo é mostrar como a abertura de cenários de aprendizagem em torno da linguagem audiovisual melhora os diálogos entre diferentes gerações e promove reflexões sobre o significado do passado da comunidade. **Metodologia:** o processo é enquadrado dentro dos postulados da Pesquisa de Ação Participativa (PAP). Seu desenvolvimento se dá através das oficinas de criação de comunicação, que têm dois objetivos: 1) formar jovens em conhecimentos teóricos, técnicos e práticos para a produção audiovisual através do uso de dispositivos móveis com tecnologia "Smartphone". 2) Vincular os conhecimentos técnicos adquiridos pelos jovens, seus interesses com respeito à memória histórica e à memória coletiva da aldeia para a criação de produtos audiovisuais. **Resultados:** a criação de conteúdos narrativos audiovisuais permitiu a reflexão e o diálogo entre os jovens e membros da comunidade, além de gerar cenários de aprendizagem e apropriação dos diferentes eventos que deixaram sua marca na comunidade de San Diego. **Conclusões:** o processo de formação prepara os jovens participantes para ouvir os adultos e cria as condições para a construção da memória através da promoção do diálogo intergeracional e do fortalecimento dos laços comunitários.

Palavras chave: memória; memória coletiva; jovens; criação.

Introduction

This article focuses on an experience of creating audiovisual content with young people, as a strategy for constructing intergenerational memory. The experience was conducted as part of the "*Hilando Sociedad*" (Connecting Society) research project, which falls under the research program "Reconstruction of the social fabric in post-conflict zones in Colombia." The project aims to develop political capacities for transitioning in different territories.

The township of San Diego, located in the municipality of Samaná, Caldas, was a territory strongly affected by the armed conflict, especially between 1997 and 2005. The armed conflict in San Diego resulted in both individual and collective victimization, as well as significant disruptions to the daily lives of its inhabitants. These disruptions included feelings of fear, silence, isolation, and a breakdown of social bonds. Today, the people of San Diego continue to struggle for recognition of their rights, as they strive for a dignified life and peaceful coexistence.

The purpose of the project is to foster political capacities for transitioning into different territories. To this end, the project aims to create community scenarios where social organizations, community members, educational institutions, academia, and the State can come together to promote collective learning around conflicts, mediations, peace experiences, and social agency (Cifuentes et al., 2021).

"*Hilando Sociedad*" acknowledges the youth population as a fundamental actor in the construction of peace scenarios. The project highlights the significance of their involvement in developing strategies for understanding the history of their communities, including the armed conflict. The contributions of young people to the memory-building process enhance the understanding of what happened during the conflict and promote dialogue between generations. This, in turn, fosters solidarity, active listening, and the creation of peaceful coexistence scenarios.

This article presents the outcomes of a work experience with 15 young people from the village of San Diego in the municipality of Samaná, Caldas, during the year 2021. The article demonstrates how an audiovisual creation process facilitated both critical reflection on personal and collective memory and intergenerational dialogue. Through this process, recognizing how the youth identity is intimately linked to the community of San Diego, the landmarks that define it, and the events that have had a collective impact, such as the armed conflict was possible. These two issues are made visible through narratives, stories, life histories, and community and organizational initiatives. They demonstrate

that the past is not left behind but re-signified, acquiring new and vital ways of existing and shaping present reality.

Conceptual Elements Guiding the Experience: The Relationship between Historical, Collective and Autobiographical Memory

All memory is a spatio-temporal social construction. Its existence and transformation are possible within the framework of everyday life, through social interaction and relational processes. These processes involve shared experiences that may be more or less enduring and interest groups that may strengthen or fade depending on the levels and intensity of relationships (Kuri, 2017, p. 2). Three types of memory can be distinguished: historical memory, collective memory, and autobiographical memory.

According to Halbwachs (2004), "historical memory" refers to events that occurred before a generation's birth, which serve as a reference for the community and a general framework for situating the era to which one belongs, and supporting shared history. Nora (1984) states that it is something that has ceased to exist, but leaves traces that are organized by a historian, obeying a chronological order.

On the contrary, "collective memory," according to Halbwachs (2004), is that which captures events in which the direct experience of people is involved, and whose memories are associated with facts that link them to a community, to practices prevailing over a period of time, or emotions and perceptions about shared events. Based on Nora's definition (1984), it can be stated that collective memory is affective, emotional, and open to all transformations which escape any control to which historical memory is subject.

Therefore, in this case it is collective because it requires a social group to account for it, based on their personal experiences, common notions, and narratives that legitimize its existence. It is considered multiple because individuals can participate in several collective memories, just as they can be actors in various groups.

Lastly, autobiographical memory is constructed thanks to the permanent interaction of a person with different groups that influence him/her: the family, the school group, the religious group, among others. Therefore, the boundaries between autobiographical memory and collective memory are blurred.

Socialization and Intergenerational Dialogue in the Construction of Memory

the intention of this article is to reflect on how historical memory and collective memory, that is, the meanings of the past, are shared, and how memory is constructed through the relationships and interactions between different generations. According to Jelin (2002), two requirements must be met for this to happen. First, there must be a foundation for a process of identification and an intergenerational broadening of the "we." The second leaves the possibility open that those who "receive" provide their own sense, reinterpretation, re-significance—and subsequently do not repeat or memorize—(p. 126). For the development of this experience, these two requirements are fulfilled by favoring the process of renewing stories and narratives about the historical and collective memory of the township.

Since San Diego is a small population center, the faces of those who live there are known, either because of their common trajectories, community ties, or family backgrounds. In addition to this, cultural, religious, and heritage symbols are constantly revisited in the public sphere, such as school events, memorial ceremonies, and farmers' markets. These symbols are also present in private settings, such as family conversations that evoke memories, traditions, and practices.

This indicates that young people are constantly engaged in an intergenerational dialogue during their socialization process, which strengthens their sense of belonging to the community of San Diego. Through this process, their horizon of meaning expands in their daily lives. According to Halbwachs (2004), new generations build their own memories by incorporating their own experiences and extending new meanings and senses to the past, which is continually reconfigured from their perspective.

Considering the second requirement mentioned by Jelin —and understanding that, as stated by Armella (2015), mobile devices should be integrated into learning experiences because they are transversal elements of socialization— scenarios, the production of audiovisual pieces facilitates the generation of reflection scenarios around topics of interest, in this case, the historical and collective memories of the township which, when explored by young people, leads them to redefine the meanings of the past in the light of their own experiences, thus encouraging its appropriation and reinterpretation among the new generations.

This experience recognizes the reach that mobile devices, especially cell phones, have in youth socialization, as well as their pedagogical potential. According to Rabadán et al. (2015) images generate fascination, the pedagogical purpose lies in being able to move from fascination to critical reflection. In this

process, the use of mobile devices facilitates the capture of images and sounds that are then used to create a collective project. Through this project, young people are able to reflect, dialogue, and reinterpret past events in the context of their present realities.

In this way, the project contributes to the opening of learning spaces that are in tune with the interests and technological resources widespread among young people for the circulation of knowledge and narratives. At the same time, it enables the group's participation in the co-creation of audiovisual products that have as content the memories of the township, such as its foundation, the armed conflict and culture. It also invites linking different generations to establish dialogues on past events, where the community of San Diego has been the protagonist and where young participants can recognize their personal trajectories, and link their biographies in a reflective and critical way.

For the presentation of the experience, in its introductory part, the article contains a reflection on the concept of memory and the requirements that, according to Jelin (2002), must come together for the process of building intergenerational memory to find a place in the communities.

Subsequently, the methodological process of the community experience is described through the strategy of the Create Communication workshops, a training process that provided a scenario for dialogue between different generations around the memory of the township, through which young people created audiovisual products.

Finally, the results of the experience are presented, showing how audiovisual creation facilitates among young people the re-signification, appropriation, and reflection on the meanings of the past. Subsequently, conclusions are presented which show how audiovisual creation promotes intergenerational dialogue and becomes a pedagogical alternative that favors community ties and reflection on collective memory. It is an exercise through which young people are given a voice.

Methodological Description of the Community Experience

With the purpose of identifying research reflections at the national and regional level on community processes related to the experience of the youth of San Diego, a bibliographic review was made, along with the subsequent prioritization of five community processes of construction of intergenerational memory, and of audiovisual creation as a pedagogical tool.

Initially, the work carried out by Ramírez (2020) entitled “Youth Experiences for Peace: Contributions from Audiovisual Narratives for a Culture of Peace”

is highlighted. There, he accentuates the importance of the implementation of pedagogical practices that link the educational community in experiences of audiovisual narratives, and facilitate the appropriation of contents associated with memory, history of the conflict and its peaceful resolution, all of these, within the framework of the Chair of Peace.¹

Later, in the article “Co-creative Community Experience in the Production of Audiovisual Stories: A Perspective of Young Victims in Norte de Santander, from Action Research” Hernández et al. (2022) propose how Participatory Action Research (PAR) is adapted to different pedagogical strategies implemented among young people and allows the integration of technological devices into educational settings. These devices, placed at the service of audiovisual creation, enable young people to meet, narrate and learn stories and testimonies from their community. In this case, audiovisual creation becomes a mediator that mobilizes critical reflections about the past, present and future of the communities.

Now, in the work “Whispers of Memory, Screams of Memory, Voice of Struggle and Resistance: An Exploration of the History of the Organizational Process of Women from the Youth Approach through the Audiovisual in the Cañamomo Lomaprieta Reservation,” Pardo (2020) analyzes the scope of participatory audiovisual communication tools, when they are put at the service of the claim of the struggles and languages of indigenous women. Likewise, it reflects on how communication tools can transform the relationship of young people with the processes of the construction of collective memory and cultural identity.

Alternatively, in the work called “Activating the Places of Intergenerational Memory of the War: Reflections from the Practice with the Educational Community of La Palma Institution of the Municipality of Samaná,” Ballesteros et al. (2021) focus on understanding the intergenerational memories of the armed conflict present in young people between 15 and 19 years of age in Samaná, through the generation of a pedagogical process of memory with the educational community of the institution of *La Palma*. For its development, participatory methodologies such as social cartography, timelines and life stories were used. This work makes visible the importance of promoting conversations between the elderly and young people of the territory to generate exercises of redefinition of what happened during the armed conflict.

Finally, the Commission for the Clarification of Truth, the Coexistence and Non-Repetition (2019) managed to position young people as key actors, being summoned through initiatives such as Generation V+ and the strategy [i] Viva Voz Scholarship (2022) which shared purpose was to “promote public dialogue from creative languages relevant to each culture, contribute to the recognition

1 Subject taught in all educational institutions in the country from the promulgation of Law 1732 in 2014.

of the value of communities to name what happened, and resist and overcome the consequences from their poetic acts” (Comisión de la Verdad, 2019, p. 42). This is based on the visibility of initiatives aimed at building peace in various communities, through the creation of community narrative projects produced by young people.

Consequently, the methodological process that is presented following is part of the line of the works previously stated. According to Pinilla et al. (2021), the “*Hilando Sociedad*” (Connecting Society) project identifies in the PAR a theoretical and methodological commitment that contributes to the expansion of community dialogue around the construction of peace, the strengthening of collective ties and the putting into play of the capacities of social and political agency of local actors.

Dialogue implies that the actors involved participate in a collective process of reflection where they discuss their own realities and, consequently, generate scenarios for the exchange of knowledge and insights that can potentially be put at the service of collective construction processes (Figás, 2020, p. 83).

This methodological premise guided the work carried out with 15 young people from San Diego between the ages of 15 and 20. It was guided by the project's communications team through workshops called Create Communication, designed with a double objective: 1) Train young people in theoretical, technical, and practical knowledge to carry out audiovisual production through the use of mobile devices with “Smartphone” technology; 2) Link the technical knowledge acquired by young people and their interests with respect to the historical and collective memory of the village for the creation of audiovisual products.

The objectives were met throughout the process, emphasizing how this knowledge served as a pretext to dispose young people to approach the memory of the village, given that, as Figás (2020) states, they suppose the generation of spaces for reflection around identity, organization, and self-representation (p. 83). According to the author, mastering audiovisual tools becomes an instrument for the formulation of new discourses, as long as they promote dialogue, negotiation, and the generation of common meanings among the groups.

Therefore, by promoting audiovisual creation with young people, an opportunity for them to explore and inquire about their links with the past was sought to be created, and they were invited to recognize in intergenerational dialogue a bridge that, when crossed, enriches with new meanings its own biography.

The development of the process was carried out between April and December 2021. It was divided into three workshops distributed by theoretical-practical sessions: the first one was called the “Photographic Creation Workshop,” in which young people were invited to explore the technical tools that lead to a better use of the camera housed in the mobile device. Young people were encouraged to

understand photography as a tool to communicate ideas, feelings and emotions, and the types of photography were socialized, mainly artistic, documentary, and landscape. To complement these learned lessons, the “*Hilando Sociedad*” project joined the commemoration of the death of Father Daniel (a priest and community leader), with a photography contest. Thus, the practice was framed in a creative process, where the young people combined in their photographic compositions the landscape and the main places of the village with the figure of this individual. This led them to link two types of knowledge: technical and historical. To achieve the objective, they carried out a preliminary investigation of the role of this personality in the history of their community.

In the second workshop called “Sound Creation,” the conceptual and technical elements for the creation of a sound product using the audio from the mobile device were addressed. In this workshop, sound was highlighted as a source of cultural information, to the extent that it marks rhythms, and indicates temporalities, presences, and exceptionalities. Following Schafer (1994), through this source it is possible to appreciate the sonority of a place, identifying characteristics and particularities of the environment in which one lives or travels.

The concept of creation was key in the methodology, since in this gathering, pre-production, production, and post-production steps were incorporated, being framed within the requirements for the production of audiovisual products. The richness of the learning process lies in the fact that, in the first two stages,² young people raised their level of participation. Hence, in the pre-production stage, the group was called upon to investigate and plan the what, how, where, and why, content to be chosen. This transcended the technical learning, which was put to the service of a reflection exercise in which reaching agreements on the themes, the identification of key individuals, and the construction of questions, became the definitive step prior to the production process.

Finally, in this workshop “the podcast” defined as an audio piece with a theme and periodicity in its circulation was elaborated. The concept, the types of formats and contents, the way in which the script was organized (rundown) and some mobile applications that could be useful in the pre-production, production, and post-production process were revealed.

In the third and last “Audiovisual Creation” workshop, the contents developed in the previous two were linked (audio and image). It consisted of creatively combining audio, image, and text to communicate or narrate stories through videos. This workshop focused on being aware of the roles, phases, and tools of audiovisual production. In the practical component, an exercise was carried out

² The youth did not intervene in the post-production stage. This process, which was carried out through editing programs, was developed by the communications professionals.

among the members of the group, to whom it was proposed to apply the interview technique to get to know its potential, and to recognize the previous preparation that is required to carry it out and to identify the formulation of questions that focused the matter of interest to optimize their results. The objective was focused on having them participate in the tasks and roles that must be assumed when generating an audiovisual production. Among them: choosing a theme, choosing a source, preparing questions, conducting the interview, and recording based on technical criteria.

In this way, the workshops offered young people technical and practical knowledge that invited them to approach their daily life in a different way, investigate it and examine it from the use of the given resources and tools. This paved the way for the PAR practice that, taking up Pinilla et al. (2021), is inclined toward collaborative gambles through intersubjective dialogue and the recognition of the plurality of knowledge as a path to understanding reality. All of this is put into play through audiovisual creation as an exercise in collective construction.

However, the potential of audiovisual creation lies in the fact that it integrates the use of mobile devices into meeting and learning scenarios, where young people have the opportunity to question their past and the different memories of the village that leads them to reassess and understand their own experiences and references in the light of a critical look. Halbwachs (2004) states that ideas or reflections, which are acquired over time, lead people to react to their own memories. For this author, “Memory is a reconstruction of the past with the help of data taken from the present” (p. 71).

Therefore, the objective of the experience was oriented so that the group of young people discover in this learning experience an opportunity to explore their own interests, activate their sensitivity through capturing images, voices, testimonies and, in this way, generate the interest and willingness to broaden their gaze on the village and the place that their predecessors have had in its construction. This with one purpose: to facilitate memory transmission exercises through the mobilization of listening and dialogue scenarios, where there would be an opportunity to meet other members of the community to broaden knowledge and feelings, as well as strengthen the path toward identification with a common past.

Results

The Create Communication workshops mobilized among young people the search for themes associated with the historical and collective memory of the

Village: identification of referents, landmarks, and places. This allowed young people to activate their concerns and interests around the village's past. They search intuitively for other types of memory: family, religious, armed conflict, linked with places such as natural heritage, or for those more general frameworks of memory that, as Halbwachs (2004) proposes, have to do with temporality, spatiality, and language.

Milestone I: Commemoration of the Death of Father Daniel María López (1865 – 1952)

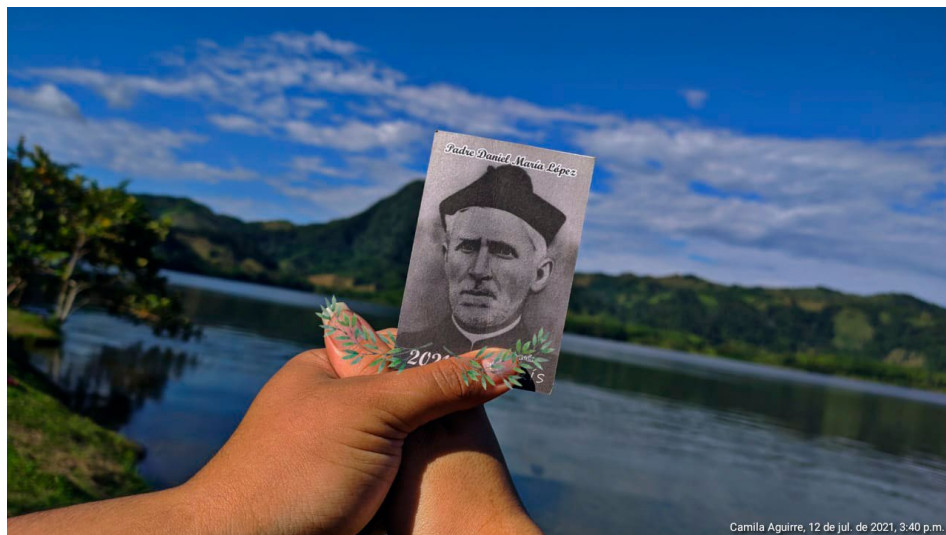
In the history of San Diego, Father Daniel is attributed as a founder, a spiritual guide and promoter of progress in the early years of the town. For his importance to the community, between 26 and 31 July 2021 tribute was paid to his work through a memorial event³ that convened different stakeholders such as the “Father Daniel’s Pro-Life Committee” and the main authorities: the local government, the Félix Naranjo Educational Institution, the police, merchants, community leaders, and members of the community in general.

“*Hilando Sociedad*” was added to this collective effort through Create Communication. In this commemoration the project found an opportunity to connect young people with the dynamics of village and to enable the construction of a relationship with historical and collective memory as they put into practice the knowledge acquired from the workshops.

The first reflection carried out within the commemoration of the death of Father Daniel was a photography contest. It aimed to motivate young people to inquire about the figure of this individual, and to link it to different places and emblematic landmarks of the village. This contest was part of the commemoration week and the photographs were exhibited to the public.

3 M. Halbwachs argued that within the social frameworks of memory exists the religious, to which he attributes the possibility of social cohesion among the members of a religious group from the transmission of dogmas and knowledge, which are updated through the celebration of important dates and rituals (García, 2011).

Figure 1. Second place in the contest held in the commemoration of the death of the Priest Daniel María López (C. Laguna de San Diego. Corregimiento de San Diego).



Source: Photo taken by Aguirre in July 2021.

During the commemoration, the group of young people became the communication team of the event, this motivated and engaged them. Commissions were organized according to the agenda to cover their development and record the main moments of the week through photographs, videos, and interviews prepared by them.

There was the need to ask for the authorized sources to talk about the life and work of Father Daniel. It was a methodological route that facilitated meetings and dialogue between two generations from the interest that this experience generated among young people to want to deepen the examination of this personality's work. This corroborates Halbwachs (2004), in the sense that meetings and dialogue serve for enriching memory with new contributions that allow for a clearer significance of past events.

The group's participation became a demonstration of how the cellphone can be optimized in its use and put to the service of a collective creative work. Based on this, interviews were conducted asking about one of the most representative personalities in the history of village. Likewise, in the photography contest, this tool allowed young people to explore their territory in search of possible images, compositions, and planes that had the explicit intention of telling a story.

The spread of this event was made through a video that compiled the main activities carried out. Thus, this group ended up mixing the use of their cell

phones, the commitment assumed as being part of the communications team, and the interest they identified by recognizing this personality as part of their history as a community.

Milestone II Lagoon of Memories: “Knowing the Roots of San Diego and Building New Memories”

In this second phase, a reflection was promoted that helped prioritize the topics of interest of the group. These were the departure for designing a plan that included: selection of themes, interviews, identification of actors, and work routes to deepen the topics and identify interests. As a result, the topics selected to be addressed were: foundation history, myths and legends of La Laguna of San Diego, and the armed conflict.

This activity aroused young people’s curiosity for the past. As this was done, they felt that establishing dialogue with older adults and other members of the community could be fruitful; as they understood that, due to the long history, they have numerous anecdotes about events, stories heard in their youth, or concerning people who were witnesses to the community’s past.

After this activity, the team gathered around a collective building project: a series of podcasts with three episodes that expanded the chosen topics. According Rabadán et al. (2015), methodologically, the production of a podcast fosters a special way of participating, because it allows for narrating stories collectively and understanding the need for communicative actions. Through tasks such as: the construction of the script, search and definition of musicalization, inclusion of voices and interpretation, and selection of actors of interest, it promotes the exchange of knowledge and memories that enrich the debate and the circulation of knowledge on the community’s historical and collective memory. The episodes promoted this dialogue and generated meeting scenarios with community actors. Young people asked questions and listened to narratives about topics they had previously selected.

In addition, as their families were victims of the armed conflict, or were regular visitors to La Laguna, they knew fragments of the life and work of Father Daniel. They were curious to find out what lay behind these topics, to spread knowledge about them, discover new meanings that would allow them to integrate these memories into their own life trajectories, and to make new sense within the framework of their reflections, experiences, and exchanges. Halbwachs (2004) stated that the dialogic exercises make the continuous development of collective memory possible; it extends and transforms, and keeps it renewed.

Figure 2. Production Podcast on the foundation of San Diego.



Source: Photograph taken by Moreno in September, 2021.

Regarding this type of training Rabadán et al. (2015) stated that:

The function of audiovisual tools and media is to promote work projects to live the diverse culture of the community through the production of narratives that lead to perceive, analyze, contrast points of view and reach agreements on the narrative's contents. (p.52).

This characteristic of the creation of audiovisual narrative content enabled conversations and reflections between young people and community members. It also generated scenarios of learning and appropriation of the several events that leave their footprints on people, and the way those people take part in those stories.

In the meeting on the podcast topic, the content of the first episode was discussed. The brainstorming led to the construction of the title and its slogan: "Laguna of memories: Knowing the Roots of San Diego and Building New Memories." In the definition of keywords, young people referred to the territory "*La Laguna*" as the natural heritage that identifies them, and the name of the

village “San Diego” as a territory in which they are located; this evidences the significant relationship, the link that young people have with the territory. One proposes:

The Laguna is what we always want to show, it is the place to visit, the most beautiful of this village, it is useful for the slogan to associate the idea of the lagoon because it has a background we do not know. (Personal Communication, July, 2021).

It allows showing that “the territory is a physical space with geographical and ecosystemic qualities, and also corresponds to a process of social construction of the sense of spaces” (Commission de la Verdad, 2022, p. 19). It reflects the importance for young people in their building of individual and collective identity.

The association they make with the roots can be interpreted as the interest that young people show to learn about the origins of the village; it is also linked to the root of the territory and the idea of the depth to which La Laguna refers. “With the podcasts, we are going to recover voices from people who have been living in San Diego for a long time and who can tell us how things were before” (Personal communication, October 22, 2021).

Likewise, when the youth refer to new memories, there can be a tacit recognition that their gestation is a consequence of the dialogue that is allowed with others on topics of interest. In this way, memory is constructed in relationship and reflection that young people are establishing between knowledge, practices, and traditions acquired in socialization, in the exchange of interests, narratives, new interactions, and motivations. The memory is constantly renewed, it is building according to the current contingencies.

According to Jelin (2002), communication must be fostered and passed from generation to generation to continue building collective memory. The word, meeting, and listening to the other is part of the relationship dynamics in everyday life, Halbwachs (2004) calls “the living bond of generations.” It refers to the permanent contact within the family, and how in this dialogue, in the traditions and experiences that are shared, children and adolescents are taken to different times, to distant scenarios that realize ways of being and thinking that —although do not correspond to current practices or feelings of young people— are assumed as an integral part of family stories. In this dialogue that takes place organically, the one that is perceived as distant it is also appropriated through everyday relationships.

The experience of meeting and exchange among 15 young people, under the excuse of audiovisual creation, generated a space for reflection on the historical and collective memory of San Diego. It placed them in a dimension in which

memories, experiences, reflections circulate and relationships between ideas and knowledge of each participant and the group are discovered. According to Ortega et al. (2014), it shows that:

Younger generations are critically examining their historical inheritance in light of its impact on the present and future. Through analysis and reading, they are developing new meaning scopes that support the process of identity construction and ethical and political orientations. (p. 67).

Young people engaged in dialogue and shared their perspectives with individuals of their own generation and those of others. Aspects such as the armed conflict, and how it is remembered holds a distinct significance, serving as a reference point. This is further enhanced by the stories and experiences of others allowing for the construction of meaning.

Regarding the period of armed conflict between the late 1990s and the beginning of 2000, a time predating their births, young people engaged in dialogue with their parents at home by asking questions and listening to anecdotes. This was driven by the topic addressed in the workshops: “I asked my mother about the conflict and she told me everything, she told me about a commander Karina and about a guerrilla takeover here in 2002” (Personal communication, November 2021).

In addition, their active participation in the week-long commemoration of Father Daniel and the photo contest allowed the youth to acknowledge his role in the founding of the town. Throughout the course of the week, they were able to listen to the perspectives of older adults, community leaders and other members of the community, as well as to the testimonies that highlighted Father’s Daniel missionary work and his leadership for the community’s welfare. As stated by one of the young women:

While it is meaningful to walk past the statue of Father Daniel⁴ with knowledge of his legacy, to pass by without understanding who he was is another thing; therefore, one must take advantage of the old people who knew him to know his history. (Personal communication, July, 2021).

Young people’s interest in the past will endure if they give new meanings to what they are told about the past; not merely repeating it, but rather using it as a significant reference point for their present goals and life project. The audiovisual products described here have helped to gradually expand young

⁴ The statue is located in the town’s central square.

people's knowledge of historical memory and encouraged them to reflect on the necessary bonds between the township's collective memory and their own identities.

The topics selected by the young people demonstrate a merging between personal and collective memory as they draw upon a plethora of memories and knowledge associated with their experiences. This comprises stories about significant milestones, remarkable individuals, and their parents' displacement which were shared by relatives, teachers, and community members. The exploration of these topics with different community members led to the expansion of the meanings and implications of these memories. Older adults were acknowledged as bearers of extensive knowledge of the origins of San Diego and their active involvement within the community through intergenerational dialogue and questioning by young people.

Similarly, the reactivation of memories was observed through dialogue among young people and between young people and community members, as well as by walking past the town center and nearby villages. Young people have shown the willingness to perceive the places from a fresh perspective, thereby making them a reference point for evoking their own experiences or those of others. This is significant because such places hold a collective memory of various events which happened there and can be discovered and understood in their present context. The comments made by participants regarding the events of the armed conflict reveal the lasting imprint of these places on young people and the ongoing construction of meaning.

During a visit to the village of Venecia, a participant said: "they say this was a paramilitary base, one can still see the bullet traces. Now it is used as a site for drug consumption" (Personal communication, September 2021).

The previous testimony was part of a spontaneous dialogue while visiting an old, ruined building in the village of Venecia (see Figure 3) which displayed wall markings associated with the events that occurred during the armed conflict. Similarly, it is evident that the site has recently been utilized for drug consumption, a matter of concern acknowledged by community members and the young people themselves.

Kuri (2017) states that sites serve as anchors and tangible supports for the act of remembering and as markers that bear witness to different historical periods. These sites may coexist in the present time and evidence how the sensory experiences they evoked may overlap and complement each other depending on the relationship established with them over time. In this regard, the memory constructed by young people on the ruins invokes the collective memory of the town center and the contemporary experiences indicating a shared sense of concern within the community that shapes their relationship with this place.

Figure 3. Old Military Base, Village of Venecia.



Source: Photography taken by Moreno in September 2021.

Furthermore, the workshops underscore the importance of the storytellers and their pivotal role in shaping collective memory as bearers of history and experiences that are meant to be shared. When questioned about the participants to be interviewed, they mentioned: “I chose teacher Carmen⁵ because in class she told us stories when she lived in El Congal” (Personal communication, October 2021). “We chose don Pedro and doña Antonia because they are among the oldest people in town and they know a lot of stories” (Personal communication, October 2021).

The young people’s topics of interest were broadened through community members whom they had previously interacted with in social gatherings where these community members shared stories about both the town’s history and recent memory. For creating the audiovisual products, young people relied on mentors who had inspired them. These mentors, who share their experiences in formal and informal settings, unintentionally triggered interest and curiosity in this population.

⁵ To preserve confidentiality of the source, the original name was replaced by a pseudonym. Hereinafter, the names used obey this same criterion.

Conclusions

The Create Communication workshops served as a pedagogical intermediary, fostering intergenerational dialogue and equipping young people with tools to deepen their reflections on the topics they chose and explored. As a result, anecdotes served as information sources that could be arranged chronologically, expanded, and understood through new logical frameworks, while also being adapted based on their own experiences.

Knowledge settings for historical and collective memory, which are vital in San Diego, enable young people to understand how their biographies are constructed through memories, experiences, and practices that are anchored to this experience; it endures over time through their own process of resignification. According to Halbwachs (2004), individual memories are integrated into collective memory through their relationships with others.

This training experience highlights how intergenerational dialogue contributes in the construction of new interpretations of the past, revealing the relationship between pedagogy and memory. Ortega et al. (2014) argue that “[...] it is based on otherness, that is, on the recognition of and respect for the other within the framework of a democratic, contextual, and transformative practice, thus interweaving past, present and future” (p. 67). This approach allows for the construction of new narratives that position young people as active agents in the present with the potential to impact their own future.

Encouraging dialogue among young people, older adults, and community members on significant and sensitive topics contributes to the construction and resignification of the community identity in San Diego, as well as values the memories of older adults, attends to their perspectives, and recognizes them as sources of meaning for the younger generations. These dialogues and experiences serve young people in reflecting and broadening their view of the territory, history and events of collective significance. According to García and Bernard (2011), it is recognizing that “[...] their identity is constructed on what their predecessors did” (p. 12).

Sanchez (2009) states that intergenerational dialogue can occur through the promotion of spaces that facilitates meetings and exchanges. Within the framework of curiosity and discovery, such spaces can foster the creation of bonds between individuals from different generations resulting in the emergence of common interests that serve as a unifying force. This concept elucidates the idea that the transmission of past memories to younger generations is not a matter of a simple transfer of ownership, but rather of a construction that occurs in an intersubjective space, as stated by Reyes et al. (2015).

Hence, the experience can be viewed as a process that enables the construction of intergenerational memory. Such relationships contribute to dialogue, sharing, learning and supporting among generations. This gives rise to what Jelin (2002) terms “the intergenerational broadening of the we,” where young participants assimilate new knowledge about their community and incorporate it into their own experiences and expectations, through audiovisual media.

Additionally, it is noteworthy that in this experience, the mobile applications in their devices proved to be useful tools for facilitating interaction, reflection, and the assimilation of historical and collective memory events due to their proximity to young people. The use of mobile applications became a pretext for exploring the environment and encouraging reflective activities to inquire about various topics, positioning it as a viable pedagogical alternative tool.

The methodology used in this project developed by the Participatory Action Research (PAR) enabled young people to respond naturally to the invitation of traversing the paths of the past, by means of the voices of preceding generations that are acknowledged as bearers of knowledge that supplement the learning of the memories of the territory, as well as of their understanding of who they are as young people and community agents.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that memory is constructed in daily dialogue and when addressed as a subject for reflection, young people establish relationships with their own biographies. They shift from being passive spectators or responders of narrated stories to becoming active authors of content which they can recreate in response to the audiovisual creation process through their new understanding.

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Languages of Silence as Peaceful Coexistence in Victims Survivors of Armed Violence in Chalán, Sucre (Colombia) *

[English version]

Lenguajes del silencio como coexistencia pacífica en víctimas sobrevivientes de la violencia armada en Chalán, Sucre (Colombia)

Linguagens do silêncio como coexistência pacífica entre sobreviventes da violência armada em Chalán, Sucre (Colômbia)

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María Hilda Sánchez Jiménez**

<http://orcid.org/0000-0002-4902-7234>
CvLAC https://scienti.minciencias.gov.co/cvlac/visualizador/generarCurriculoCv.do?cod_rh=0000001376
Colombia

Paula Natalia Rincón Isaza***

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2564-1926>
CvLAC https://scienti.minciencias.gov.co/cvlac/visualizador/generarCurriculoCv.do?cod_rh=0000184868#red_identificadores
Colombia

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** PhD in Psychology, Universidad de Buenos Aires, Psychology Area. Professor, Department of Family Studies, Faculty of Legal and Social Sciences, Universidad de Caldas (Manizales, Colombia). Research group "Colectivo Estudios de Familia" (research line in family relationships and processes). maria.sanchez_j@ucaldas.edu.co

*** Master in Family Relations Intervention, Universidad de Caldas. Field researcher for the project "Hilando Capacidades Políticas Para Las Transiciones En Los Territorios", Scientific Colombia Program, Universidad de Caldas-Minciencias. natalia.rincon@ucaldas.edu.co.

Abstract

Objective: The objective of this article is to understand, through the narratives of victim-survivors of armed violence in Chalán, Sucre (Colombia, 1992-2007), the meaning they attribute to silence as a form of peaceful coexistence. **Methodology:** From the perspective of social constructionism, silence was analyzed as a form of language that articulates memory and forgetting. Researchers interpreted how silence becomes part of people's daily lives to such an extent that they generationally resignify this concept as a life option. Under the strategies of research-action-participation, dialogues were created in collective workshops and during visits to 30 families of victim-survivors. The information was processed with the support of Atlas.ti 7 software. **Results:** Silence is an action of peaceful coexistence, protection, and a survival strategy. **Conclusions:** Narratives about silence redefine the concept and open new alternatives for survival and new encounters through non-violent relationships. There is evidence of a shift in the meaning of the concept of silence. Traditionally associated with mechanisms of repression, evasion, and negative resistance, silence is now recognized as a means of protecting life as a precious commodity.

Keywords: silence; memory; forgetting; armed conflict; peaceful coexistence.

Resumen

Objetivo: en este artículo se tiene como objetivo comprender, desde las narrativas de víctimas-sobrevivientes de la violencia armada en Chalán, Sucre (Colombia, 1992-2007), el significado que ellas y ellos le otorgan al silencio como una forma de coexistencia pacífica. **Metodología:** desde la perspectiva del construccionismo social se hace una lectura del silencio como una forma de lenguaje que se articula a la memoria y el olvido, a la vez que permite interpretar cómo el silencio llega a ser parte de la vida cotidiana de las personas a tal punto que ellas resignifican generativamente este concepto como una opción de vida. Bajo estrategias articuladas a la investigación-acción-participación se crearon diálogos en los talleres colectivos y en las visitas a 30 familias víctimas-sobrevivientes. La información fue procesada con el apoyo del software Atlas ti 7. **Resultados:** se dio cuenta del silencio como acción de coexistencia pacífica, estrategia de protección y sobrevivencia. **Conclusiones:** las narrativas sobre el silencio redefinen el concepto y abren nuevas alternativas de sobrevivencia y nuevos encuentros a través de relaciones por vías no violentas. Se evidencia un giro del significado del concepto 'silencio', el cual tradicionalmente ha estado más asociado a mecanismos de represión, evasión y resistencias negativas; un silencio que protege la vida como un bien preciado.

Palabras clave: silencio; memoria; olvido; conflicto armado; coexistencia pacífica.

Resumo

Objetivo: o objetivo deste artigo é compreender, a partir das narrativas das vítimas-sobreviventes da violência armada em Chalán, Sucre (Colômbia, 1992-2007), o significado que elas dão ao silêncio como forma de convivência pacífica. **Metodologia:** a partir da perspectiva do construcionismo social, faz-se uma leitura do silêncio como uma forma de linguagem que se articula com a memória e o esquecimento, ao mesmo tempo em que permite interpretar como o silêncio passa a fazer parte da vida cotidiana das pessoas a ponto de elas ressignificarem geracionalmente esse conceito como uma opção de vida. Sob estratégias articuladas com a pesquisa-ação-participação, foram criados diálogos nas oficinas coletivas e nas visitas a 30 famílias de vítimas e sobreviventes. As informações foram processadas com o apoio do software Atlas ti 7. **Resultados:** o silêncio como ação de convivência pacífica, estratégia de proteção e sobrevivência. **Conclusões:** as narrativas sobre o silêncio redefinem o conceito e abrem novas alternativas de sobrevivência e novos encontros por meio de relações não violentas. Há evidências de uma mudança no significado do conceito de "silêncio", que tradicionalmente tem sido mais associado a mecanismos de repressão, evasão e resistência negativa; um silêncio que protege a vida como um bem precioso.

Palavras-chave: silêncio; memória; esquecimento; conflito armado; coexistência pacífica.

Introduction

The municipality of Chalán belongs to the Montes de María sub-region, located between the departments of Sucre and Bolívar. This municipality was hard hit by the armed conflict in Colombia. As of 2022, 4,732 people (more than 90% of the population) are considered victims according to the Registro Único de Víctimas. The geographical configuration of Chalán promoted the population settlement around the San Jacinto mountain range, as well as cultural/ethnic factors present throughout its history (Daniels et al., 2017, p. 14). In this sense, one of its inhabitants, identified as *the historian*, states that cultural and ethnic expressions in Chalán are linked to the inhabitants' descent from the indigenous Zenúes. The Zenúes inhabited the valleys of the Sinú and San Jorge rivers, as well as those of the Caribbean coast in the Gulf of Morrosquillo. Their economy was centered on agriculture and livestock. Chalán is a non-violent population dedicated to the domestication of dogs, chickens, pigs, cattle, horses, and donkeys, as well as the cultivation of cassava, yams, corn, plantain, rice, and tobacco (Yépez, 2017). The following image shows the location of Chalán in the Colombian territory (see Figure 1).

Figura 1. Location of Chalán, Sucre.



Source: <http://www.ovejas-sucre.gov.co/tema/mapas-313397>

In this context, the project “Hilando Capacidades Políticas Para Las Transiciones En Los Territorios” considers the Chalán municipality as the object of study, attention, and action toward the reconstruction of the social fabric and the mobilization of spaces for peace-building. The research “Mediaciones Simbólicas Y Psicosociales Co-construidas Por Las Familias De Chalán, Sucre: Caminos Para La Transformación De Conflictos,” which this article is derived from, is the result of this macro-project. This research highlights the voices of Chalán's inhabitants who express that their experiences are forgotten, and they do not have the opportunity to be heard, much less to heal their wounds.

Through research-action-participation and a social constructionist perspective, the recognition of personal and collective voices became a dialogic resource that activated the memory between researchers and informants in meetings and conversations.¹ Their narratives include the desire to talk about issues that have not been heard, to activate memory in terms of their conflicts and the pacifist strategies created, which have allowed them to be victim-survivors and peace mediators today.

Within the framework of the research objective, “Comprender El Silencio Como Coexistencia Pacífica En Víctimas-Sobrevivientes De La Violencia Armada En Chalán, Sucre,” the article highlights the stories of the Chalán community. In their narratives, people express stories that have been relegated to oblivion, voices silenced amidst living memory, threats, and fears that are still present in their territory. Today, these are exacerbated by new events that are emerging in Colombia.

The analysis and interpretation of the information recorded from the voices of the community and the active participation of its members are based on a framework of social constructionism. This epistemological approach considers silence as a form of language that is constructed within the narratives of the people who participate in a reflective and inclusive process. It is an approach that recognizes the experiences, the daily language, and dialogic interactions with their social and familial environment, as well as the capacities that the population faces in crisis situations while living amidst the traces of silence, memory, and oblivion.

¹ The number of informants corresponds to a total of 30 people (one for each family), as explained in the methodology.

Conceptual Referent

Language and Memory: A Socioconstructionist View

“Through language we cannot say what the logic of reality is, we can simply show what one thinks of it” (Sánchez, 2018, p. 51). This phrase opens the concepts of “language” and “memory,” from socioconstructionistic and hermeneutic perspectives. In these, narrative constructions are included as part of a reflexive and inclusive process with a sociolinguistic logic that recognizes the language of everyday life. According to Arregui and Betancur (2003), “Ordinary language is the common, public, social language of a community of speakers, used in everyday speech” (p. 30).

Through language as a form of life, each person expresses themselves uniquely and elaborates on their memories and place in history. People focus and punctuate their memories. They express them as an important part of their experience. The individuals create their own style of narrative, while simultaneously searching for an interlocutor who can comprehend and acknowledge their story. Sharing with others is part of human existence, it is “a political gamble, while narratives become important as a vehicle of memory” (Herrera & Pertuz, 2015, p. 151).

Sharing acknowledges the existence of something that cannot and should not be forgotten, as forgetting is a way of erasing a part of life, identity, and language, which often happens in social contexts of violence. “Narrating oneself is then configured as a form of struggle against dis-memory, which is also a form of violence” (Herrera & Pertuz, 2015, p. 157). Shared memory configures an alliance capable of confronting silence and oblivion. It is a conversation “*between us*,” while at the same time “It is a social mode of functioning of the capacities and techniques of remembering, commemorating, and transmitting experience” (Haye et al., 2018, p. 23).

These actions generated within relationships open a communicative act that is common in daily lives and is articulated with cultural processes (Gergen, 2006). Likewise, memories and memory arise from social exchange and are mediated by language. The use of language allows for the emergence of accounts of the past that include present and future narratives, often with a new perspective or interpretation.

This becomes consolidated as a generative agenda according to Fried Schnitman (2010), aimed at reconstructing what has been lived and guiding new social ecologies, perspectives, and actions. This is done by providing resources, possibilities, opportunities, new paths, and new versions of oneself and one's circumstances. People engage in dialogic coordination to re-signify memories,

transform certain memory contents, elaborate on feelings and actions, find new interpretations, and promote new strategies for survival. The way in which living spaces of memory and personal and community encounters strengthen the social and community fabric is highlighted by Parra (2014). These spaces also have the potential to transform lives by providing more dignified, loving, hopeful, happy, and humanizing experiences.

Wittgenstein considers that in the act of remembering, there is an intersection of feelings, sensations, affections, and intellectual actions, which give people their identity in the everyday moments of life.

Memory is alive in recollection and in the act of remembering four factors are combined: 1) Remembering has empirical support; in fact, it commonly arises from an experience connected with the sensory realm. 2) Memory is open to different re-elaborations, characteristically embodied in dreaming, where the intellectual component usually makes its presence felt. 3) There is a genuinely reflective and cognitive type of memory that is usually updated in line with thinking. 4) Memories are often born bathed in affectivity and can motivate actions or paralyze them. It is the clearest expression of memory. (Gil de Pareja, 1992, p. 244).

Alternatively, Paul Ricoeur (2008) states that memories are the object of remembrance. Therefore, forgetting is a form of death of memory and a way of eliminating all forms of recognition, because *remembering is a form of recognizing*. It is a moment in which the solitude of life is, for a moment and in any form, illuminated by the common light of the discursive encounter (Ricoeur, 1995). The expressions “saying something about something” and “saying something about someone” are living manifestations of memory and encounters with others, which serve as points of humanization and recognition. In this sense, these expressions are voices that narrate to show how much it means and makes sense to talk about the memory of an experience. They are a way to prevent it from becoming silent in the context of oblivion, loneliness, and death.

Silence and Forgetting

The silence of voices is the reaction of people when they have been faced with armed violence and forced into their own dehumanization. Violence steals and murders their freedom to create multiple forms of expression through words, feelings, emotions, proxemics, gestures, art, culture, rituals, spirituality, and beliefs,

which are an important part of personal, social and cultural identity. For this reason, the silence of voices is the theft of the most sacred, intimate and social aspects that human beings can maintain while they are alive.

People in contexts of violence, notwithstanding the conflict, reduce their lives to silence that triggers fears that seem unresolved (Ángel, 2007). With the silence of voices, ruptures are generated in the daily lives of people. Ruptures are generated in their languages, which do not escape the consequences of traumatic events that are traditionally associated with mental and psychiatric problems. Rather than causing this, and seen in the context of armed violence, these are human reactions to the unexpected. "One of the results of the traumatic experience is that they lose the connection of the very familiar sense of identity that someone had" (White, 2016, p. 28).

When these events "break the daily life of the victim, it turns their world into a hostile place extraneous to them and produces a loss of control over their lives and disrupts their dignity" (Rodríguez, 2015, p. 83). Events that diminish his freedom of expression, his word, identity and social world, which remain fractured, are stolen from him and, in this context, silence emerges. It is a concealment mechanism and, at the same time, unveiling in the reconstruction of the identity of the person in a story of violence. (Montes & de León, 2021, p. 323). There is deprivation of expression and language as a condition of their identity without which human beings fail and become confused in their relationship with themselves and with the world.

In this sense, the silence of voices is faithful to uniformity, to homogenization, together with the numbness of the human beings subjected to the decision-making power of other humans who represent themselves or as part of a threatening group or society. They are others whose image is death in any of their expressions: fear, horror, panic, anxiety, pain, suffering, and paranoia, among others. It is, in this sense, a form of contradictory game of those who are in antagonistic and bilateral positions of persecuted and persecutors, good and bad, masters and slaves, dictators and subjugated, avengers and executed, armed and unarmed, supported, and helpless.

Fear is the weapon of those who seek to numb the being, whose objective is to exercise control over their lives. People do go on with their lives as they usually do due to fear of death. Their routines, customs, and traditions change; they turn toward new actions of life. Actions such as hiding, fleeing, keeping quiet, entering permanent vigils that disrupt sleep routines emerge as a way of survival. "Amnesia is both survival and uprooting. In it there is no past and there is no future" (Ángel, 2007, p. 178). People seek ways of forgetting that allow them not to suffer memories related to violence in their territories, families, with friends, neighbors and communities. As Montes and de León (2021) say,

“Sometimes, what we experienced in the past has been traumatic, painful, shameful, or immoral and we feel the need to forget it, to hide it from others by hiding it from ourselves” (p. 322).

In this context, people lose clarity regarding who is the friend or the enemy. That is, “It is necessary to know at all times who the real and concrete friend is, to determine with whom an identification relationship is built” (Hurtado, 2013, p. 137). The sense of community that revolves around help, protection and solidarity among those who are named as acquaintances is transformed. Toro & Henao (2022), like López et al. (2016) agree that silence is a defense mechanism that allows one to live and protect loved ones.

In the context of armed violence, silence is a kind of labyrinth with no way out. People cannot speak to the State fearing that they will be revictimized. For this reason, a paradoxical relationship is created, since people expect security, protection, and well-being from the State. For this reason, many times in the absence of the State, people remain silent, just as they do with armed groups. A threatened and abandoned population in its territory flees or sees entering any group outside the law as a way out, as refuge. Whoever they turn to, the situation, leads to losses and uncertainties.

In war contexts, voices that have not been heard or have been silenced through threats, persecution, finger pointing, and psychological and physical torture leave traces of helplessness and impotence. To emerge from this situation, individuals seek the intervention of others or of a character who listens in silence (Montes & de León, 2021). “The voice is a kind of certificate of existence of the condition of victimization, as if it were in the word, paradoxically, where the traumatic experiences are certified” (Castillejo, 2017, p. 145). Voice is a social memory that fights against forgetfulness and silence (Andriotti, 2021).

Methodology

This article is framed in a study based on the research-action-participation methodological process, as well as on the epistemological perspective of social constructionism. The use of participatory strategies allowed the articulation of assumptions that unite these two research components (Sánchez et al., 2022):

- a. Knowledge is social action and the world is constructed and transformed from a variety of dialogic forms and contextualized languages in everyday life.

- b. Each construction is articulated with processes created by people, their capacities to act, and practice together and value new personal, family, social and community life experiences.
- c. The production of knowledge must be contextualized around the expertise, values, truths, conventions, and narratives of the communities.
- d. The dialogical approach between subjects and collectives is fundamental toward the generation of knowledge.
- e. History as a foothold for personal and collective memory is a resource for the redefinition of the past and new present and future projects.

Under these assumptions, the subjects disclosed their experiences, highlighting what was significant about their realities. Likewise, and within the framework of social constructionism, there were important reflective processes, multiple voices, dynamics, performances, and drawings created in the workshops reflecting different styles of narration and the generation of liberating expressions (Gergen, 2006). Therefore, the central theme of this article arose in the first workshop held with members of 30 victim-survivor families. They voluntarily participated and expressed, with informed consent,² “The need for their experiences and what they had in their memories, during and after the armed violence in Chalán, to be recognized and disclosed. Something silenced and impossible to forget” (collective workshop, May 29, 2019). Based on this calling, and with the support of the field researcher (a resident of Chalán), the researchers had a first approach to the families.

Population

Chalán is one of the municipalities affected by violent acts, since it has great fertile potential on its land, which is very attractive to armed groups (Rivera, 2018), and one of the poorest in the region and the country. In 1992, massacres occurred in the Vereda el Cielo and in the corregimiento of La Ceiba. In 1996, the FARC-EP exploded 60 kilos of dynamite placed as a load on a donkey taken to the police post where the death of 11 members of the public force occurred and civilians were injured (El Tiempo, newspaper July 22 of 1999). From the end of the 90s decade of the 20th century until 2007, the fear continues due to the

² The research project complied with the agreement of informed consent and identity protection of the people interviewed., issued by the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Legal and Social Sciences of the University of Caldas, formalized by official letter dated 27 June 2017.

possibility of the existence of mine fields and the abandonment by the State,³ together with the accusation of being a “guerrilla population.”

In the investigation, carried out between 2019 and 2020, members of 30 families residing in the municipality of Chalán since before 1990 participated—one person per family group. They are registered as victims and survivors of the armed conflict. With this population it was possible to meet the criteria of validity and saturation of information. From this number, and from the total information recorded, sections were taken of those fragments that explicitly contain the theme of silence and the expanded descriptions of this concept.

Therefore, this article presents the narrations that describe the meaning of silence in greater detail: seven women between the ages of 31 and 58, and three men between the ages of 36 and 41.⁴ These ages make it possible to identify that in the year of the attack on Chalán with the “donkey bomb” in 1996, the ages of the informants ranged from eight to 35 years of age.

Procedures, Techniques and Registration of Information

Between June 2019 and March 2020, nine workshops were held in the municipality of Chalán, one per month. The initial objective of these workshops was to identify the types of experienced conflicts and the coping mechanisms enacted by the families during and after the armed conflict in the municipality of Chalán. During the meetings, the participants proposed working on a proposal on “Community psychosocial mediators of Chalán” (Sánchez & Rincón, 2021). Over the course of these workshops and interviews with members of the families, the word “silence” emerged in some narrations, accompanied by expressions of fear and pain for speaking about what forced them to remain silent. The presence of the researchers in the territory and the conversations with people strengthened the confidence to build knowledge in dialogical interaction and enrich the information around the guiding questions.

The interview was adjusted based on an exercise carried out with the field researcher, a resident of Chalán and victim-survivor of the armed conflict. From

3 In order to respond to a situation of abandonment of the municipality, the 2020-2023 development plan “Building a new Chalán” (Municipal Office of Chalán, 2020) states that: “It must be taken into account that at the date of measurement of UBN 2005, the municipality lived conditions of ungovernability and abandonment, loss of road infrastructure, services, schools and others due to the effects of violence and terror...” (p 42).

4 It is reiterated that talking about what happened in times of armed violence and issues that the population saw as latent was considered a risk for the person reporting and for their family. For this reason, followed by each fragment, no initials of the names are noted, but only the gender and age.

the narratives told by the people there is an issue of analysis and interpretation that has to do with the concept of “silence.” It emerged among narratives in response to the research concerns regarding the following questions: a) how were family and community relations affected? and b) what actions did they take in their family to face the conflict situation? The initial questions were not focused on *silence*. The concept emerged from constant repetition in the narratives. A question occurred: *what is the meaning of silence in these families as victims-survivors of the armed conflict?*

The word “silence” was identified by Atlas.ti 7 with a self-coding tool. The context of analysis and interpretation was determined from two lines before the word and two lines after it. The meaning of this word within the contexts of armed violence and traumatic experience contains expressions of pain, prudence, panic, distrust, anxiety, suffering and peaceful resistance. It also shows the conditions of helplessness, insecurity, and horror that remain for them. The answers show the resignification of the concept of “silence” as a way of peaceful coexistence that allowed them to protect both their own and their relatives' lives. In this way, strategies of protection and survival converge, as every reader can notice in the narratives. The interpretation articulates the exchange of voices between researchers and members participant families.

Results

Silence as Peaceful Coexistence: Strategy for Protection and Survival

According to the *Plan de Desarrollo Municipal 2020-2023* (Municipal Government of Chalán, 2020), Chalán is a territory in which the presence of the State has been zero or scarce. It is a spiraling circle because the silence of the voices is no longer limited to victims-survivors during and after an attack or massacre, but extends beyond the territory, with no ears, words, or acts to stop the historical damage to a social and cultural identity. In this municipality, one of the ways to shut down the voices with regard to violent events that affected the lives of people, families, and communities is to force and submit every witness to be part of the rule of silence.

Actors with the *power of weapons*, acquired legally or illegally, need to perpetuate violence by means of the golden rule: silence and forgetting, as a woman states: “It is not forgotten, but it is not spoken” (woman, 36 years old,

personal communication, November 13, 2019). Therefore, it is a very difficult intention when memory remains alive, but silent both for those who were directly affected and for a community that neither speaks nor forgets. “At the core, we are aware that what has already been experienced cannot be completely discarded voluntarily” (Montes & de León, 2021, p. 322).

In Chalan, people and their families chose to silence their voices as one of the ways to protect and prolong their lives. Not to speak, although they do not forget, is to blind themselves to other coming problems associated with armed conflict: displacement, murder, threat, torture, or capture of one of the members of the family to be part of any illegal group. Silence is used to avoid putting families at risk. The relatives also close their relationships with their neighbors while their voices mute out of fear of any real or symbolic act associated with death and resistance to defend themselves from further damage.

At some point, I trust in silence as part of my life. There were times when I felt anxiety attacks. I was walking the street smiling, but when I arrived at the hospital I shout a cry, I felt a persecution, although I had never been threatened. It seemed like they were going to kill me as I saw several people killed. (Woman, 45 years old, personal communication, September 28, 2019).

It was new for me. Silence for me is like the way of a silent cry, within the conflict what hurts and is affected cannot be said, forgotten. (Woman, 38 years old, personal communication, August 17, 2019).

To be able to live, one had to know in advance whom to talk to, what to say and painfully, and what not to do, to see things and to keep silent, to do that or die. I had to be very cautious and keep silent to survive and resist those very difficult years. (Woman, 41 years old, personal communication, August 14, 2019).

Crying becomes an expression of silence and repressed words. This is linked to individual and family loneliness and helplessness. This is due to fear and horror of violent activities that surround houses and their territory, as well as the lack of support of local, regional, and national authorities in the protection of life. “The people were alone and without any law” (woman, 42 years old, personal communication, October 15, 2019).

In Chalan, the inability to express pain, to be forced to keep silent, not crying, nor making mourning for passed away loved ones made silence a way to resist and protect their own and their relatives' lives. However, to be silent is a silence imposed and compelled by voices from several places, as it has happened in different sides of “illegal groups” and “legal groups.”

The subject ends up in a paradox, voices that force people to be silent about these groups, and at the same time, under submission to speak about the enemy groups. Therefore, within the contradiction of these groups there are threats that, at the same time, cannot be expressed. In addition, despite attempts to flee armed organizations in Chalan, people ironically looked for refuge in an armed group to get out of a dilemma. However, they moved into another issue without option to go out. It becomes a way with no exit as these narratives state:

I was displaced by the conflict, I was living in Sincelejo, where I lived in relatives' houses, but I had no job opportunities because I did not know how to read or write. I didn't have the opportunity to work and I decided to go back to town. And as I had a brother who was a community leader, I was rejected here in Chalan by the military because they said I was a FARC collaborator. I was subjected to military surveillance and break-ins. I was prosecuted and I had nothing to do with this. Then I realized that I couldn't trust anyone, because I had already been displaced by violence and then by those who offer security and belonged to the State. At that time, I began to look and think about dangerous ways of taking refuge. It was terrible and painful, even more so because I had to leave my children and family. (Woman, 58 years old, personal communication, February 22, 2020).

The most common thing was not talking about neither friend nor neighbor, all that could be risky, we talked about ourselves, what we wanted to be, how far we want to get. For example, many young people wanted to join the military and they could not express it because they were being killed. (Man, 36 years old, personal communication, November 17, 2019).

In the next narratives, the woman tells of a time when parents teach their children to protect themselves from death:

They [the children] sometimes noticed that uniformed people were passing by, they saw when one was running out and closed the door. They heard shots. One began to warn them and tell them that if they heard such a thing, they had to go under the bed and stay quiet. They asked, why? Then, one already explained that it was to survive, that they could kill them and end up in a coffin. (Woman, 38 years old, personal communication, October 11, 2019).

As can be read, families, organization and associations were silent. Meetings could only be held around a collective cooking, that time was used to talk about

what happened, what is happening or was about to happen. Silence and prudence meant not speaking of the other events with friends or family.

To be very cautious. That was one of the strategies of the municipality to survive. Prudence, to recognize who to speak to, with the pain, what should be done, to see things and to keep silent, to do that or die. Keep silent was one weapon and mechanism to survive and resist all those very difficult years. The pain kept hurts a lot, not being able to cry for the dead because we could not mourn, the pain of losing a loved person. They could not express that pain as they ought to or as they wanted to and they had to be silent. (Woman, 41 years old, personal communication, October 12, 2019).

There are many brave men in the cemetery. So, to be peaceful and let things pass avoids more problems, it avoids so many unnecessary things not only personally but also related to the family. At that time conflict didn't touch you directly, but what hurts you the most. (Woman, 38 years old, personal communication, February 23, 2020).

In other words, silence is seen by the people of Chalan as a way to peacefully resist, as a defense mechanism. Then suspicion and distrust arise. The only option was not to talk to neighbors or people of the community.

However, spontaneous groups arose from the need to release repressed feelings and actions. These family groups were born out of everyday life and met inside their houses. It is where women can share their fears and pains, express their feelings about the war, while they do everyday tasks such as cooking and cultivating the garden, as has happened since 1996. These precautionary actions become part of their relationship and interactive contexts. There is no certainty about who he or she is and how the ones around the houses act.

Silence reflects fear and fear of dying. According to another golden rule, conversations among individuals are conducted in the kitchen: *keep quiet outside with neighbors, members of the community and even with one's own family*. The following voices reflect this:

Out of anonymity, out of silence, we formed small groups. No, we were not having a gathering, instead we were meeting with the group of friends, with the home garden, with the vegetable garden, with the corn crop, men and women would gather under any excuse to socialize. Telling things was not a sudden situation, it was a gradual process. Both, men and women realized that the space provided a sense of trust where they could share what they had long kept silent. We would gather to prepare a communal meal: let's

make a *Sancocho* (stew), as the women were peeling the yucca, the yams, the plantains, the vegetables, and the meat; women would spontaneously share stories, they would cry and support each other. (Woman, 41 years old, personal communication, August 23, 2019).

In these pieces of information, the voices reflect how the communal meal was the only space in which women felt confident and could abandon the silence they had long kept. Despite these liberating actions, after 30 years without constant psychosocial accompaniment, the voices of the Chalano community cry out to not be repeated. One of its inhabitants' states:

In Chalán, although life is the most valuable good and we all want to live in peace, people are still afraid that history would repeat itself. They want to oppose more agony and death; they want to mourn, but the ghosts of those who walk the nights today keep them awake and silent once again. (Man, 41 years old, personal communication, February 23, 2020).

The actions of being silent, not grieving, or mourning the death of friends, colleagues, and relatives create ways of living in which silence prevails. These permanent ways of acting to save their lives are a form of agency and an immediate solution within the context of violence and death.

Despite these protective strategies, the feeling of distrust and the feeling toward what is already considered *unknown* take over Chalaneros' actions, leading to distancing themselves from each other due to a potential threat to their lives and those close to them. There is a need to return to personal shelter and to take care of their closest group, as in the case of the family. As a survival strategy, the walls of families and neighbors with whom it is still possible to preserve trust, help, and self-help are disrupted as a symbol of communication, information, and protection, while the main doors of the houses are closed and voices are silenced:

I remember that, at that time of the war conflict in Chalán, in 1999, when the fear and anxiety of the armed conflict started, the families would tear down the walls to be able to move from one side to the other and get away from danger. We did the same with our next-door neighbors. The union was a sign of solidarity among all. Also, we would lock the houses and put padlocks on the outside of the front door to make people think that no one was living there, especially to distract armed groups. We switched off the lights, spoke very softly, and walked barefoot in our houses to avoid being heard walking and being summoned to meetings where the entire family had to go because if there were too many of us,

we risked being recruited or killed. (Man, 38 years old, personal communication, August 16, 2019).

Chalaneros are involved in a labyrinth with no way out because of this war and recruitment; it becomes an inherited war. The following reflects this inherited form of warfare: *Violence is coming back to Chalán*.

On March 11th, 1996, a donkey loaded with 70 kilos of dynamite exploded in the main square of Chalán (Sucre). The 35th Front of the FARC entered the town, killed the police officers, and burned the police station, the health center and several houses. The police did not return to town; however, the Marine Corps mobile brigades successfully repelled the subversion. This situation fostered a strong bond between the community and the marines leading to a close friendship between the girls in the town and the marines. Two young, charming girls paid for this relationship with their lives. Early last week, they were shot to death in their own homes. (Digital archive, El Tiempo newspaper, July 22, 1999, para(s). 1-5).

Another example of this inherited legacy is found in the following piece of information in which, a victim who survived narrates the effects of the armed violence on a family. Although it is a story about one family, this narration has an imprint that extends to other families.

Due to the killing of the two girls, their two other sisters moved to Sincelejo, the family disintegrated. Shortly thereafter, their elderly father died. One of them moved to Medellín and the other one to Cartagena, while their mother stayed in Sincelejo with some of her relatives. The one who moved to Medellín has not had any children yet because she was affected by the massacre. They were very close sisters, and her sister killing is still painful; she feels sad, cries, and feels afraid. She will not come back to Chalán. And this happened with other inhabitants and families. Because it was a painful situation, one tries not to recall or talk about it. It is not forgotten, but it is unsaid. (Woman, 35 years old, personal communication, October 15, 2019).

In Chalán, although life is the most valuable good and we all want to live in peace, people are still afraid that history would repeat itself. They want to oppose more agony and death; they want to mourn, but the ghosts of those who walk the nights today keep them awake and silent once again. (Man, 41 years old, personal communication, November 18, 2019).

Finally, these Chalano community narratives illustrate how individuals shift between silence, memory and forgetfulness. In the midst of pain, affliction and survival strategies, the Chalaneros rely on silence as an action of peaceful coexistence; remembering and talking with the closest and smallest group become liberating actions. All these voices and narratives break the silence that, despite being a survival strategy, has also inflicted considerable pain.

Conclusions

A pivotal aspect of reflection in this article was to provide a fresh perspective on the traditional meaning of silence. This concept has often been associated with mechanisms of repression, avoidance, and negative resistance that an individual has toward another one, or a particular form of relationship or an event. Additionally, the role assigned to silence is closer to the marking of the subject as an individual who “says nothing.” From this perspective, silence can be considered synonymous with “non-expression.” In this regard, the meaning assigned to this word does not encompass the voices and dialogic processes that people have built in relation to one another, wherein silence is perceived as a means to preserve and safeguard life as a valuable good.

On the contrary, within the context of the armed conflict, the silence of the chalaneras’ voices means a potential strategy for self-protection and well-being of others. It is thus presented as a form that gives rise to new alternatives and possibilities for the individuals’ transformation, offering possibilities of survival and fostering new relational encounters through non-violent means. Silence retains its own memory and manages to be expressed through collaborative approaches, serving as a resource to openly express the pain, suffering, affliction, anguish, and fear caused by the actions of armed actors in their territories. Therefore, through open interaction with relatives and close individuals, the Chalano community discovers a potential to construct meanings and actions that contribute to strengthening the social fabric and fostering new relationships.

So, the voices of silence and memory become the basis of remembrance. In other words, a way of life in which forgetfulness cannot become “the golden rule.” This is another expression of peaceful coexistence that resists authoritarian, threatening, and intimidating actions in times of war. As long as the actions of war perpetuate the silence surrounding stories of violence in the territories, attacks on the integrity of every human being will persist. The feeling of mistrust will continue to guide people's actions and will lead Chalaneros to distancing

themselves from those who may pose a further threat to their own lives and the lives of their loved ones. The need then arises to go back to their own shelter and to take care of their closest group of people, such as their families and closest friends.

However, when people from Chalán, in the midst of their stories, let their voices and ways of life flow in the relationship between silence, memory, and forgetfulness, they disrupt their narrative which, encourages them to keep their story concealed in anonymity. The voices of people from the Chalano community who decided to share part of their story revealed narratives that ameliorate the violence and pave the way for new connections with others to preserve their existence. Language itself has its own agency. An illustrative example is the recurring narrative of the meaning of silence given by individuals as an act of survival and peaceful coexistence. As a result, individuals can use language to create new contexts and new ways of life.

Finally, this article presents silence as a form of language related to memory and forgetfulness, to peaceful coexistence, to coping in contexts of violence and as a strategy for protection and survival. As Ricoeur (2008) points out, it is an act of remembrance through the voices that individuals construct to narrate their experiences of war, death, and pain. It is a search for memory as an object of memory that allows for struggling against forgetfulness, the rapaciousness of time, and the burial of memory.

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Civil Resistance: A Conceptual Approach from the Experience of Social Organizations in Montes de María*

[English Version]

La resistencia civil: un acercamiento conceptual desde la experiencia de las organizaciones sociales en los Montes de María

Resistência civil: uma abordagem conceitual a partir da experiência das organizações sociais em Montes de Maria

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Jorge Luis Espitia Solera**

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7590-7542>

CvLAC:https://scienti.minciencias.gov.co/cvlac/visualizador/generarCurriculoCv.do?cod_rh=0001479817

Colombia

Victoria Lugo***

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7149-5229>

CvLAC:https://scienti.minciencias.gov.co/cvlac/visualizador/generarCurriculoCv.do?cod_rh=0000147435

Colombia

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** Master in Social Justice and Peace Building, Universidad de Caldas. [jespita2207@gmail.com](mailto:jespitia2207@gmail.com)

*** PhD in social sciences from Tilburg University (The Netherlands). Universidad de Caldas. victoria.lugo@ucaldas.edu.co

Abstract

“Civil resistance” is a concept widely disseminated among academia and Colombian social organizations. Its study is of singular importance, given the various conflicts faced by the country, including the armed conflict of the last sixty years. In academia, theoretical and conceptual definitions are varied. In praxis, the concept is polysemic and transcends the scopes or limitations that have been described by theoreticians on the subject, as evidenced by social movements and organizations. **Objective:** The objective of this article is to provide a conceptual approach to civil resistance by reviewing different authors and then examining its relevance in the context of Montes de María, where social organizations have practiced civil resistance in the framework of the armed conflict and as part of the transition toward building territorial peace. **Methodology:** This was qualitative research, through the PAR approach, conducted in the municipality of Ovejas with four social processes. The text will examine the experiences of several social organizations in the historic territory of the Colombian Caribbean, including the *Asociación de campesinos productores del corregimiento de San Rafael*, the *Asociación de Campesinos de la finca la Europa*, the *Asociación de Víctimas de Chengue*, and the *Corporación de mujeres Narrar para Vivir*. These organizations have developed civil resistance practices in the context of the armed conflict. **Results:** The concept of “civil resistance” has evolved over time as different perspectives have enriched it through practical development in history. The article begins by providing several approaches to help readers understand the concept of civil resistance, and then examines how this concept relates to the actions taken by social organizations in Montes de María. It then discusses the different conflicts present in the territory, including the armed conflict. The results of the research suggest that these forms of resistance can be classified based on time as permanent, conjunctural, or emergent, and based on the margin of action as active or passive. **Conclusions:** In the Montes de María region, social organizations have implemented forms of civil resistance that have enabled them to overcome the armed conflict, as well as promote territorial development and make progress in the construction of territorial peace based on their collective and individual experiences of resistance.

Keywords: civil resistance; political capabilities; peacebuilding; post-conflict; social organizations.

Resumen

La ‘resistencia civil’ es un concepto ampliamente difundido entre la academia y las organizaciones sociales colombianas. Su estudio es de singular importancia, dadas las diferentes conflictividades que enfrenta el país; entre estas, el conflicto armado de los últimos sesenta años. En el ámbito académico, las definiciones teóricas y conceptuales son variadas. En la praxis, desde el movimiento social y las organizaciones sociales, es también un concepto polisémico que trasciende los alcances o limitaciones que han expuesto los teóricos en la materia. **Objetivo:** este artículo tiene como objetivo hacer un acercamiento conceptual a la resistencia civil, mediante la revisión de diferentes autores y, posteriormente, ponerla en diálogo con las percepciones y experiencias desarrolladas en los Montes de María por organizaciones sociales; a partir de sus ejercicios de resistencia civil en el marco del conflicto armado, y como parte de la transición hacia la construcción de paz territorial. **Metodología:** esta fue una investigación cualitativa, a través del enfoque de IAP, realizada en el municipio de Ovejas con cuatro procesos sociales: Asociación de campesinos productores del corregimiento de San Rafael, Asociación de Campesinos de la finca la Europa, Asociación de Víctimas de Chengue y Corporación de mujeres Narrar para Vivir; quienes han desarrollado prácticas de resistencia civil en el marco del conflicto armado que ha vivido este histórico territorio del caribe colombiano. **Resultados:** la ‘resistencia civil’ tiene diferentes formas de comprensión que han sido enriquecidas conceptualmente a lo largo del tiempo, atendiendo a su desarrollo práctico en la historia. En el artículo, inicialmente se esbozan algunos enfoques que nos acercan conceptualmente al término para luego ponerlos en diálogo con las manifestaciones implementadas por organizaciones sociales en los Montes de María; y luego sortear las diferentes conflictividades presentes en el territorio, entre ellos el conflicto armado. Estas formas de resistencia, acorde con los resultados de la investigación, se pueden clasificar según el tiempo en permanentes, coyunturales y emergentes y, de acuerdo al margen de acción, en activas o pasivas. **Conclusiones:** en la región de los Montes de María, las organizaciones sociales han puesto en práctica formas de «resistencia civil», que les han permitido no solo sortear el conflicto armado, sino, agenciar el desarrollo territorial y avanzar en la construcción de la paz territorial a partir de sus propias experiencias de resistencia individual y colectiva.

Palabras clave: resistencia civil; capacidades políticas; construcción de paz; posconflicto; organizaciones sociales.

Resumo

A “resistência civil” é um conceito amplamente difundido entre acadêmicos e organizações sociais na Colômbia. Seu estudo é de singular importância, dados os diferentes conflitos enfrentados pelo país, incluindo o conflito armado dos últimos sessenta anos. No âmbito acadêmico, as definições teóricas e conceituais são variadas. Na prática, do ponto de vista do movimento social e das organizações sociais, é também um conceito polissêmico que transcende o escopo ou as limitações que os teóricos sobre o assunto têm apresentado. **Objetivo:** o objetivo deste artigo é fazer uma abordagem conceitual da resistência civil, através da revisão de diferentes autores e, posteriormente, colocá-la em diálogo com as percepções e experiências desenvolvidas em Montes de Maria pelas organizações sociais, com base em seus exercícios de resistência civil no contexto do conflito armado, e como parte da transição para a construção da paz territorial. **Metodologia:** esta foi uma pesquisa qualitativa, através da abordagem PRA, realizada no município de Ovejas com quatro processos sociais: Associação de produtores camponeses da aldeia de San Rafael, Associação de Camponeses da fazenda La Europa, Associação de Vítimas de Chengue e Corporação de Mulheres Narradoras para Viver; que desenvolveram práticas de resistência civil no contexto do conflito armado que viveu este território histórico do Caribe colombiano. **Resultados:** a “resistência civil” tem diferentes formas de compreensão que foram conceitualmente enriquecidas ao longo do tempo, de acordo com seu desenvolvimento prático na história. No artigo, inicialmente delineamos algumas abordagens que nos aproximam conceitualmente do termo e depois as colocamos em diálogo com as manifestações implementadas pelas organizações sociais nos Montes de Maria; e depois lidamos com os diferentes conflitos presentes no território, entre eles o conflito armado. Estas formas de resistência, de acordo com os resultados da pesquisa, podem ser classificadas segundo o tempo como permanentes, temporárias e emergentes, e segundo a margem de ação, como ativas ou passivas. **Conclusões:** Na região de Montes de Maria, as organizações sociais colocaram em prática formas de “resistência civil” que lhes permitiram não só superar o conflito armado, mas também promover o desenvolvimento territorial e avançar na construção da paz territorial com base em suas próprias experiências de resistência individual e coletiva.

Palavras chave: resistência civil; capacidades políticas; construção da paz; pós-conflito; organizações sociais.

Introduction

The achievement of peace, after decades of political, social, and armed conflict, is one of the great goals of the Colombian people. In 2016, the most significant peace agreement in recent history was signed in Colombia, marking a turning point in the armed conflict by removing the oldest guerrilla group on the continent from the scene: The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, People's Army (FARC-EP). This peace agreement includes several elements that differentiate it from others signed in the past, particularly the possibility of advancing in peacebuilding with a territorial approach that makes communities the protagonists. When constructing public peace policies, taking into account the knowledge, experiences, and desires of communities to overcome the cultural and structural causes that gave rise to the armed conflict is essential. This conflict has been reconfiguring and intensifying since the 1940s, with the participation of numerous actors.

In light of this approach to territorial peacebuilding, and recognizing the vital role of civil society organizations in achieving this goal, gaining insight into their experiences with peacebuilding over the years in areas most affected by the conflict is essential. Hence, the study was conducted with social organizations comprising farmers, women, victims, and producers situated in the municipality of Ovejas in the Montes de María sub-region.

The general objective of this research was to understand the role of social organizations in the construction of territorial peace, based on the political capacities developed from civil resistance exercised during the armed conflict. The specific objectives were to identify the processes or forms of civil resistance exercised by social organizations in terms of survival, defense, and permanence in the territory within the framework of the armed conflict. In a second stage, and based on the findings of the previous objective, the authors sought to describe the process of gestation and strengthening of political capacities based on the experience of civil resistance in these social organizations to finally recognize the contributions of the social organizations of the municipality of Ovejas, in the department of Sucre, to the construction of territorial peace.

However, one of the central categories of analysis in this research process was "civil resistance." Understanding this concept is the starting point for explaining all the findings. Precisely, during the fieldwork, it was observed that this concept is sometimes unknown, sometimes misrepresented, and above all, stigmatized. Therefore, this article seeks to achieve a theoretical and conceptual approach to this term, as well as articulate it with the experiences of civil

resistance exercised by social organizations in Ovejas. The goal is to overcome the armed conflict and advance in peacebuilding.

To gain a comprehensive understanding of the concept of “civil resistance”, it is necessary to approach it from different authors, disciplines, and perspectives. A first approach alludes to “resistance” from the standpoint of civil disobedience (Thoreau, 2008). This notion is often confused with the term “civil resistance.” It is important to clarify that civil disobedience is a subset of civil resistance (Quiñones, 2008).

A second approach assumes civil resistance from the practice of nonviolence, as a mechanism of struggle against oppression or abuses of power (Valenzuela, 2001). It should be noted that many acts of civil disobedience are also used as part of peaceful resistance. However, the latter notion is considered a variation of the former approach.

In another line of thought, there are two additional approaches to civil resistance: one considers it as an action of opposition to an imposed order or to a future order intended to be imposed on some part of society (Quiñones, 2008); and the other regards resistance as a power game (Molina, 2014). The four approaches to civil resistance presented in this article are not in dispute or contradictory, but rather complementary for a comprehensive understanding of the concept. The first two approaches focus on the methods and principles of civil resistance, while the latter two focus on the goals and motivations behind it.

Following is the methodology used in this study, followed by an explanation of the content, implications, and relationships of each approach to the conceptualization of the term “civil resistance.” Next, the article presents a discussion of armed violence as a form of resistance and its role in the struggle for recognition. This discussion complements the four approaches to civil resistance mentioned earlier.

The article concludes by presenting the considerations that communities and territories in Colombia have regarding civil resistance in the context of the social and armed conflict. Some are explicit and recognized by themselves through their organizational expressions or individual social leadership. Others can be derived from the analysis of their practices in the territory, of their work to overcome difficulties, preserve life, guarantee permanence in the territory and advance in peacebuilding with a territorial approach.

Methodology

This article relies on a literature review of the concept of “civil resistance” and incorporates findings from the research project titled “Construcción de paz territorial en Colombia: experiencias de Organizaciones sociales en el municipio de Ovejas, departamento de Sucre, Colombia.” The research was conducted as part of the program “Reconstrucción del tejido social en zonas de posconflicto en Colombia” and the project “Hilando capacidades políticas para las transiciones en los territorios.” The research followed the paradigm of social constructionism and employed a qualitative methodology based on the Participatory Research approach. The use of participatory techniques and strategies for information gathering was crucial. The techniques used included participant observation, social mapping, focus groups, semi-structured interviews, intergenerational dialogues of knowledge, and memories. With these techniques, the authors addressed the organizational and territorial past, as well as explored the future vision of the four organizations participating in the research unit. Asociación de Campesinos productores de San Rafael, Asociación de Campesinos de la Finca la Europa, Asociación de Víctimas de Chengue and la Corporación de Mujeres «Narrar para Vivir» were all voluntary participants in the research process between 2019 and 2022. They are present in the municipality of Ovejas in the Montes de María region.

In addition to these strategies, other virtual communication methods were used in the framework of the Covid-19 pandemic, which facilitated the construction of information. This was compiled, ordered, compared, and grouped using tables and grids for later analysis using the triangulation method, which makes relating the voice of the communities, the voices of expert authors on the subject, and the voice of the researcher through his reflection and writing of field journals possible. Finally, a more comprehensive moment took place where the researcher was able to interpret all the information related in the matrices and through a hermeneutic exercise, provide meaning and answers to his research question. These findings were shared and discussed with the participants; their feedback was essential for the writing of the final report.

Results

As previously indicated, distinguishing between the concepts of “resistance” and “civil disobedience” is important, given that, in the first case, the category is much broader since it is related to activist practices in the territories against violence or with the different forms of oppression that may arise. In the second case, according to Quiñones (2008), the term is taken as a manifestation or strategy within the framework of resistance. In this way, analysis starts from these postulates to build the different assertions of the category of resistance, taking into account both the notions already established, as those constituted within the community.

Approach to Civil Disobedience as a Form of Civil Resistance

The concept of “civil disobedience” possibly has its first theoretical exercises in the conceptions of Henry Thoreau, although its practical origins had already appeared on the scene from religious conceptions such as Hinduism or Buddhism, and even in the European revolts of an agrarian nature against the feudal policies of the 16th and 17th centuries (Alcoberro, 2017).

According to Marcone (2009), the commonly accepted definition of “civil disobedience” was constructed by Bedau in 1961 and taken up again by Rawls ten years later, and by Habermas in 1985. These authors agree in maintaining that “civil disobedience” corresponds to a collective, morally-based, public, illegal, conscious, and peaceful protest action that, violating specific legal norms, seeks to produce a partial change in laws, in the policies or in the guidelines of a government (p. 4).

Marcone (2009), in reference, considers that “civil disobedience” is a strategy that can be used as a form of protest, awareness-raising and political action that should be used “when there are no more tools left” (p. 4). That is, when the closure of a government, or of whoever holds control of power, makes public and democratic debate impossible. Along the same lines, Thoreau (2008) argues that: “The best government is the one that governs as little as possible; the one who does not rule at all” (p. 14).

The former position is often confused with anarchism, however, the latter, according to Sandoval (2015), is associated with ignorance of the authority that forces dispensing with autonomy for decision-making. In this sense, this ideology

does not recognize legitimacy in the figure of the State since it uses its power to restrict the will and freedom to decide freely.

Contrary to former positions, civil disobedience starts from recognizing the existence of an authority or source of coercive power – most of the times represented in a State – with whose actions, in a general or partial way, there is disagreement. For this reason, they one may resist or protest, seeking to generate changes in this way of exercising power, or for it to pass to another actor who is assigned greater legitimacy to make use of it.

According to Alcoberro (2017), this constitutes “a challenge to established an unfair power, which acquires a high symbolic content and can even be admired by people who would never dare to exercise it” (p. 1). In other words, these types of actions generate a chain reaction that tends to multiply in various social sectors, which, with different interests, are affected by this authoritarian imposition of the “dominant power.”

It is necessary to bear in mind that, for Thoreau, civil resistance has a series of premises and ends under which it must develop. These are specified by Alcoberro (2017), as: resistance to power, individual, but with a vocation of masses, mobilizing, exemplary, pedagogical, and with the symbolic value of public denunciation, fundamentally non-violent, focused on areas where power does not expect to be challenged, and oriented to specific purposes, sustainable throughout time indefinitely, politically coordinated, and referred to a higher ethic.

These qualities that Thoreau points out for civil disobedience are similar to those proposed by Hernández (2009), who highlights the following characteristics of civil resistance: it is a process that consolidates in a perfectible way over time; it is a collective action, and, due to this very condition, it has transforming scope, finds its origin in the social base, although in its development it manages to gain, as is desirable, the sympathy of other sectors (p. 8). It does not admit the use of violence, without necessarily having to enroll in a pacifist ethic; it goes hand in hand with organization and planning; and it has an element of moral force that is what convenes, unites, and energizes its operation. It is at the same time a mechanism for struggle, defense, and a proposal for transformation for peace; its processes represent peacebuilding scenarios, strengthen democracies and promote pacifist capacities and powers. In short, the qualities represent pacifist empowerment in contexts where various conflicts are expressed, often in crossfire, and, finally, generate a culture of peace in the groups in which they find their origin.

Therefore, it is necessary to highlight that the concept of “civil disobedience” and possibly the dissemination of Thoreau's ideas, echoed the approach of peaceful resistance as a form of civil resistance, which is discussed next.

Approach to Peaceful Resistance as an Exercise of Civil Resistance

From this perspective, the central aspect is the denial of violence as a mechanism of struggle against actions that cause harm to the collective or human group. Violence is not responded to with violence, but actions considered pacifist are used. For example, refusing to pay taxes, boycotting the purchase of certain products, or not going to certain places. In other words, it is about influencing everything that is supposed to affect the oppressor and, consequently, encourages the act of resistance against those whose actions it is expected to weaken. Mohandas Gandhi is considered the father of these ideas of pacifism as a form of civil resistance, who, in response to this exercise, according to López-Martínez (2016), pointed out that:

It is a rebellion, without any violence. He who is fully committed to civil resistance is not content simply to dispense with the authority of the State; he becomes an outlaw, who arrogates the right to pass over all State law contrary to morality. (p. 4).

He adds that there are multiple examples, such as daring to enter the barracks if you have something to say to the soldiers, despite not having the permission to do so. You can also disobey the anti-strike picket rules and decide to demonstrate where it is not allowed. In all these examples, force is never used, nor is it resisted (Gandhi cited by Allen-Perkins, 2011, p.7).

Allen-Perkins (2011) complements the above by pointing out that “civil resistance” is conceived as the best tool to use to rise up against injustice, without intending to harm the opponent or even defeat him; rather the conversion of this is proposed. The “civil resistance” for Gandhi is, in this sense, an appeal to the opponent's reason to convince him and convert his conscience in favor of the demanded cause (p. 7). In accordance with this, the thought and action proposed by Gandhi, within the framework of civil resistance through disobedience exercises, appeals to deeper elements of the human being, such as morality and ethics. It is, therefore, a resistance that can be developed even by the individual himself, without affecting the events of others.

Alternatively, Valenzuela (2001) points out some criticisms of the concept of “non-violence.” For example, that it does not provide a total solution to the problems of violence or security that a country may face, or that it is about avoiding the conflict by accepting the injustices that take place in it, to avoid other forms of violence. In this way it can be said from this approach, that “civil resistance” can be understood as an effective way of surviving in the midst of

conflict conditions. It is essentially a technique or strategy to participate or live in the midst of it, and not necessarily to solve it. In other words, the “supreme good” is not the resolution of differences, but rather the achievement of specific social objectives within the framework of that context, such as, for example, the preservation of the territory of protecting life in the midst of violent circumstances.

The following characteristics stand out in this approach: violence is distorted as a method of action within the framework of civil resistance exercises. The action of civil disobedience implies a recognition of the dominant power, against which disagreements arise. The exercise of civil disobedience does not focus its actions as a direct impact on the social group where they take place, but rather they are much more deeply rooted in the individual, particularly from their moral precepts.

Opposition Action as an Objective of Civil Resistance

This approach, in which opposition action is prioritized, has been conceived as an objective of civil resistance by authors such as Quiñones (2008), who, analyzing the framework of the social and political conflict in Colombia, points out that the “civil resistance” notion, alludes to this exercise. That is, it alludes to a refusal to give in to the expressions of domination, regardless of the characteristics that the latter have (p. 3). In this sense, all resistance implies a component of disobedience, without this meaning, as has already been said, “civil resistance” and “civil disobedience” configure the same concept. It is important to bear in mind that the resistance exercise is proposed against the violent actions of illegal armed groups, and not so much against repressive state policies as in the first approach, defended by Thoreau.

Based on the previous discussion, it is critical to bear in mind that numerous political and social entities have exerted oppositional action and have confronted the approach to democracy applied to the country. Moreover, this opposition extends to the policies that the State itself seeks to implement in the territories and that have been rejected by the population due to being deemed contrary to local development, human rights, or subject to the interests of the ruling elites.

In this line of reasoning, Nieto (2011) says that the history of social resistance in Colombia has been molded by the need to confront the war's objectives and social and economic policies that have resulted from the turn-of-the-century neoliberal model's adoption by the ruling governments (p. 2). This means that as

a goal of civil resistance, this aspect of opposition finds its best representatives in the territorial organizations that have recently gained strength and gauged the pulse of the state's development proposals. While they haven't succeeded in making their proposals prevail, at least some of the ones that institutions are trying to impose have been prevented from being implemented.

Cases that are very specific can be found in the national policy to eradicate illicit drug cultivation in different areas of the country. Because this policy is not supported by local producers, it leads to conflict and prevents it from being implemented. It is important to note that this struggle occasionally receives support from political parties and movements, some of which have seats in the House of Representatives, who are referred to as the political opposition and who echo the voices of the people who are not heard outside of their home countries.

According to Bobbio (1988), this idea of political opposition can be understood as the search for “objectives opposed to those that defend those who hold governmental power,” according to Sierra, “as an attitude of criticism of the government's actions, exercised by groups, parties or individuals outside governmental power” (p. 2).

Finally, it is important to note that the exercise of political opposition is a right guaranteed by Article 112 of the Colombian Constitution since 1991, but it was only codified by Law 1909 of July 2018 in accordance with the terms of the 2016 peace agreement signed between the Colombian government and the FARC-EP.

Civil resistance as a Game of Access to Power

According to Molina (2014), “civil resistance” might be seen as a “game for power” or a way to exert control over the actions that the collective is resisting (p. 4). This idea is controversial because “civil resistance” is a way for a group of people to struggle against a group or hegemonic power that exercises oppression, whether through constitutionally-based means like “expedition of laws, decrees, or regulations against the interests of social sectors, etc.” or through the power of weapons that can also be of legal order like “the force of the state,” or illegal means like “armed groups.” The contentious claim is that those who have experienced the effects of oppression intend to use a similar oppressive dynamic if they ever gain power or control. In this regard, Molina (2014) states that it is preferable for the group exercising resistance to value

their actions over time to avoid replicating the dominance or violent principles to which they are opposed.

It is important to emphasize that the struggle for power or control through civil resistance tactics does not delegitimize the process. Many organized civil society expressions – particularly in Colombia – view gaining power as the most practical way to end the scenes of submission and disproportionate state power or the actions of oppressive groups.

An example of this last point is the outcome of the regional elections held on October 27, 2019, in the city of Buenaventura (Valle del Cauca, Colombia), where a social leader who had previously led a civic protest was elected as the city's mayor. This experience is noteworthy in the context of this approach because it demonstrates how resistance activities organized around popular demands and in opposition to power-seeking behaviors that they view as oppressive and responsible for a variety of territorial issues can become viable options for contesting and exercising territorial authority and for trying to change those behaviors.

The Use of Weapons as a Tool of Civil Resistance

This is a reflection on the current debate in Latin America on the use of weapons as a form of civil resistance rather than just a focus that allows for closer examination of the term “civil resistance.” In the case of Colombia, illegally armed groups such as communist insurgents and paramilitary groups aligned with the country's political left have attempted to justify their actions as acts of civil resistance against rival groups, and even the state itself, through action or omission.

This notion or assertion is rejected by organized civil society processes, which hold these groups accountable for numerous negative consequences that have compelled the civil populace to resist because their actions have jeopardized fundamental rights and violated the liberties of communities that have come under their control. In this regard, Quiñones (2008) asserts that, in a general sense, resistance does not preclude the use of violence; but, when the term “civil resistance” is used, it refers to the practice of a non-military or, more broadly, non-violent opposition (p.3). As a result, armed expressions will have no place in the civic resistance scenario.

Reaching a consensus in the discussion over armed action as a form of civil resistance is difficult, especially when considering the contexts in which they arose, who incorporated them, and the support they received, both directly and indirectly, from the general public. However, according to a study conducted

by the National Center of Historical Memory (NCHM) that surveyed victims and non-victims on illegal armed groups and the legitimacy of their struggle based on the principles under which they have justified their actions, 84% of victims and 81% of non-victims believe that “guerrillas” are “simply criminals” (NCHM et al., 2012, p. 25). To put it another way, the civilian population does not recognize or legitimize this armed group, despite the fact that they self-identify as civil resistance to state-sanctioned oppression, inequality, and social injustice.

The picture is repeated in relation to paramilitary groups, who justify their actions as “necessary for combating Colombian guerrillas”; according to the same poll, 74% of victims and 71% of non-victims disagree with this justification (NCHM et al., 2012, p. 27). Within this concept, and in light of public perception, it is possible to conclude that the actions of illegally armed groups lack legitimacy as civil resistance expressions.

Resistance as a Recognition Exercise

Another point worth discussing in this exercise in conceptualizing civil resistance is the role of such resistance as a search for recognition, particularly by minority groups, who are marginalized and discriminated against in countries like Colombia.

In this regard, it is important to consider the organized protests of rural groups, women, urban groups, ethnic communities, LGTB groups, and young people, among others, who have recently erupted on the public stage through various strategies, not in a struggle for power, as Molina (2014) asserts, or simply in opposition to the state and violent groups, as Quiones (2008) proposes, but as an act of resistance.

It is important to emphasize that this struggle for recognition does not seek a type of “social acceptance” from society, but rather spaces of tolerance and respect for their existence, as do the rest of the civic groups. This is in line with Honneth's proposal for recognition forms, according to which there is a “[...] need for the I to be recognized and confirmed as a free and active subject” (Honneth cited by Arrese, 2009, p.3). In this sense, the practice of civil resistance by these groups known as “minorities” or “marginalized” is in sync with the need to be recognized as a collective, but also as individuals with rights who can and must be part of society.

As a result, acting collectively from civil resistance entails recognizing those who share the same desire for recognition, to demand the same from other

social groups from a group and organizational level. To that aim, it is necessary to continue the debate about which practices are being addressed in the search for recognition of rights and the creation of others, both from civil society and through resistance. This is with the goal of creating more equitable spaces that allow for better coexistence and complete living, as Amartya Sen has described.

Civil Resistance as a Strategy for Peacebuilding

This concept was popularized by Hernández (2009), who asserts, based on his research on organizational processes in rural and ethnic communities during Colombia's armed conflict, that “Colombian civil resistance promotes an integral and perfectible peace” (p. 15). The author allows to understand the overview of organizational expressions generated from the territories, crossed by historical claims from economic, social, cultural and environmental issues to different population groups. These are civil resistance actions, that move towards peacebuilding.

Hernández (2009) states that the concept of ‘integral peace’ exposed here “[...] includes personal, social, and ecological expectations and needs; it proposes the transformation of realities related to structural violence such as poverty, misery, and exclusion; and also, the generation of scenarios of peaceful coexistence and culture of peace” (p. 15).

Finally, in accordance with the author, the civil resistance developed in these contexts of violence in Colombia is aimed at building peace because “[...] they build on day-to-day imperfect or unfinished peace, it has significant reaches, they are related to peaceful coexistence, non-violent management and resolution of conflicts” (Hernández, 2009, p. 15) This is ultimately led to the generation of several forms of well-being of collectives or organizations that generate and move them so that they can be extended to the whole national population.

Civil Resistance within the Context of Territories in Social and Armed Conflict. The Experience of Four Organizations in Montes de María

It is important to take these approaches into account, and the perspectives stated to approach the concept of “civil resistance,” to have a clear concept of the place, context, and historical time they’re placed in. Some approaches refer

to how resistance actions are conducted, and the others focus on the manner of reaching the goal.

According to this, despite the connotations of civil resistance and the objectives that can be achieved, undertaking these kinds of actions in a country like Colombia, where violence has been constant, implies that these civil strategies become exposed, risky, and sometimes untenable, especially in those territories where people are continuously shown violence and victimization for carrying out this kind of activities, that in most cases attack the right to live of those who promote them.

These conditions limit social mobilization and, especially, civilian resistance to these conflicts. Despite this difficulty, in the territories some communities' firmness to face violence by peaceful practices has allowed their defense and an opportunity to build territories of peace. The resistance determines their life, because they struggle for the transformation of their realities and demand their right to live in peace, according to their collective life imaginaries and historical roots, as has happened in Montes de María, El Catatumbo or indigenous communities of the Cauca.

Taking into account this situation, one of the common factors among the four participating social organizations of the *Ovejas* municipality is to conceive the organizational processes as a strategy of civil resistance, for the arrangement of the violent and non-violent conflicts in the territory. In this case, the most representative is the armed conflict, which has behaved like a kind of excuse that limits seeing and recognizing the whole view (CNMH, 2018).

Based on the idea that the social organization is a strategy of civil resistance by itself, it is located within permanent strategies, since it is ahead and precedes scenarios of armed conflict. It is the last parameter to establishing temporary context of civilian resistance strategies in the territory in this research. This coincides with Villareal (2016), who recalls the Aristotle view that man is an animal that needs relationship with other individuals to satisfy their own needs, but it also mitigates conflicts.

It is worth noting that the creation of social organizations as a form of peaceful civil resistance varies depending on the nature of conflict. As a result, it became a strategy for dealing with several issues that arose in the territory and determined the best approach to organizing or addressing them (Vivas et al., 2015).

According to the participating organizations, the resistance has allowed them to fight for recognition and fulfillment of their rights. Likewise, the organization constitutes a collective identity to peacefully resolving and sorting out challenges and risks imposed to the community by armed groups. The concept of "the organization" as a mechanism of action and social coordination to common goals

addresses the dynamics of armed conflict, and points to the resolution of other types of structural or cultural violence. Consequently, the organization as a figure of civil resistance is associated with a desire to work collectively and to have a center of action (Luhmann, 1998).

According to Ibarra (2000), “social organization” is a form of collective action, and it implies, in advance, a conflict, a tension that tries to resolve or manage, that makes it visible and gives dimension to that collective activity (p. 9).

As has been seen, the organization is a process of civil resistance in itself, it transcends the scenario of armed conflict and enables the arrangement of other conflicts in the territories. Regardless of their particularities, social organizations have learned that isolated work, although it may be functional, is not enough for its purposes. It can range from being heard by the institution to managing better treatment by the armed groups in the territories; likewise, it allows them to have a greater reach from their work in the regions (Montoro, 2000).

Organizational work has played an important role in networks. It joins or creates levels of more complex organizations called “second level,” such as platforms or coordinators of peasant associations, victims, and women, among others that take advantage of leaders’ and organizations’ experiences (Alpuche & Bernal, 2015). In this case, they also benefit from the particular experiences of civil resistance that second-level organizations place in service of a broader collective.

Although, the associative processes and community cooperativism is not extensive to all organizations of the municipality of *Ovejas*, it is applied to organizational processes such as on *La Europa* farm or with the Asociación de productores de San Rafael. They can be seen in productive projects and also in social dynamics aimed at solving common problems. As an alternative to this strategy, it can be understood as a broader association between two or more organizations and their individuals; it is almost always in productivity, the articulation of workforce and commerce, among others. According to Bolos (2003), the political actions of social organizations are conceived by their own actors as a method of interacting with others; (social organizations, non-governmental and civil groups, and networks). They are political actors as they congregate the sense and the pursuit of common goals of a part of society.

Another form of resistance is “survival,” understood as the ability to overcome adversities within direct violence (individual killers, massacres, forced displacement, torture, sexual violence, among others) but also situations such as extreme poverty, territorial and organizational stigmatization, inequality in access to land, patriarchal practices, illiteracy, and denial of fundamental rights, among others. The last can be understood in the violence triangle: direct violence, structural violence, and cultural violence described by Galtung (1990). Therefore,

this dynamic of “survival” in *territorio Montemariano* maybe allows still dreaming of peace, despite all the pain.

Thus, resilience has been an unconscious internalized behavior by individuals and organizations, and in most cases the only way to care and remain in the territory: “continued life.” In short, to keep discovering the dreams or ideals for the region, with peace and economic development for all in a sustainable way. As Orozco (2015) states, it is the ability of organizations to absorb shocks or strong strikes, and complex situations, without losing the ability to fulfill their mission and leaving aside their vision. “Resilience” is “something” that is perceived not only in the four organizations participating in this process, but also by the general public, and most of the organizations in the region. In any case, resilience is reflected within social organizations, and at the general level of the population, as a practice of resistance, but also as a capacity to lead a life with normality within a context of abnormality (Rutter & Rutter, 1992).

Furthermore, the role of communications as a strategy of permanent resistance should be highlighted. It has been transformed into its forms and means with the goal of keeping the population informed and, especially, to be alert about events, dangers, problems, and needs in the territories. The main changes in the media relate to increased coverage and access, the availability of technological devices and easy use by social organizations. Key civil resistance communication strategies have helped to transmit messages from the armed conflict, call for a meeting, or report other types of problems, as well as served to educate the population during a time when education was a real privilege, and many of the men and women who fought to possess the land and consolidate organizations that were illiterate. During the 1970s and 1980s, radio was used as a means of popular education within the territory from political and organizational perspectives. In San Rafael, the implementation of the “*Radio Sutatenza*” strategy stands as a clear example. This strategy was useful in learning the fundamental educational aspects for the settlers who founded the township and were illiterate when conquering the Mula and Berruecos farms (Acevedo & Yie, 2015).

This historical background, combined with the adoption of new communication strategies, has paved the way for achieving recognition of their proposals and commitments that are in line with the mission and visionary objectives of each organization. Discourse and innovative approaches contribute to the formation of these emerging realities and the society that consumes them (Mejía & Giraldo, 2011). Consequently, the challenge lies in channeling the spirit of struggle and the underlying motivations behind social mobilizations. As stated by the participants, these communication strategies have yielded positive outcomes, both in terms of

message replication and gaining support for the claims or demands being made through public denunciation.

This observation allows asserting that certain civil resistance strategies involve a more decisive action on the part of the organization and the individuals in terms of their methods and objectives. This could entail actions such as questioning, disobeying, confronting, building solutions, or, ultimately, advocating for a different arrangement of the causes they perceive as oppressive. This group of civil resistance has been called “active,” because their goal is action, a movement within the territory as a response against situations affecting the organization’s interests.

When discussing “active civil resistance” acknowledging the existence of “passive resistance” is relevant. Passive resistance refers to approaches that far from opposing the oppressive power, or managing the territorial or sectorial difficulties, seek to combat oppression without opposing it or directly confronting it; and due to the lack of guarantees, they also put life itself at risk, among other consequences. In this regard, resistance manifests itself as a possible condition of submission in which the crucial aspect is to preserve life or permanence within the territory; therefore, guidelines of silence are assumed and adhered to without contradiction. According to Law 1448 of 2011, this may result in the abandonment of the territory, which is a victimizing incident of forced displacement.

In the future, these forms of resistance will be transformed into or result in forms of civil resistance aiming at action, that is, active. The negative and painful effects within the framework of the armed conflict are highlighted, such as forced displacements (are victimizing incidents that occur when the forms of passive or active resistance in the territory) are no longer available. In the case of the social organizations under investigation, their leaders have suffered, and they, in exile from their territory, outside or inside the country, have managed to incorporate or develop methodological, pedagogical, and political capacities from a discursive and organizational perspective, among others. These capacities have enhanced active resistance in their respective social processes and also at a regional level. The interesting aspect of these negative situations and resilience itself is how resistances that help manage the conflicts faced by the organizations and the territory are formed.

Another conceptual contribution to civil resistances of this current research in the Montes de María is the temporal framework which allowed for the identification of permanent, conjunctural, and emergent resistances. The first group comprises all resistance actions that have occurred before, been present, and have preceded the existence of the armed conflict, which is the beginning for a temporal analysis. Thus, in Montes de María, organizational

work is the main reference in this type of civil resistance as communities have relied on it to defend their rights or achieve the territorial transformations, they believe necessary. Hence, social organizations have been key actors in the struggle for land and resolution of conflicts, with the slogan that the group is the one that enables a stronger and more decisive collective action (Villareal, 2016). In addition to this group of resistances, there has been an associative production in force since the 1960s as well as cultural initiatives as the creation of local festivals as territorial integration, like the “*Ajonjolí*” or “*Las Gaitas*” in *Ovejas*, among others.

The civilian resistance to economic situations refers to the resistance that is generated or developed at certain moments to respond to situations of maximum pressure resulting from the armed conflict. They tend to disappear once the scenario that led to their emergence has ended, hence their transitory nature, because the aim is individual or collective preservation of life without directly confronting the armed actors. However, it is a form of resistance because the struggle continues from other fronts, and even places.

Finally, there are the emerging civil resistances that include those that have been recently consolidated as an alternative to the resolution of conflicts present in the territory. In some cases, they are reconfigurations of some permanent forms of resistance, which, due to the new context realities, have been transformed while preserving their core without denying the original forms previously described.

The communicative strategies are perhaps the most representative aspect of the emerging forms of civil resistance, not because they did not exist previously, but because of the revived and leading role they have been playing within the organizational commitments. These strategies use communications groups and artistic expressions –such as the “*Colectivo de comunicaciones línea 21*” or the *Museo itinerante de los Montes de María “El Mochuelo”* – to demonstrate nonconformity in the population as well as the dreams and desires of the communities, while denouncing or warning about the existing conflicts within the territories that are not managed by the organizations. Similarly, these strategies influence the community’s memories with the purpose of ensuring that those painful situations that have marked the collective memory of the population and plunged them into fear never happen again (Rodríguez, 2015).

Conclusions

The historical, theoretical, and conceptual evolution of civil resistance has been subordinated to a notion of confrontation, often directed against the State or power groups exerting pressure on the population. According to the authors cited, the analysis has been oriented toward an approach of struggle for power, with the purpose of resolving the oppressive situation that causes circumstances of resistance in the short or long term.

Furthermore, there is a debate on whether “civil resistance” and “civil disobedience” are synonymous leading one to conclude that the latter is a subset of the former. Similarly, there is a disagreement as to whether or not resistance actions can use violent methods; this resulted in the predominance of pacifism that arose with Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr. in the previous century, and the relevance of the rejection of violence as a means of defeating or intimidating oppressors.

These latter discussions are highly relevant in the Colombian context, which has been immersed in an armed conflict for more than 60 years. The causes are debatable although they can be placed in the Galtian triangle of structural and cultural violence resulting from physical violence.

From this point of view, a struggle is argued, perhaps from recognition, in defining who has truly engaged in genuine civil resistance. On the one hand, the illegal armed groups, that, regardless of their ideological leanings, use the argument of civil resistance as a way to justify taking up weapons against the State or in the war among themselves, and worsening the understanding of this historical context of violence. On the other hand, findings suggest an organized civilian population that rejects the use of weapons and, to a large extent, violence as a means of resistance. This indicates that it is the only social movement that has seriously exercised it, either to protect itself, or to resolve conflicts in its territories.

This current research examines some organizational expressions of Montes de María, particularly in the municipality of Ovejas, where it was identified that “civil resistance” is constituted as a form of life preservation and a struggle for the territorial transformations from the social, economic, political, environmental, and cultural perspectives, among others. Although the armed conflict and their actors have been the primary drivers of organizational civil resistance structural factors –such as extreme poverty, institutional abandonment, male chauvinism, and cultural discrimination, among others– they have also contributed to this type of expressions.

In Montes de María, resistance manifests itself in various ways, including the creation of organizations, the struggle for access to land, the preservation of life through actions such as the abandonment of territory, cultural expressions as a means of gathering or strengthening community ties, and the work in organizational networks. As Kohan (2020) points out, understanding education and training as an act of emancipation and independence establishes a difference with the traditional conceptions of civil resistance.

Finally, as Muñoz (2015) suggests, civil resistances in Montes de María have been used along the difficult path of peacemaking. Regardless of the form and nature of resistance, the civilian population has engaged in resistance with the goal of attaining a stable and enduring peace with social justice, as stated in the 2016 Final Peace Agreement.

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Inclusive Educational Practices and Armed Conflict in Colombian Eastern Antioquia*

[English Version]

Prácticas educativas incluyentes y conflicto armado en el oriente antioqueño colombiano

Práticas educativas inclusivas e conflito armado em Antioquia Oriental na Colômbia

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Norely Margarita Soto Builes**

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7670-4379>

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Colombia

Solbey Morillo Puente***

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2129-1121>

CvLAC: https://scienti.minciencias.gov.co/cvlac/visualizador/generarCurriculoCv.do?cod_rh=0001616487

Colombia

Claudia Nayibe Sánchez Moncayo****

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2967-3693>

CvLAC: https://scienti.minciencias.gov.co/cvlac/visualizador/generarCurriculoCv.do?cod_rh=0000070470

Colombia

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** PhD in Social Sciences, Childhood and Youth. Universidad de Medellín. nmsoto@udemedellin.edu.co

*** PhD in Education. Universidad de Medellín, Universidad de Los Andes, Venezuela. smorillo@udemedellin.edu.co

**** Master in Education, Bachelor in Special Education. Universidad Luis Amigó. claudia.sanchezmo@amigo.edu.co

Abstract

Objective: The purpose of this article is to describe the characteristics and conditions of educational practices, including those involving 80% of the teachers at two rural schools in Antioquia, Colombia, which have been affected by armed conflict. **Methodology:** In keeping with the study's overarching goal, the hermeneutical research approach was used. To obtain a more complete picture of the phenomenon, in addition to the teachers' narratives and the conduct of a workshop, a survey was used. **Results:** The results document a disintegration between the disability categories and the armed conflict categories, which gives more relevance to the former. **Conclusions:** Despite having a national policy for inclusive education, there is a lack of awareness and appropriate application of inclusive education's normative framework in rural settings.

Keywords: inclusive education; education for all; disability; social exclusion (IRESIE); Armed conflict (Author).

Resumen

Objetivo: en este artículo se tiene como propósito describir las características y condiciones de las prácticas educativas incluyentes del 80% de los docentes de las escuelas rurales de dos municipios del oriente Antioqueño (Colombia), signados por el conflicto armado. **Metodología:** de acuerdo con el interés comprensivo del estudio, el enfoque de investigación fue el hermenéutico. Para obtener una visión más completa del fenómeno, además de las narrativas de los docentes y de la realización de un taller, se utilizó una encuesta. **Resultados:** en los resultados se documenta una desintegración entre las categorías de discapacidad y las categorías del conflicto armado, que da más relevancia a las primeras. **Conclusiones:** a pesar que se tiene una política de educación inclusiva nacional, no se cuenta con una sensibilización y apropiación en el contexto rural del marco normativo de la educación inclusiva y de su praxis.

Palabras clave: educación inclusiva; educación para todos; discapacidad; exclusión social (IRESIE); Conflicto armado (Autor).

Resumo

Objetivo: o objetivo deste artigo é descrever as características e condições das práticas educativas inclusivas de 80% dos professores em escolas rurais em dois municípios do leste de Antioquia (Colômbia), marcados pelo conflito armado. **Metodologia:** de acordo com o interesse abrangente do estudo, a abordagem da investigação foi hermenêutica. A fim de obter uma visão mais completa do fenômeno, para além das narrativas dos professores e de um workshop, foi utilizado um inquérito. **Resultados:** Os resultados documentam uma desintegração entre as categorias de deficiência e as categorias de conflito armado, o que dá mais relevância às primeiras. **Conclusões:** Apesar da existência de uma política nacional de educação inclusiva, existe uma falta de sensibilização e apropriação no contexto rural do quadro normativo da educação inclusiva e da sua práxis.

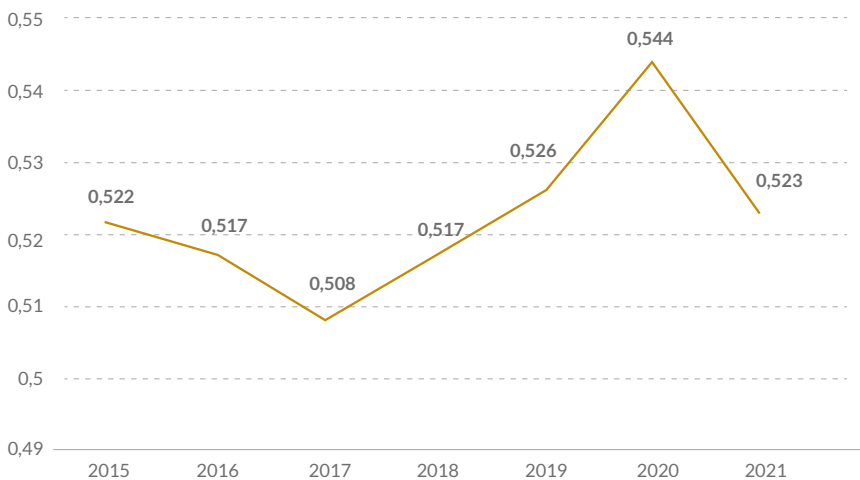
Palavras-chave: educação inclusiva; educação para todos; deficiência; exclusão social (IRESIE); conflito armado (Autor).

Introduction

The legislative framework for inclusive education in Colombia starts in the 1990s (Soto et al., 2016), influenced by the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child (Unicef, 2006), the World Conference on Education for All —held in Jontiem, Thailand in 1990 (Unesco, 1990)— and the World Conference on Special Needs Education held in Spain (Unesco, 1994). In addition to the aforementioned, it is supported by Colombia's Political Constitution (1991), which declares that the country is a "social state of rights" (Art. 1) and states that "all people are born free and equal before the law, receive the same protection and treatment from the authorities, and enjoy the same rights, freedoms, and opportunities without any form of discrimination based on gender, race, national or familial origin, language, religion, or political opinion" (Art. 13). According to Laurido et al. (2021), this constitution implies that "education is a right acquired by all persons, without being subject to discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, sex, religion, disability, or capacity" (p. 29).

However, the particular conditions of the country showing the inequity suggested by the Gini coefficient is a feature that is maintained. This coefficient stood at 0.523 in 2021 (DANE, 2022). After having gone from 0.522 in 2015 to 0.517 in 2016 in the national total, it shows a rising trend and exposes its maximum peak in 2020, reaching a value of 0.544. These values, being closer to one than zero, reveal greater inequality, as shown in Figure 1.

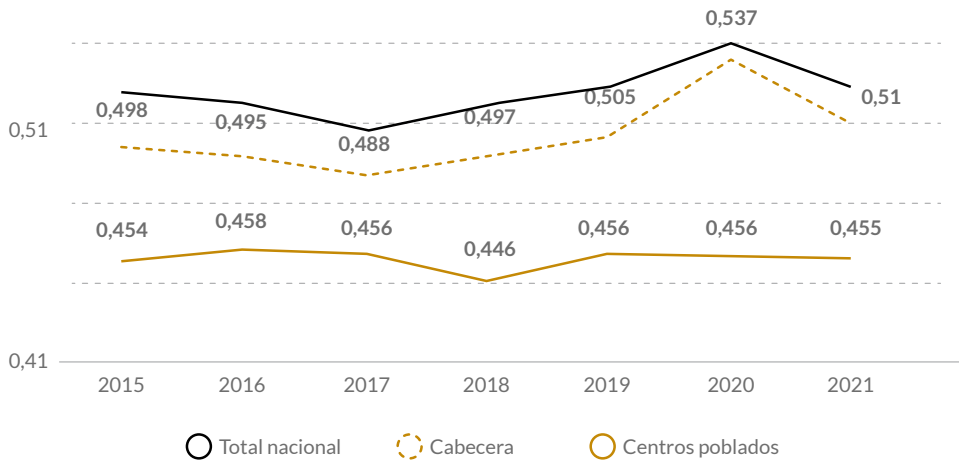
Figure 1. Gini Coefficient (National Total) in Colombia, 2015 to 2021.



Source: DANE (2022).

According to DANE (2017), there are significant differences in the Gini coefficient of municipal capitals and dispersed rural areas. For the former, it decreases, going from 0.498 in 2015 to 0.495 in 2016. For the latter, it increases, from 0.454 in 2015 to 0.458 in 2016, indicating greater inequality. For 2021, these values are maintained. The coefficient 0.455 was recorded in populated centers, while in the rural area it stood at 0.51, approaching 1, which denotes an increase in inequality with respect to 2015 (DANE, 2022). In addition, between 25% and 30% of the country's 48,202,617 million residents live in poverty. This, combined with the armed struggle that has raged for the past 60 years, has left many groups vulnerable on social, economic, and educational fronts. Exclusion has been a recurring problem (Figure 2). It is important to note that in Colombia, 24.2% of the inhabitants live in rural areas and 80% of the territory is rural (DANE, 2020).

Figure 2. National Gini Index, Head Municipality and Population centers in Colombia Between 2015 and 2021.



Source: DANE (2022).

To address the social risk generated by the described situation, the Colombian government has worked on formulating and implementing public policies that guarantee the restoration of the rights of this segment of the population. Thus, the struggles for social inclusion and, therefore, educational inclusion emerge in the landscape, where theoretical, investigative, and pragmatic advances have been achieved. Likewise, legislation is established by the *Ley General de Educación* of

1994 and the decrees and resolutions that regulate it, in which an educational policy for inclusion has been consolidated. An inclusive educational policy that allowed reporting for 2015, showed 140,939 students with special educational needs (NEE) enrolled in the formal education system and registered in the Integrated Student Enrollment System for Basic and Secondary Education (SIMAT). In 2018, there were 180,743 students with disabilities registered throughout the country, which represent less than 1% of the 48,258,000 inhabitants for that year (Fundación Saldarriaga Concha, 2018).

Nonetheless, despite the advances in inclusive education, in rural areas, the conditions of social, economic, and educational vulnerability are constant. These are exacerbated by the armed conflict, which generates situations of displacement and new vulnerabilities that add to these communities in more risk situations (IFRC, 2006; Turvill & De Dios, 2009; Twigg, 2014; Wisner et al., 2004).

In this regard, Bilak et al. (2015) argue that:

Displacement in Colombia is still driven by the armed conflict, which continues despite the ongoing peace process. There has been a decrease in hostilities between government forces and the FARC, and peace negotiators reached a partial agreement on drug trafficking in 2014. However, violence and insecurity continue to be common. Numerous abuses, including the recruitment of minors, sexual violence, the deployment of landmines, extortion, and the targeting of human rights defenders and land restitution advocates, have forced many people to leave their homes. Forty-eight percent of internally displaced persons are between the ages of six and 26, and many still live in areas still affected by the conflict. (p. 17).

Such is the case of the rural areas of Cocorná and San Francisco (Antioquia), municipalities that due to their strategic location were subject to the armed conflict during the last years of the 90s decade and the first years of the 21st century. The impact of the armed conflict in this area led the department of Antioquia to rank it as first in the country in terms of the number of victims of antipersonnel mine (APM) and unexploded ordnance (UXO) accidents. Between 1990 and July 2013, APM and UXO accidents in that department resulted in 2,324 victims, constituting 22% of the country's total victims (Correa & Pastor, 2010; Franco, 2013).

In the same vein, the Directorate for Integral Action against Antipersonnel Mines reports that "[...] Five departments account for 53% of the APL and UXO events, as follows: Antioquia (17%), Meta (16%), Caquetá (9%), Arauca (6%) and Norte de Santander (5%)" (Daicma, cited by Orejuela, 2017, p. 32). The

rural areas of Antioquia are directly affected by mines against people since they serve as a barrier to protect areas under territorial control, a deterrent to illegal armed groups, and a mechanism to protect illicit drug cultivation. In addition, the non-state armed groups' use of APM and UXO made it difficult for the victims to receive assistance.

The Antioquia Department's eastern and northern zones are the areas with the most accidents reported by APM and UXO. According to Fundación Mi Sangre (2015), the subregion of eastern Antioquia registers 46.7% of mine victims in Antioquia. Between 1990 and July 2013, the municipality of San Carlos had 79 victims, followed by San Francisco with 54, Cocorná with 44 victims, and Granada and Argelia with 38 combined.

Children and teenagers are the demographic segment of the affected civil population that accounts for the greatest number of victims.

According to the Presidential Program for Action against Mines (PAICMA), in the period of 1990 to July 2013, 1,034 underage victims were recorded. Of these, 23% (233) were girls, 76% (791) were boys and the remaining 1% (10) had no information. Of the total number of underage victims, 811 (78%) were injured in the accident, and 223 (22%) died. (Convenio 483 MEN.UNICEF.NRC.COL, 2023, p. 28).

In an attempt to reduce the exposure to risk and the violation of the rights of children and young people due to the impossibility of accessing education, in 2005 the Ministry of National Education (MEN) issued the Educational Policy Guidelines for Vulnerable Populations and the guidelines for education in emergencies. This also recognizes that there are some student populations that, at some point and as a result of the armed conflict, have had to leave their homeland behind and resume their educational process from an urban center or other safe place. In the same year, the general regulations for the educational attention to vulnerable population and victims of the internal armed conflict are published, in which it proposes the attention to the vulnerable population from the inclusive education approach (Tapiero, 2018).

The current study inquired of inclusive education among teachers at rural schools in the towns of Cocorná and San Francisco in eastern Antioquia as part of the previous picture. Their answers show that this proposal in the mentioned areas is incipient, and inclusive education has as its main focus the population with disabilities. It leaves the vulnerable population of the armed conflict invisible, therefore, the differential approach is not implemented as an inclusive practice to achieve the transformation of classroom environments and the implementation of the current regulations of inclusive education. The exclusion of children and

young people who have suffered direct or indirect harm as a result of the armed conflict in Colombia is due to the vulnerability of their circumstances, which include poverty and displacement, among other things.

Conceptual Referent

Conceptions of Inclusive Education

In Colombia, inclusive education has been strengthened in a process of more than 20 years of awareness of educational institutions, teacher training, parental and research processes, where the concern has revolved around educational practices, attitudes of peers and parents, and success of the inclusive education process, among others. Progress in the country has made it possible to include, according to the 2015 SIMAT, 159,000 children and young people considered with special educational needs (SEN) in the classrooms of the country's different institutions; in this, students in situations of vulnerability or social risk as a result of other situations or conditions are also recorded.

Similar to the rest of the world, the meaning of the term "inclusive education" is still unclear in Colombia. In this vein, Echeita and Ainscow (2011) express that "The confusion that exists within this field arises internationally, at least in part, because the idea of inclusive education can be defined in many ways" (p. 29) and add that "it is not surprising that in many countries progress is disappointing and there exist, in this regard, contradictory educational options and policies" (p. 29).

In the country and in the world, the term is still tied to the concept of disability or SEN with which inclusive education began to be approached (Benomir et al., 2016; Boer & Munde, 2014; Ahmmed et al., 2013). This placement in disability persists despite having made progress in programs such as *Inclusive Education with Quality* (2010) —with which inclusive education was actually implemented in the country— that proposes the recognition of "the characteristics and particularities of diverse and vulnerable population groups, which are cared for in educational institutions" (MEN, cited in Vélez, 2013, p. 273). Children and young people affected by violence, those separated from armed groups outside the law, reinserted and minors at social risk should also be taken into account (Vélez, 2013).

The conception of disability reduces the philosophy of inclusion that, as proposed by Azorín et al. (2017), should advocate for:

[...] the expansion of the capacity of schools to improve the response to diversity (Arnaiz & Azorín, 2014; Black-Hawkins, Florian & Rouse, 2007). Consequently, the concept of inclusion is related to all students, whether or not they have special educational needs (SEN), with the barriers they experience in the educational and social environment, and with the forms of marginalization, exclusion and low performance to which they may be exposed (Ainscow, Booth & Dyson, 2006; Alcántara & Navarrete, 2014). (p. 1022).

However, in practice, the transformation of educational institutions revolved around the inclusion of the population with disabilities, and in some cases, the population with exceptional abilities and talents; as can be demonstrated by the territorial entities (Correa & Suárez, 2021; García-Cepero & Iglesias-Velasco, 2020; Soto & Arcila, 2017). The *Guidelines for Educational Attention to the Vulnerable Population and Victims of the Internal Armed Conflict* of the MEN indicate a position of inclusion that also transcends the bias of merely disability, since they state that this means attending the students' common and specific needs with quality and equity.

From this last theoretical location, the concept of inclusion is expanded under the postulates of the differential approach; which is understood as the principle to understand diversity (*Ley 1448 de 2011*). The concept of inclusion, where the pursuit for equity is central, has been strongly strengthened in recent years, as proposed by Ainscow, 2019.

Inclusive Practices

As Ainscow (2019) puts it, inclusive practices are those that make it possible to transform the learning environments of students by visualizing their differences and democratizing the participation possibilities. Inclusive practices respond to three dimensions: culture, politics, and educational practices in relation to the entry, permanence, and promotion of all members of the educational community in school life. The first promotes respectful, motivating, and inclusive environments where all members of the educational community feel welcomed. The second allows the implementation and transformation of pedagogical practices and curricula into flexible and, therefore, equitable practices. The last elements have to do with the implementation of the Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

with the aim of responding to the needs of the diverse population, providing strategies designed from the diversity and learning styles of the students.

Armed Conflict, Vulnerability, and Education

Throughout the Colombian homeland, due to the armed conflict of the last 50 years, thousands of people have had to endure an event that has put their lives or physical integrity at risk or danger, and therefore, have been considered victims. In this way, from the theory that "they are people who have been subjected to some kind of catastrophe in their life trajectory, which implies the need to rebuild themselves as individuals" (Casado-Neira, 2014, p. 361).

Similarly, *Ley 1448 de 2011* in its third article considers as victims people who have suffered damage, individually or collectively, due to events that occurred as of January 1, 1985 "as a consequence of violations of the International Humanitarian Law or serious and manifest violations of International Human Rights norms, which occurred during the internal armed conflict."

The consequences of violations of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) are evident in individuals, their families and communities. These are physical, emotional, mental, and economic, among others, and is a common situation among the inhabitants of the rural areas of Cocorná and San Francisco. This is how the State in Law 1448, as proposed by DANE (2020), introduces for the first time the need to review this accumulation of situations and conditions from the differential approach of having a higher level of disaggregation and clarity of these conditions, and from there to be able to propose inclusive policies traversed by the differential approach that has been understood as an ethical precept of the intervention (Gómez, 2019), which is based on the principle of equity and seeks to make human rights visible. As a result:

[...] creates a need, stipulated by law, to have information at higher levels of disaggregation for public and private decision-making. The adaptation of public entities to the differential care needs recognized by law also generated more inclusive discourses in a transversal manner in the State, and with this, the data could not be abandoned, while the production of official statistics is also a service provided by the state. (DANE & SEN, 2020, p. 7).

Many of these conditions are woven into the daily lives of children and young people in rural eastern Antioquia. These are towns that, in addition to suffering the armed conflict —where different groups (FARC-EP, EPL,

Self-Defense military groups and the national army) have interacted— still live in contexts surrounded by APM-UXO. This continues to be considered a true attack because they not only put their physical and mental integrity at risk, but also hinder their access to other goods and services of a natural and social nature, such as water and schools, among others. Thus, inclusive education cannot be limited to disability alone; it must be conceived as a "process that helps to overcome the obstacles that limit the presence, participation and achievements of students" (Unesco, 2017, p. 8).

Methodology

The research process was carried out with primary and secondary school teachers from the official institutions of the municipalities of Cocorná and San Francisco, in response to one of the objectives of the study called "Reconstruction of the local memories of direct and indirect female victims due to Antipersonnel Mines (APM), unexploded ordnance (UXO) and improvised explosive devices (IED), belonging to the victim organizations of these devices in the municipalities of Cocorná, San Francisco, San Luis, eastern Antioquia" sponsored by Colciencias and the National Center for Historical Memory (CNMH) (Soto, 2015). The aim was to "design together with the Victims' Associations methodological tools for the process of memory reconstruction and life project, based on their current situation, involving elements of both physical and psychological rehabilitation, and psychosocial inclusion" (Soto et al., 2016, p.15).

Within the psychosocial rehabilitation component, at the suggestion of the victims belonging to the associations, an approach was made to educational institutions, and in particular, to teachers were approached and inquired regarding the inclusive educational practices they use to serve this population. For this, and in accordance with the comprehensive-descriptive interest of the study, the research method used was hermeneutic. A survey was applied in order to get closer to knowledge and to obtain a more complete vision of the phenomenon, in addition to the conversation with the teachers. The research was carried out in two phases.

The first phase had to do with the qualitative moment, which methodological horizon was hermeneutics that supports the possibility of "[...] directly relating the question of the scientific nature of social studies with the possibility of an objective understanding of an essentially subjective reality" (Bauman, 2003, p. 16). The interest was to understand the logic of the inclusive educational practices

of the teachers of the rural schools of the municipalities affected by the conflict: Cocorná and San Francisco, in the department of Antioquia.

Cocorná and San Francisco are municipalities that belong to the eastern Antioquia subregion. Figure 3 shows the delimitation of regions devised by the Planning Administrative Department and which is done in areas divided from “[...] the consideration of variables related to environmental, physical-spatial, economic, cultural and social aspects” (Forests and Diversity Group, 2017, p. 13). Through Ordinance 41 of November 30, 1975, the department was divided into nine subregions: East, Magdalena Medio, Northeast, Bajo Cauca, North, Urabá, Southwest, West and Valle de Aburrá (Osorio, 2015).

Figure 3. Location of Eastern Antioquia.



Source: https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oriente_antioque%C3%B1o#/media/Archivo:Colombia_-_Antioquia_-_Oriente.svg

In turn, the eastern subregion was divided into four zones or microregions: reservoirs, moorlands, forests, and highlands. The forest area —where the municipalities of Cocorná and San Francisco are located, in which this analysis is concentrated— has an area of 1,035 km². This represents 12.8 percent of the total territory of Eastern Antioquia. For 2011 it had an estimated population of 32,423 inhabitants (Antioquia departmental government, 2011, p. 24). This area

also has a special natural wealth and is part of the Rio Samaná Norte and Rio Claro-Cocorná Sur basins, with extensive areas of primary forests and exotic fauna. These riches, plus its strategic location, make it a very attractive area for all the armed groups involved in the armed conflict in Colombia —paramilitaries, guerrillas and criminal gangs (Bacrim)—. During the last years of the 1990s and the first years of the 21st century, the impact of the armed conflict in this area was unprecedented.

Narration became the central technique to get closer to knowing and understanding the inclusive educational practices of the teachers of the rural area of the two municipalities. This led to ways of conceiving, defining, and naming what happens in reality. In this sense, Zapata (2009) indicates that:

It is precisely the narration that describes the multiple transformations of personal identity, offering in turn, not an environment of chaos and darkness, but on the contrary, the possibility of collecting in a single story the breadth of transformations and descriptions that develop a personal, group or institutional identity (p.762).

The main focus of interest consisted in revealing the conceptions that teachers had about children and young people who were victims of the conflict, and the situations that they have had to experience. Also, of interest was understanding the way in which classroom practices have been constituted in these regions, where displacement and fear have been constant, as well as determining the knowledge that these actors have about inclusive education policies implemented in the country for more than 20 years. For the teachers' approach, a workshop was used as an approximation technique to discover in depth and understand in conversation the stories that have been built in the lived educational experience. This workshop was organized in five moments, as can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Workshop on Work as a Teacher in the Rural Area of a Municipality Affected by Violence.

Moment 1	Moment 2	Moment 3	Moment 4	Moment 5
Awareness	I know my students and my work context.	I know the pedagogical model of my institution, the PEI and the study plans.	I know what the country understands by inclusive education.	I narrate the training needs that I have.
Self-knowledge Activity	I describe the SEN of my students according to the context where I work today.	I characterize the pedagogical model of the institution where I work.	I explain what I understand and know about inclusive education, the available supporting material and what is done in the classroom.	I state the training needs that I consider would improve my performance in the classroom.

The second phase corresponded to the application of the survey. The sample was selected randomly and all the teachers were invited to participate in the conversation. —Twenty-six teachers in total attended. This number corresponds to 80% of the teachers of the official institutions of the rural areas of the municipalities of San Francisco and Cocorná, while the population corresponds to 28 teachers (Note that Escuela Nueva's focus on rural schools in Colombia, due to the dispersion of the rural population, leads to an average number of teachers being a maximum of two teachers per institution).

The data collected at the quantitative moments, through the survey, were stored in an Excel spreadsheet and processed through the SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, version 21 for Windows). These were analyzed using absolute frequencies and percentages, and were presented in frequency tables showing the percentage of responses for each category of the variables included in the study.

Results

The results were organized according to the two phases of the methodological design: the qualitative and then quantitative phase.

Quantitative Phase

The context of the research project: vulnerability and the lack of educational opportunities for children and young people in rural areas of the two municipalities most affected by armed conflict in eastern Antioquia. This led to approaching to teachers, to inquire about inclusive practices of educational institutions in the region from the perspective of changes in culture, politics, and educational practices. Thus, an interaction with the professors by a workshop titled “My work as a teacher in rural area of a municipality affected by violence” which aims to know the perceptions of student. (Phase 2).

The frequent questions determined that the traditional cultural perception of the student has changed. They are perceived as direct or indirect victims of the armed conflict; this situation has affected their lives forever. Those changes deal with the transformation of family structure for the father, mother, siblings or any close relative. Thus, the roles as son or brother change and those family members have to assume a new role to support or to be the leader of the family. This equates to a direct or indirect victim of the armed conflict.

The geography of the land changed as the roads to school became vacant lands with the risk having anti-personnel mines or other explosive devices planted that threaten the lives of the residents constantly. In terms of the economy, teachers consider that the displacement and the inability to work the land due to the anti-personnel mines has increased poverty in the area and children and young people have become direct victims of these things.

Forty percent of teachers think that issues related to emotional and mental aspects of students are related to consequences of the war. Those things had driven students to severe mental depression or caused them to drop out of school. Most of the teachers new in the region argue about not having enough tools to face this commitment successfully. Neither did they have the support of the Secretary or Ministry of Education.

In terms of politics, the inclusive practices that teachers report are based on being flexible with scheduled arrival and departure times due to the extended distances to attend the educational institutions. Likewise, the teachers make use

of the flexible Colombia's Unitary School curriculum proposal, as a resource that is flexible and allows students to advance according to their level.

However, in the municipalities of San Francisco and Cocorná, teachers feel that they lack the training and lack the tools and needed support for attending the diverse situations the students face, not only to the ones with any disability — addressed through traditional approaches— but also for those children and young people who have suffered from forced displacement, physical abuse, domestic violence, forced labor and have been direct or indirect victims of armed conflict.

That statement is based on several factors. The first has to do with the characteristics and conditions of the students in those regions of the rural institutions in contrast to the inclusive education concept. Although the teachers exposed situations such as displacement, physical abuse, domestic violence and forced work, those situations were not the core of their answers. Despite an interaction of that qualitative time expressed, all the students from those institutions revealed that directly or indirectly they are victims of conflict, a situation has changed their lives. The teachers understand the inclusive practice-based disability, as they have experienced it in the institutions they have worked in before.

The second issue is that they understand that the proposal for an inclusive educational institution stated in Decree 1421 of 2017 strengthens the role of the teacher as support and assigns tasks of assistance and transformation of educational institution to foster inclusive education as a help for students with (traditional) disabilities. The idea is to have more supportive teachers attending institutions and reinforcing students in particular areas and implementing teaching strategies for these populations, because the students have diagnoses of mental, psychological problems, attention deficit which come mostly from violence experiences.

In this case, it could be stated that an effective transition from the praxis between Decree 366 of 2009 and Decree 1421 of 2017, the goal of which is to direct the educative service for the population with disabilities (within inclusive education) in accessibility, continuity, and quality. The ultimate goal is to break down the frontiers of education and promote meaningful learning and quality with equity, and a framework of justice in the educational institution.

In the studied region there is only one teacher for support who assists four or five institutions from their headquarters. To support headquarters means being there four or five times a month, thus, the teachers have to go to health centers to ask for guidance in dealing with this population. This assistance is clinical but not pedagogical, thus the teacher does not have the tools to work in the classroom. This is seen from the following excerpt of an interview with one teacher:

I arrived in this town and no one told me that I should take care of myself with the displacements, or that the roads might be mined. They did not give me support when I arrived at the classroom and I found several children who had mental retardation, they had lost limbs or they had displacement problems. I asked for help and they told me there was not any, that if I needed to report a child's case that I should go to the health center. When I arrived there, they just told me that they could diagnose the children but that I should just look for ways to teach them. The Government forgot us, here we work as we can and do the best, we can with the resources we have to help our students. (Personal communication, March 2015).

This situation has caused teachers to feel they do not have the right knowledge or tools to help students to build or strengthen a life project, or to provide them quality education. In addition, the lack an Institutional Educational Project (PEI), designed to take the needs of the most vulnerable population groups into account. There is nothing to consider inclusive practices in favor of a transformation of the institutional context, since in PEI the necessary reasonable adjustments are not being made or oriented to the several levels it involves (a manual of coexistence, mission, vision, protocols of assistance to vulnerable population, among others) so that the process of educational inclusion can be significant. The most vulnerable population cannot access it with quality or quantity. One teacher interviewed states:

Our PEI is only an ornament for the institution, because many of us do not know it and it is not designed according to our students' reality. I have been working in this town for 10 years and I have never been told what the pedagogical model I should work with is. Now you believe that it will help us solve the problems we have with our students who have special educational needs. (Personal communication, March 2015).

Lastly, teachers know about pedagogy, since the answers to the open question in the survey on the pedagogical approach allows determining that less than half (44.4%) clearly know the active approach of The Escuela Nueva, the proposal as a flexible model of MEN (Ministry of National Education) for rural areas.

Quantitative Analysis

Twenty-six teachers were surveyed (see Table 2). Half of them teach in preschool and primary school, 38.5% exclusively in primary school, 7.7% are preschool teachers, and only one of them (3.8%) was a support teacher (Decree 1421 of 2017). The teachers are not dedicated to a specific level in primary education because they are multigrade teachers in a rural area, and in Colombia the New School Model is used in these areas. It is a pedagogical flexible model that aims to strengthen the educational coverage. It is remarkable that in the sample there was only one support teacher from the comprehensive care unit (UAI) program, for the rural area of two municipalities. In accordance with the Colombian inclusion policy, this teacher is in charge of supporting the educational institution in the curricular, administrative, and classroom transformations that must be carried out to assist students who need it; likewise, it must train other teachers and teaching directors.

Table 2. Classification of Teachers According to the Level in which They Perform Their Duties.

Level at which the teaching work is carried out	N° of teachers	%
Preschool	2	7,7%
Basic Primary	10	38,5%
Preschool and Basic Primary	13	50,0%
Teacher of support	1	3,8
Total	26	100,0

Source: document from SPSS software platform.

Teachers gave a positive response when asked if there were any SEN students in their classes. Table 3 reveals the three main reasons. First and foremost, cognitive disability is emphasized because 52% of the teachers' reported children with this problem in their classroom. Second, 36% of respondents said that one of SEN population is affected by emotional factors. Last, 20% of teachers reported attention deficit as a cause of the children's special needs; so, it could be stated that two out of every ten teachers in San Francisco and Cocorná assist

students with this condition. Motor disabilities (8%) and auditory or psychic disabilities (4%) occur in lower presence in children with SEN in rural areas of the municipalities in Eastern Antioquia.

Table 3. Characteristics of Students with SEN. Institutions in the Rural Areas of San Francisco and Cocorná-Antioquia. Colombia, 2016.

Type	Yes		No	
	N°	%	N°	%
Attention Deficit	5	20,0	20	80,0
Cognitive Disability	13	52,0	12	48,0
Motor disability	2	8,0	23	92,0
Emotional problems	9	36,0	16	64,0
Hearing impairment	1	4,0	24	96,0
Visual impairment	0	--	25	100,0
Psychic problems	1	4,0	24	96,0

Source: document from SPSS software platform.

Teachers interpret the educational needs of students who have had to live the conflict in the following manner: students with emotional problems (36%), attention deficit (20%) and psychic problems (4%). The fact that they add up to 60% shows how much the armed conflict has indirectly affected kids in the two municipalities of rural districts.

Table 4 shows that 68% of the teachers in San Francisco and Cocorná did not receive any training on topics related to assisting SEN. However, eight teachers report having been trained (32%), 62,5% did not report the topic they were trained on. Digital accessibility, rhythms of learning, and disability were the training courses mentioned by the other three teachers.

Table 4. Teacher Education in the Processes of Caring for Students with Special Educational Needs. Institutions in the Rural Areas of San Francisco and Cocorná-Antioquia. Colombia, 2016.

The processes of caring for students with special educational needs have been the focus of teacher education.	N° of teachers	%
Yes	8	32,0
No	17	68,0
Total	25	100,0

Source: Document from SPSS Software Platform.

During the interviews, the pedagogical approaches were discussed with the teachers from San Francisco and Cocorná who revealed a misunderstanding of pedagogy and an association with teaching strategies: flexibility, developmental processes, and rhythms of learning, among others. These results are depicted in Table 5.

Table 5. Pedagogical Approach Adopted by the Institution to Address Student Diversity. Institutions in the Rural Areas of San Francisco and Cocorná-Antioquia. Colombia, 2016.

Pedagogical approach adopted by the institution to address student diversity	N° of teachers	%
Active-learning approach	8	44,4
Flexible approach	5	27,8
Humanistic approach	2	11,1
Inclusive approach	1	5,6
Rhythms of learning	2	11,1
Total	18	100,0

Source: Document from SPSS Software Platform.

Similarly, Table 6 shows that only 7.7% of teachers count on collaboration from the support teacher of the Comprehensive Care Unit program (UAI), or from some health professionals or health institutions for the SENs. This statistic should alert educational authorities because these institutions help students who fall under the inclusion figure; however, if there is a lack of tools to make sure this attention is effective, little is done to fully integrate these students into school life and society because of their unique characteristics. According to one of the teachers, these supports consist of assistance from the IPS (Institutional Health Service Provider) support teacher, family police station, whereas another teacher reported the presence of a mental health counselor and/or psychologist.

Table 6. Support for Inclusive Educational Processes of Students from Institutions in the Rural Areas of San Francisco and Cocorná-Antioquia. Colombia, 2016.

Do the support teacher, health professionals, health institutions, or someone from the UAI program help you with the integration processes of the students with special educational needs?	N° of teachers	%
Yes	2	7,7
No	24	92,3
Total	26	100,0

Source: Document from SPSS Software Platform.

Qualitative Analysis

Discussion of Results.

The language of rights is crucial to public debate because it emphasizes the idea of an urgent claim based on justice. To say that people have a right to something means that they have the authority to demand it immediately. As a result, reparation for children and youth in displacement entails the restoration of their rights as well as their acceptance into society. (Nussbaum, 2006, p. 288).

There has been a particular interest in children and youth and their education. The latter is seen as one of the fundamental rights of this segment of the population in the search for redressing the rights of the population victimized

by the armed conflict from a differential approach. Thus, in the last decade (2005–2015), the Colombian State's policies have tried to lessen the impact on the education of young generations from a differential approach resulting in a prolific regulatory framework.

In 2005, the Colombian MEN issued the educational policy guidelines for vulnerable populations naming the risk situations that accompany children's and adolescents' educational development as one of the vulnerable groups that deserve priority attention, along with those affected by violence —populations in situations of displacement, including minors disengaged from armed groups outside the law and school-age children of demobilized adults—. After coordinating and articulating efforts to ensure children's and youth's access to education during times of conflict or natural disaster, the National Roundtable for Education in Emergencies emerged in Colombia, led by UNICEF and co-led by the Norwegian Refugee Council (CNR) and the MEN and the guidelines for education in emergencies were issued. Student populations that have been forced to leave their homes as a result of the armed conflict and continue their educational process in an urban area or another safe place has been acknowledged. As these guidelines show, this situation is thought to be temporary.

The MEN published "General Guidelines for Educational Attention to Vulnerable Populations and Victims of Internal Armed Conflict" in 2014, with the funding of the Refugee Education Fund. From a differential approach, it includes vulnerable populations such as children and young people from ethnic groups, Afro-descendants, displaced people, and those with disabilities.

As a milestone in the history of inclusive education in Colombia, these guidelines take up the proposal for educational attention for vulnerable populations affected by the armed conflict. As a result of debates held to address the educational rights of the disabled population, the world experienced a milestone when inclusive education emerged. Eadsne (2011, cited by Chiner & Cardona, 2013), when talking about inclusive education, states that:

Inclusive education is a concept that allows students with diverse needs to be placed and receive instruction in regular schools and classrooms. It can be understood as the presence (access to education and school attendance), participation (quality of the learning experience from the learners' perspective) and achievement (learning processes and outcomes across the curriculum) of all learners in mainstream schools. (p. 2).

This implies that, in terms of educational normativity, inclusive education must be distinct in its proposal of education for all —where inclusive education emerges— and not only from and for the population with disabilities. According

to the figures presented, Colombia must prioritize this issue; thus, despite the lack of knowledge revealed by teachers in the rural areas of the two municipalities where this research was conducted, this has been implemented in Colombia for more than ten years, indicating that progress has been made.

The enrollment growth rate for the disabled population has been considerable. Since 2005, the Ministry has directed the allocation of budget resources for the implementation of the inclusion program for the SEN population, achieving an increase in the allocation of resources in 2010 distributed to the territorial entity by transfer, based on the number of children with disabilities or limitations who were attended. This positive outcome can be attributed, among other things, to the design, development, and implementation of flexible educational methodologies that aid in meeting the specific needs of a vulnerable and diverse population with quality and applicability. These models apply school-based and semi-school-based strategies in both rural and urban areas, depending on the students' age and educational level. These alternative learning processes include psychosocial care, school retention monitoring, and home tutoring for students at risk of dropping out. (MEN, 2014a, p. 28).

In this regard, inclusive education could be defined as the process by which a society values education as a critical issue for the development of all citizens and a matter with far-reaching consequences for the future of a community. But reality is different. Despite the fact that Law 1618 of 2013 in Article 11 and Decree 1421 of 2017 establish real inclusion by fostering access, permanence, quality, meaningful learning and teaching for the diversity of all children and young people in school, many teachers in the eastern Antioquia municipalities, particularly in Cocorná and San Francisco, are unaware of the necessary tools for the appropriate attentions to be paid to disabled populations.

Conclusions

Colombia has made progress in inclusive education, as revealed by the increased enrollment of vulnerable students. This is evident in the 2015 SIMAT report of 130,840 students with disabilities and 9,537 students with exceptional abilities and talents; it is also evident in the "Education for All Report: Teaching and Learning: Achieving Quality for all" (Unesco, 2014). However, the process of inclusion is just getting started in rural and remote municipalities. Despite the fact that the

country has identified the various circumstances that lead to educational exclusion and implemented policies for a gradual coverage plan, phenomena such as armed conflict change and complicate the picture.

This vulnerable group of students in these rural areas should lead to the implementation of continuity strategies in their training processes, providing those who teach these groups with the necessary tools for the students to strengthen their life projection and more fully utilize education, especially in the post-conflict period, where education will be a decisive factor in achieving peace.

The Ministry of National Education's regulations on education in emergencies, as well as the Policy Guidelines for the Educational Attention to the Population Affected by Violence (2014) should be implemented in tandem with the inclusive education proposal designed for Colombia. Inclusive education will be impossible to achieve if teachers report the lack of professional support to attend this type of population, the lack of resources, and the need for in-depth teacher education sessions on school inclusion, among others.

Teachers continue to demand teacher education on topics such as learning disabilities, cognitive disabilities, digital accessibility, exceptional abilities or talents, diversity, child neglect, sexual abuse, and classroom inclusion strategies. They also request teacher education in reading and writing strategies, classroom strategies for students with cognitive disabilities, sign language, hyperactivity, and aggression management, as well as SEN strategies and protocols, the creation of public attention routes, and other topics that will enable students develop properly.

The responses of teachers revealed that they lack adequate materials to meet the needs of students and support their educational process of diversity. When these findings are compared to those of other studies conducted around the world, there is a clear clamor from everyone: "The need to provide adequate resources to inclusive classes is never been more critical. In addition, there should be an increasing effort in promoting inclusive education" (Ali et al., 2006, p. 43).

Particularly in these rural areas where there are children and young people who need special attention because this landmine zone houses mine victims and their families. While many of these children and young students are not direct victims of landmines, they are indirect victims and should be treated differently. As a result, inclusive education offers the possibility to address the wide range of situations and conditions encountered by students from rural areas, direct and indirect victims of conflict, who will be reintegrated into society and are in the school stage.

The need to improve inclusive education from a variety of pedagogical and social perspectives is evident. In this regard, the difficulties have been focused on those attitudinal barriers caused by a lack of knowledge of classroom diversity. This has prompted educational communities to rethink education and transform the thinking of directors and teachers in the interest of innovation to meet the requirements of educational policies aimed at designing institutions for all. This, in turn, has become a challenge, necessitating a continuous contextual analysis to identify those barriers that may be excluding access and permanence, and to make the necessary reasonable adjustments in terms of infrastructure, didactics, resources, and flexible methodologies to enable the development of an inclusive education with quality and applicability for students.

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Post-truth and Social Networks as Challenges for Journalism in the Digital Era*

[English Version]

La posverdad y las redes sociales como desafíos del periodismo en la era digital

Pós-verdade e mídia social como desafios para o jornalismo na era digital

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Jorge Iván González Quintero**

<https://orcid.org/0009-0009-7493-8716>

CvLAC: https://scienti.minciencias.gov.co/cvlac/visualizador/generarCurriculoCv.do?cod_rh=0002095644

Colombia

Porfirio Cardona-Restrepo***

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5648-994X>

CvLAC: https://scienti.minciencias.gov.co/cvlac/visualizador/generarCurriculoCv.do?cod_rh=0000274372

Colombia

Abstract

Objective: To analyze whether post-truth in the digital era, which has become widespread across various areas of communication, is a phenomenon that affects the

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** Master's degree in Political Studies from the Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana. Professor at the Institución Universitaria Americana (Uniamericana). jorgonquin@gmail.com

*** Doctor of Philosophy from the Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana. Associate Professor of the Faculty of Political Science, Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana. porfirio.cardona@upb.edu.co

information societies receive regarding fundamental issues used to make decisions in democratic systems; additionally, to investigate whether the intermediation of traditional media, particularly journalism, has served to verify and contrast the information delivered to the general public. **Methodology:** This is a qualitative research study that uses analytical methods and data collection techniques such as documentary review, morphological analysis, and a categorical matrix. **Results:** The widespread use of social media has largely replaced the mediating function of traditional journalism between information senders and receivers. This shift has made it increasingly challenging for journalism to contribute to shaping public opinion in democratic societies during times of post-truth and disinformation. **Conclusions:** Despite the challenges presented by post-truth in the digital era, journalism remains a crucial tool in maintaining the quality of information received by the public and preventing the erosion of rational assumptions that underpin political participation and institutions. As emotional expressions on digital platforms continue to grow, supporting and strengthening journalism as a vital component of democratic societies is vital.

Keywords: political communication; journalism; emotions; virtual social networks; democracy; post-truth.

Resumen

Objetivo: analizar si la posverdad en la era digital, y generalizada en otros ámbitos de la comunicación, es un fenómeno que está afectando la información que reciben las sociedades frente a temas fundamentales sobre los cuales tomar decisiones en sistemas democráticos; además de indagar si la intermediación de los medios de comunicación tradicionales —y el periodismo, en particular— ha servido para verificar y contrastar la información que se ha entregado al público en general. **Metodología:** investigación cualitativa, cuyo método es el analítico y las técnicas recolección de información utilizadas son: la revisión documental, el análisis morfológico y la matriz categorial. **Resultados:** las redes sociales han desactivado, en gran medida, la función mediadora de la prensa entre los emisores informativos y los receptores, lo que ha hecho difícil que el periodismo pueda contribuir a formar a la opinión pública en sociedades democráticas en tiempos de posverdad y de desinformación. **Conclusiones:** el periodismo sigue siendo una herramienta útil para hacer frente a la posverdad, la cual está poniendo en cuestión la calidad de la información recibida por la opinión pública, además de ayudar a evitar el resquebrajamiento de las bases de la participación política fundada anteriormente en presupuestos racionales y que han impactado en la construcción de

las instituciones políticas, pero que ceden espacio a expresiones emotivas construidas desde las plataformas digitales.

Palabras clave: comunicación política; periodismo; emociones; redes sociales virtuales; democracia; posverdad.

Resumo

Objetivo: analisar se a pós-verdade na era digital, e generalizada em outras áreas da comunicação, é um fenômeno que está afetando as informações que as sociedades recebem sobre questões fundamentais para a tomada de decisões em sistemas democráticos; além de investigar se a intermediação da mídia tradicional - e do jornalismo em particular - serviu para verificar e contrastar as informações que foram entregues ao público em geral. **Metodologia:** pesquisa qualitativa, cujo método é analítico e as técnicas de coleta de dados utilizadas são: revisão documental, análise morfológica e matriz categórica. **Resultados:** as redes sociais desativaram, em grande parte, a função mediadora da imprensa entre emissores e recetores de informações, o que dificultou a contribuição do jornalismo para a formação da opinião pública nas sociedades democráticas em tempos de pós-verdade e desinformação. **Conclusões:** o jornalismo continua sendo uma ferramenta útil para lidar com a pós-verdade, que está questionando a qualidade das informações recebidas pelo público, além de ajudar a evitar o rompimento das bases da participação política, anteriormente baseadas em pressupostos racionais e que tiveram impacto na construção das instituições políticas, mas que agora estão dando lugar a expressões emotivas construídas a partir de plataformas digitais.

Palavras-chave: comunicação política; jornalismo; emoções; redes sociais virtuais; democracia; pós-verdade.

Introduction

Events of local, national, or international importance gain significance due to the influx of information published on social networks. From elections to pandemics like the coronavirus, and even the most recent conflict between Ukraine and Russia, events become trending topics on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube. Additionally, a substantial amount of content circulates through messaging apps like WhatsApp or Telegram.

In the Russia-Ukraine war, Putin's government made the decision to block Facebook. However, the well-known social network also took action on its part by verifying all content originating from Russian government-backed mass media (BBC, 2022). The determinations of both parties correspond to a longstanding concern: the control of information, particularly the manipulation of public opinion through content that does not adhere to the truth.

The decision on the Facebook news feed of the Russia-Ukraine war has not been unique. If the 2016 elections in the United States were considered one of the greatest examples of a post-truth era, the 2020 elections, characterized by attacks on the truth and the proliferation of lies across the digital universe, implemented a containment barrier. After losing to his rival, Democrat Joe Biden, some of the major mass media outlets in the United States took the step of muting microphones and even cutting on-air speeches by Donald Trump or his advisors in their news programs. The decision, unprecedented for a sitting president and a prominent news source, was made because the mass media believed that the president was spreading falsehoods.

This was not the sole contention raised by the mass media during the unconventional year of 2020. The pandemic spawned worldwide news regarding conspiracy theories about the disease's origin, baseless medications and treatments, and governmental statements that, in certain instances, exacerbated the number of infections. This was evident in countries like Sweden, Brazil, and even the United States. The lies originating directly from official sources were exposed by certain mass media outlets, including the Huffington Post (2020) and the BBC (2020).

Conspiracy theories that aim to spread misinformation find an easily accessible channel in online networks. A recent report by CNN reveals how Russia, through official sources including President Putin himself, has suggested the need to "de-Nazify" Ukraine in various situations. This phrase contradicts the reality of a country that has a significant population of Jewish descent, including President Volodymyr Zelensky (CNN, 2022).

In April 2022, in the heart of California's Silicon Valley, at Stanford University, former U.S. President Barack Obama accused social networks of amplifying “the worst instincts of humanity.” Obama's assertion is striking, considering that he was the first U.S. president to leverage social networks in reaching the White House in 2009. In his speech to the academic community, he elucidated that “one of the significant factors contributing to the erosion of democracies is the profound transformation in our modes of communication and information consumption” (France 24, 2022, para. 2), while demanding controls on large technological platforms.

Since 2016, the term “post-truth” has been coined by Oxford University as the word of the year. It can be summarized as follows:

In this definition, it is emphasized that the prefix “post” is used to signify not so much the notion of “moving beyond” truth in a temporal sense (as in “postwar”), but rather the idea that truth has been overshadowed and rendered insignificant. (McIntyre, 2018, p. 34).

In other words, *the truth*, it doesn't matter. Oxford University was not the sole entity to recognize the significance and extent of post-truth. The term “post-truth” entered the Spanish Language Dictionary (DLE) in 2017 with the following definition: “Deliberate distortion of reality, aimed at manipulating beliefs and emotions in order to influence public opinion and social attitudes” (RAE & ASALE, 2017, entry “posverdad”).

Other theorists who have approached the analysis of post-truth prefer to simply label it as “lies.” Such is the case with Levitin (2016), who goes further by stating that the “post-truth era is characterized by deliberate irrationality, standing in opposition to all the significant advancements of humanity” (p. 12).

While acknowledging the democratizing potential of internet-based information and its ability to serve as a repository of human knowledge, it is crucial to recognize that social networks and search engines, in their quest to create communities and lucrative advertising markets, are introducing elements that distort public opinion instead of contributing to its formation. Naturally, the aforementioned developments have significant effects on people's daily lives and crucial aspects, such as the political decisions made by societies on a regular basis. The very architects who manipulate emotions on social networks have also developed algorithms that reinforce users' beliefs, preferences, and tastes, leading to audience segmentation—a phenomenon referred to as “the filter bubble” by Pariser (2011).

Certain features within social networks, although regarded as positive by many users, have the tendency to intensify emotions, whether they be joy, hatred, or anger. As noted by Elster (2007), emotions hold significant influence over the formation of beliefs, upon which behaviors are founded.

The axis of being social spokespersons, which was once predominantly held by traditional mass media such as television, radio, and the press, now revolves around the millions of accounts created on social networks by individuals, political groups, and companies who directly communicate their content.

Information, regarded as a public good (Restrepo, 2018), plays a pivotal role in shaping public opinion. In this regard, radio, television, and the press have played a significant role in providing individuals with the essential inputs needed to make informed decisions.

The significance of traditional mass media and journalism in shaping public opinion has been extensively studied and acknowledged. These platforms have garnered substantial audiences and have strengthened their informative spaces, consolidating their power of social influence (Castells, 2009).

The main objective of this article is to analyze the role of the media, with a particular focus on journalism, in facilitating the exchange of information between senders and receivers within social networks. Journalism, guided by ethical codes (Cortina, 2021) and utilizing refined tools developed over time, has the potential to expose post-truth elements in various content and enhance public discourse. It can promote concepts such as “deliberative democracy” (Habermas, 2008) in shaping political institutions and their legitimacy, despite the challenges highlighted by Han (2022) in his work *Infocracy* regarding the decline of communicative action.

The specific objectives of this research, as evident from the results, were to highlight, first, the amplification of “post-truth” content within social networks. Second, the research aimed to emphasize how the emotions and aesthetics embedded in tools designed for digital platforms are reshaping the way these messages are both transmitted and received. Third, to analyze the way in which social networks have contributed to a decline in the mediating role of the media and the press and, subsequently, to establish the way in which the press has been key in the formation of public opinion; this issue is explained from theories such as the *Agenda Setting* or the observations of Habermas (2001, 2008) and Sartori (1998). And last, to recover the role of journalism in editing and curating content at a time when, precisely, post-truth threatens to alter the veracity of the news and information that citizens consume in democratic political systems.

Methodology

The research was qualitative and the method, analytical. This allowed analysis by segments and a deduction of basic premises around the study of the phenomenon of post-truth and digital social networks that have challenged journalism in the last decade. Its forms of analysis were based on contextual categories and triangulation of information. The data collection techniques were documentary review, morphological analysis and a categorical matrix.

A morphological analysis was used. It is a combinatorial technique that allows breaking down a problematic question (in this case: *how can journalism contribute to shaping public opinion in democratic societies in a post-truth era?*) into essential parameters: journalism in light of categories such as “post-truth,” “digital social networks,” “emotion,” “aesthetics,” “traditional media,” “public opinion” and “democracy”). In this analysis, a categorical matrix was built that allowed multiplying the relationships amongst the mentioned parts (problematic question [a] and essential parameters [i and ii]). The steps that were followed were:

1. Specification of a general objective. To analyze whether post-truth in the digital era and widespread in other areas of communication is a phenomenon that is affecting the information received by societies regarding fundamental issues on which to make decisions in democratic systems, and whether the intermediation of traditional mass media—and journalism, in particular—has served to verify and contrast the information that has been delivered to the general public.
2. Identification of all the essential parameters that characterize the analysis:
 - a) Journalism.
 - i) Categories reviewed: “post-truth,” “social networks,” “emotions,” “aesthetics,” “traditional mass media,” “public opinion” and “democracy.”
 - ii) Edition of contents for objective information.
3. Construction of the analysis matrix *versus* the essential parameters. In the matrix, the essential parameters and the analysis categories were documented from the organization of information in the matrix, highlighting the theories, conceptions, definitions and sources of information such as multidisciplinary and specialized databases, summary and indexing systems, and journalistic media, among others.

The results obtained from this investigation are presented as follows.

Results

This section answers the guiding research question “*How can journalism contribute to shaping public opinion in democratic societies in post-truth times?*,” contrasted with each of the specific objectives set out in the introduction of this document. In this sense, each of the essential parameters and categories documented in the categorical matrix described in the methodology are displayed.

Post-truth and Social Networks

Social and electoral phenomena such as the results of Brexit—which led to the departure of Great Britain from the European Union—and the election of Donald Trump as president of the United States, led to questions about the excess of information that surrounded both processes and that, in many cases, contributed to misinforming the electorate by being manipulated or not verifiable content (Moya, 2018). This section addresses the way in which digital social networks have been used to misinform, taking advantage of tools that these same platforms have developed to “build loyalty” with their audiences and ensure that they are connected as long as possible (attention economy) as a way to obtain money through advertising (Pariser, 2011).

In 2016, reflections on what was happening with the quality of the information that was transmitted through digital platforms—and especially through social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or instant messaging services such as WhatsApp—made the concept of “post-truth” appear in the international arena. From then on, the term became an object of study, analysis, and theorization, due to the implications regarding the verification of information (Pariser, 2011; McIntyre, 2015; Ibáñez, ed., 2017; Harding, 2017; D’Ancona, 2017; Amorós, 2018; Alandete, 2019; Illades, 2018; O’Connor & Weatherall, 2019). In this sense, “post-truth” was a term that required conceptual clarification, along with some others such as “disinformation,” “misinformation,” “fake news” and “alternative facts” (Tandoc et al., 2017; Valero & Oliveira, 2018; Rodríguez, 2019; Estrada-Cuzcano et al., 2020). Post-truth became a scenario for permanent discussion and a political strategy to manipulate public opinion; it is a symbol of the new effects of immediate advertising, propaganda, and not very truthful communication, now under the auspices of digital social networks.

The post-truth phenomenon leads to talking about fake news or, simply, lies. Four cases can serve to illustrate the situation in the digital world: first, the creation by the archetypes of social networks of algorithms for commercial

purposes in which they segment users based on information bubbles (Pariser, 2011); second, the existence of news companies or people who seek to generate *clicks* only to obtain economic benefits; third, the creation of news to falsify reality for specific purposes, e.g.: win elections, set fire to a society, create chaos, defame, sow doubts in front of a government, among others; and finally, the most recurring phenomenon, the information issued directly from official sources of some politicians through their social media accounts (Moya, 2018).

In all four cases, beyond the desire to earn money from the *clicks* obtained, the content published on the networks is changing the social perception of people regarding the decisions they have to make within of a democracy or in the public sphere (Crilley & Gillespie, 2018; Mosco, 2018); that is, they influence public opinion.

For authors such as Habermas (2001), the concept of “public opinion” is closely linked to the idea of the public sphere, as that space in which the mobility of concepts, arguments, and ideas can take shape and be used for the State and politics. Habermas’ (2001) reason is that the hegemonic element of the debate in a society and public opinion must occur among enlightened people and with sufficient arguments, as a path to the truth, to be able to convince the opposing party. One might wonder if the objective world—which can be founded and argued on the stage of public opinion through the recognition that subjects can make of it, based on the action and language preached by Habermas (2001)—is not being disrupted with the prism of social networks and the emotions that circulate in them. Key concepts such as *isegoria* and *parrhesia* in the Greek *polis* for the ordering of the political realm, today are cracking in a liquid society (Baumman, 2015).

The first attack on the truth—and, perhaps, one of the deadliest and least perceptible for a user of social networks—comes from the very algorithms and tools designed by the architects of virtual social networks. For some time now, experts have pointed out how software developers who work for social networks or search engines, essentially pursue the goal that the user spends as much time connected to a computer or cell phone screen as possible.

In 2020 the Netflix documentary, “The Social Dilemma,” the emeritus professor of Harvard Business School, Shoshana Zuboff raised the question as follows:

It is a market that is exclusively dedicated to human futures. Just as there are markets that trade pork or oil futures. We now have markets trading human futures at scale, and those markets produced the billions of dollars that have made Internet companies the richest in human history. (Orlowski, 2020, mm. 15:48-16:22).

In the same documentary by Tristan Harris, a former designer who worked for Google, exposed the information bubble with an example that would demonstrate how far social networks are capable of taking information or advertising segmentation:

If I want to rig an election, I can go to a conspiracy theory Facebook group, and I can find 100 people who believe the Earth is totally flat and believe the moon landing is a hoax, and I can say to Facebook: give me thousand users that are like that. (Orlowski, 2020, mm. 01:08:36-01:08:42).

Social networks have known how to exploit cognitive, ideological and political biases of the communities they have created. Exploiting cognitive biases is a reality that is known and taken advantage of by those who are only interested in exasperating the beliefs or ideologies already rooted in the thoughts of certain social groups. Faced with cognitive bias, it is difficult to contrast evidence; beliefs, learning, what social networks say and the content that individuals want to receive will weigh more than the strength of the arguments, reality, and facts. Post-truth is skillfully exploited from cognitive biases; it is even a generator of social polarization (Thompson, 2017).

The lies that proliferate on social networks began to be hidden with a common format for all societies: that of the news with "credible" headlines, a wording capable of deceiving an avid reader, description of events in mode, time, place, interviews, and even photographs or videos. "Fake news" became common in the digital world. The same thing happens in societies that began to receive countless contents that owe little to the truth, but which, moreover, were difficult to verify. For example, in April 2019, The Washington Post accounted 10,000 lies to President Donald Trump in 800 days of his presidency. Many of them were multiplied from social networks and sold with a "news" label.

The fact that politicians and ideologues have found in social networks the possibility of speaking without filters is another way in which post-truth has managed to undermine the daily conversation. The ideological war waged by Putin against Ukraine is a case in point. Similarly, in the case of the United States, the Trump phenomenon did not only occur in that North American nation. According to Kakutani (2019), this situation has spread to multiple countries.

False news, disguised in anonymity, travels at a faster rate on the internet than true news. One of their advantages is that it must be frightening, appealing to fear, rage, or primitive emotions to achieve more success in the field of "digital virilization" (Kakutani, 2019). The possibility of fake news spreading faster has been highlighted in studies by the "MIT Initiative on the Digital Economy,"

which have shown that this type of information has a 70% higher chance of being shared and accepted by those who read it (Arrojo, 2020).

According to a study conducted by cybersecurity consultants Kaspersky (2022), approximately 70% of Latino Americans are unable to distinguish between a fake and true news story; this is a figure that, when applied to the consumption of political information by societies, could pose a problem for the formation of public opinion on issues pertaining to state management.

The Emotional and Aesthetic Language of Social Media Networks

The highly emotive language used on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram allows a fake news story to spread quickly. Platforms seek to be places where emotions can be expressed to achieve longer periods of connection. This paper will establish that social media has transformed the public sphere into something emotional that, in turn, contributes to post-truth.

The primary material on which mass media, particularly television, was built has been emotion. The image represented in the photograph and, later, in the video produced on millions of screens allowed emotions linked to aesthetic montages—from the most basic to the most elaborate—to attract and cultivate a public that Sartori (1998) refers to as “homo videns.” Playing with emotions to achieve a homogenized society open to ideological (advertising) and commercial (consumption) proposals have been on the minds of theorists since the mid-nineteenth century. This was when the instrumentalization of behavior was one of the positive effects derived from studies such as conduct psychology; in fact, it is still being learned by social network architects today.

The Frankfurt School's theoretical foundation will be based on a critique of mass society expressed in texts such as the *Dialectic of Illustration*, in which Adorno and Horkheimer (1998) specifically address the racially motivated project undertaken in the West that led to alienation and the dominion of the individual in order to serve specific interests. Communications media are not left out of this analysis. According to Frankfurt School thinkers, within the framework of the widespread use of information, as well as the alienation and standardization of society, the role of the press, radio, and cinema is critical.

Between 1920 and 1930, communication studies predominated due to their nearly unlimited ability to influence emotions and, thus, human behavior. Publicists conducted extensive research into these theories. Perhaps a clear example of this is what the Nazis accomplished in this field: “Who controls the media controls society, and as an example, one can use Goebbels' advertising system” (Capellán, 2008, p. 215).

Although emotions were an important aspect of human behavior, there was a bias in their study. Only until the 1980s was there a renewed interest in reexamining what role these people have in making decisions, particularly in politics (Arias, 2016). Theoretical recovery of emotions in politics will be led by Nussbaum's (2014) theory in the second decade of the twenty-first century. But since the mid-1990s, there has been discussion about the need for an "affective turn" as a response to the dominance of the body and emotion discourse due to the influence of psychoanalysis and poststructuralism. Shusterman (2002) asserts that at the beginning of the twenty-first century, from a neopragmatic standpoint, the care and improvement of the body will be highlighted in order to make the best public decisions. Similarly, several works with a philosophical perspective were published in 2009 under the title *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Emotion* (Goldie, ed., 2009).

The use of psychological techniques to understand human behavior with applications in technology is a rule in Silicon Valley, the birthplace of many of the world's most prominent websites. It is necessary to understand that, according to a Pfizer study published on their website in April 2016, social media networks have already altered our brain by causing "changes in neurotransmitters such as oxytocin, adrenaline, dopamine, serotonin, testosterone, and cortisol" (Pfizer news, 2016). Similarly, Castells (2009) in *Communication and Power* described how emotions emerge from stimuli that cause negative or positive emotions in a person's brain. These emotions can cause behaviors and actions, as well as influence decision-making.

With the "like," emoticons, filters, and other, sometimes imperceptible tools, social media networks have transformed people's daily lives into a "show," similar to a television production, complete with actors, speeches, applause, visual effects, and, of course, advertising.

Elster (2007) states that "emotions are accompanied by tendencies or impulses to the execution of specific actions" (p. 166) and goes on to discuss the different types of emotions: "The emotions of rage, guilt, scorn, and shame are inextricably linked to moral and social norms. Transgressors of norms may experience guilt or shame, whereas those who witness the violation may experience rage or scorn" (p. 172).

Emotions are evaluative and allow us to make decisions in response to a certain stimulus. Instagram has features such as adding a comment or saying "I like," whereas Facebook has the option to be furious, sad, enjoy, or amazed. What's interesting is that the networks don't leave anything to chance, and the option of rating any publication implies a call to action. In the 10 causes expected by Elster (2007) of some type of behavior awakened by the evaluation that is expressed with

emotions, can be found coincidences with the “emoticons,” provided by almost all social networks to interact, among them: hate, anger, pleasure, and admiration.

In addition to emotions, television and, now, social networks have found a new field in the social aesthetics introduced by capitalism. As Maldonado (2016) advises resuming Lipovetsky and Serroy, who denounce “an 'Artistic capitalism' that is characterized by an ever-increasing consumption of aesthetic experiences” (p. 27); of all that the world of politics, including its components, must advance in the creation of performances and storytelling that are better suited to what today's audiences require.

The polarization that exists and is felt between opposing ideological groups is increased using social media. The concept now is that whoever speaks more forcefully and in a plain manner, or who exhibits more aesthetic-emotional postures, wins the digital battle: passion is killing people. The main issue is a public opinion that is becoming increasingly disoriented and uninformed, and the establishment of institutions is the result of this. Language is important in the construction of emotions because it allows for the creation of social reality as a result of participation in a linguistic community (Santamara, 2016).

The concept of a community in which language is based on rules, it is the language skills and the institutionalization of the practice that set the beginning of the social institutions. “Institutional facts exist only inside the framework of constitutional rules” (Searle, 1997, p. 46). It is exactly in this space of institutionalized events that emotions are manifesting themselves, now amplified on the public stage by social media. The role of politicians and citizens in democratic participation is changing (Cardona-Restrepo & Arango, 2020).

The instrumentalization of emotions contributes to the breaking of public debate and places the subject on a plane where rational facts can be confused with emotions and subjective feelings that are not always verifiable—in other words, in the context of post-truth. From an ideological standpoint, this situation “is the recipe for political dominance” (McIntyre, 2018, p. 41).

Traditional Communication Channels have Given Way to the Internet and Virtual Social Networks

The return of the press to a mediating role has been highlighted several times in this piece, in search of a normative proposal that will put the post-truth in counterbalance. Since the 20th century, the mass media and journalism have been recognized as having a significant influence on public opinion formation.

According to Hume (2011), the weight of the rulers was based on the belief that they had the people's support, an idea that demonstrated how the term “public opinion” is linked to the political concept in the development of liberal thought. Communications media—and within them, the journalistic exercise—will allow the mass media to serve as a tribune for public opinion, as well as disseminate information, which is their primary focus. In democratic systems, there has been convergence in the presence of a free, regulated, but independent press (Muñoz et al., 1992).

When a news story ends up in the hands of a minister or a top government official, or when a complaint allows the government to make investments in communities with limited access to basic health-care services, for example, the power of the media grows.

The impact of communications media and the role of the press in shaping public opinion has been extensively studied. Between 1920 and 1940, a number of theories emerged in the United States concerning their direct or indirect impact on popular decisions. Between 1940 and 1960, there were theories of limited effects. Then afterward came uses and gratifications in the 60s. And finally, the “agenda setting” proposed in 1972 by Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw (1972). The approach of this analysis focuses on giving the mass media almost unlimited power. According to its presenters, the so-called mass media are the generators and creators of public opinion through their informative agenda.

The role of media, as social media, has not been exempt of criticism. The opposite approach of American statistical and empirical analysis is exposed by Habermas (2008), an opinion shattered by aspects such as image cult, that is catapulted by advertising.

Beyond Habermas, a relevant analysis of the role of the mass media—especially of information on television—is explained by Sartori (1998) in *Homo Videns, la sociedad teledirigida*. An analysis of how television is an instrument of news and information of various types that induce opinion is conducted. Sartori analyzes how the *homo sapiens* has transformed into a *homo videns* before the forcefulness of images and ease with which they can be digested by the television viewers. It was concluded that television and the information it provides can determine politics, electoral processes, and governmental decisions through the creation of a government based on opinion.

In this way, for Sartori (1998) public opinion must be nourished by information and, therefore, the publications of the mass media make views, news, and facts that contribute to its formation. Newspapers and radio will reinforce the proposal for public opinion, that Sartori (1998) calls “information cascades.” It allows opinion leaders to guide the rest of people, especially, the ones who receive the message last. Television would end the harmony of that process.

Sartori (1998) highlights the massive condition of television and how easy a message can be absorbed that reinforce the empty concept of “democracy as a government of opinion” (p. 72). The author explains: “because television shows itself as a voice for a public opinion that is the *echo* of its own voice” (p. 72). Not to give importance to some topics has contributed to the decline of the press, but the use of the internet and social networks has become stronger. These networks forced traditional mass media to change the way they produced many of their contents, and they took away part of their advertising that to a large extent, moved into the digital world. *Homo videns* moves into *Homo digitalis* (Cendoya, 2018).

Digital communication has changed the dynamics of mediation in the mass media and traditional press. With the creation of social networks, a re-elaboration of some paradigms of communication can be observed; this occurs especially, with the direct process of sender, channel, and responder. The production of content established in mass media has come to be created by the sources or broadcasters of information that directly talk to the responder. That option was at the same level of a news broadcast, with the broadcast of any other type of production by any user of social networks (González, 2019).

In 2004, Tim O’Reilly, one of the largest computer gurus in U.S., coined the concept of a “Web 2.0” to remark that the advance internet had reached a stage in which the production of the same digital users was providing the information and data that is currently in the network. It was accompanied by tools on mobile devices such as camera, the ability to edit content and images and have applications such as social networks, the same ones that allowed to publish almost anything on the web.

The new role of citizens in information production and its consumption generates the concept of a “prosumer.” This refers to people who, from a passive role, become protagonists in the communication process. McLuhan (1996) and Toffler (1981) had already argued that new technologies would change the way information is consumed and processed in the world. It moves the function of traditional mass media that do not have the reach to generate the amount of information and content that is produced on the Internet.

The massive production of content now does not exclusively come from traditional media, but from an extensive network of prosumers in a digital environment, which has divided audiences and created a new scenario for “agenda setting.” Users publishing content for the agenda adds a new actor, who also has an active role in the process of communication. They feed into the mass media on those news and topics that become trends. On one hand, the mass media still has an influence on what to think, but on the other hand

the mass media itself takes viral trends on social networks as input for their informative agenda.

The press is still core to the generation of information that is consumed daily. Its function of moderation is limited by millions of people who use their social networks to inform and provide opinion. According to the report “Digital” in 2022, prepared by the agency We Are Social (2022), in 2021, 462 billion users on social mass media were reported. Facebook remains the world’s favorite social network with 291 billion users; YouTube has 256.2 billion users; WhatsApp has two billion; 146.8 billion people use Instagram; 1 billion use TikTok; and 436 million are on Twitter.

The figures show the strength of networks as super-highways to inform; therefore, it highlights the importance of an epistemological analysis of the quality of contents that millions of users receive and how they are influencing human actions. The rise of Big Data and its relationship to psychology for the purpose of people’s decision-making becomes relevant, mainly in the electoral sphere (Wooley & Howard, 2019; Yeung, 2018).

According to Elster (1996), actions depend on two requirements of optimality: desires and beliefs; these in turn are cemented in the evidence that comes from information collection and also the time spent by a person collecting it. Also, Habermas (2001) studies the validity in acts of speech that have as a basic condition being a clear discourse supported by a consensus with a communicative rationality. These acts should obey a reliable criteria and adequate reasons and arguments to establish a rational relationship and trustworthiness.

Political theory also accepts dissent on recognition of the other and its differences as a feature of pluralism within democratic systems. Opposite reasons and arguments favor the debate and foster public opinion. The importance of informative truth, both in the construction of beliefs and reliable criteria, are conditions and challenges that have been raised by journalism from its beginnings.

From the vertical communication of mass media much of the world has moved to a horizontal communication. Everyone constructs information and opinion. Apparently, there is a democratization, but it does not necessarily happen. As Arias (2016) states: “More than a conversation, therefore, we would have noise: we all talk at the same time, but no one hears the others” (p. 175).

Disabling the mediating role of the press in the communication process is contributing to post-truth and a public opinion with less opportunities of communicating truthful information making decisions in democratic contexts. Social networks changed verticality in the delivery of information and introduced a horizontal digital conversation with reproduction or forwarding of information between its participants. Digital platforms have succeeded in weakening the

economic model of traditional mass media based on advertising. They become information channels, that assume the role of the press.

Journalism as a Content Editor in the Post-truth Era

From the communication studies in the first half of the 20th century, journalism is observed in the fulfillment of parameters such as objectivity and truth, the basis of the first deontological codes of the profession. The recording of facts as they occurred, and the prospect that they could be contrasted and published within the framework of objectivity “becomes the guarantor of the professional ethics of journalists” (Arrojo, 2020, p. 137).

In the practice of journalism and its search for truth, the appearance of tools such as photography and video, show images as a complement to the news that was recorded. Milestones in human history such as Apollo XI lunar mission in 1969, the Vietnam War (the first to be transmitted by television) (Briggs & Burke, 2002) or, later, the Gulf War in 1991 or the attack on United States on September 11, 2001 by Al Qaeda have strengthened the mass media in the broadcast of reality and facts.

A report authored by a reporter from a prestigious media outlet and with journalistic standards — though immersed in the social field and with the help of some scientific and statistical tools — can offer guarantees for those who want to approach a news report to be sure that the information is reliable. In this sense, Restrepo (2016) states that “for journalists, the word *truth* means fidelity to the informed facts” (p. 56). It is a changing truth based on the facts and evidence with which a reporter covers the news.

The truth is the most important demand in journalism. Sánchez (2018) suggests that the truth, which is just a statement that a fact really happened, should be the basis of news. Examples are abundant, ranging from the occurrence of natural disasters such as an earthquake to the election of a president or sports achievements like a soccer team scoring a certain number of goals.

The BBC's editorial standards state that to uncover the truth, journalists must adhere to:

- gather material using first-hand sources
- check facts and statistics, identifying important caveats and limitations
- validate the authenticity of documentary evidence and digital material
- corroborate claims and allegations made by contributors. (BBC, 2007, p. 23).

Other style manuals used by various journalistic media align closely with the guidelines established by the BBC, adopting them as a reliable guide for their reporters.

Journalistic work encompasses the truth-telling of news. Indeed, the facts that are published daily in the mass media comprise other aspects, which can be known thanks to the work conducted by reporters. By considering the narrative of a particular event, as well as investigating its origins, previous facts, consequences, and protagonists, the public opinion can develop a complete picture. It is customary that, once a news item has been published, a later follow-up provides meaningful insight to elucidate all the aspects that public opinion requires to improve its argumentation.

Journalists conduct a comparable process as scientists, and must be willing to subject the news they intend to report to the scrutiny of editors and, ultimately, the mass media editor. Regarding reporters, the process of finding a story and subsequently its broadcasting mostly begins at an editorial board, where the facts to be reported must undergo scrutiny by editors, directors, and even peer journalists. During this initial stage, numerous informational proposals are discarded due to factors such as lack of importance, validity, possibility of corroboration, or duplication of previously published information by other mass media (Ruiz, 2019).

This stage also includes the possibility of gathering information, in addition to interviews, to verify the occurrences. Materials such as archival materials, statements, images, and other relevant sources are crucial for supporting contents. Informational context is an issue that, digital publications often fail to provide with sufficient depth or rigor (Restrepo & Botello, 2018).

The reputation of mass media committed to journalism to promote the truth is built precisely on the corroboration and verifiability of the facts reported. These media are aware that the publication of news, which does not correspond to reality or “misrepresents the truth” undermines their prestige and, therefore, has an impact on their audiences. The anonymity associated to fake news published by certain “pseudo-media” is not the suitable way for a mass media briefing to be subjected to the scrutiny of its audiences.

The economic crisis of mass media also had an impact on newsrooms. With many of them diminished, the possibilities of publishing more and better material have resulted in a decrease in their audiences. Low salaries, no research opportunities, and long working hours have made numerous journalists migrate to other types of activities related to communication. The quality of content has been declining due to inadequate resources to conduct long-term investigations or recruit experienced reporters. The European Union identified this situation and

took the first actions against the so-called “fake news” in 2015, with journalism at the heart of the strategy (European Commission, 2018).

Mass media itself has been implementing the tools that have been placed at the service of their audiences with the purpose of corroborating the veracity of content published on social networks, such as www.chequeado.com or *Politifact* in the United States. Additionally, to the mass media, programs dedicated to the education, practice, and research of journalism are emerging with the aim to combat misinformation (Ireton & Posetti, 2020).

Quality journalism, as raised by Thompson (2017), is nothing more than a work in the service of truth for the benefit of democracy. This is happening precisely at a time when globalization, terrorism, outrage over political and economic corruption, fake news, digital anger, and emotionality are all threatening democratic principles. Accordingly, journalism has the potential to make valuable contributions to a society striving for solid arguments for making the best decisions. A deliberative democracy characterized by public debate grounded on accurate information and a free press fosters deliberative argumentation in societies, empowering individuals to denounce post-truth wherever it arises.

Conclusions

Horizontal participation in virtual social networks has created a new agora wherein information is no longer communicated as news based on real facts. These are pseudo-informative contents and opinions often generated by anonymous or official sources, comprising falsehoods that cannot be verified. This fact has become a challenge for public deliberation, which is always receiving inaccurate information that supports preconceived ideas. This situation influences citizens' decision-making on substantial issues, such as health during pandemics, the election of a president like Donald Trump, the exit of the United Kingdom from the European Union, and the war between Russia and Ukraine, to mention a few examples.

The press and the subsequent emergence of journalism based on ethics codes whose main pillars are truth and objectivity have enabled audiences, through mass media, to gain a better grasp of reality through news about facts and occurrences that may have really happened. Journalism has exerted control over other branches of public power without usurping them. This control is

achieved through denouncing their deviations or excesses, uncovering lies and highlighting their social failures.

Despite this, mass media has been criticized for their attachment to making the news spectacular and for its focus on delivering content as just a mere product of the cultural industry or its partisan and ideological adherence, which in some cases has contributed to its credibility decline. The migration of advertising to the Internet resulted in economic challenges for mass media, and journalism had a negative impact due to a decrease of activity in its newsrooms.

Democracies have already been concerned with an informative post-truth. The European Union is advocating for the rescue of mass media and its news slots as an alternative to combating so-called “fake news” (European Commission, 2018). Similarly, mass media itself has realized that reverting to quality news production models can be so broadly accepted that they have already begun to charge for their content with good success.

The health of a democracy relies largely on the quality of information available in the public sphere, enabling citizens to make the best decisions. Hypercommunication techniques have led to the democratization of information, as well as the leap of lies and manipulation on a global scale. On other occasions, timely information and adequate resources enabled citizens’ decisions that changed the course of history. In turbulent times, rigorous journalism that seeks the truth may correct information inconsistencies due to the Internet. Furthermore, journalism can provide the quality content that public opinion needs to build societies in which decision-making is influenced by the truth rather than lies and manipulation.

The challenge is determining whether the journalistic companies affected by the advertising crisis will be capable of such a task or whether, as is already expected, small revolutions will be produced by digital networks of journalists who will gain a space through their constant pursuit of the truth and exposure of power excesses.

The mission of journalism is already anticipated as a titanic task. The effort to produce quality content will also depend on the extent and importance that society places on truth as the source that democracies need to repel the ghosts of populism, corruption, sentimentalism, and irrationality that have taken over the political scene today more than ever.

Finally, progress on critical education regarding news content is required, as is the capacity for citizens to exercise self-control and refrain from reading and reproducing fake news that raises public spirits while increasing polarization in electoral preferences. Furthermore, adhering to ethical principles in information management is important, as it entails intellectual honesty and verification journalism as a means of rescuing traditional journalism in multilateral agreements

so that fake news does not generate revenue, as well as constant denunciation of the networks that foster it. “Fact checking” is also important with the participation of business, the mass media, the government, and educational institutions to overcome skepticism and combat disinformation (Badillo, 2019). These affect the collective construction of democratic institutions and have a direct impact on their legitimacy and credibility, paving the way for polarization and fear, where any collective project vanishes.

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