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ÁNFORA

Diversity and Multiculturalism:
Challenges and Changes for an Inclusive Society



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

Diversity and Multiculturalism

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Abstract

This monographic issue of *Ánfora* brings together socially relevant research and directs the focus of analysis toward subjects historically positioned at the margins. Its central premise is that inclusion, justice, and recognition cannot be understood solely in terms of material access, but also as matters of epistemic legitimacy, memory, territory, and dignity. Drawing on debates surrounding inclusive and multicultural education, gender perspectives, coloniality of knowledge, the rights of Afro-descendant communities, aging, youth, and historical memory, the text argues that Latin American democracies will be evaluated according to their capacity to expand the field of recognition within increasingly diverse societies. This editorial maintains that the margins are not external to the system, but rather spaces from which the system reveals both its limits and its possibilities for transformation. In this

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sense, listening to marginalized voices constitutes a demand for truth, intellectual justice, and democratic renewal.

Keywords: inclusion; recognition; justice; memory; territory; multiculturalism.

Resumen

El presente monográfico de *Ánfora* reúne investigaciones socialmente relevantes y orienta el foco de análisis hacia los sujetos históricamente ubicados en los márgenes. Su eje central es que la inclusión, la justicia y el reconocimiento no pueden pensarse únicamente en términos de acceso material, sino también como problemas de legitimidad epistémica, memoria, territorio y dignidad. A partir de debates sobre educación inclusiva y multicultural, perspectiva de género, colonialidad del saber, derechos de comunidades afrodescendientes, envejecimiento, juventudes y memoria histórica, en el texto se sostiene que las democracias latinoamericanas serán evaluadas por su capacidad de ampliar el campo del reconocimiento en sociedades crecientemente diversas. En esta editorial se defiende que los márgenes no son exteriores al sistema, sino lugares desde donde este revela sus límites y sus posibilidades de transformación. En esa medida, escuchar las voces relegadas constituye una exigencia de verdad, justicia intelectual y renovación democrática.

Palabras clave: inclusión; reconocimiento; justicia; memoria; territorio; multiculturalidad.

Resumo

Este número monográfico da *Ánfora* reúne pesquisas socialmente relevantes e direciona o foco de análise para sujeitos historicamente situados às margens. Seu eixo central é que a inclusão, a justiça e o reconhecimento não podem ser pensados apenas em termos de acesso material, mas também como questões de legitimidade epistêmica, memória, território e dignidade. A partir de debates sobre educação inclusiva e multicultural, perspectiva de gênero, colonialidade do saber, direitos das comunidades afrodescendentes, envelhecimento, juventudes e memória histórica, o texto sustenta que as democracias latino-americanas serão avaliadas por sua capacidade de ampliar o campo do reconhecimento em sociedades cada vez mais diversas. Neste editorial, defende-se que as margens não são exteriores ao sistema, mas lugares a partir dos quais ele revela seus limites e suas possibilidades de transformação. Nesse sentido, ouvir as vozes relegadas constitui uma exigência de verdade, justiça intelectual e renovação democrática.

Palavras-chave: inclusão; reconhecimento; justiça; memória; território; multiculturalidade.

There are special issues that organize a conversation; others, moreover, force it to shift direction. This volume belongs to the latter category. Its merit lies not only in bringing together research on socially relevant issues, but also in proposing, serenely yet firmly, a reorientation of perspective. Where much of the modern academic tradition has viewed certain subjects through the prism of lack, deviance, or marginality, this special issue invites readers to think of them, and to rethink them, as producers of meaning, bearers of rights, agents of memory, and epistemic interlocutors. In other words, this is not merely a collection of studies on vulnerable populations, but a collective reflection on what a society reveals about itself when it decides whom to listen to, whom to teach, whom to remember, and whom to recognize.

The strength of the collection lies precisely in this double movement: on the one hand, it brings into view pressing issues in contemporary Latin America—educational exclusion, epistemic injustice, territorial inequality, the silencing of sexuality in old age, the criminalization of youth, and the memories of state terrorism; on the other, it reorders the hierarchy of questions. It is no longer enough simply to ask what certain subjects lack to enter a preexisting order; rather, that order itself must now be subjected to critical scrutiny, that is, its canons, pedagogies, bureaucracies, languages of merit, grammars of normality, and ways of administering difference. Underlying this shift is a key intuition: it is not enough to speak of inclusion if the center remains intact; it is not enough to add historically marginalized voices if the very criteria that rendered them subaltern are left unexamined.

For decades, debates on social justice have insisted that contemporary inequalities cannot be understood in one-dimensional terms. The American philosopher, critical theorist, and feminist Nancy Fraser argued that struggles for justice require redistribution, recognition, and participation to be considered together, since a society may expand resources without dismantling cultural devaluation, or celebrate identities without altering the material structures of subordination (Fraser, 1998). That thesis remains highly relevant for understanding the present. Inequality is not only a matter of income, access, or coverage; it is also a matter of intelligibility, symbolic prestige, authority to speak, and the right to be regarded as fully human in the public sphere. Thus, when this special issue addresses students with disabilities, Deaf communities, women, peasant communities, Black communities, older persons, youth living in precarious conditions, or memories marked by forced disappearance, it is not merely expanding the journal's thematic

repertoire; it is also debating what counts as legitimate knowledge and which lives are treated as deserving of institutional attention and narrative depth.

This problem can also be framed in terms of epistemic injustice. The contemporary British philosopher Miranda Fricker introduced this category to describe the harms suffered by certain people not only in their access to goods or rights, but in their very condition as subjects of knowledge. When their testimony is granted less credibility because of prejudice, or when their experiences find no shared interpretive frameworks through which to be understood, a distinct form of epistemic harm occurs (Fricker, 2007). This idea is especially useful for understanding the questions that run through this special issue: What happens when schools assess profoundly diverse realities according to homogeneous criteria? What happens when sign language is tolerated as a compensatory resource, but not celebrated as a full aesthetic and cultural form? What is reproduced when philosophy is taught as if women had barely figured in its history? What is denied when peasant communities are treated as an object of intervention rather than as a producer of knowledge? At their core, each of these scenes points to disputes over credibility, interpretation, and presence. Epistemic injustice is not a philosophical abstraction, but an everyday structure of silencing.

In the field of education, this discussion takes on particular significance. For far too long, inclusion was understood as a policy of incorporation, whereby those who had been left outside were brought into the system without seriously interrogating the structures that produced exclusion. However, the main international developments in this area have pointed in a different direction. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) Global Education Monitoring Report 2020, for example, underscores that inclusion is not a complementary program, but an organizing principle that requires the transformation of educational cultures, policies, and practices in order to respond to student diversity. Along similar lines, General Comment No. 4 of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities states that the right to inclusive education entails a systemic transformation of institutions, their pedagogies, and their environments, rather than a mere accumulation of peripheral adjustments (Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2016). This clarification is crucial: inclusion is not simply a gesture of accommodation toward those considered different; it is a critical review of the assumptions on which the system has been built.

Viewed from this perspective, the special issue shows that inclusive education cannot be reduced to material accessibility or the physical presence of diverse learners in the same classroom. It also involves languages, affective dimensions, technological mediations, learning rhythms, modes of assessment, and, above all, the institutional willingness to recognize that difference is not a failure in

relation to an ideal model. When this volume addresses language teaching for students with autism, ICT-mediated assessment practices, or bilingual-bicultural education for Deaf students, it shows that any pedagogical innovation worthy of the name must be measured by its capacity to broaden recognition, not by its mere technical sophistication.

There is, moreover, a central strand of this special issue that engages with feminist debates and intersectionality theory. The American legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw (1991) showed that relations of power do not operate in isolated categories, and that many people experience forms of subordination produced precisely at the intersection of gender, race, class, sexuality, age, or disability. This insight remains fully relevant for understanding contemporary Latin America. The exclusions that affect a rural woman, an older woman, a Black woman, or a Deaf woman cannot be understood through a single axis of analysis. These are experiences shaped by overlapping layers of dispossession and by multiple regimes of invisibility. For this reason, it is especially significant that the special issue brings together works on philosophy from a gender perspective, territory, and women's emotions, economic empowerment, sexual rights in old age, and political memory embodied in maternal figures. Without reducing women's experience to a single essence, the volume shows that gender remains a structuring dimension of the social distribution of suffering, authority, and voice.

At this point, the critique of the canon takes on particular significance. Every academic tradition produces legacies and omissions. The problem is not that canons exist; the problem arises when they become so naturalized that they are mistaken for the full horizon of what can be thought. In Latin American humanities and social sciences, this naturalization has been especially persistent in philosophy, where male and Eurocentric dominance has operated for centuries as if it were a form of universal neutrality. In response, a feminist perspective does not call for a minor reparative gesture or token inclusion; it demands a review of the very architecture of philosophical and pedagogical narratives. This connects with a broader discussion on the colonality of knowledge. Aníbal Quijano (2000) argued that Latin American modernity was structured through a matrix of power that articulated racial classification, economic domination, and epistemic hierarchy, passing off a historically situated point of view as universal. In this sense, revising the philosophical and educational canon is not a matter of political correctness, but a task of decolonizing knowledge.

That same critique extends to the place of peasant communities, territory, and local forms of knowledge. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas recognizes that those who live and work in rural areas possess specific rights linked to land, seeds, participation, culture, and dignity. Yet beyond legal recognition, the declaration has a deeper

implication: it challenges the old representation of peasant communities as a backward remnant of history and opens the way to understanding peasants as political and epistemic subjects (United Nations, 2018). This opening is crucial in Latin America, where struggles over land, food sovereignty, and the defense of the commons cannot be separated from disputes over the value of certain forms of knowledge. Land is not merely a resource; it is a form of memory, a basis for material reproduction, and a cultural web of meaning. Likewise, territory cannot be reduced to administrative coordinates or exploitable surfaces, since it is also a bodily, affective, linguistic, and communal experience. In this vein, peasant struggles show that it is not enough to incorporate them into the language of public policy if the epistemic center that has treated them as backward remnants remains intact.

This understanding becomes especially important when considered in relation to Afro-descendant communities and the historical inequalities that persist in Latin America. Various reports by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR, 2021) and by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) together with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA, 2020) have shown that Afro-descendant people in the region face structural forms of discrimination that affect the effective enjoyment of their economic, social, cultural, and environmental rights, as well as their access to land, participation, security, and recognition. This is not merely a matter of poverty or exclusion in a statistical sense; it is the historical sedimentation of dispossession, racism, and institutional precariousness. In regions such as the Colombian Pacific, the defense of ethnic-territorial rights cannot be understood apart from these genealogies. Afro-descendant territoriality is not a sectoral demand, but a form of collective existence that involves memory, ancestry, self-government, and a relationship to space. Addressing this issue requires legal, historical, and political sensitivity capable of recognizing that conflicts over territory are also conflicts over the very meaning of citizenship and nationhood.

Another virtue of the special issue lies in treating age as a critical category. In recent decades, public debate has advanced in recognizing discrimination based on gender, race, or disability, yet it still tends to treat age as a residual category. Old age, in particular, continues to be read through the lenses of deficit, dependence, or unproductiveness. The Inter-American system has taken important steps to challenge that logic: the Inter-American Convention on the Protection of the Human Rights of Older Persons specifically recognizes the rights of this group and affirms States' obligation to promote their full inclusion, integration, and participation in society (OAS, 2015). The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO, 2021), for its part, has insisted that a human-rights perspective on older persons must encompass not only health and care, but also autonomy, equality,

and protection against multiple forms of discrimination. From this perspective, addressing the sexual rights of older persons no longer appears as a marginal issue, but rather as a central question for measuring the extent to which a society is willing to recognize desires, emotional lives, and embodied subjectivities beyond the dominant norm of youth.

Young people also occupy a central place in this special issue, and they do so not through the celebratory rhetoric of “generational innovation,” but through their confrontation with contemporary regimes of exclusion, criminalization, and death. Latin America has long been a region in which large segments of young people live at the intersection of educational precarity, social violence, unemployment, racism, and institutional neglect. Although youth inclusion is multidimensional and depends on effective access to rights, participation, education, health, infrastructure, and material living conditions, there are still situations in which the language of inclusion is insufficient to describe what is happening. Achille Mbembe (2019) proposed the notion of necropolitics to think through contexts in which sovereignty is exercised through the differential exposure of certain populations to death, harm, and disposability. Applied to Latin American youth, this category helps us understand why some young lives are systematically treated as expendable. To speak of youth at the margins, then, is to speak of structures that administer not only deprivation, but also extreme vulnerability. The way a society manages the life and death of its youth reveals the extent to which it is willing to critically reconsider the center from which vulnerability and protection are distributed.

Along similar lines, the discussion of child labour and adolescent work requires particular analytical caution. Reports by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) show that child labour remains a global problem of enormous magnitude and that it seriously compromises access to education, health, and overall development. In 2020, according to those estimates, 160 million children were engaged in child labour, representing almost one in ten children worldwide. Yet alongside this general evidence, critical Latin American reflection has reminded us that not all contexts of child labour are identical and that informality, family survival, local economies, and specific forms of social relations often intersect. This does not mean relativizing exploitation, but rather avoiding categories that are overly smooth when confronted with historically rough realities. The challenge is to defend, without ambiguity, the rights of children and adolescents without thereby impoverishing the sociological analysis of the contexts in which those rights are systematically violated (ILO & UNICEF, 2021).

If age runs through the special issue by way of youth and old age, memory does so through struggles against forgetting and denial. In Latin America, few

experiences embody that dimension as powerfully as those of the Mothers and Grandmothers of Plaza de Mayo. The Inter-American Commission has repeatedly emphasized that States have an obligation to preserve historical memory, seek truth, ensure justice, and guarantee non-repetition in response to serious human rights violations. Indeed, in 2026, the Commission once again underscored the binding nature of such memory policies in the context of tributes to the victims of dictatorships in the Americas. This insistence is fundamental because it makes clear that memory is neither a rhetorical inheritance nor a commemorative gesture without consequences: it is a democratic practice that protects societies against the return of impunity. When memory is weakened, so too is the moral boundary that separates a political community from acquiescence to horror.

The significance of this issue becomes even clearer when one considers that memory, truth, and justice processes in Argentina have come to be recognized internationally as benchmarks for public human rights policies. The designation of former clandestine detention and torture centers as sites of memory expresses, beyond its heritage value, the principle that spaces of terror can be transformed into sites of democratic pedagogy. This transition offers a crucial lesson: memory not only repairs retrospectively; it also educates for the future. And that education is neither cold nor exclusively institutional. It is made up of stories, names, marching bodies, photographs that interrupt the present, unceasing rounds, and mothers who transform private pain into public language. Waiting, in this sense, is not passivity: it is the endurance of political commitment through time.

What this special issue ultimately brings into view is a powerful thesis about contemporary Latin America, where the democracies of the region will be judged not only by their normative designs, but by their real capacity to broaden the field of recognition. Such broadening requires resources, but it also demands institutional imagination, curricular revision, historical listening, linguistic pluralization, and epistemic humility. It requires accepting that many of the categories through which we have organized academic and political life are too narrow to accommodate the complexity of contemporary experience. And it further requires understanding that the margins are not outside the system, but rather the place from which the system reveals its limits.

Perhaps this is the most fruitful lesson of the issue. Where we are accustomed to seeing peripheries, this special issue discovers alternative centers of intelligibility. Where the institutional gaze registers deficits, these works recognize capacities, memories, affective repertoires, and critical potentials. Where bureaucratic language speaks of beneficiaries, users, or coverage, this edition restores more exacting names: subjects, communities, languages, territories, rights, and forms of waiting. This is no minor gesture. To name differently is to

begin to think differently, and to think differently is an indispensable condition for transforming practices.

In times marked by information saturation, the simplification of public debate, and the temptation to reduce social reality to decontextualized indicators, a journal like *Ánfora* plays an indispensable role: reminding readers that academic research can still be a form of hospitality toward the world. Hospitality for difficult questions. Hospitality for voices that do not fit comfortably within inherited taxonomies. Hospitality for memories that resist closure. Hospitality, finally, for that uncomfortable yet necessary truth through which a society reveals itself most clearly in the way it treats those it has long regarded as secondary.

If this special issue succeeds in awakening this concern in its readers, it will have fulfilled one of the highest tasks of academic writing: not only to inform or interpret, but to deepen critical awareness. For listening to those at the margins is not an act of charity; it is a condition of truth. And reordering the center through such listening is not a symbolic concession; it is a demand for intellectual, educational, and political justice.

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DIVERSITY AND
MULTICULTURALISM:
CHALLENGES AND
CHANGES FOR AN
INCLUSIVE SOCIETY

Investiga ções Refle xões y revisiones

Research, reflection and review
Pesquisa, reflexão e revisão

The Most Recent Advances on the Teaching of English to Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD): A Basic Literature Review*

[English version]

Los más recientes avances en la enseñanza de inglés a estudiantes con Trastorno del Espectro del Autismo (TEA): una revisión de literatura básica

Avanços recentes no ensino de inglês para alunos com Transtorno do Espectro Autista (TEA): uma revisão da literatura básica

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Abstract

Objective: To identify the most recent advances including the research trends, government policies and classroom strategies in the teaching of the English language to students diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). **Methodology:** Literature review based on 52 scientific articles and retrieved from academic databases through the VOSviewer software. Publications were searched using key words related to ASD and English teaching. Doxographic data sheets to log the information were created and recurring topics were categorized using theme coding. **Results:** The results reveal, in the last decade, various countries have developed initiatives to support students with ASD. The main advances are grouped into four areas: (1) predominant research approaches by country; (2) government policies and the use of technological tools to ease the work in inclusive classrooms facing social inequalities and (3) strategies to improve ASD students' English learning. **Conclusions:** Considering that inclusive contexts offer restrictive environments, the governments have implemented educational policies on treatment and prevention. Nonetheless, there is a clear contradictory discrepancies between educational policies and the reality of inclusive education. It is also necessary to balance social inequalities to meet the specific needs of ASD populations.

Keywords: Autism; Inclusive education; Teaching strategies; Foreign languages; English; Government policy (obtained from UNESCO Thesaurus).

Resumen

Objetivo: identificar los avances más recientes, incluyendo las tendencias de investigación, políticas gubernamentales y estrategias de aula en la enseñanza del idioma inglés a estudiantes diagnosticados con trastorno del espectro autista (TEA). **Metodología:** revisión de literatura basada en 52 artículos científicos recuperados de bases de datos académicas mediante el software VOSviewer. Las publicaciones se buscaron utilizando palabras clave relacionadas con TEA y enseñanza de inglés. Se crearon fichas de datos

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doxográficos para registrar la información, y los temas recurrentes se categorizaron utilizando codificación temática. **Resultados:** los resultados revelan que, en la última década, varios países han desarrollado iniciativas para apoyar a estudiantes con TEA. Los principales avances se agrupan en cuatro áreas: (1) enfoques de investigación predominantes por país; (2) políticas gubernamentales y el uso de herramientas tecnológicas para facilitar el trabajo en aulas inclusivas que enfrentan desigualdades sociales y (3) estrategias para mejorar el aprendizaje de inglés de los estudiantes con TEA.

Conclusiones: considerando que los contextos inclusivos ofrecen entornos restrictivos, los gobiernos han implementado políticas educativas sobre tratamiento y prevención. Sin embargo, existe una clara discrepancia contradictoria entre las políticas educativas y la realidad de las aulas inclusivas. También es necesario equilibrar las desigualdades sociales para satisfacer las necesidades específicas de las poblaciones con TEA.

Palabras clave: autismo; educación inclusiva; estrategias de enseñanza; lenguas extranjeras; inglés; política gubernamental (obtenidos del tesoro UNESCO).

Resumo

Objetivo: identificar os avanços mais recentes, incluindo tendências de pesquisa, políticas governamentais e estratégias de sala de aula, no ensino da língua inglesa a estudantes diagnosticados com transtorno do espectro autista (TEA). **Metodologia:** revisão de literatura baseada em 52 artigos científicos recuperados de bases de dados acadêmicas por meio do software VOSviewer. As publicações foram buscadas utilizando palavras-chave relacionadas ao TEA e ao ensino de inglês. Foram criadas fichas de dados doxográficos para registrar as informações, e os temas recorrentes foram categorizados usando codificação temática. **Resultados:** os resultados revelam que, na última década, vários países desenvolveram iniciativas para apoiar estudantes com TEA. Os principais avanços são agrupados em quatro áreas: (1) abordagens de pesquisa predominantes por país; (2) políticas governamentais e o uso de ferramentas tecnológicas para facilitar o trabalho em salas de aula inclusivas que enfrentam desigualdades sociais e (3) estratégias para melhorar o aprendizado de inglês dos estudantes com TEA. **Conclusões:** considerando que os contextos inclusivos oferecem ambientes restritivos, os governos implementaram políticas educacionais sobre tratamento e prevenção. No entanto, há uma clara discrepância contraditória entre as políticas educacionais e a realidade das salas de aula inclusivas. Também é necessário equilibrar as desigualdades sociais para atender às necessidades específicas das populações com TEA.

Palavras chaves: autismo; educação inclusiva; estratégias de ensino; línguas estrangeiras; inglês; política governamental (obtidos do tesouro da UNESCO).

Introduction

This paper entails a literature review around the issue of English linguistic competence of individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). The theoretical review was done during the diagnostic stage of a research Project carried out at a public university in Colombia. The review consisted of analyzing the effect of reasonable adjustments and Universal Design For Learning (UDL) on the improvement of English linguistic abilities of a group of 20 autistic students.

The diagnostic stage of this project was completed over a period of six months and it was paramount for us to scrutinize the existing literature surrounding education, training and language development of students with ASD. We also realized the importance of finding out what has been written about ASD in English education since we have discovered it is scarce.

From this perspective, we searched scientific articles containing some key words such as ASD, teaching English, training and learning. We looked for them in various databases using the VOSviewer software. Once an interesting number of articles was found, we created a doxographic data sheet with the information coming for the articles found. From this previous list, we coded the information by looking at the frequency of occurrence and then those codes became categories. Finally, those categories were classified according to themes and trends.

Our findings suggest that there is a scarce amount of articles that refer to teaching English to students with ASD taking into account the 52 articles found. Moreover, teachers lack training in the design of technological tools, effective teaching materials, and adequate pedagogical environments. More specialized programs need to be implemented and evaluated to ensure that this type of population is able to achieve apprenticeship as their numbers are progressively increasing. Although the World Health Organization (WHO, 2025), declared that one in fifty children have ASD, there are more current theories about the number rising. Additionally, new initiatives have emerged to support the increasing population with ASD in recent years. One of the most recent advances is the use of technological tools to ease the work in the classroom. However, teachers lack effective training to work with disabled populations as stated by (Al Jaffal, 2023). Concerning ASD, new publications have been focused on listening skills, comprehension, oral expression, conversational situations, among others. In line with state policies, the permanent barriers in inclusive classrooms need to be removed.

Methodology

Within the framework of the objectives established in the literature review of various research reports, the need to identify, contrast, compare, and establish relationships among the bodies of knowledge that are interconnected, divergent, or complementary arose. This involved confronting theoretical, methodological, and instrumental aspects. Accordingly, a literature review process as emphasized by Henderson (2014) «must be intensified but, above all, systematized; it is not about assembling a puzzle with fragments of different theories, but rather about systematically selecting the key concepts that are relevant to our research» (p. 14), always guided by the predetermined descriptors.

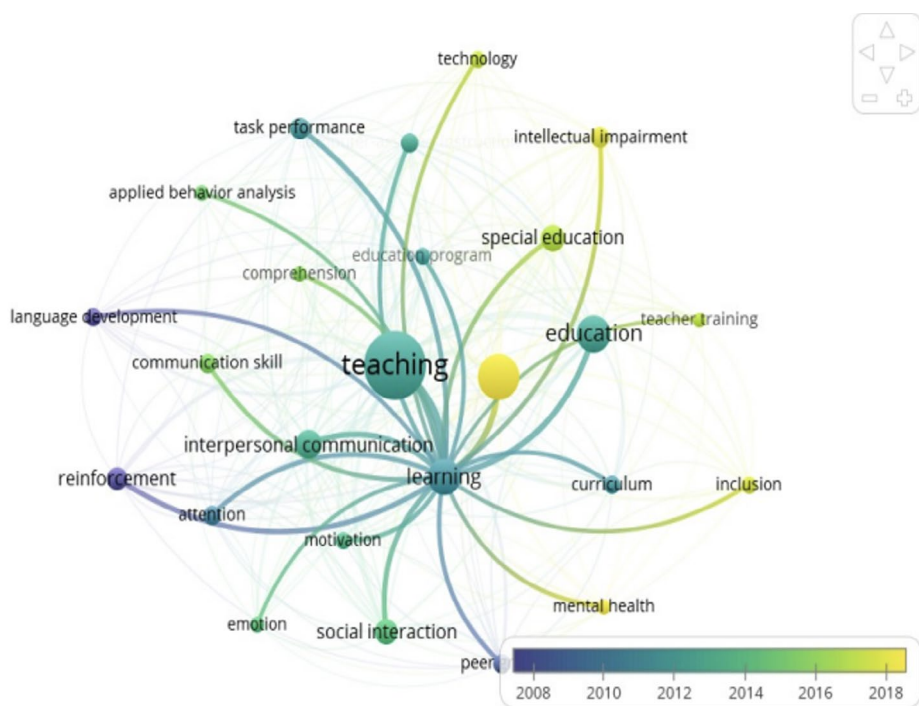


Figure 1. Conceptual Network of the Teaching and Learning Process in Students with ASD.

Source: VOSviewer software.

In the first moment, VOSviewer was used as a tool to identify research gaps and trends related to English language teaching for individuals with autism. As shown in the figure, the analysis revealed that studies in this area are scarce.

Early publications, around 2008, mainly focused on reinforcement techniques and language development, while more recent studies—particularly after 2018—have shifted toward themes such as technology use and educational inclusion. Despite the limited number of publications specifically addressing this intersection, a more detailed manual search was conducted to identify relevant studies within the broader field.

Therefore, the research trajectory was organized into three phases, which enabled the identification of various research trends and the building of categories related to the main topic of study.

First Phase: Initially, a research problem was identified and central categories were selected to guide the literature review. The information review process was also defined. Subsequently, keywords and descriptors were established to conduct searches in specialized databases. The primary search terms used were autism and teaching English.

Second Phase: The literature review was carried out through several academic databases, including Scopus, ResearchGate, JSTOR, Redalyc, SciELO, Google Scholar, and Academia. However, only a limited number of relevant articles were retrieved. For instance, Scopus yielded only six articles using the initial descriptors. As a result, the search was broadened to include additional descriptors such as *teaching English*, *learning English*, and *ASD population*. Priority was given to publications in scientific journals, academic theses, books, and relevant legal frameworks. Ultimately, 52 research-based documents were reviewed.

The organization and processing of information were carried out using a customized doxographic data sheet. This sheet included fields for titles, year of publication, objectives, methodologies, theoretical frameworks, findings, conclusions, and additional observations.

Third Phase: Based on the review and analysis of each component recorded in the doxographic sheet, emerging trends were identified, highlighting both the strengths and weaknesses of the research documents analyzed. This analytical process was conducted internally within each category of the data sheet. Recurring and repetitive elements were identified and compiled into a concurrence table, while less frequent elements were also documented.

Finally, this phase included the formulation of critical perspectives on the findings, highlighting the needs and emerging trends in English language instruction and teaching for autistic learners as reflected in the reviewed literature. As a result of this analysis, three main categories were constructed, thoroughly developed with the support of the articles retrieved from all the consulted

databases: 1) Predominant research approaches developed in each country. 2) State policies on inclusive education, 3)Technological aids in English teaching with ASD students.

Findings

Predominant Research Approaches Developed in Each Country

Once the different steps described in the methodology were carried out, the information was categorized by countries with their corresponding number of studies, dominant focus in publications, representative authors and evolutionary character in recent years, as shown in Table 1 and in the corresponding graphs.

Table 1. Dominant Research Approaches on ASD students by Countries.

Country	Number and Percentage of the reviewed studies	Dominant Research Approaches	Key Examples
Indonesia	12 23,1%	Action Research, Classroom Action Research, Qualitative Descriptive, Case Study (applied and pedagogical focus on interventions like visual aids, speech therapy, and language strategies)	Qualitative Applied (Adnyani <i>et al.</i> , 2024); Qualitative Descriptive (Bidari & Yanti, 2021); Design Pedagogical (Fatmawaty <i>et al.</i> , 2021); Descriptive Qualitative (Lasintia <i>et al.</i> , 2021); Qualitative Applied Intervention (Asik & Humaerah, 2020); Classroom Action Research (Wahyuni, 2019); Case Study (Padmadewi & Artini, 2017); Descriptive Qualitative (Setiadi, 2017)
USA	11 21,1%	Literature Review, Experimental, Case Study. Mixed methods, Systematic reviews, Practical-adaptive interventions	Qualitative, Professional Development/Technology (Al Jaffal, 2023); Adapted Grammar Lessons (Nixon & Schweizer, 2020); Literature Review (Reppond, 2015); Case Study / Classroom Application of Visual Supports (Meadan <i>et al.</i> , 2011)

Country	Number and Percentage of the reviewed studies	Dominant Research Approaches	Key Examples
Spain	7 13,5%	Literature Review + Didactic Proposal, Case Study, Systematic Review (theoretical-applied with practical strategies, ICT for ASD teaching)	Systematic Critical Review, TIC for ASD (Durán, 2021); Qualitative Descriptive (Moro-Ramos, 2021); Literature Review + Proposal (Cardona, 2020, 2021); Documentary analysis (Garrido & Carballo, 2021); Qualitative Descriptive (Herrera, 2017)
Iran	4 7,7%	Quasi-Experimental, Single-Subject Design, Qualitative Applied, Interdisciplinary (focus on EFL strategies, social skills, and vocabulary via PECS)	Single-Subject Experimental (Zohoorian <i>et al.</i> , 2024); Quasi-Experimental (Golshan <i>et al.</i> , 2019).
Ecuador	4 7,7%	Case Study/Action Research, Quantitative Correlational (focus on alternative methods and teacher knowledge)	Qualitative Observational (Cevallos & Villavicencio, 2024); Quantitative Correlational (Esparza-Choto <i>et al.</i> , 2021); Case Study/Action Research (Peña Chávez, 2016)
Malaysia	4 7,7%	Qualitative Inquiry, Exploratory, Scoping Review PRISMA-ScR, Systematic Review (emphasis on challenges, obstacles in vocabulary learning, and AR-enhanced interventions)	Qualitative Inquiry (Hashim <i>et al.</i> , 2022); Qualitative Exploratory (Hashim <i>et al.</i> , 2021).
Colombia	3 5,8%	Document Review and Descriptive-Analytical	Documentary Review + Case study (Figueroa, 2021); Case Study + Eclectic Intervention (Giraldo & Ramos, 2021).
Mexico	2 3,8%	Policy Analysis / Critical Review	Documentary Review (Bernal & Ramos, 2022); Policy Analysis / Critical Review (Tuman <i>et al.</i> , 2008)
China	2 3,8%	Mixed-Methods Experimental (focus on visual tools and ESL proficiency in international schools)	Mixed Quantitative/Qualitative (Luo <i>et al.</i> , 2023); Survey-Based Quantitative (Lu, Jiang & Huang, 2022)

Country	Number and Percentage of the reviewed studies	Dominant Research Approaches	Key Examples
Poland	1 1,9%	Qualitative Exploratory (interviews and literature review on teacher support and techniques)	Qualitative Study (Gałązka & Dick-Bursztyn, 2019); Survey-Based Mixed Methods (Hersh & Elley, 2019)
Lithuania	1 1,9%	Empirical Survey, Quantitative Descriptive Statistics (focus on individualization strategies for ASD)	Survey/Quantitative Analysis (Kaffemaniene & Kulese, 2021)
Australia	1 1,9%	Mixed-methods case study; video modeling for EFL vocabulary.	Approach oriented to design and technology for English vocabulary (Sarić, et al., 2014).

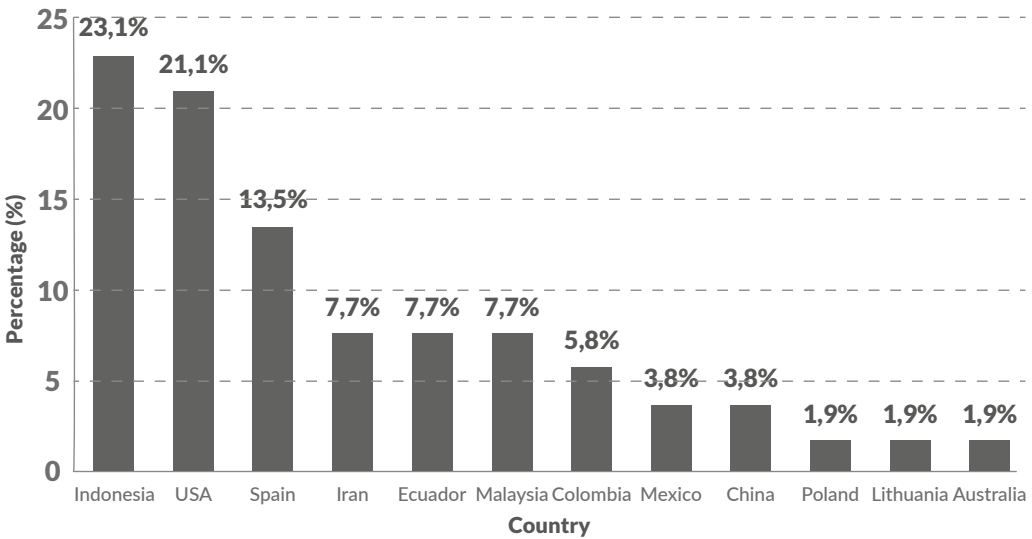


Figure 2. Research on English Teaching for ASD Population by Country.

The information provided in table 1 and its corresponding graph 2 show that 52 articles report research studies related to the teaching of a foreign language in populations with ASD and they came from 12 different countries. The 3 countries with the biggest number of publications are: Indonesia with 12 articles

which represent 23.1% of the total studies, United States with 11 reports which represent 21.1% and Spain with 7 reports that correspond to 13.5%. In the fourth place we can rank Iran, Ecuador and Malaysia with 3 reports that correspond to 7,7%. In fifth place we have Colombia with 3 studies representing 5,8%. In sixth place we can find Mexico and China with 2 studies which represent 3,8% each one. Finally, in this list we can find Poland, Lithuania and Australia with 1 study each representing 1,9%. This comparison highlights that most research is concentrated in Indonesia and the United States, with growing interest emerging in Latin America and Asia.

Table 2. *The most Recurrent Research Approaches by Country.*

Country	Number of Studies	Most Recurrent Approach	Percentage
Indonesia	12	Action Research	50,0%
USA	11	Literature Review	45,5%
Spain	7	Literature Review	57,1%
Iran	4	Quasi-Experimental	50,0%
Ecuador	4	Case Study	50,0%
Malaysia	4	Qualitative Inquiry	50,0%
Colombia	3	Document Review	33,3%
Australia	1	Mixed Methods	100,0%
China	2	Mixed-Methods Experimental	50,0%
Poland	1	Qualitative Review	100,0%
Lithuania	1	Empirical Survey	100,0%
Mexico	2	Policy Analysis	50,0%

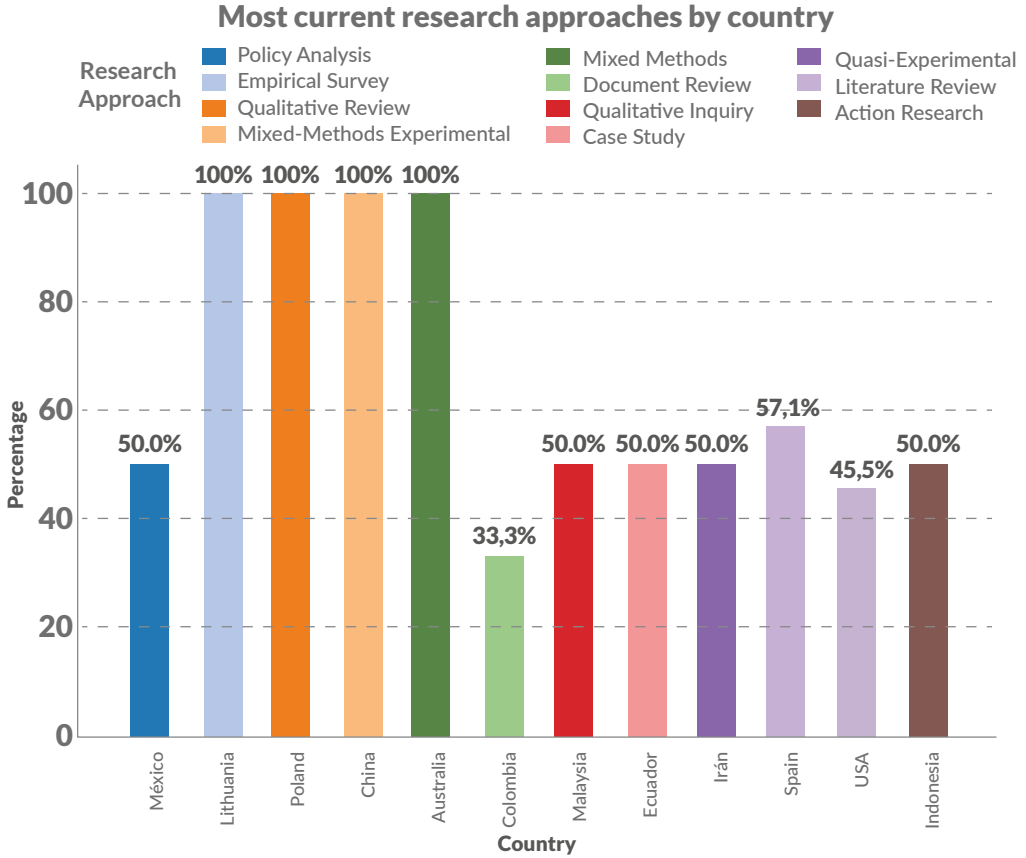


Figure 3. *Research Approaches by Country.*

In Graph 3 and table 2, it is possible to see how the predominant approaches used to research about the teaching of a foreign language to students with ASD are mainly the following: qualitative studies, quantitative studies, mixed approaches, action research, case studies, systematic literature reviews, discourse analysis and documentary analysis. Prominent among the research processes, the authors include data collection instruments such as surveys, structured and semi-structured interviews, mail and cell phone, questionnaires, standardized tests, direct and participant observation, evaluative studies, descriptive studies and documentary analysis.

The Graph 3 highlights that the most recent research approaches vary notably across the countries. Indonesia is dominated by Action Research (50%), and also shows a strong preference for case studies, classroom-based research among other qualitative methodologies. USA presents the most balanced

distribution among all countries. 45.5% emphasizes literature reviews and experimental methods. The remaining 55.5% is distributed among other possibilities such as mixed methods, practical interventions, and theoretical synthesis. Spain demonstrates preferences towards literature review with 57.1%. The remaining 42.9% is focused on case studies, qualitative and descriptive proposals, didactic interventions and theoretical frameworks. Iran has the highest proportion of Experimental / Quasi-Experimental research (50%), besides other studies related to single-Subject Design, Qualitative Applied, Interdisciplinary EFL strategies and social skills. Ecuador 50% Case Study and the remaining percentage is distributed among qualitative observational, quantitative correlational and systematic review. Malaysia balances experimental and qualitative perspectives, exploratory, systematic review, learning interventions, being qualitative inquiry 50%. Colombia offers 33.3% to Document Review.

Countries with only one or two studies appear with single-method dominance due to limited data. Australia (mixed method), Poland (qualitative review indicating a purely descriptive focus), Lithuania (empirical survey indicating a strong empirical focus) and Mexico (policy analysis).

The aforementioned data indicate that:

- Qualitative research is the most common approach overall, especially in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Poland, showing that many countries favor descriptive, exploratory designs.
- Systematic Reviews are highly present in the USA, Spain, Colombia, and Australia, showing that these countries contribute significantly to knowledge synthesis and evidence-based practice.
- Experimental approaches dominate in Iran and Lithuania, highlighting a more empirical tradition of research.
- Mixed Methods appear mainly in the USA and China, indicating interest in combining quantitative and qualitative perspectives but still not very widespread.
- Countries like the USA and Ecuador stand out for having the most methodologically diverse research, whereas Australia, Poland, and Lithuania rely entirely on one single approach.

Discrepancies Between State Policies and the Reality of Inclusive education

Since the advent of the technological paradigm, education has gradually received direct and indirect effects, which have generated national, regional, and global debates on issues addressing digital literacy, productivity, innovation and undoubtedly, inclusion. As stated by Boyle *et al.* (2022), there is a significant number of contradictions about the real value of inclusive education. A positive point is the advantages of ICTs to balance social and educational inequalities inside and outside the classroom, which ensures equal opportunities including addressing diversity as an indicator of the quality of education in line with state policies, considering that strategies should be sought to address the phenomenon of diversity present in each of the educational institutions. In the words of Barragán *et al.* (2016), "adequate attention to diversity always takes into account that all students, regardless of their situation, can learn" (p. 27).

Over the past decades, the percentage of students with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) has increased worldwide (Al Jaffal, 2022; WHO, 2025). It can be argued that individuals with this disability enter educational institutions that offer restrictive environments that are not useful for their future performance. The conditions of a person with ASD have direct and indirect impacts on academic performance due to factors such as difficulty adapting to everyday school life. According to Al Jaffal (2022), students with ASD receive instruction with the insufficient resources available in the institution and with the same pedagogical methods that teachers use to teach in regular classrooms.

Thus, governments have implemented inclusive policies in key areas such as health, environment, and education to enhance the population's life quality. Classrooms have focused attention on the adoption of pedagogical models, update of curriculum designs, modernization of physical structures and improvement of the academic quality of teacher training programs. Kistoro *et al.* (2021) state that within other state policies, different countries prioritize special education, arguing that teachers play a fundamental role in the learning of children with autism. Therefore, teachers ought to have a high degree of creativity, an "open heart", and be supported with sufficient and adequate resources.

Educational policies propose changes in curriculum and learning materials, taking into account that these decisions vary significantly, depending on factors such as the interests and needs of institutional contexts, the economic possibilities of families, and the individual characteristics of each student. This becomes a challenge for teachers because there are no clear guidelines which, according to Al Jaffal (2022), constitutes a present and permanent barrier in classrooms.

Teachers observe and express contradictions between state policies and their application in the reality of school contexts. Cassady (2011) and Cook &

McDuffie-Landrum (2020) report high levels of exasperation on the part of teachers, related to the amount of time required, adequacy of individual and group lesson plans, as well as some gaps in curriculum designs oriented both to students with and without this type of disability.

Technological Aids in Teaching and Learning English in ASD Populations

Different studies reviewed by Durán (2021) from 2010 to 2019 serve as backgrounds that demonstrate the effectiveness of technological tools and their positive impact, with certain precautions, on the educational care of students with ASD. There are many uses of computers to improve academic processes as well as videos, audios, digital screens, computer tools, and other electronic devices which offer educational potential and reduce the possibility of errors in academic tasks. There is a variety of softwares, apps and online resources that help the development of emotional and social skills in line with motivation and individualization as stated by Gallardo *et al.* (2020), Gallardo & Rodríguez, (2024) and Saranani *et al.* (2018). Luque (2016) demonstrated in his study that any kind of multimedia resources have a really high educational value. Durán (2021) noted the emphasis on social and communicative skills, as it is a distinctive feature of ASD. Likewise, it is not possible to affirm that a single tool responds to all spectrums of autism. Moreover, some findings shared by Tárraga *et al.* (2019), suggest that the use of ICT is beneficial to students with ASD because when they interact with technology, they do not have to face social demands or to interpret and respond to social information that is present in other kinds of instruction.

The publications reveal that one of the most evident strategies in inclusive classrooms is the use, adaptation, and creation of technologies, taking into account that learning materials influence teaching methods and strategies. In this regard, the use of manipulative materials (Cardona, 2021), puppets (Wahyuni, 2019), word wall pictures (Asik & Humaerah, 2020), power cards (Spencer *et al.*, 2008), EDUcards (Meydianda *et al.*, 2018) or “arteterapia” (Esparza-Choto *et al.*, 2021) can also provide students with ASD a sense of security and confidence, which supports the internalization of the concepts to be learned .

However, Gómez-Marí *et al.* (2022) show that classroom teachers lack professional training related to technology and that they demand greater collaboration, professional advice and increased use of technology to achieve the expected goals (Mulholland & O'Connor, 2016), as established by national legislation.

From the research carried out by Kaffemaniene and Kulese (2021), it is claimed that involving a student with ASD in learning activities implies

analyzing several factors that favor or prevent adaptation to the educational program. According to the authors, the following elements must be taken into consideration: demographic data, gender, age, visual patterns, emotional factors, anxiety, repetitive behaviors, well-being, type of school, number of students, ways of structuring environments and places, sequencing of lessons, complexity of activities, type of materials acquired or designed by the teachers themselves among others.

Bearing in mind that students with ASD have different needs, Durán (2021) and Kistoro *et al.* (2021) refer to professional competencies related to the proper management of an extensive body of materials included in the curriculum. These are directly related to the topics to be taught, the methodological structure, and the expected learning outcomes. The use of materials includes organization, concepts, and principles that support the lessons. However, teachers of inclusive education have not yet gained recognition because they are tied to their experience and to the training they receive in their professional careers, where this area is not a priority. Through reflective actions around the leverage of the benefits of ICTs, they have gradually moved into developing skills to originate creative materials appropriately and permanently. It is considered that ICTs help to understand curricular content and also exercise communicative processes. Technologies are, therefore a useful factor in the development of pedagogical and social competencies.

According to the recent studies reviewed, new strategies have been implemented in the English language curriculum. In this regard, Lasintia *et al.* (2021), guided by a constructivist epistemology, present studies aimed at implementing strategies that work in language teaching, focusing on competencies for students with ASD to learn how to communicate.

This group of researchers remark the peer-assisted learning approach, mentoring strategies, cooperative learning, direct instruction, game-based strategies, learning construction strategies, varied methods in multicultural classrooms, and strategies for parents. The following strategies stand out among others:

Strategy 1. Learn to listen. The starting point is to foster a good listening attitude, which is essential for understanding what is being said and answering questions correctly. The use of sound-enhancing materials is very important to attract attention. Audio media such as recordings, video-beam presentations, songs, microphones, and YouTube are used.

Strategy 2. Development of oral comprehension. The didactic uses of visual and auditory media, such as objects, photos, images, songs, and comics, are effective in maintaining attention, increasing interest, deepening understanding, and strengthening communicative skills.

Strategy 3. Development of oral expression. Teachers and families understand and value verbal and nonverbal efforts in communicating with people with ASD. A computer or tape recorder is very helpful for practicing oral strategies which are complemented by written exercises.

Strategy 4. Conversational skills. The use of technologies facilitates the structuring of interesting opportunities. They stimulate communication, concentration, miming, and interaction through modeling, physical demonstrations, visual aids and permanent positive feedback.

Strategy 5. Echolalia. According to Lasintia *et al.* (2021), echolalia is one of the negative habits prevalent in people with autism. For weeks or months afterward, the student continues to mechanically repeat words or phrases he has heard. Although the language learner is able to repeatedly pronounce new vocabulary and linguistic structures, it is necessary to correct this habit by making good use of teaching resources and adapting the learning environment in a more creative and interesting way. Visual aids help answer questions instead of repeating them because they allow the stimuli to vary. Revisiting scenes from a film over and over again allows acquiring new vocabulary, reinforcing linguistic structures, and reducing repetition of the same words.

Strategy 6. Alternative or argumentative systems of communication. They are used in the classroom to reinforce or broaden what a person says. They are frequently used with nonverbal students or those who, although expressing themselves verbally, insinuate that they cannot speak functionally. Visual aids, either individually or in groups, make it easier for children with ASD to understand others. They are also a great help in expressing their thoughts and developing new examples from the basic ones provided by the teacher.

Valencia *et al.* (2019) emphasize the issue of social skills focused on the use of virtual reality. They also focus their attention on the degree of accessibility by children with ASD and game-based learning. The experimental work of Alzrayer *et al.* (2019) emphasizes the use of tablets and iPads as devices to promote speech skills, express desires, and, in general, for social communication. However, these devices require high-tech handling that stimulates motor and cognitive skills not always within the reach of people with ASD.

Discussion

Progress has been made in the concept of autism by health institutions and organizations such as WHO (2025) and the American Psychiatric Association (2014). The fundamental concepts refer to functional disability, autism spectrum

disorders -ASD (Demetriou *et al.*, 2018; Artigas-Pallares & Paula, 2012), and executive functions (Ellis *et al.*, 2018). Although, based on the significant progress reported, educational policies have promoted inclusive pedagogical strategies for serving students in classrooms, the levels of ASD have increased considering the data reported by the WHO. 240 million children are characterized with some type of disability worldwide; 49% are likely not to attend school; 1 in 36 children, 28%, have autistic disorder.

According to the results of the literature review, the scientific production of greatest impact concerning the most recent advances on the teaching of English to students with ASD is located in 12 countries, among which, the most productive are Indonesia with 23.1%, the United States with 21.1% and Spain with 13.5%. When analyzing the conclusions of the studies reviewed, the discrepancy between educational policies and their implementation in the real educational contexts of institutions that receive students with ASD is evident, even in the most advanced countries. This factor constitutes an academic challenge since creating innovative pedagogical strategies applicable to different classrooms and contexts requires interdisciplinary teams trained in the issues and problems specific to inclusive educational settings.

Based on the most up-to-date research works in line with educational policies, higher education institutions, as well as public and private schools, have begun to understand the scientific basis of disabilities in order to develop specific teaching materials, programs, and projects. Beyond offering courses, lectures, workshops, or providing bibliographies and manuals (Busby *et al.*, 2012) educational institutions need to increase the implementation of inclusive alternatives with greater impact in teacher training programs in the field of autism and other disabilities.

The literature review based on the 52 articles conducted by different researchers from 12 countries provided recent evidence on the current state of knowledge that will strengthen future research projects in this arena. The articles also mention exploratory studies, observational studies, focus groups, holistic and in-depth descriptions, phenomenological studies, and analytical studies. However, few institutions receive transforming actions directly in their real-life contexts, considering that 100% of countries use descriptive, experimental, observational case study, and systematic literature review approaches. Only two countries, Indonesia and China (3.8%), of the 52 countries develop action and experimental research aimed at real-life context transformations.

The results and conclusions of the accessed studies reveal the need to expand research leading to a better understanding of populations with disabilities, as well as the development of individualized learning strategies in inclusive classrooms, particularly those related to the autism spectrum. Beyond technological and methodological resources, it is necessary to delve deeper into a better

understanding of ASD, and channel attitudes towards the management of this problem in the educational field. Creating an inclusive learning environment requires teachers to listen to and validate preferences of students which can significantly improve participation and learning outcomes, taking into account their diverse learning profiles.

In addition to the lack of training, counseling, and follow-up regarding ASD, there are strong barriers identified by Al Jaffal (2022). This finding agrees with Cassady (2011) and Cook & McDuffie-Landrum (2020) who highlight the contradiction between state policies and the reality of school contexts. Likewise, it is critical for teachers to be familiar with specialized methodologies and techniques that support inclusive education. In particular, they should be familiar with frameworks such as Universal Design for Learning (UDL), which promotes flexible teaching approaches that adapt to diverse learning needs.

Although special education as a human right is constitutionally mandated and all educational institutions are obliged to include the ASD population, respecting their physical, emotional, mental, intellectual, and social characteristics, not all people have access to it. While governments are responsible for financing formal and non-formal programs aiming at enhancing the quality of education, this remains a pending debt.

Conclusions

The most recent research advances related to the teaching and learning of the English language, affecting educational contexts serving students with ASD, have been identified in this paper.

Bearing in mind the 52 articles analyzed, it was possible to recognize how research is being conducted, what methods and tools are being used, and what paradigms illuminate the way in which researchers produce knowledge on educational contexts serving students with ASD, including those who are interested in the acquisition of a foreign language. The 52 studies reviewed shed light on methodological paths to understand experiences of teachers in educating children with autism. Depending on the chosen research approach, whether qualitative or quantitative, data collection instruments and techniques are designed, as well as data analysis procedures.

Different countries have taken government decisions aimed at including new and varied technologies as pedagogical mediators in inclusive schools, taking into account the characteristics of people diagnosed with ASD. It is undeniable that the creativity and the strengthening of competencies of teachers underpin

the high or low quality of technological resources in teaching and learning in both mainstream and inclusive classrooms. Taking advantage of the creative and innovative potential demanded by the technological era, educational institutions must design their own teaching materials, as the characteristics of traditional classrooms are restrictive and do not meet the needs of this population in the present times.

The results highlight that teacher training in specific strategies to support students with ASD is essential. Strong professional competencies enable the creation of inclusive classrooms where children learn under optimal conditions, and achieve meaningful progress in both English language learning and social integration. Considering that in inclusive contexts, students with ASD face a series of social, academic, communication, and behavioral challenges, the educational legislation establishes guidelines and requirements for specialized counseling on treatment and prevention.

The research results recommend strategic actions that focus on qualified professional training for the management of inclusive classrooms where children learn in optimal conditions, get involved in group activities, develop better language development of language, interact with their peers, and integrate into the demands of the intercultural world.

From the systematic review on the impact of ICTs, several initiatives have emerged that in recent years have served to support the population with ASD, which faces obstacles in the classroom. Teaching English to students with ASD demands pedagogical attitudes from educators, as well as from the state policies, authorities and institutions. Providing security and confidence is crucial for students to internalize concepts, develop autonomy, and strengthen social interaction within an educational framework that prioritizes both language learning and the students' overall well-being.

It is important to mention that ICTs offer great support to meet individual needs, interests, motivations, and learning rhythms. The possibilities of using technological tools in inclusive classrooms are varied and very useful in acquiring new knowledge from previous teachers and students' experiences. However, it is necessary to be aware of why, when, how, and for what purposes they are used. Technological tools are an even more attractive resource for students with ASD because of the visual stimuli accompanying access to information. They facilitate the organization of the environment for better interaction and development of autonomous responses in the times required by students with ASD.

Finally, regarding the different curriculum areas, the publications analyzed show skills that are intended to be improved with ASD students. These skills are transversal to pedagogical and didactic processes, but their greatest weight

lies in the area of language. The most common skills are: technological skills, social-communicative skills, academic-cognitive skills, emotional skills, and general skills. Nonetheless, understanding learning environments goes beyond the simple plans and state policies, it is a cultural and mental change involving innovation in practice and decision making in school management at all levels of the education system that hosts populations with ASD.

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Aesthetics of Subjectivity in Literary Productions in Colombian Sign Language*

[English Version]

Estética de la subjetividad en producciones literarias en lengua de señas colombiana

Estética da subjetividade em produções literárias em língua de sinais colombiana

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Abstract

Objective: To understand the relationship between aesthetics and subjectivity in literary productions in Colombian Sign Language (LSC). **Methodology:** The study was conducted at the Francisco Luis Hernández Betancur Educational Institution in Medellín, Colombia, using the videographic method. The process included three main steps: collecting video recordings, constructing a videographic analysis matrix, and conducting literary-creation sessions in LSC with a group of Deaf signing students. **Results:** In Colombia, there is a wide and diverse body of literature produced in LSC. Expressive resources, visual rhetorical figures, and methods of constructing intensity and form, articulated through the language's own parameters, enable the configuration of the aesthetic sign. This sign is intertwined with the narrator's subjectivity—their identity, experiences, and life events—which strengthens the literary work, enhances the appeal of the narrative,

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and evokes emotions in the audience. Aesthetics thus manifests itself as an expression of subjectivity. **Conclusions:** Those who produce literature in LSC seek to communicate sensations, feelings, and messages that address others, while representing the world they inhabit and the ways they experience and interpret it through signs.

Keywords: aesthetics; sign language; literature; Deaf (obtained from the UNESCO Thesaurus).

Resumen

Objetivo: comprender el tejido entre estética y subjetividad en las producciones literarias en lengua de señas colombiana (LSC). **Metodología:** la investigación se desarrolló en la Institución Educativa Francisco Luis Hernández Betancur, en Medellín, Colombia, mediante el método videográfico. El proceso incluyó tres acciones principales: recolección de registros en video, construcción de una matriz de análisis videográfico y realización de encuentros de creación literaria en LSC con un grupo de estudiantes sordos señantes. **Resultados:** en Colombia se evidencia una amplia y diversa producción de literatura en LSC. Los recursos expresivos, las figuras retóricas visuales y los modos de construcción de intensidad y forma, articulados con los parámetros propios de la lengua de señas, posibilitan la configuración del signo estético. Este signo se entrelaza con la subjetividad del narrador —su identidad, experiencias y vivencias—, lo que fortalece la creación literaria, genera atractivo en la narración y despierta emociones en el público. La estética se manifiesta, así, como expresión de la subjetividad. **Conclusiones:** quienes producen literatura en LSC buscan comunicar sensaciones, sentimientos y mensajes que interpelen al otro, al tiempo que representan el mundo que habitan y la manera en que lo experimentan y resignifican mediante las señas.

Palabras clave: estética; lenguaje de signos; literatura; sordo (obtenidos del tesauro UNESCO).

Resumo

Objetivo: compreender a interação entre estética e subjetividade em produções literárias em Língua de Sinais Colombiana (LSC). **Metodologia:** a pesquisa foi realizada na Instituição Educacional Francisco Luis Hernández Betancur, em Medellín, Colômbia, utilizando o método videográfico. O processo incluiu três ações principais: coleta de gravações em vídeo, construção de uma matriz de análise de vídeo e realização de oficinas de escrita criativa em LSC com um grupo de alunos surdos que utilizam a

língua de sinais. **Resultados:** na Colômbia, existe um amplo e diversificado corpo de literatura produzida em LSC. Recursos expressivos, figuras de retórica visual e métodos de construção de intensidade e forma, articulados com os parâmetros próprios da língua de sinais, possibilitam a configuração do signo estético. Esse signo se entrelaça com a subjetividade do narrador — sua identidade, experiências e vivências —, o que fortalece a criação literária, gera apelo na narrativa e evoca emoções no público. A estética, portanto, manifesta-se como uma expressão de subjetividade. **Conclusões:** os autores de literatura em LSC buscam comunicar sensações, sentimentos e mensagens dirigidas ao outro, ao mesmo tempo que representam o mundo que habitam e a forma como o vivenciam e ressignificam por meio de sinais.

Palavras chaves: estética; língua gestual; literatura; surdos. (obtidos do tesauro da UNESCO).

Introduction

Deaf signing students' education reveals weaknesses in the field of literature. Most of them are unfamiliar with stories, narratives, and in general, literary texts, along with their poetics, aesthetics, and constitutive and structuring elements, both in their own language and in Spanish (translated, adapted, or interpreted). This is because such texts had never been told to them at school or at home; consequently, these literary productions were unknown to them. Following the recognition of Colombian Sign Language (LSC) in Colombia, and thanks to access to communication through Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), accessing literary productions through videos, both synchronously and asynchronously has become possible. In recent years, an increasing amount of information has been disseminated on literary production in LSC, driven by the personal interest of individuals in exploring their language, whether or not influenced by experiences in other countries or by organizations that initiated processes of interpreting, translating, and adapting literary texts. For this reason, the decision was made to investigate the aesthetics of subjectivity in literary productions in LSC, with the aim of contributing to existing research and to the process of teaching and learning literature in this language.

The studies collected and reviewed for this research revealed two trends: sign language literature and Deaf literature (Montoya & Castellano, 2023). The former refers to research conducted from an external perspective on the Deaf population and its language, carried out mostly by hearing scholars, and consisting of studies on a wide range of topics. In Brazil, these are referred to as "Deaf Studies" (Quadros, 2006; Quadros & Stumpf, 2008), a term that points to a series of books addressing issues related to education, sign language, and deaf identities, written by Deaf and hearing authors committed to a socio-anthropological approach to deafness (Andreis-Witkoski, 2015). This perspective is linked to the socio-anthropological model, which recognizes LSC as a legitimate language and a cultural value, distinguishing it from the clinical-therapeutic approaches that historically sought the "normalization" of Deaf people (INSOR, 2006). Within this category, three components stand out: the first is related to visibility, or visual experience, in the acquisition of sign language; the second refers to the literary, linguistic, and narrative characteristics of sign language; and the third addresses inclusion and bilingualism in relation to education, accessibility, interpretation, and written language as a second language for Deaf people. The fields in which these studies are primarily situated are education and linguistics.

The second trend, called "deaf literature", establishes an internal view of sign language. The studies within this line maintain a close link with the Deaf community, since some of them are carried out by hearing people with deep

immersion in that community, and others by Deaf people who conduct research based on their experiences, practices, and lived realities in relation to their language. It is a way of sharing in different spaces, both formal and informal, with a diverse audience (Mourão, 2016, p. 8). Four axes stand out in this category: identity, representations of Deaf people, genres, and the proposal for writing sign language.

These trends support the discussion regarding how literary production in sign language, or the literary-artistic expressions of members of the Deaf community, are named, as well as regarding what is investigated when spoken language is used as a reference model. The first trend approaches the literary from the perspective of hearing people, that is, from an external viewpoint. From this perspective, literary production is assessed in relation to the dominant spoken language within a given territory (Spanish or Portuguese), which serves as the basis for communication. The second trend departs from the evaluative and classificatory criteria established by spoken language and instead proposes an internal viewpoint: research produced by members of the Deaf community or by hearing scholars who recognize the perspective that sign language establishes in communicative terms, as well as in the representation of the world and in literary and aesthetic expression.

The background studies make identifying the two viewpoints that have shaped the education of Deaf people over the years possible, grounded in epistemological perspectives that imply the transition from an external or “normalizing” view to an internal or interpretive one. The external view, linked to the clinical-therapeutic paradigm, tends toward the “normalization” of the Deaf person and seeks to bring sign language closer to oral language, or even to deny its existence and its status as a language. The internal perspective, linked to the socio-anthropological model, constitutes a transitional approach between evaluative and interpretive frameworks, ultimately leading to an understanding of sign language on its own terms, without the need to compare it with other languages. In this sense, recognizing the linguistic difference of Deaf people is fundamental to their social and educational participation, without seeking their normalization or subordination to the dominant spoken language.

“Deaf literature” emerged in the Brazilian context from this internal viewpoint, which grants value and recognition to productions in sign language. According to Karnopp (2010), “it is the production of literary texts in signs, which translates visual experience [...] and considers Deaf people as a different linguistic and cultural group” (p. 161). From this perspective, Deaf people assert themselves as subjects of and through their language and make use of the various functions of language, including the poetic function, which is most closely associated with creativity. This function enables them to participate autonomously

in the literary field and to engage with issues intrinsic to the language itself. Although this term was initially proposed in studies in fields such as linguistics, education, and translation (Karnopp, 2006; Mourão, 2016; Pokorski, 2014; Porto, 2007; Rosa, 2006; Sutton-Spence, 2021), it has also been adopted within literary studies. In this field, Alves (2022) proposes the concept of “*señalitura*” (a blend of the Spanish words *seña* (sign) and *literatura* (literature)), understood as literary work by Deaf people and for Deaf people, made accessible through visual means.

In Colombia, the studies by Montoya (2019) and Trillos (2016) show an interest in literature in LSC from areas such as education, literature, theater, and the performing arts. The first author focuses on literary production in LSC, while the second analyzes Deaf people’s perceptions of the world in relation to hearing people in seven *signliterary* narratives. More recently, Montoya and Porto (2024) identify common aesthetic elements in sign language literature in Brazil and Colombia, highlighting the shared visual creativity in these productions.

In Colombia, the need for the full recognition of LSC as a language has become particularly evident, not simply as a means of interpreting texts written in Spanish, but as a language with its own literary productions, aesthetic manifestations, and subjective modes of expression. Within this effort to understand LSC from an internal perspective, grounded in what signers themselves create and produce, literary production emerges as a means of advancing such recognition. Through literary production one may observe how users engage with language, construct meaning, and express their understanding of the world as subjects. Approaching sign language from an internal perspective strengthens emancipatory processes that make inhabiting the world outside the logics of domination possible.

Within this framework, the research problem addressed in the present study may be formulated as follows: what relationships are established between aesthetics and subjectivity in literary productions in Colombian Sign Language?

The general purpose of this work was to understand this interweaving, and the specific objectives were:

- a) To identify aesthetic elements in literary productions in LSC.
- b) To explain aspects of the subjectivity of members of the Deaf community who participate in literary production processes.
- c) To describe the tensions that arise in the manifestation of aesthetic elements in such productions.

Methodology

In line with the internal perspective and the recognition of sign language, the methodological procedure adopted in this study is grounded in an approach aimed at understanding and investigating issues related to visual experience. In addition, the study proposes and supports a videographic method that emerged from inquiry into and reflection on the characteristics of sign language, particularly in relation to autonomy and independence, that it may be approached by researchers who know, accept, and affirm sign language as the natural language of Deaf people.

The videographic method proposed in this study emerged from reflection on communication in sign language, visual experience, and literary productions in LSC. The specific characteristics of the language were taken into account, as they reveal experiences and practices that make visible relevant aspects of sign language and that are currently recorded in video format, since this format allows tetra-dimensional communication (Herrero & Nogueira, 2012) to be captured through moving images. In this sense, emphasizing the role and predominant modality of language within this videographic approach to understand the significance of communication in the research process is necessary, particularly in relation to subjective configurations and aesthetics grounded in linguistic difference, in accordance with the socio-anthropological perspective (INSOR, 2006). The importance attributed to language lies in its role as a mediator in the construction and representation of the world, based on symbolic structures and interactions that enable the establishment of intersubjective relations. These relations shape the internal structures of the participants and delineate the construction of the research object.

A research proposal grounded in the videographic method seeks to recognize sign language in communicative practice as part of human diversity. In this sense, technology enables new forms of engagement with diverse videographic materialities and opens up new textual, methodological, formal, and expressive possibilities, which in turn allow the exploration of other modes of knowledge through experimental forms (Poppe, 2018). In this study, the videographic method is employed to record information, and also to analyze and put into practice the production of meaning from visual experience. This makes a sensory engagement with literary creations in LSC recorded in video format possible. This also functions as a productive resource for approaching literary production in sign language, such as written texts capable of eliciting processes of thought, imagination, and sensibility (Migliorin & Barroso, 2016).

Videography constitutes a commitment to understanding sign language from its internal dynamics and to establishing a self-reflexive perspective. It has

been used as a technological tool to record information on practices in certain communities, such as Indigenous communities, to document those practices, preserve oral traditions, and address other concerns through audiovisual production (Coutiño, 2018). Videography is also a medium through which Deaf people express their literary productions in their natural language. Video makes recording literary and artistic creations in sign language possible, and disseminating them, especially among those whose experience of the world is fundamentally visual, through platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, and other digital media.

The study was conducted at the Francisco Luis Hernández Betancur Educational Institution, located in Medellín, Colombia, during 2021. The research involved a group of eighth-grade students; videos of literary production by alumni of the institution were also collected. Some of the participants had prior experience in literary production, whereas others were only beginning to engage in such processes. The selected students had participated in literary activities with the researcher from the first year of primary school and expressed interest in taking part in the study. The group was selected on the basis of their involvement in literary creation experiences, given that no previous work had been undertaken in this field in Medellín or, more broadly, in Colombia.

A total of 15 students from Grade 8A at the Francisco Luis Hernández Betancur Educational Institution participated in 2021, together with alumni whose literary productions had been published on social media platforms such as YouTube and Facebook. All participants signed informed consent forms. In the case of minors, authorization was obtained from their parents or legal guardians, who permitted the use of the participants' names and literary productions in the study.

Constitutive Actions of the Method

The first step consisted of videographic collection, which involved compiling existing videos of literary production in LSC to identify, review, document, and analyze aesthetic and subjective elements.

The second step involved the development of videographic content analysis forms designed to record the information contained in the footage. For the videographic review, a form was created to compile literary productions in LSC and to organize an information repository for their analysis.

Table 1. Videographic Review Form (inventory-characterization).

Location	Genre – Format	Nº
(Where the material is located)		(Consecutive numbering assigned to the identified material)
Bibliographic Information		
(Full name of the author, title of the material/topic, city, and year of publication)		
		Aesthetic Elements
Interpretative Description of the Content		(Relationships between the aesthetic and the elements that structure the language and enable production, including grammatical, expressive, semantic, and experiential dimensions)
		Subjective Elements
Observations: issues concerning the video or the production of a descriptive nature.		
Elements Identified: grammatical, experiential, semantic, expressive.		
Determine whether the collected productions can be classified as literary. What defines this production as literary?		Researcher's Name:

From this action, a “videographic matrix” was developed, which facilitated the analysis of the objectives proposed in the research. The poetic function proposed by Jakobson (1975), the dramatic and rhetorical functions of Mandoki (2005), and the nine aesthetic components indicated by Sutton-Spence (2021) were taken into account: speed, space and symmetry, same hand configurations, morphism, incorporation of humans, incorporation of non-humans, classifiers, non-manual elements, and multiple perspectives.

Table 2. Atrix for Recording Aesthetic Elements for the Analysis.

Sign – GLOSS	QR Code	Poetic Function (Jakobson)	Dramatic- Rhetorical (Mandoki)	Elementos estéticos (Sutton-Spence)
	Narrative	Literary Figures		

The third step, as the central process of the research, was the implementation of literary creation workshops in LSC. Their objective was to develop a creation exercise in accordance with the interests, abilities, and experiences of each participant. The information recorded in the proposed matrix made fulfilling the purpose set out in the research possible.

Videographic Analysis

To gain a clearer understanding of videographic analysis—here understood as the study of the aesthetic elements of subjectivity in literary productions in LSC—a search was conducted in databases such as Scielo, Redalyc, Dialnet, Google Scholar, and Base Search to identify videographic studies that could serve as references for the fieldwork. The literature reviewed included references to documents, materials, devices, and records of a videographic and audiovisual nature.

A definition is therefore provided below to clarify the methodological procedure. In this study, videographic analysis refers to the process of reflection, discussion, and argumentation based on literary material in sign language recorded in video format, understood as a means of documenting and interpreting research practices.

Through videographic analysis, the central aim of the study was pursued: to understand the relationship between aesthetics and subjectivity in literary productions in LSC. In the search for literary productions in LSC—specifically those created by students and alumni of the Francisco Luis Hernández Betancur Educational Institution—several videos were identified that made examining aesthetic elements of subjectivity possible, drawing on the approaches of Kant (1876), Jakobson (1975), Mandoki (2001), and Sutton-Spence (2021).

Table 3. *Collection: Videographic Literary Production in LSC.*

Title	Author	Genre	Location
Especial del Caballo (Horse special)	Sebastián Arenas	Narrative	YouTube https://youtu.be/pa4clfsKazk .
Vaquero es sordo (The cowboy is deaf)	Sebastián Arenas	Narrative	YouTube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dYQq-g_4byoQ

Title	Author	Genre	Location
Yo vs. Moscas (Me vs flies)	Sebastián Arenas	Narrative	YouTube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Z7a0_Jkz-4c .
Oruga-mariposa (Caterpillar-butterfly)	Sebastián Arenas	Visual Vernacular	YouTube https://youtu.be/sHRgm34Zs4M
Las palpitaciones del corazón (The heart's palpitations)	Sebastián Arenas	Visual Vernacular	YouTube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C_w9s93yySU
Vaquero con caballo (Cowboy with horse)	Geraldine Vélez	Visual Vernacular	YouTube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=meBedB-DEmGI
El balón de fútbol y el fútbol (The soccer ball and soccer)	Eduar David Peña Berrío	Visual Vernacular	Facebook https://www.facebook.com/SebazoArenasS.LSC/videos/10220050703715590

The literary production videos collected were created on the initiative of alumni and students of the Francisco Luis Hernández Betancur Educational Institution in Medellín. These videos were personally shared with the researcher and are hosted on YouTube or Facebook.

Other literary productions analyzed were those obtained in the literary creation workshops in LSC:

Table 4. *Literary Production Carried out in the Fieldwork.*

Author	Topic	Nature	Link
Chelmy	Dog	Narrative	https://youtu.be/E_GgQVTV2iU
Claudia	Fish	Narrative	https://youtu.be/eE7dcAy3EQw
Erica	Rabbits	Narrative	https://youtu.be/hNdvYSzKOVQ
Valeria	Valeria Narrative	Narrative	https://youtu.be/Fw_letO2yCg

Eduar 1	Athlete	Visual Vernacular	https://youtu.be/LAZwxmTmTkA
Eduar 2	War	Visual Vernacular	https://youtu.be/c7-3x7TyjrY
Eduar 3	Dinosaur	Visual Vernacular	https://youtu.be/RQIm-M4JJoY

Videographic analysis was conducted on both the collected videos and those recorded during the fieldwork and were uploaded to the YouTube channel “Clarita En-Seña.” These videos were examined in detail, and the relevant scenes illustrating the aspects and elements selected for analysis were identified. Specifically, the analysis focused on: the modes of presentation of intensity and form in the parameters of LSC to identify the precise moment at which the aesthetic sign is configured; the literary resources and figures highlighted for analysis; scenes of anthropomorphism examined in relation to the aesthetic sign; and the elements of subjectivity present in literary productions in LSC.

Results

Aesthetics in literary productions in LSC highlights bodily experience and appeals to the senses, which awakens sensitivity and captivates the audience. According to Sutton-Spence (2021), “[...] aesthetic language appeals to the senses and, through the Deaf artist, seeks to create an experience for the audience, rather than simply asserting something or providing information” (p. 56). For this author, aesthetics refers to the ways in which signers can produce, in sign language, forms that generate emotions in the audience.

These imagined and created productions are literary in nature, as they are imbued with ingenuity through visual expressions. This is possible thanks to grammatical resources that enable poetic expression as a special use of language, together with other expressive elements (such as the pictorial, the erotic, religious traditions, or testimonial events) based on visual and sensory codes. Such codes are expressed through the signer’s gestures and body, which convey sensations, ideas, and emotions.

Sutton-Spence (2021) proposes certain aesthetic elements present in literary productions in signs. These elements are:

Speed. The rhythms and movements with which signs are produced are resources used to generate emotions in the audience. In aesthetic language, speed can be manipulated to produce “cinematic” effects, such as slow motion or fast motion. Artists can recreate scenes with prolonged and slow movements to increase emotions in viewers; such movements are often applied in the

incorporations performed by the narrator and through the use of classifiers (Hodge & Ferrara, 2022). In the video *Me vs. Flies* (Sebastián Arenas, Figure 1), the acceleration of movements reinforces the comic tone of the narrative; while in *Athlete* (Eduar, Figure 2), slowness at certain moments emphasizes the competition and denotes the effort to reach the finish line.

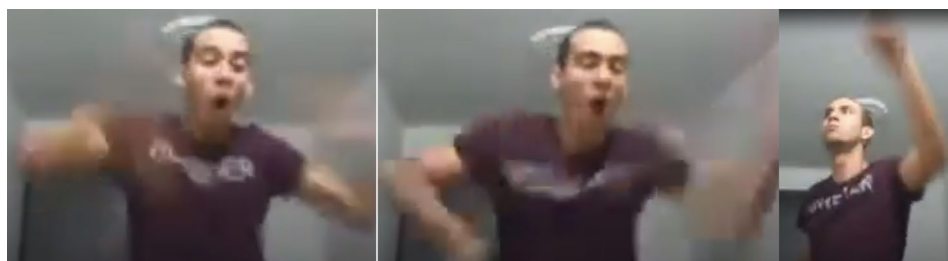


Figure 1. *Me vs Flies*.

Source: Arenas, 2019.



Figure 2. *Athlete*.

Source: Clarita En-Seña, 2021a.

Space and Symmetry. Symmetry is a way of creating aesthetic effects through a sense of balance. Both hands are used simultaneously with the same handshape. These signs can be placed in different locations, thereby creating additional meanings (Sutton-Spence & Pedroni, 2023). This visually pleasing symmetry produces aesthetic impact by expressing harmony, beauty, and perfection (Quadros & Sutton-Spence, 2006). This resource can be observed in

Cowboy with Horse (Geraldine Vélez, Figure 3), where the symmetrical use of both hands lends force to the scene of the rider.



Figure 3. *Cowboy with Horse*.

Source: Clarita En-Seña, 2022d.

Same Handshapes: Aesthetic and Metaphorical. The use of repeated handshapes in signs creates a kind of visual “rhyme.” From an aesthetic point of view, the repetition of the same handshape is much more pleasing to the eye (Beukeleers & Vermeerbergen, 2022). In *Fish* (Claudia, Figure 4), the reiteration of the handshape conveys visual rhythm and reinforces the sense of continuous movement in the water.



Figure 4. *Fish*.

Source: Clarita En-Seña, 2021d.

Morphing: Changing Handshape. The movement of some signs can merge with that of others. A sign with a certain handshape in one location can adopt a new movement or a new location and acquire a different meaning (Sutton-Spence, 2021; Capirci *et al.*, 2022). The final handshape, location, and

movement of the preceding sign are maintained as the initial parameters of the following sign. It is an aesthetic resource that creates a poetic, smooth, and elegant effect (Quadros & Sutton-Spence, 2006). This can be clearly seen in *Rabbits* (Erica, Figure 5), where the handshape of the initial sign, “walk,” gradually transforms to “sad” and then to “indignation,” visually representing the rabbit’s state.

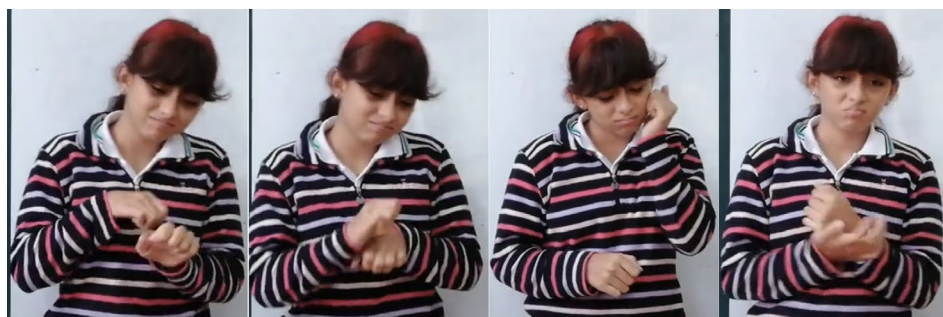


Figure 5. *Rabbits.*

Source: Clarita En-Seña 2022c.

Showing Humans (through incorporation). This consists of the imitation of human beings. This resource is aesthetically effective when the character is caricatured through the exaggeration of physical features or movements (Vandenitte, 2022). In *The Cowboy is deaf* (Sebastián Arenas, Figure 6), the narrator intensifies gestures and postures to highlight the main character and evoke humor and empathy.



Figure 6. *The Cowboy is Deaf.*

Source: Arenas, 2014b.

Showing Animals, Plants, and Inanimate Objects. The aesthetic imitation of human beings extends to the imitation of non-human beings, whether animals, plants, or inanimate objects. The important literary resource of anthropomorphism is used, in which the signer portrays the non-human character as if it were human. This occurs in *Dog* (Chelmy, Figure 7), where the animal is presented with humanized expressions and behaviors, and in *The Soccer Ball and Soccer* (Eduar David Peña, Figure 8), where the object comes to life by moving as the protagonist of the narrative.



Figure 7. *Dog.*

Source: Clarita En-Seña, 2021c.



Figure 8. *The Soccer Ball and Soccer.*

Source: Arenas, 2021.

Classifiers (and new classifiers). Hand configurations are selected from a conventional set within the sign language and are positioned and moved through space to show how characters and objects move and interact with one another. Effective storytelling in sign language typically makes use of classifiers to create

an engaging text. Classifiers render the meaning of what is narrated clearer and more accessible. Descriptive classifiers, in particular, serve a highly detailed function: they allow for the description of sounds, sizes, textures, flavors, tactile sensations, smells, and shapes, and, more generally, of inanimate objects and animate beings. An example appears in *Caterpillar-butterfly* (Sebastián Arenas, Figure 9), where the author uses a new classifier to depict the butterfly's body upon waking. He represents this new classifier through the forearm and fist, while also using movements of the body, head, and facial features to indicate the animal's actions, thereby generating a different form in the representation of metamorphosis.

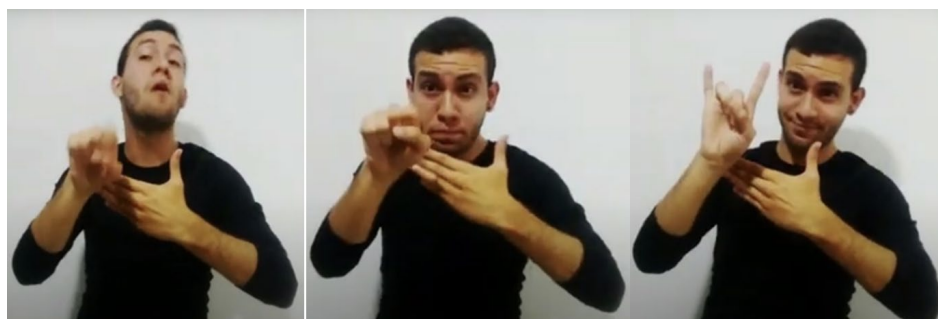


Figure 9. *Caterpillar-butterfly*.

Source: Francisco Luis En-Seña, 2021.

Non-manual Elements. Non-manual elements are very important, especially when the aim is to increase aesthetic impact. In aesthetic signing, fewer mouthing patterns derived from oralization often appear, partly due to a greater presence of highly iconic structures. The more visual the piece is and the fewer signs with formal vocabulary it contains, the fewer mouthing patterns derived from spoken language are observed. In *The Heart's Palpitations* (Sebastián Arenas, Figure 10), facial expressions intensify the emotion of the story, conveying visceral sensations to the viewer.



Figure 10. *The Heart's Palpitations..*

Source: Clarita En-Seña, 2022e.

Multiple Perspectives. Aesthetic signing often shares characteristics with cinematic techniques, including the presentation of different perspectives. There are two types: the signer may produce signs that represent two points of view of the same character (for example, alternating between a close-up shot and a long shot of the character), or may present the perspective of two different characters, such as that of the observer and the observed, through the use of divided space. This can be seen in *War* (Eduar 2, Figure 11), where the narrator alternates between the perspective of the combatant and that of the enemy to convey tension and drama.



Figure 11. *War.*

Source: Clarita En-Seña, 2022b.

Sutton-Spence (2021) states that these aesthetic elements generate emotion in viewers. However, this paper considers such elements to be part of the grammatical aspects of sign language, although they may acquire aesthetic value depending on how they are used. They are readily identifiable in narratives and, when taken into account, they facilitate the interpretation of a literary text, inviting the reader to perceive and to use the parameters, resources, and literary figures involved in storytelling consciously and effectively.

In light of the above, this study proposes exploring the aesthetic sign in the narratives that make up its corpus, which leads to aesthetics, understood here as a form of visual captivation that awakens sensitivity and emotion in recipients.

The aesthetic sign, then, transforms the way in which the linguistic sign is presented through modifications of intensification and form, components that allow the emergence of the aesthetic sign, together with elements that make the poetic function possible (Jakobson, 1975). This modification of the linguistic sign does not affect its content; rather, it adds an emotional charge through features of substitution and personification proper to the aesthetic sign. According to López (1982), “human representations and ideas are substituted through their personification, that is, through the embodiment of representations of human ideas in certain concrete objects and beings” (p. 60).

Within the parameters of sign language, modifications are produced in the intensity and form of signs, making discourse more striking and appealing. These variations in intensity may be exaggerated or excessive, and they are manifested through the use of literary and aesthetic figures, resources, and elements. Among them are classifiers, descriptions of places, prosopographies of animals and people, personification, and anthropomorphism, all of which produce sensitivity and emotion in recipients as a result of literary work.

In literary productions, resources can be identified that modify both the message and the way in which the narrator represents their world. These modifications mark the transition from the linguistic sign to the aesthetic sign. Through the force and intensity applied to parameters such as handshape, non-manual features, movement, location, and orientation (Quadros & Karnopp, 2007), the sign is modified and configured as an aesthetic sign. As indicated, this corresponds to a transformation of the sign through expansion and intensification, generating an intended effect in communicative interaction, whether humor, surprise, or horror, ranging from the tragic to the comic, and from the sublime to the horrible and monstrous.

In both the literary works collected and those created in the workshops, identifying aesthetic elements that emerge through the transition from the linguistic sign to the aesthetic sign that modifies it is possible. The intensification of the sign is what enables this transition, expressed through modifications that

alter the form of the structured sign. Intensification refers to changes in tension and in the movements of body parts, as well as to certain one-handed signs that are produced with both hands to achieve the intended intensity (Xavier, 2017). Characters may be enlarged, dramatized, or exaggerated to create powerful images in narratives; the narrator may amplify and dramatize character descriptions to heighten the audience's emotions (Sutton-Spence, 2021). In *Dinosaur* (Eduar 3), the exaggeration of gestures and size intensifies the visual effect and generates astonishment in recipients (Clarita En-Seña, 2022a).

The modifications that express intensity are presented in those parameters of sign language where attention is focused, showing the moment when the change from the linguistic sign to the aesthetic sign occurs. The modes of presentation of intensity in each parameter of sign language, as they appear in fragments of the corpus of literary productions in LSC, are specified below:

- **Handshape:** Intensity is achieved through greater amplitude, changes in handshape, and the use of both hands in signs that are initially one-handed, to express what is intended. In *Athlete* (Eduar 1), the transition from one hand to two highlights the character's physical strength (Clarita En-Seña, 2021a).
- **Movement:** Movements may be performed quickly or slowly, with more marked beginnings and endings, depending on what is intended to be expressed.
 - Repetition: The movement or the sign is repeated to emphasize something.
 - Addition or increase of trajectory: Movements broader than normal are performed.
 - Delayed release: The release at the beginning of the movement is delayed, thereby prolonging the duration of the sign. In *Me vs. Flies*, the accelerated repetition of movements underscores the humorous nature of the piece (Arenas, 2019).
- **Location:** Precision in the point of articulation of the sign is highly important for meaning, and intensity is marked through gaze. Effective use of location delimits the space of the characters' world; it "allows one to know where in signing space the articulating hand is located and, in cases where some part of the body is touched, which section of the

touching hand is closest to that place” (Oviedo, 2001, p. 109). In *Valeria Narrative*, differentiated spatial location helps identify each character and their relationships (Clarita En-Seña, 2021b).

- **Non-manual Features:** Facial gestures, gaze, mouth movements, tongue, eyebrows, and the position of the head and body stand out. The use of non-manual elements is key to achieving exaggeration. Facial expression, the opening and closing of the eyes and mouth, together with bodily movements, generate powerful visual images and intense emotions when emphasized (Sutton-Spence, 2021). “Basic features, related to possibilities of movement of the head and facial muscles, as well as some bodily postures articulated significantly, which together with the activity of the hands constitute the signs” (Oviedo, 2001, pp. 113-114). This is evidenced in *The Heart’s Palpitations*, where facial gestures intensify the dramatic quality of the story (Clarita En-Seña, 2022e).
- **Orientation:** This parameter acquires great intensity that attracts attention and causes emotion in viewers by increasing the impact of the visual image. “It accounts for the relative position of the articulating hand in space” (Oviedo, 2001, p. 109). In *War*, the marked orientation of the hands reinforces the confrontation between sides, increasing narrative tension (Clarita En-Seña, 2022b).

Discussion

The resources of sign language, literary figures, aesthetic elements, and discursive forms expand the possibilities of expression. This allows the linguistic sign to become an aesthetic sign, one that draws the gaze and evokes emotion and sensitivity in viewers by virtue of the parameters specific to sign language. This is precisely how the present study approaches the description and analysis of certain aspects of the narratives that make them aesthetically compelling.

Drawing on Deleuze (1995) and with regard to the ways in which art gives rise to thought about ways of life—in this case, the literary creation of narratives from an aesthetic perspective, through which life is reflected upon and participation in the world takes place—subjectivity is understood as the capacity to constitute oneself as an individual through language, within the scope of what the subject can do in interacting with and interpreting reality, as reflected in the

narratives they produce. Accordingly, the narrator's subjectivity is understood as being in a constant process of constitution.

LSC possesses a beauty that enables both subjective experience (that is, experiential and meaning-related experience) and aesthetic experience, understood as ways of perceiving the world and making meaning within it (Farina, 2005), as well as the sensitive captivation of things (Mandoki, 2001). In this sense, literary productions in LSC reveal elements of the narrators' subjectivity: their ways of presenting themselves, relating to others, and bringing together their attitudes, emotions, sensations, feelings, and thoughts. Literary creation is, for example, an artistic manifestation of subjectivity, insofar as it reveals how people represent reality, the mechanisms they use to represent the reality in which they live, and how they understand and express it. These findings reinforce the socio-anthropological approach (INSOR, 2006), which recognizes sign language as a legitimate language and as a fundamental means of cultural expression, in contrast to the clinical-therapeutic paradigm that sought to "normalize" the Deaf person through the imposition of oral language. From this perspective, "the Deaf community is distinguished by the absence of hearing, as well as primarily by its visual culture and identity, constructed around sign language and shared experiences" (Silva *et al.*, 2025, p. 6).

The relationship between aesthetics and subjectivity approaches aesthetics from contemplation, the poetic, the everyday, the sensitive, and the relational, thereby allowing LSC to engage in that artistic exercise through the act of literary creation. Subjectivity is linked to aesthetics through the sensitivity inherent in culture, which nourishes and permeates language through experience with others, with the world, and with oneself. In interaction with other people, language is inhabited, and vocabulary, forms, and styles of expression imbued with aesthetic elements are acquired, producing sensitive effects that are exposed to life (Mandoki, 2005).

Narrators express imagined and created stories in accordance with their knowledge and understandings of matters related to their lived experiences, as well as the values and dynamics specific to the communities to which they belong. In this case, reference is made to the transmission of ideas and messages in LSC laden with aesthetic elements, which are configured according to the viewer's interest in practice, allowing, according to Silva *et al.* (2025), "to tell their own stories, share their lived experiences, and see themselves represented in the cultural and artistic sphere" (p. 11). Viewers receive this information and perceive and interpret it according to their emotions. This is what the present study refers to as the "aesthetics of subjectivity": The way in which the narrator expresses and generates emotions in the audience through their manner of being, based on their experience and understandings in interaction with others. From a

pedagogical perspective, this recognition is fundamental, since it makes including literary productions in LSC as teaching material possible, thereby fostering the creativity and aesthetic development of Deaf students in school contexts.

Understanding the aesthetics of subjectivity in literary productions in LSC through these created and expressed forms makes acquiring new elements that enrich expression possible, rendering discourse aesthetically more elaborate. At the same time, this contributes to an ongoing constitution of subjectivity, nourished by experience as an openness to reality, which generates a transformation of the self and of one's presence in the world in relation to others. All this takes place within a specific field of action and through a capacity for interaction mediated by intentionality and negotiation in thinking, feeling, and willing.

As learning is acquired, the recognition of sign language becomes evident. Through this language, those who require it for communication are made visible, and, therefore, so too are their educational processes and their own creations. The presentation of created narratives is the result of the experience of people's becoming, of the fact of existing and being in relation with other beings in nature, both human and non-human. In this sense, work with literary productions in LSC in the educational sphere fosters the cultural appreciation of the Deaf community, as well as the consolidation of an inclusive pedagogical practice that integrates literature, identity, and aesthetics.

Participants naturally invent, imagine, and create narratives spontaneously. This makes observing characteristics inherent to their becoming in the world possible, a world permeated by culture and identity. The aesthetics surrounding LSC constitutes a fabric that produces sense and meaning and enables understanding through visual experience. According to Farina (2006), one speaks of aesthetics when experience refers to an order of ideas and to a specific sensible order that configures forms of subjectivity and is related to what inhabits each person through their experiences and beliefs.

Conclusions

Those who produce literature in sign language seek to express and reflect sensations, feelings, and emotions, as well as to craft messages that engage others. They also represent the world they inhabit: How they live in it, how they experience it, what it means to be in the place they live, and what they learn through signs. When a narrative in sign language is viewed, audiences are transported to those imaginary worlds and experience sensations, tears, laughter, expression, and feeling; a sense of motivation, displacement, and sensitivity emerges that forms

part of the aesthetics of the narrator's subjectivity. This is the result of their lived experiences, of what they think, feel, and desire, and of what enables them to captivate, move, and evoke sensations in viewers.

The resources, figures, and modes that express intensity and form in literary productions, together with the parameters of LSC, enable the configuration of the aesthetic sign. This sign is closely linked to the narrator's subjectivity, including the narrator's identity, experiences, and lived realities. Such elements make the literary creation that renders the narrative compelling and produces emotion in the audience possible. Literary productions in LSC are imbued with the participants' ways of being; aesthetics is the reflection of the narrator's subjectivity. In this sense, literature in LSC also constitutes a pedagogical resource that strengthens language teaching, fosters aesthetic sensitivity, and contributes to the construction of Deaf students' identities. Recognition of the value of LSC is essential to consolidating pedagogical practices that are more inclusive, equitable, and responsive to cultural and linguistic diversity. Literature in LSC is a pedagogical tool that offers a rich and diverse range of discursive genres, thereby playing an important role in linguistic and cultural development.

This study proposes the videographic method for research on literature in sign language. This method makes recording, collecting, identifying, and analyzing data and information on a topic of interest (in this case, the aesthetic construction of literary productions in Colombian Sign Language) possible, yielding results that reveal aspects of reality that must be considered and addressed. Likewise, the videographic method makes detecting weaknesses that may be addressed through improvement-oriented actions possible. It thus constitutes a contribution to research on sign language because of its visual nature and its consideration of handshape, non-manual features, location, orientation, and movement. In the educational sphere, this method is presented as a didactic tool that facilitates the analysis of narratives in LSC and opens possibilities for their incorporation into classroom practices.

Further study on aesthetics, subjectivity, and literature in LSC from a literary perspective is recommended to continue examining their components. This would allow for greater precision, clarity, and knowledge regarding literary productions in LSC, always from the internal perspective of the language. At the same time, these advances should be translated into pedagogical strategies that integrate literature in LSC into school education, so that the Deaf community may have access to materials and educational experiences that recognize their language and culture.

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Microfinance and Women: Bibliometric Analysis and Trends Using the ARIMA Model*

[English Version]

Microfinanzas y mujeres: análisis bibliográfico y tendencias con la utilización del Modelo Arima

Microfinanças e mulheres: análise bibliográfica e tendências com o uso do modelo ARIMA

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Abstract

Objective: To conduct a bibliometric analysis and trend review of research on microfinance and women. **Methodology:** The autoregressive integrated moving average (ARIMA) model was used due to its capacity to model and forecast time series data. Publication data from the Scopus database for the period 2010-2023 were analyzed to strengthen the study. **Results:** The findings allowed the identification of patterns, seasonality, and changes that revealed trends and potential research lines on the topic.

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Conclusions: Overall, microfinance is considered a positive strategy used by different countries to promote women's empowerment.

Key words: Microfinance; empowerment; women; ARIMA model; SDGs (obtained from the Social Sciences Thesaurus).

Resumen

Objetivo: realizar un análisis bibliográfico y revisión de tendencias sobre las microfinanzas y las mujeres. **Metodología:** se utilizó el modelo autorregresivo integrado de medias móviles —ARIMA—, debido a su capacidad para modelar y predecir series temporales. Se cotejaron los datos de publicaciones de la base de datos Scopus entre los años 2010 y 2023 para enriquecer la investigación. **Resultados:** los resultados permitieron identificar patrones, estacionalidades y cambios que generaron tendencias y posibles líneas de investigación en el tema. **Conclusiones:** en general, se consideran las microfinanzas como una estrategia positiva utilizada por diferentes países para el empoderamiento de las mujeres.

Palabras clave: Microfinanzas; empoderamiento; mujeres; Modelo ARIMA; ODS (obtenidos del tesauro de Ciencias Sociales).

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Resumo

Objetivo: realizar uma análise bibliográfica e revisão de tendências sobre microfinanças e mulheres. **Metodologia:** utilizou-se o modelo autorregressivo integrado de médias móveis — ARIMA — devido à sua capacidade de modelar e prever séries temporais. Os dados de publicações da base de dados Scopus entre os anos de 2010 e 2023 foram comparados para enriquecer a pesquisa. **Resultados:** os resultados permitiram identificar padrões, sazonalidades e mudanças que geraram tendências e possíveis linhas de pesquisa sobre o tema. **Conclusões:** de modo geral, as microfinanças são consideradas uma estratégia positiva utilizada por diferentes países para o empoderamento das mulheres.

Palavras chaves: Microfinanças; empoderamento; mulheres; Modelo ARIMA; ODS (obtidas do Tesauro de Ciências Sociais).

Introduction

Microfinance is associated with small loans and other financial services provided to population groups underserved by traditional banking systems. These initiatives are generally implemented through government programs established in partnership with institutions specialized in the field. In recent years, microfinance has gained increasing relevance due to the impact that empowerment approaches have had on women's decision-making processes and on personal, social (Pareek *et al.*, 2019), psychological (Samant *et al.*, 2019), and economic dimensions (Shohel *et al.*, 2021). Consequently, microfinance is considered both a poverty reduction and comprehensive development strategy grounded in a gender perspective (Al-shami *et al.*, 2021), and a mechanism that facilitates access to savings and credit services for individuals excluded from the traditional financial system because they are unable to meet formal requirements (Khan & Ansari, 2018).

As a mechanism for women's empowerment, microfinance directly contributes to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 1, associated with poverty reduction, and Sustainable Development Goal 5, related to gender equality (Wondimu *et al.*, 2023; Olohunlana *et al.*, 2022). From the perspective of poverty reduction, microfinance functions as a support strategy that helps reduce gender-based violence while increasing women's decision-making capacity within the household (Kapiga *et al.*, 2019). These initiatives are often complemented by support or self-help groups in which individuals join together to obtain credit while collectively sharing debt and risk through cooperation and solidarity in the development of economic and productive activities led by women entrepreneurs. Another related aspect involves the design of economic empowerment strategies aimed at vulnerable women, as well as their articulation with broader development and health policies (Tolmay *et al.*, 2022; Macrimmon *et al.*, 2018).

Additionally, several studies suggest that microfinance contributes to higher levels of income generation and participation among women, families, and microenterprises through savings practices, access to credit, and training programs aimed at strengthening entrepreneurial skills (García *et al.*, 2024; Hewa-Wellalage & Thrikawala, 2021).

Despite these contributions, the literature also reveals limitations in the implementation of such programs, operational contradictions, and insufficient evidence regarding their contextualized impacts, particularly in Latin America and the Caribbean.

This article presents a bibliometric analysis and review of trends related to microfinance and its relationship with different dimensions of women's agency, a thematic area that still requires further examination. Likewise, the study identifies

research gaps and emerging categories that may contribute to future research agendas.

The article is organized into several sections. The first presents the methodology used in the study, with particular emphasis on the ARIMA model (Autoregressive Integrated Moving Average Model). The second section focuses on the results derived from the application of the model. The third discusses the patterns and trends identified through the literature review. The fourth presents the main findings obtained from the Scopus analysis conducted to strengthen the study. Finally, the fifth section outlines the main conclusions, as well as potential directions for future research and the limitations identified in the development of this type of study.

Methodology

The methodology employed in this study was the Autoregressive Integrated Moving Average (ARIMA) model. This approach facilitates the analysis of sequential data, seasonality, behavioral changes, and the identification of patterns in the literature related to the topic, since it is widely used for modeling and forecasting time-series data (Box *et al.*, 2015). According to Pindyck and Rubinfeld (2014), this method provides representative insights into changes and the relative importance of research topics over time. Likewise, Box *et al.* (2015) argue that the usefulness of the ARIMA model in this context lies in its capacity to identify long-term trends, detect significant shifts in academic attention, and indicate potential directions for future research.

For this study, the general expression of the ARIMA model is presented as follows:

$$Y_t = C + AR(p) * Y_{t-1} + MA(q) * \varepsilon_{t-q} + \varepsilon_t$$

Where:

- Y_t is the variable of interest at time period t .
- C is the constant term or intercept of the model.
- $AR(p)$ represents the autoregressive terms of order p , which capture the relationship between past values of the time series and the current value.
- Y_{t-1} is the value of the variable in the previous time period.

- $MA(q)$ represents the moving average terms of order q , which capture the relationship between past forecast errors and the current value.
- ε_{t-q} is the forecast error in time period $t-q$, where q is the order of the moving average term.
- ε_t is the forecast error at time period t .

The previous equation represents the structure of an ARIMA model, in which each coefficient establishes the degree of relationship between variables and error terms. The model was subjected to the Dickey-Fuller Test, also known as the Unit Root Test, in order to determine the stationarity of the data over a specific period. According to Dickey and Fuller (1979), this test is frequently used in economics, finance, and social science research. The null hypothesis assumes that a time series contains a unit root and is therefore non-stationary, whereas the alternative hypothesis assumes that the series is stationary. Based on these assumptions, the test compares the calculated t-statistic with the critical values of the Dickey-Fuller distribution (Dickey & Fuller, 1979) to determine whether the null hypothesis can be rejected.

Likewise, Dickey and Fuller (1979) argue that the test is highly useful for detecting unit roots in economic time series, thereby helping to identify the possible trends and seasonal patterns. The test has been widely applied in economic and financial research because of its effectiveness in identifying non-stationarity in financial and economic data. In addition, it has been used in a variety of contexts and thematic areas, including stock price forecasting and trend analysis in macroeconomic data. Similarly, Kwiatkowski *et al.* (1992) recognize the Dickey-Fuller test as a useful tool for identifying the seasonality and stationarity in time-series data, thus providing a solid basis for modeling and forecasting.

To conduct the analysis and review of trends concerning “microfinance and women,” publication data from the Scopus database covering the period 2010-2023 were analyzed according to two main criteria: (I) the broad coverage of this database regarding the topic and its extensive collection of journals in the fields of social sciences, development studies, and women’s studies; and (II) the global consolidation of microfinance as a programmatic strategy following the 2006 Nobel Peace Prize awarded to Muhammad Yunus, founder of the Grameen Bank, for this contribution to poverty reduction (World Bank, 2015). Most publications on the subject have been concentrated since 2010, considering the timeframes associated with editorial and indexing processes.

This study considers the constructs of “women’s empowerment” and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), although these variables are not directly

measured within the econometric model. Instead, they are used as thematic categories in the bibliometric analysis. Therefore, the purpose of the study is not to operationalize empowerment or the SDGs, but rather to analyze the temporal behavior of scientific production related to microfinance and women. The search equation used in the study is presented below (see Table 1).

Table 1. *Search Equation.*

Search date	02-21-2024
Search period	2010-2023
Journal type	All journal types
Search fields	Title
Search terms	("microfinance" OR "microcredit" OR "micro-loans*") and ("women" OR "gender")
Results	659

Results of the Application of the ARIMA Model

The model reveals a strong dependence for future publications on previously observed data. This indicates that the model adequately captures the behavior of the time series, as shown in Table 2:

Table 2. *Application of the ARIMA Model.*

Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error	t-Statistic	Probability
Constant	0.074413	0.039473	1.885164	0.0888
AR(1)	0.932435	0.164091	5.682440	0.0002
MA(1)	- 0.000316	0.371624	- 0.228137	0.8241
SIGMASQ	0.000316	0.000165	1.912733	0.0848
R^2	0.6721145	Mean dependet var		0.071429
Adjusted R^2	0.573788	S.D. depedente var		0.032209
S.E. of regression	0.021028	Akaike info criterion		-4.516831

Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error	t-Statistic	Probability
Sum squared residuals	0.004422	Schwarz Criterion		-4.334243
Log Likelihood	35.61781	Hannan-Quinn criter.		-4.533732
F-statistic	6.833755			
Probability (F-statistic)	0.008738	Durbin-Watson Stat.		2.068481

Based on the coefficients obtained from the ARIMA model, the resulting equation is as follows

$$Y_t = 0.074413 + 0.932435 * Y_{t-1} + \varepsilon_t$$

This equation corresponds to first-order autoregressive ARIMA model, ARIMA (1,0,0), due to the inclusion of the AR(1) term and the absence of differencing and moving average components.

After estimating the model, the following results were obtained:

Constant (Intercept). This coefficient represents the expected value of the time series when the remaining variables are equal to zero. According to the results, the constant has a value of 0.074413. This suggests a positive baseline trend in the annual number of publications on microfinance and women is 0.074413 per year during the analyzed period.

AR (1). This coefficient represents the relationship between the current value of the series and its previous value. The estimated coefficient of 0.932435 indicates a strong temporal dependence, suggesting that the annual number of publications on microfinance and women is highly influenced by publications from the previous year. Specifically, the coefficient indicates that approximately 93.2% of the variability in the analyzed publications can be explained by the previous period. This finding suggests a persistent growth pattern and a stable trend in scientific production related to the topic.

MA (1). This coefficient captures the relationship between the current value of the series and previous forecast errors. Since the estimated coefficient is close to zero and its associated probability is high, the moving average component does not appear to be statistically significant.

SIGMASQ (Error Variance). This coefficient represents the variance of the error term in the time series. A relatively large variance may suggest that the model does not fully account for all fluctuations in the data.

Regarding the additional statistics, the adjusted R-squared value that the model explains approximately 67.21% of the variability in the data. Likewise, the

F-statistic and its associated probability indicate that the model is statistically significant overall.

In this sense, the results obtained from the ARIMA regression suggest that the model is suitable for analyzing the publication time series on microfinance and women (Hyndman & Athanasopoulos, 2018). The strong dependence of future publications on previous publications indicates that the model adequately captures the dynamics of the series. Furthermore, the interpretation of the coefficients suggests the continuity of research lines related to microfinance and women, based on the following considerations:

Significant temporal dependence. The significant AR(1) coefficient (0.932435) indicates a strong dependence of future publications on microfinance and women on the behavior of previous publications. This suggests the existence of a persistent pattern throughout the study period, meaning that the topic remains relevant and continues to attract academic interest.

Relevance of the topic. The dependence on previous publications suggests that the topic continues to be important within the academic community. Consequently, the probability of continued scholarly attention increases due to its social and economic relevance.

Statistically significant model. The model is statistically significant overall, as indicated by the F-statistic and its associated probability. This suggests that the model contributes meaningfully to understanding and forecasting publications trends related to microfinance and women.

Additional data required. Although the MA(1) coefficient is not statistically significant, other aspects of the model, such as temporal dependence and thematic relevance, support the continuity of research related to microfinance and women. Nevertheless, it is important to consider additional variables and external factors beyond the model itself to support more comprehensive interpretations.

According to the results obtained from the ARIMA model, continued research on microfinance and women appears justified.

To determine the stationarity of the data series, the Dickey-Fuller Test (Unit Root Test) was applied to ARIMA Model structure. The following hypotheses were considered:

H_1 : The time series is stationary if the t-statistic is greater than the calculated value.

H_2 : The time series contains a unit root and is therefore non-stationary if the t-statistic is less than the calculated value.

The data presented in Table 3 are as follows:

Table 3. *Dickey-Fuller Test (Unit Root Test).*

Dickey-Fuller test statistic argument	t-Statistic	Probability
	-5.28267435	
1 % level	-4.12198994	0.001615
5 % level	-3.14491970235241	
10 % level	-2.713750993686372	

As previously mentioned, the Dickey-Fuller test determines whether a time series is stationary or not. The null hypothesis assumes the presence of a unit root, meaning that the series is non-stationary. The test compares the calculated t-statistic with the critical values to determine whether the null hypothesis should be rejected.

In this case, the obtained t-statistic value is -5.28267435 and its associated probability is 0.001615. This indicates that the t-statistic is lower than all the critical values at the 1%, 5%, and 10% significance levels. Therefore, the null hypothesis of a unit root can be rejected, indicating the time series is stationary.

In summary, the results of the Dickey-Fuller test suggest that the observed relationships may reflected seasonal or short-term dynamics rather than exclusively long-term structural trends. This implies that the ARIMA model may have limitations in predicting long-term changes or identifying external factors that could influence publications trends (Hyndman & Athanasopoulos, 2018). Therefore, although the ARIMA model is useful for short-term forecasting based on historical data, it is important to consider exogenous factors that may affect the validity of long-term predictions. In this context, such factors may include:

- **Government decisions:** Changes in public policies related to Sustainable Development Goal 5, “Gender Equality: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls” (United Nations, 2015), which may influence support program programs and women-oriented entrepreneurship initiatives.
- **Economic events:** Fluctuations in interest rates and changes in financial markets that may affect microfinance systems and related research agendas.

- **Social and cultural developments:** Awareness campaigns, changes in social norms, and feminist movements that may increase academic interest in gender-related issues.
- **Technological advances:** The implementation of new technologies in both the financial sector and in information dissemination processes.

These factors may influence researchers' interest in the topic of microfinance and women. It is difficult to predict whether the impact would be positive or negative; thereby affecting number of publications in this field.

Regarding the dependent variable, after applying the first difference to publications series on microfinance and women, the series became stationary and free from autocorrelation. This is important because ARIMA models require stationary time series to produce more reliable forecast, as illustrated in Figure 1.

Date: 03/05/24 Time: 13:25
Sample (adjusted): 2 14
Included observations: 13 after adjustments

Autocorrelation				Partial correlation				AC	PAC	Q-Stat	Prob
		1	-0.344	-0.344	1.9230	0.166					
		2	-0.107	-0.255	2.1248	0.346					
		3	0.075	-0.071	2.2354	0.525					
		4	0.061	0.048	2.3153	0.678					
		5	0.011	0.085	2.3182	0.804					
		6	-0.140	-0.096	2.8608	0.826					
		7	-0.210	-0.373	4.2935	0.745					
		8	0.037	-0.365	4.3458	0.825					
		9	0.270	0.104	7.8899	0.545					
		10	-0.335	-0.157	15.203	0.125					
		11	0.156	0.107	17.590	0.092					
		12	0.026	0.003	17.721	0.124					

Figure 1. Additional Supporting Evidence.

In this sense, the absence of significant autocorrelations in the differenced time series suggest that the fitted ARIMA model adequately captures the structure of the series and that the residuals behave randomly, without systematic patterns. Consequently, the model can be considered appropriate for forecasting publication trends related to microfinance and women.

Discussion in Terms of Patterns and Trends in the Literature Review

The existence of seasonality and trends in the time series of publications on microfinance and women reveals several recurring themes and research patterns within this field during the analyzed period.

Microfinance, women, and social empowerment. Multidimensional perspectives and personal factors related to psychological structures and social leadership capacity have been widely examined (Huis *et al.*, 2017; Samant *et al.*, 2019; Baskaran *et al.*, 2022). Social empowerment implies that women participate not only in the power structures of civil society organizations, but also as active agents in decision-making processes associated with the development of economic and social activities within their communities. Women must be recognized and able to exercise influence—not merely in their roles as wives or mothers, but as individuals entitled to equal rights, conditions, and opportunities. This continues to represent a challenge for institutions that, in some cases, remain restrictive or exclusionary (Maître, 2021).

Microfinance, women, and self-help groups. From the perspective of microfinance, support or self-help groups refer to associations formed by several individuals with the purpose of obtaining loans collectively. Debt and financial risk are shared among participants, enabling cooperation in the development of economic and productive activities. In rural India, these groups are often recognized as mutual aid societies; in Kenya, as community-based insurance schemes; and in Colombia, as solidarity circles. Self-help groups are also expressed through different cooperative structures, which have become important mechanisms for promoting microfinance and women's empowerment (Knight *et al.*, 2019; Alzate & Alzate, 2023). This research trend has addressed issues related to political participation, autonomy, trust, respect, education, economic benefits, collective action, and improvements in physical and mental health practices (Kumar, 2020; Walia *et al.*, 2020; Bott *et al.*, 2022). These dimensions are considered essential for strengthening egalitarian and democratic societies (Mohamed & Elgammal, 2022).

Microfinance, women, and economic empowerment. This dimension refers to household management and the administration of microenterprises or family businesses initiated through microfinance programs. In this regard, particular attention has been given to indicators related to access to economic resources (Shohel *et al.*, 2021). Economic empowerment provides women with greater autonomy, practical capacity, and influence over their personal lives, households, organizations, and communities. Consequently, it facilitates the development of leadership skills and decision-making capacity (Al-shami *et al.*, 2021).

Microfinance, women, and power relations. Through this dimension of empowerment, the effectiveness of microfinance programs has been assessed using variables associated with the programs themselves. Particular attention has been paid to initiatives led by women serving on the boards of civil society organizations (Fall *et al.*, 2021; Garikipati *et al.*, 2017). At the same time, the literature highlights situations of subordination in which women feel pressured by the need to maintain good reputations and satisfactory repayment records within lending programs (Tchakoute, 2023).

Microfinance: impact assessment of women's empowerment initiatives. Considering microfinance as an effective strategy for promoting women's development across multiple dimensions, the stationarity identified in the time series also reveals a growing body of studies focused on evaluating the effectiveness of microfinance programs. Several publications, including books and case-study compilations, document testimonies that validate the positive transformations experienced by individuals, families, and communities benefiting from these initiatives. However, despite the expectations surrounding such programs, the outcomes are not always entirely favorable. The literature also documents limitations, contradictions, and cases in which the expected impacts have not been fully achieved (Al-shami *et al.*, 2021; Huis *et al.*, 2019).

Scopus Analysis

Consistent with the results obtained from the ARIMA model, the analyzed time period reveals a growing interest in the topic within the scientific community, where several noteworthy patterns emerge. The number of publications increased from 11 documents in 2010 to 88 documents in 2023. The most significant growth in scientific production on microfinance and women occurred during the last four years of the analyzed period, as shown in Figure 2. Publications increased from 53 articles in 2019 to 88 articles in 2023, with annual growth rates of 39.47%, 32.08%, 33.33%, and 10%, respectively. These findings are consistent with the observations reported by Wondimu *et al.* (2023) and Pervin *et al.* (2023).

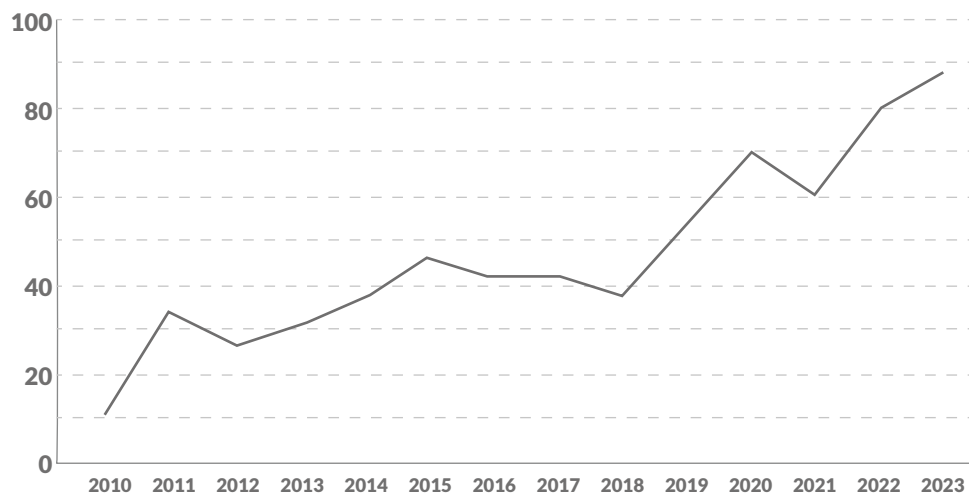


Figure 2. Annual Publication Trends on Microfinance and Women, 2010–2023.

Regarding scientific production by country, India leads global research output on the topic, accounting for 23.37% of total publications, followed by the United States with 19.42%, the United Kingdom with 14.11%, China with 7.59%, Malaysia with 6.53%, Nigeria with 5.31%, Australia with 5.01%, Canada with 4.1%, Pakistan with 3.95%, France with 3.49%, and South Africa with 3.49%. Regarding Latin America, only Mexico was identified with 1.37% and Colombia with 0.61%. The remaining countries collectively accounted for 1.67% of total production. These results demonstrate that women's inclusion through microfinance programs has become an increasingly relevant global research trend, encompassing both developing and highly developed countries (Gyapong *et al.*, 2021).

The ten most relevant journals on the topic are *Journal of Development Studies* (seven publications, Q1), *AIDS and Behavior* (four publications, Q1), *Development in Practice* (four publications, Q2), *Journal of Advanced Research in Dynamical and Control Systems* (four publications, Q4), *Enterprise Development and Microfinance* (four publications, Q4), *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* (four publications, Q1), *Annals of Public and Cooperative Economics* (three publications, Q2), *Gender in Management* (three publications, Q1), *Global Public Health* (three publications, Q1), and *International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Small Business* (three publications, Q3). Although the primary selection criteria were the number of publications and journal quartile rankings, additional indicators such as citation count (H-index) and journal prestige measured through the SCImago Journal Rank (SJR) were also considered.

All these journals are published in English, are highly indexed, and are committed to disseminating knowledge in the social sciences, particularly in areas related to development, health, and gender issues. The articles published in these journals are characterized by empirical approaches and by the adoption of progressive theoretical perspectives. It is noteworthy that journals from developing countries —especially from Latin America— were not represented within this group. This finding highlights not only the predominance of English-language publications, but also the tendency of researchers to prioritize prestigious journals from developed countries, despite the fact that microfinance programs are more commonly associated with developing countries and progressive public policies.

When analyzing the academic community with the highest number of publications on microfinance and women, the selection criterion included authors with between five and ten Scopus-indexed publications on the topic, under the assumption that publishing at least five documents demonstrates a solid research trajectory and expertise in the field. The leading authors identified were Nurulizwa Abdul Rashid and Chamhuri Bin Siwar, each with ten publications. They were followed by Ferdoushi Ahmed, Izaidin Bin Abdul Majid, and Nadine Shaanta Murshid, each with eight publications. Next were Nabila El-Bassel and Nor Aini Hj Idris, with seven publications each, followed by Susan S. Witte with six Scopus-indexed documents. Finally, eight authors were identified with five publications each: Michael Adusei, Samer Ali AL-shami, Tara McCrimmon, Gaukhar Mergenova, Md Aslam Mia, Sholpan Primbetova, Assel Terlikbayeva, and Charlotte Watts. The remaining authors among the 649 analyzed had between one and four publications.

A common characteristic among these authors is their predominantly positive approach toward women's empowerment through microfinance programs, examined from family, community, economic, and social perspectives. Several studies associate empowerment processes with women's leadership capacity. In line with the findings related to journals, no Latin American authors meeting the established publication threshold were identified within this group. Although researchers from the region are working on the topic, their academic trajectory in this field remains relatively limited.

Finally, it is important to note that, in addition to the terms “microfinance” and “women,” the most frequently used keywords were “economic empowerment,” “financial inclusion,” and “rural development.” Overall, the findings obtained from Scopus confirm a consistent pattern over time: the sustained relevance of the topic and the continuing interest of the international academic community.

Conclusions

The literature reviewed suggests that microfinance constitutes an important tool in the global effort to promote gender equality. These programs address not only economic issues affecting women and their families but also contribute to fostering greater levels of economic and financial development. As women increase their participation in microfinance initiatives, significant changes in their social conditions and decision-making capacities become evident.

Access to financial services provides women with opportunities to achieve greater economic autonomy, thereby strengthening their roles within both the family and the community. This empowerment is reflected in their capacity to make financial decisions and improve their well-being in a responsible and sustainable manner.

Despite these positive contributions, more comprehensive interventions are still required to ensure that such programs generate impacts within safer and more supportive environments, while also promoting women's empowerment across economic, family, and social dimensions.

Furthermore, according to the results obtained effectiveness strategies from the ARIMA model, continued research on microfinance and women appears justified. This is supported by the persistent publication pattern observed throughout the study period and by the strong dependence on previous publications identified in the time-series analysis. In other words, the topic continues to attract growing attention within the scientific community, particularly in developed countries. Consequently, it is likely that researchers will continue exploring this field because of its social relevance and academic significance.

In addition, the findings of this study contribute to understanding the evolution of academic discussions surrounding microfinance and women by combining bibliometric analysis with time-series analysis through the ARIMA model. The application of this methodological approach makes it possible to identify patterns and potential future research directions on the topic. In this regard, the results highlight the importance of continuing to investigate the relationship between financial inclusion and women's empowerment through contextualized and comparative approaches, particularly in regions where academic production remains limited. Strengthening empirical evidence under these conditions may contribute to the design of more effective public policies and financial programs aimed at promoting gender equality and sustainable development.

Possible Topics for Future Research

The results of the time-series analysis reveal emerging lines of inquiry within this field, highlighting the potential for future studies on microfinance and women, particularly in relation to women's empowerment. Such studies could provide valuable empirical evidence to support the design of more effective policies and programs aimed at promoting financial inclusion and women's empowerment worldwide. The following research topics are suggested:

Effectiveness of microfinance initiatives from a gender perspective.

Future studies could examine how women's financial experiences and needs shape the field of microfinance, as well as the effects of designing more inclusive and equitable financial policies, as suggested by Aktaruzzaman and Farooq (2023) and Cruz *et al.* (2022). Similarly, research could analyze the effectiveness of microfinance initiatives specifically targeted at women and their relationship with economic empowerment, considering variables such as business creation, access to financial services, and increases in household income (Adusei *et al.*, 2017; Dhungana *et al.*, 2023).

Gender gap in access to financial services. Given that unequal access to financial services remains one of the main challenges affecting the operation of microfinance programs, future research could analyze the barriers women face in accessing financial services and how these limitations reduce their participation in economic activities. Likewise, studies could evaluate the effectiveness of strategies designed to overcome such barriers (Hewa-Wellalage & Thrikawala, 2021; Shohel *et al.*, 2023).

Impact of public microfinance policies on women's empowerment.

Further research could assess the impact of public policies aimed at promoting women's economic empowerment, including financial education programs, support initiatives for women entrepreneurs, and tax incentives for financial institutions that provide services to women, among other measures (Uzma *et al.*, 2018).

Gender perspectives in the design of financial products. Another relevant line of inquiry involves comparing the financial needs and preferences of women and men in order to identify differences that may contribute to the design of more inclusive and gender-sensitive financial products (Rodríguez-Salgado & de Farias-Aires, 2018; Gupta & Gupta, 2014).

Comparative analyses of microfinance and women's programs across local, regional, national, or international contexts. Comparative studies at local, regional, national, and international levels could examine the socio-economic impact of microfinance programs to identify best practices applicable across different contexts with similar characteristics. Such analyses could be

conducted using indicators associated with Sustainable Development Goals 1, 5, and 8.

Analysis involving self-help groups in low-income countries. Future research could also focus on self-help groups in low-income countries and their contribution to women's development within their communities. These groups often generate positive effects on economic and productive development while helping to address family, community, and social problems. In many cases, they provide urgent assistance for essential needs, thereby preventing community members from resorting to illegal or informal lending systems (Samant *et al.*, 2019).

Finally, it is important to acknowledge several factors that may hinder the achievement of research objectives in this field: (I) limited access to detailed and comprehensive information regarding microfinance program experiences, particularly in countries with less developed financial information systems; (II) difficulties in ensuring women's participation as research subjects due to cultural constraints and contextual factors; (III) family responsibilities and women's limited access to education and better employment opportunities across different contexts; (IV) challenges associated with evaluating the long-term impact of microfinance and women's empowerment programs because of the lack of monitoring processes and changing economic and political environments; and (V) the presence of sampling bias in some studies, especially when samples are restricted to women already participating in microfinance programs, which may limit the generalizability of the findings.

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Telling History from Women's Standpoints: A Proposal for Teaching Philosophy through a Gender Perspective *

[English version]

Contar las historias desde las mujeres: apuesta para
enseñar la filosofía con perspectiva de género

Contar as histórias a partir das mulheres: Uma aposta
para ensinar filosofia com perspectiva de gênero

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Abstract

Objective: This article seeks to demonstrate the need to recover the contributions of women philosophers in secondary and upper-secondary education. **Methodology:** The article begins with a review of studies that have examined the extent to which the work of women philosophers has been included at these levels and, in addition, reviews curricular plans in the department of Caldas, as well as the textbooks most commonly used to teach philosophy. **Results:** The findings are conclusive: philosophy education in the department of Caldas does not include women, nor does it promote reflection on gender equity, despite the fact that this is established as a general objective in educational legislation in various countries, including Colombia. **Conclusions:** The article argues for the need to include women philosophers in secondary and upper-secondary education to provide students with a broader view of the history of thought. It further contends that teaching philosophy with a gender perspective helps close gaps and foster a profound change in the way we educate ourselves to inhabit the world. Ultimately, the proposed educational modality will contribute to correcting the unjust structures produced by an education and a history that ignore the contribution of half of humanity.

Keywords: Women; philosophy; education; gender equity; philosophy teaching (obtained from the UNESCO Thesaurus).

Resumen

Objetivo: el propósito con este artículo es mostrar la necesidad de recuperar los aportes de las mujeres filósofas en la educación secundaria y media vocacional. **Metodología:** se parte de una revisión de estudios que han indagado qué tanto se ha incluido el trabajo de las mujeres filósofas en estos niveles, y, además, se realiza una revisión de planes curriculares en el departamento de Caldas, así como de los libros de texto más usados para la enseñanza de la filosofía. **Resultados:** los resultados son concluyentes: en la formación en filosofía en el departamento de Caldas no se incluye a las mujeres y tampoco se hacen reflexiones frente a la equidad de género que se presenta como un objetivo general en las legislaciones en educación de distintos países, incluido Colombia. **Conclusiones:** se sostiene la necesidad de incluir a las mujeres filósofas en la enseñanza secundaria y media para proporcionar al estudiantado una visión más amplia de la

historia del pensamiento. Además, se defiende que enseñar la filosofía con perspectiva de género contribuye al cierre de brechas y a un cambio profundo en la manera como nos educamos para estar en el mundo. En últimas, a corregir las estructuras injustas en las que nos ha instalado una educación y una historia que desconoce el aporte de la mitad de la humanidad.

Palabras clave: Mujeres; filosofía; educación; equidad de género; enseñanza de la filosofía (obtenidos del tesoro de la UNESCO).

Resumo

Objetivo: o propósito deste artigo é mostrar a necessidade de recuperar as contribuições das mulheres filósofas no ensino secundário e médio vocacional. **Metodologia:** parte-se de uma revisão de estudos que investigaram quanto tem sido incluído o trabalho das mulheres filósofas nesses níveis, e, além disso, realiza-se uma revisão dos planos curriculares no departamento de Caldas, assim como dos livros de texto mais usados para o ensino da filosofia. **Resultados:** os resultados são contundentes: na formação em filosofia não se incluem as mulheres e tampouco se fazem reflexões sobre a equidade de gênero que se apresenta como um objetivo geral nas legislações educacionais de diferentes países, incluindo a Colômbia. **Conclusões:** sustenta-se a necessidade de incluir as mulheres filósofas no ensino secundário e médio para proporcionar aos estudantes uma visão mais ampla da história do pensamento. Além disso, defende-se que ensinar filosofia com perspectiva de gênero contribui para o fechamento de lacunas e para uma mudança profunda na maneira como nos educamos para estar no mundo. Por fim, visa corrigir as estruturas injustas nas quais nos instalou uma educação e uma história que desconhece a contribuição de metade da humanidade.

Palavras chaves: Mulheres; filosofia; educação; equidade de gênero; ensino de filosofia (obtidos do tesoro da UNESCO).

Introduction

The uncomfortable question from which this reflection begins is whether those who teach philosophy include women philosophers in their curricula. In the 21st century, one of the major concerns surrounding philosophical education is the gender-based epistemic injustice (Fricker, 2017) sustained for centuries. The absence of women both from the teaching of the history of philosophy and from the treatment of philosophical problems has become a matter of pressing concern. Research on the contributions women have made to philosophy throughout history, and on the neglect of those contributions in educational curricula, can be traced across different continents, showing that this is an issue of global urgency.

Various studies have documented the exclusion of women from the philosophical canon and the resulting gender gap in curricula.

When the inclusion of women in philosophical curricula is examined, the outlook is discouraging. Rodríguez and Roldán (2015), in Spain, analyzed the presence of women teachers at different educational levels and the presence of women philosophers in textbooks. Their findings show that, although women teachers hold 57% of positions in upper-secondary education and vocational training, this representation is not reflected in textbooks, where female authorship accounts for an average of 12%. In addition, the number of works cited reveals a significant gap: on average, 5,25 of works by women philosophers are recorded, compared with 120,25 by male philosophers. One of the texts cited no women philosophers at all; of the 345 works referenced, only 12 correspond to women philosophers, representing 2.98% of the total.

Alonso (2019) points out that one of the general objectives of secondary education, established in Article 25 of Royal Decree 1105/2014, consists of “fostering equal rights and opportunities between men and women” and, moreover, “critically analyzing and assessing existing inequalities and discrimination.” However, although the guidelines for the subject *History of Philosophy* in the second year of upper-secondary school are consistent with this objective in their introduction, the syllabus does not present a single woman philosopher.

This reveals an educational anachronism that normalizes “stereotypes, ideologies, and prejudices surrounding the idea [of] the exercise of thought” (p. 35). The author proposes a curriculum that complements the contributions of female and male philosophers to make women visible in the history of thought and thereby denaturalize assumptions about women’s intellectual capacities.

Morillo (2020), for her part, argues that, judging by the list of names through which the history of philosophy is configured in textbooks, “[...] anyone may come away with the impression that philosophical knowledge, far from presenting itself as a specifically human capacity and need, is rather a

male privilege” (pp. 36-37). On this basis, she calls into question the meaning and relevance of including women philosophers in philosophical education, highlighting the need to reassess forms of positive discrimination and to develop curricula from a critical perspective, rather than merely replacing one list of male names with another list of female philosophers.

In her thesis *Philosophy as a Subject from a Gender Perspective: A Review of the 2002 and 2020 Study Plans and Programs*, Pinto (2021) examines the application of the PTD model (Female and Male Presence, Transmission of Stereotypes, and the Value Dimension of Female and Male Presence model) in two basic education curricula in Chile developed eighteen years apart. She argues that the concealment of women lies in the absence of women philosophers from curricular content, as well as in language, since the discourse is directed primarily toward a male audience. Not only are women assumed to not engage in philosophy; they are also assumed to not receive a philosophical education. Although the study shows that the gap narrows over time in the use of language, the difference remains significant. In 2002, masculine forms represented 80%, while feminine forms accounted for only 10%, and the remaining 10% corresponded to neutral language. By contrast, in 2020 masculine forms fell to 56%, while feminine forms rose to 20%; however, neutral language exceeded feminine language, accounting for 23% of the total. These changes significantly favor the inclusion of women and the visibility of their contributions.

Concern over the erasure of women from school curricula is not exclusive to philosophy. López (2014) refers to a study of 115 textbooks across all subjects and from three different publishers in which women account for just 12.8%.

All these observations underscore the urgency of addressing the absence of women from the content that guides academic education.

Methodology

With the aim of investigating the inclusion of women in philosophical education in the Department of Caldas, the research project *The Other Canon of Philosophy: Reconstructing the History of Philosophy Produced by Women* was carried out between August 2022 and April 2023. Its purpose was to identify the state of this issue in secondary education. The team analyzed the presence of women in philosophy curricula at institutions across the department, using documents provided by the Caldas Department of Education and by the institutions themselves. It also reviewed the textbooks most commonly used by different teachers. Finally, as an exercise in “gender hermeneutical justice,” a proposal for redress was developed

through the production of a textbook on women philosophers. It addresses the Pythagorean women, Hildegard of Bingen, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, Marie de Gournay, Elisabeth of Bohemia, and Nel Noddings, to mention only a few (Hoyos *et al.*, 2025).

Results

Regarding this review, education in Colombia is governed by the General Education Law (Law 115 of 1994), which, in its second chapter, *Curricula and Study Plan*, enshrines the principle of school autonomy (Art. 76). More specifically, with regard to the *aims of education*, Article 5 of Title 1 states [our translation]:

- Education in respect for life and for other human rights, for peace, democratic principles, coexistence, pluralism, justice, solidarity, and equity, as well as in the exercise of tolerance and freedom.
- Education to facilitate the participation of all persons in the decisions that affect them in the economic, political, administrative, and cultural life of the Nation.

This grants institutions the freedom to prioritize the thematic content of core subjects at each level. This differs from countries such as Spain or Argentina, where such content is defined in advance. However, this autonomy is expected to remain consistent with the aims of education, in this case, justice, equity, and the participation of all persons in all decisions.

Taking this general framework into account, and to fulfill the objective of identifying the presence of women in curricula, these documents were requested from the Caldas Department of Education and from the various institutions by email. Through this exercise, 27 curricula were collected and reviewed according to four analytical categories: content, methodologies and resources, bibliography, and the presence of women. In terms of content, most addressed general themes or problems. Five curricula referred to specific thinkers; however, none of these references included women. In addition, no use of inclusive language was identified that would reflect an interest in the study of both male and female philosophers.

With regard to bibliographic references, only one reference by a woman was found in one of the philosophy curricula. However, APA citation models and other editorial standards do not facilitate the identification of authors' first names,

which could serve as a filter (although not a fully reliable one) for determining whether a publication was written by a man or a woman.

Identifying the names of the people who prepared them was possible in eight philosophy curricula, for a total of 12 names, six of which corresponded to names commonly used by women.

In conclusion, the philosophical education offered in basic schooling in educational institutions in Caldas shows no concern for the contribution women have made to the development of philosophy. Since the teaching of philosophy is commonly divided into history and problems, these curricula could be enriched by incorporating women's contributions.

With regard to the analysis of the textbooks used to teach philosophy in Caldas, even in the Ministry of National Education (MEN) guidelines for upper-secondary education (MEN, 2010), Agnes Heller was found to be the only woman philosopher explicitly mentioned. Although works by Hannah Arendt and Adriana Arpini are cited, their names are not developed in the text; moreover, APA citation standards do not help make them visible. This trend continues in the textbooks most widely used in the region, particularly those published by Santillana, whose most recent version (*Philosophia 10 and 11*) does not include women philosophers or women authors on the editorial team. By contrast, earlier versions (*Pensamiento filosófico 1 and 2*) do record the participation of women authors.

Discussion

Bringing Women Philosophers to Light in the History of Ideas: Recognizing Knowledge for Human Growth

We should not have to concern ourselves with reviewing the presence of women in philosophical education; nevertheless, such a review is justified by the neglect of women's thought. We know that this task is not exclusive to the 21st century, nor did it arise merely as an echo of contemporary feminist movements. In the fourteenth century, Christine de Pizan (2015) had already warned of the need to combat misogynistic positions and to show that women have made many important contributions to humanity. Her work *The Book of the City of Ladies* vindicates the physical, scientific, artistic, literary, philosophical, cultural, and

social work of hundreds of women; in this way, she becomes one of the first thinkers able to demonstrate that women's contributions are neither minor nor insignificant. She compels us to recognize that any body of knowledge that ignores these contributions will be historically incomplete. Along similar lines, Marie de Gournay (2014), in *The Equality of Men and Women*, first published in 1622, presents a catalogue of illustrious women as an argumentative strategy for demonstrating equality between the genders, while also arguing that the nature of God, being perfect, is neither masculine nor feminine.

From the standpoint of the "critical perspective" proposed by Morillo (2020), and as heirs to these philosophers, whom we recognize as the first feminists by conviction, we find that women's absence from philosophical canons of education must be overcome. This is because we need to include names associated with women, and also because we must make visible women's capacity to address issues different from those treated by men, or issues treated by men but approached with visionary perspectives and proposals that allow for revisiting old philosophical problems that now appear as emergent. From this perspective, defending spaces that struggle for the recognition of women in academia is important. For example, philosophers such as Sally Haslanger (2008), Louise Antony (2012), and Arantza Etxeberria Agiriano (2018) point out that one of the reasons for women's lower presence in philosophy has to do with the fact that female students do not see themselves represented in textbooks, curricula, or academic events. Ensuring that women are represented in different areas of study from the early stages of education can therefore help close these gaps.

Failure to recognize women's contributions means that we have explored only one part of history and that the part still awaiting exploration is not merely nominal or quantitative, but also substantial, even though it has been denied to us. Janina Ramírez (2023) explains that one of the motivations behind her work was discovering that in different repositories and archives preserving human thought there is a tendency to disparage, erase, and overlook what is considered to have been produced by women. In the closing lines of *Fémína*, she writes: "This handful of women I have presented are part of a silent majority, and many more voices are waiting to be heard" (p. 359).

Bringing women philosophers to light and highlighting their role in philosophical education does more than broaden and complete the history of thought. Offering this education with a gender perspective contributes to cultural transformation through the pursuit of gender equality, defined by the UN for 2030 as one of the most urgent goals and inseparable from the struggle for social justice, equal opportunity, and participation.

Concerning discourse, within philosophical education with a gender perspective, stressing use of the generic masculine as one of the mechanisms through

which women are concealed in philosophy is important. Pinto's (2021) research addresses this concern and, encouragingly, shows that recognition of women has gradually gained ground in curricula focused on philosophical education. In the same spirit, there has been a decrease in the use of masculine language and the increase in generic or neutral language. One of the major contemporary debates surrounding the recognition of women concerns language use, since the generic masculine that has predominated in Spanish and other languages does not do justice to women's presence. Some people have fully adopted gender-inclusive double forms in their discourse to make explicit reference to both men and women; others, however, have preferred neutral language, arguing that it satisfies the principle of linguistic economy while ensuring the equal inclusion of men and women.

Alonso (2019) showed that in Spain, governmental declarations are neither sufficient nor a guarantee of the educational transformations required. The same can be observed in Caldas: despite regulations oriented toward education for equality, women are commonly absent from philosophy curricula. Even when such curricula are designed to teach history, they wholly erase women's thoughts. Recognizing this gap between what education is normatively expected to be and what is actually offered is not new; however, once such shortcomings are identified, educational practices become easier to correct. Some may think education for gender equality has little to do with the thematic content of disciplinary knowledge. Nevertheless, an education that includes women in its curricula becomes a key ally in achieving gender-aware educational aims and in closing gaps across fields of knowledge, including philosophy.

In this regard, the study conducted by Dougherty *et al.* (2015) deserves special attention. Framed by the question *Why do women leave philosophy?*, it examined the University of Sydney context to determine whether the causes of attrition stemmed from pre-university experiences (primary and secondary education) or from classroom dynamics. The study was carried out with a sample of 123 students enrolled in an introductory philosophy course that included topics in ethics, metaphysics, and aesthetics. Observation was conducted over 13 weeks, and a Likert-scale survey was administered using the statement: "I can imagine becoming a male/female philosopher." The authors found significant differences in the responses to the first survey, suggesting the influence of pre-university factors, and compared these results with those from a final survey administered at the end of the course to determine whether there were differences that might corroborate the influence of classroom dynamics on the ability of men and women to imagine themselves as philosophy professionals. Among the findings, they observed that, after the first class, although two thirds of the students were women, fewer than half intended to specialize

in philosophy. In response to the question of whether they could imagine themselves as male/female philosophers, women tended to assign lower scores; they also stated that they probably would not feel comfortable engaging in philosophical discussions, although the authors did not find that women regarded philosophy as especially useless for achieving their goals. Paradoxically, the authors found no significant differences in the second survey, which would support the idea that pre-university factors probably exert a greater influence on women's persistence in this profession.

It should be understood, then, that the relationship between curricular content and everyday events mediated by culture and society is best conceived as a correlation in which the self is constantly constructed, recognized, and defined in relation to others. Sonia Reverter (2003) puts it this way,

The constructivist potential of the concept of "gender" is enormously significant for feminist philosophy, because it implies that we can introduce changes in epistemological structure, that we can finally rethink how femininity and masculinity are constructed, in short, how the other is constructed and, consequently, the basis of that other's exclusion. For the moment, then, we may say that feminist theory is the theorization of the construction of the "other" (in this case, the "female other") as a dominated subject. (p. 40) [our translation].

Understanding that changes in epistemological structures have effects on the construction of the self allows us for defending the importance of linking the changes expected in social structures to curricular content. In other words, if education is to contribute to the recognition of women in society, women must be recognized in the history and production of the knowledge being taught. This is a practice that can make education from a gender perspective easier; however, most scientific, artistic, literary, and philosophical knowledge seems to have been denied to women, and finding that those who prepare curricula lack the knowledge of female referents to include in their proposals is common. In this regard, the need to modify curricula in higher education has been identified so that new generations may make up for this lack. However, seeking strategies for training those who completed their professional education without learning about women's presence in the development of their disciplines is also necessary, so that they may promptly incorporate them into their content and thus contribute to education from a gender perspective.

One of the most common concerns raised when attempting to provide education with a gender perspective is expressed by Rebeca Caballero Álvarez (2011):

Including a gender perspective through curriculum design is, without doubt, a major challenge for the development of curricula and study programs in institutions of higher education, since it complicates a task that is already complex, because curriculum designers must satisfy—in addition to the demand for the particular knowledge of each profession or discipline—the inclusion of practices and content aimed at eradicating inequity between the sexes in everyday school life (p. 45) [our translation].

When faced with the possibility of including such “practices and content aimed at eradicating inequity between the sexes in everyday school life,” the false threat of sacrificing discipline-specific content quickly appears. However, acquiring the habit of including women’s work within teaching and learning processes is a powerful aid in offering education with a gender perspective.

In short, including women in curricula designed for philosophical education makes a fuller education in philosophy, its history, and its problems possible, as well as contributes to the educational purpose of preparing us to inhabit the world and, in particular, to respond to the demands of justice, equality, and gender equity.

Educating with a Gender Perspective to Build Reality on Principles of Equality

The Italian philosopher Wanda Tomasi (2002), in *Philosophers and Women*, begins from the strange and, at first sight, counterintuitive idea that being is not neutral. With this statement she embarks on a journey through the history of Western philosophy in which she shows how, on the basis of philosophers’ reflections, a world is configured in which women occupy a subordinate place.

The problem Wanda Tomasi (2002) identifies at the root of the canonical philosophical tradition is that, without directly addressing sexual difference, it has taken men as the model of humanity. This has had notable consequences for the way we have organized ourselves socially throughout history and for the role assigned to women within this organization. The first consequence is that women have been considered defective, imperfect, or incapable of performing certain tasks. The second is women’s exclusion from multiple spaces. The third is that the contributions of women thinkers have been virtually erased from history, which reinforces the need to evaluate the inherited canons of thought.

To understand these consequences, reviewing the contributions of philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle, who at times use the word “aner” (male) interchangeably with “Anthropos” when referring to human beings is enough.

It clearly shows that men are taken as the measure of the human. This becomes much clearer, for example, when Aristotle, in Book IV of *Generation of Animals*, states that the woman is a failed male. In this regard, Wanda Tomasi (2002) writes: “[...] when there is weakness in the male and matter is not mastered, animality prevails, that is, the monster emerges, of which woman is the first degree” (p. 55). This idea of woman as a failed male persists throughout the history of philosophy and, therefore, throughout the history of education. It is reflected in gender stereotypes that determine whether women do or do not participate in academic, labor, and political spaces.

With this question in mind, what can we do to correct this androcentric tradition and generate more inclusive and diverse environments of knowledge and social organization? We recognize that from the first half of the twentieth century, consistent and systematic efforts have been made to recover women's contributions to the history of thought, including the four volumes of *A History of Women Philosophers* (Waithe *et al.*, 1987, 1989, 1991, 1995), *Las filósofas. Las mujeres protagonistas en la historia del pensamiento* [*Women Philosophers. Women as Leading Figures in the History of Thought*] (Di Martino and Bruzesse, 2000), *Sabias. La otra cara de la ciencia* [*Wise Women. The Other Side of Science*] (Muñoz, 2017), and *Ellas lo pensaron antes: Filósofas excluidas de la memoria* [*They Thought of it First: Women Philosophers Excluded from Memory*] (Femenías, 2020). These efforts fill the void left by the exclusion of women's thought and bring to the fore questions about the silencing of women in history and its consequences. They offer a different way of viewing the philosophical canon and the problems deemed relevant. As Hutton (2021) and Birulés (2015) argue, this requires evaluating how we have approached the past and memory; it also implies opening pathways so that, from the earliest stages of academic education, students can engage with concerns about the role of women in history and learn to trace the signs of these contributions.

Moreover, as Del Río (2022) proposes, this reconsideration of how the philosophical canon has been conceived constitutes a moral responsibility for those devoted to the profession. In her study of different histories of philosophy in Mexico, and faced with the almost complete absence of women authors, she asks whether this omission constitutes a defect in the quality of those histories or whether it represents an act of injustice for which we would be responsible. To answer this question, she turns to the approaches of Fricker (2010, 2017), Calhoun (1989), and Moody-Adams (1994), concluding that what is included in the canon or in history always implies a degree of responsibility. She argues that efforts to recover the history of women philosophers should incorporate the perspective of ethical critique, oriented toward the concept of “gender epistemic justice.”

This concept may be understood as a positive counterpart to Fricker's (2017) notion of "epistemic injustice," that is, harm done to someone in their capacity as an epistemic subject by virtue of some identity prejudice, for example, being a woman. Such harm appears either as an impairment of credibility (testimonial injustice) or as an impairment of the capacity to make sense of one's experiences (hermeneutical injustice). This type of injustice has implications for the quality of knowledge, but also for the ethical responsibility borne as knowers in the face of practices that perpetuate injustice. By contrast, the pursuit of gender epistemic justice implies recognizing responsibility and taking action to repair the damage produced by unjust behavior (epistemic and moral harms).

In this way, the arguments of Del Río (2022) and Fina Birulés (2015) lead us to consider that the presence of bias in the construction of curricula means that we are being denied access to part of knowledge and that our knowledge is incomplete. However, this problem is more complex, since it implies limitations on our knowledge, and also affects our construction of reality and the assessment of the practices we consider just.

The way that reality is constructed, as well as those that inhabit it, is shaped both by lived experiences and by the structures of knowledge through which education is conducted. At the same time, when education is concerned with preparing individuals to respond to the needs of the world, rather than stuffing their minds with content, then individuals educate and are educated to inhabit the world.

Including women in philosophical education also means engaging concerns that have not formed part of the history or canon of philosophy. For example, in the thought of the Pythagorean women, mathematics was not an area of knowledge isolated from every day and domestic matters. They insisted on harmony not only as a numerical characteristic but also as a virtue to be pursued in human behavior. Theano of Croton maintained that

The world and the human being exist by nature in harmony, and one should be careful not to disturb that harmony. Asceticism and spiritual work are required. A positive effect is attributed above all to mathematics and music, since number plays an important role in these two disciplines (Gleichauf, 2010, p. 10).

The connection between philosophical reflection and the actions proper to life was also reflected in the education offered by this school, which was directed toward care of oneself and of others, expressed in terms of human harmony. This perspective suggests the search for an education aimed at epistemic abstraction, as well as at inhabiting the world. Thus, we may agree that

the interest of Theano's texts (ca. 600 BC) lies in developing what one would currently call a "philosophy of education," a psychology of moral development, and a theory of family obligations and responsibility toward younger generations (Femenías, 2020, p. 33) [our translation].

Although we are dealing with an ancient school from which abstract conceptions have been inherited with lofty universal pretensions and far removed from the sensible and experiential world, this school nevertheless offers a conception of education that remains relevant today and that, if studied carefully, may prove highly useful for understanding and addressing problems now regarded as emergent.

Integrating philosophical education into everyday life constitutes one of the first steps toward understanding that we educate ourselves to inhabit the world. When education is thought of in the ancient Greek world, the idea that a holistic education was offered is quite common: Alongside gymnastics, music, mathematics, and poetry, there was also room for magic and myth. This form of education was due primarily to the fact that the Greek way of inhabiting the world was interwoven with narratives and mythical figures. One example can be found in Pericles' victory speech, in which the first thing he does is acknowledge that the gods were on his side; similarly, other stories from Greek culture recount that, prior to a confrontation, a council of war was held in which much of the attention was devoted to entrusting the coming events to the gods.

Offering philosophical education with a gender perspective entails two highly significant benefits. First, it contributes to the pursuit of gender epistemic justice, which ensures fair representation in the knowledge taught in school settings. Second, it fosters the habit of including and recognizing women in all our lived activities, thereby promoting an education for inhabiting the world that is equitable, inclusive, and reflective of the values of the society we seek to build. Vargas (2016), in *La querella de las mujeres* [*The Debate on Women*], explains that the struggle for the recognition of women both in the intellectual world and in society dates back to the Middle Ages,¹ when women sought to make known their opinions about the false ideas being spread concerning women's thought.

What is at stake for them is crucial: Recognition of their intellectual capacity and their access to education and culture. This form of political participation, putting into circulation thought favorable to the interests of their own sex, is closely tied

1 This paper has already referred to *The Book of the City of Ladies*, a work in which Christine de Pizan (Italy, 1364 – France, 1431) makes a major effort to vindicate the social actions and intellectual contributions of hundreds of women from classical antiquity to her own time.

to the growing interest of women of the time in reading and to the opening of spaces for cultural and political gathering and debate, also sponsored by women. (Vargas, 2016, p. 108) [our translation].

Bringing up these reflections on women in the fifteenth century helps us showing that the struggle for the recognition of women goes back many centuries; it also allows us to trace the education received by medieval women and the aims that guided the didactic principles of the time. The education women received was directed toward preparing them to inhabit the world as wives, mothers, or religious women, and they were never prepared for public functions or government; so much so that training in rhetoric was denied to them. Curricula for women varied according to their social condition and the life projects envisioned for them: “Logically, it is not the same to be the wife of a nobleman as of an artisan; consequently, there are educational differences in terms of content, duration of education, and the persons involved” (Vargas, 2016, p. 269). We realize that educating ourselves to inhabit the world has accompanied the education women have received throughout history. Perhaps, even at the risk of the counterfactual this implies, if women had not been relegated from the public and political spheres and had been allowed more active participation in the decisions that guide society, we would today clearly understand that the ultimate purpose of education is to guide our behavior.

Conceiving education from the perspective of behaviors and actions within society is a position quite close to American pragmatism. As Barrena (2012, p. 2) argues, pragmatist education seeks personal growth, as well as knowledge rooted in everyday life, capable of promoting a deeper understanding of the world and of ourselves. In this sense, pragmatism maintains that educational programs should affect both one’s understanding of the world and one’s lived experience, as well as the constant and unfinished construction of oneself and of reality. Thinking of education as growth of the self entails cultivating reflective thought and recognizing that actions and decisions continue into future experiences.

Growth must proceed in a direction that allows growth to continue and that achieves greater clarity in ideas about the world. Growth, education can never be considered complete and is a clear example of the principle of continuity upheld by pragmatism (Barrena, 2015, p. 69).

From this perspective of understanding education as growth, offering one that actively includes women in its curricular content acquires even greater relevance. By adopting a pragmatist approach, we recognize that the inclusion of women is not only a matter of epistemic justice but also an effective strategy for fostering social growth. By including women in the curriculum, we enrich

the learning experience of our students while at the same time fostering behaviors oriented toward gender equity. Pragmatism insists on the importance of cultivating the habit of valuing the practical consequences of our actions and decisions; it teaches us to cultivate our attitudes while remaining alert to the sensations we expect in our encounter with the world, to prepare our reactions to those sensations, and to put ideas to work within the continuity of experience with the aim of modifying reality (Dewey, 2000, p. 85).

In this way, we can see that thinking about education with a gender perspective in pragmatist terms makes promoting recognition of women in a merely discursive sense possible, and also as an active potential within an education oriented toward action and social change. This, in turn, contributes to the construction of a more just and equitable world for all people, regardless of gender.

Conclusions

Beginning with the question of whether women are included in the teaching of philosophy and the history of philosophy creates the uncomfortable position of the argument *ad antiquitatem*: If they are not there, have never been there, and education has nevertheless functioned, perhaps there is no need to include them. However, a more conscious reflection on the matter leads to asking: What would have happened if women's contributions had been included from the beginning? Would society be the same? Would the same ideas about justice and equality exist? These questions cannot be answered. Nevertheless, the work of recognizing and recovering women's thought has clearly shown that the exclusion of women from certain activities and fields of knowledge has consolidated the configuration of a world in which the idea that the ideal human being is male and that this configuration has been naturalized. In this way, unjust structures that subordinate the feminine have been perpetuated.

As has been shown, the way to correct these structures and attain ideals of equity involves re-educating ourselves to inhabit the world. Recognizing women's contributions to the history of thought and also considering that history from another perspective is vital. As Fina Birulés (2015) affirms, merely recovering the voices that have been silenced or establishing the reasons for that silencing is not enough; rethinking history and the way we have approached it is necessary. We must recognize that not everything important, nor all the problems relevant to a given era, were always recorded in the canon, and that finding answers to some questions that still exist today in the traces left by women philosophers is

possible. Finally, the role that teachers can play in secondary and upper-secondary education is fundamental, since fostering spaces for reflection on these matters and doing so with a gender perspective will make consolidating more conscious and sensitive forms of citizenship possible. This will result in closing gaps, and also in consolidating a necessary social change.

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Decolonial Methodologies: A Commitment to Make the Peasantry Visible as an Epistemic Subject*

[English version]

Metodologías decoloniales: una apuesta para visibilizar el campesinado como sujeto epistémico

Metodologias decoloniais: uma aposta para visibilizar o campesinato como sujeito epistémico

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Abstract

Objective: This paper presents a reflection on the relationship between decolonial methodologies and the peasantry as an epistemic subject, highlighting its transformative potential from a critical perspective of colonialism by questioning the dominant ways against conducting science and proposing alternative methods built from a dialogue of knowledges and communal contemplation. **Methodology:** coloniality from the perspective of authors such as Quijano, Mignolo, and Maldonado-Torres promotes the creation of patterns of subalternization that define who creates and receives knowledge, without space for co-creation. Decolonial methodologies are an alternative to deconstruct the established canons by breaking the observer-observed relationship and promoting scenarios of knowledge agency. **Results:** agroecology as a multidimensional field, and food sovereignty as a political propositions to food production, are commitments within decolonial methodologies that recognize knowledges made invisible or extracted from peasant communities by Westernized hegemonic knowledge. **Conclusions:** This work underscores the need to maintain the development of new decolonial methodologies that recognize the creation of knowledge from below, with social actors, and through listening, not only to their needs, but also to their aspirations for change.

Keywords: colonial; methodology; method; knowledge; peasants (obtained from the UNESCO thesaurus).

Resumen

Objetivo: este artículo presenta una reflexión sobre la relación entre metodologías decoloniales y el campesinado como sujeto epistémico, destacando su potencial transformador desde una perspectiva crítica frente al colonialismo, al cuestionar las formas dominantes de hacer ciencia y proponer métodos alternativos contruidos a partir del diálogo de saberes y el contemplar comunal. **Metodología:** la colonialidad, desde autores como Quijano, Mignolo y Maldonado-Torres promueve la creación de patrones de subalternización que definen quién construye el conocimiento y quién lo recibe, sin espacio a la co-creación. Las metodologías decoloniales son la alternativa para deconstruir los cánones instaurados, al romper la relación observador-observado y al promover escenarios de agenciamiento del conocimiento. **Resultados:** se reconoce la agroecología, como campo multidimensional, y la soberanía alimentaria, como una apuesta política para la producción de alimentos, son apuestas dentro de las metodologías decoloniales, al reconocer los saberes invisibilizados o extraídos en las comunidades campesinas por el conocimiento hegemónico occidentalizado. **Conclusiones:** se destaca

la necesidad de mantener el desarrollo por nuevas metodologías decoloniales que reconozcan la construcción de conocimientos desde abajo, con los actores sociales, y a partir de la escucha; no solo de sus necesidades, sino también de sus apuestas por el cambio.

Palabras clave: colonial; metodología; método; saber; campesinos (obtenidos del tesoro UNESCO).

Resumo

Objetivo: este artigo apresenta- uma reflexão sobre a relação entre metodologias decoloniais e o campesinato como sujeito epistêmico, destacando seu potencial transformador a partir de uma perspectiva crítica frente ao colonialismo, ao questionar as formas dominantes de fazer ciência e propor métodos alternativos construídos com base no diálogo de saberes e no contemplar comunal. **Metodologia:** a colonialidade, a partir de autores como Quijano, Mignolo e Maldonado-Torres, promove a criação de padrões de subalternização que definem quem constrói o conhecimento e quem o recebe, sem espaço para a co-criação. As metodologias decoloniais configuram-se como alternativa para desconstruir os cânones instaurados, ao romper a relação observador-observado e ao promover cenários de agenciamento do conhecimento. **Resultados:** se reconhece a agroecologia, como campo multidimensional, e a soberania alimentar, como uma aposta política para a produção de alimentos, constituem propostas inseridas nas metodologias decoloniais, ao reconhecer os saberes invisibilizados ou extraídos nas comunidades camponesas pelo conhecimento hegemônico ocidentalizado. **Conclusões:** destaca-se a necessidade de fortalecer o desenvolvimento de novas metodologias decoloniais que reconheçam a construção de conhecimentos a partir de baixo, com os atores sociais e a partir da escuta; não apenas de suas necessidades, mas também de suas apostas por mudança.

Palavras-chave: colonial; metodologia; método; saber; camponeses (obtidos do tesoro UNESCO).

Introduction

Neoliberalism around the production of knowledge implies exposing the different forms of coloniality to which the territories of *Abya Yala* and, especially, peasant communities have been subjected. The economic model, as an expansion of modernity and the Cartesian panorama that divides the subject/object, myth/logos, mind/body, nature/culture (Quijano, 2014a), promotes the creation of patterns of hierarchization and subalternization from the coloniality of power, of being, and the knowledge that define who creates and receives knowledge without space for participation or co-creation.

The coloniality of power strengthens the relationships of the institutions that led models of education or research (Quijano, 2014a; Horta-Cmhorta, 2019), such as States, academia, corporations, or publishers, to promote hegemonic knowledge that responds to the logic of cognitive capitalism for the fetishization of science as a commodity. The "coloniality of being" according to Maldonado-Torres (2007) influences the subjectivities of the subjects, their thoughts and emotions, and causes the unconscious adoption of the knowledge produced by traditional science. It entails the separation of Mother Earth from the human and the loss of critical thinking. Finally, the "coloniality of the knowledge" (Mignolo, 2006) —on which this paper focuses— is a way of coercing the scientific/commodity system that reproduces educational models of production and distribution of knowledge that disqualify other forms of knowledge and understanding to explain the world outside of neoliberal logic. It puts into judgment the perception of who is the subject of the episteme or for the episteme.

Therefore, decolonial methodologies are the alternative to deconstructing the canons established by the coloniality of knowledge, by breaking the observer-observed relationship, and promoting knowledge aggregation scenarios with and by communities (Arroyo-Ortega & Alvarado-Alvarado, 2016). They recognize that knowledge is alive, diverse, dynamic, and polymorphic. Knowledge is woven from the relationship with people, territories, and with a great capacity for transformation.

Agroecology, as a multidimensional field that seeks to harmonize agricultural practices with the sustainability of resources (Altieri, 2015), and food sovereignty, as a political commitment of the territories for food production, (López-Galeano & Alvarado-Salgado, 2025) are wagers for decolonial methodologies to recognize the knowledge, reduced, rejected, invisibilized, or extracted from peasant communities by hegemonic knowledge. This demands the need to claim the knowledge produced by peasants, who for years have developed food systems that resist the

guidelines established by agro-capitalist models that associate natural resources and food as commodities.

This paper presents theoretical-reflexive research with a decolonial approach, based on a philosophical-political analysis and supported by authors such as Quijano, Mignolo, Maldonado-Torres, and Corona, among others. It aims to reflect on the relationship between decolonial methodologies and the peasantry as an epistemic subject, highlighting its transformative potential from a critical perspective of colonialism, as a way of producing knowledge that questions the dominant ways of conducting science and proposes alternative methods from the dialogue of the knowledge and communal contemplation, among other non-hegemonic methodological practices in communities such as the peasantry.

Finally, this paper is divided into three sections. The first is concerning key foundations for the commitment to decolonial methodologies. The second covers peasantry addressed as a subject for the construction of knowledge necessary in the development of food sovereignty and agroecology. Finally, decolonial methodologies are reviewed as related to the peasantry for the sustainability of food sovereignty and agroecology.

Fundamentals of Decolonial Methodologies: the Beginning of Transforming Traditional Science

The development in decoloniality emerged in the mid-1990s as a critical response to the management and production of knowledge by colonial power structures, thanks to Latin American thinkers such as Aníbal Quijano and Walter Mignolo, among others. This turn is based on statements inherited from authors such as José Carlos Mariátegui – who addresses power relations and the indigenous situation in Peru and Latin America in the 1920s. José María Arguedas discusses racism and discrimination of the native languages of Peru vis-à-vis languages other than Spanish. Pablo González Casanova and Rodolfo Stavenhagen propose the term "internal colonialism," later taken up by Quijano (2014a).

These approaches develop readings on how modernity, in the capitalist framework, is linked to colonization, highlighting discussions around racism, economic exploitation and extractivism as indivisible elements of the modern world-system to generate a series of "processes and practices of re-humanization of the material and symbolic structures that besiege humanity caused by globalization and construction of identities" (Lara, 2015, p. 26).

Among the commitment of decolonialism in the field of knowledge is the need to rethink the conceptual categories with which the world is understood and the perceptions around the modern research, which tends to decontextualize research processes and reproduce inequality and exclusion between communities (Avalo, 2023). In this sense, the construction of knowledge with and from communities demands setting aside the traditional hierarchies between the researcher and that researched, inherited from the "Eurocentric [...] project, called 'rational' [...] imposed and admitted into the whole of the capitalist world as the only valid rationality and as a symbol of modernity" (Quijano, 2014a, p. 287).

This change is only possible because of the methodological component. The research subject, within the traditional conception, fosters a vertical relationship between researcher and what is studied. It generates a series of limits specifying what is observed and categorizes the object of study that, sometimes, is completely alien to the researcher.

The critique of the European paradigm of rationality/modernity is indispensable, even more, urgent. But it is doubtful if the criticism consists of a simple negation of all its categories; of the dissolution of reality in discourse; of the pure negation of the idea and the perspective of totality in cognition. It is necessary to extricate oneself from all the linkages between rationality/modernity and coloniality, first of all, and definitely from all power which is not constituted by free decisions made by free people. It is the instrumentalization of the reasons for power, of colonial power in the first place, which produced distorted paradigms of knowledge and spoiled the liberating promises of modernity. The alternative, then, is clear: the destruction of the coloniality of world power (Mignolo, 2010, p. 15).

As Enrique Dussel (2001) states, Cartesian epistemological universality makes other rationalities invisible, so a radical critique is required that displaces the modern subject as the exclusive center of knowledge production.

The decolonial turn, as a theoretical-methodological commitment, seeks to create new paths that are closely related to the experience of the researcher or dialogue partner (Spyer & Rocha, 2021). The call involves welcoming and disengaging from categories that traditionally promoted colonialities of knowledge and practice and generated consensus with people or territories so that they can choose their own way of living and be subjects of agency without hegemonic means of coercion, based on their conscience and self-management.

Co-creating a decolonial type of research demands rethinking and restating the meanings that the dominant, Cartesian, and Eurocentric social sciences assign

to categories or concepts. They are usually loaded with semantics that ignore, invisibilize, or subalternize subjects, cultures, knowledge, and phenomena and thereby deny certain realities.¹ The concepts that need to be rethought are the use of the terms “researcher” and “research.” The word “research,” according to Corona (2019) and Ortiz (2022), refers to a series of meanings that address the “research problems and their solutions, which [we] inherit with theoretical concepts” (Corona, 2019, p. 73) routed toward the development of a science that puts objectivity first and seeks to leave the subject aside, with the purpose of making “the subject disappear, so as to not contaminate the environment, or show its particular feeling or understanding” (Corona, 2019, p. 72). Therefore, decolonial methodologies require reconfiguring or transforming the dominant categories inherited from systems that only legitimize the hegemonic knowledge produced by neoliberalism and modernity. This to welcome those categories that best represent the feelings of the communities and recognize the creation of epistemes led by the peasantry.

According to Arroyo-Ortega and Alvarado-Alvarado (2016), the new methodological commitments with a decolonial approach allow the understanding and recognition of realities. They promote agency to transform the forms of oppression and subordination with the subjects, and co-construct paths of alterity to get relevant results

[...] for the communities and contribute, to some extent, within their worlds and far from all imposition, considering that the peoples [...] subalternated by the national society and the political system [...] have every right to collectively decide what is best for them (Mendoza-Zapata, 2022, p. 127).

The decolonial methodologies recognize the epistemic richness built in territories historically subalternized by structures like the State, academia, and other institutions that reproduce colonizing logic established in neoliberalism, development, and modernity. They also claim local knowledge and practices to support a collaborative and co-creation approach that validates community voices. That constitutes an ethical-political commitment aimed at fostering horizontal relationships based on respect and collaboration.

This contrasts with traditional research, in which, according to Ortiz and Arias (2019), the researcher dominates the process and prioritizes an epistemology that favors the subject-object relationship, in which the latter is treated as object, observed, and classified from the outside. Once these foundations have been

1 Differentiating between “episteme” (validated systematic knowledge) and “doxa” (common opinion) is key, as is the difference between “knowledge” (situated forms of understanding the world) and “the knowledge” (structures formalized by academia). These differences strengthen the decolonial discussion.

presented, the peasantry is approached as an epistemic subject that articulates it with rural experiences.

The Peasantry as an Epistemic Subject for the Construction of Food Sovereignty and Agroecology

The "peasantry," as a concept, has been an interest for several disciplines, such as anthropology and economics, which, from their own logic, produce definitions that allow them to understand this category. However, the conceptions that are woven around what being a peasant means are usually reduced to a status as a social or economic group. It is hardly recognized or conceptualized as an epistemic subject that affects the subordinate image with which it is identified and recognized.

The peasantry as a social and economic group within the frameworks of subaltern subjectivation of coloniality —coloniality of power (Quijano, 2014b), coloniality of being (Maldonado-Torres, 2007), and coloniality of the knowledge (Mignolo, 2006), related to capitalism and neoliberalism— has undergone different processes of epistemological extractivism (Grosfoguel, 2016). The reproduction of the notion of the peasantry as a group that is pre-modern, backward, or resistant to change has been the pretext to imposing models of knowledge established by the logic of modernity that establish relationships of subordination in which the peasantry is placed at the base of the production of knowledge as the subject that must receive without request and, therefore, legitimize and validate what receives.

In the case of epistemic extractivism, peasants have been victims of institutions such as the State, academia, and corporations, in this case, the ones that control capitalist food production (McMichael, 2016; Friedman, 2005, 2016), in the sense that they expropriate their knowledge and the knowledge of natural resources, their properties, or farming techniques to then be *fetishized* or *used* by the market as "green capitalism" (Friedmann, 2016). This promotes labels such as "bio," "organic," or "*free*" but hides the voracity of a system designed to encourage consumption and brands, rather than the care or preservation of Mother Earth.

This leads to the fact that, historically, peasant knowledge and epistemes are marginalized by several forms of coloniality that only capitalist and urban-centric knowledge validates. The role in consolidating processes like food sovereignty, which defends the right of peoples to establish their food policies based on indigenous diets, and agroecology, a discipline that promotes ecological techniques

and designs sustainable agricultural systems to optimize resource and energy use, is invisible.

Understanding that food sovereignty is politicized within the territories is necessary. The recognition of peasants as epistemic and political subjects must be necessary; otherwise,

[...] it is left out of the essence of the bodily experience of the world, of the ways in which diet and cuisine structure effective forms of intersubjectivity, the experience and destiny of this sovereignty would be reduced to a strategic conception of the geopolitics of economy and technology (Vargas, 2023, p. 58).

One More Case of Epistemic Extractivism

Food sovereignty is an alternative process for “the self-determination of peoples in the production, distribution, and consumption of food, [which] respects local knowledge and cultural practices” (López-Galeano & Alvarado-Salgado, 2025, p. 10). Its ontological principle is based on the knowledge and techniques developed and maintained through its own territorial strategies, not only by peasants but also by other rural communities, such as indigenous peoples and Afro-descendants (in the Colombian context, Afro-Colombians).

For this reason, recognizing the capacity of the peasantry for epistemic agency is necessary so that, from this way of seeing and perceiving the world and its relationship with food production, new commitments are generated to curb the negative consequences of neoliberal models of food production, which reproduce Westernized forms of knowledge that subordinate peasants, their ways of life, and Mother Earth herself (Dávalos, 2008).

Bearing in mind that, historically, peasant movements in Latin America have shown that food production is not only an economic practice but also a political strategy of resistance and world-building through experiences of self-management, recovery of seeds, and defense of the territory is also important.

Agroecology emerged in the 1980s as a critique of the green revolution, a practice “inappropriate for peasants and that used agrochemical technology with a high environmental impact” (Altieri, 2015, p. 7). Agroecology claims peasant epistemologies and welcomes traditional and scientific knowledge through participatory processes as a way of keeping knowledge alive and located within territories. This is key to rescuing peasant knowledge and increasing the ecological resilience of the territories (Altieri & Nicholls, 2013).

Agroecology, as a peasant epistemological framework (Serra & Simões do Carmo, 2012), seeks to address the environmental crisis, where conventional

disciplines have failed to generate strategies to reverse the damage caused by climate change. For this,

an epistemological opening capable of delving into peasant knowledge is necessary. These authors propose that agroecologists should assume a posture of recognizing that traditional communities contain important knowledge in relation to the agroecosystem, which science until then had not been able to incorporate. (Serra & Simões do Carmo, 2012, p. 713) [authors' translation].

Recognizing that peasants are carriers of knowledge is key. This is essential to strengthening alternative processes compared to how agri-food systems are managed today for food sovereignty and agroecology. This relates to the hegemony of modern scientific knowledge framed in the coloniality of knowledge, and also opens the horizon toward an epistemic plurality that rejects the homogeneous and responds to specific geographical, historical, and cultural conditions. This means valuing other ways of inhabiting, knowing, and relating to the territories and assuming that there is no single legitimate way to produce knowledge.

Intersection between Decolonial Methodologies and the Peasantry: A Path toward Food Sovereignty and Agroecology

Research processes should not refer to knowing and interpreting realities and experiences. They should allow the opening to the agency of the researcher and those who accompany the research path (Haber, 2011). Decolonial methodologies, as an alternative to organizing, rescuing, and reproducing peasant voices, allow prioritizing their knowledge, experiences, and ways of life as valid sources of knowledge. These challenge the hegemonic narratives that have historically made these communities invisible and violent, through processes and disciplines that encourage participation, horizontal dialogue, and the collective construction of knowledge, such as food sovereignty and agroecology.

From the recognition of the vernacular knowledge, "the intention to expand the understanding of the cosmos and its relationship with the corpus and praxis [...] opens the possibility of a more empathetic and reciprocal epistemological perspective" (Hernández-Mazas *et al.*, p. 200). Within the framework of decolonial methodologies, the peasantry is recognized as essential epistemic agents for food production and the conservation of renewable and non-renewable resources. Their knowledge, framed in agroecology and food

sovereignty, is key to recovering soils and biodiversity, restoring ecosystems (Aya-Rojas, 2024), and supporting local communities. Thus, socialization and participation play an important role in fostering ethical principles within the peasantry, which allow the recognition of identity processes associated with solidarity (Acuña-Rodríguez *et al.*, 2022).

The research in the territory of *Abya Yala* is considered by many to be a dehumanizing and colonizing process that has caused harm and pain to Mother Earth and living beings including humans (Ortiz *et al.*, 2018). Therefore, this argument includes the conventional techniques and instruments that have been responsible for reproducing means of the colonization of knowledge and power.

The observation, the survey, the interview, and the multiple techniques that emerge from the sciences with scientific criteria to try to appropriate the knowledge of the other carry the certainty that, well applied, they free us from deceptive appearances. But we know that it is nothing more than a desire, a “metaphysical comfort” [...], the fantasy of seeing, like God, without being observed (Corona, 2019, p. 73).

Decolonial methodologies seek to deconstruct the traditional ways in which research is carried out, including dialogues of the knowledge and communal contemplation, for the generation of knowledge horizontally and from below, with communities. In the case of the *knowledge dialogue*,

[...] it is not just that the knowledge that comes from one discipline can be articulated with the knowledge from another, so generating new fields of knowledge in the university. This is just one aspect to which the assimilation of complex thought would probably lead us and of which there are already certain traces, although still emerging. But the other aspect, the most difficult one, that does not show signs of life, has to do with the possibility that different cultural forms of knowledge can coexist in the same university space. We would say, then, that while the first consequence of the paradigm of complex thinking would be the transdisciplinary flexibilization of knowledge, the second would be the transculturization of knowledge (Castro-Gómez, 2007, p. 87).

The integration of knowledge allows the creation of new fields of knowledge and the possibility of different cultural forms of knowledge emerging so that they coexist and dialogue within the same space. This would mean combining disciplines, as well as recognizing and valuing diverse cultural perspectives, such as non-Western peasant knowledge traditions, as an integral part of university knowledge.

In this way, the dialogue of the multiplural knowledge seeks to break the colonial academic and scientific hierarchies. In this exercise, listening to "the other forms or ways of interpreting existence and having elements to analyze and question the principles and beliefs of one's own culture to open up to a more enriching and encompassing vision of reality" (Gueijman, 2018, p. 214). In this case, with the participation of different actors and the peasant community and with different perspectives, new knowledge can be created and appropriated to help address different problems within a territory. This allows the development of a horizontal dialogue that seeks to decolonize the colonized (Rivas *et al.*, 2020).

This exercise seeks to validate and recognize each word, each semantic sense resulting from the daily experience that develops within the communities, to collectively identify what affects or harms them and to create means that can solve their problems through the generation of community knowledge that responds to their felt and real needs. Keeping in mind that this form of dialogue is generated in spaces of respect to recognize otherness, where all participants have the same role is important.

"Communal contemplation" is defined by Ortiz and Arias (2019) as:

The feeling-listening-living-observing decolonial is a collective listening-perceiving-observing in which the decolonial mediator is not the only one who consults but allows himself to be observed by observing. It is a cooperative contemplation, in which each and every one of the decolonial actors contemplates the other and contemplates itself (p. 157).

"Communal contemplation" responds to the need to break the ways in which knowledge is perceived and constructed today, from a logic that gives priority to the discourses of science and academia and that silences the voices of communities and instrumentalizes their resources, knowledge, and experiences. It also seeks to build knowledge in community, listening to and respecting ways of feeling and perceiving realities. A challenge seeks to break with colonial/Eurocentric/hegemonic approaches that place the researcher as a simple observer, apart and distant from the discourses of the studied communities, and that reproduce mechanisms of subordination. "It is not just the mediator observing everyone, but they are observing the mediator and observing each other. The "researcher" is "investigated." It is not the "researcher" observing, analyzing, and interpreting what "others" do" (Ortiz, 2022, p. 23). Thus, the verticality of traditional

knowledge is transformed toward a horizontal and reciprocal conception, where research processes become scenarios of participation, collaboration, listening, and collective action.

Communal contemplation is articulated with food sovereignty by recognizing that the production and care of food are material processes, as well as collective experiences of knowledge and political action in community.

This methodological approach, through dialogue and contemplation, seeks to overcome the "coloniality of the knowledge," which has privileged Western epistemologies over other forms of knowledge. Decolonial commits to recognizing the alternative and political processes that develop within food sovereignty as a way of resistance (and re-existence) toward the way in which food is produced today within the neoliberal context (López-Galeano & Alvarado-Salgado, 2025). These proposals make visible the knowledge that, for years, peasant communities have promoted, incorporating life practices such as planting and plant care allowing decolonizing hegemonic thinking (Arcia-Grajales *et al.*, 2025), minimizing the damage caused to Mother Earth due to agroneoliberal food production, and developing processes with greater energy efficiency in food systems to reduce the carbon footprint. They also recognize that the choice of food is also a political principle (García, 2019) and promote the consumption of products sown *in situ* and the use of organic supplies made in the territories themselves.

Thus, association processes in which horizontal and organic relationships prevail are important. And so, from the common (identity), collaborative actions are generated for the promotion and development of food sovereignty.

In the case of agroecology, decolonial methodologies, based on the dialogues of knowledge (Sotiru, 2023), promote the generation of knowledge between academia and communities from a perspective that breaks with the observer-observed notion and with the subject-object dichotomy (Moreno & Corral, 2019). This is materialized in the development of spaces that encourage the contemplation and active participation of community members, where memory, orality, and listening become relevant, among other non-hegemonic methodological practices (Rivera, 2012), aimed at the recovery of undervalued epistemes expropriated by traditional science.

Food sovereignty and agroecology, as commitments toward the transformation of neoliberal food systems, are not separate from each other. They promote local food production, protect resources—seeds, water, and soil—and seek social, cultural, and epistemic justice. This convergence denotes a participatory construction in the generation of knowledge, where peasant communities are active protagonists in the creation of knowledge that reflects their realities and needs. To join these perspectives, a holistic vision is strengthened that seeks

to improve food production and distribution, as well as generate principles of self-management in communities, so that, they own their food systems, and a more sustainable and equitable future is guaranteed by understanding that knowledge promotes agency.

Discussion

The discussion of the approaches developed in this paper allow for understanding that decolonial methodologies constitute a critical way to question the coloniality of knowledge and, at the same time, recognize the epistemic role of the peasantry in the construction of food sovereignty and agroecology. The role that dialogue partners take within decolonial methodologies arises from a sentimental positioning, guided by the need to be and share with the other, recognizing it as an alternative and as an actor with capacities for the transformation and change of rural contexts, mainly of neoliberal agri-food systems. This demands the expansion of subjectivities and agency capacities, framed in the processes of food sovereignty and agroecology, to give way to solidarity between peasant communities and Mother Earth. In this way, alternatives are established to the current ways of food production and the relationships that are woven around them, which are subalternized by the modes of coloniality in the Latin American peasant territories.

Likewise, recognizing that the agency processes of peasant communities promote active participation and the development of practices that lead to the care of Mother Earth and criticism toward coloniality, in generating political and social subjects that advocate equality, the defense of life, conscious eating, and freedom is important. These wagers are developed in spaces that encourage communal contemplation and the dialogue of knowledge to deterritorialize conventional and hegemonic practices that invisibilize vernacular knowledge and the proposals of the peasantry as an epistemic subject. In this way, it seeks to deconstruct dominant narratives and discourses, recognizing the importance of horizontal research and experiences as means for the construction of knowledge.

The relationship between several decolonial methodologies and the peasantry as an epistemic subject is articulated from the critique of the coloniality of the knowledge and doing, which extracts the knowledge created by the peasants thanks to their relationship with Mother Earth and with the other in an exercise of otherness. It also creates from the perspective of the implementation of non-hegemonic proposals associated to food production, such as food sovereignty

and agroecology, and from the denunciation of the mechanisms of invalidation that reduce their knowledge to myths, beliefs, or traditions and that thus perpetuate the invisibility of peasant knowledge.

Decolonial methodologies are fundamental to claiming the forms of peasant knowledge, rooted in the dialogue of knowledge and communal contemplation. These are alternates to Westernized epistemologies, where the transformative potential that allows the development of processes such as food sovereignty and agroecology is highlighted, which are enriched thanks to the experiences and knowledge of the peasantry – and other rural agents such as indigenous people and Afro-Colombians. In this way, energy, environmental, economic, and social sustainability are achieved in food production processes, from the care of resources and the promotion of the consumption of food produced *in situ*, the generation of inputs from the handling of organic material, among other living practices in farmers and their communities.

Finally, the need to maintain the development of new decolonial methodologies that recognize the construction of knowledge with social actors, based on listening to their needs and commitment to change, recognizing their capacity for agency, self-management, critical thinking, and transformation is highlighted.

Conclusions

The aim of this paper was to reflect on the relationship between decolonial methodologies and the peasantry as an epistemic subject, highlighting its transformative potential from a critical perspective in the face of colonialism. It was shown that these methodologies, by questioning the vertical relationship between observer and observed, make recognizing the peasantry as a legitimate producer of knowledge and not only as a passive receiver of external knowledge possible. In this sense, the incorporation of decolonial methodologies makes broadening the horizons of knowledge production toward horizontal, participatory and situated practices possible, which strengthens peasant agency and claims its historically subalternized epistemes. This approach democratizes science, and

also opens paths of resistance (and re-existence) in agro-capitalist models. Finally, future research is proposed to delve into concrete experiences of rural communities —peasant, indigenous and Afro-descendant— to continue building comparatively epistemic and methodological alternatives in a decolonial key that strengthens food sovereignty and Good Living in Latin America.

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Sentiment Analysis of Women's Relationships with Territory Through Body Mapping*

[English Version]

Análisis de sentimientos de las mujeres frente al territorio aplicado al mapeo corporal

Análise de sentimentos das mulheres em relação ao território aplicada ao mapeamento corporal

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Abstract

Objective: To study the perceptions and emotions regarding the territory of three groups of rural women of Bosque Modelo Risaralda. **Methodology:** The body-mapping technique was employed to collect qualitative data for a sentiment analysis carried

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out by R software with National Research Council of Canada (NRC) Emotion Lexicon

Results: Women associate their homes with feelings of well-being. They symbolically placed their homes in the heart. The emotions of sadness and fear are mainly placed in the head and feet. These body locations correspond metaphorically to spaces within the home. Environmental conflicts were represented in the hands and stomach. Those body parts generate negative emotions such as sadness and disgust, but, at the same time, awaken positive emotions of trust shown in desires for change and transformation. The women place struggles and strength in the mind and legs. They associated those body parts with confidence, but also with fear and anger. **Conclusions:** Women's vulnerability in intimate and public places is evident. Additionally, the socio-environmental conflicts of their territories becomes coded in their bodies.

Keywords: sentiment analysis; body mapping; body; territory; emotions (obtained from UNESCO and ERIC thesauri).

Resumen

Objetivo: estudiar las percepciones y emociones frente al territorio de tres grupos de mujeres rurales del Bosque Modelo Risaralda. **Metodología:** se hizo uso de la técnica de mapeo corporal para la recopilación de información cualitativa a la cual se le realizó un análisis de sentimientos en el software R, con ayuda del lexicon del Instituto Nacional de Investigación Consejo de Canadá (NRC). **Resultados:** entre los principales hallazgos se identificó que las mujeres encuentran alegría en sus hogares, ubicándolos simbólicamente en el corazón. Las emociones de tristeza y miedo se ubican principalmente en la cabeza y pies, asociados a partes específicas de la casa. Los conflictos medioambientales los representan en diversas partes del cuerpo como manos y vientre, que generan emociones negativas como tristeza y disgusto, pero, a su vez, despiertan emociones positivas de confianza que se reflejan en deseos de cambio y transformación. Las luchas y la fuerza la ubican en la mente y en las piernas, asociadas a la confianza, pero también al miedo y enojo. **Conclusiones:** se evidencia la vulnerabilidad de las mujeres en espacios íntimos y públicos, así como la codificación de los conflictos socioambientales de sus territorios en sus cuerpos.

Palabras clave: análisis de sentimientos; mapeo corporal; cuerpo; territorio; emociones (obtenidos de los tesauros UNESCO y ERIC).

Resumo

Objetivo: estudar as percepções e emoções em relação ao território de três grupos de mulheres rurais do Bosque Modelo Risaralda. **Metodologia:** utilizou-se a técnica de mapeamento corporal para a coleta de informação qualitativa, à qual se aplicou uma análise de sentimentos no software R, com o auxílio do léxico do National Research Council do Canadá (NRC). **Resultados:** entre os principais achados, identificou-se que as mulheres encontram alegria em seus lares, situando-os simbolicamente no coração. As emoções de tristeza e medo localizam-se principalmente na cabeça e nos pés, associadas a partes específicas da casa. Os conflitos socioambientais são representados em diferentes partes do corpo, como mãos e ventre, gerando emoções negativas como tristeza e desgosto, mas, ao mesmo tempo, despertam emoções positivas de confiança que se refletem em desejos de mudança e transformação. As lutas e a força são situadas na mente e nas pernas, associadas à confiança, mas também ao medo e à raiva. **Conclusões:** evidencia-se a vulnerabilidade das mulheres em espaços íntimos e públicos, assim como a codificação dos conflitos socioambientais de seus territórios em seus corpos.

Palavras chaves: análise de sentimentos; mapeamento corporal; corpo; território; emoções (obtidos dos tesouros UNESCO e ERIC).

Introduction

This paper results from the “Tángara Multicolor” female leadership program within the framework of the “RESTAURacción” project, funded by the government of Canada and executed by the Universidad Tecnológica de Pereira, Colombia. The results of the analysis of sentiments and emotions of three groups of rural women from Bosque Modelo Risaralda regarding their territories are presented in a body mapping.

The research draws on feminist geography frameworks that explore the relationship between space and gender and reveal how spatial divisions are shaped by dominant power relations (Zubillaga & Lan, 2024).

Body mapping involves full-scale body maps using artistic media such as drawings or paintings to represent aspects of participants' lived experience, bodies, and territory (Gastaldo *et al.*, 2012).

One of the first records of body mapping is found in research conducted in Jamaica to evaluate the perception of sexuality in women (MacCormack & Draper, 1987), and their knowledge of reproduction and non-indigenous contraceptive methods (Cornwall, 1992). Thus, the best-known research on the origin of body maps as a research tool applied to the sensitization of the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) in women, emerged in South Africa (MacGregor & Mills, 2011; Wienand, 2006).

The use of body maps in research has moved to health for its potential to obtain in-depth information from people. It becomes a qualitative research tool for the lived experience of each participant.

Silva *et al.* (2013) used body maps as a biographical tool, while Rivas-Quarneti *et al.* (2020) used body maps for occupational and gender analysis. Chaves (2015) applied this technique to explore the relationships between the territory and students' rights, and Gastaldo *et al.* (2012) used it as a methodology to tell stories of workers in an irregular situation. The roots of body maps lie in art, therapy and the recognition of the body as the first territory in which stories are told.

From this approach, Lan and Rocha (2020) and Zubillaga and Lan (2024) used body mapping to place the fear caused by violence in the female body and the oppressions that they go through, a result of adjustment policies in Argentina. The Critical Geography Collective of Ecuador (2018) states that this tool made it possible to observe how different expressions of violence functioned in an indigenous commune in Ecuador. Domestic violence to conflicts over land were reflected in the bodies of women. It impacted collective life and the shared territory.

Visual tools as body maps in this kind of research foster the co-construction of knowledge from the participants' voices and experiences, evoking deep issues

of human consciousness (Harper, 2002) such as feelings and emotions that arise from the relationship of people with the territories they inhabit. Body maps can hardly be identified with traditional verbal or written approaches (Zaragocin & Caretta, 2021).

Body-territory-emotions

The territory has multiple perspectives, one is the critical perspective of geography. It considers "territory" as a social representation from the exercise of power relations (Herner, 2009).

Nates (2011) states that:

There is no territory in itself, there is only a territory for someone who can be a social actor, both individual and collective that comes from planning and territorial planning to home or access to resources (pp. 211-212).

As a space, the territory has a physical dimension that allows human presence and can be endowed with cultural meanings and social, political and economic implications. Each culture builds and defines its own conception of "territory" as a polysemantic concept based on intentionalities of organizing the properties and spaces of human relationships (Bustos & Molina, 2012).

The territory should not be interpreted as an *outside* as versus an *inside*, but rather as a symbiosis in which all social systems and interactions take place, in individual subjectivity (Londoño & Herrera, 2018). Thus, the "territory" can be understood as a complex network of socially and culturally constructed, symbolic, and lived spaces in which corporeal subjectivity transforms into a constructed "we" that opens up to the "others" in the construction of a "between-us."

The symbiosis between these apparent internal and external worlds, is embodied, i.e., a territory in which all experience leaves its mark, and through them, experiences can also be accessed (Pedraza, 2011). The "body" can be seen as a social construct interpreted as a territory. A body located spatially and temporally as a field of expression of emotions, a result of perception of inhabited territories (Londoño & Herrera, 2018).

Silva (2010) approaches this concept from the notion of "body-space". The body becomes the first territory to be inhabited, connecting the body scale to other geographical scales (local, regional, national, global). Power relations —mainly for women, who can make these spaces of resistance and agency— take place in the body territory (Lan & Rocha, 2020).

The body-territory relationship is mediated by feelings and emotions that impact the relationships in places that are inhabited daily, and affect decisions such as permanence, absence, and mobility. Serrano (2024) shows this issue through a mapping with young women who deal with violence in their neighborhood. The researcher concludes that emotions rebuilt the cartography of space, as the emotions redefined it by printing senses and memories on it.

The concept of “emotion” can be complex to explain because of its wide variety of definitions. However, Kleinginna and Kleinginna (1981) inferred the following multidimensional definition:

A complex set of interactions between subjective and objective issues mediated by neural and hormonal systems that: (a) can generate effective experiences, feelings of activation, liking-disliking; (b) generate cognitive processes such as relevant perceptual effects, valuations, and labeling processes; (c) generate physiological adjustments [...]; and (d) generate behavior that is usually, but not always, expressive, goal-directed, and adaptive (p. 355).

According to Fernández-Abascal and Sánchez (2010), emotions can be classified into two types: dimensional and discrete. This paper addresses discrete or specific emotions. They are characterized by having unique and distinctive attributes that allow their classification according to the individual's level of development when they appear. Primary emotions make part of this category, they appear at the beginning of the subject's life and have an adaptive function in non-verbal communication and physiological activation. These emotions include surprise, disgust, fear, joy, sadness, and anger.

On another level are secondary emotions, the result of social interactions. They are based on primary emotions as the subject's experiential basis. The development of these emotions is mediated by culture and personal history. An example is the emotion of jealousy, a mixture of the primary emotions of anger, sadness, and fear.

Table 1 presents the classification of primary emotions according to their adaptive function.

Table 1. *Primary Emotions from an Adaptive Function.*

Emotion	Adaptive Function	Purpose
Surprise	Exploration	Facilitates emotional and behavioral reaction according to the situation, and the direction of attentional processes. Recruits and directs cognitive resources to the new situation.
Disgust	Rejection	Triggers or avoids unpleasant or dangerous stimuli. Enhances the development of adaptive habits.
Joy	Affiliation	Increases the ability to enjoy different aspects of life, generates positive attitudes towards oneself and others, favors interpersonal relationships, gives a sense of strength, competition, transcendence and freedom.
Fear	Protection	Favors escape/avoidance responses, focuses attention on the feared stimulus, mobilizes a large amount of energy to respond very intensely and quickly.
Anger	Self-defense	Moves needed energy for self-defense or attack behaviors, overcomes obstacles for obtaining goals, inhibits undesirable reactions from other people and avoids confrontation.
Sadness	Reintegration	Increases cohesion with other people, reduces the general activity of the body, enhances the possibility of appreciating other aspects of life. Claims for help from others, hedges aggressive reactions from others, and encourages empathy and other altruistic behaviors.

Source: Fernández-Abascal & Sánchez (2010).

Another highlighted concept is "perception" which is closed to emotion. Melgarejo (1994) states that perception involves the acquisition and processing of sensory information from the environment, and is an effective response to perceived stimuli.

The way a person perceives and processes stimuli can affect the way they experience emotions, since one of the basic characteristics of perception is the elaboration of judgments. Emotions can also influence perception, by affecting attention and the interpretation of sensory information. Therefore, perception

and emotion are interconnected and can affect each other in the processing of sensory information and emotional experience.

Perception has a conscious and unconscious level of existence. It is conscious when the individual realizes that he/she perceives certain events. At an unconscious level, the processes of selection (inclusion and exclusion) and organization of emotions are carried out.

Research that addresses the relationship between body-territory-emotions usually does so through manual analyses by researchers. The interrelationship makes identifying trends of meaning in large volumes of files difficult. To overcome this limitation, Silva and Silva (2016) highlight computer tools in qualitative research to increase productivity and flexibility.

This research uses a sentiment analysis to body mapping carried out with three groups of women from Bosque Modelo Risaralda.

Methodology

The methodology had the following steps:

Step 1 Participants created body maps as a means to express their perceptions and emotions, and made scale drawings of their own bodies. The "Methodological Guide for Women Who Defend Their Territories: Mapping the Body-territory" of the Collective Critical Views of the Territory from Feminism was taken as a foundation. The aggressions by the territories and how they are experienced from the bodies can be identified. It makes one aware of why defending the place in which one lives is important (Cruz *et al.*, 2017).

Step 2. The maps were enriched through the following questions:

Question 1: "Think about the spaces you inhabit in everyday life. It could be the house, the community, the work. Think about each one. Which places can be identified? Which of those places do we like? Now, place them in your body using materials, for example, if you imagine the roads that they usually travel, where are those roads in the body? If you think of a park, a crop, a river, a mountain, a forest, a street, a water source – where are they in that body?"

Question 2: "We propose that the participants point out those places they like the least, where they feel unsafe, where they have felt violence, pain, anger, and that have already healed on the body-territory maps. Where are they? And

how are these visually represented? Is it a street, a part of their house, a place far from their house, or is it close?"

Question 3: "Think about whether or not there are conflicts in the territory that affect you in your daily life: mining, oil extraction, agro-industrial conflicts, etc. How do they affect your bodies? Where would they be placed in the body territory?"

Question 4: "Recognize the places where you find struggle, rebellion, triumphs on your map. Where are they in your body? Where is that rebellion born, that word, that shout? In what part of that body or that territory? How is that triumph expressed? Is it a shout, a word, a song? Is it in the head, in the heart, the feet, the stomach, the legs...? Where is it? Where in the territory do you feel you can be strong? Where do you fight?"

Question 5: "Your body as a territory must be focused on mobilization, on socialization. Does the mobilization arise with others? Does it arrive alone? Where does that meeting with others take place to organize yourselves?"

These questions prompted participants to reflect on and deepen the perceptions and emotions represented in their bodies. They also made connecting the personal dimension (body) with the collective dimension (territory) that generated inputs for the analysis possible.

Step 3: Socialization of the maps. The women shared everything placed on their body maps with the group. During this process, the shared information was audio recorded.

Step 4. The information was transcribed and oral narratives turned into text.

Step 5. A textual analysis was carried out to differentiate the narrative from the body maps, emotions and perceptions in the body-territory relationship built by the participants. A sentiment analysis was conducted with R software using the lexicon of the National Research Institute Council of Canada (NRC).

Data Gathering Instruments

The main instrument for gathering data was body maps. For its construction, different steps were taken:

Each participant was first given a paper big enough on which to draw an outline of their body. They had a wide variety of materials available to avoid limiting their expression: markers, colors, crayons, paint, scissors, magazines and sticky notes. Participants were asked individually to draw the outlines of their body from head to toe, as shown in Figure 1.



Figure 1. Body Outline Examples.

Then, guiding questions prompted participants to identify places in their territories to different parts of their body maps (Figure 2).



Figure 2. Body-Territory Examples.

Once the body maps were prepared, each participant had time to share it with the group (Figure 3).



Figure 3. *Sharing of Body Maps.*

Participants

The task was carried out with three groups of rural women from Bosque Modelo Risaralda during the “Tángara Multicolor” female leadership program (Table 2).

Table 2. *Groups of Women Who Participated in the Activity.*

Location	Average Age	Level of Schooling	Task Date
Corregimiento La Florida, Pereira, Risaralda	29 years	33% Undergraduate 67% Technical/ Techno-logical	December, 2022
Mistrató, Risaralda	47 years	11% Technical/ Techno-logical 22% Secondary school 67% Primary school	February, 2023
Peralonso, Risaralda	45 years	22% Graduate 11% University student 11% Technical/ Techno-logical 22% Secondary school 33% Primary school	March, 2023

Data Analysis

To understand the perceptions and emotions that women associate with their body-territory, a sentiment analysis was carried out. This content analysis technique allows for extracting the polarity, valence, or opinion of a text to determine if its trend is positive, negative, or neutral (Pérez, 2018). The approach used in this research is based on the use of lexicons, with dictionaries of terms or lists of words previously labeled with a sentiment polarity (positive or negative) and linked to basic emotions.

The “National Research Council of Canada (NRC) Lexicon of Emotions,” developed by Saif M. Mohammad and Peter Turney (2010) was used. This resource associates words with a polarity, as well as relates them to eight basic emotions: anger, fear, anticipation, confidence, surprise, sadness, joy, and disgust. The NRC differs from other lexicons in its ability to offer a broader and more diverse classification of these emotions, which makes it an extremely useful tool in sentiment analysis.

The NRC has been applied in multiple studies that cover different levels of analysis, from individual words to more complex texts, sentences, social media posts, and academic papers. It has been widely used to the analysis of abusive language, the identification of personality traits and the exploration of discursive

positions as one the most complete resource of its kind (Mohammad & Turney, 2010). This adaptability supports its relevance as a methodological tool.

The characteristics of this dictionary are described in Table 3.

Table 3. *NRC Lexicon.*

Lexical Association	No. of Terms	Categories	Association Scores	Creation Method
NRC Word-Emotion Association Lexicon (also called EmoLex)	14,182 unigrams (words)	Feelings: negative, positive. Emotions: anger, anticipation, disgust, fear, joy, sadness, surprise, confidence.	0 (not associated) or 1 (associated)	Manual: by crowdsourcing in <i>Mechanical Turk</i> . Overall Proficiency
	~25,000 senses		not associated, weak, moderately or strongly associated	

Source: Mohammad & Turney (2010). Translated version of NRC Word-Emotion Association Lexicon (aka EmoLex).

Data Processing

R Statistical software was used in its visual environment *RStudio* (version 2022.12.0+353). Data processing was carried out in several steps:

Step 1. Cleaning and data preparation. A cleanup of the text by *tm_map* function was executed to standardize data. This process included converting the entire text to small letters to avoid inconsistencies in the analysis, the removal of numbers and punctuation marks that did not add value to the semantic content, and the removal of generic words that could distract attention from key emotions. This standardization was important to ensure that subsequent analysis was consistent and free of unnecessary noise.

Step 2. Tokenization. The processed text was *tokenized* using the *get_tokens()* function, splitting the character string into a list of individual words.

This enabled the identification of each term and its corresponding analysis. *Tokenization* allowed each word to be evaluated independently keeping its contextual meaning and ensuring that the associated emotions were correctly identified.

Step 3. Sentiment and Emotion Analysis. The technique of sentiment and emotion analysis was applied. In this stage, the NRC lexicon was used to identify and classify the emotions within the transcribed texts. This analysis determined the polarity of each word (positive, negative, or neutral), and also revealed more complex emotions, such as anger, fear, anticipation, confidence, surprise, sadness, joy, and disgust. The integration of these emotions into the analysis allow for obtaining a deeper and more detailed view of how rural women perceive and feel their relationship with the territory.

Results

According to Gastaldo *et al.* (2012) "the purpose of the analysis is not to psychologically evaluate the participants through their art, but to understand aspects of their logic, hopes, and desires" (p. 18). This research aims to explore the emotions and perceptions of the participants by relating their bodies to the territories they inhabit.

The results of the sentiment analysis are exposed by each of the guiding questions.

Question 1: "Think about the spaces we inhabit on a daily life. It could be the house, the community, the work. Let's think about each one. What places do we identify? Which of those places do we like? Now, we are going to place them in our body using materials, for example, if you imagine the roads that they usually travel, where are those roads in the body? If we think of a park, a crop, a river, a mountain, a forest, a street, a living source- Where are they in that body?".

Figure 4 shows that most of the feelings generated in women by representing in their bodies the places they inhabit on daily life are positive, mainly for the group of women of Mistrató, Risaralda, with 100% positive.

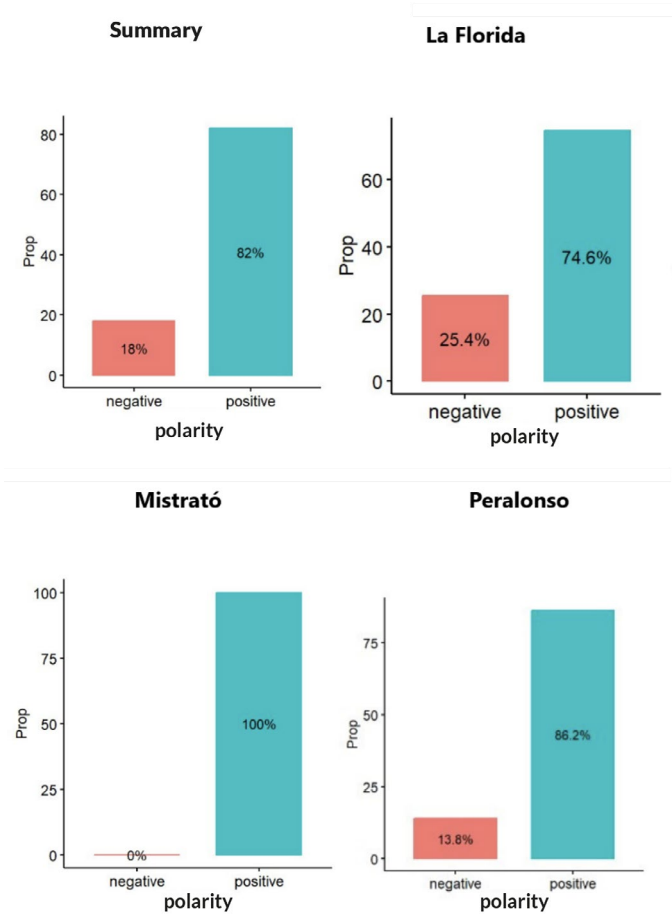


Figure 4. *Places Inhabited Daily – Polarity.*

Figure 5 shows that emotions like joy, confidence, and anticipation are highlighted. In Figure 6, all participants agree that "the house" is the place they inhabit on a daily basis and makes them happy. It is the place where they currently live, as well as their parents' house. It is marked by memories. This place is mainly located in the heart, they state that they place it there because it is their "safe place," "the place that gives them peace," "where they feel safe."



In Figure 8, the participants expressed joy in realizing that they were not alone contributing to their territory, feeling part of it, or appreciating it. They placed these emotions in the heart and chest, also in the eyes, since through them, they could visualize what other women expressed during the activities; and in the mind, since they experienced a lot of thoughts when knowing the members of the group very well (Figure 9).

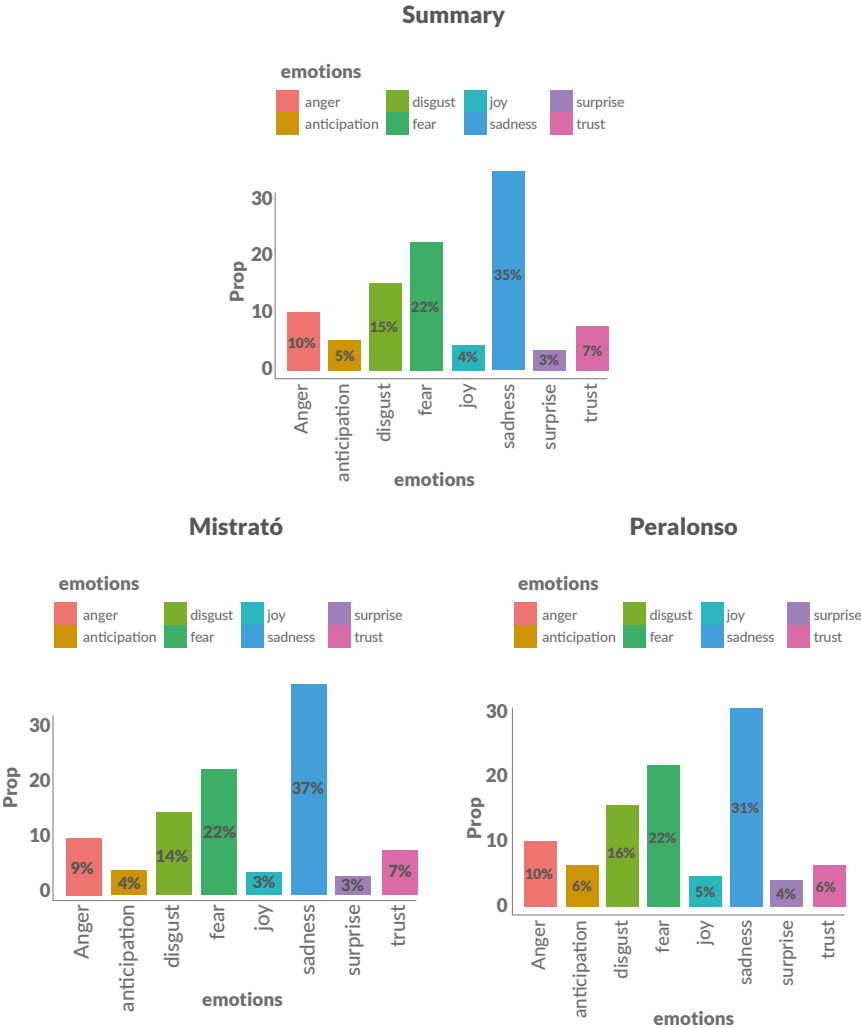


Figure 8. *Fears and Insecurities – Emotions.*



Figure 9. *Fears and Insecurities – Word Clouds.*

The group of women of Mistrató, locate the places they dislike and that signify negative feelings and emotions of sadness and fear them in the mind, as a representation of memories, because, despite overcoming past, they remain in their memories. The women in Peralonso associate these with the feet, since it causes the desire to "kick" or because some of them decided to "leave" that place. The places that evoked the most memories were parts of the house (bedroom, kitchen, and bathrooms), and public places, such as roads and parks in their territories.

Question 3: Think about whether or not there are conflicts in the territory that affect you in your daily life: mining, oil extraction, agro-industrial conflicts, etc. How do they affect your bodies? Where would they be placed in the body territory?"

Figure 10 shows the feelings of conflicts in the territory they inhabit represented in the women's bodies. There is a 41,5% relationship of positive feelings and 58,5% of negative feelings. Sadness, disgust, and fear were the most common.

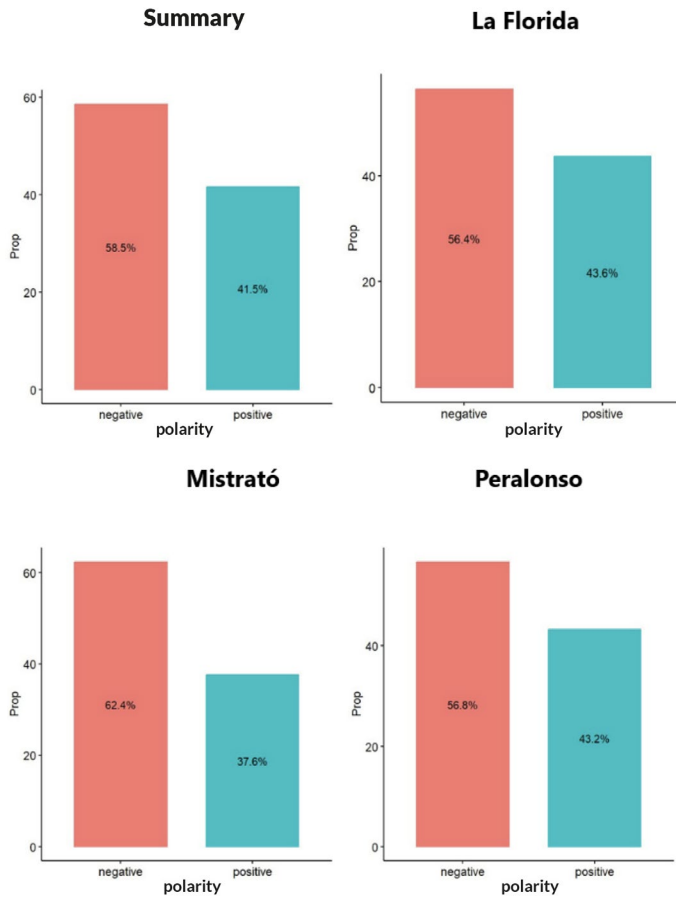


Figure 10. *Territorial Conflicts – Polarity.*

Positive feelings were mainly generated by emotions such as: confidence, anticipation and surprise (Figure 11). Most women associated the identification of these conflicts with the desire for change and transformation.

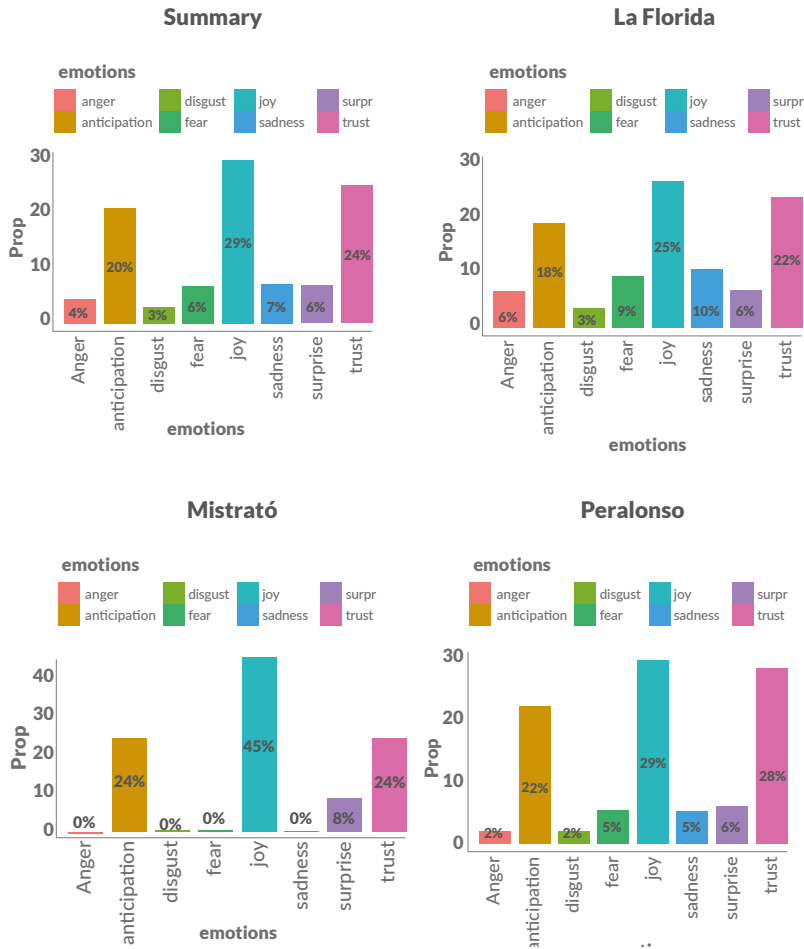


Figure 11. Territorial Conflict – Emotions.

Figure 12 shows that the conflicts identified by women in their territories are: deforestation, solid waste, monocrops, use of agrochemicals in crops, contamination of water sources, excessive tourism, lack of recycling, waste accumulation, abandonment of dogs, water shortage, drug addiction, and social and institutional disruption.



Figure 12. Territorial Conflicts – Word Clouds.

The parts of the body where these conflicts are placed are very varied. Women from Florida place them on the chest and heart, since they associate these parts of the body with this feeling. In the womb (“from the bowels”), these problems could affect the health of the people in their community over the long term. In the hands for the desire to act, do, and solve.

Question 4: Recognize on your map the places where you find your struggle, your rebellion, your triumphs. Where are they in your body? Where is that rebellion born, that word, that shout? In what part of that body or that territory? How is that triumph expressed? Is it a shout, a word, a song? Is it in the head, in the heart, the feet, the stomach, the legs...? Where is it? Where in the territory do you feel you can be strong? Where do you fight?"

Figures 13 and 14 show that most of the feelings were classified as positive, mainly the emotion of trust. However, for the women of Peralonso and Mistrató negative emotions such as fear and anger arose. This is because they supported their affirmations of strength and struggle with difficult stories they lived and

cited as examples situations where they put strength and struggle into practice. For many of them, those feelings come from the mind. They state that "there is strength in their ideas" and "they are motivated in their minds."

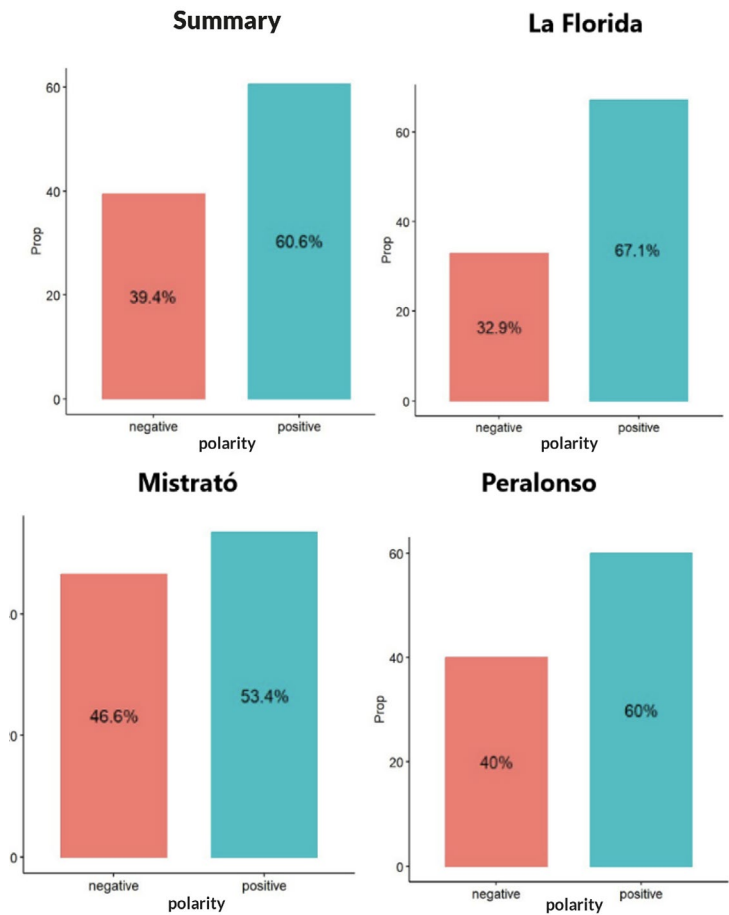


Figure 13. *Our Struggle – Polarity.*

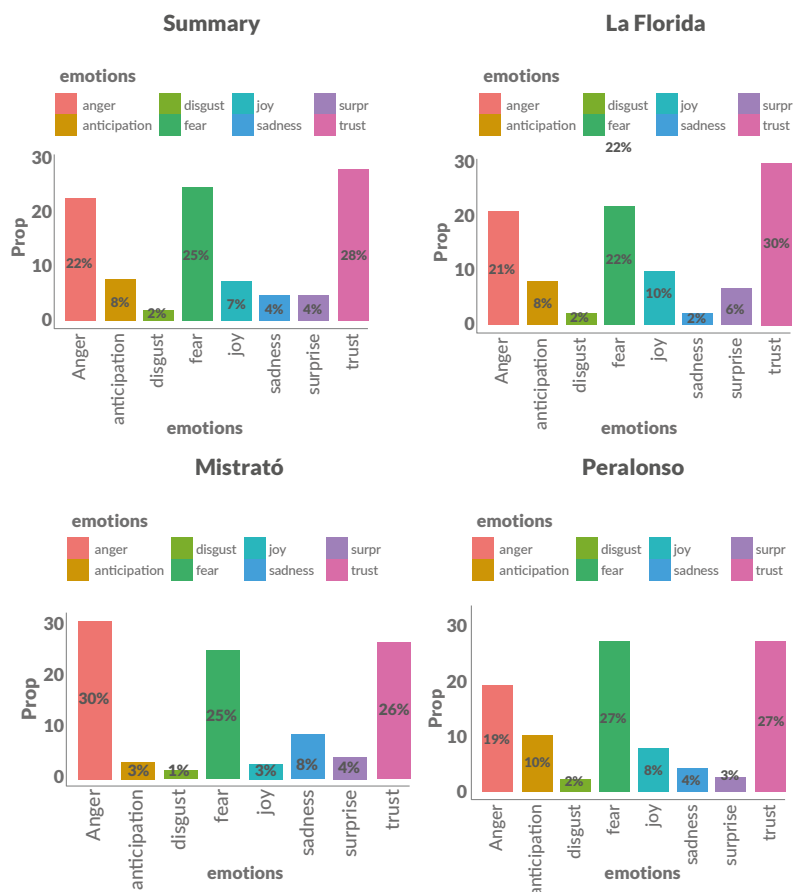


Figure 14. *Our Struggle – Emotions.*

Figure 15 shows that the strength is symbolically located in the legs, legs to escape from the places where women claim to feel that they no longer belong or do not want to stay; in the belly, where they place the female force; and in the hands, with which they do and initiate actions. They express it as follows: "clenching the hand and saying I am going to do such a thing, clenching the hand to use a machete, clenching the hand to sweep" (personal communication, March 4, 2023).



Figure 15. *Our Struggle – Word Clouds.*

Question 5: "Your body as a territory must be focused on mobilization and on socialization. Does the mobilization arise with others? Does it arrive alone? Where does that meeting with others take place in organizing yourselves?"

Evidently that mobilization and union generated positive feelings in the participants, mainly trust (Figures 16 and 17). Women from La Florida placed their desire for union and mobilization in the hands, since they perceive those desires as a symbol of their desire to build and work, and to help others. Women from Mistrató placed it in their minds. There the actions are planned and a favorable attitude is adopted for collective work.

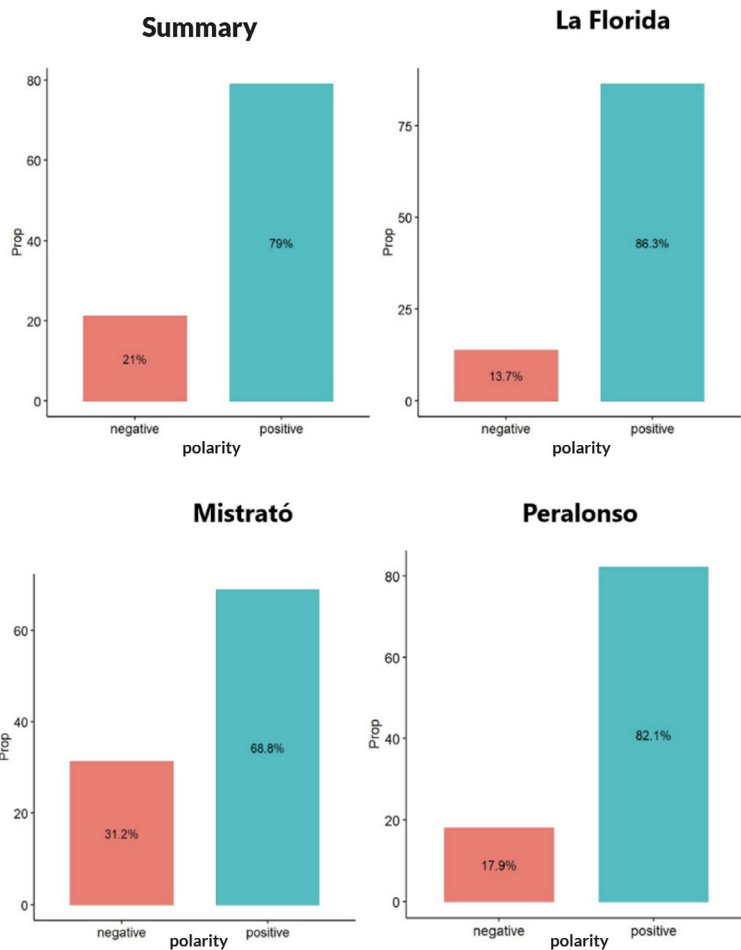


Figure 16. *Mobilization, Union - Emotions.*

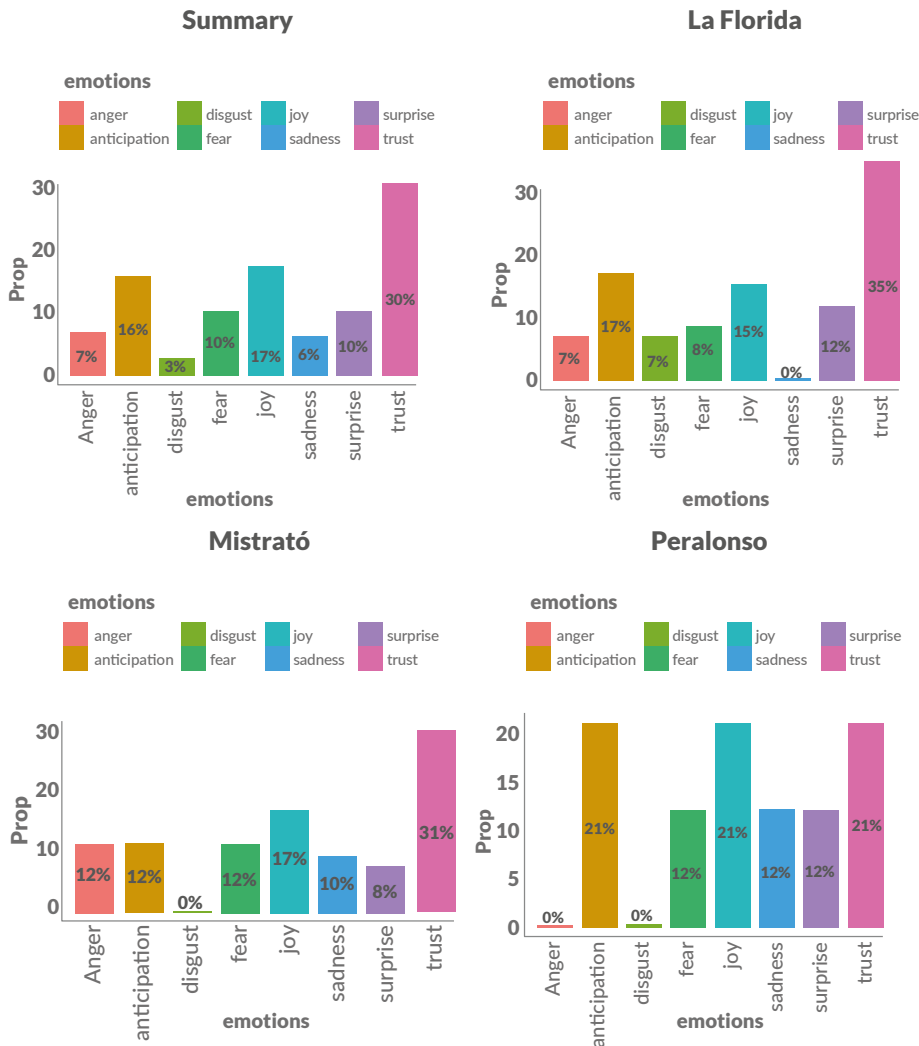


Figure 17. *Mobilization, Union – Emotions.*

Finally, women from Peralonso associated their desire for union and mobilization in the heart, since it represents the love they give to others and the intuition, called "sixth sense," in understanding the needs of other people (Figure 18).

Summary



La Florida



Mistrató



Peralonso



Figure 18. *Mobilization, Union – Word Clouds.*

Discussion

Comparing several studies that use the body mapping technique to explore the connection between emotions and perceptions that have yielded consistent results regarding placing certain emotions becomes interesting. De Souza *et al.* (2021), conducted research with women who required mental health counseling in Brazil, which concluded that the participants placed nervousness in the head.

This conclusion is supported by the Volynets *et al.* (2020) global research of participants from 101 countries where sadness is also associated with the head.

El presente estudio reveló que las participantes ubican en la cabeza los lugares donde se sentían inseguras y que despertaban en ellas sentimientos de miedo y tristeza, como, por ejemplo, el caso del mapa de Alicia, quien ubicó en esta parte del cuerpo los recuerdos de la pérdida de su esposo a causa del conflicto armado en el país (figura 19). También se identificó en el mapa de Juliana, al ubicar el estrés que le genera salir a la ciudad, por el bullicio, el aire pesado y la cantidad de personas (figura 20).

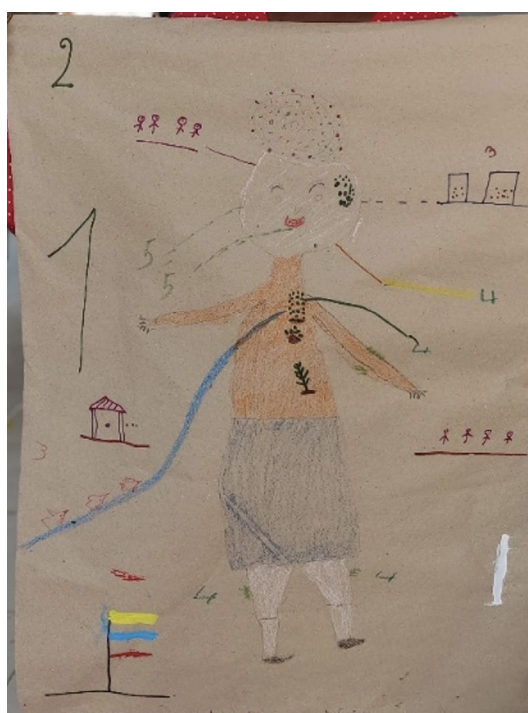


Figure 19. Alicia's Body Map.



Figure 20. Juliana's Body Map.

Despite geographical and cultural differences, all three studies agree that emotions such as sadness, insecurity and nervousness tend to be both experienced and placed at the mental level. This coincidence suggests that the association of certain emotions with the head may be a universal pattern in people's emotional experience.

Volynets *et al.* (2020) offer a perspective on the relationship between emotions and body perception. They identify specific places on the body related to different emotional states. According to the authors, there are emotions that are associated with parts of the body because of physiological changes that are generated against stimuli related to that emotion, such as sweating, changes in heart rate, breathing and facial expressions. In their results, disgust is presented as an emotion strongly linked to the belly, an aspect similar to this paper. An example is Lucero who relates the stress generated by the drug addiction problem in her community with pain in the belly (Figure 21).

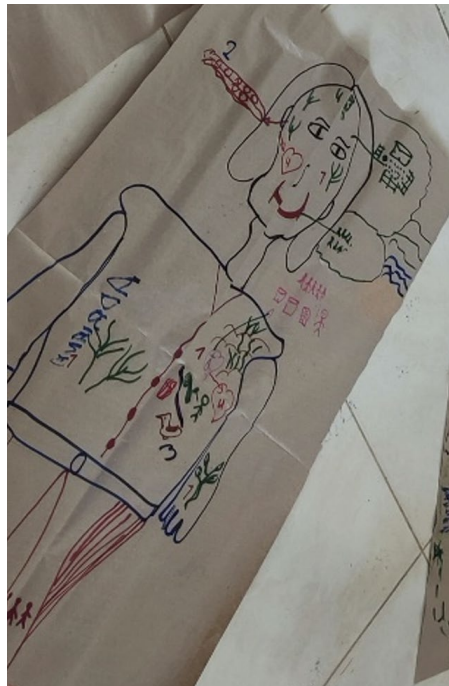


Figure 21. *Lucero's Body Map.*

However, differences are also observed. While in other studies joy is distributed across the body, in this one, it is specifically related to the heart and chest.

The results of this research show that the participants place their family and home in the chest, and the conflicts in the territory in the womb.

Gabriela placed a skull in her belly expressing: "I think that today [...] we are poisoning everything we eat; we eat garbage when we pollute the rivers, we pollute the water we drink, I feel that there are so many essential things that we are damaging and everything will remain inside us" (Figure 22).

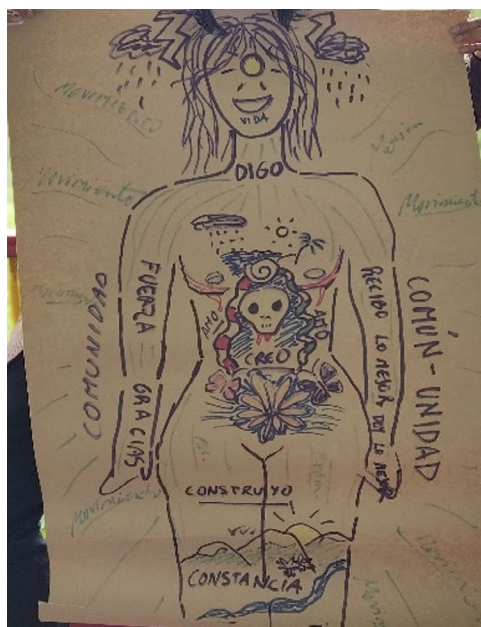


Figure 22. Gabriela's Body Map.

These findings are similar to Luckett and Bagelman (2023) who used the body mapping technique with a group of women to analyze gender impacts in coal mining.

These similar results, despite different contexts, allow inferring shared patterns in the way women encode their experiences in the body. The connection of the chest to home and family ties could reflect a shared perception of these areas as emotional and care centers. While the connection between the womb and territorial conflicts is possibly related to the physical and emotional discomfort that these situations generate.

This coincidence between research shows the value of the body mapping technique in revealing patterns in how people embody their experiences.

Associations between positive sensations and the chest/heart is also observed in the Chaves (2015) and Turmo *et al.* (2023). In the first, participants chose the heart and hands as the parts of the body related to happy times; in the second, participants place feelings of satisfaction in the chest and hands. These findings are consistent with this paper in which women placed joy and trust in the heart and chest.

There is a coincidence despite the contextual differences in the patterns associated with positive sensations in the chest, heart and hands. This could reflect a widespread perception of these areas as emotional wellness centers.

Some participants referred to their homes as an unsafe place, where they have felt anger, sadness, and fear. In this regard Campos *et al.* (2021) in their research of women victims of sexual violence identify the aggressors as people close to the family. Sexual violence turns the home into a place where the body of women can be physically and morally subjugated.

Women also expressed feeling unsafe, violated, and vulnerable in public places. Some placed these emotions in the feet, representing moving away and leaving that place. Lan and Rocha (2020) show similar results in their research where women placed the stress they feel when they go to those spaces where intimidating situations can occur in the legs.

Other women placed these emotions in their eyes. Amparo, who expressed (Figure 23):

The place that generates the most insecurity, where I have felt violated in a certain way was in a chair in the park, at a table in the park, there was an uncomfortable and very violent conversation, I would not want it to happen again. (Personal communication, February 4, 2023).

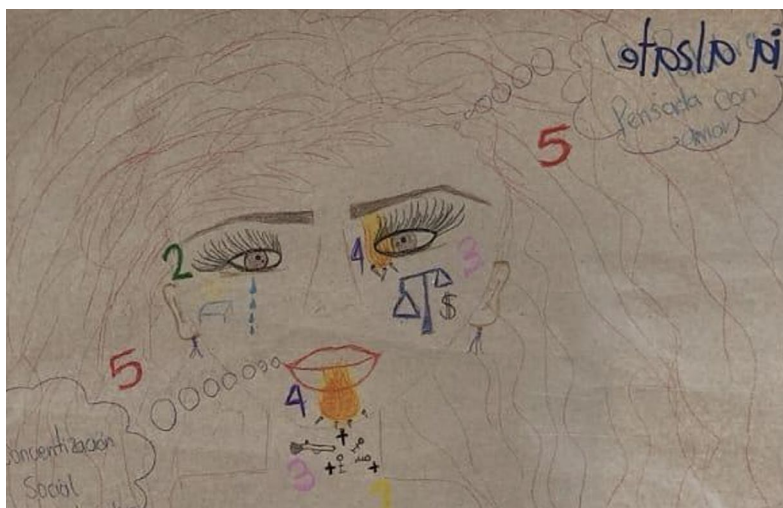


Figure 23. Amparo's Body Map Fragment.

The use of body mapping in this experience generated a holistic, co-created, and empathetic vision of the relationship that women weave with their territories,

thanks to the collective exchange of sensations, conflicts, struggles, triumphs and joint mobilization. This aspect is consistent with the conclusion obtained by Cornwall (1992) of body mapping in health, where the contributions of this technique to facilitate the identification of topics of discussion that allow examining social issues and more complex connections, an aspect also highlighted by Silva *et al.* (2013).

In the experience shared in this paper, the body mapping technique was used as a way of expression. It explores creativity, strengthens personal narratives, and contributes to female empowerment. This approach is consistent with the analysis of Parra (2018). The author identifies that the mapping process contributes to the construction of women as social subjects, it values their experiences to recognize and organize themselves, and aligns with the principles of empowerment and social transformation.

Afro-descendant and indigenous women of Bosque Modelo Risaralda participated, however, no intersectional analyses were carried out that deepened possible differences or relationships between these sociodemographic variables and the results.

Rodó-Zárate (2023) uses intersectionality as a theoretical framework of the so-called: "Maps of reliefs of experience," which relates three dimensions: social (gender identities, social class, ethnicity, age, etc.), geographical (places of daily life) and psychological (effects on emotions). This framework invites reflecting on how these dimensions relate, and understanding that it is their intersection that conditions experiences.

Body mapping represents an opportunity for future research. Incorporating intersectional theoretical and methodological frameworks is recommended to show how the multiple identities of rural women materialize in a differentiated way in their bodies-territories, and in the emotions associated with them.

Conclusions

In this research, the perceptions and emotions related to the territory of three groups of rural women of Bosque Modelo Risaralda, Colombia, were analyzed by sentiment analysis technique to body mapping.

Among the most relevant findings, the repeated connection between everyday places such as home and positive emotions was highlighted, and also the association of less pleasant places, such as public places and some parts of the home with negative emotions. The home was identified as a safe environment by placing it in the chest (mainly in the heart) as a symbol of love for their family.

However, some participants also referred to this place as unsafe, because they felt fear, sadness and anger. This corroborates the vulnerability of women in both intimate and public places.

A relationship between environmental conflicts in the territories and women's bodies was also evident when addressing possible health implications that these could have on them. These conflicts were placed in the womb as a symbol of an affectation to life, and in the chest, because these problems are not separate and cause them sadness, disgust and fear. At the same time, these conflicts awaken confidence and the desire to meet other women to transform their realities.

The body mapping technique allowed participants to explore the relationship they established between their body and their experiences in the territories in a deeper fashion. The act of drawing made surpassing a logical discourse and expressing unconscious aspects which would hardly arise through a verbal or written exercise possible for the women.

This tool serves as a guide to understanding people's explanations of their bodies, and also reveals discussion topics that go beyond the purely biological. It begins an exploration of social issues and deeper connections between self-image, cultural perceptions, and social contexts.

The sentiment analysis technique was evidenced to be valuable for identifying trends and patterns that could have been lost in conventional manual analyses. It offers a complementary perspective that enriches the understanding of qualitative information without replacing contextual interpretation of this type of research. Its implementation opens up new possibilities for interdisciplinary research by combining computational and qualitative techniques to enhance the analysis of data.

This task was part of a female leadership program, which led to the conclusion that women's empowerment must begin with spaces for self-knowledge to promote personal growth and emotional well-being. Issues that are normally neglected and must be taken up again to improve the participation of women in social transformation.

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Primary School Teachers' Conceptions of ICT-Mediated Assessment Practices from the Perspective of Learning Diversity*

[English version]

Concepciones de maestros alrededor de la práctica evaluativa mediada por TIC desde la diversidad

Concepções de professores sobre a prática avaliativa mediada por TIC a partir da diversidade

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Abstract

Assessing learning involves recognizing methods and tools, as well as understanding the process through which students develop competencies. **Objective:** To explore

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primary school teachers' conceptions of Information and Communication Technology (ICT)-mediated assessment practices and their influence on the recognition of learning diversity. **Methodology:** A qualitative study with an ethnographic design was conducted involving 11 primary school teachers from a public educational institution in Medellín, Antioquia. **Results:** The findings reveal several possibilities, challenges, and educational tensions associated with the integration of ICT into classroom settings. **Conclusions:** Primary school teachers consider that the use of these technological tools contributes to the strengthening of their professional role in response to current educational demands and enables the diversification of assessment strategies.

Keywords: assessment; educational technology; learning; teachers (obtained from the UNESCO Thesaurus).

Resumen

La evaluación de los aprendizajes implica el reconocimiento de los métodos y las herramientas, así como la comprensión del proceso de desempeño de las competencias de los estudiantes. **Objetivo:** explorar las concepciones de los maestros de básica primaria sobre las prácticas evaluativas mediadas por las Tecnologías de la Información y la Comunicación (TIC) y su influencia en el reconocimiento de la diversidad de aprendizaje. **Metodología:** se realizó un estudio cualitativo con un diseño etnográfico acompañado por 11 maestros de básica primaria de una institución educativa pública de la ciudad de Medellín- Antioquia. **Resultados:** los resultados permiten evidenciar algunas posibilidades, retos y tensiones educativas al introducir las TIC en el aula de clases. **Conclusiones:** se concluye que los maestros de primaria consideran que el uso de estas herramientas tecnológicas aporta a la cualificación de su rol según las demandas educativas actuales y posibilita la diversificación de estrategias evaluativas.

Palabras clave: evaluación; tecnología educacional; aprendizaje; maestro (obtenidos del tesaurus UNESCO).

Resumo

A avaliação das aprendizagens implica o reconhecimento dos métodos e das ferramentas, bem como a compreensão do processo de desenvolvimento das competências dos estudantes. **Objetivo:** explorar as concepções de professores dos anos iniciais do ensino fundamental sobre as práticas avaliativas mediadas pelas Tecnologias da Informação e Comunicação (TIC) e sua influência no reconhecimento da diversidade de aprendizagem.

Metodologia: realizou-se um estudo qualitativo com delineamento etnográfico, com a participação de 11 professores dos anos iniciais de uma instituição pública de ensino da cidade de Medellín, Antioquia. **Resultados:** os resultados evidenciam algumas possibilidades, desafios e tensões educacionais decorrentes da introdução das TIC em sala de aula. **Conclusões:** conclui-se que os professores consideram que o uso dessas ferramentas tecnológicas contribui para a qualificação de seu papel profissional diante das demandas educacionais contemporâneas e possibilita a diversificação das estratégias avaliativas.

Palavras-chave: avaliação; tecnologia educacional; aprendizagem; professor (obtidas do tesouro da UNESCO).

Introduction

The pedagogical and didactic constructs that shape teachers' assessment practices are essential for understanding the purpose and social function of assessment within educational praxis. In this regard, Gimeno (2013) and Salinas (2016) argue that assessment practices are determined by teachers' epistemological and pedagogical conceptions within the curricular framework, their interpretation of students' characteristics, and their perspectives on learning and reflective educational action. Thus, assessment not only measures academic achievement, but also becomes a dynamic process that enriches teaching and learning processes by promoting greater coherence among educational objectives, teaching strategies, and students' individual needs.

In this sense, Quintana (2022) states that "[...] the complexity of assessment practices points toward formative assessment and the regulation of learning and teaching in order to guide classroom practices" (p. 84, own translation). These practices, from a dialogic and reflective perspective, encourage the development of active students who are aware of their leading role in pedagogical mediation (Ríos & Herrera, 2020). At the same time, they conceive assessment as a factor that gives meaning to educational processes in light of comprehensiveness and educational quality, according to current curricular regulations and the social realities that permeate schools. Accordingly, Colombia's Ministry of National Education (MEN, 2009) states that:

[...] classroom assessment should focus on everyday events, observing and gathering information to determine how students are learning; what they need to learn; and where concepts and processes need to be clarified, reinforced, or consolidated, among other aspects, in order to contribute to their development as competent individuals. (p. 17, own translation).

Indeed, Litwin (1998) conceives assessment as "[...] part of the didactic process, implying for students an awareness of acquired learning and, for teachers, an interpretation of the implications of teaching on such learning" (p. 16, own translation). This perspective aligns with the formative purpose established by the MEN (2009) in Decree 1290 of 2009, which understands assessment practices as a resource that, among other functions, enables the evaluation of students according to their own characteristics, abilities, and interests, while providing teachers with essential information to strengthen and guide educational processes from the perspective of students' holistic development. From this standpoint, the effectiveness of assessment lies in its ability to provide constructive feedback,

adjust pedagogical practices, and contribute to students' integral development within an inclusive and equitable educational context.

According to Asprilla *et al.* (2019), the assessment approach of contemporary schools and primary education teachers seeks to address the need to diversify assessment strategies within the framework of meaningful and comprehensive education. In this regard, studies conducted by Cano *et al.* (2021), Fernández-Menor (2021), Garmen *et al.* (2019), López *et al.* (2021), and Parra *et al.* (2015) demonstrate the relevance of assessment practices grounded in the recognition of learning diversity and the mediation of assessment through digital technologies. These studies argue that such an approach promotes the integration of digital tools, enhancing learning processes, students' active participation in education, and adaptive assessment practices.

Consequently, Arnaiz (2000) argues that the traditional educational paradigm is increasingly distancing itself from a rights-based approach aimed at guaranteeing quality education through the flexibilization and personalization of educational processes in accordance with the differences that shape and contribute to the construction of equitable schools. This gap reinforces the need to promote pedagogical practices that recognize and value student diversity, ensuring access to learning opportunities that respond to individual needs. Thus, the integration of student-centered approaches becomes a pathway for educational transformation, fostering inclusive learning environments that support the holistic development of every learner.

For this reason, the MEN (2017) advocates for the consolidation of an educational system that promotes transformation through the recognition of all students' capacities and possibilities according to their differences, an issue considered fundamental for building a fair and equitable country and society. To this end, schools are expected to focus on each student individually, based on respect for and appreciation of their uniqueness, while highlighting their strengths, skills, and potential beyond the notions of deficiency and lack that have historically stripped diversity of its human dimension. Understanding and adapting to diversity has become increasingly important in a constantly changing world; therefore, schools that value diversity prepare students to face and contribute positively to an evolving society.

Within this discourse and implementation of inclusive schooling and assessment practices that not only recognize but, above all, respect learning diversity, Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) emerge as a key element. From the perspective of their ethical use and articulation with the fundamental objectives of human development, ICT make it possible to chart a path toward a school capable of responding effectively to the challenges and demands of the knowledge society (Begoña & Valdivielso, 2012). Likewise, ICT foreground the

ongoing question of teacher professional development as a coherent means of understanding, within the pedagogical and didactic field, the contemporary ways in which students comprehend, give meaning to, and inhabit the world around them.

Accordingly, this article aims to contribute to the understanding of the different pedagogical and didactic constructs that shape primary school teachers' assessment practices within the framework of learning diversity and the use of ICT.

Methodology

This research followed an ethnographic design which, according to Galeano (2012), facilitated a natural and direct approach to the context, participants, and situations related to the research interests. Furthermore, ethnography enabled the interpretation of the social and cultural dynamics identified through the behavioral patterns observed among the teachers who participated in the study (Creswell, 2007).

The study population consisted of 11 primary school teachers from a public educational institution in Medellín. The institution grounds its educational practices in institutional policies that regard learning diversity, ICT, and assessment practices as matters of significant importance for institutional transformation toward an education contextualized according to the realities and demands of contemporary society. In addition, the participating teachers had at least two years of professional experience in the field. Authorization from school administrators and teachers was obtained, and informed consent forms were signed to ensure the proper handling of information for research and academic purposes. Likewise, participants were previously informed about the study's purpose, focus of interest, intended use of the information, and the researcher's commitment to providing feedback and formally closing the process by submitting an institutional analysis report to the Academic Council regarding the object of study.

With regard to ethical principles in data management, the anonymity of the participants involved in the research process was preserved, and particular attention was given to respecting the originality of the different theoretical and experiential sources. In addition, the researchers previously shared their

interpretation of the data with the participants in order to obtain their approval before proceeding with the subsequent stages of the study.

Within the ethnographic design framework, the research instruments employed were semi-structured interviews and an observation log focused on assessment practices. The interview included an introductory section addressing the participants' general information, as well as 11 open-ended questions designed to foster dialogue around the research problem. The observation log consisted of a general heading for the study, specific information about the teachers contributing data, and an analytical matrix that facilitated the researcher's descriptive recording of the phenomenon under study.

The instruments were developed in accordance with the specific objectives of the research and were reviewed and validated by three experts in ICT, Diversity, and Assessment Practices, university professors holding doctoral degrees and extensive experience in the educational and research fields, who considered it necessary to strengthen the component related to learning diversity. Consequently, the researchers incorporated an additional question to gain deeper insight into the relationship between learning diversity and the use of ICT. Prior to entering the field, a pilot study was conducted with three primary school teachers from different public institutions to verify the scope and relevance of the instruments' design.

For data analysis, an initial thematic coding process based on the inductive analysis of the collected data was carried out in order to identify units of meaning. Subsequently, major categories emerged, guiding the interpretative analysis of the information. Finally, data collection concluded once data saturation was reached, that is, when the information gathered no longer contributed to the emergence of new categories or to the analytical deepening of existing ones.

Within the framework of educational ethnography's credibility and its scientific rigor, triangulation was employed as a strategy that enabled the discussion of participants' voices and experiences alongside the researcher's perspective, contrasted with the legal and theoretical references supporting the study, thereby ensuring credibility and scientific validity in an objective manner (Denzin, 1970). In order to guarantee the accuracy and reliability of the research, the specialized software Atlas.ti was used to support the objective analysis of qualitative data within the parameters of scientific quality.

This study acknowledges that educational research is shaped by the positionalities and experiences of those involved. Such a stance made it possible to establish a relationship of trust with the participating teachers, facilitating dialogue and the interpretation of their conceptions regarding ICT-mediated assessment practices. The researchers recognize that their academic and professional trajectories in the field of education influenced the selection of the research

problem, the formulation of the questions, and the interpretation of the findings. A situated perspective was adopted, seeking to maintain coherence among the observed realities, the theoretical framework, the methodology, and the data collection process. Likewise, collaborative work enabled cross-review procedures that strengthened interpretative validity and reduced individual biases.

Results

From the perspective of the “knowledge society,” it has been argued that contemporary schools are situated at the center of multiple social realities and demands that require institutional transformation and renewed commitments in the fields of knowledge construction, information management, and educational dynamics capable of aligning with the realities experienced by twenty-first-century learners (García, 2012). These issues reveal the urgent need to reflect on the influence of such challenges on educational and assessment praxis.

With the aim of identifying some of the tensions, challenges, and possibilities that emerge within schools, which, according to Benavides *et al.* (2023), are required to transform and engage, through their curricular structures and pedagogical practices, with alternative ways of understanding and carrying out educational processes in contemporary times, the analysis conducted through Atlas.ti resulted in the emergence of the following categories: ICT in the qualification and mediation of teachers' praxis; pedagogical and didactic approaches to addressing learning diversity; and the consolidation of assessment practices oriented toward educational quality, understood in terms of formative and holistic education.

ICT in the Qualification and Mediation of Teachers' Praxis

Throughout the historical development of ICT and its incorporation into schools, an increasing demand for the use of these technological tools in the service of education has become evident. Consequently, the requirements for and awareness of their integration into educational and assessment practices have steadily gained greater relevance, with the aim of aligning school dynamics with ongoing technological advances and transformations.

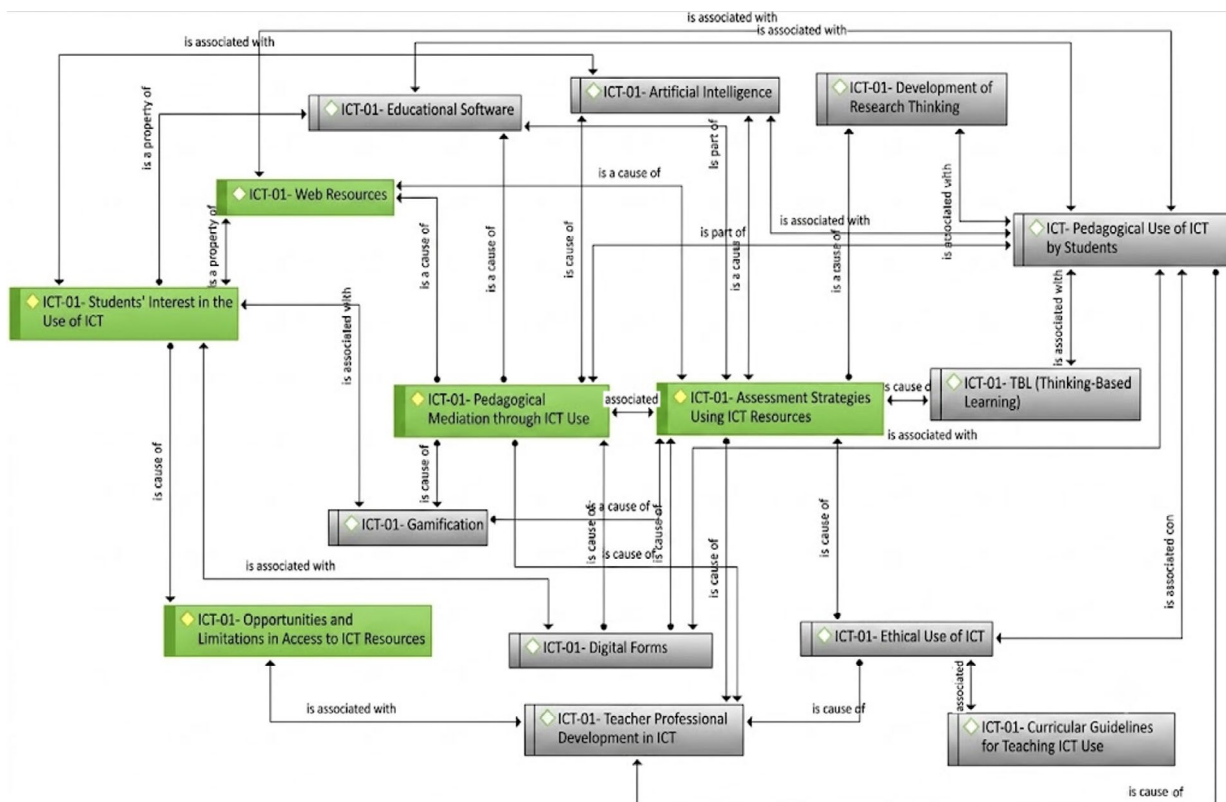


Figure 1. Primary School Teachers' Correlations Regarding the Concept of "ICT".

Based on the analysis of the correlations established by primary school teachers regarding the use of ICT (see Figure 1), these technologies are identified as a range of didactic resources and tools that contribute to strengthening teaching and learning processes within the framework of recognizing the educational possibilities they offer. In this same vein, Benavides *et al.* (2023) argue that primary school students need to be immersed in teaching processes enriched through ICT resources so that they may develop competencies for their everyday use and for the transformation of academic environments. Likewise, the integration of ICT into the curriculum supports the personalization of learning by providing opportunities for each student to progress at their own pace and according to their interests, thereby enriching their learning experience.

This was reflected in the account of one teacher, who highlighted the visual and didactic advantages of implementing explanatory videos for students with

learning disorders and/or visual learning styles in order to foster the development of textual competencies across different subject areas.

In this way, ICT-mediated pedagogical practices respond to the need to diversify teachers' assessment strategies beyond the standardization of punitive and exclusionary forms of assessment, giving way instead to an approach that, according to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2019), is grounded in the ethical use of technology aligned with curricular guidelines, students' natural interests, and their sustained motivation to use these tools both inside and outside the classroom. The latter is considered a determining factor in ensuring students' ongoing participation in the construction of their own knowledge and the development of competencies.

Another aspect emerging from the relationships established in Figure 1 concerns the connections among the pedagogical use of ICT, curricular guidelines, and teacher education. This demonstrates that, although the use of ICT in schools has been increasingly promoted since the COVID-19 pandemic, the development of teachers' digital competencies remains an unresolved issue. This is because the pedagogical use of ICT goes beyond the mere technical mastery of digital tools and requires an understanding of local realities in order to develop contextualized didactic objectives.

As a result, teachers' narratives indicate that the implementation of assessment strategies through technological tools does not necessarily prevent teachers from continuing to apply standardized and exclusionary methods that overlook the individuality of learners, as expressed by one teacher:

[...] I could use a computer to administer a literacy assessment, but if I limit myself to multiple-choice questions without any type of multimodal support, then I am still directly implementing traditional learning strategies that fail to recognize diversity, even if I am using ICT. (Personal communication, September 16, 2024) [own translation].

In this regard, studies conducted by Damasio *et al.* (2017), Granda *et al.* (2019), López (2022), Montalvo-Castro and Martos-Castañeda (2019), and Montoya and Campbell (2022) emphasize the didactic value of using ICT tools such as educational software, digital forms, gamification, artificial intelligence, Thinking-Based Learning (TBL), and web-based resources. Among other contributions, these technological resources support the consolidation and diversification of assessment practices, enabling the transformation of pedagogical mediation in response to school-related challenges and tensions, while fostering formative assessment centered on students' holistic development.

Likewise, as illustrated in Figure 2, a relationship emerges among pedagogical mediation, assessment strategies, and web-based resources. This situation can be understood through the reciprocity among these concepts within classroom settings, where the web has become a didactic resource that contributes to the educational process. For instance, teachers can guide students in the use of online resources by teaching them how to search for relevant information, evaluate sources, and use digital tools to solve problems. Therefore, in line with learning assessment, teaching practices in this field are beginning to move beyond the traditional, punitive, and standardized approaches perpetuated over time, toward practices that may be understood in terms of innovation, participation, dynamism, and meaningful learning within the teaching process.

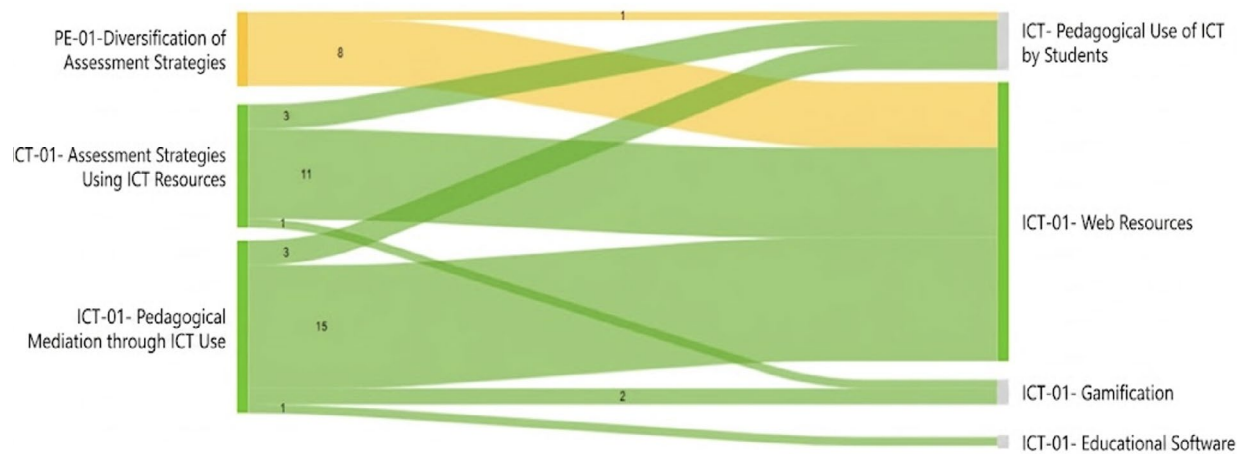


Figure 2. Representative Framework of Pedagogical Mediation and the Diversification of Assessment Strategies.

For this reason, Etchegaray *et al.* (2018) and Lucas and Arana-Cuenca (2022) highlight that ICT-supported assessment methodologies generate a particularly strong sense of motivation among students, as their use brings learners closer, through interactive means, to a formative, playful, multimodal, and challenging educational process aimed at knowledge consolidation and competency development. This approach not only fosters engagement and participation, but also facilitates personalized learning by allowing students to progress at their own pace while receiving immediate and targeted feedback. Ultimately, this improves academic outcomes and prepares students to face the challenges of the twenty-first century, an aspect which, according to Redondo-Trujillo *et al.* (2025), is made possible through the pedagogical impact of Universal Design for

Learning (UDL) and ICT on the inclusion and learning processes of primary school students.

However, limitations in the access to and use of these types of tools constitute a problem that should not only be analyzed and addressed through public policy, but also requires ongoing reflection on and appropriation of teachers' professional practice in order to strengthen the possibilities that emerge from them, as well as to reveal the challenges and tensions that arise when attempting to integrate these resources into classroom settings.

The advancement of technologies in the world and in the everyday lives of younger generations is an undeniable reality. However, providing access and equipment alone is not enough. State and institutional investment is required, translating into connectivity, spaces for reflection, paid teacher training, and interdisciplinary projects that enhance the use of these tools. (Linne, 2020, p. 11) [own translation].

Consequently, access to these resources becomes significantly limited when schools adopt a restrictive stance toward their use and teachers lack sufficient training for their implementation. This situation may become even more complex when such tools are simply unavailable to support pedagogical practice. In contrast, Benavides *et al.* (2023) state that "[...] it is essential for teachers and students to have a robust curricular structure that encompasses the main forms of learning related to the technological and digital world, with clearly defined objectives regarding what is to be achieved and how it can be accomplished" (p. 12, own translation). To this end, ICT should become an integral part of teachers' everyday praxis, not only in terms of their use and ethical and appropriate management, but also in guiding a situated curriculum that contributes to the construction of meaningful learning experiences.

Learning Diversity

For primary school teachers, discussing the diversity woven into classroom settings entails recognizing the responsibility of schools and teaching practices to address the singularity of learning processes, based on the acknowledgment of both the collective and individual characteristics of students, as well as the demands these place on teaching (MEN, 2021). Within this context, teachers are required to develop an understanding of students' learning styles, prior knowledge, and educational needs. Such understanding makes it possible to adopt didactic strategies and assessment practices aimed at designing inclusive learning

environments. This was reflected in the accounts of several teachers, who stated that their initial professional training was not grounded in special education and that addressing diversity represents a contemporary challenge for which they require pedagogical, didactic, and professional development.

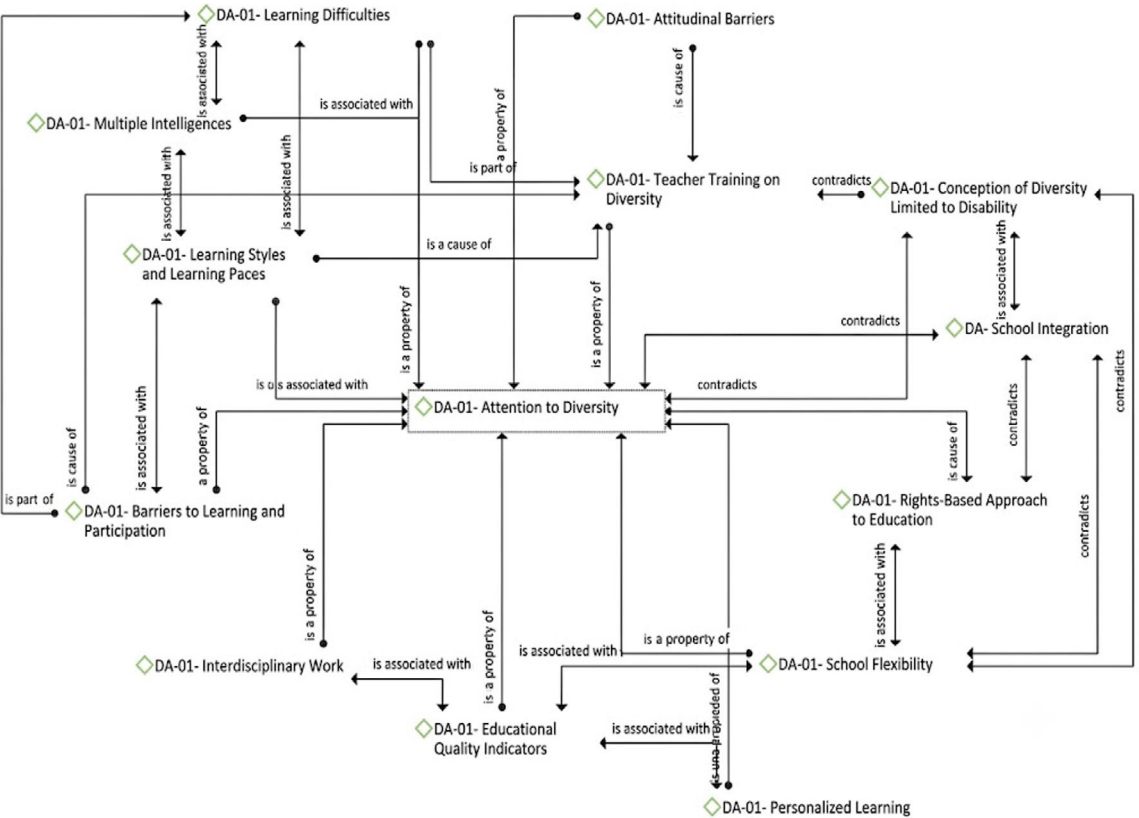


Figure 3. Primary School Teachers' Correlations Regarding the Concept of "Learning Diversity"

As shown in Figure 3, the data reveal several fundamental categorical correlations that contribute to understanding pedagogical and assessment dynamics from the perspective of inclusive education. Attention to diversity is directly related to learning paces and learning styles, as well as to multiple intelligences and the importance of recognizing the attitudinal and participation barriers faced by students. Likewise, school integration appears to be in tension with the rights-based approach in education and with school flexibilization in relation to personalized learning.

Consequently, and considering the correlations established in Figure 3, teacher education in the field of diversity emerges as a fundamental aspect in

determining the development of inclusive educational practices. On the one hand, when teachers' training is largely limited by prejudices and imaginaries that translate into attitudinal barriers, diversity and inclusion tend to be conceived solely in terms of disability. Educational practice is then restricted to the attempt to create strategies aimed at "normalizing" students and reducing the perception of their individuality to characteristics interpreted from the standpoint of deficiency, in terms of differentialism, as described by Skliar (2019), whereby the "different" is viewed through the fallacy of defectiveness and therefore requires "adjustment."

Similarly, Figure 3 presents categories associated with attention to diversity, highlighting the importance of teachers' understanding of learning paces and learning styles, as well as their theoretical and practical mastery of multiple intelligences, in addition to their recognition of students' attitudinal and participatory barriers. The figure also addresses the school integration of diversity, identifying key elements such as a rights-based approach to education, school flexibilization, and personalized learning. Furthermore, Figure 4 illustrates a series of complex interrelationships among diverse factors affecting education and diversity, revealing learning difficulties as a multifaceted issue that requires a comprehensive approach.

This situation promotes assessment practices that reinforce barriers to learning and participation by perpetuating a praxis detached from the flexibilization and diversification of teaching strategies. In other words, a single standardized method of assessment is imposed, to which all students are expected to adapt. As a result, educational assumptions that have historically run counter to inclusive education and attention to diversity become normalized, such as the school integration approach, which, according to Marín (2019), arbitrarily promotes the idea that students themselves must adapt to a static and exclusionary curriculum.

In relation to Figure 4, when teachers understand that diversity extends beyond disability, as proposed by Booth and Ainscow (2000) through the perspective of the Index for Inclusion, it becomes possible to foster the deployment of pedagogical and didactic resources aimed at recognizing and valuing difference as an opportunity for learning and knowledge construction. This includes attention to different learning paces and styles, educational approaches to multiple intelligences, and the importance of identifying and supporting students with or without learning difficulties in order to minimize, or even eliminate, barriers to learning and participation within schools (Ainscow, 2019; Azorín & Arnaiz, 2013).

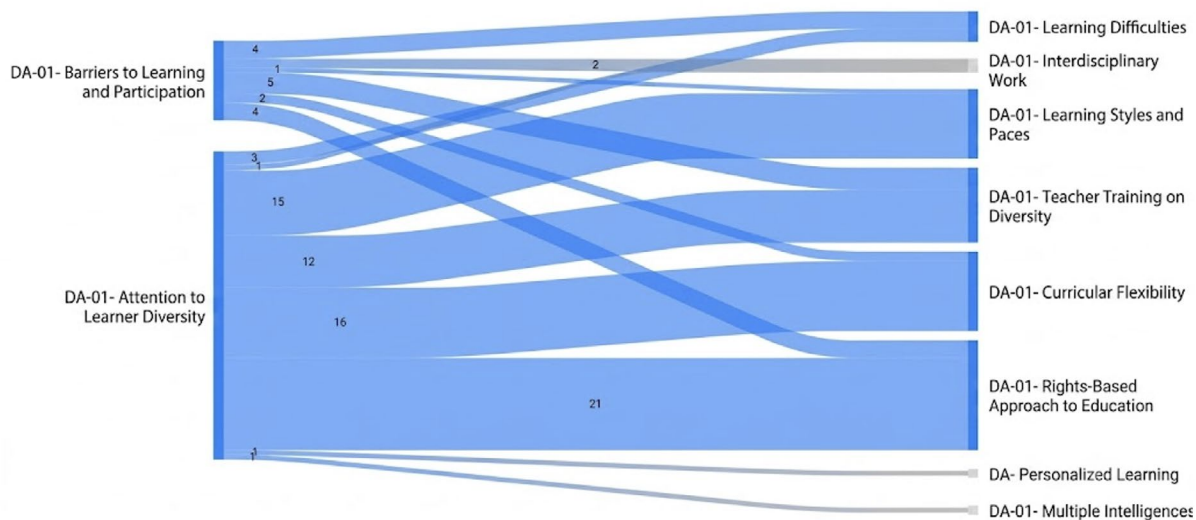


Figure 4. *Correlations Among Primary School Teachers Regarding the Concept of "Attention to Diversity" and Barriers to Learning and Participation.*

In line with Figures 3 and 4, sensitivity toward diversity equips teachers with openness toward inclusion and commits them to mediating their praxis through flexibilization as a pillar of inclusive education. Likewise, the principles of attention to diversity are identified as a key factor in improving educational quality indicators within the framework of a rights-based approach, which demands teacher education and professional development aligned with the interests, particularities, and motivations that characterize students according to their own worldviews.

For this reason, human development-oriented education must begin with the recognition of others through their own singularities and with a commitment to personalized teaching practices that respond to educational demands. This requires teachers' openness to interdisciplinary work that enables them to provide assertive pedagogical, didactic, and assessment support for different learning paces and styles, multiple intelligences, and the learning difficulties commonly found in classrooms. These aspects enrich and strengthen educational processes through diversity while also minimizing barriers to learning and participation.

Assessment Practices

Within the field of education, assessment practices can be understood as a matter of great relevance for both students' learning processes and the improvement of teachers' praxis. As initially illustrated in Figure 5, teachers' conceptions of assessment determine both its implementation and its purpose within educational processes (Salinas, 2016), as well as the broader educational approach and the interpretation of educational guidelines.

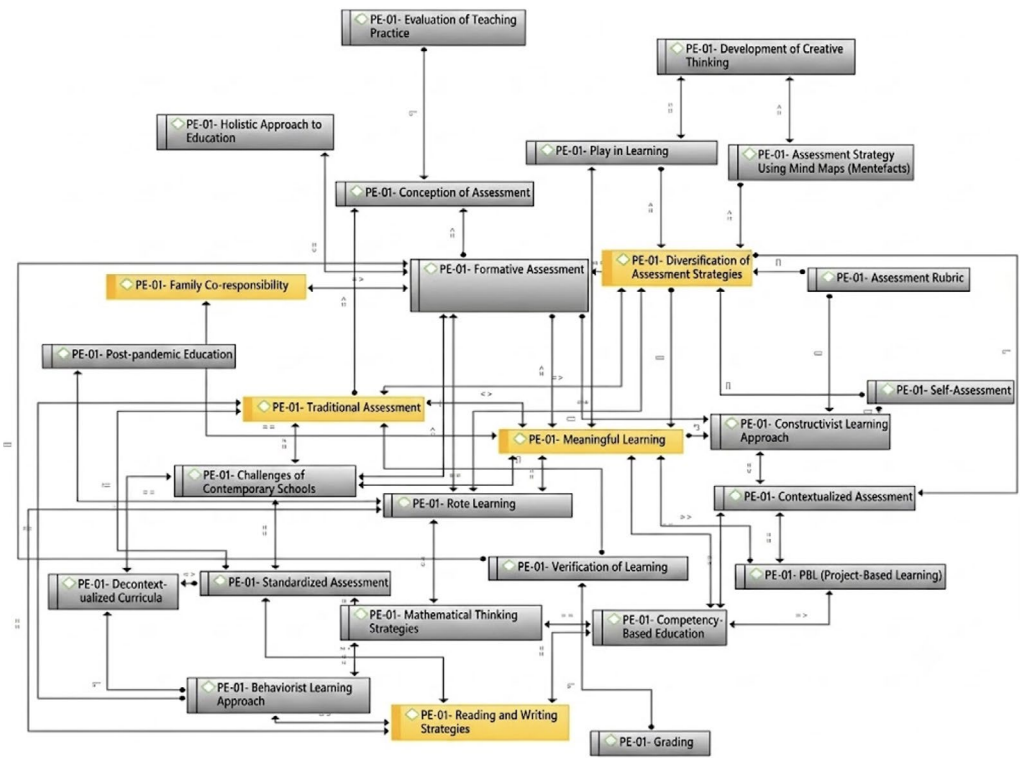


Figure 5. Primary School Teachers' Correlations Regarding the Concept of "Assessment Practices".

As illustrated in Figure 5, a dual panorama emerges through which two major perspectives that have shaped learning assessment throughout the development of educa of mechanized and standardized assessment resources that distort the multidimensional and complex nature of learning (Gelpi, 2001).

This perspective results in the establishment and implementation of decontextualized curricula (Center for Applied Special Technology [CAST], 2011) focused exclusively on behaviorist educational approaches that narrow the holistic understanding of education. Such approaches overlook the contemporary

challenge of generating teaching and assessment processes that foster meaningful learning within competency-based education, since assessment practices are conceived merely as mechanisms for verifying students' performance in reading, writing, and logical-mathematical skills.

On the other hand, the educational approach of contemporary schools, which conceive learning from a constructivist perspective, focuses on understanding assessment as a driving force within the educational process and seeks to transform assessment practices so that they respond to the formative, holistic, and process-oriented nature of education. In this regard, the MEN (2009) argues that formative assessment goes beyond the mere measurement or grading of learning, giving rise instead to a hermeneutic exercise that expands the limits of traditional understandings of students and broadens assessment as a process placed at the service of education.

Indeed, and as an issue brought to light by the COVID-19 pandemic, Walss (2021) argues that teachers have recognized the urgent need to diversify their assessment strategies in order to address diversity and promote assessment practices contextualized to the realities and demands of society. In this way, the integration of ICT into classroom settings emerges as an opportunity to strengthen teachers' professional practice, enrich curricula, and transform teaching and assessment practices in coherence with the technological advances that challenge and place schools under tension.

Some of the main ICT-mediated assessment strategies identified by primary school teachers (Figure 5) include the use of assessment rubrics (Calle-Álvarez, 2020; Montoya & Campbell, 2022), web-based resources such as gamification (Ordiz, 2017; Tirado-Olivares *et al.*, 2021), and assessment strategies mediated through mind maps or conceptual frameworks aimed at stimulating the development of creative thinking. These strategies facilitate the collection of data regarding students' progress, enabling teachers to conduct detailed and personalized monitoring of their performance. Moreover, such strategies not only make the assessment process more dynamic and engaging for students, but also provide teachers with valuable information for decision-making, allowing them to design and implement alternative teaching approaches according to students' individual needs.

Likewise, the importance of self-assessment can be observed as a valid and meaningful evaluative exercise for students, as it enables them to assume a leading role in decision-making processes related to their own learning. At the same time, the teacher's responsibility to assess their own pedagogical practice is highlighted, prioritizing the formative dimension of assessment, which contributes to the strengthening of their professional practice in accordance with the particularities of the educational context.

Figure 6 reveals direct relationships between formative assessment and the diversification of strategies for monitoring student learning, family support, meaningful learning, and the guidance of reading and writing practices. It becomes evident that the concept of “formative assessment” is not an isolated matter, but rather one that must be interconnected with different school-related dimensions that are essential for fulfilling established formative purposes within a competency-based educational framework that transcends grading as a limited view of assessment practices.

From a holistic perspective on education, the relevance of the different educational stakeholders in students’ development is reaffirmed, while students themselves are recognized as active subjects in the construction of meaningful learning. This perspective reinforces, for example, the importance of comprehensive development and support in literacy practices during primary education from the standpoint of formative assessment.

Illustrating the foregoing, one primary school teacher described how her teaching practices in the early grades have proven effective due to the way she succeeds in engaging families in the educational process, taking advantage of resources such as social media and web-based platforms to promote reading comprehension and text production through interactive and participatory experiences involving the family environment.

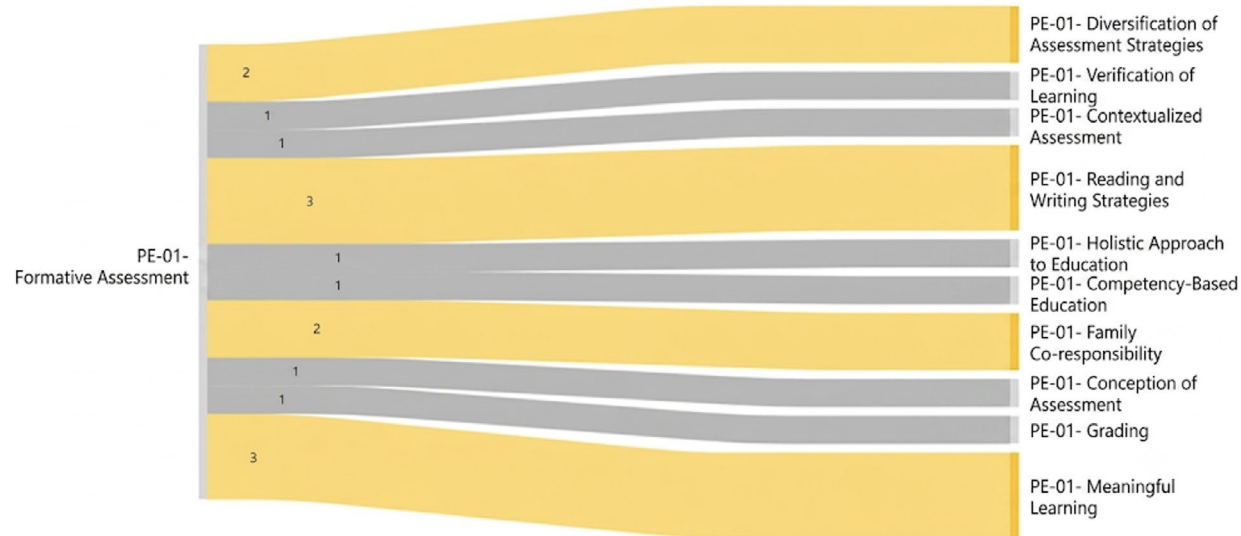
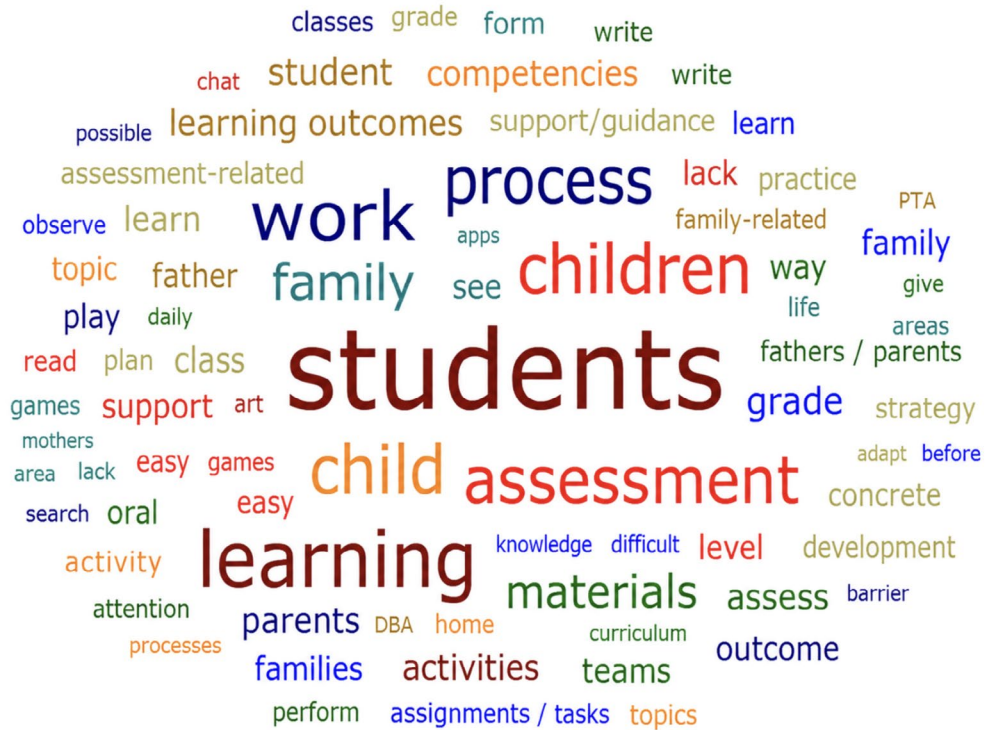


Figure 6. Primary School Teachers' Perceptions of the Concept of “Formative Assessment” and Its Main Characteristics.

In Figure 7, the terms “students,” “assessment,” “children,” and “process” emerge as key concepts when discussing formative assessment, as they place learners at the center of pedagogical practice. Accordingly, the figure reveals the main characteristics of primary school teachers who seek to orient their assessment practices toward the formative and humanistic dimensions of education. Such an approach aims to achieve, according to Mollo-Florez and Medina-Zuta (2020), the development of comprehensive pedagogical proposals that recognize the importance of flexibilizing assessment strategies within the framework of acknowledging learning diversity in the classroom. This implies adopting approaches that value not only students’ academic knowledge, but also their socio-emotional and creative abilities, promoting continuous and contextualized assessment practices that reflect different learning paces and styles. In this way, teachers become facilitators who, through empathy and adaptability, foster an inclusive and equitable environment in which every student has the opportunity to reach their full potential and develop essential competencies for future life.

Finally, assessment is as important as learning itself and requires that pedagogical and didactic reflections focus on the ways in which this process is being carried out, understanding it as a highly relevant complement to the contextualized and meaningful education of learners. Moreover, students can be recognized as the central axis of the educational act, while families are acknowledged as indispensable sources of support under the principle of shared responsibility for multidimensional education.



which in certain ways become intertwined within educational practice. One example is periodic testing, which may be reduced to grading practices, but which simultaneously serves as a resource for guiding and improving teaching and learning processes according to teachers' evaluative analyses. The study also highlights an approach centered on competency development, aimed at situating learning within the realities and social demands that concern schools.

Thus, discussing inclusive educational and assessment practices implemented in classrooms by teachers directly entails recognizing ICT as indispensable resources for ensuring acknowledgment of student diversity in approaches to learning. For this reason, the teachers participating in the study emphasized the need to strengthen their professional practice in matters of inclusion and in the management of these technological tools in order to respond to the demands and rapid transformations occurring in society, transformations that schools must confront based on the understanding that such resources are increasingly present in students' everyday lives and can promote relevant and contextualized education.

In this sense, ICT become a means of transforming primary school teachers' perceptions and assessment practices from a constructivist perspective that fosters teaching and learning processes committed to educational quality and relevance. However, teachers also highlight the need to facilitate access to these technologies through educational investment, both in terms of accessibility and affordability for families, students, and teachers, with the aim of promoting educational innovation.

Attention to learning diversity within school contexts is an issue that must be analyzed and understood from a rights-based perspective that goes beyond disability-centered approaches. In this way, space is created for reflection and for a pedagogical commitment that positions teachers to value differences as a factor that enriches the human condition and transforms the educational act when conceived through the identification and elimination of attitudinal barriers that obscure the humanizing dimension of an education designed in and for diversity. In other words, the study promotes the importance of educational practices framed within inclusive education in order to foster respect for human dignity through the recognition of each student's unique potential. Likewise, it seeks to address human diversity and its implications for learning processes as a pressing issue in order to prevent the exclusion and segregation of difference within school contexts.

At the same time, the study revealed the need to generate further reflection on the importance of assessment practices in primary education and on the ways assessment may significantly influence the different forms of learning that teachers identify in everyday school life. Such learning processes may either foster and transform learning toward a more personalized and meaningful approach or, conversely, continue perpetuating mechanistic learning through exclusionary

educational practices that fail to engage with current social demands and competencies, while validating assessment methods grounded in memorization and decontextualized processes that reinforce educational inequalities. This runs counter to the arguments proposed by Jiménez-Becerra (2022), who recognizes the role of technologies in improving schools, enhancing quality of life, and developing human skills and abilities.

Ethnographic research proved to be an appropriate methodological option because it enabled extensive dialogue with the teachers who agreed to participate in the study. However, these findings cannot be generalized to other educational contexts due to the specificity of both the study and its methodological design. Consequently, future research is encouraged to consider the findings of this study as a starting point for designing and developing research initiatives that contribute to the epistemological consolidation of the field from different qualitative and quantitative perspectives capable of providing a holistic approach to the object of study.

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Challenges to the Consolidation of the Ethnic-Territorial Rights of Black Communities in the Colombian Pacific*

[English version]

Desafíos para la consolidación del derecho étnico-territorial de comunidades negras en el Pacífico colombiano

Desafios à consolidação do direito étnico-territorial das comunidades negras no Pacífico colombiano

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Abstract

Objective: To critically analyze the territorial conflicts that challenge the protection of the ethnic-territorial rights of Black communities in Colombia, as established in Law 70 of 1993. **Methodology:** This qualitative case study focused on COCOMACIA (Spanish acronym for Consejo Comunitario Mayor de la Asociación Campesina Integral del Río Atrato). Data were collected between 2021 and 2024, primarily through semi-structured interviews with representatives of Community Councils. This was complemented by document review and participant observation recorded in field diaries. The analysis relied on qualitative content analysis to identify thematic patterns. **Results:** Externally imposed visions of development erode the ethnic-territorial construction of these communities. This erosion takes concrete form in conflicts with the State, armed actors, and economic agents. These tensions hinder the full realization of the territorial rights secured since 1991, subordinating the communities' own cultural and territorial understandings to external interests. **Conclusion:** Despite legal advances, the consolidation of these rights continues to face structural challenges. Although recent government policies offer grounds for hope, their translation into concrete actions that respect local autonomy is crucial to ensuring that territory remains the basis of ethnic identity and community continuity.

Key words: Afro-descendants; Ethnic groups; Rights of special groups; Cultural rights; Social conflicts (obtained from the UNESCO Thesaurus).

Resumen

Objetivo: analizar, desde una perspectiva crítica, los conflictos territoriales que desafiaban la garantía del derecho étnico-territorial de las comunidades negras en Colombia, según lo establecido en la Ley 70 de 1993. **Metodología:** este estudio de caso cualitativo se centró en la organización COCOMACIA (Consejo Comunitario Mayor de la Asociación Campesina Integral del Río Atrato). La recolección de datos, realizada entre 2021 y 2024, provino principalmente de entrevistas semiestructuradas con representantes de Consejos Comunitarios. Esto se complementó con la revisión documental y la observación participante, cuyos hallazgos se consignaron en diarios de campo. El análisis se fundamentó en el contenido cualitativo para identificar patrones temáticos. **Resultados:** las visiones de desarrollo impuestas externamente erosionan la construcción étnico-territorial de las comunidades. Dicha erosión se materializa en conflictos con el Estado, actores armados y agentes económicos. Estas tensiones obstaculizan la plena realización de los derechos territoriales adquiridos desde 1991, subordinando la concepción cultural y territorial propia de las comunidades a intereses

externos. **Conclusiones:** a pesar de los avances legales, la consolidación de estos derechos enfrenta desafíos estructurales. Aunque las nuevas políticas gubernamentales son una esperanza, su transformación en acciones concretas que respeten la autonomía local es crucial para garantizar que el territorio se mantenga como base de la identidad étnica y la pervivencia comunitaria.

Palabras clave: afrodescendientes; grupo étnico; derechos de grupos especiales; derechos culturales; conflicto social (obtenidos del tesoro de la UNESCO).

Resumo

Objetivo: analisar, a partir de uma perspectiva crítica, os conflitos territoriais que desafiam a garantia do direito étnico-territorial das comunidades negras (comunidades afro-colombianas) na Colômbia, conforme estabelecido na Lei 70 de 1993. **Metodologia:** este estudo de caso qualitativo concentrou-se na organização COCOMACIA. A coleta de dados, realizada entre 2021 e 2024, baseou-se principalmente em entrevistas semiestruturadas com representantes de Conselhos Comunitários. Isso foi complementado por análise documental e observação participante, com registros em diários de campo. A análise fundamentou-se no conteúdo qualitativo para identificar padrões temáticos. **Resultados:** as visões de desenvolvimento impostas externamente enfraquecem a construção étnico-territorial das comunidades. Essa erosão se manifesta em conflitos com o Estado, atores armados e agentes econômicos. Essas tensões dificultam a plena realização dos direitos territoriais reconhecidos desde 1991, subordinando as concepções culturais e territoriais das comunidades a interesses externos. **Conclusões:** apesar dos avanços legais, a consolidação desses direitos enfrenta desafios estruturais. Embora as novas políticas governamentais representem uma esperança, sua transformação em ações concretas que respeitem a autonomia local é essencial para garantir que o território permaneça como base da identidade étnica e da continuidade comunitária.

Palavras-chave: afrodescendentes; grupo étnico; direitos de grupos especiais; direitos culturais; conflito social (obtidos do tesouro da UNESCO).

Introduction

Since the 1980s, ethnic groups in Latin America, including Indigenous and Afro-descendant peoples, have mobilized more forcefully in pursuit of recognition of their cultural identity (Areiza, 2022). Supported by International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention No. 169 (1989), which protects Indigenous and tribal peoples, this mobilization has driven constitutional reforms in several countries, including Brazil, Ecuador, Bolivia, Honduras, and Colombia. Ethnic-territorial recognition of Afro-descendant peoples varies from country to country (Hooker, 2008); in Ecuador, for example, progress has been greater, with collective rights over ancestral lands and the creation of territorial constituencies, thus surpassing Colombia in this regard (Juárez, 2023). These movements protect Indigenous and Afro-descendant communities, their territories, and their ecosystems, while also recognizing their productive practices, traditional knowledge, and relationship with nature (Cano & Lozano, 2021, p. 848).

In Colombia, Law 70 of 1993 recognized the right of Black communities to collective land ownership in the Pacific region, thereby guaranteeing protection of their cultural and territorial identity (Offen, 2009; Nates, 2020). This recognition marked a milestone in the struggle for their cultural and territorial rights (Coronado, 2006; Clavijo, 2016; Cuesta & Hinestroza, 2017; Hoffmann, 2002; Ortiz & Mendoza, 2012; Restrepo, 2013). It also made the development of governance arrangements aligned with their traditional practices possible (Oslender, 2003).

Despite this recognition, state efforts to guarantee these rights have been limited by political and economic factors (Pantoja, 2014). In addition, Black communities face internal challenges, since they must align their demands with those of other Afro-descendant actors across Latin America (Antón & Santacruz, 2023) and address the urban-rural divide in those demands (Hooker, 2008).

The *2022-2026 Development Plan for Black, Raizal, and Palenquero Communities, Entitled Rights, Territory and Cultural Identity to Strengthen Life*, proposes a new social contract and a reconfiguration of relations between the State and these populations. This context gives renewed relevance to the present research, as it represents a critical juncture aimed at overcoming decades of ineffective formal recognition. The plan acknowledges cultural identity and differentiated forms of territorial appropriation, incorporating elements of worldview and social organization to guarantee rights and foster peaceful environments (Departamento Nacional de Planeación, 2022, p. 10). This policy breaks with earlier frameworks of ethnic-territorial recognition and is further reinforced by the political representation of an Afro-descendant vice president, marking an advance in racial inclusion in Colombia.

Within this framework, this article analyzes how territorial conflicts, which configure collective spaces as plural and contested territories (Lara-Largo, 2019; Zambrano, 2001), emerge as the principal challenges to the consolidation of the ethnic-territorial rights of Black communities. Specifically, the analysis focuses on the tensions generated by three key actors: the State, armed groups, and economic agents. It also examines internal organizational challenges and the processes of deterritorialization that affect material territory, as well as political, economic, and symbolic dimensions (García, 2017).

These dynamics are examined through the case of COCOMACIA (Spanish acronym for Consejo Comunitario Mayor de la Asociación Campesina Integral del Río Atrato), which, as the largest collective territory in Colombia and one of the earliest experiences of recognition following the 1991 reform (Restrepo, 2013), serves as an essential barometer for measuring the real effectiveness of these rights. Since the 1980s, COCOMACIA has defended its ethnic identity, cultural autonomy, and territorial self-governance. However, the consolidation of its constitutionally supported ethnic-territorial rights has remained limited. Its case in the Colombian Pacific shows that relations among diverse rationalities and territorial conceptions are not grounded in a dialogue among forms of knowledge, but are instead imposed by those who hold power (Porto-Gonçalves, 2009).

Based on document review, interviews, and direct observation in the territory of COCOMACIA, this article argues that the ethnic-territorial recognition of Black communities, which includes collective land ownership and their system of values, is constrained by the interests of other actors that affect their political, economic, and social development. The following question therefore arises: How do territorial disputes with other actors, who appropriate the territory in differentiated ways, affect the consolidation of the ethnic-territorial rights of Black communities in their collective spaces?

To answer this question, the article is organized as follows. First, it presents a historical context of the spatial occupation of Black communities in the middle Atrato River basin, between Chocó and Antioquia, and the consolidation of their right to collective ownership from an ethnic-territorial perspective. Second, it analyzes the principal actors interacting in the territory of COCOMACIA and their differentiated mechanisms of territorial appropriation, based on Henri Lefebvre's thesis on the production of space (2013). Third, it examines the territory of COCOMACIA as a spatiality under tension, where conflicts with the worldview of Black communities affect their very existence. Finally, the conclusion examines how the historical configuration of these contested spaces continues, after three decades, to obstruct the materialization of the mandates of the Constitution and Law 70 of 1993, while assessing the urgency of overcoming

these factual barriers so that the new promises to “strengthen life” are not similarly frustrated.

Methodology

This study is framed as a descriptive qualitative case study aimed at exploring contemporary phenomena in their real-world contexts, where the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly defined (Yin, 2018, p. 39). The methodological design comprised five phases: planning, preparation of the recording process, data collection, data analysis, and report writing (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007). Data were collected between 2021 and 2024 through document review, participant observation recorded in field diaries, and semi-structured interviews with social actors and representatives of Community Councils. Purposive sampling was used to select six key informants – specifically leaders from the Community Councils of La Boba (Bojayá, Chocó) and Buchado (Vigía del Fuerte, Antioquia) because of their active role in territorial defense and their strategic location within the conflict zone.

Data were processed through qualitative content analysis, using systematic inductive coding in which categories emerged directly from the material (Schreier, 2012). This approach facilitated the identification of core themes and patterns through in-depth interpretation of the data. The interpretive analytical process, applied to both documents and interviews, is grounded in the methodological proposals of Patton (2015), Miles *et al.* (2014), and Coffey and Atkinson (1996). These tools made addressing the contextual conditions relevant to understanding the phenomenon under study possible.

Results

Presentation of the Case Study: Territory, Law, and Occupation in COCOMACIA

Three foundations structure the context of dispute in COCOMACIA. The first is the history of the occupation of its territory. The second is the legal framework that defines ownership for the collective. The third is the profile of

the organization as a case study. This section addresses each of these elements on the basis of document review.

History of Settlement in the Atrato Basin.

The historical construction of territory in the middle Atrato basin can be divided into three periods: a colonial insular mining formation (1600 to 1850) based on enslaved labor; a phase of dispersed agricultural colonization following manumission, and a contemporary stage of nucleation in kin-based settlements (Aprile-Gnisset & Mosquera, 1998).

These models of spatial distribution correspond to rural settlement patterns on the Pacific coast. These settlement arrangements are shaped by a traditional family-based system of relationships that is directly reflected in ways of inhabiting and organizing space (Mosquera, 2010).

The Right to Collective Ownership of Land.

As part of the Latin American multicultural turn (Clavijo, 2016), ethnic-territorial recognition in Colombia, driven by ILO Convention 169 and the 1991 Constitution (Restrepo, 2013), resulted in the collective titling of more than five million hectares to 157 Community Councils in the Pacific region (Romaña *et al.*, 2010). However, the validity of this legal framework remains under debate because it excludes rights for Black communities in urban areas and in rural areas outside the Pacific region, such as the inter-Andean valleys (Romaña *et al.*, 2010; Hoffmann, 2016).

Figure 1 shows the spatial scope of this legislation. The “Collective Titles” (brown) form a corridor along the Pacific coast that coexists with Indigenous Reservations (green). This configuration, intersected by municipal and departmental boundaries, foreshadows the tensions between ethnic governance and state administration analyzed in this study. This territorial distribution reflects the complexities involved in implementing the right to collective ownership in the Colombian context.

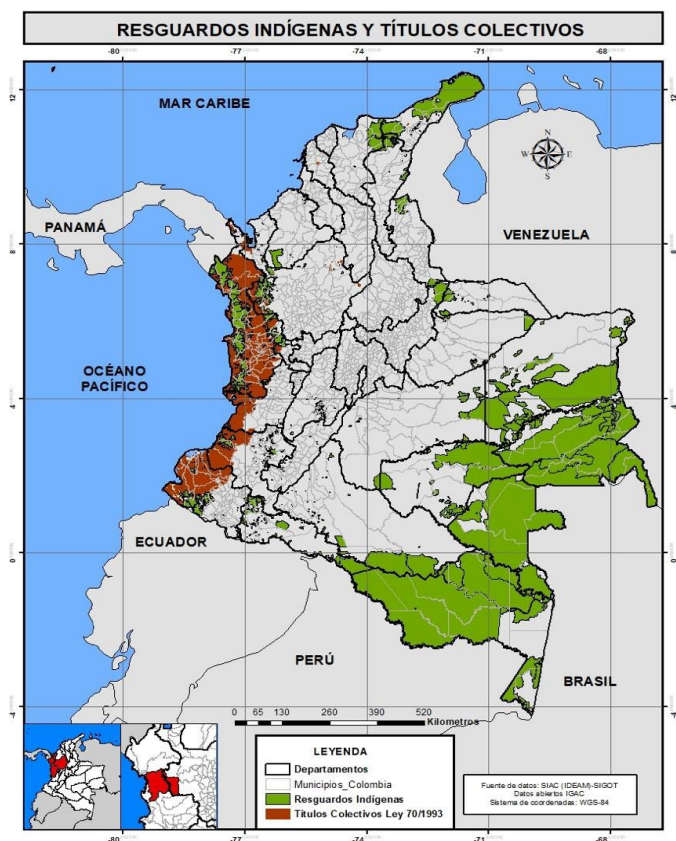


Figure 1. *Indigenous Reservations and Collective Titles.*

Profile of the Collective Territory of COCOMACIA.

COCOMACIA exercises self-government in the Atrato basin (Chocó and Antioquia). Its influence extends beyond the regional scale through its demands for ethnic rights and ecosystem protection. The organization represents the struggle for autonomy, equity, and the preservation of identity, factors that underpin the protection of territorial rights (Dominguez, 2015; Escobar, 2010; Restrepo, 2013).

As a safeguard of Afro-descendant heritage, COCOMACIA integrates a model of territorial autonomy with the governance of natural resources. Its work also extends to the defense of human rights and the promotion of peace in

According to the *COCOMACIA's Territorial and Environmental Land-Use Plan (2016)*, its territory is located in the Colombian Pacific region, in the middle basin of the Atrato River, encompassing Urrao, Murindó, and Vigía del Fuerte in Antioquia, and Atrato, Bojayá, Carmen de Darien, Medio Atrato, and Quibdó in Chocó. It received its collective title in 1997 (INCORA Resolution 4566), which made it the largest collective territory in Colombia (722,510 hectares). For administrative purposes, the title is divided into 124 local community councils, each with its own internal regulations and operating from social, productive, and political perspectives. These councils are distributed across nine zones and are home to approximately 45,000 inhabitants.

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The Production of Space in COCOMACIA

This section analyzes the main actors in the territory of COCOMACIA and their mechanisms of territorial appropriation: the policies of the Colombian State, illegal armed actors, and timber and mining extraction companies. It highlights the contradictions between these mechanisms and the territorial representations of the Black communities of COCOMACIA. It also details how the territorial conceptions of these actors generate tension with the rationalities of Black communities.

Differentiating between “space” and “territory” suggests that the latter tends to transcend geographic abstraction, insofar as it is constituted through social relations (Ramírez, 2004; Pérez & Uribe, 2016). The classical definition of “territory” integrates delimitation and control (Aceves, cited in Pérez & Uribe, 2016, p. 537), while Hoffmann (2007) defines it, from the standpoint of ethnicity, as a sphere of emancipation that consolidates identity (Hadad & Gómez, 2007). This perspective can facilitate analysis of territorial construction in Black communities through the human-nature dialectic.

Lefebvre's theory of the production of space (2013) suggests that territory results from historical processes and social relations materialized in spatiotemporal forms (Hadad & Gómez, 2007). This is articulated through the triad of conceived, lived, and perceived space, whose interactions tend toward conflict. In this regard, Baringo (2013) proposes a political and ideological dialectic marked by tension between representations of space (the technical-bureaucratic sphere) and spaces of representation, defined as lived space directly appropriated by social subjects (p. 125).

Understanding territorial conflicts requires examining how actors produce space and construct territory through everyday life. In Black communities, these arrangements are refracted through what Thame (2023) terms *organic blackness*, which helps explain everyday experiences in collective spaces under tension with economic actors. This may lead communities to resist capitalist logic through a *counter-space* (Lefebvre, cited in Oslender, 2010), in which space is produced in ways that configure the relationship with the environment as both sustenance and a pillar of territorial life (Martínez-Alier *et al.*, 2016).

Configuration of Conflict.

The study of conflict requires examining actors, their interests, strategies, and resources (Londoño, 2018), since tensions tend to arise from incompatible perceptions and cultural differences that can undermine mutual capacities (Gómez,

2009, p. 132). In COCOMACIA, the category of “territorial conflict” must be approached with caution because of the diverse existing perspectives (Hoffmann, 2010), since the proliferation of disputes seems to respond to concern for the security of the environment in the face of projects promoted by supralocal agents (Nel-lo, cited in Cruz, 2008). These interventions, marked by a utilitarian vision, often privilege the capitalist exploitation of mining and forest resources, extensive cattle ranching, and monocultures such as palm oil (Hoffmann, 2010; Pérez, 2004).

Territorial conflicts, therefore, tend to be understood as tensions between public administration and citizenship over opposing interests (Cruz, 2008), giving rise to organizational responses of resistance and re-existence (Mosquera & Tobar, 2021; Mosquera, 2020). These actions confront the extractivist model of territorial appropriation in Latin America (Hurtado, 2021) through the ethnization of space (Restrepo & Rojas, 2004; Lopez, 2014) and through forms of opposition to dominant conceptions of territory (Moreno, 2013).

In the territory of COCOMACIA, a territorial plurality converges (Haesbaert, 2013; Zambrano, 2001) in which state authority coexists with the control of extractive companies and armed groups. In the face of these pressures, Black communities construct their territoriality through everyday and ancestral practices that give social content to inhabited space (Boira, 1998; García, 2017). This dynamic reflects a tension between a rationality that conceives territory as an economic resource and source of wealth, and another that understands it as shelter, a place of encounter, and the foundation of community life (Jimenez & Novoa, 2014, p. 14).

This situation is not unique to COCOMACIA, since a similar dynamic can be observed in *Lagunas de Chacahua* National Park in Oaxaca, Mexico, where the production of Afro-descendant space unfolds in tension between the spatial practices of its inhabitants and the institutional space of representation (Ruiz, 2019).

The Collective Territory: A Relationship Under Tension

The collective territory of COCOMACIA exists in a constant state of tension. This arises from a collision of visions regarding space and its resources. On the one hand is the community’s perspective. On the other is the logic imposed by external actors such as the State, illegal armed groups, and extraction companies such as Unión Natural. The intervention of the latter modifies the use, control, and meaning of territory, thereby violating ethnic-territorial rights (Romero *et al.*, 2017).

This local struggle is not an isolated case, but rather responds to a broader pattern of expanding neoliberal policies in Latin America. According to Gudynas (2011), this development model imposes a single vision that, by its nature, subordinates or ignores each community's own perspectives. Likewise, according to Hoffmann (2010), the utilitarian and mercantile conception of space prevails in areas affected by capitalist exploitation projects based on a model of accumulation by dispossession (Vélez *et al.*, 2013; Silva, 2016). This contrasts with local communities' systems of territorial construction, which regard territory as a space of resistance (Mosquera, 2020) and as the basis of cultural identity (Nates, 2020). In this context, the tensions in territorial appropriation among the different actors present in COCOMACIA are analyzed below.

Tensions with the Colombian State.

Despite the recognition of ethnic-territorial rights established by Law 70, the settlements of Black communities, known as "Community Councils," continue to be portrayed as homogeneous, backward, marginalized, and underdeveloped spaces. These labels sustain the discourse that introduces and legitimizes a conventional territorial-planning scheme in which institutional bodies such as ministries, autonomous corporations, and municipal governments participate (Estrada *et al.*, 2013; Vélez *et al.*, 2013). Here Lefebvre's tension becomes visible: the State's "conceived space" —technical and homogenizing— is imposed on the community's "lived space," laden with its own meanings, thereby generating conflict.

This institutional interference is reflected in the testimony of Mr. Gilbertico, a member of the collective territory of COCOMACIA, who stated: "Those who are in the offices must change the way they think about us. They bring projects, but everything ends up being done the way they say" (personal communication, June 4, 2021). In the same vein, Marquitos, an active member of the Community Council, stated: "We are not interested in anything other than recognition that we have other ways of doing things" (personal communication, June 1, 2021). The perspective both men criticize is grounded in the standard of Western modernity, which makes viewing the problems of the Third World in a superficial and external manner possible (Solistyani, 2014).

This reveals the differences between governmental bureaucracy and the territorial conceptions of the Black communities of COCOMACIA, generating a disconnect between state regulations and the territorializations defined by the Community Council. This paradox dates back to the 1991 Constitution. On the one hand, it opened the way to recognition of collective ownership. On the other,

it preserved a state-centered logic of territorial planning that clashes with the communities' own vision. This mismatch, as Cely (2018) notes, shifted the focus of the debate from access to land toward models for territorial ordering. The tension is manifested in the contrast between community uses of space and the State's rationality, a clash that exposes the rigidity of the institutional structure (Martínez, 2011).

More recently, another development has further exposed the tensions between the Colombian State and Black communities. This development is related to Judgment T-128/22, which recognizes midwifery as ancestral knowledge and as part of the Nation's cultural heritage. However, according to the United Association of Midwives of the Pacific (Asoparupa), the ruling clearly shows how the practice of this knowledge continues to be a site of conflict with the State, since it is not recognized by the public health system (cited in T-128/22).

To contextualize this point, the article cites a fragment of the response issued by Colombia's Ministry of Health and Social Protection to community demands regarding the prioritization of female and male midwives in the *National Vaccination Plan during the COVID-19 Pandemic*: "Midwifery was not found as a higher education program in the National Higher Education Information System (SNIES)" (Minsalud, 2021, cited in T-128/22). This response reveals the tensions and suggests a conflict between Black communities and the Colombian State.

In the same vein, elements of COCOMACIA's political position are presented, as expressed during its annual general assembly held December 8-11, 2021, in Beté, the municipal seat of Medio Atrato. At this meeting, COCOMACIA denounced before the national and international community that state and multinational interests had turned its territory into a theater of war. It identified as danger factors the presence of, and dispute among, armed actors (paramilitary groups, the National Liberation Army [ELN], and dissident factions of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People's Army [FARC-EP]), the planting of antipersonnel mines, and the exploitation of resources without consent or proper management (COCOMACIA, 2021, p. 5).

Interviews with community leaders from the collective territory of COCOMACIA also revealed expressions of tension with the State, particularly in the administrative and political sphere at the municipal level, precisely because of its distinctive location across two departments. Mr. Nevaldo Perea, former legal representative of COCOMACIA and social and community leader in the collective territory, describes the problems of territorial autonomy they face:

The relationship with institutions is complex; there are State institutions that do not accept us as an organization with territorial autonomy. [...] There have been many stumbling blocks with municipal mayors because they do not want

to relinquish power [...]. The other difficulty is related to electoral politics; [...] if a mayor comes to office whom we did not support [...], relations [...] are difficult throughout his term in office. (Perea, personal communication, April 6, 2024).

In the same sense, Mr. Liborio Moreno Perea, representative of Zone Seven on the board of directors of COCOMACIA, refers to the sense of utilitarianism that appears in administrative processes, since they view COCOMACIA as an obstacle to the political projects of local administrations:

The reason municipalities look at us unfavorably is that when [...] the moment of prior consultation arrives, they believe that we should simply give immediate approval [...]. The benefits of the project must be analyzed, but so must its consequences, and this exercise [...] requires resources [...]. On many occasions these situations arise from a lack of knowledge about the processes of Black communities. (Moreno, personal communication, April 2, 2024).

Tensions with Illegal Armed Actors.

In the Pacific region, the armed conflict has a geopolitical dimension in which actors seek to control territory for coca cultivation, transit, or residence (Gonzalez, 2015). Land dispossession in Chocó indicates that drug traffickers, guerrilla groups, and paramilitaries pursue geostrategic objectives that often disregard ethnic-territorial processes (Robledo, 2006). Theoretically, these groups produce a violent “counter-space” that disrupts the communal “lived space,” imposing a logic of control that transforms everyday life.

The impacts of the armed conflict on the collective territories of Black communities, due to disputes over territorial control by illegal armed actors, underscore the gravity of violence against these communities. According to the National Center for Historical Memory (2014, p. 279), “the war waged for territorial control has prevented these communities from exercising the autonomy constitutionally enshrined and ancestrally practiced.” According to the Single Registry of Victims (RUV) (2022) of *Colombia’s Unit for the Victims of the Armed Conflict*, more than one million people identified as Black or Afro-Colombian have suffered some form of victimization as a result of the armed conflict.

The Bellavista massacre (Bojayá) on May 2, 2002, evidences the intensity of the armed conflict and the territorial disputes between the FARC-EP and paramilitary groups in COCOMACIA (García, 2012). This event caused socio-cultural damage by interrupting the traditional transition of adults and elders

into their role as protective ancestors and guardians of wisdom (Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica, 2014, p. 280).

Twenty years after the Bellavista (Bojayá) massacre, and according to observations made in the collective territory of COCOMACIA, the presence of illegal armed actors, especially the ELN and the Gaitanista Self-Defense Forces of Colombia, remains significant, continuing to affect Black communities. Riqui, a peasant from the middle Atrato River basin, stated: “We no longer grow plantains in the streams because these men (illegal armed groups) are very possessive about the areas where they have their crops (coca plantations); if you go there, they think you are a spy and end up killing you” (personal communication, October 17, 2022). This landscape reflects a strong perception of fear among inhabitants, configuring a scenario of deterritorialization (Haesbaert, 2013) and the formation of territories of fear (Oslender, 2002; Victoria, 2001). Thus, territory as the basis for consolidating the ethnic identity of these communities remains under constant tension due to the actions of other actors.

Seeking to keep its territory outside the armed conflict, COCOMACIA made an explicit request to the armed actors present in the area and, within the framework of its political position, proposed, among other matters, the need to “respect the autonomy of the Community Councils regarding the drafting and implementation of the approved internal regulations.” This stance, reiterated in its annual assemblies, has led to international recognition, such as the international Human Rights award granted by the Asociación Pro Derechos Humanos de España (Hernández, 2009b, p. 126). In addition, as part of its efforts to build peace, community-based initiatives have emerged, such as the work of the *Cantaoras de Pogué*, *Voces de Resistencia*, who, as women peacebuilders, contribute to what Hernández (2009a) regards as grassroots civil peace initiatives.

In this regard, judicial strategies have been especially important, as in the case of Judgment T-622 of 2016, issued by the Constitutional Court, which recognizes the Atrato River as a subject of rights. For the Black communities of COCOMACIA, the Atrato River is their ancestral territory and the basic support of material, social, and symbolic life. Thus, for these communities, the notion of “territory” includes languages, customs, rivers, swamps, forests, animals, sacred places, land for cultivation and dwelling, spirits, and traditional authorities. To that extent, they regard territory as a source of life, where the culture of the men and women of Atrato unfolds, with ancestral organizations that shape community life; among the most important are *novenarios* (nine-day mourning rituals), *juntas promortuorias* (community funeral committees), youth groups, and children’s groups, among others.

Tensions with Economic Agents.

Conflicts in the Pacific derive from territorial ambitions that disregard collective titling (Barabas, 2014) and evade the mandatory negotiation required by Law 70 of 1993 (Oslender, 2003), reflecting the clash between mercantile “conceived space” and communal “lived space.” This dynamic consolidates the populations of Chocó as territorialities of resistance, rooted in historical legacy of marooned resistance and strengthened by current legal recognition, whose worldview tends to challenge neoliberal projects through “diverse or relational ontologies” (Escobar, cited in Cuesta & Ramírez, 2024, p. 54).

Consequently, the utilitarian and mercantile conception of space predominates in areas with capitalist exploitation projects. In this context, economic theories of rent and property rights are useful for understanding current dynamics in the collective territories of Black communities (Cairo, 2009). The enormous wealth of the middle basin of the Atrato River, such as timber and gold, arouses great interest for the economic benefit of different actors, including illegal armed groups. Likewise, prior consultation mechanisms also constitute a scenario of tension between Black communities and large private or state-owned companies. Nevaldo Perea, a leader of COCOMACIA, links the exploration of territorial resources to economic interests operating outside community organization:

Before collective ownership was recognized, the territories we inhabit today were nobody's territories; outsiders and people from Antioquia came here and spoke of vacant lands, they felled trees on a large scale, engaged in indiscriminate mining, and no one could say anything to them. Today, we have made gains in that respect, since we are collectively the owners of the territory, and that implies prior consultation. Under current conditions, miners enter the territory because the armed actor brings them in or because the community brings them in; in this, the community councils also bear some responsibility, since some leaders of community councils negotiate in secret to receive some kind of benefit in exchange for allowing these activities. (Personal communication, April 6, 2024).

Likewise, Rosendo Valoyes, former legal representative of COCOMACIA, explains the tension between unilateral economic interest and the need to preserve natural resources:

It is important to remember that COCOMACIA was born out of the defense of natural resources. [...] We do not agree with our resources being destroyed by machinery, because mining inputs poison our rivers [...]. Some difficulties have arisen there because, although the board of directors has instructed that

this should not happen, some local community councils allow it, some under armed pressure, others because of economic incentives. This situation needs to be regulated. (Personal communication, April 6, 2024).

Conclusion

The analysis of COCOMACIA shows that the consolidation of ethnic-territorial rights, despite the achievement represented by Law 70 of 1993, is systematically eroded in practice by power structures that instrumentalize the law. Prior consultation, for example, is reduced to a bureaucratic obstacle rather than being recognized as a governance mechanism (Reyes-Guarnizo & Díaz-Riveros, 2024). This lack of material guarantees leaves communities in a permanent bind between protecting their territory and confronting external pressures.

At the root of this vulnerability lies the antagonistic struggle between an extractivist worldview and the community's logic of survival. This perspective, which resonates with notions of "*buen vivir*"—a relational and community-centered vision of collective well-being—present in other ethnic movements across Latin America (Cubillo *et al.*, 2016), is besieged within a scenario of conflictive multi-territoriality (Haesbaert, 2013) that contests resources, but also strips the community of real control over the meanings attached to space. As a result, the collective territory does not fully consolidate as the basis of cultural identity, because its control and meaning remain permanently disputed.

Thus, territorial conflict in COCOMACIA arises from two different perspectives on territory: one that understands it as shelter and as the fundamental basis of identity, and another that approaches it from a utilitarian and mercantile perspective. This panorama requires an understanding of territorial management grounded in ethnic and cultural diversity, recognizing a form of socio-spatial control (Zambrano, 2010).

The new policies introduced by the Colombian government under the presidency of Gustavo Petro and the vice presidency of Francia Márquez, an Afro-Colombian leader and environmental activist, as expressed in the *Development Plan for Black, Raizal, and Palenquero Communities 2022–2026*, suggest a significant change in guaranteeing the right to territory as the basis of the ethnic identity of Black communities in collective territories.

Indeed, the discourse of that plan coincides with the vision of these communities, since it posits identity as the axis of autonomy and the definition of their own interests. The real test, however, will be whether this approach

moves beyond paper. Ensuring territory as the basis of ethnic identity requires more than intention. It requires a material guarantee of territorial control as the only way to secure the physical and cultural survival of these communities.

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Breaking Myths About the Sexual Rights of Older Adults: A Narrative Literature Review*

[English Version]

Rompiendo mitos sobre los derechos sexuales de los adultos mayores: una revisión narrativa de la literatura

Romperar mitos sobre os direitos sexuais dos adultos mais velhos: uma revisão narrativa da literatura

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Abstract

Objective: Analyze literature on the promotion and guarantee of sexual rights for older adults from a gender-based, intercultural, and intersectional approach. **Methodology:** An exploratory integrative review was conducted in five stages: 1) Problem identification guided by the SPIDER question framework; 2) Bibliographic search according to the PRISMA flowchart; 3) Evaluation of the quality of the studies using SANRA; 4) Analysis using Atlas.ti software; and 5) Presentation of the results. **Results:** Three categories emerged 47 papers: 1) Structural and health system elements focus on service access, medical training, and health policies on sexuality in old age; 2) social and cultural elements related to norms, taboos, and stigmatization; and 3) individual elements centered on personal factors such as beliefs, experiences, and physical and mental health status. **Conclusions:** To address sexuality in older adults, it is important to eliminate aging prejudices and stigmas. The guarantee of sexual rights at this stage of life demands inclusive health systems with policies on education, prevention, and diversity. The implementation of a gender, intercultural, and intersectional approach is important to promoting dignified and healthy development.

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Key words: Older adults; Sexuality; Social Representation; Sexual and Reproductive Rights; Health Policy (obtained from the DeSC/MeSH Thesaurus).

Resumen

Objetivo: analizar la literatura científica sobre la promoción y garantía de los derechos sexuales de los adultos mayores, adoptando un enfoque de género, intercultural e interseccional. **Metodología:** se realizó una revisión exploratoria integradora en cinco etapas: 1) Identificación del problema guiada por el marco de preguntas SPIDER; 2) búsqueda bibliográfica según el flujograma PRISMA; 3) evaluación de la calidad de los estudios mediante SANRA; 4) análisis mediante el software Atlas.ti; y 5) presentación de los resultados. **Resultados:** de los 47 artículos identificados surgieron tres categorías: 1) elementos estructurales y del sistema de salud, centrados en el acceso a los servicios, la formación médica y las políticas sanitarias sobre sexualidad en la vejez; 2) elementos sociales y culturales relacionados con normas, tabúes y estigmatización; y 3) elementos individuales centrados en factores personales como creencias, experiencias y estado de salud física y mental. **Conclusiones:** para el abordaje de la sexualidad en las personas mayores es importante liberar prejuicios de edad y estigmas. La garantía de los derechos sexuales en esta etapa de la vida requiere de sistemas de salud inclusivos con políticas centradas en la educación, la prevención y la diversidad. Para la promoción del desarrollo digno y saludable es crucial implementar el enfoque de género, intercultural e interseccional.

Palabras clave: personas mayores; sexualidad; representación social; derechos sexuales y reproductivos; política sanitaria (obtenidos del tesoro DeSC/MeSH).

Resumo

Objetivo: analisar a literatura científica sobre a promoção e garantia dos direitos sexuais de pessoas idosas, adotando uma abordagem de gênero, intercultural e interseccional. **Metodologia:** foi realizada uma revisão integrativa exploratória em cinco etapas: 1) identificação do problema guiada pelo quadro de perguntas SPIDER; 2) busca bibliográfica de acordo com o fluxograma PRISMA; 3) avaliação da qualidade dos estudos utilizando o SANRA; 4) análise utilizando o software Atlas.ti; e 5) apresentação dos resultados. **Resultados:** dos 47 artigos identificados, emergiram três categorias: 1) elementos estruturais e do sistema de saúde, centrados no acesso aos serviços, formação médica e políticas de saúde sobre sexualidade na velhice; 2) elementos sociais e culturais relacionados com normas, tabus e estigmatização; e 3) elementos individuais

centrados em factores pessoais como crenças, experiências e estado de saúde física e mental. **Conclusões:** para abordar a sexualidade entre idosos, é importante romper com preconceitos e estigmas ancestrais. A garantia dos direitos sexuais nesta fase da vida requer sistemas de saúde inclusivos, com políticas focadas em educação, prevenção e diversidade. Para promover um desenvolvimento digno e saudável, é crucial implementar uma abordagem de gênero, intercultural e interseccional.

Palavras chaves: Idosos; Sexualidade; Representação Social; Direitos Sexuais e Reprodutivos; Políticas de Saúde (obtidos do tesouro DeSC/MeSH).

Introduction

Sexuality is a main aspect of the human condition throughout life including the old age. Sexual practices and experiences evolve over the years in response to hormonal and anatomical changes that come with aging (regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation), it prompts a new search for ways of pleasure (PAMI, 2023).

It is essential to understand that sexuality in older adults encompasses a wide range of biological, mental, social, and spiritual dimensions that extend beyond genital organs, even more when aging is socially associated with a decline in sexual activity. This understanding demands to be apart from a medical perspective limited to the absence of disease or dysfunction. The need for interaction, intimacy, and affection does not disappear with age; in fact, interest in sexuality and sexual activity is an important quality of life indicator in older adults (Guadarrama *et al.*, 2010). Therefore, a positive and respectful approach to sexuality when aging is essential to ensure safe and pleasurable sexual experiences, free from coercion, discrimination, and violence (World Health Organization, 2006).

Sexual health is essential for healthy aging; however, the full exercise of older adults' sexual rights is limited by stigma and discrimination. The origins of these barriers are associated with cultural, social, and administrative factors, rather than physiological changes. Nowadays, public policies and education on sexual rights have begun to consider the changing nature of gender identity, sexual orientation, sexual practices, emotions, and desires throughout life. However, older adults have been excluded from these considerations rendering them invisible in discussions and strategies for the protection of their sexual rights (PAMI, 2023).

Demographic changes worldwide have led to an aging population. United Nations (UN) (2022) reveals a growing part of people over 60 years, with a fast increase in people aged 80 and over. In Latin America and the Caribbean, this accelerated demographic transition has reshaped the population structure. According to the Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Center (CELADE, 2024), in 1950, only 5.2% of the regional population was 60 years or older. The percentage has grown steadily since 1970, reaching 88.6 million in 2022, or 13.4% of the population (CELADE, 2024). It is estimated that by 2030, this will rise to 114.9 million, or 16.5% of the total population of the region (UN DESA, 2024).

In Colombia, the National Administrative Department of Statistics (DANE, 2022) reported that in 2021, the population over 60 years increased to 7,107,914 (13.9% of the total population), with a female predominance of 55.1%. This growth trend is expected to be higher in the coming years.

For public health, population aging has significant implications in sexual health, as scientific evidence suggests that older adults are interested in and have active sexual life, and maintain specific needs. It challenges the widespread perception that interests in sexuality declines with age (Crema & Tilio, 2021).

Over the past few decades, several international organizations have remarked the importance of recognizing the sexual rights of older adults, mainly in women. In 1979, the CEDAW Convention (Aboderin, 2014) highlighted the lack of research and policy implementation on the health of postmenopausal women. In 1995, the UN reaffirmed that human rights include control over sexuality and health throughout life, not excluding old age (United Nations, 1995). As older people were still marginalized, in 2013, governments were called upon to guarantee these rights, but progress is slow (UNFPA, 2013). The Inter-American Convention on the Protection of the Human Rights of Older Persons (OAS, 2015) promotes inclusive sexual health policies based on equality and non-discrimination, and the United Nations Plan for the Decade of Healthy Aging 2020-2030 (WHO, 2020) proposes transforming the perception of aging by ensuring comprehensive care and access to adequate services.

Colombia has advanced in recognizing the sexual rights of its population, integrating this right into the 1991 Constitution and into health policies based on human rights. However, cultural taboos, gender inequalities, and the lack of interest of the health system remain barriers to the full exercise of sexuality by older adults. Sexuality promotion and care programs are limited for this population group, and few trainings for health professionals, absence of spaces open to diversity, affect sexual health care (Ezhova *et al.*, 2020; Stowell *et al.*, 2023). Health professionals often do not address the topic, and older adults do not always feel comfortable talking about it (McKay *et al.*, 2022).

The SABE research in Colombia states that 50% of older adults consider sexuality a main aspect of their lives, especially those with better socio-economic conditions and a high level of education (Ministry of Health and Social Protection, 2016). As life expectancy increases, sexuality in old age has gained greater relevance in scientific and social contexts.

Thus, it is necessary to develop technical guidelines for the promotion and guarantee of the sexual rights of older adults, especially, with a gender-based, intercultural, and intersectional approach, within the framework of current Colombian regulations, and the National Public Policy on Aging and Old Age. This would pave the way to protecting the sexual rights of older adults as an extension of human rights in sexuality and sexual health, thereby upholding their dignity and ensuring an inclusive and respectful approach.

The understanding of the relationship between aging and sexuality demands a perspective that involves generational, historical, and sociocultural

factors. Therefore, this paper aims to analyze the literature on promoting the guarantee of sexual rights for older adults from a gender-based, intercultural, and intersectional perspective.

Methodology

An exploratory integrative review was conducted to examine the evidence for the promotion and guarantee of older adults' sexual rights, with a sampling framework as differential. This process included five stages that guided the design: problem identification, literature search, data evaluation, data analysis, and presentation (Manterola *et al.*, 2023; Whittemore & Knafl, 2005).

Stage 1: Problem Identification

Sexual health, holistically, includes physical, mental, and social dimensions that guarantee of sexual rights as an extension of human rights. The cultural perceptions and aging taboos often state more significant barriers to sexual enjoyment in aging than the physiological changes associated with age. In Colombia, despite legislative and public policy advances since the 1991 Constitution, older adults still face challenges in fully enjoying their sexuality, due to stereotypes and institutional disinterest. Based on this, the following review question is stated:

What evidence does the literature provide on the promotion and guarantee of the sexual rights of older adults from a gender-based, intercultural, and intersectional perspective?

The design of this review question was guided by the SPIDER framework:

- Sample: papers as the unit of analysis
- Phenomenon of Interest (PI): Sexual rights of older adults
- Design: Narrative review
- Evaluation: SANRA
- Research type: Qualitative

The inclusion criteria were papers published between 2013 and 2023, in English, Spanish, or Portuguese, and fully accessible. The exclusion criteria were book chapters, gray literature documents, reflection articles, and letters to the editor. The search for papers was conducted between June and August 2023.

The databases used were the Virtual Health Library (VHL), PubMed, Embase, Scopus, JSTOR, and ScienceDirect. Health descriptors (DECS BIREME) and MeSH terms in English, Spanish, and Portuguese, such as “aged”, “elderly”, “aging”, “sexuality”, “sexual health”, “social representation”, “intersectional framework”, “sexual rights”, “health policy”, and “practice guideline” were validated. The Boolean operators were “AND” and “OR” to combine key terms related to the study topic (Table 1)..

Table 1. Search Strategies.

Data-base	Search	Results	Downloads
VHL	"Anciano" AND "Derechos sexuales"	26	1
	"Anciano" AND "Sexualidad" AND "Guía de práctica clínica"	68	5
	"Anciano" OR "Adulto Mayor" OR "Persona Mayor" AND "Sexualidad"	698	10
	("Aged" OR "elderly" OR "aging") AND "Sexuality" AND "Sexual Health"	293	3
	("Aged" OR "elderly" OR "aging") AND "Sexuality" AND "Social Representation"	12	0
	("Aged" OR "elderly" OR "aging") AND "Sexuality" AND "Intersectional Framework"	1	0
	("Aged" OR "elderly" OR "aging") AND "Sexuality" AND "Sexual Rights"	10	0
	("Aged" OR "elderly" OR "aging") AND "Sexuality" AND "Health Policy"	10	0
	("Aged" OR "elderly" OR "aging") AND "Sexuality" AND "Practice Guideline"	1	1
PubMed	("Aged" OR "elderly" OR "aging") AND "Sexuality" AND "Sexual Health"	507	17
	("Aged" OR "elderly" OR "aging") AND "Sexuality" AND "Practice Guideline"	5	2
	("Aged" OR "elderly" OR "aging") AND "Sexuality" AND "Sexual Rights"	18	2
	("Aged" OR "elderly" OR "aging") AND "Sexuality" AND "Social Representation"	2	1
	("Aged" OR "elderly" OR "aging") AND "Sexuality" AND "Intersectional Framework"	5	0
	("Aged" OR "elderly" OR "aging") AND "Sexuality" AND "Health Policy"	60	5

Data-base	Search	Results	Downloads
Embase	'aged' AND 'sexual health' AND ([english]/lim OR [portuguese]/lim OR [spanish]/lim) AND [aged]/lim AND [embase]/lim AND [2013-2023]/py	1,694	25
	('aged'/exp OR 'aged') AND ('reproductive rights'/exp OR 'reproductive rights') AND ([english]/lim OR [portuguese]/lim OR [spanish]/lim) AND [aged]/lim AND [2013-2023]/py	15	0
	('aged'/exp OR 'aged') AND ('reproductive rights'/exp OR 'reproductive rights') NOT ('gender and sex'/exp OR 'gender and sex') AND ([english]/lim OR [portuguese]/lim OR [spanish]/lim) AND ([aged]/lim OR [very elderly]/lim) AND [embase]/lim AND [2013-2023]/py	5	0
	'aged' AND 'clinical pathway' AND 'sexual health' AND ([english]/lim OR [portuguese]/lim OR [spanish]/lim) AND ([aged]/lim OR [very elderly]/lim) AND [2013-2023]/py	5	0
	('aged'/exp OR 'aged') AND ('sexual health'/exp OR 'sexual health') AND ('program evaluation'/exp OR 'program evaluation') AND ([english]/lim OR [portuguese]/lim OR [spanish]/lim) AND ([aged]/lim OR [very elderly]/lim) AND [embase]/lim AND [2013-2023]/py	0	0
	('aged'/exp OR 'aged') AND ('sexuality'/exp OR 'sexuality') AND ('social representation'/exp OR 'social representation') AND ([english]/lim OR [portuguese]/lim OR [spanish]/lim) AND ([aged]/lim OR [very elderly]/lim) AND [2013-2023]/py	2	1
	('aged'/exp OR 'aged') AND ('sexuality'/exp OR 'sexuality') AND ('intersectionality'/exp OR 'intersectionality') AND ([english]/lim OR [portuguese]/lim OR [spanish]/lim) AND ([aged]/lim OR [very elderly]/lim) AND [2013-2023]/py	42	0
	'aged' AND 'sexuality' AND 'sexual rights' AND ([english]/lim OR [portuguese]/lim OR [spanish]/lim) AND ([aged]/lim OR [very elderly]/lim) AND [embase]/lim AND [2013-2023]/py	15	0
	('aged' OR 'elderly' OR 'aging') AND 'sexuality' AND ([english]/lim OR [portuguese]/lim OR [spanish]/lim) AND ([aged]/lim OR [very elderly]/lim) AND [2013-2023]/py	2,835	31
	('aged' OR 'elderly' OR 'aging') AND 'sexuality' AND 'sexual health' AND ([english]/lim OR [portuguese]/lim OR [spanish]/lim) AND ([aged]/lim OR [very elderly]/lim) AND [embase]/lim AND [2013-2023]/py	283	5
	('aged' OR 'elderly' OR 'aging') AND 'sexuality' AND 'social representation' AND ([english]/lim OR [portuguese]/lim OR [spanish]/lim) AND [aged]/lim AND [2013-2023]/py	1	1
	('aged' OR 'elderly' OR 'aging') AND 'sexuality' AND 'sexual rights' AND ([english]/lim OR [portuguese]/lim OR [spanish]/lim) AND [aged]/lim AND [2013-2023]/py	20	0
	('aged' OR 'elderly' OR 'aging') AND 'sexuality' AND 'health policy' AND ([english]/lim OR [portuguese]/lim OR [spanish]/lim) AND [aged]/lim AND [2013-2023]/py AND [embase]/lim	28	1
	('aged' OR 'elderly' OR 'aging') AND 'sexuality' AND 'practice guideline' AND ([english]/lim OR [portuguese]/lim OR [spanish]/lim) AND [aged]/lim AND [2013-2023]/py AND [embase]/lim	39	0

Data-base	Search	Results	Downloads
Scopus	("Aged" OR "elderly" OR "aging") AND "Sexuality" AND "Sexual Health"	2,945	10
	("Aged" OR "elderly" OR "aging") AND "Sexuality" AND "Sexual Rights"	56	2
	"aged" OR "elderly" OR "aging" AND "Sexuality" AND "Intersectional Framework"	1	1
	"Aged" OR "elderly" OR "aging") AND "Sexuality" AND "Social Representation"	65	2
	("Aged" OR "elderly" OR "aging") AND "Sexuality" AND "Health Policy"	91	3
	("Aged" OR "elderly" OR "aging") AND "Sexuality" AND "Practice Guideline"	109	0
JSTOR	"aged" OR "elderly" OR "aging" AND "sexuality"	6,800	7
	("aged" OR "elderly" OR "aging") AND "Sexuality" AND "health policy"	773	3
Science-Direct	("Aged" OR "elderly" OR "aging") AND "Sexuality"	2,270	10
	("Aged" OR "elderly" OR "aging") AND "Sexuality" AND "Sexual Health"	522	3
	("Aged" OR "elderly" OR "aging" AND "Sexuality" AND "Social Representation"	16	6
	("Aged" OR "elderly" OR "aging") AND "Sexuality" AND "Intersectional Framework"	28	0
	("Aged" OR "elderly" OR "aging") AND "Sexuality" AND "Sexual Rights"	36	1
	("Aged" OR "elderly" OR "aging") AND "Sexuality" AND "Health Policy"	132	0
	("Aged" OR "elderly" OR "aging") AND "Sexuality" AND "Practice Guideline"	14	0
Total		20,558	159

The thematic analysis of the selected papers was conducted using Atlas.ti version 9 (licensed by the University of Caldas). The unit of analysis consisted of meaningful text segments (sentences, paragraphs, or thematic fragments) that addressed older adults’ sexuality and sexual rights.

Based on the three pre-defined analytical families—(1) structural and health system elements, (2) social and cultural elements, and (3) individual elements—an initial codebook was constructed deductively. During iterative reading of the 47 papers, this codebook was refined inductively by merging

redundant codes, adjusting code names, and incorporating new codes that emerged from the material.

The coding process involved assigning one or more codes to each relevant text segment, and then regrouping them into subcategories, and final categories within each analytical family. Atlas.ti was used to retrieve coded segments, organize them by theme, and support the synthesis of findings through code frequencies, code co-occurrences, and thematic relationships. This procedure ensured transparency and traceability between the original texts, the codes, and the three main categories.

Quality criteria: The review was conducted in line with the Scale for the Assessment of Narrative Review Articles (SANRA) by Baethge *et al.* (2019), which includes six items: 1) importance to readers (this was a need expressed by the Ministry of Health and PAHO); 2) objective of the narrative review (described in the introduction); 3) complete description of literature search (described in materials and methods); 4) references; 5) scientific reasoning; and 6) adequate presentation of the data (described in results).

This research followed the guidelines given in the Declaration of Helsinki (World Medical Association, 2024). Ethical approval for the research was granted by the Faculty of Health Sciences of the Universidad de Caldas (CBCS-052) on October 2, 2023.

Results

159 papers were selected through the search strategies, most of them were found in Embase (n=64). As a first step, papers with solid scientific evidence published in journals classified as Q1 and Q2 were collected. The articles were classified into three categories related to barriers to sexual health in older adults: structural and health system-related elements, social and cultural elements, and individual elements. Finally, 47 papers met the inclusion criteria (Figure 1).

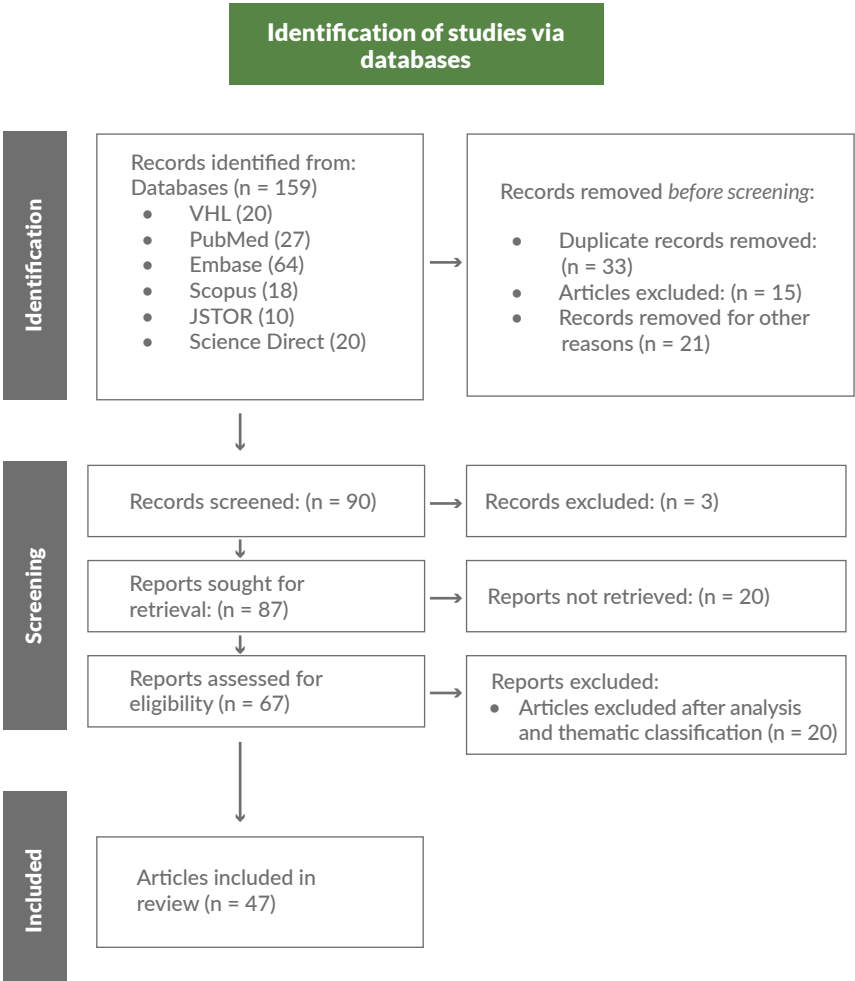


Figure 1. Selection Flowchart.

Source: Authors own elaboration based on the flow diagram from the PRISMA model

Of the total publications, 81% were found in category Q1 journals and 19% in category Q2.

The United States (n=17), Australia (n=6), and the United Kingdom (n=5) were the countries with the most publications. The year with the highest publication was 2023 (n=11) (Figure 2). The review revealed a growing interest in sexual rights of older adults, the continent with the greatest representation was America (n=18), followed by Europe (n=17). However, no Latin American

publications were found that met the selection criteria. Regarding the approach and type of research, 32 quantitative studies, 13 qualitative studies, and 2 mixed-methods studies were identified (Table 2).

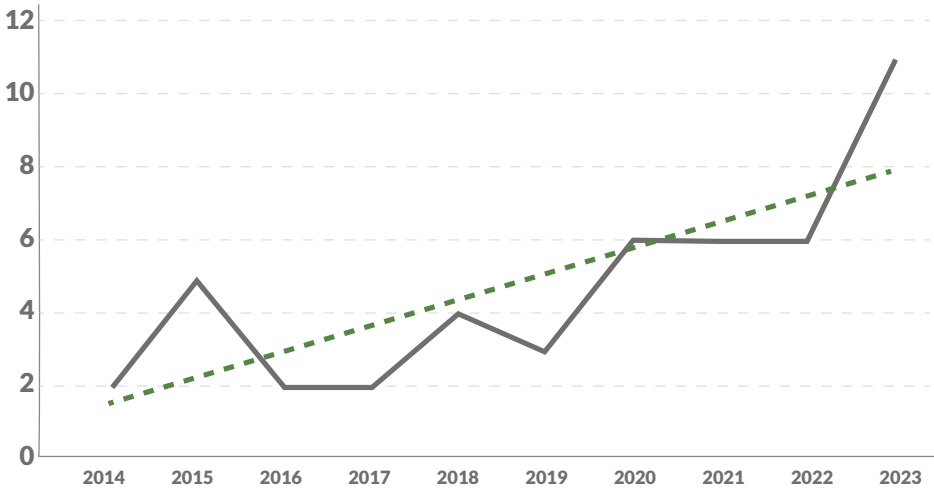


Figure 2. *Trend in Scientific Publications.*

Table 2. *Characterization of Publications.*

Year	Number of Articles	Language	Country	Journal & Publindex Classification (2022)	Thematic Classification	Type of Research
2014	2	English (n=2)	England (n=1)	Reprod Health Matters. Q1	Structural elements	Quantitative
			United States (n=1)	J Sex Med. Q1	Individual elements Health system-related elements	

Year	Number of Articles	Language	Country	Journal & Publindex Classification (2022)	Thematic Classification	Type of Research
2015	5	English (n=5)	United States (n=4)	American Journal of Public Health. Q1	Individual elements	Quantitative
				Journal of Women's Health. Q1	Health system-related elements	
				The American Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry. Q1	Health system-related elements	
				Appl Nurs Res. Q1	Individual elements	Qualitative
			Australia (n=1)	J Aging Stud. Q1	Structural elements	Qualitative
2016	2	English (n=2)	United Kingdom (n=1)	Arch Sex Behav. Q1	Individual elements	Qualitative
			United States (n=1)	Reprod Health Matters. Q1	Structural elements	Qualitative
2017	2	English (n=2)	Australia (n=1)	Australas J Ageing. Q1	Structural elements	Qualitative
			United Kingdom (n=1)	Int J Environ Res Public Health. Q1	Structural elements Individual elements Social and cultural elements Health system-related elements	Quantitative
2018	4	English (n=4)	United States (n=2)	Gerontol Geriatr Educ. Q2	Health system-related elements	Qualitative
				J Womens Health. Q1	Individual elements	
			Tanzania (n=1)	Sex Roles. Q1	Social and cultural elements Individual elements	
			Iran (n=1)	Int Perspect Sex Reprod Health. Q2	Social and cultural elements	

Year	Number of Articles	Language	Country	Journal & Publindex Classification (2022)	Thematic Classification	Type of Research
2019	3	English (n=3)	United States (n=1)	Int J Aging Hum Dev. Q2	Structural elements	Quantitative
			Germany (n=1)	Psychol Aging. Q1	Individual elements	
			England (n=1)	Sex Med. Q1	Individual elements	
2020	6	English (n=6)	Israel (n=1)	Isr J Health Policy Res. Q2	Health system-related elements	Qualitative
			Norway (n=1)	Int J Sex Health. Q1	Health system-related elements	
			South Korea (n=1)	Sex Med. Q1	Individual elements	Quantitative
			Spain (n=1)	European Journal of Ageing. Q1	Health system-related elements	
			Australia (n=2)	Australas J Ageing. Q1	Structural elements Social and cultural elements Health system-related elements	
					Study. Sex Med. Q2 Social and cultural elements Individual elements	

Year	Number of Articles	Language	Country	Journal & Pubindex Classification (2022)	Thematic Classification	Type of Research
2021	6	English (n=6)	United States (n=1)	Aging Ment Health. Q1	Social and cultural elements	Quantitative
			Portugal (n=1)	Sex Res Social Policy. Q1	Individual elements	
			United Kingdom (n=1)	Soc Sci Med. Q1	Individual elements	Qualitative
			Australia (n=1)	J Appl Gerontol. Q1	Health system-related elements	Quantitative
			Sweden (n=1)	Sex Med. Q1	Individual elements	
			Germany (n=1)	Age Ageing. Q1	Structural elements Social and cultural elements	
2022	6	English (n=6)	United States (n=2)	Gerontologist. Q1	Health system-related elements	Quantitative
				Int J Environ Res Public Health. Q1	Health system-related elements	
			China (n=2)	J Aging Stud. Q1	Structural elements	Qualitative
				J Sex Med. Q1	Individual elements	Quantitative
			United Kingdom (n=1)	Age Ageing. Q1	Health system-related elements	Mixed method
			Belgium (n=1)	J Sex Med. Q1	Individual elements	Quantitative

Year	Number of Articles	Language	Country	Journal & Pubindex Classification (2022)	Thematic Classification	Type of Research
2023	11	English (n=11)	United States (n=5)	Gerontologist. Q1	Structural elements	Quantitative
				Pre Sci. Q1	Health system-related elements Individual elements	
				J Women Aging. Q2	Individual elements	Qualitative
					Health system-related elements Social and cultural elements	Quantitative
				Gerontologist. Q1	Structural elements Social and cultural elements	
			United Kingdom (n=1)	Sex Transm Infect. Q1	Health system-related elements	Quantitative
			Germany (n=1)	J Med Philos. Q1	Social and cultural elements	
			Australia (n=1)	Br J Occup Ther. Q2	Health system-related elements	
			Italy (n=1)	Healthcare. Q2	Social and cultural elements	
			Turkey (n=1)	Eur J Obstet Gynecol Reprod. Q2	Individual elements	
			Canada (n=1)	Gerontologist. Q1	Health system-related elements	

Figure 3 presents, in a tree map format, the classification of scientific publications on the sexual rights of older adults into three main categories: structural and health system elements, social and cultural elements, and individual elements. This classification helped in analyzing the diverse factors that influence both the sexual health and sexual rights of older adults.

The most frequently category was structural and health system elements, with main emphasis on access to health services, and training of healthcare professionals. Health policies on sexuality in old age have received little attention. This was followed by the category of individual elements, indicating that research has focused on personal factors such as beliefs, experiences, and physical and mental health status. Finally, the category of social and cultural elements includes research on social norms, taboos, stigmatization, and the impact of society on the experience of sexuality in old age.

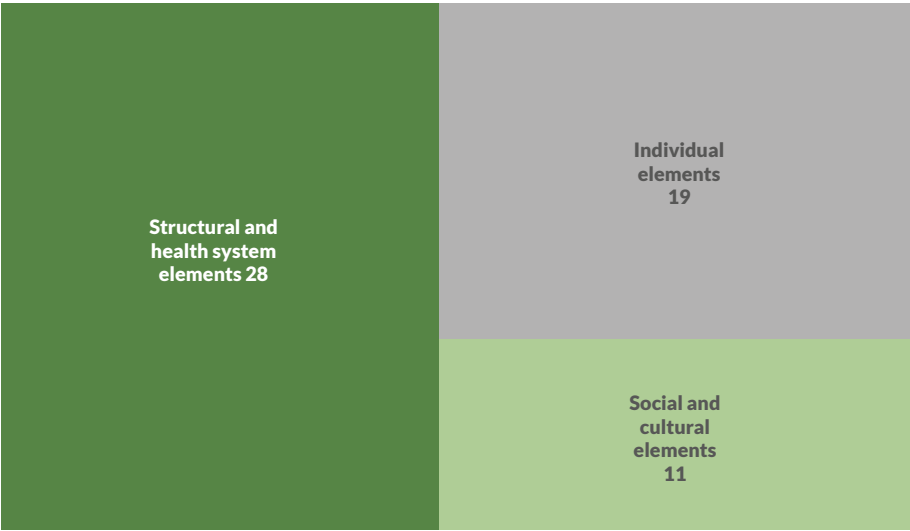
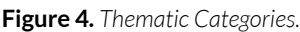


Figure 3. *Thematic Classification of Publications.*

This classification allowed the analysis to be directed as shown in Figure 4.



Individual Elements

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al., 2021; Dalmer & Marshall, 2023; Emerson *et al.*, 2023; Roney & Kazer, 2015; Rutagumirwa & Bailey, 2018; Towler *et al.*, 2021; Villar *et al.*, 2020; Wang *et al.*, 2015).

According to Fredriksen-Goldsen *et al.* (2023), the sexuality of many older adults is a private and personal issue with aging conceptions that leads them to assume that sexual dysfunctions are normal aging changes. They find it easier to discuss sexuality with healthcare professionals of the same sex who demonstrate a genuine interest in their sexual health.

Macleod *et al.* (2020) states that being an older woman entails double discrimination, as sexist perceptions of female sexuality relate only to reproductive capacity, reducing pleasure to a non-transcendental issue in the postmenopausal age. Menopause, a critical determinant of sexual satisfaction, is rarely addressed in medical consultations with older women.

From a differential perspective, research on sexually diverse older adults is scarce and mostly focused on homosexual men. These individuals bear a greater burden of discrimination and internalized stigma that limits the expression of their sexual orientations and needs. It increases the risk of health problems and leads to less trust in healthcare providers (Crockett & Cooper, 2016; Henning *et al.*, 2015; Jung *et al.*, 2023; Lyons *et al.*, 2021; McKay *et al.*, 2022; Ports *et al.*, 2014; Smith *et al.*, 2019). All of these factors make the sexually diverse older population a vulnerable group of particular interest for future research.

Structural Elements and Health System

Based on the perceptions and experiences of older adults, research such as those by Stentagg *et al.* (2020) suggest that medical and psychiatric comorbidities are negatively related to sexual activity. This supports the concept of sexual activity as a marker of healthy aging and a determinant of physical and psychological well-being (Portellos *et al.*, 2023). Some authors (Gewirtz-Meydan *et al.*, 2020; Schaller *et al.*, 2020; Syme & Cohn, 2021) highlight the discomfort and lack of training among healthcare professionals in addressing these issues as a limitation for sexual health in older adults. This stems aging perceptions and beliefs, and taboos about sexuality in old age. This reveals a need for training healthcare professionals in non-heteronormative sexuality, and from the perspective of sexual orientation diversity. Such an approach promotes a positive view of sexuality in older adults as a normal activity, free from a medicalized perspective and not focused mainly on dysfunction. This would empower healthcare professionals to communicate and promote actions that seek comprehensive development in sexual health.

There is a clear need for the inclusion of the older population in public sexual policies from a non-medicalized perspective that promotes the normalization of sexuality in old age. This could be achieved through educational initiatives out of care settings aimed at eliminating aging stigmas surrounding sexuality (Brennan-Ing *et al.*, 2018; Fileborn *et al.*, 2017; McAuliffe *et al.*, 2020). These policies should consider the specific needs of the LGBTIQ+ population, encompassing older adults in all their diversity and reducing the social stigma that becomes a barrier to accessing quality sexual health care (Flesia *et al.*, 2023; Fredriksen-Goldsen *et al.*, 2023; Kittle *et al.*, 2023; Nazroo, 2017; Suen, 2022). This highlights the need for healthcare professionals to be trained on sexual diversity of older adults, both in the community and in long-stay care units (Horne *et al.*, 2022; Lee *et al.*, 2019).

Social and Cultural Elements

Ageist and negative perceptions of old age significantly impact views on sexuality. The social representation of sexuality as a characteristic of youth leads to the stigmatization of eroticism in old age, it is seen as abnormal and pathological, and in older women, inappropriate, as it is not performed for procreative purposes. This leads to a sense of shame that may be experienced by older women when the topic is addressed (Thames *et al.*, 2018). This view is strongly influenced by religious conceptions that confine sexuality to marriage and family formation, where the woman's role is to please the man, and may partly explain why the sexual and relational outlook of a widowed man differs from that of a widowed woman (Thames *et al.*, 2018).

The discussions about female sexual health are often limited to reproductive age, leading to a failure to recognize the needs of older women (Hughes *et al.*, 2015; Macleod *et al.*, 2020; Moghasemi *et al.*, 2018). Thus, sociocultural factors limit sexuality to marriage, with a clear gender division, women are subjugated to men's desires and their eroticism beyond marriage and reproduction is not recognized (Roney & Kazer, 2015).

Ageist leads to the perception of aging as an asexual stage of life, causing older people to normalize their dysfunctions (Cismaru *et al.*, 2022). However, findings shows that the asexuality of older adults is a myth and that, although aging is associated with changes in sexuality, old age is a stage in which it can be redefined overcomes biological issues and emphasis on love and relationships (Benítez *et al.*, 2023). These aging social norms and representations associated

with loss is widely present in LGBTIQ+ population's understanding of aging and sexuality (Souza *et al.*, 2019; von Humboldt *et al.*, 2021).

These findings should lead to the promotion of non-aging sexuality, free from prejudices based only on age, understanding that in old age, sexuality remains a normal and important topic and can provide positive elements for greater enjoyment for older adults, moving away from a heteronormative and genital centered perspective.

Age, gender, and ethnicity are intersectional categories necessary for the comprehensive analysis of older adults' sexual rights (Weßel & Schweda, 2023). From a gender perspective, there are gaps in education and income levels. Women are the most vulnerable population, and they are also the group that suffers the most from sexual violence (Macleod *et al.*, 2020). This, coupled with ageist conceptions that ignore the possibility that older women can be victims of sexual violence, means that the sexual rights of older women are doubly denied, especially if they belong to ethnic minorities.

A limitation of the research was the absence of Latin American papers meeting the predefined selection criteria. Although most included papers were published in journals with low indexation, they provide relevant insights into safeguarding the sexual rights of older adults. The literature highlights the need to normalize sexuality in later life through social and educational interventions, including campaigns led by and targeting healthcare professionals, to promote positive perceptions of aging sexuality (Laganá *et al.*, 2021; Medina *et al.*, 2021; Ruiz *et al.*, 2023). In addition, eliminating ageist attitudes toward sexuality is essential, as such biases among healthcare providers negatively affect sexual health care delivery and erode older adults' trust in the healthcare system (Syme & Cohn, 2021). Finally, training healthcare professionals in assertive, unbiased communication—particularly regarding sexual health—is critical (Ruiz *et al.*, 2023).

Conclusions

Sexuality is a normal and significant aspect throughout the life cycle and is associated with benefits for older adults' physical and psychological health. The addressing of their sexual health needs must be a priority in public health, mainly from the perspective of sexology and gerontology. This implies recognizing sexual rights as inherent to the condition of older adults. Aging comes with a transformation of sexuality, where it is redefined and decoupled from the purely

genital, but it does not disappear. Therefore, it is necessary to discard discourses that stigmatize sexuality in old age based on ageist prejudices.

In providing sexual health care to older adults, it is essential to have solid foundations, such as education and prevention within a context of diversity, this guarantees sexual rights and strengthens trust in the health system. Specifically, the sexually diverse older population faces a series of risks that combine stigmas related to sexual orientation and age discrimination. Therefore, one way to ensure their sexual rights is through health systems that understand, recognize, and are prepared to address the precise needs.

Sexuality in old age is shaped by gender, identity, culture, and other conditions that influence its experience and recognition. Older women, LGBTIQ+ people, and ethnic communities face additional barriers to full sexual health. The inclusion of an intersectional and intercultural perspective into public policies allows inclusive sexual rights that are appropriate for the diversity of aging experiences.

It is necessary to generate information on the concept and perception of sexuality in older adults, which will allow for the development of inclusive sexual health policies that are free of prejudice, and recognize the importance of sexuality in the aging process as a source of well-being and quality of life.

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Youth on the Margins: An Analysis of Youth Exclusion and Juvenile in the Latin American Context *

[English Version]

Juventudes en los márgenes: análisis de la exclusión juvenil y del juvenicidio en el contexto latinoamericano

Juventudes às margens: uma análise da exclusão juvenil e juvenicídio no contexto latino-americano

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Abstract

Objective: To identify the contemporary mechanisms of domination used to marginalize, criminalize, and render youth invisible, with particular emphasis on the intersection of concepts such as *biopolitics* and *necropolitics*. It also seeks to examine how young people develop forms of agency through resistance and symbolic creation in response to the discourses and practices that exclude them. **Methodology:** A qualitative methodology was employed, based on a bibliographic review and document analysis, using a critical hermeneutic approach. This approach established a categorical dialogue among diverse theoretical perspectives in order to understand current trends in youth discrimination. **Results:** The concept of *youth* should not be understood solely as an age-based category, but rather as a situated sociohistorical and cultural construct. **Conclusions:** Discourses that criminalize and render youth invisible were identified, including phenomena such as *juvenile* and *iuvēnis sacer*. Recognizing youth agency and resistance is therefore essential for promoting inclusive policies that foster the participation of this social group.

Keywords: youth; identity; social inequality; violence; adolescence (obtained from the UNESCO Thesaurus).

Resumen

Objetivo: reconocer los métodos de dominación contemporáneos usados para marginar, criminalizar e invisibilizar a las juventudes, con especial énfasis en la intersección de conceptos como «biopolítica» y «necropolítica». Así mismo, presentar la forma en que los sujetos jóvenes establecen sus agenciamientos a partir de la resistencia y creación simbólica, para hacer frente los discursos y prácticas que los excluyen. **Metodología:** se hace uso de una metodología cualitativa, a partir de la revisión bibliográfica y análisis de documentos, con un enfoque hermenéutico crítico, estableciendo un diálogo categorial entre diversas perspectivas teóricas que permitan comprender las tendencias actuales de discriminación juvenil. **Resultados:** el concepto de «juventud» no debe ser comprendido exclusivamente como un rango etario, sino que se debe entender como una noción sociohistórica, cultural y situada. **Conclusiones:** se identifican discursos de criminalización e invisibilización hacia las juventudes, como el *juvenile* y el *iuvēnis*

sacer, siendo necesario reconocer la agencia y la resistencia juvenil para promover políticas inclusivas que permitan la participación de este grupo social.

Palabras clave: juventud; identidad; desigualdad social; violencia; adolescencia (obtenidos del tesoro de la UNESCO).

Resumo

Objetivo: reconhecer os métodos contemporâneos de dominação utilizados para marginalizar, criminalizar e invisibilizar as juventudes, com especial ênfase na interseção de conceitos como *biopolítica* e *necropolítica*. Da mesma forma, apresentar a maneira pela qual os sujeitos jovens constroem suas formas de agenciamento por meio da resistência e da criação simbólica, a fim de enfrentar os discursos e práticas que os excluem.

Metodologia: utilizou-se uma metodologia qualitativa, baseada na revisão bibliográfica e na análise documental, com uma abordagem hermenêutica crítica, estabelecendo um diálogo categorial entre diferentes perspectivas teóricas que permitissem compreender as tendências atuais de discriminação juvenil. **Resultados:** o conceito de *juventude* não deve ser compreendido exclusivamente como uma faixa etária, mas como uma noção sócio-histórica, cultural e situada. **Conclusões:** identificam-se discursos de criminalização e invisibilização dirigidos às juventudes, como o *juvenicídio* e o *iuvenis sacer*, tornando necessário reconhecer a agência e a resistência juvenil para promover políticas inclusivas que favoreçam a participação desse grupo social.

Palavras-chave: juventude; identidade; desigualdade social; violência; adolescência (obtidas do Tesouro da UNESCO).

Introduction

The concept of *youth* has undergone various transformations, both in its methodological and epistemological approaches, within the debates that have occupied the social sciences (Chaves, 2010). Historically, young people were understood through a purely age-based classification; however, contemporary perspectives embrace more complex notions that take into account cultural, social, and political factors (Vommaro *et al.*, 2021). Consequently, the evolution of the concept allows young people to be understood as a collective shaped by diversity rather than homogeneity, situated within specific historical moments and adapted to distinct geopolitical realities (Jaramillo *et al.*, 2025). From this perspective, youth has become the subject of multiple academic and political debates, given its dynamic character and its capacity to embody social tensions (Muñoz, 2003).

The recognition of youth as a social condition constitutes one of the contemporary approaches advanced by authors such as Brito (1998) and Reguillo (2010), whose work focuses on identifying the power dynamics that shape youth identities. This perspective moves away from biologically determinist definitions and instead reaffirms the importance of understanding the political contexts in which young people live.

Nevertheless, pathologizing and criminalizing discourses about young people continue to prevail, often associating identity formation with problematic behaviors (Chaves, 2012). Such adult-centered narratives have sought to reduce youth experiences to a period of social moratorium, in which young people are merely preparing to enter adulthood, thereby legitimizing practices of control and heightened surveillance (Alvarado & Jaramillo, 2023). Concepts such as *iuvenis sacer*, developed by Valenzuela (2016), contribute to understanding the forms of exclusion generated by the socioeconomic structures embedded within neoliberal capitalism. These structures render young people disposable and strip them of their social value.

Likewise, the concept of *juvenile*, which seeks to account for the systematic forms of violence faced by young people (González & Nateras, 2023), has become particularly relevant in contexts marked by marginalization and inequality. This phenomenon reveals how young lives may be sacrificed through their exclusion to the margins of society, as a result of systematic practices stemming from policies that construct them as subjects who can be eliminated without social or political consequences (Valenzuela, 2019). Furthermore, Jaramillo (2020) argues that, in the face of exclusion, young people construct alternative identities and territorialities that challenge the narratives through which they are stigmatized, a crucial insight for rethinking the policies that shape their lives.

Against this backdrop, the primary objective of this article is to identify, from a critical hermeneutic perspective, the various contemporary forms of domination that marginalize, criminalize, and even render young people invisible. In doing so, it seeks to uncover the power structures traversed by biopolitics and necropolitics, as well as by critical concepts such as *juvenicide* and *iuvēnis sacer*. The article also aims to examine the meanings and perspectives that underpin adult-centered discourses used to socially construct youth, while problematizing the effects of exclusion and precarization. Finally, it seeks to recognize the ways in which young people develop forms of agency, resistance, and symbolic creation that enable them to re-signify their position within social and political life. Through these processes, they challenge hegemonic logics that reduce them to disposable lives, thereby reconstructing horizons of possibility grounded in dignity, recognition, and new forms of social and cultural organization.

Methodologically, this reflection article is situated within a qualitative approach characterized by a critical and situated interest in understanding social phenomena. It is guided by a critical hermeneutic method aimed at unveiling the constitutive meanings embedded in social structures that emerge within historically and geographically situated contexts (Herrera, 2023), while acknowledging their location within broader global-local dynamics. These meanings are understood as being crossed by relations of power; therefore, critical inquiry seeks to identify the forms of power that become intertwined with the meanings used to define Latin American youth (Jaramillo, 2020). This exercise is grounded in the understanding that social truths, as well as the theoretical categories and public policy frameworks used to name and define youth, may respond not only to scientific methods but also to strategic forms of governing life and youth populations.

To this end, a selection of texts was compiled from scientific databases, primarily Web of Science, Scopus, ScienceDirect, SciELO, Redalyc, Google Scholar, Dialnet, REDIB, and Latindex. The corpus included research articles and reflective essays, with priority given to publications issued between 2010 and 2024 in indexed journals. Additional selection criteria included open-access availability, publication in Spanish, and a focus on Latin America and the Caribbean. These texts were placed in dialogue with foundational authors in the field in order to provide greater interpretive depth and theoretical density to the categorical framework developed in this study.

Brief Context of Discourses and Representations of Youth

The origins of the modern conception of *youth* can be traced to pedagogical and educational discourses, in which this stage of life was understood as one characterized by dependence on the family and the school (Charlot, 2009). In France, for example, the 1960s witnessed a significant emergence of youth as a social category, marked by the establishment of specialized groups devoted to sociological research on youth (Charlot, 2009). This development was complemented by the contributions of Bourdieu and Passeron during the same decade, while the creation of academic networks such as *Youth and Society* in 1982 further consolidated the field of study.

Another perspective that contributed substantially to youth studies was the generational approach, which opened new analytical possibilities during the first half of the twentieth century. Referring to youth, Ortega y Gasset (1966, 1970) proposed that generations should be understood as key elements for interpreting the rhythms of history, whereas Mannheim (1993) developed a sociological framework for examining the formation of generations as social phenomena rather than merely age-based categories (Álvarez, 2018). These contributions positioned youth as a historical agent embedded in social conjunctures and disputes, rather than simply as a biological stage of life.

More broadly, Aguilera (2014) argues that concern with youth emerged and became consolidated during the early decades of the twentieth century. According to this author, studies conducted in the United States included urban research associated with the Chicago School and Whyte (1971), cultural anthropology through Mead (1985), and developmental psychology through Hall (1915). Aguilera (2014) further notes that in Europe, both Ortega y Gasset and Mannheim played a pivotal role in advancing youth studies. Subsequently, British cultural studies contributed important insights into the relationship between mass media, the cultural industry, and youth identities. Aguilera also highlights the existence of a Latin American tradition that approaches youth as a situated social subject, as reflected in the contributions of scholars such as Barbero, Muñoz, and Reguillo.

Muñoz (2006) reinforces the argument that youth has been historically configured through discourses that assign meanings varying according to time and context. From this perspective, he identifies multiple ways of understanding *youth*: the biological perspective, focused on age and life cycle; the pedagogical perspective, linked to dependence on school and family; the sociological perspective, concerned with deviance and social control; the cultural perspective, which emphasizes youth subcultures, consumption, and lifestyles; the marketing perspective, which constructs young people as consumers; and, finally, the public policy perspective, which recognizes youth as a social actor assigned

specific roles (Muñoz, 2006). Today, the Ibero-American field of youth studies continues to enrich these debates through the contributions of scholars such as José Manuel Valenzuela, Rosana Reguillo, Maritza Urteaga, Alfredo Nateras, Pérez Islas, Germán Muñoz, and Carles Feixa, among others, whose situated theoretical approaches have significantly expanded the conceptual tools available for understanding youth worlds.

In light of the above, it can be argued that the category *young person* does not have a single definition; indeed, it has largely been understood through hegemonic perspectives and remains the subject of ongoing contestation. Following Muñoz (2003), it may be stated that the concept of *youth* lacks a universal meaning, since it is a dynamic social construct that emerges under specific historical conditions and at particular moments in time. It is equally important to recognize that multiple approaches to youth coexist. On the one hand, there are adult-centered perspectives, and on the other, age-based definitions. Biological approaches are also common. Alternatively, as Castells (cited in Muñoz, 2003, p. 26) argues, young people are often inadequately reduced to labels such as *minors* (“which places them in a condition of inferiority”), *adolescents* (“lacking maturity or in transition toward adulthood”), *at-risk subjects* (“rather than subjects with agency and therefore with genuine rights”), *irresponsible*, *apathetic*, or *without a future*.

Youth is a dynamic category constructed through sociohistorical and cultural perspectives; it is always contextual and relational. Consequently, it may be understood as a lived experience defined primarily through social relationships rather than through age-based or biological characteristics (Vommaro & Cozachcow, 2023). Chaves (2010) argues that the concept of *youth* acquires meaning only when situated within a specific temporal and spatial context that is, when recognized as a category embedded in the social world.

In this regard, it is important to identify the discourses that have been constructed around the category of *youth*. To this end, the following discussion presents a conceptualization of the various ways in which the category is currently understood and employed. Through this analysis, the processes of criminalization, infantilization, and invisibilization of youth are brought to light, while also exposing the stigmatization, precarization, and mechanisms through which young people are governed and, in some cases, rendered disposable.

Youth as a Contextualized Category

The positioning of the category *young person* has undergone significant theoretical and epistemological transformations, given that neither cultures nor scientific

disciplines understand and approach young people in the same way. For this reason, the scope and meaning of the category have been interpreted differently throughout history. It is important to recognize the multiplicity of perspectives through which youth has been approached. From the earliest attempts to identify behaviors that deviated from dominant social norms —such as the urban studies of the Chicago School— to contemporary critical methodologies, youth has become a central topic in both scientific and political debates (Sánchez & Hakim, 2014).

In this regard, it is also important to note that a variety of interpretive frameworks have been applied to young people (Kropff, 2010). At the beginning of the twentieth century, youth was viewed as a potential solution to social problems due to its capacity to revitalize institutions. Following the Second World War, however, discourses emerged that criminalized young people. By the late 1950s, amid growing youth mobilizations and protests, narratives portraying youth as a generation without a future gained prominence (Machado, 1993).

It is therefore not possible to homogenize the meaning of *youth* through a strictly age-based classification, since being young cannot be reduced to a mere stage in the life cycle. Bourdieu challenged such age-based classifications by arguing that age is both a manipulated and manipulable datum. Through this notion, interventions are generated that present young people as a homogeneous social unit—a group supposedly sharing common interests. By linking these interests to a biologically defined age, a clear conceptual manipulation becomes evident (Bourdieu, cited in Duarte, 2000).

Similarly, Bourdieu's statement that "*youth is nothing but a word*" (cited in Muñoz, 2003, p. 26) clearly illustrates that the category acquires meaning depending on the theoretical perspective from which it is approached. Over time, young people have been described as individuals in transition, lacking a stable identity and searching for one; as symbols of social change; as vulnerable subjects prone to risk; or even as dangerous and maladjusted individuals (Muñoz, 2003; Tatar & Díaz, 2018).

Youth Understood Through the Concept of Adolescence

The etymology of the word *adolescent* originates from the Latin term *adolescens*, *adolescentis*, which may be interpreted as "someone who is in a period of growth." Fernández (2025), in *Hispanoteca*, notes that the term derives from the present participle of the Latin verb *adolescere*, meaning "to grow," "to mature," or "to develop." Suárez (2009) further explains that the root of the word *adolescent* is the same as that of *adult*. The past participle of *adolescere* is *adultum*, implying

that while the adolescent is the one who is in the process of growth, the adult is the one who has already reached full maturity.

It should be noted, however, that the word *adolescent* is often associated with the idea of “suffering from” or “lacking something.” Several authors, including Hernández (2011) and Suárez (2009), argue that this association is inaccurate. The Spanish verb *adolecer* refers to suffering from a condition or deficiency, whereas *adolescencia* derives from a different Latin root associated with growth and development. Consequently, the meaning of *adolescence* is etymologically unrelated to notions of deficiency or suffering.

The origins of the concept of *adolescence* can be traced back to eighteenth-century psychology. Nevertheless, it was not until the late nineteenth century that G. Stanley Hall’s studies on the biological and psychological dimensions of adolescence contributed to the widespread adoption of the concept within educational sciences and the social sciences more broadly (Manzano, 2018). Hall (cited in Manzano, 2018) argued that adolescence is characterized by significant sexual, social, and biological changes, marking a period of turmoil and stress. Thus, although adolescence is filled with promises of development and growth, it also involves risks such as distortions, disproportions, and dissociation.

Likewise, the concept of *adolescence* emerged historically from the need to classify populations according to age, particularly in relation to their capacity to participate in the labor market. Feixa (2011) points out that the notion of adolescence emerged in the United States and Europe in connection with major social transformations associated with the Industrial Revolution, age-based labor classifications, and the establishment of compulsory schooling.

Fridman (1999), for his part, argues that adolescence has been understood as a stage in which individuals, still free from adult responsibilities, are able to explore a variety of social, cultural, and sexual roles. This exploratory phase requires a degree of freedom but also adult supervision, as it is crucial to the formation of personal identity, a process that is both individual and social.

It is therefore evident that the category of *adolescent* is primarily defined through biological and psychological perspectives (Manzano, 2018). On the one hand, it has been described as a stage characterized by the absence of something, insofar as it represents a period in which one is no longer a child but not yet an adult. It is a time of transformation and self-definition that prepares individuals to assume responsibility for themselves, and may therefore be understood as a form of social moratorium (López *et al.*, 2024). On the other hand, criminalizing discourses have frequently portrayed adolescents as rebellious and problematic individuals (Chaves, 2010).

Being Young in Times of Neoliberal Capitalism in the Global South

Today, multiple discourses can be identified that stigmatize, discriminate against, and criminalize youth, as well as practices that lead to the systematic elimination of young people. To describe these phenomena, various scholars (Valenzuela, 2009; Amador, 2013) have examined the concept of *iuvenis sacer*, while others have focused on the concept of *juvenile* (Valenzuela, 2009, 2016; Reguillo, 2015; Muñoz, 2015). The study of these categories makes it possible to understand processes of precarization and exclusion, as well as the materialization of the State's sovereign power within social realities through the stark designation of young people as disposable subjects and through the power to make die or let live.

From *Homo Sacer* to *Iuvenis Sacer*.

Agamben (2006) argues that, strictly speaking, *bare life* is a life that may be stripped of its existence while simultaneously remaining unsacrificable. López (2018) expands upon this idea by stating that *bare lives* are those whose vulnerability exposes them both to death and to abuse because there is no one capable of intervening on their behalf. This conception is closely linked to the figure of the *sacer*, an ancient notion in Roman law that permitted the exclusion or even annihilation of an individual's life. As Amador (2013) explains, this juridical institution of Roman law implies that an individual is incorporated into the State's social and legal order precisely through exclusion, thereby enabling, if necessary, the possibility of their death.

To further examine the figure of the *sacer*—a concept rooted in Roman law—Rodríguez (2016), drawing on Agamben, explains that when a person committed a particularly serious offense, they became a *Homo sacer* (*sacred man*), thereby losing the protection of both human and divine law. As a consequence, they were excluded from the community, and anyone could take their life without being guilty of a crime. However, such a death could not be offered as a sacrifice to the gods. Thus, behind the *Homo sacer*, endowed with the quality of sacredness, lies the possibility of death, while at the same time the inclusion of that death within a sacrificial ritual is prohibited (Rojas, 2010).

In this sense, the *Homo sacer* is excluded by both civil and divine law. Yet these exclusions also produce indirect forms of inclusion within the civil order, insofar as civil law determines that anyone may take the individual's life without committing a crime, while divine law prohibits offering the sacred man as a sacrifice to the gods. Rodríguez (2016) argues that Roman legal frameworks, by

defining what is permitted and prohibited in relation to the *Homo sacer*, reveal a form of inclusion through exclusion.

According to Agamben (2006), the condition of *Homo sacer* is defined less by the supposed ambivalence of sacredness than by the state of double exclusion in which the individual is trapped and the violence to which they are exposed. The subject becomes vulnerable to the exclusions imposed by sovereign power, which, while claiming legitimacy, leaves the individual unprotected and stripped of the safeguards ordinarily provided by law.

Drawing on the figure of the *Homo sacer*, Valenzuela (2016) proposes the concept of *Iuvenis sacer*, emphasizing the exclusion and abandonment experienced by young people. He argues that such conditions generate social inequalities that, in turn, produce precarization. The economic and social precariousness affecting certain sectors of the population also limits their access to justice, as these individuals occupy a proscribed, disposable, and sacrificial condition of life. They are located at the margins of the judicial system, existing as subaltern subjects without voice or representation (Castells, cited in Valenzuela, 2016).

Returning to the notion of sovereign power that determines who should live and who may die, Valenzuela (2019) applies this framework to impoverished young people in Latin America whose deaths occur through violence. Once the lives of young people are deemed expendable, society enters the conceptual terrain of *Iuvenis sacer*. Referring to this phenomenon, Valenzuela (2016) explains that the combination of precariousness and lack of justice produces Agamben's (2006) *Homo sacer*, thereby revealing the existence of sacrificial lives. In this way, the *Homo sacer* is transformed into the *Iuvenis sacer*. Within this context, Amador (2013) adds that the *Iuvenis sacer* is a subject trapped within an adult-centered and deinstitutionalized world, integrated only to be sacrificed—if necessary—through forms of structural violence such as war.

Necropolitics and Juvenicide.

Achille Mbembe (2011) introduced the concept of *necropolitics*, through which he expands and reinterprets Michel Foucault's notion of biopolitics, which he considers insufficient. For Mbembe, *sovereignty*—defined as the right to kill—lies in the capacity to determine who has the right to live and who must die, thereby exercising the power to make die or let live. Control over life and death thus represents the highest expression of sovereignty, since authority possesses the power to decide who lives and who dies (Mbembe, 2011). At the same time, power manifests itself in the lives of subjects by regulating and conditioning the ways in which people are expected to live.

Determining who is made to die and who is allowed to live constitutes one of the central characteristics of necropolitics. However, it would be inaccurate to attribute this capacity exclusively to the State, as multiple actors and phenomena converge in these processes (Jaramillo & Zuluaga, 2023). According to Valenzuela and Borelli (2021), factors such as precariousness, vulnerability, and lack of protection constitute the economic, political, social, and cultural foundations that enable both biopolitical practices—focused on controlling bodies and populations—and necropolitical strategies, which reserve for themselves the power to decide over life and death.

From this perspective, necropolitics allows governments to manage the distribution of risk and, consequently, to decide matters of life and death. It constitutes a complex form of governance guided by a logic of sacrifice that has long been embedded within the core of neoliberalism—or *necro-liberalism*—based on the notion that some lives are worth more than others, and that those deemed less valuable may be discarded (Aguilar-Forero, 2020).

Within neoliberal capitalism, both necropolitics (Mbembe, 2011) and biopolitics (Estévez, 2018) are employed to produce unequal dynamics of life and death. These strategies determine who should—or deserves to—die, including the *Juvenis sacer*: young people whose lives are regarded as precarious and expendable.

Building upon the concept of necropolitics, Valenzuela (2012) and Reguillo (2015) connect it to the notion of *juvenilecide*, understood as the ultimate act of taking a person's life. However, juvenilecide should not be understood as an isolated event that emerges spontaneously; rather, it is the result of the materialization of multiple forms of social and economic precarization that disproportionately affect young people.

Thus, *juvenilecide* emerges as a concept aimed at recognizing and contextualizing the convergence of precariousness, social inequality, non-lives, and sacrificial lives among young people, while identifying a segment of the population considered expendable. In this way, a subalternized population is produced, one that Zygmunt Bauman characterizes as residual or surplus. Such populations are labeled undesirable, superfluous, or disposable because the system has degraded their forms of life and existence (Bauman, cited in Valenzuela, 2016).

Juvenilecide arises through an analogy with genocide. Both categories seek to identify how the intentional extermination or systematic elimination of a human group takes place. Juvenilecide, however, specifically refers to the persistent, systematic, and unpunished killing of young people (Valenzuela, 2016). In this regard, Valenzuela (2012) emphasizes that the concept of *femicide* is closely related to that of *juvenilecide*, since both forms of lethal violence are preceded by symbolic violence that establishes the conditions necessary for the crime to occur. Whereas femicide is rooted in a dominant patriarchal order, juvenilecide is grounded

in adultocratic structures that impose their interests through stereotypical and normative perspectives.

Juvenicide therefore reveals how those who hold power have promoted processes of stigmatization and criminalization directed at young people, often with the active participation of cultural industries. These industries contribute to stereotyping and stigmatizing youth behaviors and lifestyles, generating negative predispositions that disqualify young people by portraying them as rebellious, lazy, violent, gang-affiliated, dangerous, anarchic, or criminal (Valenzuela, 2016).

Consequently, juvenicide emerges through either the action or omission of the State, which serves as the guarantor of fundamental human rights. For this reason, the systematic killing of young people—or the precarization of their living conditions—may be understood as a State crime. By conceptualizing it in these terms, Muñoz (2015) argues that an epistemological platform emerges through which specific legal claims can be directed toward the State.

Discussion

The literature reviewed on youth studies in Latin America reveals significant epistemological transformations in the category of *young people* within the social sciences. Early approaches relied primarily on age-based classifications to identify youth; however, this criterion has gradually become more complex through the incorporation of chronotopically situated notions shaped by specific social and cultural factors (Vommaro & Cozachcow, 2023). The meaning of youth varies across historical contexts. For instance, in the postwar period young people were frequently criminalized, whereas during the 1960s and 1970s they were associated both with revolutionary movements and with delinquency (Chaves, 2010).

This diversity of approaches demonstrates that youth constitutes not only a scientific concern but also a political one, reflecting social tensions that are constantly evolving (Vásquez & Larrondo, 2020).

Likewise, Brito (1998) and Reguillo (2010) argue that youth may be understood as a social condition in which youth identity is constructed through the cultural and structural dimensions that shape young people's lives. The significance of this perspective lies in its emphasis on young people's interactions with the sociopolitical context, thereby moving beyond biologically determinist views. Reguillo (2010) contends that understanding young people through their

lived experiences, in relation to the structural and cultural mechanisms of their environments, situates them within the concept of the *youth condition*.

This category recognizes that young people cannot be understood as a homogeneous group, but rather as a collective immersed in ongoing processes of insertion into and adaptation to historical and geopolitical dynamics. Consequently, youth must be understood as a relational and situated social construct, influenced by factors that transcend biology and respond to complex realities that vary across time and space (Kropff, 2010).

Approaches grounded in adult-centered and biologically determinist discourses, such as those associated with the concept of adolescence (Manzano, 2018), limit the possibility of comprehensive analyses within the social sciences because they deprive young people of recognition as social subjects with agency. These perspectives are restricted to psycho-developmental theories that define youth as lacking maturity, given that they are assumed to occupy a transitional stage preparing them for adult life. Such narratives reproduce discrimination against young people and perpetuate a reductionist vision that fails to recognize their capacities and contributions within society (Kropff, 2010).

Furthermore, practices of control and surveillance directed toward young people (Jaramillo, 2018) are often justified through criminalizing discourses that associate youth with risk and conflict. These narratives generate forms of identity discrediting that stigmatize and segregate young people by perpetuating the belief that youth should be molded in the image of the adult world. It is therefore necessary to revalue and recontextualize the place of youth in social life by reassessing perspectives that pathologize and stigmatize young people and that frame them as subjects requiring constant intervention from adults (Manzano, 2018).

Youth does not endure only criminalizing discourses. There are also narratives that render young people invisible and subject them to precarization, as illustrated by the concept of *Iuvenis sacer*, advanced, among others, by Valenzuela (2016). This concept offers a profound critique of the ways in which social and economic structures precarize the lives of young people, transforming them into disposable subjects.

Within this same line of thought, the legitimization of structural forms of violence that manage lives and bodies places young people in a condition similar to Agamben's (2006) *Homo sacer*, insofar as it implies that some lives possess rights while others do not. Likewise, the naturalization of youth death as an acceptable outcome forms part of the structural and symbolic violence that validates the sacrifice of certain lives without consequence (Alvarado & Jaramillo, 2023).

This abandonment and precarization not only exclude young people from access to rights and opportunities but, in contexts of violence and war, also

transform them into bodies available for elimination or exploitation (Jaramillo & Zuluaga, 2023). From an adult-centered perspective, their lives are valued only insofar as they serve the hegemonic powers of the present, reinforcing relations of domination in which youth —particularly the most vulnerable— becomes a sacrificial, invisible, and disposable life within broader logics of exclusion (Jaramillo, 2020).

Following the logic of criminalizing discourses, *juvenilecide* emerges not merely as a phenomenon of direct physical violence but as a systematic consequence of policies that relegate young people to the margins of society (Valenzuela, 2019). This category helps explain how young people, particularly those from marginalized contexts, come to be viewed as disposable lives—lives that may be sacrificed within a socioeconomic order that privileges production and capital accumulation while neglecting or abandoning those who do not fit its productive schemes (Valenzuela, 2016).

The lives of young people rendered expendable by the system (Amador, 2013) exist in a condition akin to *bare life*, occupying an intersection between biopolitics and necropolitics that, in practice, is ultimately expressed through the phenomenon of *juvenilecide* described by Valenzuela (2016). In this sense, these frameworks enable the implementation of repressive policies that exclude and criminalize young people to the point of deciding over their lives, including their elimination. Such processes radically precarize youth life and assign it a residual value, reinforcing the perception of young people as potential social threats (Bonvillani, 2022).

Adult-centered, state, and market structures embedded within neoliberalism have deployed strategies of permanent precarization that push young people into conditions of extreme vulnerability. These structures have even acquired the power to determine which lives are worthy of being lived, operating through symbolic violence that precedes and legitimizes physical violence (Reguillo, 2015). In this context, *juvenilecide* becomes a State crime, enacted both through action and omission, that not only kills bodies but also destroys futures, possibilities for agency, and human dignity. In doing so, it creates a subcategory of humanity condemned to slow or violent death at the margins of society (Jaramillo, 2020).

Conclusions

Based on the analysis of the categories and concepts developed throughout this article, identified through a rigorous documentary review and examined from a critical, situated, and hermeneutic perspective, several conclusions can be drawn.

First, the category of *youth* has evolved from a simple age-based classification into a complex concept shaped by historical, social, and cultural contexts. This transformation makes it possible to move beyond biologically determinist and adult-centered perspectives that limit the understanding of young people as social subjects. It also enables the recognition of their agency, autonomy, and capacity to participate actively in political, economic, and cultural life.

Second, it is evident that adult-centered policies and discourses continue to criminalize and precarize young people, particularly those living in vulnerable conditions. The structural violence directed against youth makes concepts such as *juvenile* and *Juvenis sacer* valuable analytical tools for understanding the forms of marginalization and exclusion that render this segment of the population disposable. The normalization of youth deaths resulting from systematic violence situates *juvenile* within a framework of thanatopolitical governmentality, clearly revealing the dehumanization of youth through economic, social, and cultural exclusion.

The analytical power of the concept of *juvenile* lies precisely in its capacity to denounce the violence affecting young people in contexts of inequality, extending to the point of the physical elimination of specific bodies that are treated as social enemies. Such elimination may occur either through direct State action or through State omission.

At the same time, it is essential to recognize the forms of resistance deployed by young people, which demonstrate their capacity to propose alternatives and to challenge the processes of disqualification directed against them. In this regard, recognizing youth agency becomes a central analytical and political axis, as it allows for the construction of an approach that understands young people as protagonists of their own realities, capable of making decisions that influence emerging forms of social and political organization. This implies working *with youth, among youth, and from the perspectives of youth*, fostering participation and creating spaces for listening that value young people's experiences.

Finally, this article seeks to contribute to consolidating the idea that, from a social sciences perspective, youth is not merely an age-based condition but rather a relational and situated category. It therefore advocates an epistemological rupture with psychobiological approaches and promotes an understanding of young people as social subjects endowed with full agency. Likewise, it seeks to broaden discussion and debate surrounding the concept of *juvenile* as an analytical category that makes visible the ways in which States, neoliberal markets, and other social actors operating as agents of violence manage the lives they consider expendable. Ultimately, this article calls for the recognition of youth through their strengths, capacities, and forms of resistance.

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Child and Adolescent Labor in Non-Wage Societies: A Sociological Perspective from Family Workshops*

[English Version]

Trabajo infantil y adolescente en sociedades no salariales.
Una lectura sociológica desde los talleres-familia

Trabalho infantil e adolescente em sociedades não salariais:
uma leitura sociológica a partir dos ateliês familiares

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Abstract

Objective: To examine the contemporary debate surrounding child and adolescent labor from two main perspectives: the protectionist and abolitionist approaches. The theoretical potential is studied to address the reality of the phenomenon in contexts where multiple conditions of precariousness prevail, and where working children can begin their process of social disaffiliation. **Methodology:** As a strategy to explore the different conceptions and expressions of the phenomenon, interviews were conducted with working children and adolescents (WCAs) from San Andrés Cuexcontitlán, a semi-urban community in Mexico where the participation of working children and adolescents in informal family

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workshops has become normalized. **Results:** The need to reconceptualize child labor was identified taking into account the probability of finding in work a social bond, an institutional support, and a possible right that is still denied to children and adolescents interested in participating legitimately and with dignity in labor and productive activities. **Conclusions:** In non-wage societies, child labor is not only a technical relationship of production, it serves as a key institutional mechanism for integration into the social structure.

Keywords: child labor; informal work; workshop; family; social structure (obtained from the UNESCO thesaurus).

Resumen

Objetivo: abordar la polémica contemporánea entre las concepciones del trabajo infantil y adolescente desde dos principales enfoques: proteccionista y abolicionista. Se indaga su potencialidad teórica para abordar la realidad que presenta el fenómeno en contextos donde prevalecen múltiples condiciones de precarización, y donde la niñez trabajadora puede comenzar su proceso de desafiliación social. **Metodología:** como estrategia para explorar las diferentes concepciones y expresiones del fenómeno, se realizaron entrevistas con niños, niñas y adolescentes (NNA) trabajadores de San Andrés Cuexcontitlán, una comunidad semi urbana en México donde se ha normalizado la presencia de NNA trabajadores en talleres familiares, caracterizados por la informalidad. **Resultados:** se logra identificar la necesidad de reconceptualizar al trabajo infantil, tomando en cuenta la probabilidad de encontrar en el trabajo un vínculo social, un soporte institucional y un posible derecho que se les sigue negando a los NNA interesados en involucrarse legítima y dignamente en las dinámicas laborales y/o productivas. **Conclusiones:** en sociedades no salariales, el trabajo infantil no es solamente una relación técnica de producción, es un soporte institucional privilegiado de inscripción en la estructura social.

Palabras clave: trabajo infantil; trabajo informal; taller; familia; estructura social (obtenidos del tesoro UNESCO).

Resumo

Objetivo: abordar a controvérsia contemporânea entre as concepções do trabalho infantil e adolescente a partir de duas perspectivas principais: a protecionista e a abolicionista. Investiga-se seu potencial teórico para compreender a realidade

apresentada por esse fenômeno em contextos marcados por múltiplas condições de precarização, nos quais crianças e adolescentes trabalhadores podem iniciar processos de desfiliação social. **Metodologia:** como estratégia para explorar as diferentes concepções e manifestações do fenômeno, foram realizadas entrevistas com crianças e adolescentes trabalhadores de San Andrés Cuexcontitlán, uma comunidade semiurbana do México onde a presença de crianças e adolescentes em oficinas familiares, caracterizadas pela informalidade, tornou-se socialmente naturalizada. **Resultados:** identificou-se a necessidade de reconceituar o trabalho infantil, levando em consideração a possibilidade de encontrar no trabalho um vínculo social, um suporte institucional e um possível direito que continua sendo negado às crianças e aos adolescentes interessados em participar de forma legítima e digna das dinâmicas laborais e/ou produtivas. **Conclusões:** em sociedades não salariais, o trabalho infantil não constitui apenas uma relação técnica de produção; trata-se de um suporte institucional privilegiado de inserção na estrutura social.

Palavras chaves: trabalho infantil; trabalho informal; oficina; família; estrutura social (obtidas do Tesouro da UNESCO).

Introduction

Child labor can be examined from different theoretical perspectives, leading to diverse interpretations of the phenomenon. The main one remains its conception as a "symptom of poverty" (sometimes extreme) suffered by households. It is a predominantly economic interpretation, still in the social imaginary as the only or, hierarchically, the most important one. A related body of research conceptualizes child labor as a survival strategy by families or by working children and adolescents (WCAs) living under conditions of vulnerability. It is an example of an answer to the classic question about how the marginalized survive.

Another approach focuses on the consequence of meritocratic ideology in which one must know how to earn a living from an early age, learn to do things in a technical-practical sense as a way of training for adult life, to be responsible and feel satisfied of knowing and earning money, and even a character from face-to-face confrontation with life. There is also a perspective that identifies child labor as a common practice, rooted in families, where everyone participates in tasks and expenses to the extent of their possibilities. In other words, it is not conceived as something extraordinary that must be repaired, since it is practically an almost necessary (and desired) process that every person goes through in their childhood and adolescence. However, in recent decades, an approach has emerged from the children's own voices, in which they claim as a right to be inserted into the labor market if they wish, also protected by their recognition as subjects of rights, with the capacity for discernment and decision making. This perspective not only challenges adult-centered and abolitionist views, it also resists in a country like Mexico where, in the absence of a full wage society, the connection between formal work and the social State is weak. For this reason, institutional support relies heavily on community-based institutions of a community nature.

This paper proposes a conception of child and adolescent labor from a protectionist approach that explores its definition as an institutional anchor in social disaffiliation. A reconceptualization of child labor bases on experiences of the social protagonists. This assumes a critical view of work, named as "informal", especially in community and family contexts.

The Debate on Child and Youth Labor

Within the perceptions around the work carried out by children (boys, girls and adolescents) there are two main considerations. As an unwanted phenomenon, literally as a public problem worthy of being treated for its reduction and, in the future, eradication. And a certain positive meaning, either because it is expected or because it is desired or searched, in which the phenomenon is accepted as that, a phenomenon typical of the social dynamics that we have built and legitimized.

For the purposes of this paper, child labor is conceived as a socio-institutional support of children and adolescents to the social structure with the logical intention of reinforcing their social ties or supplying them to the probable weakening of their family and/or school ties.

Abolitionist Approach

Traditional definitions of “child labor” describe it mostly as the participation of children in economic activities prohibited by law (UNICEF, 2006). It is classified as forms of work prohibited because they endanger children's physical integrity (ILO, 2010). They show a bias towards the pathological conception of the phenomenon and, thus, choose its eradication.

The abolitionist approach (Leyra, 2005) defines child labor as a totally harmful practice since, according to its perception, violates the rights protected in *the Convention on the Rights of the Child* (CRC), under the argument that it negatively affects education, health, and occupational and personal safety of children and adolescents.

Child labor raises legitimate concerns, not only in recent years, as Ranjan and Lancaster (2005) state, but throughout history and mainly from local and international institutional development. This concern mainly deals with the conviction of child labor from those definitions:

It is harmful to the development of human capital, an idea that thrives in increasingly several research of this issue. Kanbargi and Kulkarni (1991), Psacharopoulos (1997), Patrinos and Psacharopoulos (1997), Jensen and Nielsen (1997), Ravallion and Wodon (2000) and Ray (2000a, 2000b and 2002) are part of this wide bibliography that demonstrates the correlation between child labor and children's schooling. (Ranjan & Lancaster, 2005, p. 209).

The relationship between poverty and child labor within these approaches is fundamental to explain the phenomenon and associate it with the real need that it is a symptom and consequence of poverty itself. Therefore, the treatment is necessary from the perspective of eradication.

According to the orthodox view, minors enter the labor market when the income they receive is necessary to guarantee the minimum level of family consumption (Ilahi, Orazem & Sedlack, 2001; Rogers and Swinnerton, 2004; Kambhampati and Rajan, 2005; Fan, 2011); this hypothesis is known as the *luxury axiom* of child labor. (Cortés *et al.*, 2018, p. 136).

Under this approach, there is a threshold income level below which parents are likely to send their children to work. This is how child labor is related to characteristics of vulnerability in households, and even to deficiencies within the same population of children and adolescents.

The abolitionist approach includes studies where child labor is conceived as a strategy of households to meet their needs for low income of the heads of the household, or informal employment or unemployment.

Parikh and Sadoulet (2005) state that children whose parents are self-employed are more likely to work than children of employees. Edmonds (2007) and Reggio (2011) found that daughters of employed mothers are more likely to work at home when there are young children at home. A similar result stated by Ilahi (2001), shows that changes in the socioeconomic situation of the family affect the probability of work outside the home more than that of girls, and that the trend is reversed in household. (Cortés *et al.*, 2018, p. 137).

Ureña *et al.* (2009), aimed at determining the impact of poverty on schooling and child labor and found that poverty stimulates the labor participation of children, and reduces their chances of going to school. The higher the schooling of parents, the less likely children and adolescents are to work and the more likely to attend school. Child labor is not only related to household poverty and its survival dynamics; it is also related to schooling. There are rates of absenteeism as a result of work in minors, and low academic performance, and, in extreme cases, school dropout. This often results from the excessive time demands imposed by work activities, or the absence of minimal academic preparation, as a result of a lack of time, resources and attention of parents (workers or not), and a very early incursion of children and adolescents themselves into productive activities.

These research works have contributed to strengthening the traditional view of child labor as a public problem, rather than as a social phenomenon. This perspective has historically been legitimized, without contradicting the social stigma to which working children are subjected, nor with the recurrent discourses of awareness and promises to eradicate their practice.

Protectionist Approach

There is a duality about child labor, or at least a flexible view, in the way child labor is conceived within the family. This duality requires going beyond conceptions that only show one side of the phenomenon. The reality experienced by many children and adolescents in Mexico and in the world, demands rethinking the conception of child labor, even to its probable definitions as a regular practice, and identifying that the problem lies not in this practice but in the constant degrees of exploitation (De la Vega, 1996) or abuse.

The so-called protectionist approach (Leyra, 2005) is based on a critical assessment of child labor. It emphasizes the potentially positive dimensions of child labor as a way to enhance experience within the labor market to make it a comprehensive part of a socializing and training process. By doing so, child labor can go from being a reason for disaffiliation, or social exclusion in extreme cases, to a cause for strengthening family and social ties. This paper explores this conception through an analysis of the family, socioeconomic, and cultural contexts that influence children's decisions to enter the labor market before reaching the legal working age.

Contexts are essential when analyzing child labor and several factors that trigger it and its consequences. The so-called “structural issues” are often ignored when establishing correlations of the phenomenon, such as low income problems, labor abuses or the low academic performance of children and adolescents.

Child labor affects the dynamics of the families in different ways, and mainly on children and adolescents. The findings around the subject are relevant to education; however, it is essential to explore recent research about other elements that do not necessarily fit into the pathological view of child labor.

Despite the evidence that favors the *luxury axiom*¹, recent studies have found an inverted U relationship between land tenure and child labor (Bhalotra and Heady,

1 Hypothesis within child labor that states that minors enter the labor market when the income they receive is necessary to guarantee the minimum level of family consumption.

2003; Basu *et al.*, 2010). This relationship is called the "wealth paradox", because it disputes the hypothesis of poverty as the only determinant of the insertion of minors into the labor market. To understand such a paradox [...] Fan (2011) states that when the wages of adults guarantee the subsistence consumption of the household, the substitutability between children labor and adults can matter much more than the income of the parents in the decision of participation of minors in the labor market. Even, Fan (2011), suggests a higher rate of return on investment in the child's education may increase the parents' incentive to make child work, since child labor increases household income and, therefore, financial resources for the child's education; for this reason, the new approaches include variables associated with the sociocultural acceptance of CL, the limitations of credit markets, displacement and the impacts of state transfer programs that seek to mitigate the effects of this phenomenon (Acevedo *et al.*, 2011a), (Cortés *et al.*, 2018, p. 140).

Child labor, not as a problem, but as a part of a cultural tradition, includes certain differences of roles to men and women within work dynamics.

Blunch and Verner (2001) state that there is a marked gender difference in child labor, since girls are more likely than boys to engage in risky work. But this gender gap is not due to discrimination in the labor market, but reflects the cultural norms of certain societies. Del Rio and Cumsille (2008) show that, while poverty establishes the most robust determinant of child labor, the cultural preferences of parents become increasingly relevant in the decision. In Colombia, Gil (2006) finds that within the cultural dynamics of certain social groups (such as peasants and people with low schooling), work is attributed a formative function; hence, the collective imagination sees an effective way to prevent minors from falling into bad habits and to promote the development of work skills and abilities for their adulthood. (Cortés *et al.*, 2018, p. 140).

Families, motivated by a variety of factors—not necessarily survival—resort to child labor to sustain their own dynamics or even to promote values and expand not only their economic, but also their cultural capital.

Edmonds and Turk (2003), based on information from Vietnam, found that households with their own business are more likely to send their children to work. A family that owns their property or business has a greater opportunity to use the children's labor. Bhalotra and Heady (2003), research on Ghana and Pakistan, stated that property is positively related to child labor. As large properties imply

greater wealth, in this case poverty does not lead to a higher level of child labor. (Mazzarella, 2013, p. 53).

These approaches are not only the result of theoretical efforts by researchers, but also of the movements of child workers (WCM) who have raised their voices to claim new considerations. They demand greater participation and prominence in their own lives. These voices do not speak about child labor itself (Leyra, 2005), but the conditions in which children and adolescents carry out such work, allow the exploration of other ways of understanding, defining and intervening in child labor.

From the protectionist perspective, the main issue lies on social inequalities. However, it is necessary to consider the continuums of inequality-violence that mark children and adolescents in broad regions such as Latin America; social contexts in which both conditions work as a system of mutual involvement. In these cases, this reality explains, in a systemic way, the deterioration of the institutional anchors of the most unprotected; at the same time, it generates a series of asymmetric social and economic relationships, not only between social classes, but also between age groups and sexual diversities.

Although, the continuums of inequality-violence affect the reproduction of ways of economic precariousness or economic exploitation, one of its most disturbing effects is the destruction of social cohesion. That is, the replacement of systems of solidarity social relations by asymmetric systems of power, which tend to reproduce and perpetuate the same systems of inequality-violence (Arzate, 2023).

Institutional Supports and Child and Adolescent Labor

The base of the argument for this paper is what Robert Castel calls the new social question: what to do to reintegrate populations marginalized by social and economic circumstances into social life and put an end to a hemorrhage of social disaffiliation? (Castel, 1997). The author places work as that social question, since modern societies have been historically structured around work. In other words, work is an economic reference, and also a psychological, cultural and symbolically dominant reference in the modern world. It is the main mechanism that structures society, especially formal work, understood as a fundamental connection between the individual and the State. The wage society represents the most finished result of this historical process.

In certain contexts, work is a socio-institutional support for all age groups. Child labor is shown as a possibility to reinforce the connections of children and

adolescents with the family, the community or the school itself, or, in extreme cases, to supply some of those links.

The concept of ‘modern social bond’ connects directly with that of ‘social cohesion’. According to Arzate (2021), it should be understood as a theory of social action, since it starts from an identity and a morality that allows producing social organization around the common good. For Durkheim (cited by Múgica, 2004), it is not possible to generate a cohesive society without conscious individual and collective action based on the autonomy of individuals that makes it possible. This conception leads what is meant by institutional ways that works as anchors of individuals in the modern world, regardless of the level of development of a society. Institutional anchoring is nothing more than the result of a collective action based on that conscious morality around the common good, even beyond the mere economic rationality that usually guides institutions.

The connections of individual and the modern social structure —based mainly on implicit organic solidarity— allow both the construction of social cohesion and the prevention of social exclusion. To demonstrate this, three areas of integration proposed by Castel (1997) describe the process of social disaffiliation: integration, vulnerability and disaffiliation. Within this framework, a first conclusion is drawn: individuals can hardly live without social support because that condition would make them excluded.

What is the socio-institutional support for children and adolescents? The quick answer is family. The family is the primary institution through which children become integrated into social life, and also the one who protects them; that is, they are a bond and support at the same time, there the first socialization takes place. The second bond is education and school. The first as an institutional value to strengthen their anchoring in the capitalist dynamics of society, and the second where they can weave friendly relationships with some of their peers to move towards total integration. If both bonds exist and are maintained, the child is likely to be within the first place under a safe and stable environment.

There are possibilities due to several situations in their households —as National Survey of Child Labor (INEGI, 2022) states— minors will see weakened one of these main supports, or in the worst case, they will see both. When this happens, one of the strategies of families and children and adolescents themselves to make up for such weakening is to work. If the socio-family context requires children and adolescents to work, they will do so without problems, which further reinforces the behavior if there are those who preceded them in that practice or have examples of their peers involved in work dynamics.

These actions are strategic, especially to avoid social exclusion, since, in certain social situations, the home and the family are not enough to fully sustain the connection with the social structure. Moreover, there are wide forms of violence in families and neighborhoods in extreme poverty, especially in the cities of Latin America; violence that mainly affects girls, adolescents and sexual diversities.

However, children and adolescents face a regulatory impediment that banned them from working before the age of 15. In the areas of disaffiliation, their insertion in labor market places them, at least in theory, in an area of vulnerability, since they are located in an environment of fragility of job insecurity and in the deterioration of their social relationships.

Child labor that includes working children and adolescents represents one of the social phenomena that most challenges social sensitivity. Their condition of vulnerability can place them in a process of social disaffiliation and, consequently, as potential recipients of social assistance, which Castel (1997) refers to protecting the person in danger of social distancing and unable to meet their needs by themselves. In this framework, a social intervention of a charitable or welfare nature is prioritized before a socio-political intervention. The latter is associated with the process of modernity of the development of critical thinking, democratic practice, the consequences of the industrial revolution and the growing secularization of Western culture (Saavedra, 2015). In other words, it is an intervention contextualized to capitalist dynamics, which also distances itself from the strategies of the welfare model.

Manfred Liebel and Child Citizenship

The intention to incorporate the term "child citizenship" into the debate is the construction of the set of rights of children and adolescents; among them the right to work as a way to fully realize.

If the work is registered as an institutional support of children and adolescents to reverse a process of disaffiliation or avoid total exclusion, it is a must to be recognized as a right, which can be justified within a new paradigm of childhood. Manfred Liebel is one of the pioneering authors in theoretically constructing this prerogative for children and adolescents. The right of children and adolescents to work does not refer to any work, but to "work with dignity", to "[...] light and not very heavy work, to an activity according to their skills and abilities" (Liebel, 2012, p. 19). Working children and adolescents do not accept being excluded from the social practice of work that for adults is a sign of a dignified life, solely on the grounds of their young age (Liebel, 2012). The

claim is a recognition as subjects of rights, as protagonists of the world and of their own life, without their age condition limiting them in that sense, as adultcentrism states.

To keep the adult working world closed to children is to reproduce the ideology of a group of weak and immature people who need to be protected for their healthy future development, an assumption that, articulated to chauvinism, racism and social classes, ways a constellation of power that reproduces social exclusion. (Leyva & Pichardo, 2016, p. 80).

Manfred Liebel focuses the theoretical approach on the subject to place the working child as the center of reflections and protagonist of their own lives. This author criticizes "[...] the idea inherent in the bourgeois pattern of childhood that being a child and working are mutually exclusive, or that they can only form a union that is harmful to children" (Liebel, 2006, p. 11). One approach to capture these realities is that proposed by James and Prout (cited by Liebel, 2012), through the definition of the child as subjects able of interpreting their realities and acting consciously. In this framework, childhood is considered not only as a "[...] temporary space in personal development, but also as a social space co-constructed by the same children and developing in historically and culturally different contexts" (James *et al.* cited by Liebel, 2006, p. 203).

The proposal implies being aware that a child worker is mainly a social subject: a member of society that contributes to its own configuration and that has the capacity of agency. This aspect is key, since their opinions and points of view will be influenced by that same society, while facing structural, cultural and social limitations. Here lies the core of the approach, recognizing these limitations and how they can possibly be overcome. It is about understanding how children and adolescents place themselves before these limitations, because in this way work can mean a position before the situations that they themselves observe and perceive.

Manfred Liebel's approach helps us better to understand child labor as a key institutional mechanism for integration into the social structure. It is not only significant for adults, but also for minors, especially when they face situations where their more traditional social ties are threatened, as they react by linking themselves again to society through work.

If work is understood as a solution to those motivations, it would not be congruent to eliminate that possibility they have found as a way of life. Many times, work is used by minors or by the same families to compensate for the inequality of opportunities (*ex before*), and to be matched in that equality (*ex after*).

This is part of the effort to overcome the circumstances in which they were born and live (family, region, income, level of resources of a household).

One of the empirical research lines is the identification of several motivations of children and adolescents to insert themselves into child labor. These do not necessarily correspond to the negative and pathological perspective with which the phenomenon has traditionally been approached. The fact that child and adolescent labor is a constant practice throughout the world and that, in the Latin American, it has a significant presence in almost all the countries.

Informality and Family Work as a Contingent Social Action: The Emergence of Family Workshop

During the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, child and adolescent labor has been a reality of Mexican labor market. This is explained by high percentages of informality: for the first quarter of 2023, the Informality Rate, according to the National Survey of Occupation and Employment, was 55.1%. More than half of the economically active employed population worked without an employment contract, therefore, they are workers disaffiliated with the State health services and social security that shows situations of job insecurity. Even in formal work, there are serious processes of precariousness, specially for different neoliberal reforms that ended up undermining workers' rights, especially wage precariousness, associated with the containment of wages as a State policy.

This reality leads to the proposition that Mexico is a non-wage society. This has many problems in social reproduction. First, as a non-wage society, formal and informal work do not represent a powerful institutional and legal anchor to the welfare system that the State and the market propose, and Mexican welfare system is permeable in its processes of social inclusion. Secondly, the system of needs of a family with lack or poverty implies the resolution of such deficiencies through a contingent response. This generates several strategies for the creation of hybrid institutions between work and family that allow avoiding economic precariousness. In this way, different informal family-work arrangements emerge that, in practice, work well as effective institutional anchors.

At least from a sociological perspective, the important thing is not their organization of work or social division of labor, but the new configurations for production from a community/family logic. The way in which the organization of work responds to: i) the satisfaction of the system of needs, while, ii) the productive configurations to be strongly interwoven in the community and

the family are sustained by imaginary meanings around identity, the value of solidarity work and the need for a morality of autonomous survival.

Economic informality results in multiple work scenarios, ranging from street work to domestic micro-workshops. The latter have been the spaces where children and adolescents work frequently. Such dynamics occur in configurations of work spaces that respond to the contextual, historical-social and cultural reality of the different populations in the territory, and that are also the result of complex processes of creating communities and families.

In almost all of the country, many industries have emerged and consolidated where work in informal family microenterprises constitutes the backbone of production, and where child and adolescent labor is standardized. For example, in the State of Mexico, mostly in Valle de Toluca, from the 1970s to now, food processing, *textile maquiladora*, and handicraft industries have emerged, among others. The emergence of these industries responds to the radical changes in the social structure, that is, to the productive transformation of peasant economies towards service and industrial economies (Arzate, 2011).

The economic structural change and its correlation in the social structure in Mexico in the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries—which meant moving from being an agricultural country to an urban and industrialized one—widely explains different ways of social inequality and new areas of disaffiliation for the most vulnerable. These processes that trigger social change are the real scenario under which communities and families produce hybrid economic institutions, which works as containment zones in disaffiliation and external processes of capitalist exploitation; these are economic-social formations that can be referred to as "family workshop".

The "family workshop", as a hybrid capitalist institution, but which works under a logic of reproduction of family-type life, uses informality as a strategy of invisibility to the State and the market. This allows to survive against formalized capitalism. In this way, it adapts to capitalism based on subsistence strategies constructed from specific cultural identities.

An example of this is the town of San Andrés Cuexcontitlán, a community of the municipality of Toluca, still identified as a socioeconomically vulnerable area with a high presence of indigenous population. The intention to place the case study there for this research has to do with the validity and constant reproduction of the phenomenon of child labor within its productive and cultural dynamics. The resin and ceramic art workshops are places where children and their families have found a way to reproduce the ways of life, the trades and preserve the identity, the sustenance and even the anchorage to the social structure within the community and the municipality itself.

The resin art workshops in San Andrés Cuexcontitlán have a date that goes back to its origins as a community, and child labor within its productive dynamics. The learning process in the art craft can hardly be understood without resorting to the teaching of this way an early age, especially intergenerational within the families themselves. Therefore, the normalization of child labor within these workshops has been a constant, with the opposite cases (people learning the trade until youth or adulthood) being the least.

To approach the working children of the community and, considering the possibilities of sampling in qualitative research, an intentional or strategic sampling was carried out. This consists of the deliberate selection of environments and people with a wealth of relevant information in relation to the objectives. The particularly knowledgeable participants have a lot of information, since they have a broader understanding of the scenario; they can narrate the history of the institution or the population, and complete researcher's knowledge (Sánchez, 2013). These were the main criteria for the selection of the interviewees:

- a) Children and adolescents engaged in labor activities
- b) Possibility of access to their environments
- c) Availability of participation and information
- d) Relationship with working children and adolescents
- e) Assistant authorities informed about the phenomenon

Twenty-six semi-structured interviews were carried out among child and adolescent workers, parents and employers. The questions were intended to get information to understand the meanings and conceptions of the interviewees around child labor, considering their subjective perspectives and exploring where they get information through which they construct their meanings.

Perceptions of Child Labor

In the resin workshops, remnants of an inherited dynamic are observed to achieve the permanence through the teaching of children and adolescents. However, these practices coexist with new dynamics in which dedication is no longer exclusive to work, but alternates with schooling and even with the

incursion into other tasks or professions. Fortunately, the new paradigm around children and adolescents has permeated many of the activities in which they are involved, and in different regions. Within this context, children and adolescents labor is framed in craft workshops of San Andres Cuexcontitlán where different positions coexist: those that propose to move them away from these places and those that consider their participation relevant to promote their development. The position that understands this experience as an opportunity for children and adolescents to develop skills and attitudes necessary for life is recognized, and the contribution to the continuity of a labor with which the community and its inhabitants have historically identified.

To know the work means being able to defend oneself, if needed, from labor exclusion, poverty and vulnerability. The children and adolescents involved have the possibility of crafting if the processes of social exclusion do not allow them to continue in their formal studies.

E: Do you consider an obligation for children who work to have a complete training?

A: It is not a matter of obligation or that one by force wants them to learn this, but it is necessary that they know how to work, but imagine, what they are going to do tomorrow if they do not study or if they do not find a job from what they study, they cannot expect me to support them indefinitely. (Fieldwork in San Andrés Cuexcontitlán. Isaiah, workshop owner and employer. Personal communication, 07/10/2023).

E: Do you think that the work you do in the workshop has contributed to your development?

A: Well, it is what they have done in my family, my grandfather, they say, that I did it, and now my father too. I am learning trade there, and it feels good because it is part of what is done here also in the town [...] maybe, it depends on whether I study high school and a career or something, but it does help me, and I would like to learn crafts well, I think it is a good job. (Fieldwork in San Andrés Cuexcontitlán. Brandon, 12 years old, working child and adolescent. Personal communication, 10/10/2023).

The workshop family does not have a single organization, but multiple, each adapted to the circumstances within the community and the family in inequality-violence contexts. In doing so, children and adolescents into labor demand the coining of imaginary definitions of what childhood and youth

are, and what work means and its relationship with other life context, such as school.

This, as an institution that provides institutional anchorage to its members, it represents an economic support, but also, perhaps as important as an affective and supportive stem for inequalities and forms of violence of daily life. The workshop family is a supportive space where learning and individual arrangements of precariousness, and its ways govern their social, cultural and moral logic, without forgetting that there is always an inevitable economic end, because they must be productive and successful as capitalist companies.

In this community, although conceptions framed in the protectionist approach prevail there are also critical positions regarding child labor. However, these cannot be considered dichotomous, since the protectionist approach advocates, just critical views at the phenomenon, to consider its possible negative consequences, but not limited to them. As a result, the perspective is broadened towards those aspects that can contribute to the training of working children and adolescents, and to the positive influences in their close environments.

E: What is your opinion about the fact that children work?

A: Well, it is good that they work to support the family, although it is better that they go to school, right? I think that is better for them, and then they can work more, although knowing something else, and I do not think it will hurt them. (Fieldwork in San Andrés Cuexcontitlán. Javier, workshop owner and employer. Personal communication, 07/10/2023).

E: What is your opinion about the fact that children work?

A: Many parents of these children do their job, not because they want to get rich or something like that, they are used to working from a young age and that they inherit from their children, almost as if it were passed down genetically [...] The little children who work do it mainly to help their families, fortunately, there are no such ideas that they work because they despise what they have, moreover, I think that the fact of working in the same way as their parents is a sign that they are happy and even somewhat proud of what they are and what they have achieved with that work. (Fieldwork in San Andrés Cuexcontitlán. Karla, Community Middle School Teacher. Personal communication, 27/11/2023)

If work is identified in the community as an engine of personal development, then the strength of the phenomenon, both in force and in scale, is further

explained. Incorporation into workshops from childhood is also reasonable in helping children in their comprehensive training. Therefore, it is not just to have them apart from the workplace, on the contrary, it is sought to incorporate them to contribute to their training. The personal development of children can motivate and be an engine of family development (eventually also for the community) in keeping their traditions, the maintenance of the craft and the generation of jobs.

The effort of child and adolescents workers in the resin craft workshops is externally recognized as a sign of self-improvement, family solidarity and community identity. Internally, child and adolescents workers know that they are executors of this effort, it is a framed idea inherited generationally. They voluntarily subscribe so as not to be excluded from that recognition, it means not to do less than their parents or grandparents. The effort is necessary for the own life, beyond what it can generate in a complementary way to the basic needs and their closest satisfactions as children or adolescents.

Working children are protagonists in the generation of identity and subsistence, both at homes and workshops. Within the community, the conception of child labor impacts the decisions of children to get involved and anchored in the labor field and community dynamics as a part, participating and reproducing them.

Final Thoughts

In societies that do not conform to the full wage-labor model, work is not only a technical relationship of production, it serves as a key institutional mechanism for integration into the social structure. In this type of society, where diverse and continuous complexes of inequality-violence also coincide, as family ties are weakened or broken, the phenomenon of child labor highlights the potential fragility of the institutional supports that keep a person within the social structure. In childhood and adolescence, these supports are mainly the family and school.

The importance of protectionist approach is their recognition of right of children and adolescents to work and guaranteeing their protection both as children and workers as subjects of rights. The problem still lies in the fact that their search for inclusion through work conflicts with adult-centered prohibitive approaches. Since it is not allowed by law, child labor is characterized by its clandestinity, precariousness, injustice and, in extreme cases, quasi-slavery.

They cannot demand labor protection because they must not even work, in the end, abolitionist approaches end up making the reality of any way of child and adolescent labor invisible.

As a way of hybrid production, family workshops have been employment alternatives around the world, where children and adolescent are involved in productive activities, but at the same time, they are protected from possible violations and abuses in different contexts. The workshop guarantees the work and the protection of their integrity, it recognizes their status as children or adolescents and assign tasks appropriate to their age and physical capacities, all from a moral sense of protection of a community nature.

The work does not deny their childhood, on the contrary, it is to recognize - according to CRC- the capacities of children and adolescents in understanding and discernment. If the recognition of these abilities were to lead them away from their condition as children, an adult-centered view would be involved to overcome, at least on the theoretical approach. Thus, child citizenship is the guarantee and full exercise of the rights of children and adolescents. Citizenship is a possibility to demonstrate the capacity they have to participate in all social dynamics from a rights approach, beyond its legal dimension, it can be another way of supporting and linking to the social structure.

Family workshops as institutional arrangements of institutional anchorage in contexts of inequality-violence represents an analytical challenge to abolitionist theories. They also open a window of understanding to the survival of vulnerable populations of the dramatic and fast structural changes of capitalism in peripheral countries. These situations allow us to think, among other issues: i) the anthropo-social ways of what social cohesion means; ii) the support of active life as a social and historical imperative in the domestic sphere; iii) the construction of ways of economic and cultural autonomy in marginalized societies and excluded from the longstanding indigenous development linked to identity processes of a community nature; and iv) the social construction of hybrid institutional arrangements between the economic and work context.

Therefore, it is necessary to insist on the conception of a work that also looks for covering material needs and framed cultural, social, and even political approaches related to social fabric. Work shows itself as that enhancer of family and community cohesion, without being limited to the adult population. It covers working children, especially in contexts of communities with certain degrees of exclusion, where the dynamics of the community economy can be interpreted as resistance to the capitalist logic of consumption and accumulation.

The work of children and adolescents is established as a contribution, as they are family members, it aims at satisfying subsistence needs, rather than generating significant surpluses. This distinguishes it even from the mode of

production of capitalist enterprises. In economic terms, craft workshops are ways of family and community work organization to resist with principles somewhat different from those of the market, typical of capitalism, or, at least, soften it by prioritizing intangible assets related to culture, tradition and educational training.

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Perceptions Regarding a Proposal for Bicultural/ Bilingual Education for Deaf Students in Bogotá: A View from the Actors*

[English Version]

Percepciones respecto a una propuesta de educación bilingüe bicultural para estudiantes sordos de Bogotá: una mirada desde sus actores

Percepções sobre uma proposta de educação bilíngue-bicultural para estudantes surdos em Bogotá: uma perspectiva a partir de seus atores

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Abstract

Objective: To analyze the perceptions of the actors involved in the Bicultural/ Bilingual Educational Offer for Deaf People (OEBBS) in the training processes of the students of Colegio San Francisco Institución Educativa Distrital de la localidad Ciudad Bolívar de Bogotá. **Methodology:** A qualitative study was implemented with the type of descriptive research. The focus group technique was carried out on six schoolchildren, six family members, and six teachers. **Results:** Assessing the OEBBS for deaf children, young people, and adolescents and compare the vision of students, parents, and teachers regarding the effectiveness of the offer in the comprehensive training of students that generated proposals for improvement was possible. **Conclusions:** The educational offer under study favors comprehensive training by developing the cognitive (learning in the different areas and class activities), affective (integration with deaf and hearing students, promotion of participation, and teaching of values), and communicative (sign language management, presentations, and group work) dimensions of deaf children and young people who study in the regular classroom.

Keywords: deaf students; bicultural/bilingual educational offer; comprehensive training; inclusive education; perceptions (obtained from the UNESCO thesaurus).

Resumen

Objetivo: analizar las percepciones de los actores involucrados en la Oferta Educativa Bilingüe Bicultural para Personas Sordas (OEBBS) en los procesos formativos de los estudiantes del Colegio San Francisco Institución Educativa Distrital de la localidad Ciudad Bolívar de Bogotá. **Metodología:** se implementó un estudio cualitativo con el tipo de investigación descriptiva. Se efectuó la técnica de grupo focal a seis escolares, seis miembros de las familias y seis docentes. **Resultados:** se logró valorar la OEBBS para los niños, niñas, jóvenes y adolescentes sordos, comparar la visión de estudiantes, padres de familia y profesores respecto a la efectividad de la oferta en la formación integral del estudiantado, lo que generó propuestas de mejora. **Conclusiones:** la oferta educativa objeto de estudio favorece la formación integral al desarrollar las dimensiones cognitiva (aprendizajes en las diferentes áreas y actividades de clase), afectiva (integración con estudiantes sordos y oyentes, promoción de la participación y enseñanza de valores) y comunicativa (manejo de la lengua de señas, exposiciones y trabajo grupal) de los niños, niñas y jóvenes sordos que estudian en aula regular.

Palabras clave: estudiantes sordos; oferta educativa bilingüe bicultural; formación integral; educación inclusiva; percepciones (obtenidos del tesoro UNESCO).

Resumo

Objetivo: analisar as percepções dos atores envolvidos na Oferta Educacional Bilíngue Bicultural para Pessoas Surdas (OEBBS) nos processos formativos dos estudantes do Colégio San Francisco Instituição Educativa Distrital, localizado na região de Ciudad Bolívar, em Bogotá. **Metodologia:** implementou-se um estudo qualitativo com abordagem de pesquisa descritiva. Foi utilizada a técnica de grupo focal com seis estudantes, seis membros das famílias e seis docentes. **Resultados:** foi possível avaliar a OEBBS para crianças, adolescentes e jovens surdos, comparar a visão de estudantes, pais e professores sobre a efetividade da oferta na formação integral dos estudantes, o que gerou propostas de melhoria. **Conclusões:** a oferta educacional objeto deste estudo favorece a formação integral ao desenvolver as dimensões cognitiva (aprendizagens nas diferentes áreas e atividades de sala de aula), afetiva (integração entre estudantes surdos e ouvintes, promoção da participação e ensino de valores) e comunicativa (domínio da língua de sinais, apresentações e trabalho em grupo) das crianças, adolescentes e jovens surdos que estudam em sala de aula regular.

Palavras-chave: estudantes surdos; oferta educacional bilíngue bicultural; formação integral; educação inclusiva; percepções (obtidos do tesouro UNESCO).

Introduction

Inclusive education policies focus on the global context (Martínez, 2021), a fundamental dimension that schools must address inside and outside the classroom (Gil & Serna, 2020). In Colombia, Decree 1421 of 2017 and Law 2216 of 2022 promotes inclusive education through continuous processes for the assistance of diversities, particularities, needs, opportunities, and interests of the entire population that inhabits the territory. This aims at the acquisition of learning and the promotion of participation with people of similar ages and with common environments for teaching processes, without segregation or exclusions.

From this perspective, student assistance with disabilities has been the interest of education in Colombia for several years. This is the case of deaf people of school age who have been able to access the educational system. According to Hernández (2015), regular schools become the environments designed to promote education in all dimensions, socialization processes, and assessments of a linguistic minority group. For this reason, education for deaf people is still alive today (Balvin *et al.*, 2022).

This is relevant to consolidating training proposals to qualify education for these population groups. This is because policies, programs, and projects are usually developed without acknowledging the voices of the actors who value the strengths and carry out transformations in achieving a constant improvement of different training processes. This research aims to answer the question: What are the perceptions of a bicultural/bilingual educational offering for training deaf students from the perspective of the educational actors?

The general objective aimed at exploring the perceptions of education actors with respect to the Bicultural/Bilingual Educational Offer for Deaf Students (OEBBS) in the process of comprehensive training of the students of the Colegio San Francisco Institución Educativa Distrital de la localidad Ciudad Bolívar, Bogotá, Colombia. The specific objectives were: 1) To compare the vision of different educational actors (schoolchildren, parents, teachers, and administration staff) in relation to the contributions of OEBBS in comprehensive training. 2) To explain the achievements and opportunities for improvement of the OEBBS regarding the comprehensive training of students.

As part of the background, the findings of some research, both national and international, are presented in descending chronological order. From Chile, Roa *et al.* (2022) identified the perceptions of parents of an early childhood educational institution about the pedagogical activities implemented in the promotion of inclusion from virtual work. The findings showed different perceptions of family members in relation to virtual education, comprehensive training of children,

inclusion strategies based on play, and linking families within the educational process.

Pérez *et al.* (2022) researched conceptions of natural science teachers from educational institutions in Huila regarding the teaching and learning of physics with deaf schoolchildren. The teachers' conceptions are reductionist, limited to scientific content without taking into account issues such as the flexibility of the curriculum for deaf students in schools.

Bello and Escobar (2022) studied the communications between hearing and deaf secondary school students from a public school in Bogotá, Colombia. They found deficiencies in the communication processes between students with disabilities and teachers. Inequalities in the development of cognitive abilities, sensory perceptions, and linguistic skills were made visible.

Vera and Yarce (2022) conducted another relevant study carried out in Colombia. Its goal was to evaluate the inclusive education program of an educational institution in Pasto, Nariño. The findings showed that this school has not fully appropriated the basic requirements for the promotion of inclusive education. There was a lack of a comprehensive care route that promoted an inclusion plan, program, or project in the school.

In Spain, Navarro *et al.* (2022) checked didactic resources used during early childhood education with the students of the *Federación de Personas Sordas de la Comunidad Valenciana* (Federation of Deaf Persons of the Valenciana Community) to favor the competence of language and communication. They demonstrated the formative relevance of the resources, their adaptation, and possibilities in the processes of student inclusion by benefiting attendance, integration, and learning under the same conditions.

In Chile, Larrazabal *et al.* (2021) studied the educational practices implemented with deaf schoolchildren through the dialogue of these students with their teachers and interpreters in the classrooms. The findings highlighted the relevance of sign language, the essential role of interpreters, teachers' work, and usefulness of resources in generating learning in deaf people. They also described the conceptions of teaching practices that teachers have as a determining factor for the achievement of inclusion processes in schools.

Rosas *et al.* (2021) in Chile, compared acquired learning, improvement of epistemic skills, comprehensive reading, the development of mathematical skills, and the management of emotions in students with hearing and visual disabilities. The findings showed differences in the performance of the areas under evaluation, according to the type of disability. They highlighted the need to promote policies, programs, and projects that consider the needs of the contexts and the particularities of the students.

Garduño *et al.* (2020) evaluated the inclusive education implemented at the Universidad Autónoma de Guerrero in Mexico, at the Escuela Superior Ciencias de la Educación, in achieving the improvement of current curricula from the representations of the actors of the school. The results showed that considering the interests and needs of schoolchildren in the development and implementation of curricular schedules, is necessary to integrating the language of inclusion both in documents and in educational practice to reduce the gaps between students with and without disabilities.

Finally, in Colombia, Serna (2017) reported on the analysis of the implementation of the educational program for deaf people from what is stated in the Institutional Educational Project, the inclusion index, the institutional improvement plan, and the annual operational plan in an educational institution in the municipality of Itagüí, Antioquia. The results suggested a training plan based on the communication with deaf people, review, and curricular flexibility for the improvement in the reconstruction of knowledge, and the promotion of participation of deaf people in the school, and student government.

So far, the inclusion of deaf schoolchildren in regular classrooms is inferred as a topic of national and international interest. Countries have gambled on the creation of public policies to achieve this goal. However, there are serious problems that limit the development of inclusion in education, such as lack of teacher training, and inadequate facilities and resources for teaching. In addition, the impact of these programs on the education of children and young people has not been extensively evaluated.

Conceptual Framework

The theoretical foundations of the research are based on the following categories: deaf schoolchildren, inclusion of deaf students in regular classrooms, and comprehensive training.

Deaf Schoolchildren

Law 2049 of 2020, issued by the government of Colombia, defines as "deaf" any individual who does not have adequate hearing and who, in certain cases, does not manage to keep a clear conversation in some oral language. Caverio (2021) states that deaf students must have the same opportunities as hearing students in developing their potential in school and community life. According to INSOR

(2020), the deaf person is recognized socio-anthropologically (having the capacities for comprehensive training) and legally (as a population with constitutional protection). However, according to Guevara and Vélez (2020), there are cultural and attitudinal barriers related to the exclusionary behaviors of fellow students, and to rejection by family members and teachers.

At the time of enrolling deaf students, a compilation of personal, social, family, communicative, and school histories must be developed (INSOR, 2018), considering the information reported by relatives and clinical reports in achieving an adequate characterization. In the same way, the school must engage all actors and institutions to guarantee an education in quality conditions with favorable environments for the comprehensive development of students and engage the full potential of the teacher. According to García and Vegas (2019), the purpose of inclusive education is for both teachers and students alike to conceive of diversity as a challenge and possibility for enriching teaching and learning.

Inclusion of Deaf Schoolchildren in Regular Classrooms

Regular classroom inclusion programs refer to the set of projects and actions aimed at linking students with disabilities to the school day on an equal basis with those for students who do not have disabilities. Inclusive education programs in public education appear as priority indicators of educational quality, the institutions are forced to design and plan inclusive education according to the contexts and requirements of their populations (Peraza, 2017). In this perspective, the OEBBS, with proposals such as the school for the deaf and parallel classrooms, contributes to this purpose. They propose several strategies to efficiently meet the needs of deaf students in the search for cognitive, linguistic, affective, and artistic development (INSOR, 2020).

From this perspective, educational inclusion requires institutional commitments to the contribution of the development of humanism, the creation of possibilities for social transformations, and the promotion of cultures for peace and social justice (Vidal, 2018). This demands the implementation of educational practices that involve didactics that strengthen inclusive environments to ensure successful school trajectories (Mena *et al.*, 2020). For this reason, studying inclusion offers, rigorous monitoring processes required to obtain the review and feedback of the components of the programs to strengthen them based on both positive and negative findings, (Peraza, 2017).

Comprehensive Training

Comprehensive training refers to educational processes that develop all aspects of school children's personalities. These processes must generate impacts on the configuration of the student's personalities and their skills and knowledge that allow them to interact in social media (Díaz & Quiroz, 2013). Tobón (2010) stated that the training of the person must be comprehensive, taking into account cognitive, bodily, communicative, spiritual, aesthetic, and evaluative aspects. Current educational systems focus on consolidating training schools open to diversities with adequate skills in teaching and learning (Aguinaga *et al.*, 2018).

Comprehensive training can be provided to deaf people. Caverio (2021) states that, if educational and social contexts offer possibilities, students can make great progress in the different dimensions of their personalities. For this reason, according to Rodríguez *et al.* (2019), classrooms should enhance cognitive skills that facilitate the development of learning. Thus, curricular transformations are required to strengthen the individual competencies and socio-emotional skills of students (Ministerio de Educación Nacional *et al.*, 2021), based on diagnoses of interests and needs, within the framework of the social complexities of students (Díaz *et al.*, 2020).

Methodology

Approach

The study corresponds to a qualitative approach with a type of descriptive research. For Niño (2011), this research aims to relate the realities of the topic under study to describe the characteristics, aspects, and the relationships between the components. This research contributes to the identification of strengths and aspects to be improved in a Bicultural/Bilingual Educational Offering (OEBBS), from the descriptive perspective of the same actors, to propose alternatives that allow its implementation to be readjusted.

Participants

Six deaf students, six parents, and six teachers participated in the research. All participants had a relationship with the OEBBS for Deaf People of Colegio San Francisco, Institución Educativa Distrital de la localidad Ciudad Bolívar de Bogotá, in their respective roles as students, parents, or teachers, specifically in fifth, sixth, and seventh grades. The students of this cycle that belong to the offer started their education in a regular classroom with the support of the linguistic model and interpreters.

Instruments

The focus group was used as the method of gathering the information. For Guerrero and Moral (2018), this strategy, besides gathering information and getting data from a group that shares certain characteristics, delves into what people think or feel about the topic under debate. Three focus groups were held with the support of interpreters: one with deaf students, one with parents, and the other with teachers. Each focus group was made with six participants and lasted between 30 and 60 minutes. The topic of discussion was the contribution of OEBBS in the comprehensive training of students, from the cognitive, affective, and communicative dimensions, and recommendations to improve the development of these dimensions.

Procedure

To describe and explain the object of study, three phases were followed: 1) *Exploration*: The context analysis based on OEBBS. Characterization of the students participating in the research; 2) *Description*: With the findings of the diagnosis, the questions were designed and used in the focus groups to compare the perceptions of students, parents, and teachers regarding the impact of OEBBS on the comprehensive training of schoolchildren; and 3) *Explanation*: Conducted after the implementation of the focus groups. A SWOT matrix (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) was used to assess the OEBBS and diagnose the current situation of said program (Ponce, 2007).

Results and Discussion

The findings are presented in three sections according to the specific objectives:

Perceptions of the Development of Comprehensive Training and Proposals for Improvement

Table 1 presents the systematization of the contributions of OEBBS in the cognitive dimension. Table 2 shows the systematization on the communicative dimension, and Table 3 shows the affective dimension.

Table 1. *Systematization on the Cognitive Dimension.*

Question	Students	Parents	Teachers
How is it evident that in school students develop the cognitive dimension?	Every day I learn more, although I like it more when we are only deaf.	The fundamental help of the interpreters is observed. They explain to them, although I feel that they learned more when they were only deaf children.	It is difficult because there is no initial joining process with the teachers of the previous year [...] During the year, the follow-up is done by each teacher, but there is no space for socialization either.
	When the interpreter tells me what to do and I do the activities. I understand why the interpreter is here.	Teachers do everything possible for them to understand; some make them present what they understand. It seems to me that this is how they force them to study.	Within the evaluation process of the school year, curricular adaptations are made according to the situation of the students.
	My parents or my brother explains to me, I almost don't understand the teacher. My mom says to read more so I can learn more when the teachers send readings. I'm understanding a little bit more.	I see little learning as he lacks more sign language, and as they come in with hearing children, some teachers don't have time to explain to them.	It is evident with learning. When they know nothing, they do not have sign language. They acquire it, and through it they begin to get knowledge.

Question	Students	Parents	Teachers
What would you recommend for the cognitive dimension to be better developed?	I pay attention, but sometimes I do not understand. I take time to understand, and sometimes the teacher tells me that it is not so. It is better to be as before, only deaf.	That all teachers are attentive to the inclusion of the entire student community with hearing disabilities.	To work on adjustments to the classroom plan to demonstrate the appropriation of basic learning in the area.
	I like classes when the teacher does not explain much, but they do funny activities with materials and paintings.	I think it is good that they follow the process with their specialized teachers and in the classroom with their interpreter.	To have agreements with external entities that contribute to the comprehensive development of deaf communities, both in the management of Spanish as a second language.
	I like to see what others do, and my interpreter tells me, and I do the same.	Sometimes, the interpreters are not enough, and children or teachers do not know much of signs. They lose explanations.	To continue with the work per classroom project, to make the pedagogical outings activities, to use technological material that brings them closer to other realities, and to involve and engage more family members.

According to Hernández *et al.* (2018), comprehensive training entails the development of students as complex, multidimensional human beings, willing to self-train through the different levels of progress of the biological, affective, cognitive, socio-cultural, and spiritual dimensions. This study is based on analyzing the comprehensive training of deaf students, exclusively from the cognitive, affective, and communicative dimensions. The “cognitive dimension” refers to the ability for “a complex totality of skills, processes and products of several types, linked to the social, cultural and individual experience of each person, and based on the biological structure that gives them effective sustenance” (Hernández *et al.*, 2018, p. 544). It means the ability to build knowledge.

In this research, students think that the activities applied in the cognitive dimension can be developed through communication with the interpreter, the families' support, and when they are alone with their deaf peers. On the other hand, parents think that in the cognitive dimension their children and adults,

through sign language, can learn, communicate, and integrate better with other people and be more resourceful when presenting. Teachers state that this dimension is developed with sign language when they begin to acquire knowledge in the other dimensions, and apply it in daily life.

Regarding the recommendations on improving performance in the cognitive dimension, students ask for more explanations about what they should do. They show preference for artistic and recreational activities and for actions that they can take with help of the interpreter. Parents suggest teachers be attentive to the inclusion and equal conditions with the entire community of students with hearing disabilities, more teachers with special education, and learning with specialized teachers. Teachers require training in didactics for working with deaf students, and agreements with external entities that support the comprehensive training of deaf communities for the acquisition of the Colombian Sign Language to engage families in educational dynamics and updated pedagogical practices. Mena *et al.* (2020) state that inclusive educational practices can be generated to guarantee successful trajectories for all students.

Table 2. *Systematization on the Communicative Dimension.*

Question	Students	Parents	Teachers
In which activities is it observed that students are developing the communicative dimension?	The interpreter helps me learn new words.	In sign classes, this is how they learn to communicate with other people, at home I understand some things.	They demand group work, in presentations, in the analysis or making of videos, in communicative interactions inside or outside the classroom, in the elaboration of narratives or explanations in sign language.
	When I meet my deaf friends, some of them know a lot about sign language.		
	The teacher taught us quite a lot of sign language, because he is also deaf.	When he has to make presentations, I see him looking for more things to make himself understood.	In class, in informal conversations, in presentations, in games...
	I learn with my deaf friends, and sometimes with videos I watch at home. But my parents hardly know sign language, and I can't practice.	The other deaf children also help him to communicate, they teach him signs, some are swear words.	
		Sign language helps him if he is with other deaf children.	Forming groups to work voluntarily with hearers.

Question	Students	Parents	Teachers
What would you recommend for the communicative dimension to be better developed?	Sometimes, there are problems with hearing children because they are tired, and they do not understand what I want to tell them, and also some teachers do not understand me. It would be good if we all learned sign language, and my family too.	That parents and family learn sign language so that they can communicate at school, and at home.	Stimulating learning of sign language and written language from an early age... motivating parents, caregivers, and teachers to learn it.
	That they do more activities where we have to present, so that they understand us.	Activities in which they have to share with the deaf and hearing students, so that they communicate with each other. More hours in sign language program for the deaf.	Classroom teachers are being assigned students with cognitive impairments, psychiatric problems, and we do not have the training to assist them.
	That they do more deaf only activities for us, so that we learn from those who know more.	More interpreters and language models, so that we all learn sign language and communication is easier.	To establish a good curriculum for the subject of Colombian sign language.

In the educational context, communication skills demand addressing the processes that lead to the establishment of rules, verbal and non-verbal expressions for interactions between different social subjects (Rodríguez *et al.*, 2019). In this perspective, students state that they develop the communicative dimension when the interpreter helps in learning new words, and communication with friends, and teachers who are deaf allows them to understand sign language, and interact better in their school environment. The attendees and parents state that in the institution they learn sign language, and they learn to communicate with other people, interact with other deaf children, and also with hearing people. Teachers show that deaf students develop their communicative dimension through group work, in presentations, the making of videos, communicative interactions, preparation of narratives or explanations in sign language, informal conversations, games and integration of work with hearers.

Regarding the recommendations to better develop the communicative dimension, students, parents, and teachers agree in learning and practicing sign language more to improve interaction with their deaf and hearing peers, including families, because some of them say that their family members do not understand them. In the same way, they suggest more hours in sign language program for the deaf, more interpreters, and language models so that everyone

learns sign language and communicate easier. According to Caverio (2021), deaf people should be guaranteed to be in the same conditions as hearing people to facilitate better communicative practices.

Table 3. *Systematization on the Affective Dimension.*

Question	Students	Parents	Teachers
How do the activities they perform in class help the development of the affective dimension?	Teachers tell us what is right and wrong, we must correct ourselves.	They participate in activities for deaf and hearing students, so that they say what they feel. When they share with deaf and hearing children, they gain greater confidence.	In general, activities are more designed to develop the cognitive dimension.
	Children who are from higher grades tell us how we should defend ourselves so that we are not mistreated by hearing children.	There is support from teachers and the teacher when they observe something happening to them or when as parents, we tell them if something is happening.	Our students from an early age have difficulty expressing their emotions due to the late acquisition of sign language.
	My family and teachers tell me how to behave and solve problems.	When each opinion, pace of learning and life history are valued.	Participation in class with hearers shows them that there are no differences between them. This fosters independence and generates self-affection.

Question	Students	Parents	Teachers
What would you recommend for the communicative dimension to be better developed?	Making more outings to parks, that they make us workshops where we are all and that way we feel better.	To solve problems soon since when hearing children discriminate against them, they feel bad and sometimes do not want to go back to school.	Establishing more cultural activities to show individual skills of the students.
	That they work more on discrimination, there are very rude hearing children.	Not separating them from hearing children when there is a celebration of the day of the deaf. Only the deaf go to those activities, it should not happen.	We demand more training in what the socio-affective dimension means, and how to develop it in our students.
	That they listen to us when we have problems. With a lot of support, treating us as normal people.		
	That they show us more life stories of deaf people who have been able to be professionals.	Having more teachers who learn sign language so they can know what they feel and think.	To do workshops with parents teaching them to handle the resources that we teachers develop so that they can integrate at home with school reinforcement.

The “affective dimension” includes “The set of feelings, emotions and passions experienced internally by a subject when relating to the outside world” (Hernández *et al.*, 2018, p. 553). Students state that they develop this dimension when they are taught how to behave, solve problems, defend themselves if they are mistreated by hearing children, differentiate between good and bad, and express feelings. Family members consider that participation is favored to express their opinions and feelings so that they say what they feel and become more self-confident. Teachers stated that this dimension must be addressed more intensely since deaf students, from an early age, have difficulty expressing their emotions due to the late acquisition of sign language, and when they acquire it, they encounter an environment that does not understand their language or their needs.

Students recommend activities such as pedagogical outings, workshops with everyone, working more on non-discrimination so that they see them as normal people, and hearing for problem-solving. Families believe that activities can be further strengthened through the use of virtual tools for adolescent changes, working as a family to have better results, and having more teachers who learn

sign language to strengthen communication with deaf students about their feelings and thoughts. The teachers propose cultural events to show the students individual skills with greater orientation in the diversification of activities focused on the deaf and with teamwork, and workshops with parents so that they can integrate at home with school reinforcement. Peraza (2017) states that inclusive education responds to the needs of students and the requirements of the contexts.

Explanation of the Bicultural/Bilingual Educational Offer for Deaf People

To carry out the explanation of the OEBBS, the SWOT matrix (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) was used. This matrix was a timely instrument to analyze the operation of the offer implemented at Establecimiento Educativo Distrital San Francisco in 2022. For this, the written project, the 2022 institutional self-assessment, and the improvement plan designed for 2023 were taken into account. In the same way, some findings of the focus groups made it possible to consolidate this matrix. In Table 4, the consolidated SWOT is reported.

Table 4. *SWOT Matrix of the OEBBS.*

Context	Favorable Aspects	Unfavorable Aspects
	1. Strengths	2. Weaknesses
Internal	-The institution's IEP specifies the requirements for students with hearing disabilities. -Classrooms for the deaf, in which students attend a special place for preschool and elementary school with an elementary school teacher and a deaf adult as a language guide. -From the 5th grade, deaf students are in an inclusive modality in regular classrooms with the communicative support of deaf interpreters and teachers and linguistic models in the areas of Spanish and sign language. -The institution has an interdisciplinary group for the care of deaf students.	-Lack of spaces for families to socialize with teachers to create a work team that contributes to the comprehensive development of schoolchildren. -Some people in the school show disinterest and resistance to the inclusion of deaf people in the institution. -The difficulty of communication between deaf and hearing students is notorious and generates conflictive situations. -Because of delays in appointing an entire team that assists the deaf community, difficulties arise in providing assistance to students.

Context	3. Opportunities	Threats
External	-To motivate the educational community in learning Colombian sign language. -To establish curricula adapted to the educational needs of the deaf community and their performance in higher education. -To participate in events scheduled by public and private entities that encourage the inclusion of the deaf community. -To implement participation strategies of the educational community in evaluating the program. -To make teachers, students, and parents participate and develop a sense of community and inclusion.	-Ignorance of public policy of inclusion which guarantees citizen participation and optimal educational development of the deaf community. -Reduction of budget from territorial entities for inclusion programs. -Lack of guarantee of appointments from the Secretary of Education to make a work team during the school year. -Lack of support from district entities in economic, health, and social insufficiencies of the deaf community of the locality for the displacement and permanence from institution to school.

Describing the perception of the effectiveness of the OEBBS, understood as the achievement of the objectives was possible (Gutiérrez, 2009). In this perspective, the observed teaching, learning, and communication activities, as well as the coexistence of the deaf population were essential in the decision to choose evaluative research in the OEBBS offered by the institution. This is to determine the effectiveness of these categories in the inclusive processes of the regular classrooms of the deaf youth of Cycle III, to the extent that in this cycle changes in the institutional organization are evidenced as they move from the specialized classroom to inclusion in the regular classroom. This generates new ways of learning, communication, and interpersonal relationships in young people.

Therefore, implementing quality inclusive education, in which teachers are linked and engaged in these processes based on effective training for them and adequate materials for their work has not yet been possible (Gallegos, 2023). In addition, collaboration in the training of their children and the State to allocate, execute, and control investment for public policies and programs is necessary for parents. Thus, strengths must be increased, opportunities must be exploited, and needs and immediacies must be addressed so that educational offerings can continue to contribute to the comprehensive development of deaf students. García and Vegas (2019) state that diversity must be considered as a challenge for the transformation of the ways of teaching and learning.

Conclusions

The Bicultural/Bilingual Educational Offer (OEBBS) for deaf students of the school under study promotes comprehensive training from the cognitive, communicative, and affective dimensions. According to the contributions of the participants (schoolchildren, parents, and teachers), the cognitive dimension is developed with learning different areas of knowledge, curricular adaptations made by teachers, acquisition of knowledge for daily life, and the execution of classroom activities. The communicative dimension is strengthened by learning new words, meetings with deaf students, mastering sign language, presentations, and group work. The affective dimension is developed when teaching on how students should behave and giving advice, with the promotion of their intervention in school experiences, and the integration of deaf students with hearing students.

The main weaknesses found in the OEBBS are the lack of cooperation between family and school, apathy toward inclusion, and the disinterest of educational actors in learning sign language. Programs and projects must be implemented to link the family and schools to join efforts to achieve a comprehensive training of deaf students that responds to their interests and needs. The threats dealing with lack of knowledge of inclusion policies, insufficient budgets, disinterest of families in the education of children, and scarce connection between the different entities of the State in assisting the deaf student population. The leadership of governments is required to design, support, and implement public policies that provide quality and warmth to these population groups.

On the other hand, people from OEBBS work team of the institution contribute to comprehensive training processes of deaf schoolchildren, but definitely interpreters are great facilitators for adaptation involving them in the regular classrooms. They generate learning spaces interpreting what was stated by the teachers, they also provide other explanations. In the same way, bonds of trust are created when students express their feelings and emotions so that they can interpret them to make other people understand what is happening. In the institution, there is recognition of gratitude to interpreters by family members, students, teachers, and teaching executives.

The research had some limitations, such as the lack of attention from families and the lack of participation in events scheduled by the school in evaluating processes. On the one hand, the greatest limitation of the deaf community is communication, due to poor learning of sign language by young people, poor understanding of questions, and, in some cases, shyness and low confidence. On the other hand, there were rescheduled meetings with deaf young people due to the absence of interpreters because they were involved in other activities. Finally, some regular classroom teachers were reluctant to participate in studies

to propose improvements in the OEBBS, expressing lack of knowledge to deal with this type of population and suggesting specialized classrooms.

With this research, subsequent studies can be carried out to lead the promotion of communication strategies of the deaf population to contribute to communication skills and the exchange of knowledge between the deaf and hearing populations. Another topic of study may be monitoring the enrollment of deaf young people into higher education and promoting knowledge of sign language as a strategy to improve coexistence of the deaf and hearing student community. On the other hand, the identity of the deaf is mentioned in several responses, however, the value they provided remained to be scrutinized. Research on families in the deaf community in the use of Colombian sign language in and out of homes can be conducted, and also on the relevance of education for deaf students. Regarding teachers, conducting research on training needs, the use of didactic strategies, and perceptions about the evaluation of inclusion students would be good.

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The Mothers and Their Different Forms of Waiting: Reflections on the "Madwomen" of Plaza de Mayo*

[English Version]

Las Madres y sus esperas. Reflexiones a propósito de las «locas» de Plaza de Mayo

As mães e suas esperas. Reflexões a propósito das "loucas" da Plaza de Mayo

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Abstract

Objective: To explain the emotions experienced by the Mothers of Plaza de Mayo as they waited for their children who had been detained or disappeared by the Argentine civil-ecclesiastical-military dictatorship (1976-1983). **Methodology:** Qualitative methodologies—such as discourse and documentary analysis—are used to provide insights for reconstructing the Mothers' perceptions regarding the abduction of their children. This framework relies on political, legislative, and organizational indicators as essential resources to interpret the reactions elicited by this (un)expected wait. **Discussion:** The article critically examines denialist perspectives grounded in the so-called "theory of the two demons," which equates crimes committed by state terrorism with acts of violence carried out by guerrilla organizations. **Results:** The findings make tracing an evolving trajectory within those experiences of waiting possible. This involves (and converges in) the categories referred to here as "bifurcated

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waiting." **Conclusions:** The research sheds light on aspects of the emotional fabric, always collectively constructed, that have shaped and continue to shape the Mothers' demands, synthesized in the slogans "appearance alive" and "trial and punishment for the guilty."

Keywords: Mothers of Plaza de Mayo; madwomen of Plaza de Mayo; Argentine dictatorship; detained-disappeared (obtained from the Argentine History Thesaurus).

Resumen

Objetivo: elucidar emociones experimentadas por las Madres de Plaza de Mayo ante la espera de sus hijos detenidos-desaparecidos a manos de la dictadura cívico-ecclesiástico-militar argentina (1976-1983). **Metodología:** se hace uso de metodologías cualitativas—como el análisis discursivo y documental— con el fin de aportar insumos para reconstruir las percepciones de las Madres ante el secuestro de sus vástagos. En este marco, se apoya en indicadores de índole política, legislativa y organizacional en cuanto recursos imprescindibles para interpretar las reacciones suscitadas ante esa (des)esperada espera. **Discusión:** se discute con miradas de sesgo negacionista amparadas en la denominada «teoría de los dos demonios», mediante la cual se homologan los delitos cometidos por el terrorismo de Estado a los actos de violencia ejercidos por organizaciones guerrilleras. **Resultados:** los resultados obtenidos permiten trazar un recorrido evolutivo en el marco de esas esperas que involucran (y confluyen en) las categorías aquí denominadas «esperas bifurcadas». **Conclusiones:** la investigación desbroza aspectos de la trama de sentires (construidos siempre desde lo colectivo) que marcaron y marcan hasta hoy los reclamos de las Madres, los cuales son sintetizados en las consignas de «aparición con vida» y «juicio y castigo a los culpables».

Palabras clave: Madres de Plaza de Mayo; locas de la Plaza de Mayo; dictadura argentina; detenidos desaparecidos (obtenidos del Tesoro de Historia Argentina).

Resumo

Objetivo: elucidar as emoções vivenciadas pelas Mães da Plaza de Mayo diante da espera por seus filhos detidos-desaparecidos pelas mãos da ditadura cívico-ecclesiástico-militar argentina (1976–1983). **Metodologia:** utilizam-se metodologias qualitativas—como a análise discursiva e documental— com o objetivo de fornecer subsídios para reconstruir as percepções das Mães diante do sequestro de seus filhos. Nesse contexto, apoia-se em indicadores de natureza política, legislativa e organizacional

como recursos imprescindíveis para interpretar as reações suscitadas diante dessa (des)esperada espera. **Discussão:** discute-se com perspectivas de viés negacionista amparadas na denominada “teoria dos dois demônios”, por meio da qual se equiparam os crimes cometidos pelo terrorismo de Estado aos atos de violência praticados por organizações guerrilheiras. **Resultados:** os resultados obtidos permitem traçar um percurso evolutivo no âmbito dessas esperas, que envolvem (e convergem em) as categorias aqui denominadas “esperas bifurcadas”. **Conclusões:** a pesquisa desvela aspectos da trama de sentimentos (sempre construídos a partir do coletivo) que marcaram e ainda marcam os reclamos das Mães, os quais se sintetizam nas consignas de “aparição com vida” e “julgamento e punição dos culpados”.

Palavras chaves: Mães da Plaza de Mayo; loucas da Plaza de Mayo; ditadura argentina; detidos-desaparecidos (obtidos do Tesouro de História Argentina).

Introduction: From the Waiting of Mothers to the Different Forms of Waiting of the "Mothers"

The waiting of mothers (lowercase), that is, of any mother, begins with pregnancy, or before, and carries a significant cultural imprint associated with gendered perspectives. This form of waiting, in its various nuances, has been widely addressed by historiography and sociology in key, well-known works. Furthermore, it cannot be labeled a priori as either desired and joyful or undesired and sorrowful, nor should it be associated with the fulfillment of any hypothetical role imposed on women. It is a type of waiting that, in many cases, gives rise to conflicting feelings, oscillating between the desire for and the fear of pregnancy, childbirth, and the act of giving birth itself, as a literal detachment from the maternal body, to the decision to either continue or interrupt the pregnancy: that is, to abruptly end that wait. There is also another (perhaps delayed?) form of waiting that begins after the child is born, marking the end of that so-called sweet wait. This second type of waiting is also marked by contrasting emotions, ranging from the immense joy of meeting, touching, and feeling the newborn, to the anxiety over the child's health and future, the real, no longer idealized, child.

However, beyond these relatively expected forms of waiting, Argentina experienced in the 1970s and 1980s a form of waiting that could be called "unexpected." Specifically, this refers to the experience of the Mothers (now capitalized) of Plaza de Mayo. This designation includes all mothers of children who were detained-disappeared in Argentina between 1976 and 1983, regardless of whether they were institutionally affiliated with the organization Madres de Plaza de Mayo. The term is used here because of the global recognition it has attained. These women, mockingly referred to as the "madwomen of the Plaza" by the genocidal regime that seized power on March 24, 1976, and held it for seven long years, had adult children who were kidnapped and "disappeared" by the dictatorship led by a Military Junta. This Junta was headed by Jorge Rafael Videla (representing the Army), with Emilio Eduardo Massera (of the Navy) and Orlando Ramón Agosti (of the Air Force) serving as his principal collaborators. These women became victims of a form of dispossession orchestrated by an authoritarian regime that, by literally taking their children from their homes, turned their lives into an open question. In this context, the contributions of Critical Theory from the Frankfurt School may be relevant, as they offer insights into the conditions under which political domination emerges and legitimizes itself, particularly the dynamic between those who make others wait and those who are forced to wait (and, most importantly, what is being waited for) under dictatorial regimes.

The Mothers made their first public appearance on April 30, 1977, with an iconic march in Plaza de Mayo. Their original goal was to secure an audience with Videla, which led them to gather in the Plaza and stage a peaceful demonstration, demanding to know the whereabouts of their children. The decision to meet there was made while a group of 14 mothers of detained or disappeared individuals was waiting to speak with the secretary of the military vicar at the Metropolitan Curia of Buenos Aires. The connections and support between the upper ranks of the Argentine Catholic Church and the military regime are well documented.¹ In that context, then unknown to many of the Mothers, Azucena Villaflor proposed that they cross the street and gather in Plaza de Mayo, reasoning that if they were seen by the *de facto* president, they might finally be heard. Thus, faced with a wait that seemed infinite, the Mothers walked to the Plaza and stood in front of the main entrance of the Casa Rosada, the seat of Argentina's national government. However, due to the authoritarian order enforced under the State of Siege declared that same March, police ordered them to disperse, instructing them to "keep walking." And so they did. They walked in pairs, the maximum number allowed under the emergency legislation, and began to circle the May Pyramid in silent protest, demanding answers from the government about their missing children. Their physical movement also served as a symbol of the real power of a society embodied in their presence. It questioned the patriarchal authority that claimed the right to regulate life and death. The white headscarves they wore, fashioned from baby diapers, symbolized motherhood. Their Thursday marches came to represent, among other things, resistance to the regime's technology of death: the enforced disappearance of their children.

Six months later, a mother, who was also a grandmother, stepped away from the circle and asked whether any of the others were also searching for a grandchild or had a pregnant daughter or daughter-in-law. Her timely question prompted twelve women to organize a collective effort to search for their grandchildren, many of whom had been born in clandestine detention centers. The following Saturday, October 22, 1977, the Grandmothers of Plaza de Mayo held their first meeting and began a struggle that continues to this day (Grandmothers of Plaza de Mayo Association, 2025).

The subversive nature of the Mothers' activism (and of the Grandmothers, as "twice-mothers") is encapsulated in the phrase, "we were birthed by our children." Viewed from a historical distance, this formulation highlights how the

1 Among the extensive bibliographies on the subject, the following works are worth mentioning: Mignone (1986), Obregón (2005), Mallimaci (2015), and Rupflin (2016), to name just a few recommended texts. Additionally, Catoggio (2016) highlights the disappearance of Catholics associated with dissenting clergy groups.

associations between women, mothers, childbirth, diapers, babies, and children ensured the continuity of a demand that lacked any prior symbolism connected to political protest (Funes, 2017, p. 199).

This waiting was marked by a clear, legitimate, and precise demand: to know the fate of their children, where they were, whether they were cold, and ultimately, whether they were still alive. In other words, it was a demand to stop waiting. Any analysis of the Mothers' different forms of waiting must take into account that they embodied a distinct socialization of motherhood, shifting from being the mother of one, two, or several specific children to becoming mothers of all the disappeared.² They transcended biological bonds by grounding their demands in political principles, which became key symbols of resistance to tyranny and defining features of both national and international opposition to the dictatorship. The Mothers thus emerged as a new political subject (Gorini, 2015, pp. 19-21).

This form of socialized motherhood, embodied by the Mothers, became a foundational principle that guided their actions. These women embraced the suffering of all victims of political violence, as reflected in the powerful words of Hebe de Bonafini, co-founder (1977) and long-time president (from 1979 until her death in 2022) of the Mothers of Plaza de Mayo.³ In an interview at the National University of General San Martín (Argentina), Bonafini recalled that the Mothers were accused of being mothers of terrorists and terrorist mothers. Faced with the fear provoked by such accusations, each responded individually, saying things like: "my son did nothing," "he was taken because of a friend," "because of his wife," or "because of his cousin." One day, they realized the need to become mothers of all. They stopped embroidering their children's names on the white headscarves and no longer carried photos labeled with names. When asked whether the missing person was their child, they answered: "Yes, we are the mothers of 30,000" (Di Marco, 2025, p. 1).

Indeed, the Mothers quickly understood that together they were more. Not simply in a numerical sense, but as a collective force that transformed fear into strength and hope. This socialization of motherhood gave rise to a collective identity through which they also shared their different forms of waiting. They wove their intertwined and indistinct emotions into a unified narrative expressed through two powerful slogans: "appearance alive" and "trial and punishment for the guilty." These slogans have become defining markers of Argentina's political

2 This statement is expressed on multiple occasions and can be seen in the documentary titled *Todos son mis hijos* (Soto & Asociación Madres de Plaza de Mayo, 2016).

3 It should be noted that by 1986, the Mothers had split into two groups: the Asociación Madres de Plaza de Mayo, the larger of the two, which continued to be led by Bonafini; and the Madres de Plaza de Mayo-Founding Line.

history in recent decades and embody a fundamental ethical principle central to human rights: life must not be violated for any reason of state. These slogans also express the raw desire born from a profoundly painful wait (Pecheny, 2015, pp. 213-214).

Waiting, Between Loss and *Despair/Hope*

“Hope,” “waiting,” “hopelessness,” and “despair” are terms that dwell in the depths of the human psyche and are simultaneously tied to a wide range of situations (traumatic or not) experienced by individuals.⁴ Hope, connected to the very core of religion, also involves the expectations that the Mothers had of the Church and, more specifically, of the ecclesiastical hierarchy (Rupflin, 2019). Although neither the Mothers nor their children constituted a homogeneous group in religious terms, the military government believed they posed a threat to its goal of restoring the so-called “Catholic nation” (Rupflin, 2019, p. 125).

The concept of “waiting” involves an infinitely broad spectrum of possibilities and may be evaluated either positively or negatively. Such judgment, usually made retrospectively, is often linked to the outcome of that wait. Whether it be waiting for a partner, a child, state authorization to access life-saving medication, or an organ transplant, or even waiting for a dignified death through euthanasia, all of these are just a few examples among many. Yet, these diverse experiences share a commonality: they are all, in essence, forms of waiting, regardless of the emotional or moral weight they carry.

The waiting experienced by the Mothers inevitably encompassed a range of conflicting emotions. In effect, the emotions (or affects, in line with a well-established historiographic debate) (Zaragoza, 2013) associated with all forms of waiting make them context-dependent and, at the same time, shaped by gender. The same cultural forces that often conflate sex with gender and gender with socially imposed roles also influence the expression of emotions, typically manifested differently in women and men, particularly when they act as or identify as mothers and fathers. This leads to a concept embedded in dominant patriarchal culture: that a woman becomes a mother from the moment of gestation, while a man becomes a father through a kind of psychological adoption that occurs after birth. Without resorting to deterministic assumptions, this helps explain the emotional distance often observed between their most primal responses. It also sheds light on the absence of a parallel group of

4 For insights into the relationship between trauma, tragedy, and religion, though focused on another event in Argentine history, see: Korstanje (2013).

"Fathers of Plaza de Mayo." This is not to say that the fathers were unaffected by the disappearance of their children, but rather to highlight the emotional differences reinforced by our culture. Moreover—as Hebe de Bonafini once noted—men were perceived as unable to sustain the mission that served as the unifying force among the Mothers. For the Mothers, their children were above race, religion, and politics, whereas the fathers often clashed over more circumstantial matters, which ultimately led to requests that they no longer attend the meetings (Di Marco, 2025, p. 5).

Revisiting Butler's reflections, beyond the pandemic context in which they were originally framed, the Mothers can be seen to embody a way of living that recognizes the inherent value of each individual life, regardless of its market value. They affirm that the flourishing of each person occurs not only for oneself but for the collective (Butler, 2022, p. 10). This belief forms the basis of the socialization of motherhood, as expressed through the reconstruction of their detained-disappeared children as children of all.

However, acknowledging that the comparison between losing a child due to the pandemic (or illness or accident) and losing a child to state-sponsored disappearance as not entirely equivalent is important. Indeed, a key difference between the pandemic reality analyzed by Butler and the political reality brought about by the dictatorship lies in the fact that, in the former, no social, ideological, or sexual category was guaranteed absolute immunity (Butler, 2022, p. 13); whereas in the latter, the disappeared generally shared the ambiguous category of "otherness." This was an undefined category from which, according to the regime's discourse, "decent people" needed to be immunized.⁵ Nevertheless, as in the pandemic, the Mothers' experiences were characterized by emotional waves, peaks and troughs, related phenomenologically to hope and despair.

The obvious question—what did and do these women of the Plaza expect?—triggers a series of unavoidable reflections when attempting to outline their emotional history. Their different forms of waiting were permeated by feelings anchored in the barren hope of recovering their children alive, but also by others rooted in a different register: the pursuit of justice and punishment for those responsible. There is an implicit fading of hope for their children's survival, for once again, time seemed to favor the repressors.

The powerful global impact of these "madwomen" reached universal proportions, even though their different forms of waiting were rooted in a microworld located in the deep south of the Global South, and within it, an even smaller and statistically insignificant space: the "otherness" within Argentina.

5 The notion of 'immunity,' originating in the life sciences, refers to the strengthening of an organism's immune process to protect itself against external agents that may threaten the individual's life or health. Its transposition into the realm of biopolitics was developed by Roberto Esposito (2005, 2009).

This context invites a microhistorical reading to unearth both their past and present emotions. Thus, in attempting to offer a possible response to Butler's question: What kind of world is this? Reconstructing part of the world (or more precisely, the microworld) that enabled the disappearance of people, and, in parallel, the even smaller world that experienced that disappearance firsthand becomes relevant. For the Mothers, as subjects who wait, the pain of loss is sometimes intertwined with a kind of *despair/hope*. This emerges from the premise that "grief moves between life and the world, between the singular and irreversible event of loss and a world now rendered unimaginable, immersed in grief" (Butler, 2022, p. 36).

The world, in its supposed universality, falls short of capturing the tragic reality of the Mothers. Beyond the common waiting experienced by all mothers, the waiting endured by these Mothers is marked by unique features: the forced disappearance of their children, the uncertainty surrounding their fate, the silence of the perpetrators, and the torment of questions left unanswered, in short, the epistemic inconsistency at the core of disappearance itself.

In this light, their different forms of waiting can be analyzed through a combination of variables such as *time*, *behavior*, and *submission*, as proposed by Javier Auyero (2016) in his study of how marginalized sectors experience waiting (pp. 18-19). Given the context-dependent nature of waiting, it can be argued that its experience is conditioned by the social space where it unfolds and by the complexity of the social fabric surrounding those who wait and those who are waited for (Palumbo and Marentes, 2013, pp. 10-11). For the Mothers, that space was especially hostile; those who should have listened and responded to their legitimate claims were unwilling to do so. In such circumstances, the ones who waited and the one who made them wait stood in absolute opposition.

The Indefinite Postponement of the Right to Grieve

The act of waiting, as staged in Plaza de Mayo and transformed into a symbol of resistance by these women, Mothers of detained-disappeared children, is characterized by a specific emotionality encompassing the full spectrum of what might be called "torn motherhood" (Miranda, 2020, pp. 223-232). These forms of waiting were embedded in structures of political domination imposed by a power that claimed ownership over human lives, specifically, their children's lives. This necropolitics produced what have rightly been called "beings on unstable ground," as they are the dead who are not quite dead and the living who are not quite alive (Tello, 2025, p. 14).

In this regard, and drawing on the reinterpretation of Foucault by Cameroonian philosopher Achille Mbembe (2011), recalling that the notion of "necropolitics" refers not merely to the power to decide who lives and who dies, but to the orchestration of murder and the management of death is important. From this perspective, torture and the strategic use of corpses exemplify forms of power that multiply death among a state's citizens (Navarro, 2021, p. 415).

In this context, time—an essential frame of reference—also transformed the Mothers' waiting (Elías, 1989). This occurred without disregarding the inherent subjectivity of the emotions involved, which are not immune to distorted or even contradictory interpretations regarding the fate of the awaited person. Furthermore, the issue of memory must be considered—at times forbidden or suppressed in the case of these Mothers. From this arises the question of what they are able to remember and what they are able to forget. In line with Michael Pollack (2006, p. 19), this calls for a deeper look into those spaces of domination that shape clandestine memories, memories which, in this case, can only go as far as the Mothers can remember without endangering their own maternal identity, and even more critically, the identity of their children. On this point, and following Holocaust survivor and writer Primo Levi (2006, p. 491), it is worth recalling that the greatest distortion of a crime's memory is its suppression. Yet Levi also acknowledges that, at times, reality itself may be altered for self-protective reasons. The author describes this through his personal experience with the case of Alberto D. during the Nazi era (Levi, 2006, pp. 494-495).

Still, it must be acknowledged that breaking the initial silence—both imposed and, perhaps, self-imposed—was a risky endeavor. That silence had originally been justified by the instinct to protect their children, but the Mothers confronted it. They broke it first to hear one another, and then to make their voices heard by society, recreating a kind of birth scream. This new scream, however, was triggered by the pain of a violent separation, tragically resembling another birth, this time defined by uncertainty, anguish, and death. In essence, the Mothers of Plaza de Mayo formed a remarkable collective, notable among other things for disrupting the original submission. Faced with fear and repression, they chose resistance.

At this point, it is worth revisiting the statement made by Lieutenant General Jorge Rafael Videla in 1979 during a press conference, in response to a question from journalist José Ignacio López. Videla said:

I will tell you that, regarding the disappeared, insofar as they are such, they are an unknown; as long as they remain disappeared, they cannot have a special treatment because they have no entity. They are neither dead nor alive... they

are disappeared. [He concludes:] If the person were to appear, they would receive treatment X; if their death were confirmed, treatment Z; but as long as they remain disappeared, they cannot receive any special treatment, they are disappeared, without entity; neither dead nor alive, they are disappeared. In such cases, we cannot act, though we do attend to the relatives. (Archivo Prisma, 2022, 5m22s-5m49s).

The gestures accompanying his words underscored the concept of vanishing, as if he were describing a kind of disappearance “into thin air.” This hypothetical dematerialization implicitly absolved the state of responsibility, effectively postponing the act of mourning, and consequently, denying the dual right to grieve. The phrase: “neither dead nor alive, just disappeared” barred the Mothers from grieving, from saying goodbye, and from ending their wait. This uncertainty, although tragically more conclusive today, compounded the anxiety of not knowing their children's fate.

In sum, the dictatorship's genocidal campaign forced the Mothers to deal with separation anxiety, whether through the projected search for their children's remains or through an internalized affirmation of the revolutionary ideals their children held before being abducted. Their journey was further complicated by the underlying sense of guilt felt by many of these women, the belief that they had failed in their maternal duty to protect their children (Robben, 2006).

This suggests that their different forms of waiting involved a combination of anguish and anxiety, operating in synergy through a crucial expectation. The appearance of their children's bodies, beyond the undeniable right to condemnation that they (and everybody) are entitled to, would at the very least help them process their grief and bring closure to the chapter of their children's murder; it would allow them to complete the unresolved mourning they still carry among their most painful emotions.

Indeed, as Freud taught, “mourning” is the natural response to the loss of a loved one or an abstract equivalent, such as one's homeland, freedom, or ideals. It is not a pathological state and should not be treated medically. This perspective led the Austrian master to trust that, after some time, it will disappear on its own, and that disturbing it would be inappropriate or even harmful. An examination of reality reveals that the loved object no longer exists and demands that the libido withdraw all its attachments to it (Freud, 1992, pp. 241-242). However, in the case at hand, the loved one is not officially dead—he or she has disappeared. The mother, now transformed into a Mother, is trapped in an endless wait that indefinitely delays the possibility of mourning. In other words, the presence of expectation prevents the process from reaching closure,

a process that would otherwise be marked by the child's death. Accepting this, beyond the tragedy, might allow them to process that individual and social rupture from another place, to close what was undoubtedly the most sorrowful chapter of their lives, and, in some way, to bring an end to or at least cope with that torturous waiting.

It is essential to stress that this unresolved waiting turns into an infinite one, an open-ended waiting sustained by ungrieved loss, without a body and without certainties. A mourning that, ultimately, still harbors, however unconsciously, a glimmer of hope. Meanwhile, the laws enacted in 1979 by the de facto government established procedures to declare disappeared persons as deceased, thereby preventing any investigation into what had actually occurred. On this matter, it is necessary to refer specifically to Laws 22.062 (B.O.R.A., 24240, September 3, 1979, p. 2) and 22.068 (B.O.R.A., 24247, September 12, 1979, p. 2). The first law established that the absence of a person from their place of residence or domicile in the Republic, without any news of them for a period of one year, granted entitlement to individuals whose rights, recognized under national laws on retirement, pensions, or non-contributory benefits, depended on that person's death. Furthermore, after three years had passed from the moment the pension or non-contributory benefit began to be collected, the beneficiary was required to present proof that judicial proceedings had been initiated to declare the presumption of death of the missing person, in accordance with Law 14.394 (B.O.R.A., 17805, December 30, 1954, p. 1), a piece of legislation enacted in an entirely different historical context. For its part, Law 22.068 established the possibility of declaring the presumed death of a person whose disappearance from their place of domicile or residence had been reported with no news of their whereabouts since November 6, 1974 (the date of the declaration of the state of siege). The legislation emphasized the non-contentious nature of the procedure, requiring the presiding judge to order the publication of notices for five consecutive days in two of the most widely circulated newspapers in the corresponding locality, as well as in the Official Gazette, summoning the missing person. If, after ninety days from the last publication of the notices, there was still no news of the disappeared person, their presumed death would be officially declared.

This macabre plan systematically denied families reliable information about the fate of their loved ones, thereby stripping them of the rights to proper burial and mourning (Robben, 2006, p. 14). As confirmed by the dictator's iconic words regarding the disappeared, the regime trampled the victims' right to be mourned. Mourning, the capacity to be grieved, is, as Butler argues, a prerequisite for any life that matters. It is a condition for the emergence and continuation of life itself (Butler, 2010, p. 32).

Memory and Bifurcated Forms of Waiting

As previously mentioned, the emblematic Mothers of Plaza de Mayo were socially identified by the use of a diaper worn as a headscarf. This image reinforced their maternal role and symbolized the vulnerability they perceived in their adolescent and adult children, whom they still viewed as needing maternal protection, like a baby. These Mothers identified themselves as housewives and mothers simply seeking news of their disappeared children. In doing so, they merged their maternal feelings, clearly private and intimate, with the public sphere, dominated by a repressive patriarchal state (Robben, 2006, p. 24).

This characterization of the Mothers and their children is both real and symbolic, and it continues to distinguish them to this day, positioning them as particularly unique expressions of waiting. It is a form of waiting that can also be analyzed in terms of its bifurcation or division, based on two fundamental dimensions that go beyond their temporal connection.

Thus, considering that every act of waiting carries an expectation of resolution—regardless of whether the outcome is welcomed or not by the one who waits—it is possible to identify certain emotions, partly shared among all of them, that are linked to an unresolved waiting, one that appears to lack any real possibility of closure. This first form of waiting, in which the presence of unprocessed grief becomes particularly evident, is encapsulated in the phrase: “appearance alive,” referring to those whose survival was becoming increasingly unlikely. Many of the Mothers came to accept this death: some assumed it, while others denied it.

However, one can also observe in these women a form of waiting oriented toward a possible resolution, one tied to the verdicts in crimes against humanity trials, encapsulated in the slogan, which complements the previous one: “trial and punishment for the guilty.” In both cases, the subject who waits is the same, while the one who makes them wait represents the power of the State, whether authoritarian or democratic. Under the dictatorship, this power sought to anonymize and render itself indistinct, a strategy upheld through the fallacy of the “theory of the two demons,” built around a supposed and hypothetical symmetry between the crimes committed by state terrorism and the acts of violence carried out by guerrilla organizations.

Thus, in the first case, the aim was to reinforce impunity, articulated through the underlying ambiguity of terms such as “homeland,” “nation,” or “national being,” entities the regime claimed to be protecting. However, thanks to the return to democracy in 1983, those responsible for the genocide began to be identified, especially with the initiation of the so-called “Trials of the

Juntas"—later classified as crimes against humanity—which targeted specific individuals and therefore allowed for the possibility of prosecution. This second form of waiting, if one may call it so, was more likely to result in a concrete outcome through convictions and thus offered a real opportunity to formally close the circle of pain.

Indeed, considering that waiting is one of the defining elements of judicial processes, and based on the idea of justice as one of the most significant expressions of state power, the waiting for the outcomes of crimes against humanity trials is associated with the need for reparation and truth. In this sense, one observes how these expectations and ideals came into play during the last dictatorship, but even more so how that waiting has continued into democratic times through the verdicts issued in those trials, verdicts that carry a fundamental characteristic: their non-expiration. And in the convergence of both types of waiting—the hope for their return alive, and the demand for a just sentence—there necessarily exists a power that makes people wait.

The narratives that characterize both forms of waiting experienced by the Mothers were, and continue to be, deeply political, yet also lived as misfortune or injustice (Pecheny, 2013, p. 27). These forms of waiting, reinforced by kinship ties made visible through the demands of the claimants, allowed those family bonds to enter the public sphere, not merely as metaphors or symbolic images, but in a literal (and biological) sense.

Hence, this bifurcated form of waiting can also be read through two additional, overlapping perspectives. One is the public-political waiting, in which judicial bodies intervene to convict the guilty and enforce the call for their judgment and punishment. This form of waiting, embedded in society, endures even beyond the life of the woman whose child was taken. The other is the private, maternal waiting, which does not end with the real or presumed death of her child, but with the death of the mother herself—even though it may also continue in other forms and intensities through others who reflect, in their own way, the emotional continuity and the pursuit of justice carried forward by the Mother(s). Among them, a kind of existential unity developed, one that helped them grow stronger, survive the tragedy, and above all, recover those missing children.

Thus, in order to reconstruct their experiences of waiting and the potential persistence of those emotions today, the most accurate approach would be to investigate the emotions of those who wait—infinitely—for the appearance alive, while at the same time, finitely, for judgment and punishment of the guilty (Pollack, 2006; Ricoeur, 2000). This form of waiting has persisted despite the years of enforcement of the Full Stop Law (Law 23.492, B.O.R.A. 26058,

December 29, 1986, p. 1) and the Law of Due Obedience (Law 23.521, B.O.R.A. 26155, June 9, 1987, p. 1), as well as the presidential pardons.⁶

Among the many questions that arise in an effort to shed light on the topic, emphasizing aspects that help understand how these two types of waiting were and are experienced is important: What is the predominant emotion as time passes? And, in some way, can it be said that the Mothers anticipate the end of the wait? These individual emotions converge into a sketch of the collective emotion that defines the waiting. After the dictatorship ended, the Mothers faced the dilemma of whether to maintain hope, which implied the search could continue indefinitely, or to begin mourning, abandoning expectations and accepting their child's death, yet without being able to provide a final resting place or proper funeral to bring closure, even if painfully, to that prolonged waiting (Robben, 2006, p. 32).

Conclusions

The impact that the dictatorship's population policy still generates today becomes tangible through its anchoring in motherhood and its dramatic parallel with the "birth," in 1977, of the Mothers of Plaza de Mayo. These women's response to the abduction of their children by the genocidal regime went beyond subverting maternalistic and gender norms reinforced by the so-called "National Reorganization Process." Their actions crossed a threshold, where the collective they formed re-politicized what had already been politicized by the military government through the disappearance of their children (Domínguez, 2007, p. 22).

In fact, alongside "traditional motherhood," there emerged the figure of "torn motherhood." The waiting associated with that traditional form of motherhood was soon replaced by another, one whose resolution depended entirely on the will of the kidnappers' power, a power that had contempt for life (and the waiting that comes with it) granted by those mothers decades earlier. This form of motherhood corresponded to a denied childhood or, as has been well described, an "appropriated childhood," through the disappearance and substitution of identity of their children's children, newborns or toddlers whose

⁶ Some authors have attempted to discredit the end of impunity by reviving the theory of the two demons, through which they denounce a supposed political use of human rights (see, for example: Korstanje, 2014).

mothers and fathers had also been murdered by repressive forces.⁷ Thus, another form of waiting emerged, embodied by the Grandmothers of Plaza de Mayo. These women, if the phrase may be used, experienced a multiplied anguish: not only were their children disappeared, but they also knew with certainty that babies (their grandchildren) had been born in captivity or taken from their parents' arms and appropriated by a genocidal State.

All of these strategies took shape in a context where the dissolution of families—considered a threat to the nation—was one of the main objectives of the de facto government, and where the regime's view of women, including the Mothers, played a central role. It was claimed that "subversive" women exhibited extreme sexual liberalism, were bad housewives, bad mothers, and bad wives, and therefore had to be eradicated to restore the archetype of the conventional wife and mother, based on a model of female subjectivity imposed through reeducation and disciplinary logics rooted in totalitarian systems (Álvarez, 2000, p. 76).⁸

In this context, the de facto regime regarded the Mothers' demands and mobilization as an impossible project, a delusion. Yet they continued, and will continue, in their waiting, encapsulated in the slogans "appearance alive" and "trial and punishment for the guilty."

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⁷ On this matter, see: Villalta (2018).

⁸ The logic of the dictatorship from this perspective has been extensively analyzed by Pilar Calveiro (2001).

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