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Effects of Covid-19 Pandemic on the Welfare of the Maasai Girl Child in Narok County, Kenya

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Abstract

The Maasai girl child is vulnerable to poor menstrual hygiene, teen pregnancies, early marriages, domestic violence and female genital mutilation (FGM). Schools had temporarily offered the girls a shelter towards these challenges. However, covid-19 pandemic led to indefinite closure of schools forcing the girls back home to the full glare of these predicaments. Additionally, there was fear of the health pandemic which had also affected the economy. This study aimed at examining how covid-19 pandemic had affected the welfare of the Maasai girl child in Narok county, Kenya. A cross-sectional design of study was used. Data was collected using questionnaires and by observations. Descriptive analysis was used to analyze the data. The findings indicate that frustrations over lack of basic needs coupled with numerous domestic violence incidences caused the girls to engage in 'sex for

sanitary towels'. 83.1% of the girls did not use any sex protection means while majority of the rest used ineffective methods. FGM was at its peak as there was abundant time to practice it and less government interference. In conclusion, the Maasai girls' welfare was in dire need for external assistance. Government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) should urgently intervene to rescue the Maasai girl child.

Introduction

1. Background of Study

The plight of the Maasai girl child has always been jeopardized by many factors (maasaigirlseducation.org., 2020). Most of these factors are integrated on the patriarchal Maa culture (Morompi *et al.,* 2020; Morompi, 2018, Hodgson, 1999). Heavily laden traditions have negatively affected any form of civil progress to the Maasai girl child. Her education, employment, business or political ambitions are always pulled back by a web of patriarchal cultures and traditions. According to these traditions, her role is reserved in the kitchen and matrimonial bed. Here, she is destined to satisfy all her husbands needs, make and bring up children; without questioning. Her wife-count position is a non-issue as her husband can marry as many wives as his cattle can support.

The Maasai girl child does not actually belong to her family and is seen as a passer-by where she is exchanged for cattle from one clan to the next on maturity (maasaigirlseducation.org., 2020). Any girl above the age of 8 (beginning adolescence) is as good as mature. The decision to her marriage is solely bestowed on her father and elders (all male). The groom's age can range anywhere between a Moran (over 19 years) to that of a senior elder (over 70 years). It is actually not surprising for an 8-year old girl to wed a 90-year old Maasai elder. As a pre-requisite into marriage hood, all the fresh brides have to undergo female genital mutilation (FGM) (Muchene *et al.,* 2018). Failure to undertake this rite leaves the uncircumcised bride with a lot of dishonor and very little respect in public. Menstrual health is perceived as a shameful act and never discussed in public (Pakdamana and Beina, 2014). The Maasai girl experiencing menstruation is expected to sought it on her own in secret using any material; hygienic or not (Pakdamana and Beina, 2014). Sex education is also rarely discussed between parents and the girl. The girl is expected to maintain utmost chastity without necessarily raising any matters on the same to her guardians.

Although the Maasai have been rigid in accepting western civilization, formal education has gradually but surely encroached into Maasailand (Morompi and Kweingoti, 2018). The government and other non-governmental organizations have heavily invested in formal education through building leaning infrastructure and provision of teachers and other learning resources. The process has not been quite successful owing to the rigidity of their culture towards foreign civilization. Numerous efforts have been made by education stakeholders to persuade the custodians of the culture (elders) to allow their daughters to go to school (Morompi and Kweingoti, 2018). This is because formal education is perceived to be the savior that will free the Maasai girl child from her plight. Introduction of free primary education by the government in 2003 increased the enrollment rate of the girls by a significant margin. However, other issues, most linked to culture have ensured the completion and transition rate of the girls as they advance academically is very low.

Formal education has reduced some of these challenges faced by the Maasai girl child, community illiteracy and oppression. Most of the initial challenges such as teenage pregnancies, FGM and menstrual health matters reduced when the girls were taken to school. Enrollment of the girls in school kept them away from these matters (Korir *et al.,* 2018) while increasing their level of understanding on the matters in a more rational manner. In school, the girls are actively engaged with curricular and co-curricular activities that keep their minds occupied thus avoiding these challenges (Archambault, 2017). School vacations slightly affect tis temporal relief from their challenges but to an insignificant margin.

The covid-19 pandemic led to indefinite closure of all learning institutions in Kenya. The learners were forced to go home until the pandemic was contained. The situation worsened with time and days became weeks which later became months. The challenges faced by the Maasai girl child which had taken so long to alleviate began re-manifesting themselves back. There was no more school to shelter the girls from teenage pregnancies, FGM and poor menstrual activities. Additionally, other social immoralities attributed to modern civilization and tourism such as drug and substance abuse and sexual immorality merged with the traditional vices to mount more misery onto the girls. As if this is not enough, economic hardships arising from covid-19 pandemic saw and increase in domestic violence which indirectly affected the girls. Finances for purchasing girls' necessities such as menstrual towels were thus out of priority as families used the meagre resources available to purchase food and pay for shelter. Economic frustrations also saw an increase in the rate of drug and alcohol abuse. Many guardians chose to use these commodities as a temporal relief to their problems. On the other hand, idleness resulting from mandatory staying at home with no meaningful learning increased the girls' exposure to drug abuse and sexual immoralities.

This study aimed at assessing the social, psychological and economic impacts of covid-19 pandemic on the welfare of the Maasai girl child in Narok county, Kenya. Narok county is one of the three counties in Kenya (alongside Kajiado and Samburu) with a large population of the Maasai people. It is a marginalized county with the Maa culture deeply rooted amongst most of its inhabitants.

2. Research Methodology

2.1 Design of Study

A cross-sectional research design was used for the study. This design was opted to enable the researchers determine the impacts of covid-19 on the welfare of Maasai girls at the epitome of the pandemic (the month of June, 2020). The month was suitable since a grace period of 3 months (since march) was sufficient for the challenges affecting the girls to manifest out. This was also the most unprecedented month of the pandemic in Kenya with most decisions anchored on the presidents' decision to be made on 6th July, 2020. The economy was at its lowest and domestic violence cases had sharply increased. The study was conducted in Narok county (co-ordinates 1.1041°S, 36.0893°E; **figure 1**). The county has the largest population of Maasai people in Kenya (Bussmann *et al.,* 2006; Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2019). Data was collected using questionnaire guides and observation and descriptive statistics used to analyze it. The findings were presented in form of text, tables, quotes and graphs.
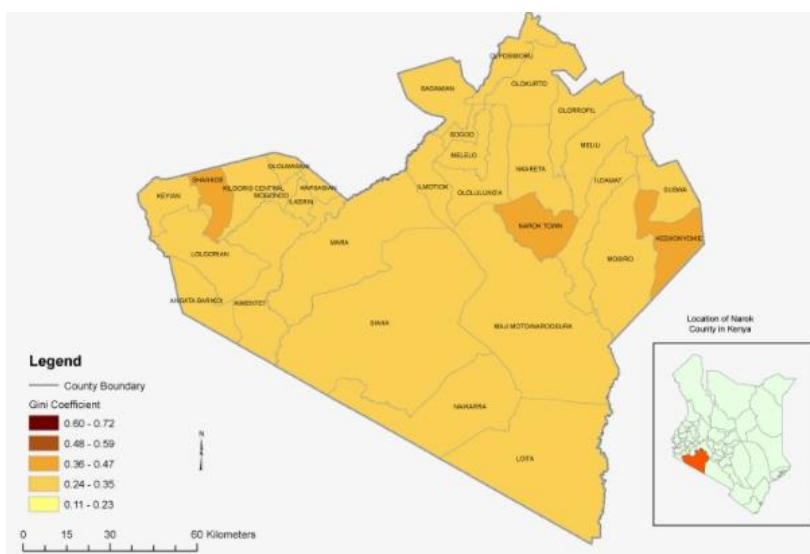
Figure 1: Map of Narok county, Kenya where the study was conducted.

Source: pngkey.com, (2020).

2.2 Sampling Techniques

Random sampling was carried out throughout the county. The target population was all the Maasai school-going girls between the age of 12 to 18. This cluster was assumed to be mature enough to experience the challenges faced by the Maasai girl child. All the girls within this bracket were randomly picked as respondents. The method was preferred for its ability to sample a small representative group from a bigger population with limited bias. Any respondent could be taken from the main target population with equal probability.

2.3 Sample size

The target population of the girls in the county was very large and had to be narrowed down to a desirable size. The target population could not be wholly analyzed and was therefore reduced to 80 samples. The sample size was arrived at from Slovin's formulae (Statisticshowto.com, 2020) outlined in **equation 1**.

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e^2)} \quad (\mathbf{1})$$

Where, n-sample size, N-population size, e- Error term (5%) based on 95% confidence interval

The samples were spread out across the various wards in the county.

2.4 Research questionnaires, interviews and observation guides used

The study involved use of questionnaires guides and observation. The questionnaires were unstructured and had both open ended and closed research questions. The questionnaires were divided into 9 main sections i.e respondents biodata section, family, financial, academic, domestic, sexual life, personal and psychological, drugs and alcohol abuse and FGM information. The respondents were assigned the questionnaire guides and given a duration of 3 days to fill the data. During collection of the questionnaire guides, any interesting information that was not captured in the questionnaires was noted down at the back of the questionnaires guides Observations were made to assess some of the situations that could easily be noticed. There was no clear structure or number of research items in an observation guide but rather researchers' opinion on notable features of respondents.

2.5 Validity and reliability of the research guides used

Questionnaires were quite reliable since they were easy to administer and encouraged confidentiality thus, reducing biasness. They were subjected to the test-retest reliability method to check for their consistency in results after a duration of 11 days. A group of 15 respondents (volunteers) was used. There was a similarity index of 63% in the results at the two instances of testing. Observation also ensured gathering of reliable data. The 15 respondents were also assigned with the same task and a 58% similarity index observed. A face validity of the research guides was

conducted by 4 volunteers. A pilot study was then conducted to determine the validity of the data collection instruments used. Each of the 110 initial distinct research questions in the questionnaire guide (excluding bio-data section) was assigned to 2 different respondents. In total, there were 220 respondents (volunteers). The data was then debugged and the minimum and maximum values recorded. After a critical analysis check, 15 questions were found to be confusing and leading. These questions were plucked out. The ultimate validity score was thus 95/110 (86.4%) and the outcomes were found to strongly favor the use of these research guides.

2.6 Data analysis

The data collected was analyzed and presented using descriptive statistics. The data collected was analyzed using Ms Excel (2016). For the significance levels, a confidence level of 95% was used.

3 Results and Discussions

3.1 Family information regarding the Maasai girls

Majority (70.9%) of the girls lived in a nuclear family set-up. Only 7.5% of the girls had been adopted and lived with their foster families while 21.6% of the girls in the county lived in an extended family set-up. The large proportion of nuclear families compared to extended families is partially attributed to western civilization (Ruggles, 2010; Chen *et al.,* 2017). The traditional Maa culture consisted of most of the families living communally; in small clans (Mokgobi, 2014). These clans comprised of several extended families all originating from a common ancestor (Mokgobi, 2014). However, due to western civilization, these clans dispersed as individuals went further apart to seek for livelihoods. With regard to the girls' welfare, girls living in an extended family setup are likely to have their matters addressed quickly compared to those living in nuclear families. This is because in extended families, they have many peers and can front their needs as a group. On the other hand, there are more stakeholders in the form of cousins, mothers, aunties and grandmothers to address their issues compared to in a nuclear family. 64% of the nuclear families had both parents while 36% had only a single parent living with the girls. Out of the 36% of the families where the girls lived with a single parent, 95% of the single parent were their mothers. The girls' fathers did not live with their families because they were either deceased (9%), worked far away (21%) or lived with another spouse (71%). The high proportion of fathers living with their younger spouses is attributed to the patriarchal Maasai culture which encouraged polygamy (Morompi, 2018; Hodgson, 1999). Some of the younger wives in question were school-going girls who were forcefully wedded. This detachment of girls to their fathers have negative impacts on the girls support as described by one of the girls in Naikarra, Narok south;

…my dad used to provide me with everything. He would pay all my school fees, buy me school uniform and get us enough food at home every day. However, since he married

the younger wife, some of the necessities are no longer available. For example, my school uniform is worn out and my mother does not have enough money to buy me another one. Most of my colleagues make fun of me in school. My father no longer prioritize most of our basic needs…

The was an equal distribution in the number of male and female siblings in the girls' families as illustrated in **figure 2**.
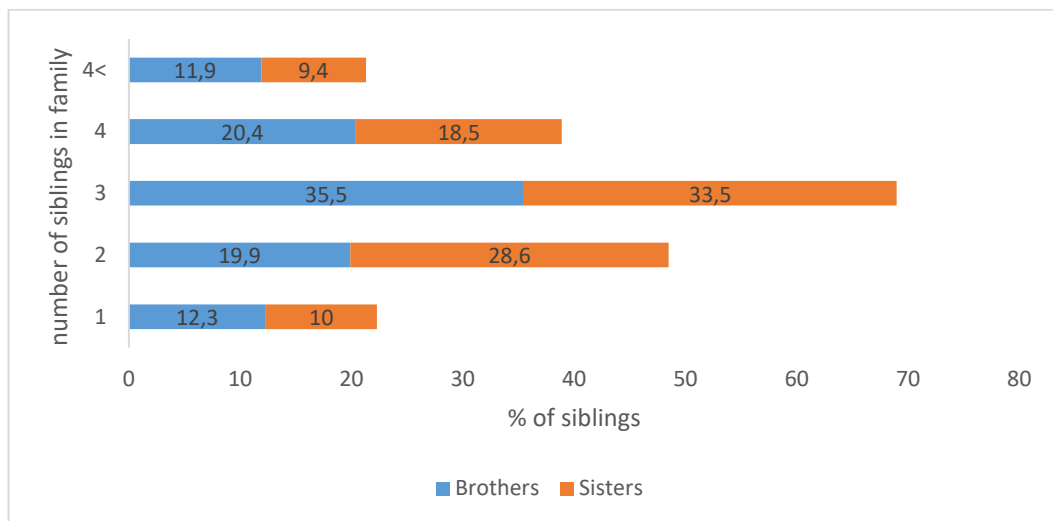
Figure 2: Distribution of number of siblings in the families of Maasai girl children

Majority of the girls had 3 brothers (35.5%) and sisters (33.5%). This implies that about a third of the girls lived in families consisting of 7 children. According to East (2010), the number of siblings can affect the welfare of girls in terms of provision. Girls with fewer siblings are likely to get more attention from their guardians (Hsueh and Gennetian, 2011). According to Olson *et al.,* (2017), girls deserve more attention from their guardians compared to their male counterparts. A higher number of girls in the families thus imply less attention from the guardians. According to **figure 2**, the Maasai girl children had a relatively equal distribution in the number of male and female siblings. Therefore, there was no significant diversion in attention resulting from the gender of their siblings. About 69.9% of the families were monogamous while 30.1% were polygamous. The reduction in polygamous families from the conventional Maa culture is attributed to increase in western civilization. Some of the elements of western civilization such as western religion (in this case Christianity) strongly oppose polygamy. The attention for girls living in the polygamous families depended on the position of their mothers in the husbands rating (usually based on age). Girls whose mothers were the first wives had less attention compared to those whose mothers were the last wives. 59% of the polygamous families had 2 wives, 32% had 3 wives while 9% had more than 3 wives. The more the number of wives, the

lesser the attention the girls received from their fathers. The girls living in polygamous and extended family set-ups faced more competition for attention and necessities due to the higher number of recipients as illustrated in **table 1**.

Table 1: The number of siblings of the Maasai girls living in polygamous and extended families

Number of girls' siblings	% of Maasai girls' siblings		
	In polygamous families	In extended families	Those below 18 years
1-5	3.3	8.1	14.6
6-10	20.2	15.3	56.3
11-15	48.5	36.5	20.2
16-20	28.0	29.9	8.9
20<	0.0	10.2	0.0

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There was no significant difference in the distribution of siblings living in polygamous and extended families (P < 0.05). From **table 1**, majority of girls living in extended and polygamous families had 11 to 15 siblings. This is significantly higher than the conventional 6 siblings from girls living in nuclear families (P > 0.05). About 96.7% of girls living in polygamous families had between 6 to 20 siblings. This is a very high number compared to the limited resources available for these families. Majority (56.3%) of families with 6 to 10 girls had siblings who were below 18 years. This is a critical factor to consider because these are the siblings who are actively competing for attention and resources. For most of the Maasai families, siblings above 18 years are independent. For the male siblings, they are initiated into Moranhood (adulthood) and are expected to be actively engaging in their independent economic livelihoods (McCabe *et al.,* 2014). Majority of female siblings above 18 years are expected to be married (Bobbitt-Zeher *et al.,* 2018). There was literally no change in the patterns of the girls' family size due to covid-19 pandemic because its window was barely 3 months old.

3.2 Domestic violence in the Maasai girls' families

The number of domestic violence cases in Kenya increased during the covid-19 pandemic period (Odhiambo, 2020). The Maasai girl child was not exempted from these incidences. 49.7% of the girls confirmed that their guardians had engaged in domestic violence during the covid-19 pandemic period. The girls indicated that the incidences were quite horrible and would not love to experience them again. 28.5% of the incidences were minor and involved heated exchange of vulgar language and minor fights. 66.3% of the incidences were moderate and involved fights which led to

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1 Sibling population in girls living in an extended or polygamous family

severe injuries. The incidences ended up with casualties in hospitals or dispensaries and other social effects to the family members. 5.2% of the incidences were extremely severe and lead to divorce and hospitalization of the guardians for more than 3 days. There was no death reported arising from the incidences. Covid-19 pandemic had increased the frequency of domestic violence incidences as illustrated in **figure 3**.
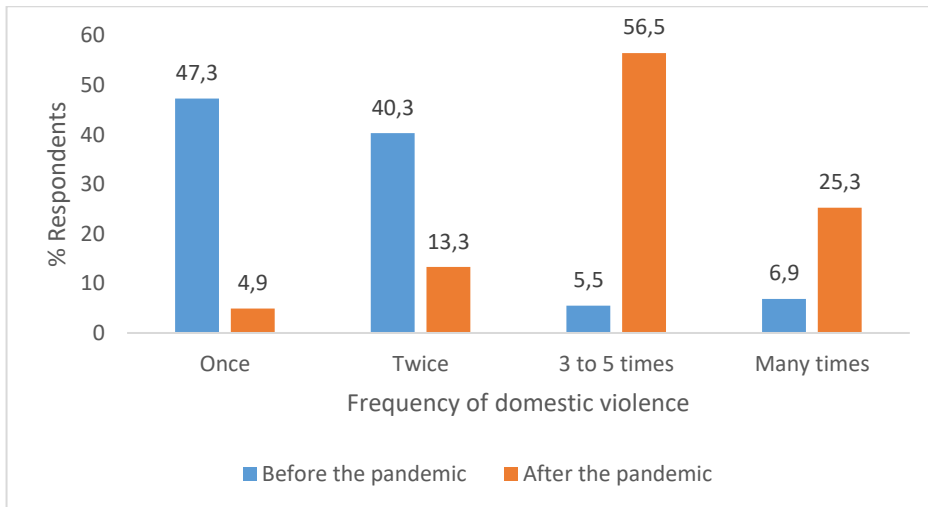
Figure 3: The frequency of domestic violence incidences in the girls' families

There was an upward surge in the number of incidences during the pandemic period. The surge might have been triggered by reduced monetary circulation as a result of the failing economy and an increase in contact time between family members. There is a higher probability of domestic violence when family members are together at home and there is little economic activity ongoing. The patriarchal role of the male guardians is put under trial if they stay at home and do not suffice the requirements of the family. This provokes their female counterparts leading to misunderstanding. If the misunderstandings are not controlled, then domestic violence results. Before covid-19 pandemic, most of the families where the Maasai girls belonged to had witnessed only 1 or 2 domestic violence cases. However, after the pandemic, 56.5% of the families had witnessed violence 3 to 5 times while 25.3% of the families had witnessed violence more than 5 (numerous) times. Only 22% of these incidences were reported. The girls indicated that in most of the cases, their female guardians were on the receiving end. Very few would fight back. They were also expected not to report the incidence failure to which they would face severe consequences. The patriarchal Maasai culture allowed for wife battery as a method to instill discipline to Maasai women (maasaigirlseducation.org., 2020). The women were regarded as big children and could easily receive beatings when their husbands so wished. Out of the 22% incidences which were reported, in 46.5% of them no action was taken. 17.9% of the incidences led to police arrests while 35.6% of the cases were settled in the

family by clan elders. The Maasai girls indicated that the clan elders always sided with their male guardians and justice was never served. These frustrating measures prompted their female guardians to persevere the incidences. Several factors contributed to the domestic violence incidences as illustrated in **figure 4**.
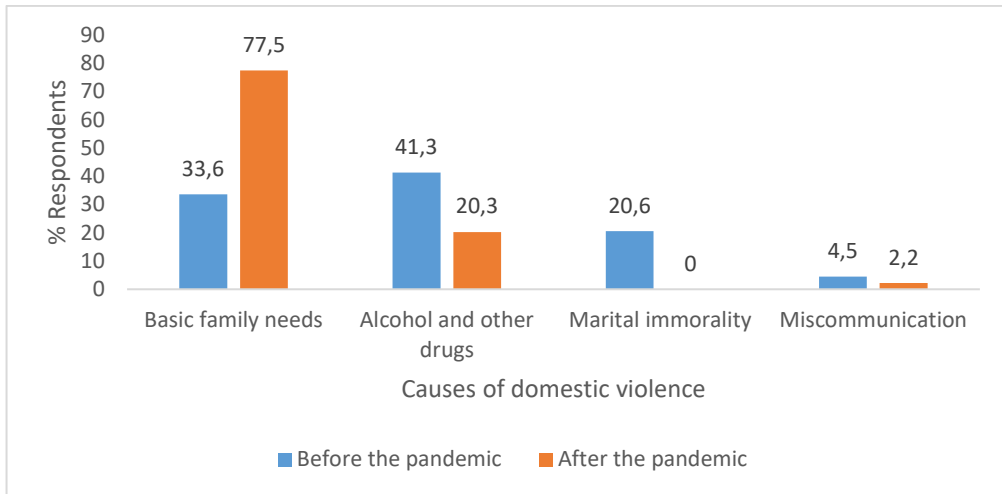
Figure 4: Causes of domestic violence incidences in the families of the Maasai girls

There was an increase in domestic violence arising from lack of provision of basin necessities such as food during the pandemic. This was fueled by the failing economy which led to reduced salaries and job losses. Some of the male guardians were frustrated by the situation and directed their anger onto their wives and children. In some cases, the female counterparts could not withstand insufficient provision of necessities by their male counterparts leading to violence. The number of violence incidences arising from alcohol and drugs as well as marital immorality had reduced because there was little money to engage in these activities. The incidences had a negative impact on the Maasai girls. Majority (68.5%) of the girls whose guardians engaged in domestic violence indicated that they were undergoing depression and mental trauma. This is because of the consequences caused by the violence incidences and lack of harmony in their families. 15.7% of the girls indicated that the violence worsened the provision of necessities in their family. 8.2% of the girls had physical challenges resulting from trying to separate their fighting guardians or being battered together with their mothers in the incidences. 5.2% of the girls' academic performance were affected because they could not concentrate properly with their studies. Covid-19 pandemic had thus fueled the number of domestic violence incidences thus affecting the welfare of the Maasai girls in several ways.

3.3 Sexual life, teen pregnancies and early marriages faced by the Maasai girls

Only 21.5% of the Maasai girls admitted to having sex education with their guardians at home. All the rest of the girls indicated that the issue was considered shameful and their guardians avoided it in all possible ways. The girls indicated that their guardians expected them to learn about sex education in school and with their peers. According to the Maasai traditions, sex education was taught by the girls' mothers and elderly women (Graamans *et al.,* 2019). However, this custom seems to have gradually eroded with contemporary social ethics as a result of western civilization. A deeper insight into the sex education sessions revealed that the talks were dominated by threats to the girls if they engaged with intimate relationships with boys. One of the girls narrates;

…it is always a threats session. My mother always insists that I am not to be seen talking to boys. She says that if I allow them to touch or play with me, I will become pregnant and it will humiliate her. This are the same lines used over and over every time…

The rest of the girls (78.5%) indicated that they learn sex education from their teachers, elder siblings and friends. With their schools closed as a result of covid-19 pandemic, the sessions were solely left to their elder siblings and friends. However, most of the girls indicated that learning it from their friends was more comfortable. This creates chances of misleading advices and bad peer influence which can lead to sexual immoralities (Widman *et al.,* 2016). Only 31.4% of the girls' guardians were concerned with the menstrual health of their daughters. The rest always turned a blind eye to it and expected the girls to take care of their menstruation privately and in their own capacity. 84.3% of the concerned guardians were their mothers (or female guardians) while 1.5% were their male guardians. 3.6% of the girls indicated that they had both their guardians being concerned with their menstrual health while 10.6% indicated that their siblings assisted were concerned about it. This category of girls received support both psychologically, being provided with menstrual towels and exemptions from tasking duties during their periods. Provision of sanitary towels was the most common support given to the girls as indicated in **table 2**.

Table 2: How the Maasai girls get their sanitary towels during menstrual periods

Method used by guardians to provide sanitary towels to the Maasai girls	% respondents
Buy in bulk for the girls to collect when they require them	4.3
Buy when needed by the girls	9.9
Give money to buy in bulk	0.5
Give money to buy when needed	4.2
Not concerned about it	39.3
Get the towels from friends and neighbors	22.5
Improvise using local fabric materials	19.3

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From **table 2**, it is evident that most of the girls had been neglected by their guardians as far as their sexual health is concerned. Only 18.9% of the guardians provided the towels. 39.3% of the guardians were not concerned with provision of sanitary towels while 22.5% of the girls obtained the towels from their friends and neighbors. One of the girls confessed that she finds it shameful to ask for the towels from her neighbors and currently obtain it from her friend (boyfriend). However, the towel is not provided freely and she has to 'pay for it' at a later date when she is 'safe to pay'. This leaves the girl vulnerable to other sexual immoralities. 22.3% of the girls indicated that covid-19 pandemic had altered the trend in provision of sanitary towels negatively. There were lesser guardians providing the towels because hard economic times had significantly reduced the provision of these necessities. The meagre earnings by the guardians were directed towards basic necessities such as food. This in turn increased the proportion of girls seeking for the towels from their friends (and boyfriends) thus exposing them to other sexual immoralities. One of the class 6 girls narrates;

… before the pandemic, my mother would give me money to purchase sanitary towels when I had my periods. Nowadays she doesn't have any money for the same. I have no option but to ask it from my boyfriend. In return, I have to sleep with him when the period is over. I do not like it but I don't have any other option.

64.5% of the girls admitted to having a boyfriend. The girls argued that it was a contemporary issue to have one and lack of one led to jeers and criticism by their colleagues. Those without boyfriends (35.6%) gave various reasons for their choices as illustrated in **figure 5a**. 36.3% of the girls who did not have boyfriends indicated that they were not concerned with the relationships at the moment. Majority of them were in their primary school level. It is therefore likely that they had not been subjected to a lot of peer pressure by their colleagues. The strictness of their guardians and teachers (25.2% and 3.1% respectively) were also key in preventing the girls from having intimate relationships with boys. According to traditional Maasai culture, guardians were responsible for the moral upbringing of their children (Lawson *et al.,* 2014). It was therefore their responsibility to ensure that their girls did not indulge in intimate relationship with boys before they were of the right age. However, moral degradation of this custom and contemporary social immoralities have reduced this norm. This has led to more intimate relationships amongst the girls. About 21.3% of the girls indicated that they were focusing on their academics for the time being and perceived intimate relationships with boys as a barrier to their studies. Only 2.7% of the girls indicated that they were yet to be approached by a boy for an intimate relationship. There was an increment in the incidences of the girls first meeting with boys with their ages up to after 15 years. The climax of these incidences

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1 Provision of sanitary towels for the girls by their guardians

was between 14 to 15 years. About 72.3% of the girls in a relationship first met their boyfriends between 14 years and 17 years (**figure 5b**). Majority of the girls were either in class 8 or in their secondary school level. This is the prime age of their adolescence age. According to (Price *et al.,* 2016), many girls are susceptible to intimate relationships at this age bracket. Most of the girls in this age bracket are in their secondary schools (some boarding) and the covid-19 pandemic school closure might have catalyzed their incidences of meeting with boys at home. A good proportion of the girls attended schools away from their hometowns (majority being single-gender boarding schools). The girls are thus deprived any chance of encountering with boys and are excited during holidays when they can finally meet with boys. The pandemic thus provided them with an excellent opportunity to satisfy this desire. There was a lower magnitude of girls first meeting their boyfriends beyond 18 years.

(a)

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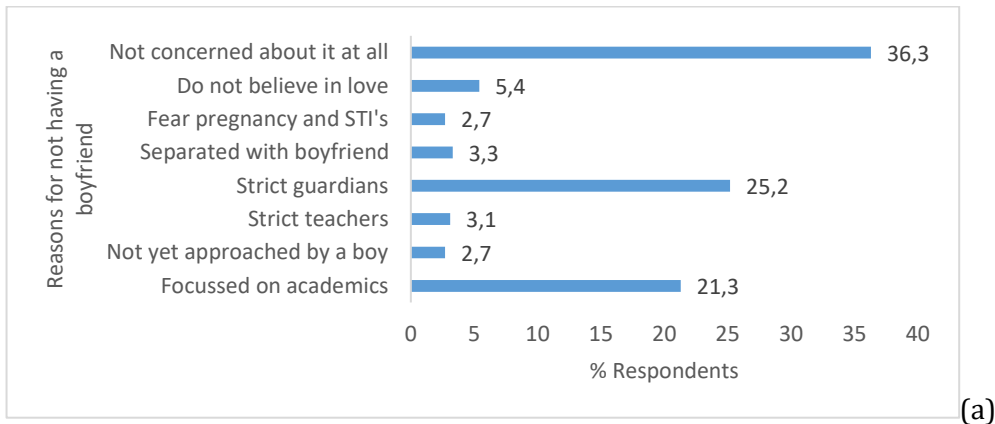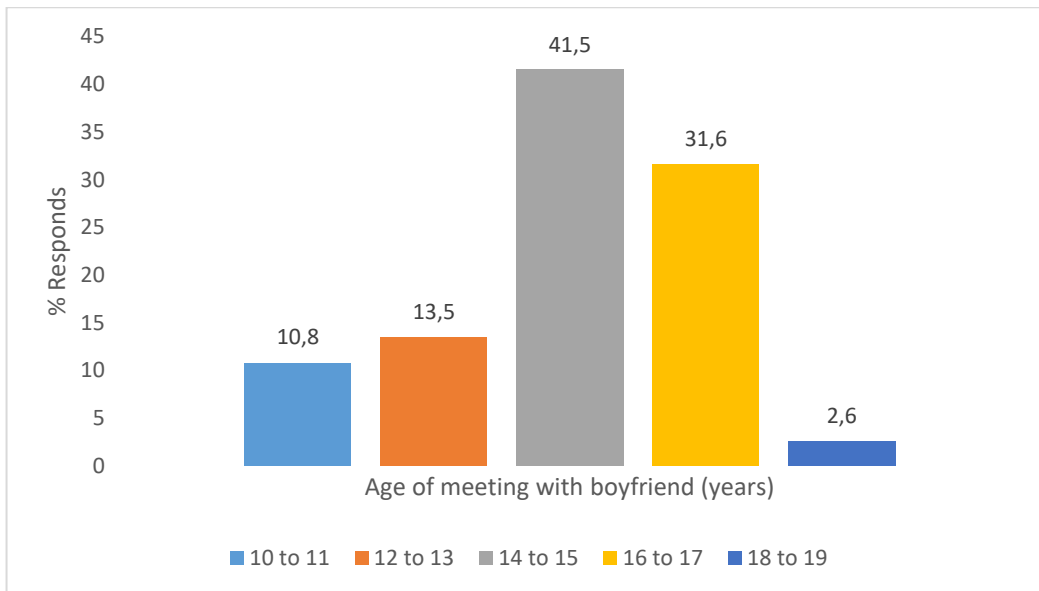
(b)

Figure 5: Reasons for not having boyfriends (a) and the age when the Maasai girls with boyfriends first met (b)

The girls met with their boyfriends through different people. About 39.4% of the girls had met their boyfriends though their friends. These friends also had boyfriends and pressurized their friends to join them. The prolonged stay at home owing to the pandemic increased interaction of girls with their friends and by extension more first engagements with boys. 29.2% of the girls first met their boyfriends through social media platforms while 28.6% of the girls had met in their respective schools. Only 2.7% of the girls had met their boyfriends through their relatives. There was a high correlation of the platforms of meeting and the people aware of these relations. 22.3% of the girls' guardians were aware of their daughters' relationships and even supported them. Only 21.5% of the relationships were kept secretly between the girls and their boyfriends. 60.3% of the girls were actually remorseful that covid-19 pandemic had interrupted their relationships. The girls indicated that they could not freely see their boyfriends as was the case previously. They only interacted with the boys through social media, phone calls and text messages.

About 69.3% of the girls attested to having sex with their boyfriends. These incidences were triggered by peer pressure as well as quests by the girls to be given certain favors such as purchase of confections, credit cards and sanitary towels. In return, the girls had nothing else to offer other than sex. Majority of the girls indicated that the frequency of the incidences had increased during the pandemic period because they were in dire need of money to purchase their necessities. The period

between first meeting and sexual intercourse of the girls with their partners is illustrated in **figure 6a**.
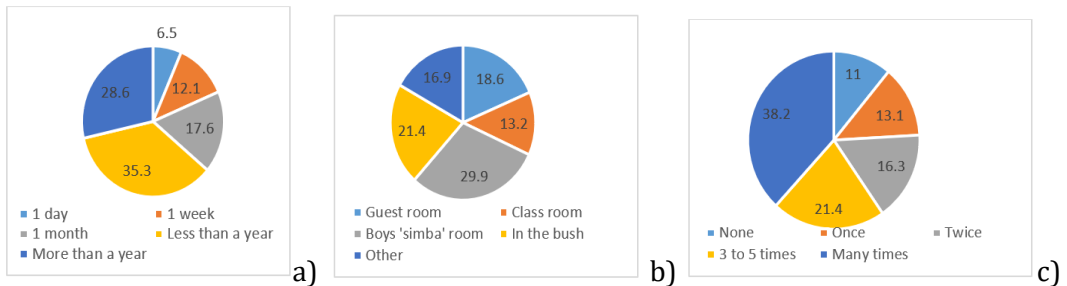
Figure 6: Duration taken by Maasai girls between first encounter with their boyfriends and sexual intercourse (a), the venue of the first intercourse (b) and the consecutive number of intercourse sessions thereafter (c).

There was a relatively little amount of time for teen courtship between the first instance when the girls met their boyfriends and sexual intercourse. Only 28.6% of the girls could persevere for over a year without sexually engaging with their partners. The hurried consent to engage in the vice was informed by the demands of their boyfriends to re-pay favors done as narrated by one of the girls;

...I had no intentions to break my virginity this year. However, after the pandemic struck, my guardians could no longer provide sanitary towels for me. I therefore turned to my boy friend for provision of the towels who accepted. It was then that he begun asking me to sleep with him as a reward for providing the towels. I had no option but to concur.

The duration between first engagement and sexual intercourse between the girls and their boyfriends was found to be alarmingly low. Though this window is relative, there should be a grace period of adequate time before the two can engage in intercourse (Mishori *et al.,* 2019). Morans' 'Simba' room is the house that a Maasai boy is given after initiation. This is intended to minimize interactions with their guardians (especially mothers) and siblings which can lead to taboos (Hodgson, 1999). This rooms were the most exploited (29.9%) in having sexual intercourse with the girls (**figure 6b**). This is because they have a lot of privacy in the Manyatta homesteads and are out of reach to other members of the homestead (Hodgson, 1999). 21.4% of the girls had intercourse in the bush. This venue was preferred for being cheap and reliable to both parties involved. The venue is opportune when the boys do not have a 'Simba' and have no money to rent a guest room. 16.9% of the boys afforded to take their girls to restaurants and guest rooms. This was a relatively more dignified venue compared to bushes and classroom (used by 13.2% of the girls).

Once their virginity was lost, there was no stopping the girls from continuing with the vices; it seemed (**figure 6c**). This is because more than half (59.6%) of the girls had engaged in the vice more than thrice after the first incidence. Only 11% of the girls had not had intercourse with their partners after the first incidence. The high frequency of sexual intercourse incidences by the girls indicate loose morals and severe need for their necessities by the girls. As the pandemic era is prolonged, provision of necessities such as sanitary towels for the girls' use is also prolonged thus increasing more chances of the vices. 45.6% of the girls indicated that there were other parties aware of these vices other than themselves and their partners. According to the girls, almost all those aware of their intimate relationship with their partners were also aware of the vices (including their female guardians). Luckily enough, only 21.5% of the girls had engaged in the vice with more than one partner. All the other respondents had maintained their initial partners. A more alarming statistics is the number of girls who engaged in intercourse without any protection (83.1%). Only 16.9% of the girls used protection during the incidence. This figure paints a very dark image of the girls when schools will be re-opened after the pandemic. The probability of most of the girls getting pregnant and ceasing school is quite high. The rest of the girls used various means to protect themselves from becoming pregnant or contracting STIs as illustrated in **figure 7** (from their own perspective of protection methods). It is indeed sad to realize that majority (64.3%) of the girls believed and actually used withdrawal tactic as an effective method of preventing unwanted pregnancies and STIs. The method is actually very ineffective in preventing either of the situations (Jones *et al.,* 2014). The girls defended this tactic by indicating that they used it when they were in their safe menstrual days. 19.1% of the girls using prevention methods used condoms during the incidences. All the rest used medicinal compounds such as e-pills (5.6%), injections (5%) and traditional pharmacological concoctions (5.6%). The concoctions were praised to be quite effective in controlling menstrual cycles. Several indigenous Maasai herbs have previously been used as phytochemicals in ethnomedicine (Bussmann *et al.,* 2006; Omara, 2020). However, the exact efficiency of these prevention methods can only be determined later on when the girls start experiencing pregnancy related complications.
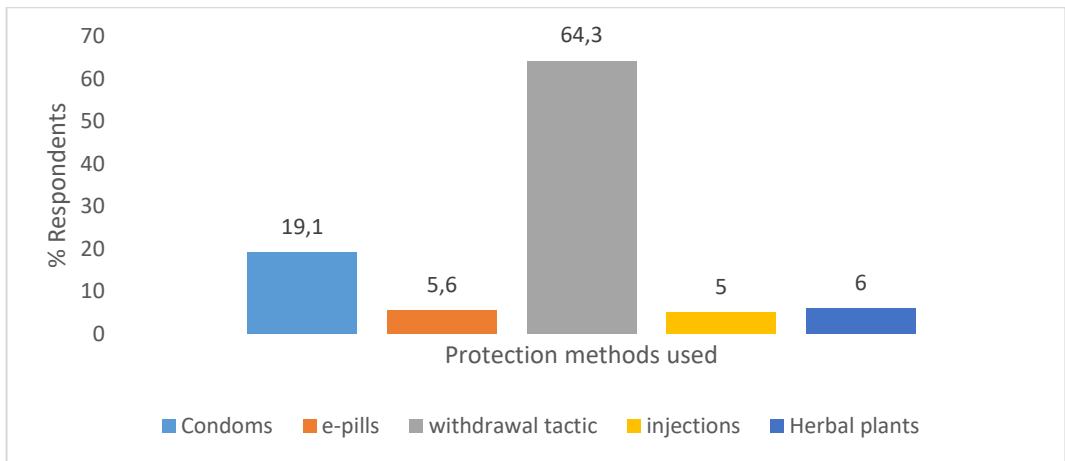
Figure 7: Some of the alleged prevention means as per the Maasai girls' belief and usage

14.5% of the girls sampled indicated that they already had children. Almost all (91.6%) of them had only a single child. The rest (8.4%) had 2 children. 69.3% of these girls conceived between the age bracket of 16 to 19 years. This can be justified by the high number of girls getting boyfriends between 15 to 16 years (**figure 5**) and the short grace period between first engagement and sexual intercourse (**figure 6a**) as well as the low number of girls using effective birth control methods. 24.2% of the girls conceived within the age bracket of 13 to 15 years while the rest (6.5%) conceived with 12 or less years. The teen pregnancies in question are those resulting from sexual intercourse before covid-19 pandemic. From the above findings it is almost guaranteed that the number of teen frequency will shoot within a few months. 71.5% of the girls with a child had less than 18 years. The distribution of teen mothers from the girls' school and villages is illustrated in **table 3**.

Table 3: Distribution of teen mothers in the Maasai girls' school and villages

Distribution of number of teen mothers	% Respondents	
	In the girls' school	In the girls' village
1-5	10.1	0.7
6-10	20.3	13.1
11-15	36.4	29.9
>15	33.2	56.3

[1]

From **table 3**, most of the schools had more than 11 teenage mothers. Almost a third of the girls (33.2%) indicated their schools had more than 15 teenage mothers. The

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[1] Distribution of Maasai teen mothers in the girls' schools and villages

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situation was worse in the girls' villages whereby more than half (56.3%) of the girls attested to there being more than 15 teenage mothers in their villages. The tendency towards more teenage mothers in the girls' village was skewed towards the higher end. Actually, only 0.7% of the girls indicated there were 1 to 5 teenage mothers. The statistics in **table 3** are those indicating the pre-existing teen mothers during the pandemic. From the findings in **figures 5, 6** and **7**, the number of teenage mothers is likely to be very high within a short period of time. Only 44.6% of the girls are able to resume their learning after conceiving. All the rest (55.4%) are confined to their marital homes and cease learning henceforth. This figures project lower school transition from one academic level to the next when learning will proceed normally.

3.4 Effect of the pandemic on FGM of the girls' welfare

95.0% of the girls were well aware of FGM through various people. The girls indicated that the vice had been practiced for a long time. Numerous efforts by the government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other social bodies in curbing the menace fell on deaf ears. The residents of the county were determined to guard their culture with all its elements (good or bad). It was therefore very difficult to persuade the residents that FGM was bad. Girls who had not been initiated were regarded with little honor and considered unsuitable for marriage. 45.1% of the girls first heard about FGM through their guardians. The girls indicate that their guardians had always prepared them of being initiated psychologically by telling them its merits since they were young children. The girls then grew up knowing that initiation was mandatory and a good practice. Other girls first heard about FGM through NGOs (15.3%) and in school through their teachers (13.1%).

The girls indicate that these sources painted the tradition as a bad practice. Most of the NGOs (such as World Vision) were against FGM and would go an extra mile in rescuing girls who had been initiated (28toomany.org, 2013). The girls would be enrolled in boarding schools which had a collaboration with the NGOs. The teachers in those schools were tasked to preach against the vice by all possible means. 6.9% of the girls heard about FGM from their siblings while 19.6% of the girls knew about it from their friends. This campaigns and awareness measures were not possible since covid-19 pandemic struck since most of the learning institutions were closed.

62.1% of the girls had undergone FGM. All the girls initiated indicated that they had been forced to undertake the initiation. Their guardians and relatives had collaborated in ensuring that they were circumcised. Most of the girls attested that the experiences were quite horrible and would not wish their loved ones to undertake such ordeals in future. Some of their peers whom they were to be initiated together had ran away never to return back to their homesteads. The girls further indicated that 63.5% of their friends, siblings and relatives had also undertaken the rite. The distribution of number of Maasai girls in the same village who had undergone FGM is illustrated in **table 4.**

The number of girls undertaking FGM after covid-19 had sharply risen. This corresponded with more free time at home and less intrusion of the culture by formal education and NGOs. As a result, most of the guardians took the advantage and ensured their girls were initiated. Limited movement of people (especially from foreign nations) ensured that the custodians of the culture could practice their norms with little interference. This ensured the population of girls being initiated was skewed towards the higher end. Before the pandemic, most of the girls' village-mates (39.9%) had 1 to 20 girls initiated. After the pandemic, the majority (63.6%) had more than 60 girls per village initiated.

Table 4: Distribution of number of Maasai girls who had undertaken FGM per village

Number of girls who have undertaken FGM per village	Respondents (%)	
	Before covid-19	After covid-19
1-20	39.9	8.7
21-40	38.7	12.3
41-60	16.4	15.4
> 60	5.0	63.6

The girls confirmed that the local administrators had been trying to fight FGM but with very little success. Only 4.1% of the culprits involved had been arrested (according to the girls). All the others had gone free and any case involving the administrators had been withdrawn by one reason or the other. 12.3% of the girls agreed that the local administrators had succeeded in educating the local community against the vice. However, 84.5% of the girls indicated that the local administrators did not put any significant effort to curb FGM. The girls indicated that the administrators were bribed to ensure that the rites proceeded on without any hitch. Only pressure from their external supervisors at county or regional level would make them stop the vice. This would be done for a little time after which they would again relax their restrictions and allow FGM to proceed. Since covid-19 pandemic struck, there was fewer supervision from their seniors. This gave more room for the administrators to relax thus enhancing FGM practice.

4. Conclusions

Since covid-19 pandemic struck, most of the daily norms and lifestyles of Maasai girl children changed. The girls' guardians' livelihoods were significantly reduced increasing cases of domestic violence ($P > 0.05$). The number of domestic violence had sharply risen amongst the girls' guardians. There was a higher engagement in fornication due to idleness and desire for the girls to have necessities. 'Sex for menstrual towels' was a common phenomenon by the girls. 71.5% of the girls did not use any protection during intercourse while 64.3% of those who did used

'withdrawal' method. This casts a looming health and education pandemic once school reopen with numerous teen pregnancies and early marriages in waiting. Academic enrollment and transition through the classes are also heavily challenged. 58.3% of the girls confirmed that they were indeed stressed up. 21.1% of the girls engaged in various forms of alcohol and drug abuse. 62.1% of the girls had undergone FGM and the number was sharply increasing during the pandemic period.

5. Recommendations

The local administrators should tighten their grips towards immorality and some of the injustices affecting the girls. Parents should also come up with amicable means to resolve conflicts away from their children. Governmental and NGOs should also move with speed to ensure the welfare of the girls are well taken care of.

Acknowledgements

Data Availability Statement

All the data used in this study is enclosed within the manuscript and any supplementary sheets attached.

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[32]   Appendices: Questionnaire guide used

Construction of Reflexivity in Social Workers Working with Vulnerable Children in the Czech Republic

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Abstract

Social work in the Czech Republic is confronted with the impact of global neoliberalism, which is manifested by privatisation of social services, individualisation of social risks and economisation. Reflexivity of social workers working with vulnerable children and their families has the potential to lead to a higher quality of social work, strengthening of social workers' identity, and empowering social workers to promote changes in everyday practice. Meeting this potential requires an understanding of constructing reflexivity by social workers, which is the objective of this paper. We used a qualitative research strategy, particularly group and individual interviews with social workers and their analysis using current approaches to grounded theory. Concerning data analysis, we found out that constructing reflexivity (nature and subject of reflexion) derives from the perceived roles of social workers (social worker as an ununderstood artist, social worker a as mediator between social and individual, social workers as an agent of a (society) change, social workers as an agent of normalisation and reflexive professional). The acquired data, within the situational analysis, was inserted into a position map on the scale of holistic and technical reflection. The conclusion discusses the implication for practice and education in social work.

Keywords: Reflexion construction, role of social work, neoliberalism

Introduction

Social work in the Czech Republic is confronted with the impact of global neoliberalism; which is a political ideology with an economising paradigm applying the laws of the free market. The practice of social work goes though the implementation of market-oriented values, procedures, and management of social services. Neoliberalism in social work is manifested, in general, by privatising social services, individualising social risks (although most risks occur structurally, their solution is expected on an individual level), and economising and rationalising (social

work subjects to market demands and effective requirements).[1] As a result of global neoliberalism, legitimacy of social services is questioned and social workers are perceived as those who artificially create problems and help those who do not deserve their help (Chytil 2007; Valová & Janebová 2015).

Contemporary social work in the Czech Republic thus works in the intentions of bureaucratic responses to uncertainty, complexity, risk, and anxiety, which are inherent in social work practice (Glumbíková, Vávrová & Nedělníková 2018; similarly see Ferguson, 2005); resulting in the loss of sense of perspective (Knott & Scragg, 2016).

Czech social work thus witnesses a reduction of beyond-rational and emotional behaviour aspects. A client is thus redefined from an *"individual with difficulties"* to a *"service user"* (see Ruch, 2005).

Authors Glumbíková, Vávrová & Nedělníková (2018) add that social work with vulnerable children accentuates the above-mentioned with: a) social workers work with the difficult life situation of, in many cases, traumatised children who may feel distrust toward adults; b) the existence of a series of inconsistent methodological guidelines from various institutions (f. e. the ambiguous definition of concepts, such as "*a vulnerable child*" or "*remediation of the family*") and the absence of methodological guidelines on topics such as the situation of unwanted children; c) the fact that child protection service workers need to retain the trust of the client on one hand and, on the other hand, collect evidence for the potential need to "*remove a child from a family*".

According to many Czech authors, a lot of social workers have adapted to the above-mentioned neoliberal trends in social work or they perceive them as unchangeable (Musil, 2008; Janebová, Hudečková, Zapadlová &Musilová 2013; Valová & Janebová 2015). Social workers thus perceive themselves as mere executors of the set social work, which come to them from the "*outside"* or "*above"* from those who do not have a direct relation to everyday practice of social work with a client (Gojová & Glumbíková, 2015; Glumbíková, Vávrová & Nedělníková 2018).

Within the context of the above-mentioned providing social work with vulnerable children and their families in the contemporary society, the ability of reflexivity seems to be the key skill in coping with the requirements of the current social work, which enables to deal with messy or complex problems (Mathias, 2015; Fook, 2016), to cope with uncertainties, doubts, and anxieties (Gardner, 2006; Holland, 2011; Fook, 2016), or to reveal challenging implicit discourses, knowledge system, assumptions, and values (Sanaya & Gardner, 2012; Fook, 2016). Reflexivity in social workers has the

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[1] Similar impacts on social work outside the Czech Republic are described, e.g., by Ruch (2005), Ferguson (2005), Fook (2016), or Knott & Scrag (2016).

potential to improve social work, strengthen the identity of social workers, and empower social workers to promote changes in everyday practice in this profession. In order to strengthen the social workers' ability of reflexivity, it is necessary to understand constructing[1] reflexivity by social workers working with vulnerable children and their families in the Czech Republic, which is also the objective of this paper.

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[1] In our text, we proceed from the thesis of social constructionism, which understands social reality as a social construct created by interaction, communication, and language. The reality is experiential, passed on from generation to generation through traditions and socialisation (Gergen, 1999).

Theoretical grounds: Reflexivity and its concepts

Reflexivity[1] can be understood as a) **ability to assess** the situation of a vulnerable child in the context of destabilisation or problematisation of what we consider knowledge and everyday defence of knowledge (see for example D´Cruz, Jones, 2007; Sanaya & Gardner, 2012); b) **process** of looking from outside on social and cultural artefacts and forms of thinking which saturate the practice of helping professions, and questioning and challenging processes which give a meaning to the world (see for example Ferguson, 2003); c) **theoretical approach** which enables social workers to deal with dilemmas and identify values and the *"important"* in their practice (see for example Fook, Gardner, 2007). Individual authors (Schön, 1983; Gould & Baldwin, 2004; Ruch, 2005; Taylor, 2010; Edwards, 2016) distinguish numerous perspectives/understanding a reflection.

Schön (1983) formulates two concepts of reflection: reflection-on-action and reflection-in-action. Reflection-on-action is a one-time activity that follows a meeting with a client or after some other practical activity. In the reflection-on-action, a worker studies why he/she acted, how he/she acted, what happened in the process, and considers the future strategy of acting.

Reflection-in-action is a concept that expresses the effort to continuously monitor, during the whole meeting, experiences, feelings, and concepts and theories which affect the currently ongoing meeting. It concerns a creative process which enables the social worker to get a situational view to be able to act with respect to the developing situation.

Knott and Scragg (2016) add that reflection in action requires the social worker to be experienced as it can be concerned more *"intuitive and artistic"* unlike *"technical competence"*, which prevails at the side of a beginning social worker (Knott & Scragg, 2016). Gould & Baldwin (2004) extend the Schön's concept with a third component reflection before action, which consists of acquiring information before the client's visit and enables the worker to prepare for the client's visit and use his/her sources more effectively. Edwards (2016) extends the concept with a fourth component reflection beyond action, which *"can produce the type of learning that may be vital if students are to move beyond the limited confines of mechanistic reflection in the current*

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[1] Differences between the terms reflexivity and reflectivity can be seen in the following categories a) **grounding** (term reflexivity stems from socially-scientific research, primarily qualitative); b) **relating to the present** (reflexivity is related to reflection in action, reflectivity is related with reflection on action; reflexivity is then a continuous process and reflectivity has primarily a one-time character); c) **application of a finding** (reflectivity creates a theory from one incident, which is then generalised and applied to other incidents or situations; reflexivity does not have this objective, it focuses on a critical attitude to creating knowledge in a given particular situation) (D´Cruz et al., 2006). In this paper, we will approach reflexivity and reflectivity according to Fook and Gardner (2007) and Fook (2016) as interchangeable.

form of reflection-on-action. With the inclusion of a story of others and their sharing, the development of professional practice can be enhanced through interconnection of the past, present, and future".

Ruch (2005) talks about technical and holistically oriented reflection on social work. Technical oriented reflection on social work orientates on improving the practice by evidence what happened and how it happened. Holistically oriented reflection on social work focuses on improving the practice by searching the answer to the question of why it happened (trying to understand the meaning of action). Meanwhile, it perceives the uniqueness and complexity of each client and his/her situation, including irrational aspects. Holistic reflection is thus of an interpretative nature, is relational, dynamic, and situational; it also contains individual and structural aspects of each client's situation and stems from the respect to the practice wisdom. Taylor (2010) identifies, in accordance with Ruch (2005), technical reflection as empirically based focused on systematic and objective approaches (e.g. evidence-based practice). The author then distinguishes practical reflection, which focuses on our interactions and our expectations of interactions and on emancipatory reflection, which is concerned with power in interactions and trying to liberate people from constraints (e.g. an expert model situating knowledge and solutions in the hands of the practitioner).

Methodology

The paper presents data from research in 2018 realised within a project of Students' Grant Competition (SGC) called Critical Reflexivity of Social Workers Working with Vulnerable Children and Their Families. The main research question was set as follows: How do social workers working with vulnerable children and their families perceive critical reflexivity and how do they perceive that critical reflexivity becomes evident in social work with vulnerable children and their families? The research was implemented using a qualitative research strategy, the communication partners (informants) were selected using an intentional selection through an institution (organisations providing socially activating services for families with children[1] in the

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[1] It concerned workers of socially activating services for families with children, specified by §69 Act 108/2006 on Social services as follows: *"Socially activating services are ambulant or terrain services provided to retired persons or disabled persons endangered by social exclusion. The service according to...includes the following basic activities: a) mediating contact with social environment: It primarily concerns support of family bonds with broader social environment – with relatives, social and community (local) events, relation to peer and self-helping activities, support of participation in cultural and other events (search, accompaniment, etc.); b) social therapeutic activities: It concerns activities with children and adults focused on the development of personality, understanding oneself and situation in which the clients are, sharing and emotional support, activities focused on the support of sibling relationships and relationships between parents and children, support to understand and make clear life situations, ways of solutions and risks; c) help with assistance with asserting rights, justified interests and looking after personal matters."* Socially activating services cooperate with other services and the Body of social and

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Czech Republic). The criteria to include an informant into the research were set as follows: a) being active in terrain social work with vulnerable children and their families; b) length of practice in terrain social work with vulnerable children and their families of at least 12 moths; c) voluntariness of taking part in the research. The research involved 12 communication partners altogether (11 women and 1 man) from three different towns in the Czech Republic. The average age of the communication partners was 30 years (the age ranged between 22 and 53 years). The average length of practice of the communication partners was 3.5 years (and ranged between 1 and 1 years). 3 communication partners had higher professional education, 9 communication partners had university education.

The data was collected using semi-structured interviews and subsequent three focus groups (N=4, N=5, N=3), which were systematically focused on: perception of reflexivity in the practice of social work with vulnerable children, implemented interventions in the practice of social work and relating to them, own relating of the social worker to the practice of social work, perceived context of implementing social work in the Czech Republic, and anticipated future development of social work with vulnerable children in the Czech Republic. The data was word-to-word transcribed and anonymised. The data was processed using current approaches to the grounded theory of K. Charmaz (2003) and A. Clarke et al. (2018).

The data analysis included initial coding; focused coding (which is based on searching similarities and selecting the "*most useful*" codes and their re-testing from the point of view of their relationship to other open codes), and intentional coding (selective phase where the most significant codes were used to synthesise, organise, and integrate a large volume of data). Next phase of coding was axial coding, which leads to the creation of categories (re-structuring data which was decomposed during open coding and thus it gives it relations) (Charmaz, 2003). Then we used the procedures of a situational analysis A: Clarke, particularly position maps, which graphically depict partakers' positions or phenomena in relations to the cross-section of (identified) factors affecting these positions (Clarke et al., 2018).

Regarding the procedures carried out within the research, they were all in accordance with the Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct, which were approved by the American Psychological Association (APA, 2010). Every communication partner was familiarised with research objectives; every communication partner provided the informed consent; participation in the research was voluntary and the researchers committed themselves to keep confidentiality.

Regarding the research limits, it is important to reflect that the data was collected using interviews with the communication partners the premise of which was the

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legal protection of children, which is the state body with regional and city branches designed to protect the rights and interests of a child.

ability of reflexivity of communication partners. The data in its nature is rather a perception/opinion of social workers on the reflexivity and their practice rather than a description of a real state of reflexivity in the practice of social work in the Czech Republic. Regarding the data limits, it is also necessary to reflect possible social desirability in the communication partners' expressions. Regarding the support of data validity (with respect to own reflexivity of the social workers), the data was analysed using the mechanism of mechanism inter-coder agreement.

Data analysis

The data analysis, whose aim was to understand the construction of reflexivity in social work, revealed that social workers working with vulnerable children and their families[1] construct reflexivity reflexivity (nature and subject of reflexion) in social work differently in several percieved roles of social worker in social work. It concerned the role of: social worker as an ununderstood artist, social workers as a mediator between social and individual, social workers as an agent of a change (in society), social workers as an agent of normalisation and a reflexive professional. However, the individual role can be perceived as theoretical constructs which do not exist so clearly, but which intermingle and intersect in the personality of (one) social worker.

Social worker as an ununderstood artist

In the role of a social worker as an ununderstood artist (creative role), social work is perceived as the **possibility of self-realisation, sense, and mission** *"For me, it's a kind of self-realisation."* (KP1[2]) *"I see it as something like my life mission…"* (KP4)

Social work in the role was perceived as a **lonely profession where the working tool is the social worker.** *"It's a very individual work, the personality of the worker in that family is very important there … one is alone for that situation."* (KP1) Social work, however, was perceived as an **intuitive profession**. *"Often very intuitively that one cannot say how the model is called in a textbook, but it is used like that."* (KP6) The communication partners in this role agreed on the fact that social work is a **continuous process of *learning***: *"As I do not have such long practice, I take it as I'm learning all the time."* (KP2)

The role of an ununderstood artists relates to the feeling of **ununderstanding** and **undervaluing**, both by society and clients. *"The work itself, with this group of people, was ununderstood directly… that I'm a terrain social worker, their eyebrow rises. And*

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[1] Social workers do not explicitly state in their narrations the uniqueness of the construction of reflexivity in relation to the target group they work with; however, it is important to perceive that their construction of reflexivity stems from their everyday practice of social work with vulnerable children and their families.

[2] Abbreviation KP means communication partner, the number means identification of individual communication partners.

when you add that you focus on families with children, for example Gypsy families, that you help them with benefits and accommodation, ununderstanding again." (KP9)

The definition of this role of a social worker reveals that social workers' reflexions primarily focus on the personality of a social worker. Social work was perceived in the intentions of **priceless** and often **intransferable experience, which led to the change of the personality of its executor.** *"I've always been such a pro-social character, but it is a profession which affects everyone; one is more humble, appreciate what he/she has when seeing people around with their existential problems. And material possessions, greed, and consumerism which predominates in our society, I think it does not touch me so much. I don't need to race for such conveniences… it's rather humbleness.*" (KP1)

Social workers as a mediator between social and individual

Within this role, the communication partners perceived the role of a social worker as a certain balance of the non-existence of collective responsibility in relation to unfavourable social situations and the pressure on individual responsibility for failures; their **reflexion was then primarily directed to the setting of contemporary society**. *"In many clients, it can't be said who's guilty… mostly it's the society and the setting that we have here; for example there are no town flats and multiple families then end up in quarters as they can't find such big flats…"* (KP12)

In the context of this role, the communication partners reflected that social work is perceived as ***necessary even in "problems that get worse"***. *"Problems of those clients are worse, I think*." (KP7) *"As the population is getting older, social work is really more and more needed, no one else can take care of those people*." (KP6)

Social worker as an agent of a change (in society)

The role of a social worker as an agent of a change in society is defined by reflexion of the **absence of a system approach to solving problems.** In this context, one of the communication partners reflected the current situation in the area of social housing "*At the moment, I think that most of our practice is influenced by the pressure to close down the quarters and change it to rental housing. Many families cannot afford it. So closing down the quarters pushes them to the hands of resellers of these flats as they cannot go anywhere else.*" (KP8) Another communication partner pointed out the setting of the system of benefits "*I see it that the benefit system is badly set. Those who don't work often receive more… it's not motivating.*" (KP5)

Other reflexions were focused on **"problems with legislation"** which **is not set in social work "bottom-up"**. *"The biggest problem is in laws. Seems like… social workers do their work well, but it is the state which throws a monkey wrench into the works*." (KP5) „*And the best should be that those up should try it, touch this work, they should*

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change…" (KP7) Concerning this setting, the communication partners pointed out increasing **bureaucratisation** of social work, which sucks out the time for direct work with a client. *"Half of the work time is paperwork about what I do… I'd rather work with clients, but can't – have to write: I did this and that. Reports. I have to prove to somebody what I do so that someone knows as we are paid. This really annoys me."* (KP6) Another communication partner was critical to the system of **setting interventions within a project**, where it is necessary to meet obligatory quota. She pointed out a paradox in social work as the objective of social work is that a client does not need the social worker in the future, but the social worker needs them to fulfil this profession. *"But we need the clients… because we need to meet the interventions. I reckon that sometimes there's a kind of contradiction as I need to gain these interventions and I'm happy that the client does not do it by himself/herself because I need to have these interventions and if the client did many things by himself/herself, I can't gain the interventions."* (KP10)

Social workers stated that due to the above-mentioned, **they lose the sense of social** work. *"I think that there is a lack of the view from the practice point of view. It's done by people behind a table. We have to follow certain norms and regulations and I have to spend certain hours in the terrain and then write individual plans which the client changes our times during one meeting. I understand that we have to do it, so I do it, but I see no sense in it."* (KP11)

Social work in the role of a social worker a s an agent of a change in society is perceived as a filed having a certain **potential**. *"I still think that social work does not achieve what it could achieve."* (KP1) *"Social work is quite developing thanks to those projects and so on. Yes, it's going up, but still does not meet its potential."* (KP2)

Social worker as an agent of normalisation

The role of a social worker as an agent of normalisation is a position when the objective of social work is to *"reform"* the client according to valid norms in the society. Social workers in their narrations perceived this role as oppressive and they rather connected it with expectations of the society towards social workers and worries of clients from the scope of work of a social worker. The communication partners related this role with the **check of the "asocial"**. *"Some (clients) take us as the tool of such a check and that we go there to take their children away."* (KP8)

The check of the *"asocial"* was related by the communication partners with a perceived **discourse of merit**, which appears in the contemporary society. *"The public doesn't see it that sometimes they* (note: clients) *got into it by their own mistake, sometimes it was just a coincidence of many circumstances."* (KP4) *"And one friend tells me that she does not understand how I can help such people as they got into the situation by themselves."* (KP11)

In this role, social workers mostly relate reflexivity with the process of executing social work, particularly it is perceived as a tool of **setting boundaries of work with a client, freeing from work with a lie from the client's side.** *"I free myself for example like that… I just simply take it that it is work and I won't go to have a coffee with the client, I just do my work and I give the man what I can give."* (KP3). In this context, the communication partners considered reflexivity as a tool to set the **level of trust in a client**. *"Those are really beginner's mistakes with the trust… , one wants to see the people positively, one wants to believe."* (KP10) Another communication partner perceived critical reflexivity as a tool of work with **a failure to meet what was agreed on with the client**. *"They want something, we work hard on it and I see that they haven't done a single thing they were supposed to do… go somewhere with son's application for school… I'm always so surprised that those people want something, but then don't do anything for that."* (KP10)

Reflexive professional

The role of a reflexive professional can be related with holistic reflexivity, which is refers to **improving the practice of social work** by its reflexion. This reflexion is focused on the uniqueness of each client and each situation in its individual and structural aspects. Reflexivity in this context is understood as a *"tool of healthy doubts". "But I think that if a social were one hundred per cent sure about what he/she is doing, it would not be good either…"* (KP8) Reflexivity was also perceived as a **tool of work with own** mistake *"I it is a mistake… meaning that I didn't behave professionally, but the client didn't consider it a… misstep… I solve this situation differently… I get back to this topic and we discuss it a bit differently."* (KP1)

Reflexivity in the role of a reflexive professional is understood as a **tool of understanding client's** behaviour. *"I might have been disconcerted by client's reaction as I didn't see any reason for that. But looking back I thought… yes… that there might have been some reason…"* (KP2) This understanding will subsequently result in the **avoidance of taking a judging** attitude towards the client. „*I think that clients really appraise I consider it quite crucial for me that they see some understanding from the social worker's part and that there is no a priori judgement of the behaviour."* (KP4) Reflexivity was also perceived as a **tool to accept the client's norm by the social worker**. *"Just get closer to the level of the family, don't criticise. I take it as it is. I perceive it that the client needed it. If they knew to do it better, they would do it better."* (KP6)

Reflexivity was also perceived as a tool enabling to work with a client in (more) **empowering ways**. *"We come to a mutual conclusion how to solve it… I don´t help them indeed… rather motivate."* (KP6) „*I see myself not as a directive tool. If a client tells me that he/she doesn't want to take this alternative to solve the situation, I can't force them. I can only explain the situation in the case that they wouldn't like to solve the situation, where it might end up."* (KP8) The communication partners perceived reflexivity as a tool supporting an approach focused on the **support of competencies and**

strengths. *"An approach as something like praising... not praising like a small child, but rather highlight what they did*." (KP9)

In the narration, the communication partners perceived the role of a reflexive professional as a certain **ideal** to head towards. *"I would like to be that empowering social worker who is aware of and works with the whole system, but there is a long journey and a lot of support*." (KP1)

Positional map of social workers' role related to the subject and nature of reflexion

The above-mentioned roles of social workers (partakers´) were related with the theoretical concept by Ruch (2005) on technical-oriented and holistically-oriented reflection (nature of reflexion) (identified factors affecting roles of social workers).

Thus, a positional map was created. It depicts the above-mentioned roles of social workers according to the subject of reflexion (society, process, client's personality, worker's personality) and according to the use of technical-oriented reflection a holistically-oriented reflection (nature of reflexion).

Scheme 1: Positional map of social workers in relation to the subject and nature of reflexion
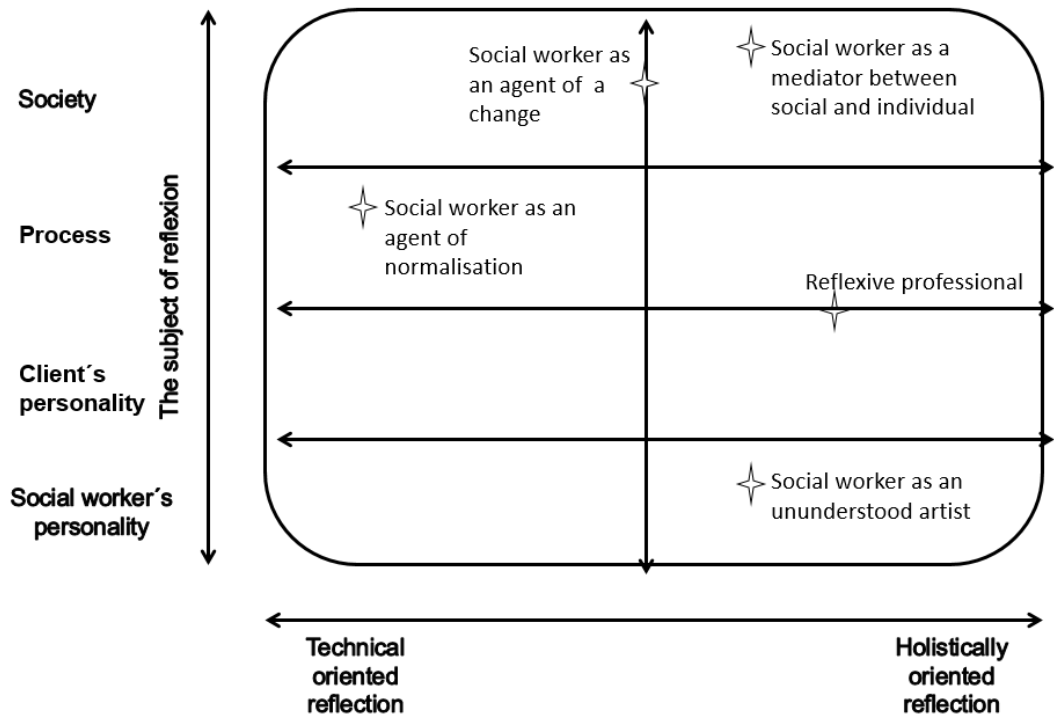
Source: Own construction.

The above-presented positional map reveals that two roles of social workers (Social worker as an agent of a change and Social worker as an agent of normalisation) can be perceived in the concept of Technical-oriented reflection, when their reflexion stems from the practice evidence and systemic and objective approaches. The subject of a Social worker as an

Agent of a change is society while the subject of a Social worker as an agent of normalisation is the process of social work. Three roles of social workers (Social worker as a mediator between social and individual, Reflexive professional and Social worker as an ununderstood artist) can be perceived within the concept of Holistically-oriented reflection. The social worker in these roles focuses on improving the practice using reflexion of searching the answer to the question why happened what happened (they try to understand the meaning of happening) while perceiving the uniqueness and complexity of each client and each situation, including irrational aspects.

Discussion and implications for social work

The data analysis revealed that constructing reflexivity depends on the roles perceived by social workers. Each created role, however, must be perceived as a certain (ideal) theoretical construct as roles of social workers are of an intersectional nature and thus intersect and mingle depending on a specific context of social work. The above-presented positional map shows that the identified roles of social workers fluctuate in a certain continuum of *"doing social work"* and *"being a social worker"* (see Ruch, Harrison, 2007). An important finding is that the role of a reflexive professional was marked in the narrations as a certain *"ideal"* to head towards rather than a matter of everyday practice. When defining the role of a reflexive professional, it is obvious that reflexion has the potential to create more inclusive and less judging practice (similarly see Jones, 2010); to work in more empowering ways (similarly see Fook, 2016); and to create practice less focused on finding a solution and more on building clients' abilities (Fook & Gardner, 2007; Fook, 2016).

Reflexion in the created roles related to various subjects in social practice, such as society, process, personality of a client, or personality of a worker. The research results thus show that reflexion has a wide range of focus which has a potential to empower social workers in relation to a possible change in the setting of social work practice. It seems that it is thanks to reflexion that social workers can become aware that they are not only mere executors of the *"above"* given setting, but their role in this process is more active. They are implementers who develop own coping strategies helping them, within limited resources, manifest own decision making. It is those processes that enable social workers to shape public policy right when interacting with clients (Lipsky, 2010).

In the context of the above-mentioned, it can be stated that strengthening of the ability of holistic reflexivity of social workers (not only in the Czech Republic) should be included in a standard curriculum of social workers (similarly see, for example, Tate & Sills, 2004; or Guransky et al., 2010) and to further education of social workers working with vulnerable children and their families. The first step to include this in the Czech Republic was understanding how Czech social workers construct reflexivity in the practice of Czech social work. The above-stated data shows that integrating into education should have the nature of offering opportunities and platforms to reflect experience from the practice. A roofing concept of this education should be experiential learning, which is based on sharing experience. A particular form of integration into education can be supervisions, intervisions, team meetings, or, for example, using reflexive diaries (similarly see Barlow & Hall, 2007; Grant et al., 2014;).

Conclusion

We gained understanding about constructing reflexivity by social workers working with vulnerable children and their families in the Czech Republic, which is also the objective of this paper. The data analysis revealed that constructing reflexivity depends on the roles perceived by social workers.

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Health Returns to Birth Weight: Evidence from Developing Countries

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Abstract

This paper explores the effect of birth weight on a series of anthropometric outcomes among children. We use a panel of individual-level data from 39 developing countries covering the years 1999-2018 and attempt to solve the Endogeneity using mother fixed effect and twin fixed-effect strategies. The results suggest that improvements in birth weight result in statistically and economically significant improvements in children's anthropometric outcomes. An additional 100 grams birth weight is associated with a 0.43 and 0.25 units increase in *weight for age percentile* and *height for age percentile*, respectively. The links are stronger among low educated mothers and poorer households. The observed protective effect of birth weight on infant mortality suggests that the true effects of birth weight on children's outcomes are larger and that the estimated effects probably understate the true effects.

Introduction

It is well established that health endowment at birth can affect health outcomes later in life. Fetal Origin Hypothesis provides a theory to explain the link between the antenatal environment and health outcomes later in life. Based on the theory, while the genetic variations among humans are very minuscule (Witherspoon et al., 2007) the epigenetic programming variations are relatively large. An Epigenome is a multitude of chemical compounds that are attached to the DNA and turns off some genes as a response to environmental stressors. The shocks during prenatal development could trigger these changes and program Epigenome to turn off some genomes related to growth with the sole purpose of survival of the fetus. This results in below-normal growth in tissues, brain cells, and other organs. This deficiency in the growth of certain organs is reflected in lower birth weight and conceals its importance later in life (Almond and Currie, 2011). To empirically investigate this

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link, a strand of literature in economics and health documented the causal effects of birth outcomes, and specifically birth weight, on long term mortalities due to respiratory disorders, neurodevelopmental disabilities, and hypertension (Behrman et al., 2007), child mortality (Lau et al., 2013; McCormick, 1985), and other socioeconomic outcomes such as education and earnings in adulthood (Behrman and Rosenzweig, 2004; Bharadwaj et al., 2018; Conley et al., 2006; Figlio et al., 2014; Maruyama and Heinesen, 2020; Miller et al., 2005).

A small branch within this literature focuses on the fetal origins of anthropometric outcomes of children. For instance, Bacallao et al. (1996) use longitudinal panel data and document that children with higher birth weight are more likely to have higher height during different ages. The birth weight is also a good predictor of the onset of the pubertal maturation process. These studies usually point to correlational links and fail to offer a causal path (Bacallao et al., 1996; Sorensen et al., 1999) and mostly use data from developed countries (Datta Gupta et al., 2013). This study aims to fill this gap in the literature by using data from developing countries and applying a twin fixed-effect strategy to solve the Endogeneity issues.

Using individual-level panel data from 39 developing countries over the years 1999-2018 and applying various econometric techniques, this paper explores the link between birth weight, as an important measure of health at birth, and children's standardized anthropometric outcomes including weight for age, weight for height, and height for age. We apply OLS, mother fixed effect, and twin fixed-effect models and find that an increase of 100 grams in birth weight is associated with 0.35, 0.43, and 0.25 percentile units rise in weight for height, weight for age, and height for age, respectively. These changes are equivalent to 1, 1.8, and a 0.9 percent rise from the mean of their respective variables over the sample period. Besides, we show the heterogeneity of these associations based on the mother's education and the household wealth quantiles. We find that the links are stronger for low educated mothers and persists with a stronger momentum among children in poor families.

The results of this paper have important implications for governments and policymakers. Since the anthropometric outcomes and specifically height are among the important determinants of labor market success and lifetime earnings (Brinkman et al., 1988; Deaton and Arora, 2009; Meyer and Selmer, 1999), exploring their fetal origins offer an effective long-run policy channel to promote labor outcomes. In addition, the results imply that there are externalities for health policies towards pregnant mothers that go beyond the health of infants and mothers and could affect the health of children several years later.

The contribution of the current study to the literature is twofold. First, on the contrary to the ongoing literature, we document a causal path between birth weight and medium-run outcomes in the case of developing countries. Second, it adds to the

literature of the Fetal Development Hypothesis by providing evidence of health endowment at birth on children's anthropometric outcomes.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows: Section 0 provides a brief review of the literature. In section 0 we discuss the data source and the final sample. Section 0 introduces the econometric methods implemented in the study. In sections **Error! Reference source not found.** and **Error! Reference source not found.** we report and discuss the main results and heterogeneity of the effects across sub-samples. Section **Error! Reference source not found.** explores one potential source of sample selection bias. Finally, we depart some concluding remarks in section **Error! Reference source not found.**..

A Brief Literature review

A small strand of literature in public health and economics investigates the association between birth outcomes and adult height. For instance, Sorensen et al. (1999) use a longitudinal panel of Danish men and find that birth length is a strong predictor of adult height. The association still holds even after controlling for birth weight and other socioeconomic confounding factors. Gupta et al. (2013) show that the link between low birth weight and physical growth among children becomes weaker by age and that it is stronger for children in the very low birth weight category.

Focusing on anthropometric outcomes is essential mainly due to the hidden benefits associated with improvements in these outcomes. Deaton and Arora (2009) show that taller people in the US population are on average happier, are more likely to have positive emotions, are less likely to suffer from sadness, are less probable to have negative mental experiences, and have higher education and income. The relationship between height and income is also supported in other studies (Brinkman et al., 1988; Meyer and Selmer, 1999).

Birth weight also has long-run impacts on a wide range of labor market outcomes. For instance, Behrman and Rosenzweig (2004) apply a twin fixed-effect strategy to explore the effect of birth weight during adulthood. They find consistent evidence that higher birth weight is associated with higher educational levels and higher earnings. If the birth weight of the bottom half of the US population reaches that mean of the US birth weight (an increase of roughly 480 grams), their average earnings would go up by about 6 percent. Using longitudinal data and applying an instrumental variable strategy, Maruyama and Heinesen (2020) explore the effect of birth weight on medium-run health outcomes and long-run non-health outcomes. They find that a 10 percent rise in birth weight is associated with about 13.7 fewer infant death per 1,000 births. However, they do not find any evidence for the long-run effects on other outcomes such as test scores. Royer (2009) exploits the plausibly random variations in birth weight among twins and shows that birth weight has small but explanatory power for later pregnancy complications and the birth weight of the next generation.

(Almond et al., 2005) explore the hospital discharge costs and infant mortality rates associated with low birth weight. They find that the average hospital discharge costs of having a low birth weight infant in excess of the costs of having a normal birth weight infant add up to roughly $8,654 in 2000 dollars.

The environmental shocks during prenatal development could, in turn, affect birth outcomes including birth weight. Hoynes, Miller, and Simon (2015) explore the effects of the changes in the Earned Income Tax Credit payments birth outcomes. The cash transfers created a sizeable and permanent shock to households' income. The increased income encouraged health care spending including prenatal care and private health insurance. They find that a $1,000 treatment-on-the-treated increase in income is associated with 6.4 grams higher birth weight and about 2-3 percent reduction in low birth weight. Cole and Currie (1993) explore the effect of cash transfers from Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) on infants' health outcomes and find no evidence that the program has any effect on birth weight. Noghanibehambari and Salari (2020) explore the effects of unemployment insurance generosity as a temporary shock to income and find that the payments have externality for infants' health outcomes including birth weight, low birth weight, Apgar score, and gestational age. Similar studies have explored the effects of government welfare and health programs on infants health outcomes (Almond et al., 2011; Currie and Grogger, 2002; East, 2018; Figlio et al., 2009; Ga and Feng, 2012; Hoynes et al., 2011, 2016; Kaestner and Chan Lee, 2005; Leonard and Mas, 2008; NoghaniBehambari et al., 2020b, 2020a; Noghanibehambari et al., 2020; Sonchak, 2015, 2016; Tavassoli et al., 2020; Wherry et al., 2018)

Data and sample selection

The primary source of data is a collection of Demography and Health Surveys (DHS) extracted from Heger Boyle et al. (2020). The DHS Program collects survey data from individuals across developing countries on topics such as health and demography. This program is implemented by ICF International and funded mainly by the United States Agency for International Development. The data provides a variety of information including mothers' demography, birth outcomes of children ever born, and anthropometry of their survived infants up to age 5. To the benefit of the current study, it also reports whether the child is single, twin, triplet, etc. We remove all individuals and samples for which the essential information (e.g. birth weight, anthropometric variables, mother's demography, and birth plurality) are missing. The final sample consists of 625,485 children in 39 countries over the years 1999-2018. Table 1 shows the distribution of observations across different countries. Table 2 reports summary statistics for the full sample of children and the sample of twins. Compared to the full sample, twins have lower birth weight (2,483 grams versus

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3,063 grams), are more likely to die during infancy (3.3 percent versus 0.44 percent), and are more likely to be female (50 percent versus 48 percent). Since children observed at different ages and that the anthropometric variables are highly correlated, it is inappropriate to focus on reported weight or height. Instead, we use the ranking of children relative to their peers or relative to a reference median person. This specific median value is determined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). For instance, instead of focusing on height, we use the height for age in terms of standard deviation from the reference median that is defined by CDC and reported by Heger Boyle et al. (2020).

Empirical strategy

This section discusses the econometric methods used to analyze the association between birth weight and children's health outcomes. The basic idea is to compare the outcomes of children who had higher birth weight to children with lower birth weight. In summary, we use the following OLS regressions:

$$y_{imrbt} = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 BW_i + \alpha_2 X_m + \zeta_r + \eta_b + \phi_t \qquad (1)$$
$$+ \epsilon_{imrbt}$$

In this formulation, y is the anthropometric outcome of child i born to mother m who reside in sub-national region r who belongs to birth cohort b and observed in year t. BW represents the birth weight of child i. In X is included a series of mother's demographic characteristics including dummies for education, wealth, type of occupation, employment status, and the number of prenatal visits. Fixed effects for the region, birth cohort, and observation year are included in ζ, η, and φ, respectively. Finally, ε is a disturbance term.

The assumption is that conditional on covariates and fixed effects, the anthropometric outcomes of children with higher birth weight would have followed the same path and determined by the same influences as the anthropometric outcomes of children with lower birth weight except for the fact that their birth weight varies. However, this assumption could be violated if there are certain characteristics among mothers, such as genetic attributes or socioeconomic characteristics, that affect birth weight and also are correlated with their children's anthropometric outcomes. Although we include a set of observed demographic covariates in equation 1 we are unable to control for the unobserved features. For this reason, the estimations of α_1 could be biased. Assuming that those unobserved mothers' attributes that confound equation 1 are time-invariant, we can include a set of mother fixed effects and re-write the equation as the following formulation:

y_imrbt=α_0+α_1 BW_i+γ_m+ζ_r+η_b+φ_t+ε_imrbt   (2)

This equation takes advantage of variations in birth weight to different children of a mother. In other words, it compares the anthropometric outcomes of siblings with higher birth weight to siblings (of the same mother) with lower birth weight. The

estimated coefficient of α_1 in equation 2 is biased if there are unobserved characteristics of a mother that vary by time and sibling. For instance, if the socioeconomic characteristics of a mother change during the prenatal development of one child versus the other child and affect birth outcomes in ways that are unobserved, then the estimated coefficient is biased. In a similar way, if mothers discriminate in the investment of health and wellbeing of their children in unobservable ways the coefficient will be biased, too. To solve this potential source of Endogeneity, we can restrict the sample to twins and compare the outcomes of a child in twin pair with higher birth weight to his/her lower birth weight twin. In summary, we use the following twin fixed-effect strategy:

$$y\_i = \alpha\_0 + \alpha\_1 \, BW\_i + \lambda\_i + \epsilon\_i \qquad (3)$$

Where λ_i is set of twin fixed effects. Since twins have the same intrauterine growth and gestational age, their birth weight variation is primarily due to their differential intake of nutrition during the antenatal period. This differential intake and intrauterine growth are assumed to be random which offers a widely used strategy to search for the effects of birth weight on later-life outcomes (Behrman and Rosenzweig, 2004; Bharadwaj et al., 2018, 2019; Black et al., 2007; Figlio et al., 2014; van den Berg et al., 2011). The assumption is that the within twin variation in birth weight, after controlling for twin fixed effect, is orthogonal to other determinants of anthropometric variables of children, i.e. $cov(BW, \epsilon) = 0$.

Main results

We start by reporting the results of the simple OLS model introduced in equation 1. Table 3 shows the estimated α_1 in equation 1 for different outcomes in different panels and slightly adding controls and fixed effects across consecutive columns. Column 1 includes country, year, and birth cohort fixed effects. Column 2 adds to these controls by including region (sub-national district) fixed effects as well as a limited set of mothers' demographic characteristics. Column 3 also adds a region-by-year fixed effect to account for all macroeconomic and environmental features specific to a region within a country that also vary by time. A full set of mothers' socioeconomic characteristics is also included in column 3. For instance, looking at panel A and the full specification of column 3, a 10 percent rise in birth weight (equivalent to about 306 grams) is associated with a 1.6 units rise in weight for height percentile. This increase is equivalent to a 4.4 percent rise from the mean of weight for height percentile over the sample period.

As explained in section 3, a conventional way to look at the anthropometric values is to deflate them with respect to a reference value. We use the CDC-defined values for the reference median and implement the reported percentiles or standard deviations from the reference median as the proper measures. For instance, instead of looking at the raw value of Body Mass Index (BMI), we use the BMI standard deviation from the reference median. As reported in panel G, birth weight is positively associated

with BMI standard deviation from the reference median. If the average birth weight of children in the bottom half of the birth weight distribution could increase to the average of the sample (an increase of roughly 446 grams), the BMI standard deviation from the reference median of children would go up by 0.11 units, equivalent to a rise of 36% from the mean of the variable.

The big picture uncovered by Table 3 is that birth weight is strongly associated with improvement in anthropometric outcomes of children. The estimated effects are quite robust in magnitude across different specifications and economically significant. All the coefficients are statistically significant at 1% level.

To account for time-invariant unobserved characteristics of mothers, we include mother fixed effects as discussed in equation 2. The results are reported in Table 4 for different outcomes in different panels. Specifications in column 1 include only mother fixed effects while column 2 also controls for the region, time, and birth cohort fixed effects. The marginal effects are quite robust with and without fixed effects. Comparing the coefficients in the full specification of column 2 with those reported in column 3 of Table 3, we can see that the marginal effects have diminished in magnitude. This fact implies that unobservable characteristics of mothers over-bias the estimates. However, the reductions are only marginal and the coefficients are statistically and economically significant for all outcomes and all specifications. For example, looking at panel E, a 10 percent rise in birth weight is associated with a 1.23 unit rise in height for age percentile in the mother fixed effect model of Table 4 compared to 1.63 unit change in Table 3.

Mothers may respond to the health of their newborn by reinforcing or compensating their health endowment. If this behavior is correlated with unobservable factors of mothers, then variations in birth weight of siblings are correlated with the error term in equation 2 and the estimated coefficients are biased. Therefore, we turn our focus to the twin fixed-effect strategy introduced in equation 3. The results are reported in Table 5 for different outcomes across different columns. While statistically significant, the magnitude of the coefficients is smaller than those in Table 3 and Table 4. For instance, a 10 percent rise in birth weight is associated with 0.07 and 0.06 units rise in weight for age standard deviation from reference median and height for age standard deviation from reference median (columns 4 and 6). These effects are equivalent to an absolute change of 6.2 and 4.6 percent change from the mean of their respective variables. For the same shock to birth weight, the marginal effects are 0.10 and 0.09 in Table 3 and 0.09 and 0.07 in Table 4. This fact implies that the within-sibling changes in unobserved mothers' characteristics slightly overstate the true effects. However, the link between birth weight and children's anthropometric variables are statistically significant and economically meaningful. Overall, the results of this section are quite comparable and similar to other studies that investigate the medium-run effects of birth weight and specifically anthropometric

outcomes of children (Bacallao et al., 1996; Datta Gupta et al., 2013; Sorensen et al., 1999).

Heterogeneity by Education and Wealth

Restrepo (2016) shows that low-educated mothers and specifically high school dropouts reinforce the gap between their low birth weight children and their offspring with normal birth weight by providing less investment in their human capital. On the opposite, higher educated mothers compensate for this gap by providing more investment in the human capital of their low birth weight children compared to their normal birth weight children. Therefore, one may expect heterogeneity in the results based on some observed mothers' characteristics. Table 6 shows the heterogeneity of the effects for different outcomes in different columns. As discussed in section 4, the twin strategy is the preferred model that presumably accounts for unobserved factors and Endogeneity issues. Therefore, we only show the results for the twin fixed-effect models. Each panel reports the effects of a specific sub-sample based on mothers' education and household wealth. Comparing the magnitude of the effects between panel A (low educated mothers) and panel B (high educated mothers), one can observe that the link between birth weight and children's health outcomes are larger among low educated mothers. In line with the findings of Restrepo (2016), the results suggest that high educated mothers compensate for the low health endowment of their children.

Panels C and D of Table 6 report the marginal effects for poor and middle-rich families, respectively. The link between health endowment at birth and children's health outcomes are larger among poor and very poor families. This pattern holds across all outcomes except for BMI standard deviation from reference median. Richer families probably have the resources and are able to close the gap between twins that have higher birth weights and twins that have lower birth weight. Also, richer families usually contain high educated mothers who, as discussed above, have a higher tendency to close the health gap among their children.

Endogenous Infant Mortality

One of the potential confounding issues in examining the long term relationships is the sample selection bias. The fittest and healthiest newborns are more likely to survive the period of infancy and transit into childhood to be included in the sample. This fact concerns the results of this paper since we observe the anthropometric children in the sample up to age 5 when they already passed the transition period. If infants with lower birth endowment who could have revealed lower anthropometric outcomes during childhood die during infancy as a result of lower initial health, the estimated coefficients of equations 1 through 3 will be under-biased and understate the true effects.

To explore this potential Endogeneity, Table 7 reports the results of a series of regressions from equations 1 to 3 where we replace the outcome with a dummy that equals one if the child is reported dead at the time of the interview and zero otherwise. We report the results of OLS in columns 1-3, the mother fixed effect in columns 4-5, and the results of the twin strategy in column 6. The signs of all coefficients imply a protective effect of birth weight against the likelihood of infant death. An additional 100 grams of birth weight is associated with 2.2 and 4.4 basis points decrease in the likelihood of infant death in the full specifications of OLS and mother fixed-effect models (columns 3 and 5), respectively, equivalent to roughly 5 and 10 percent reduction from the mean. While the twin strategy also points to the negative effect and the magnitude is very close to that of OLS results it is imprecisely estimated. These results are in line with other studies that relate the infant mortality rates to birth weight and more generally health endowment at birth (Gage et al., 2013; Lau et al., 2013; McCormick, 1985). As a conclusion, the results of this section suggest that the marginal effects, reported and discussed in section 5 and 6, are understating the true effects due to sample selection concerns. We need to use caution in interpreting the results as a lower-bond of the true effects.

Conclusion

Exploring the long term effects of health endowment at birth is important for policymakers to design optimal policy interventions. In this paper, we investigated the effect of birth weight on a series of anthropometric outcomes among children. On the contrary to the current literature, we explored this link in the case of developing countries. We attempted to solve the potential Endogeneity issues by applying mother fixed effect and twin fixed-effect strategies. Using individual-level data from 39 countries passing the years 1999-2018, we found that if the birth weight of infants at the bottom half of the sample was to converge to the mean birth weight (an increase of about 446 grams), the weight for age standard deviation from reference median, the height for age standard deviation from reference median, and the BMI standard deviation from reference median would have increased by 0.10, 0.08, and 0.08 units, respectively. These marginal effects are equivalent to an absolute change of 9.1, 6.7, and 28.6 percent from the mean of their respective variables. While the effects become slightly smaller in twin fixed-effect models, they remain statistically and economically significant. In line with previous literature, the results suggest that improvements in birth weight results in improvements in anthropometric outcomes among children.

The results are heterogeneous by mothers' education and household wealth. The links between birth weight and children outcomes are stronger for low educated mothers and poorer households. The observed heterogeneity points to the ability and tendency of high-educated and wealthy families to compensate for the low health endowment of their weaker offspring. Besides, we discussed that there are protective

effects of birth weight against infant mortality. This fact has the potential to under-bias the estimates and suggests that the true effects are larger than the findings in this paper.

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Tables

Table 1 - Sample Statistics

Country	Observations	Share in the Final Sample (%)
Angola	6,865	1.10
Myanmar	1,998	0.32
Burundi	14,653	2.34
Cameroon	10,591	1.69
Chad	1,845	0.29
Congo Democratic Republic	17,711	2.83
Benin	27,010	4.32
Ghana	5,346	0.85
Guinea	8,601	1.38
India	207,316	33.14
Cote d'Ivoire	4,106	0.66
Jordan	45,129	7.22

Kenya	10,831	1.73
Lesotho	7,114	1.14
Liberia	2,282	0.36
Madagascar	6,972	1.11
Malawi	35,939	5.75
Mali	8,968	1.43
Morocco	2,726	0.44
Mozambique	10,773	1.72
Namibia	9,643	1.54
Niger	5,705	0.91
Nigeria	17,105	2.73
Pakistan	4,804	0.77
Rwanda	17,565	2.81
Senegal	29,558	4.73
South Africa	2,896	0.46
Zimbabwe	14,308	2.29
Uganda	18,288	2.92
Egypt	20,572	3.29
Tanzania	13,533	2.16
Burkina Faso	12,143	1.94
Yemen	1,329	0.21
Zambia	21,260	3.40
Total	625,485	100.00

Notes. The sample covers the years 1999-2018.

Table 2 - Summary Statistics

	Full Sample			Twins		
	Mean	SD	Observations	Mean	SD	Observations
Birth Weight	3063.3559	701.6407	625,485	2483.9533	733.99371	17,548
Child Sex (female=1)	0.4861	0.4998	625,485	0.5009	0.5000	17,548
Birth Year	2009.5854	4.9230	625,485	2009.0231	5.0773	17,548
Children Ever Born	3.1251	2.0693	625,485	4.6624	2.2801	17,548
Household Age	42.1186	14.1730	613,503	42.5795	13.4060	17,006

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Household Sex	1.1622	0.3686	613,503	1.1731	0.3790	17,006
Wealth: Poor	0.3461	0.4757	625,485	0.3270	0.4691	17,548
Wealth: Middle	0.1915	0.3935	625,485	0.1888	0.3914	17,548
Wealth: Rich	0.4089	0.4916	625,485	0.4124	0.4922	17,548
Years of Schooling	6.5357	4.9454	623,983	6.1453	5.1070	17,505
Prenatal Visits	29.1150	41.0736	616,112	58.0335	46.3341	17,248
Weight for Height Percentile	35.7226	30.5221	441,254	35.4860	29.8707	11,580
Weight for Height Standard Deviation from Reference Median	-0.5398	1.2793	441,254	-0.5553	1.2249	11,580
Weight for Age Percentile	23.3143	27.3431	440,207	18.4328	24.4983	11,561
Weight for Age Standard Deviation from Reference Median	-1.1348	1.2850	440,207	-1.4077	1.2634	11,561
Height for Age Percentile	25.6404	29.6841	434,701	19.4353	27.15849	11,271

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Height for Age Standard Deviation from Reference Median	-1.1240	1.5429	442,153	-1.5289	1.5901	11,614
Body Mass Index Standard Deviation from Reference Median	-0.2964	1.4811	441,275	-0.3396	1.4955	11,581
Infant Dead?	0.0044	0.0664	625,485	0.0332	0.1792	17,548

Notes. All anthropometric variables are based on the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) standards for the reference median.

Table 3 - The Effect of Birth Weight on Anthropometric Outcomes of Children: OLS Models

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Panel A. Outcome: Weight for Height Percentile			
Birth Weight	0.00528***	0.00534***	0.00518***
	(0.00018)	(0.00020)	(0.00021)
R^2	0.180	0.185	0.190
Observations	441,054	427,505	416,443
Panel B. Outcome: Weight for Height Standard Deviation from the Reference Median			
Birth Weight	0.00021***	0.00022***	0.00020***
	(0.00009)	(0.00009)	(0.00008)
R^2	0.165	0.169	0.173
Observations	441,054	427,505	416,443
Panel C. Outcome: Weight for Age Percentile			
Birth Weight	0.00680***	0.00682***	0.00652***

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	(0.00045)	(0.00049)	(0.00053)
R^2	0.178	0.187	0.208
Observations	440,007	426,492	415,439

Panel D. Outcome: Weight for Age Standard Deviation from the Reference Median

Birth Weight	0.00035***	0.00035***	0.00034***
	(0.00001)	(0.00001)	(0.00001)
R^2	0.191	0.203	0.230
Observations	440,007	426,492	415,439

Panel E. Outcome: Height for Age Percentile

Birth Weight	0.00558***	0.00563***	0.00532***
	(0.00020)	(0.00020)	(0.0020)
R^2	0.089	0.101	0.124
Observations	434,501	428,438	417,385

Panel F. Outcome: Height for Age Standard Deviation from the Reference Median

Birth Weight	0.00030***	0.00031***	0.00028***
	(0.00001)	(0.00001)	(0.00001)
R^2	0.090	0.105	0.131
Observations	434,501	428,438	417,385

Panel G. Outcome: Body Mass Index Standard Deviation from the Reference Median

Birth Weight	0.00024***	0.00025***	0.00024***
	(0.00001)	(0.00001)	(0.00001)
R^2	0.154	0.157	0.159
Observations	441,073	427,466	416,285

Country FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
Birth Year by Birth Month FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sub-National Region FE	No	Yes	Yes
Sub-National Region by Year FE	No	No	Yes
Mother Characteristics Set 1	No	Yes	Yes
Mother Characteristics Set 2	No	No	Yes

Notes. Standard errors, reported in parentheses, are clustered on the sub-national region level. All regressions are weighted by person weights provided by DHS-IPUMS. Mother characteristics set 1 includes: a polynomial function of age, number of children ever born, a polynomial function of household age, household sex, and number of prenatal visits. Mother characteristics set 2 includes all covariates of set 1 in addition to

mother's employment status, dummies for the type of occupation, household wealth quintiles, and education.

Table 4 - The Effect of Birth Weight on Anthropometric Outcomes of Children: Mother Fixed Effect Models

	(1)	*(2)*
Panel A. Outcome: Weight for Height Percentile		
Birth Weight	*0.00519****	*0.00513****
	(0.00021)	*(0.00020)*
R^2	*0.681*	*0.689*
Observations	*441,054*	*441,054*
Panel B. Outcome: Weight for Height Standard Deviation from the Reference Median		
Birth Weight	*0.00020****	*0.00020****
	(0.00009)	*(0.00008)*
R^2	*0.885*	*0.887*
Observations	*441,054*	*441,054*
Panel C. Outcome: Weight for Age Percentile		
Birth Weight	*0.00598****	*0.00528****
	(0.00019)	*(0.00018)*
R^2	*0.688*	*0.714*
Observations	*440,007*	*440,007*
Panel D. Outcome: Weight for Age Standard Deviation from the Reference Median		
Birth Weight	*0.00031****	*0.00030****
	(0.00009)	*(0.00008)*
R^2	*0.713*	*0.734*
Observations	*440,007*	*440,007*
Panel E. Outcome: Height for Age Percentile		
Birth Weight	*0.00425****	*0.00404****
	(0.00021)	*(0.00020)*
R^2	*0.649*	*0.674*
Observations	*434,501*	*434,501*
Panel F. Outcome: Height for Age Standard Deviation from the Reference Median		
Birth Weight	*0.00021****	*0.00022****

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	(0.00001)	(0.00001)
R^2	0.661	0.685
Observations	441,953	441,953

Panel G. Outcome: Body Mass Index Standard Deviation from the Reference Median

Birth Weight	0.00024***	0.00025***
	(0.00001)	(0.00001)
R^2	0.674	0.680
Observations	441,073	441,073

Mother FE	Yes	Yes
Country FE	No	Yes
Birth Year by Birth Month FE	No	Yes
Sub-National Region by Year FE	No	Yes

Notes. Standard errors, reported in parentheses, are clustered on the mother level. All regressions are weighted by person weights provided by DHS-IPUMS.

Table 5 - The Effect of Birth Weight on Anthropometric Outcomes of Children: Twin Fixed Effect Models

	Weight for Height Percentile	Weight for Height Standard Deviation from Reference Median	Weight for Age Percentile	Weight for Age Standard Deviation from Reference Median	Height for Age Percentile	Height for Age Standard Deviation from Reference Median	Body Mass Index Standard Deviation from Reference Median
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Birth Weight	0.00357*** (0.00116)	0.00014*** (0.00004)	0.00426*** (0.00081)	0.00023*** (0.000037)	0.00249*** (0.00061)	0.00017*** (0.00003)	0.00019*** (0.00005)
R^2	0.817	0.839	0.852	0.878	0.899	0.911	0.849

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| Observations | 11,574 | 11,574 | 11,555 | 11,555 | 11,265 | 11,265 | 11,575 |
| Twin FE | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |

Notes. Standard errors, reported in parentheses, are clustered on the twin level. All regressions are weighted by person weights provided by DHS-IPUMS.

Table 6 - Heterogeneity of the Effect of Birth Weight on Children Anthropometric Outcomes by Mother's Education and Household Wealth

	Weight for Height Percentile	Weight for Height Standard Deviation from Reference Median	Weight for Age Percentile	Weight for Age Standard Deviation from Reference Median	Height for Age Percentile	Height for Age Standard Deviation from Reference Median	Body Mass Index Standard Deviation from Reference Median
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Panel A. Mother's Education<Secondary							
Birth Weight	0.00440***	0.00014***	0.00435***	0.00023***	0.00229***	0.00016****	0.00018***
	(0.00126)	(0.00004)	(0.00099)	(0.00004)	(0.00068)	(0.00004)	(0.00005)
R^2	0.810	0.842	0.835	0.965	0.886	0.899	0.846
Observations	6,510	6,510	6,492	6,492	6,250	6,250	6,516
Panel B. Mother's Education≥Secondary							
Birth Weight	0.00245	0.00014*	0.00416***	0.00022***	0.00218**	0.00015***	0.00011**
	(0.00199)	(0.00008)	(0.00137)	(0.00006)	(0.00113)	(0.00004)	(0.00004)
R^2	0.825	0.842	0.854	0.881	0.898	0.911	0.851
Observations	5,029	5,029	5,028	5,028	4,980	4,980	5,024

Panel C. Household's Wealth: Very Poor, Poor

Birth Weight	0.003 39 (0.002 53)	0.000 11 (0.000 08)	0.005 05*** (0.001 65)	0.000 24*** (0.000 07)	0.002 50*** (0.000 93)	0.0002 3*** (0.000 05)	0.000 16 (0.000 10)
R^2	0.829	0.850	0.872	0.895	0.903	0.914	0.862
Observations	3,719	3,719	3,714	3,714	3,734	3,734	3,708

Panel D. Household's Wealth: Middle, Rich, very Rich

Birth Weight	0.003 21*** (0.001 17)	0.000 10*** (0.000 04)	0.003 95*** (0.001 00)	0.000 22*** (0.000 04)	0.002 41*** (0.000 82)	0.0001 4*** (0.000 04)	0.000 20*** (0.000 05)
R^2	0.811	0.833	0.843	0.869	0.896	0.910	0.865
Observations	7,178	7,178	7,167	7,167	7,200	7,200	7,183

Twin FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Notes. Standard errors, reported in parentheses, are clustered on the twin level. All regressions are weighted by person weights provided by DHS-IPUMS.

Table 7 - Birth Weight and Child Mortality

	Outcome: Child is Dead $\times$ 100					
	OLS Model			Mother Fixed Effect Model		Twin Fixed Effect Model
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Birth Weight	-0.00018*** (0.00004)	-0.00021*** (0.00006)	-0.00022*** (0.00006)	-0.00045*** (0.00015)	-0.00044*** (0.00014)	-0.00025 (0.00073)
R^2	0.006	0.035	0.036	0.686	0.687	0.776
Observations	624,919	603,564	579,530	624,919	624,919	17,533
Twin FE	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
Mother FE	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Country FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No
Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No

Birth Year by Birth Month FE	*Yes*	*Yes*	*Yes*	*No*	*Yes*	*No*
Sub-National Region FE	*No*	*Yes*	*Yes*	*No*	*Yes*	*No*
Sub-National Region by Year FE	*No*	*No*	*Yes*	*No*	*Yes*	*No*
Mother Characteristics Set 1	*No*	*Yes*	*Yes*	*No*	*No*	*No*
Mother Characteristics Set 2	*No*	*No*	*Yes*	*No*	*No*	*No*

Notes. Standard errors, reported in parentheses, are clustered on the sub-national region level for columns 1-3, mother level for columns 4-5, and twin level for column 6. All regressions are weighted by person weights provided by DHS-IPUMS. Mother characteristics set 1 includes: a polynomial function of age, number of children ever born, a polynomial function of household age, household sex, and number of prenatal visits. Mother characteristics set 2 includes all covariates of set 1 in addition to mother's employment status, dummies for the type of occupation, household wealth quintiles, and education.

Dubai and United Arab Emirates Ministry of Happiness: Presentation of the National Happiness and Positivity Programme - Qualitative Analysis

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Abstract

Scientific research on the question of how happiness can be increased and then sustained has still a long way ahead. The authors have been developing studies in this field and have chosen the happiness initiatives of the Dubai and UAE government to elaborate a case study. This paper, extracted from the wider investigation, presents a study based on government communication on the creation of the Dubai and United Arab Emirates Ministry of Happiness. In the scope of this work we have chosen the National Happiness and Positivity Programme of the Dubai and United Arab Emirates Ministry of Happiness. Using the technique of content analysis, through the use of webQDA software, the aim was to understand how the government communicated its strategy for happiness and which are the most used concepts to capture the attention of institutions and citizens. Consequently, the aim was to understand what actions the government has advocated to implement the said programme. The results imply that the concept of positivity has a focus that is very close and complementary to that of happiness. It is also inferred that the government intends to promote 'happiness as a way of life', and also to involve the private sector in the National Happiness and Positivity Programme. Finally, the author's contribution to this research field is to demonstrate that this model of positivity and sustainable happiness can be extensively implemented, including in the academy.

Keywords: happiness, content analysis, government communication, ministry of happiness

Introduction

Communication is an important element in the material of influence which leads to innovation and modernization of a society (Kanozia, 2016). The study of government communication, in the logic of communication for development, is an academically challenging area due to the constant updating of research content and the thematic scope, diversity, typology,

implications (positive or negative) of government policies, among other aspects. The beginning of the study that underlies this work coincided with the initiative of the governing authorities of the United Arab Emirates to create the Ministry of Happiness in the year 2016 (D. J. T. Ribeiro, Remondes, & Costa, 2017).

It was understood that there could be academic and social interest in deepening the study of communication carried out by the Ministry of Happiness and in understanding its contribution to development. At the same time, it was considered interesting to understand the objectives of the creation of this Ministry, the communication model used by the UAE government and how an abstract concept such as Happiness is translated into concrete actions that can effectively contribute to happiness and the well-being of citizens and to development (D. J. T. Ribeiro, Remondes, & Costa, 2019b).

The investigation begins by analysing government communication within the general communication framework, communication theories and the mainstream media today, followed by a case study through content analysis of the news released by the governments of Dubai and the United Arab Emirates in one year (February 2016 to February 2017), specifically about the Ministry of Happiness (D. J. T. Ribeiro, Remondes, & Costa, 2019c).

Soon after the creation of the Ministry of Happiness (February 2016), it was possible to gather news in international media related to the objectives that were the basis of the creation of this government body (D. J. T. Ribeiro, Remondes, & Costa, 2019a).

The option to select a time period of 1 year, in addition to the analysis of the communication, allowed for the understanding of the evolution of communication and the use of human and material resources.

Following a qualitative approach, the content of this news was analysed through the qualitative analysis software webQDA (Costa, de Souza, Moreira, & de Souza, 2018). In this article, the content of one of the most emblematic texts was analysed in the scope of the research carried out, which concerns the launching of the National Happiness Programme.

In the following sections we will have a brief view on government communication, on the Ministry of Happiness, methodology, analysis and discussion of results.

Government Communication

When one thinks of government communication, taking into account where its nomenclature directs us, one thinks of the exchange and sharing of information between the State and the people, the citizens.

This particular form of communication, in fact, is a legitimate way for a government to render accounts and bring the projects, actions, activities and policies that it performs, and which are of public interest, to the knowledge of the public (Brandão, 2009). Brandão (2009) argues that government communication can be understood as a form of public communication. These two forms of communication share some resemblances, because government communication aims to be an instrument for building the public agenda, as well as a mechanism of accountability and a stimulus for social participation.

The duty of government communication is to inform citizens of what is happening within the government and, for this reason, it is an instrument that allows them to learn about

government actions and, simultaneously, that they can convey their expectations to the government (Torquato, 1985).

It is necessary that government communication be guided by some standards and rules, so as to fulfil its duty - to inform society - because the communication system is essential for the processing of the internal administrative functions and for the relationship with the external environment (Kunsch, 2003). Since government communication is not an easy process, the government must make an effort to improve its communication, making it understandable and accessible to all. In this sense, organisations have to be convinced that communication needs to be worked on and managed by specialised professionals. Otherwise, they will always be improvising, thinking that they are communicating when they are merely reporting. You cannot plan organisational communication without basic foundations (Kunsch, 2003).

From a strategic point of view, government communication should be planned for its target audience, studies should be made to assess the image of the administration with the public and events should be planned to disseminate the information. Assuming that there is political will and a decision by senior managers to develop a communication plan, the planning process should be organised into three phases: strategic diagnosis, strategic planning and strategic management (Kunsch, 2003).

In short, government communication should be transparent, be well acquainted with its interlocutors and be carried out on the basis of defined theoretical principles, supported by good planning.

The Ministry of Happiness

The science of happiness looks at "what makes happy people happy" (Lyubomirsky, Sheldon, & Schkade, 2005) but the subjective nature of happiness makes it incredibly difficult to define and also challenging to measure (Kringelbach & Berridge, 2010). However, happiness can be thought of as experiencing predominantly positive emotions, or affective states, rather than negative ones (Tkach & Lyubomirsky, 2006). So, positive emotions can be a sign of happiness (Fredrickson, 2001). (Seligman, 2011), credited as being the 'father of Positive Psychology', suggests that there are three kinds of happiness: 1. pleasure and gratification; 2. embodiment of strengths and virtues; 3. meaning and purpose Seligman (2011) presented a model for positivity/psychological wellbeing, known as PERMA model that comprehends five domains: Positive emotions – P Engagement – E; Relationships – R; Meaning – M; Accomplishment – A.

(Lyubomirsky et al., 2005) supported on the past well-being literature propose that a person's chronic happiness level is governed by 3 major factors: a genetically determined set point for happiness, happiness-relevant circumstantial factors, and happiness-relevant activities and practices. The authors then consider adaptation and dynamic processes to show why the activity category offers the best opportunities for sustainably increasing happiness.

So, in the pursuit of sustainable happiness of the Kingdom of Dubai and of the United Arab Emirates, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum[1] launched in 2014 the Happiness Index to measure how satisfied citizens are with government services. In the start of 2016, HH surprised the media, via Twitter, with the indication that he would appoint a Minister of

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[1] Retrieved from: https://www.khaleejtimes.com/nation/government/shaikh-mohammed-launches-happiness-index. Last accessed on 09-02-2018

Happiness. Days later, he appointed Mrs Ohood Al Roumi[1] to take the position of Minister of State for Happiness as an integral part of the Governor's office and whose main mission would be to oversee "plans, projects, programmes and indices" that would improve the overall climate of the country.

At the inauguration, the Minister stated that the purpose of her work was to create authentic and genuine Happiness in public services. A little more than a month after taking office, the Minister presented a package of positive initiatives and institutional happiness in the Federal government. The National Plan for Happiness and Positivity (PNF) was approved on International Happiness Day on 21 March. The PNF comprises 3 main areas:

Inclusion of happiness in the policies, programmes and services of all government agencies as well as in the work environment.

Consolidation of values of positivity and happiness as a way of life in the UAE community.

Development of tools and indices to measure happiness levels.

The programme is based on a scorecard[2] of happiness and positivity, and all national government agencies will have to work according to this instrument. The government approved programme also includes:

The appointment of a CEO for happiness and positivity in all government agencies.

The establishment of happiness and positivity boards in federal entities.

Certain hours allocated to programmes and activities related to happiness in the Federal government.

Creation of offices of happiness and positivity.

Customer service centres will be transformed into customer happiness centres.

Special programmes are tailored to change the culture of government employees, to serve the clients and make them happy.

The programme also includes annual indices, surveys and reports to measure happiness in all sectors of the community.

Since the approval of the Programme, the government, and in particular the Minister, have been involved in initiatives ranging from the scientific training of managers specialised in happiness to the integration of women and children into actions aimed at promoting happiness and positivity. Meanwhile, the programme has been extended to the private sector and has attracted the support of the country's large economic groups.

One of the concerns of the government and the Minister is the measurement of results, with the aim of bringing policies closer to the real desire of citizens. This measurement includes, among other tools, a scientific study that is being carried out by the University of Abu Dhabi, based on citizens' tweets in the year 2015. In concrete terms, the government has

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[1] Retrieved from: https://www.happy.ae/en. Last accessed on 09-02-2018
[2] Definition: 'a report or indication of the status, condition, or success of something or someone'. Retrieved from https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/scorecard. Last accessed on 09-02-2018

endeavoured to make the most of its adherence to the concept created in the 1970s in the Kingdom of Bhutan (D. J. T. Ribeiro, Laranjeira, & Remondes, 2019). To do this, it has changed the name of public services (the citizen's bureau was named the Happiness Centre), amusement parks and sports and, for example, the new area of the city that is being built next to the future airport of Dubai (e.g. Dubai World) will be named the City of Happiness. In addition, it has encouraged several organisations to launch initiatives for the happiness of their workers, as in the case of "Dubai Culture", which implemented the "Make It Happen" programme. It believes that happy workers are contagious to customers and also wants private companies to work to make customers happy.

Overall, the government believes that the model can be replicated internationally. It promotes the constant collection of opinions from the public and from experts. In this context, an international event was held in 2017 called "Global Dialogue for Happiness", on the eve of one of the biggest political events of the year in the region, the World Government Summit. The "Global Dialogue for Happiness" was attended by more than 30 experts (scientists, economists, governors, psychologists, etc.) with the responsibility of exchanging ideas and encouraging discussion about trends and happiness for the people of the world. The two events had a new edition, in February 2018. During the 2018 "World Happiness Forum", the first Global Happiness Policy Report was launched.

Methodology

In this study, the work was structured as recorded in the following diagram (Figure 1) as a way to obtain the data to be analysed:
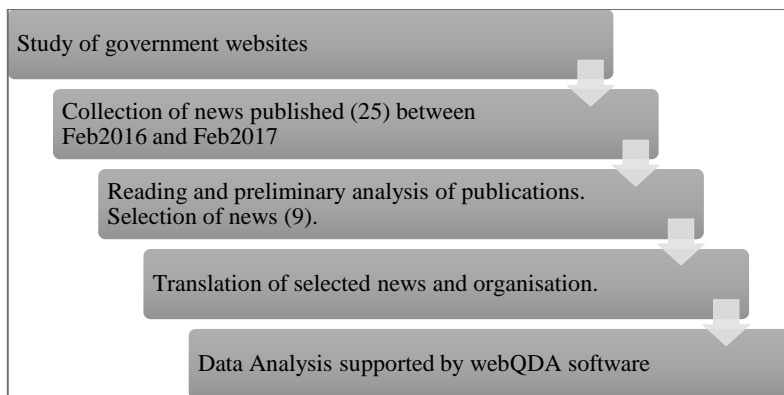
Figure 1 - Evolution and structure

The news was collected for the analysis of content published in the media during the period of analysis (February 2016 to February 2017) in order to understand the evolution of the concept, the form and direction of communication, and actions on the ground of the UAE government. Table 1 summarises the dates, sources and titles related to the texts selected for analysis.

Table 1 - Listing of texts in chronological order

#	Date	Title	Power

1	February 8, 2016	**"Genuine happiness is the ambition of the United Arab Emirates Minister of Happiness"**	Gulf News
2	March 7, 2016	**"Mohammed analyses the UAE Happiness and Positivity Programme"**	Emirates 24/7 News
3	March 21, 2016	**"United Arab Emirates Happiness Programme approved on International Day of Happiness"**	Emirates 24/7 News
4	May 15, 2016	**"Happiness, positivity through the eyes of children of the UAE - Children will inspire the logo of the Happiness and Positivity programme"**	Emirates 24/7 News
5	June 14, 2016	**"UAE reveal the formula for Happiness"**	Emirates 24/7 News
6	June 30, 2016	**"Joyful task for 60 Emirati named pioneers of positive thinking in the government"**	The National UAE
7	September 1, 2016	**"Abu Dhabi teachers study Tweets to assess Happiness in the UAE"**	The National UAE
8	December 26, 2016	**"The Crown Prince of Dubai welcomes the Year of Donation"**	The National UAE
9	February 2, 2017	**"Dialogue on Happiness welcomes 300 experts"**	The Gulf Today

After a free translation into Portuguese (the native language of the authors), an analytical reading of the texts was carried out without any kind of formalities. Then the texts were imported to the webQDA platform. In a second reading, the contextualization was carried out and the categories adapted for each of the texts were created. Using the selection, collection and integration tool available in the software, the most representative contents of the communication were selected and integrated within the categories. At the same time, a cloud of the keywords of each of the texts was constructed. From the selections made, conclusions were drawn for each text. At the point of discussion of results, the link between all the texts is made and the conclusions drawn (D. Ribeiro, Costa, & Remondes, 2020).

The analysed data were collected from the Internet or *corpus latente* - the *corpus latente* refers to the existence of large databases with which everyone can work, namely the Internet, which accumulates more and more information day after day in the form of texts, images and videos, among others (Pina, Neri de Souza, & Leão, 2013). The *corpus latente* is a set of content, available on the Internet for those who wish, and have the necessary skills and qualifications, to extract them (Pina et al., 2013).

In order to analyse the data, the analysis of content was the recommended technique. Content analysis consists of a set of methodological tools that aims to analyse different sources of content, both verbal and nonverbal. With regard to its practical implementation, it covers several stages, particularly to confirm the full significance of the data collected. According to

Costa and Amado (2018), these stages are, in turn, organised into seven distinct phases: 1. Definition of the problem, work objectives and theoretical basis; 2. Organization of the Data Corpus 3. Reading the Data 4. Categorization and Codification 5. Formulation of Questions 6. Analysis Matrices 7. Presentation of Results.

For Krippendorff (1990) content analysis is a research technique that allows one to make valid and replicable inferences of the data to its context. Hence, inferences are made about what can affect the type of interpretation of analysis, on the basis of establishing a relationship between the data obtained (Amado, Costa, & Crusoé, 2017).

As support for the achievement of this establishment of relationship between data, technological tools can and should be used to obtain results that go beyond traditional observation/interpretation.

Bardin (2009) proceeds to a definition of codification, assigning it the meaning of transformation, especially through extraction, aggregation and enumeration, and based on certain precise rules on all the textual information, that end up representing all the characteristics of the content. Table 2 presents the proposal that was followed in this study.

Table 2 - Proposal of organisational model by Bardin (2009)

Category	Subcategory	Registration Unit	Context Unit
Here the major themes of the analysed data are joined together (in this case the titles of the texts).	Most important subtopics within a certain major theme.	Fragments of text taken by an indication of a characteristic (category and subcategory).	There are fragments of the text that encompass the registration unit, contextualising the registration unit.

The use of the webQDA tool to analyse the data of this study allowed the generation, as outputs, of tables (matrices) with the encoded data (Costa, Linhares, & de Souza, 2014). On the other hand, according to Costa, Linhares and Souza (2014), Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS) extend the possibilities of communication among researchers in the definition of analysis (categorization, coding, and recoding, etc.), that are fundamental for the construction of synthesis and analysis. In the case of the research carried out, the option to use specific software of qualitative analysis was important in the deepening of the analyses carried out (Amado et al., 2017) (Costa & Amado, 2018).

Results and Discussion

Since it is not possible to present all the results in this article, it was chosen, as already mentioned, to present the analysis performed to the **Text 2: Presentation of the Happiness and Positivity Programme** ("Mohammed reviews UAE Programme for Happiness and Positivity - Emirates24|7," 2016)

Regarding the presentation of the National Happiness and Positivity Programme. The analysis of the selected publication highlights several concepts and objectives, such as: **positivity,**

happiness, measurement and evaluation, government policies, connection to the private sector, sharing ideas, investing in science and culture and three main objectives.

From the work done using the software, it was possible to verify that the reference to **"positivity"** appears several times throughout the text as a complement to happiness, as can be seen from the following excerpts of the text:

- *"The National Happiness Programme should contribute to the building of a **positive** and happy community" [Ref. 1]*

- *"(...) promoting **positivity** as a fundamental value in the local community" [Ref. 2]*

- *"Promotion of **values of positivity** and happiness as a way of life..." [Ref. 3]*

- *"(...) create a **positive environment** for all government officials and instil positive values in all ministries and government entities." [Ref. 4]*

In this context, 'positivity' can be related as a synonym of optimism and willingness to consider the good side of everything, even in adverse conditions (the same meaning presented in the dictionary).

Throughout the ages there have been several thinkers who related optimism to positivity and based on these opinions the importance of optimism and motivation in the development of communities and countries can be inferred. Mahatma Gandhi, for example, argues that if societies want to progress, they should not repeat history, but make a new story (Jordis, 2017). In turn, the Dalai Lama argues that cultivating positive mental states such as generosity and compassion definitely leads to better mental health and happiness (Lama, Tutu, & Abram, 2016). Machado de Assis, in turn, says that there are people who cry because they know that roses have thorns while others smile because they know that thorns have roses (Assis, n.d.).

By focusing on motivation and positivity in the logic of work, one can also understand its importance over time; the Philosopher and contemporary of Jesus Christ, Confucius, 2000 years ago affirmed that if people chose the jobs they liked, they would not have to work a single day in their lives (Confúcio, 2013).

The analysis allowed, regarding the word **happiness**, for it to begin to be linked to Positivity:

- *"Promotion of values of **positivity and happiness** as a way of life in the community of the United Arab Emirates." [Ref. 1]*

In addition, it is inferred that in the framework of the Ministry of Happiness, **happiness**, instead of a theoretical and isolated concept, appears as a structure of conscious life:

- *"(...) a **lifestyle** in the United Arab Emirates." [Ref. 2]*

- *"Our goal is to make happiness a **way of life** in the UAE community, as well as the noble purpose and ultimate goal of the government." [Ref. 3]*

- *"The goal is to make happiness **a way of life** in the community." [Ref. 4]*

On the other hand, as has already been verified in the analysis of other texts that are not presented in this article, there are again references to measurement and evaluation of the results:

*- "The PM has recognised the need **to accurately measure** happiness among community members." [Ref. 1]*

*- "(…) development of innovative benchmarks and **mechanisms for measuring** happiness in the community." [Ref. 2]*

Regarding **government policies,** it is understood that the communication does not fail to mention that the Happiness issue will be very present in the work of the Government and will be supported by government policies, as one can draw from several phrases throughout the text:

*"**Policies**, programmes, services and the work environment in ministries, he emphasised, should focus on happiness." [Ref. 1]*

*"Our purpose is… as well as the noble purpose and **ultimate goal of the government**." [Ref. 2]*

*- (…) **happiness in policies, programmes and services** of all governmental entities and the work environment. " [Ref. 3]*

*- "**Our policies** contribute to building a happy community." [Ref. 4]*

*- "**Government policies, programmes and services should contribute** to building a positive and happy community." [Ref. 5]*

*- " **Sheikh Mohammed said that the government's main task** is to ensure that conditions are conducive to providing…" [Ref. 6]*

*- "(…) aims to **align government policies, programmes and legislation** to provide happiness and positivity in the community." [Ref. 7]*

The analysis also allows for the verification that the Government communication is not confined to the public sector. The issue of Happiness and Positivity will be boosted by the Government, considering the involvement of the business community in a close connection between the Government and the private sector as fundamental, as can be seen from the following text extracts:

*- "(…) aims to align government policies, programmes and legislation to provide happiness and positivity in the community and to **encourage the public and private sectors to launch**, recommend and take initiatives in this regard." [Ref. 1]*

*- "… **improve co-ordination with the private sector** to achieve this goal." [Ref. 2]*

At the same time, it can be seen that the government does not intend to have exclusivity in the intervention. That is why it refers to the need to share ideas among the whole community:

*- "Sheikh Mohammed also emphasised the **importance of receiving and exchanging ideas**, proposals and opinions of individuals and corporations on happiness and positivity." [Ref. 1]*

With regard to **investment, especially in science and culture**, the government does not rule out its responsibilities, and as can be seen from the text, it lays down several initiatives:

- "The plan will include initiatives for the publication of scientific and cultural content and books on happiness to encourage reading in the area of awareness of the importance of positivity and happiness as an integrated way of life" [Ref. 1]

From the content analysis carried out on this text it is possible to conclude that the three main objectives of the government are:

- *"Promotion of values of positivity and happiness as a way of life in the community of the United Arab Emirates." [Ref. 1]*

- *"happiness in policies, programmes and services of all government entities and the work environment. " [Ref. 2]*

- *"(...) development of innovative benchmarks and mechanisms for measuring happiness in the community." [Ref. 3]*

In summary, a major focus is seen in government policies. Positivity appears with a focus that is very close and complementary of happiness. Of note is 'happiness as a way of life' and the involvement of the private sector in the National Happiness and Positivity Programme. In addition, it was possible to verify that the word 'community' also has a strong presence as can be seen in the following 'cloud' of words obtained (Figure 2).

HAPINESS	22
POSITIVITY	14
COMUNITY	11
LIFESTYLE	10
GOVERNMENT	8
EMIRATES	7
MOHAMMED	7
INITIATIVES	6
POLICIES	6
PROGRAM	5
PURPOSE	5
SHEIK	4
MINISTER	4

Figure 2 - Frequent words

In addition to the notes to the above paragraph, it should also be mentioned that, in the case of a government programme, it is considered natural that both the word government and the name and reference to the head of this government appear prominently in the 'cloud' of words.

The study of this text is in line with the principles recommended by Torquato regarding the role of government communication as a means of informing citizens about what happens within the government, and that is why it is an instrument that allows them to learn about government actions (Torquato, 1985). The government believes that happy employees are contagious to clients, and also wants private companies to work to make clients happy. To this end, it emphasises in its communication and, in this case, through the dissemination of the National Happiness Programme, the concepts and actions that will lead to the implementation of this programme.

The analysis allowed for the verification that there is uniformity in the content of the National Happiness Programme, whose 3 main areas are: 1) Inclusion of happiness in the policies, programmes and services of all government agencies as well as in the work environment; 2) Consolidation of values of positivity and happiness as a way of life in the community of the

United Arab Emirates; 3) Development of tools and indices to measure levels of happiness, and the news that makes the same programme known.

Thus, it can be inferred that government communication is carefully elaborated and follows the organisation presented by some experts. As indicated by Kunsch (2003), government communication is not an easy process, and the government must make an effort to improve its communication, making it understandable and accessible to all.

The research carried out allows us to conclude, in our view, that the above mentioned principles of theoretical application suggested by Torquato (2002) are fulfilled in their entirety, almost in compliance with a previously established script.

Discussions and Implications

The analysis made it possible to verify the discursive congruence of the text analysed and the description of the National Happiness Programme itself, namely through the three main areas of this Programme. It is also worth mentioning the creation of a 'scorecard' as a practical instrument for measuring and evaluating the results of government policies foreseen in the PNF. There was also the emphasis given to happiness as a lifestyle.

The research allowed for the observation of which are the most used concepts in government communication of the Ministry of Happiness: Positivity, Happiness and Community. It allowed for the conclusion that the government set up a concrete programme to achieve the outlined policy measures and that it intends to communicate not only through the submission of tenders in the media, but also by implementing or carrying out various actions.

The results allow for the inference that there is a great focus on government policies and that the Government intends to get the public and private sector involved in the National Happiness and Positivity Programme

Transposing the results gathered for a broader view on the communication of the Ministry of Happiness, it is possible to highlight three main elements: 1) that it is based on the theoretical principles of government communication; 2) that the strategies are defined with specialised advice with the support of international reference organisations; 3) that it systematically refers to social media and social networks (D. Ribeiro et al., 2020).

This study, as well as the studies carried out in the scope of the broader research that has been developed on this subject, allows for the conclusion that, effectively, government communication has a strong influence on Happiness, it also being possible to conclude that the communication can contribute greatly to the success of the policies defined by the government.

The study can be regarded as a contribution to governments worldwide and other institutions on the simplicity of implementing a happiness and positivity programme and on how to communicate it to the citizens.

For the authors, happiness policies together with a well-defined communication programme can also be developed implemented by other institutions, where academy is included introducing the concept of theory 'in action' as far as sustainable happiness and positivity programs are concerned. Further studies on the gap between aimed happiness and real happiness levels in the academic community are strongly recommended.

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Street Children and Money in Relation to Covid-19 Virus: Case Study for the Street Children in the Republic of South Sudan

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Abstract

Living as a street child is a miserable situation, and additionally, the Covid-19 pandemic that has affected millions of people and killed thousands of humans worldwide is very alarming. Money is desired by any person for its role in purchasing things essential for living. Street children beg for money and sometimes they resort to pickpocketing from people who could be carrying the Coronavirus. This study investigates the life of street children and money in relationship to Covid-19 in South Sudan. This argument is presented through an analysis of existing literature and documents on the matter. A sample of 197street children found in the streets of Juba and Yei, including eight children who were sex-workers, filled in a questionnaire. In the sample, 43.7% slept in the street. The study found that street children are at risk of contracting the Coronavirus, and because of underlying poor health conditions, they are at a higher risk of developing complications.

Keywords: Street children, Money, Covid-19 Virus and South Sudan

Introduction

The protection of children growing up in the midst of political violence and displacement has become one of the central priorities of humanitarian intervention worldwide. In conflict situations where it affects parts of the African continent, protection is generally understood as referring to those strategies that aim at reducing the risk and extent of harm to civilians, both adults and children and facilitating the re-establishment of more secure conditions. Child-centered agencies such as Save the Children have intended to protect children from violence, injury or abuse, neglect, maltreatment, and exploitation (O'Callaghan &Pantuliano, 2007). In South Sudan,

like in many other developing countries, there is a severe problem for the children who sleep in the streets. Consequences of sleeping in the street are in many cases fatal for the children as they easily become victims of physical violence and sexual abuse. Children also are deprived of a family cultural upbringing, which hampers their social development. Furthermore, sleeping in the streets is a human rights issue. However, Street children are the victims of lack of education systems. They are subjects of prostitution networks, abductions to become soldiers and domestic violence (UNICEF, 2006, p. 35).

The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (1998) has strongly condemned all forms of violence against children. However, the problem is widespread all over the developing world and deserves attention. In a review of studies on street children in the developing world, poverty, and abuse, were related to children choosing to live in the streets (Aptekar, 1994). In addition, many children are victims of physical and emotional aggression, poverty due to parents' unemployment and this had led children to choose to sleep in the streets (Ndoromo, Österman & Björkqvist, 2017). As a result, these children are prone to trauma and suffering from severe psychological disorders such as depression and anxiety. Therefore, they may engage in antisocial behaviors, such as drug or alcohol abuse (Banyanga, Björkqvist, &Österman, 2018).

According to the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child, children have the right to an education, to a standard of living that is good enough to meet their physical and mental needs, and they should be protected from activities that could harm their development (Le Blanc, 1995). However, many times, this convention on the rights of the child does not work in certain developing countries. Because of poverty, many children may be raped, which can lead some female street children to be ignored and marginalized by their families and communities. The children born as a result of rape are not accepted in some African communities and people argue that children born as a result of rape are considered as social burdens (Banyanga et al, 2018). Sometimes, these street children are forced laborers. Their work situations are cruelly difficult, frequently not offering the encouragement for appropriate physical and mental growth.

Who are the Street Children?

According to Ndoromo, Österman & Björkqvist (2017), street children is a multifaceted phenomenon that is divided into three distinct categories, (a) children on the street, (b) children in the street, and (c) children of the street. The researcher argues that the first category are those children who work and play on the street, to support their household income, but go back home every evening to their families. The second are those children who exist in urban spaces and are exposed to the tortures of poverty, and mostly engage in social vices as part of a normative culture. The third group are those children who live and work on the streets, whose only sense

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of family draws from their social relations with the two other categories of street children outlined above. Historically, these children are orphans, runaway kids and abandoned children, who often at times do not know their family ties and or see them in negative light. Furthermore, the World Health Organization (2000) estimated that there are currently between 10 and 100 million street children in the world. The Researchers argued that some street children are part of entire families who live on the street. Others are born to older street girls. Some street children are 'on the street,' which means that they still see their families regularly and may even return every night to sleep in their family homes (World Health Organization, 2000).

To start to tackle the problems of keeping street children safe in this global emergency, people need to work together as a team, and governments need to highlight the urgent issues and challenges and seek to involve organizations to influence resources to urgently respond (Cohen & Kupferschmidt, 2020). Street children need food, shelter, access to health services and protection but also information so that they can understand how to keep themselves safe. It means organizations working with street children need help with advocating for street children in times of crisis. To make sure street children are included in all emergency work that is going into Coronavirus is a huge task (Megan, Griffeth & Ashish, 2020).

Methods

Sample

A total of 197 children, 71 girls and 126 boys, between 6 and 17 years of age, took part in the study conducted in 2020. A questionnaire was filled in by those children who could read and write; the researcher helped the others to fill it in. The children were found in Juba (n=140), the capital of South Sudan, and in the smaller town of Yei (n=57). The girls (M=14.6 years, SD=2.0) were significantly older than the boys (M=13.6 years, SD=2.4) [(195) =2.74, p=0.007]. There was no significant age difference between children from the two cities. Nine of the girls worked in the streets; their age range was between 13 and 17 years. Tribal belonging of the children was established by the first author who is of South Sudanese origin. The largest group of children belonged to the Kakwa tribe (51.3%), which originates from the southwestern part of South Sudan. The following tribes were also represented: Bari, Pojulu, Latuko, Baka, Mundari, Denka, Avukaya, Murle, Taposa, Nuba, Zande, Murru, Kukku, Mundu, Didinga, Peri, Acholi, Mandi, Lokoya, Balanda, and Ugandan. Tribal belonging of one child could not be established. Of the children, 97% were Christians, and 2% were Muslims.

Instrument

The questionnaire was filled in with each child individually. The following topics were covered: family background and education, daily life in the streets (e.g., work, drugs), injuries, war experiences, victimization from domestic violence, and expectations for

the future. Injuries were rated by the researcher on a four-point scale (no injuries=0, small=1, severe=2, extremely severe=3). Two groups were formed based on the children's responses to the question "Where do you sleep?" (at home/in the street). Victimization from physical punishment at home was measured with three questions: how often has an adult at home (a) pulled your hair, (b) hit you with their hand, and (c) hit you with an object? Witnessing of interpersonal violence between parents was measured with two questions: how often (a) did your father hit your mother, and (b) did your mother hit your father? Responses regarding physical punishment and parental aggressive behaviors were given on a four-point scale (never=0, sometimes=1, often=2, very often=3). Questions concerning shortage of food at home, parents' alcohol problems, and sexual abuse were yes/no answers. Life stories of six randomly chosen children, expectations for the future, and drawings made by the children are presented. The field work was carried out during the period of June to October 2020. Prior to the study, cooperation had been established with Juba National University. Since research permissions were necessary in order to deal with the security interventions that were expected to take place during the data collection, local authorities in the towns Juba and Yei provided a written consent for the investigation. The researcher visited places such as Juba market, Konykonyo market, Gumbo market, Gudele market, and Jebel market where street children were expected to be found. First, he observed the children at length, familiarizing himself with their habits. Children in the street commonly form small groups with a leader. The researcher would then establish a friendly contact with the leader and ask if he would like to fill in a questionnaire. After that, other group members turned up encouraged by the leader. The data was collected sitting in the street, in marketplaces, bus stations, or sleeping places of the children in a way that the conversation could not be interrupted and overheard by others.

Ethical considerations

The study adheres to the principles concerning human research ethics of the Declaration of Helsinki (World Medical Association, 2013), as well as to the guidelines for responsible conduct of research issued by the Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity (2012).

Results

Many street children have no access to clean water, health care and shelter on the streets and therefore, they are at risk of contracting the virus, and because of underlying poor health conditions, they are at a higher risk of developing complications. Street children face discrimination and cruelty from communities who fear the Covid-19 virus, in which they could be those who are supposed to protect the street children, especially, the police and other authorities. Although, the name Covid-19 has nothing to do with China, it originated in China and spread all over the world. Though there are countries with few reported Coronavirus cases, all state

governments, with the help of international organizations and national and community-based organizations, should work together for prevention of this deadly disease.

However, for the safety of the South Sudanese, the government has issued an order closing borders with the neighboring countries of Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia, Sudan, Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of Congo. At the same, time all schools, churches, universities and Juba International airport all are closed. An order also was issued prohibiting any social gathering. However, today COVID-19 has become a pandemic disease killing people in their thousands. As a result, many countries introduced and have taken serious messes for controlling this deadly disease. However, one of the most important problems that has been neglected to be addressed is the issue of Street children in relationship to money and Coronavirus. Street children in many ways are unclean humans, and if it is not acknowledged that they may be easily affected with Coronavirus, this can lead to penetration of the Coronavirus into various areas in the Republic of South Sudan. Therefore, parent-child relationships are a central factor of social life and an individual's well-being. A poor quality of parent-child relationships is associated with psychological distress, poor physical and mental health, learning disabilities and anxiety disorders, and aggressive behavior (Banyanga, Björkqvist, &Österman, 2017).

Prevention of Coronavirus

The first cases of novel coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 infection were reported in December 2019 in Wuhan, China (World Health Organization, 2020). Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) was declared a global pandemic by the World Health Organization on 11 March 2020, and as of 17 September 2020, there have been over 3.068 million confirmed cases and more than 954,000 deaths globally. In South Sudan, there have been 8677 confirmed cases and 102 deaths (Worldometer, 2021). Many countries have suddenly implemented strict measures to slow the spread of the disease, which the World Health Organization officially declared a pandemic on 13 March 2020. Thousands of events have been canceled, schools, restaurants, bars, and clubs have been closed and transit systems are at a standstill. The government of the Republic of South Sudan, with the help of the international, national and the community-based organization should work together for prevention of this deadly pandemic disease (Shen et al., 2020).

A common feature in many urban areas in South Sudan is young children, who are scrambling to maintain a presence in the urban area, and many of these children of school age have been abandoned by their families or in some cases the children have abandoned their families due to poverty (Ndoromo et al, 2017). However, irrespective of who abandoned these children, they definitely do not deserve thlife circumstances of destitution, squalor, disease, abuse and societal neglect (Kudrati, Plummer, Dafaalla, 2008).

Poverty, income inequality & food security

Over half of the population of South Sudan (51%) live below the poverty line, defined by the Southern Sudan Commission for Census Statistics (Karmakar & Sarkar, 2014), and the majority of rural households are headed by women, which leads some children to go and beg in the streets. Poverty and family income in South Sudan is directly correlated with the education level of the head of household. 55% of households whose head has received no schooling live under the poverty line, compared to 11% of households headed by those with post-secondary education (Ndoromo et al, 2018).

Food insecurity and malnutrition are widespread in South Sudan. Children under the age of five are moderately or severely underweight and 34% suffer from moderate or severe stunted growth. Localized conflict and insecurity continue to exacerbate issues of food insecurity in many regions of South Sudan (Lokosang, Ramroop & Zewotir, 2014).

In addition, insecurity and fear of attacks severely restrict people's mobility, preventing them from accessing food markets, farms, health centers is a severe problem. Their primary objective is to understand the phenomenon of street children, to be a better advocate, one who can articulate the needs and concerns of these children with respect to the formulation of policies that will truly be beneficial to the afflicted children. A common feature among street children in Juba, the capital of South Sudan, is that there is no reliable data on the second generation of street children that is children who are the offspring of street children (Ndoromo et al, 2018).

The immediate concern about this population of street children involves the health of the babies and their mothers, and the potential disease that many of these mothers and children are exposed to. Street children, from their origins in a rural area to their destination on the streets of the capital city, their coping capabilities, and the dynamics of poverty and failure of the family system affect the whole of their life (Ayaya & Esamai, 2001).

The role of the government and non-governmental organizations

Closure of schools and restriction on residential services has forced even more children onto the streets at greater risk of harm. The governmental authorities and non-governmental organizations that are working with street children, are in-need of practical support, they need help to speak up for the street children, who are being excluded from initiatives to reduce the spread of the Coronavirus through screening, hand washing facilities and a safe environment for self-isolation (Megan, Valerie & Ashish, 2020). As competition for health services increases, street children will suffer even more.

Discussion

The aim of this study is to ascertain the relationship between money, street children, Coronavirus and the general public. Street children are at risk of contracting the virus, and because of underlying poor health conditions, they are at a higher risk of developing complications. Generally, protection of Civilians from acute harm is a humanitarian concern, and an issue of risk concerning child safety requires flexibility. Therefore, to understand the relationship between money, street children and the rest of public is very delicate. The approaches for protection of street children are very important and serious care must be taken, the duty of specialized actors should be encouraged and supported by both the international and national authorities. In many situations, street children are directly targeted, and laws are deliberately broken by all parties. For instance, in South Sudan the state authorities who are supposed to protect street children are in fact the main perpetrators of violence against them.

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The Signifying Materiality of the Body (in Protests) in the Imbrication of Ideology, History and Discourse

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Abstract

The purpose of this article is to analyze the signifying materiality of the body in protests scenes in the discursive imbrication of the political in the borders with the social. The theoretical and analytical perspective taken is based on the historical-materialism from the Discourse Analysis of the French line to help in the comprehension of the materiality of body in protests in its relation with history, ideology, memory and discourse. In this sense, the intention is to focus on a specific work by the Zimbabwean artist Dan Halter, considering the meaning effects that slide metaphorically and metonymically to other senses of the body that unfold in different images of the subject (LAGAZZI, 2014a) and help to understand the resistance-revolt-revolution process of the ideological and political class struggle (PÊCHEUX, 1982 [1975]), especially in those processes of tensivity of the social from the spaces occupied by the bodies and crossed by the symbolic, by the ideology and by the history.

Keywords: Discourse; Body, Memory; Ideology.

Introduction

Scenes of protests against Apartheid in the streets of Zimbabwe in south-African in its postcolonial era provide a rich material to analyse the signifying materiality of the body in protests in the imbrication of ideology, history and discourse.

Image 1 – Crowd of young people in European raves

Image 2 – Bodies gathered in Zimbabwe protests

In the convergence between art, the social and the political, the images in the documentary work of Dan Halter, entitled Untitled – Zimbabwean Queen of Rave (2005), present some prototypical scenes of social protests in the (inter)(en)lacement of different images of black protests on South African streets contrasting with flashes of rave parties throughout Europe in the early 1990s.

Theoretical-Methodological Resources

Based on materialist perspective of the Discourse Analysis of the French line, I try to observe the projections of the body in / through art, thinking about the question of the meanings mobilized by the body sliding through / on the frontiers with the social. In order to do so, I take as analysis basis some scenes of street protests in South Africa, in different historical moments caught from frames extracted from the videos Untitled – Zimbabwean Queen of Rave (2005; 3:33s), work by the Zimbabwean artist Dan Halter, who, by mobilizing in his work the question of the body occupying different social spaces, builds his critique of the political situation of Zimbabwe in its postcolonial era. And from these two materials, I examine how the artist looks around the demonstrations for the end of Apartheid and also around the xenophobia directed at refugees who left Zimbabwe to South Africa.

In this sense, considering the discursive materiality and modes of representation of the social and political body present in this material, I first turn my attention to some important reflections regarding the question of body. Thus, according to the understanding of Pêcheux and discourse analysts, what makes the body an ideological sign is its signifying materiality, as well as its historical materiality and its ideological value. In this sense, by approaching the body materiality as a support for the discourse of struggle, militancy, resistance and protest at the frontiers with the social, I consider the reflections of Althusser and Pêcheux towards the questions of the resistance and

the class struggle. As a disciple of Louis Althusser, Porto & Sampaio (2013, p. 99-100) says that:

[...] Pêcheux expanded Althusser's reflection to think about the role of language in society: for him, language "inevitably reflected the class struggle, bringing, closely linked to its production, the marks of formation / reproduction / transformation of conditions in which it was produced"(INDURSKY, 1997, p. 20), as language was one of the forms of manifestation of ideology, and the ideological apparatus of the State were places for the transformation of production relations, and not simply the reproduction of the ideology of the dominant class, as Althusser argued. (author's translation)

Starting from the thought of manifestations of the body in historical conditions of social transformation, I take the idea of a collective body which is established through an experience of transgressive union (not being a mere unitary entity) to analyse the question of the body as discourse and on the body textualized in different signifying materialities (such as the artistic image, film and documentary scenes, video frames), seeking to show, in this sense, "that corporality itself is also a signifying materiality, discursiveness inscribed in boundary production conditions" (AZEVEDO, 2014, p. 322), author's translation. In the material taken here I intend to analyze thus how the body appears marked by the political and by the symbolic, occupying different spaces of protest and meaning in different ways, given the different conditions of meaning production, in the relation between body, space, time and subject, considering "the constitution movement of meanings about / of the body" (p. 322), as well as "the modes of meaning and signifying materiality are plural: the body is a place of opacity that gains meaning through the look" (p. 323). In this perspective, is very important to highlight, according to Azevedo (2014, p. 323), that:

[...] through the theoretical affiliation to the historical materialism, the material form is always historical. In other words, taking the body as a material form implies removing any conception that treats it as an empirically understandable and biologically functional reality, common in areas such as health, where the body is natural, segmentable, controllable and transparent. (author's translation)

To make a reading of the body under this discursive and materialist bias, considering Michel Pêcheux legacy in discourse studies, represents an investment in gestures of interpretating different materialities, such as images in its visual formulations (LAGAZZI, 2013, 2014a, 2014b) of the body. This requires from the analyst a look that seeks to go beyond the meanings in evidence, in the methodological beat between the gestures of description and interpretation, making the opacity of the body and the representations of the body. In this perspective, "[...] human body was, and remains for us, covered with signs, even if their nature, the look that deciphers them, the position of the interpreter and the intention of the person who expresses them have historically changed (COURTINE, 2013, p. 78).

More than that, it is very important to comprehend the body in its relation with the class struggle pointed by Michel Pêcheux, as the author says (PÊCHEUX, 1982 [1975], p. 219) that:

[...] there is perhaps a thread that it would be interesting to follow in the historical study of repressive and ideological practices in order to begin at last to understand the resistance-revolt-revolution process of the ideological and political class struggle, without making the dominated ideology the eternal repetition of the dominant ideology or the self-education of an experience progressively discovering the truth behind the curtain of illusions held up by the ruling class, or the theoreticist irruption of an external knowledge alone able to break the enchanted circle of the ruling ideology[1].

In the case of art, it is possible to observe different representations of the body. Some of them, which are here the object of our analysis, arise in certain prototypical scenes of protests (bodies in marches, raised fists, crowds in the streets, hands hovering banners and posters). Therefore, such representations of the body are not only constituted in its performance aspect, in the dialogical confluence and in the imbrication between bodies and images, but they also interpellate different meanings (around)(of) the body in the (inter)(en)lacement between verbal and nonverbal (ORLANDI, 1995) crossed by the political, the ideological, occupying different spaces, different temporalities that are determinant in the processes of signification.

Taking into account, for example, the relation time-space, the Bakhtinian notion of chronotope leads me towards the reflection on how body and subject are placed on the meaning boarders, from the experience of the streets and public spaces and from the discursiveness of the protests, which is forged in the temporality of manifestations and social-political struggles. The spaces of protests are the meeting point between heterogeneous bodies discursively crossed by ideology and history.

This, from the historical-materialism perspective of Michel Pêcheux in France to what he calls "a materialist theory of discourse" (PÊCHEUX, 1982 [1975], p. 60), this theoretical approach can help to broaden the horizons of this theoretical-analytical view on the body present in different textualities, from its representations in Art to its comprehension in the political, social and discursive borders.

Discursive and Analytical Notes

In some of Dan Halter's works[2] the body's images emerge in the constitution and construction of a critique of the artist regarding the political system of Zimbabwe in

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[1] English version in the book translated BY in 1982 by H. Nagpal as Language, Semantics and Ideology, and published by Macmillan.

[2] My first contact with Dan Halter's work happened at the art exhibition titled Memórias Inapagáveis, at SESC Pompeia, in Sao Paulo (SP), 2014. At the time, it was possible to watch the documentary video Untitled – Zimbabwean Queen of Rave (2005).

the postcolonial era. A descendant of Swiss refugees after World War I, Dan Halter was born in Harare, Zimbabwe's capital, a small African country that in 1980 was no longer a British colony. In 2005, he witnessed the forced exile of his parents. Commenting on the political situation of his country, Dan Halter mentions the important step that must be taken by the revolutionaries who have fought against repression and, today in power, are also corrupted. The recognition of Dan Halter's work has resulted in the participation in several art exhibitions, such as in the 10th Havana Biennial (Cuba), the 3rd Triennial in Guangzhou (China), the 9th Biennial of Contemporary African Art (Dakar, Senegal), and the Smithsonian National Museum (Washington, USA).

Using an artistic technique of overlaying images in scratch videos, Dan Halter configured Untitled – Zimbabwean Queen of Rave (2005) in a videoclip format (3m32s) having as soundtrack the song hit Everybody's Free (To Feel Good) by the Zambian singer Rozalla, who made her first appearances on stage performances in the 1980s in Zimbabwe, reaching international fame with this dance-style song released in 1991. In the interlacing between the verses of the song and the video images, the visual and verbal materialities are articulated together in dialogical links which constitute Dan Halter's work. The chorus Everybody's free (to feel good) – repeatedly (re)sounds producing meaningful effects of a "spokesperson song" that moves in the discourse threads standing on the borders between the scenes of the European raves in contrast to the different movements of resistance and protest in the streets of Africa against the Apartheid regime that appear in parts of the videoclip.

The Apartheid policy led by successive National Party governments in South Africa over the years of 1948 and 1994 was a regime of racial segregation in which the rights of the majority of the inhabitants were imposed by the government formed by a white minority. After the March 21, 1960, massacre in Sharpeville, in the context of the period of decolonization, international critics against that segregationist political regime began to grow. As a result, many of the popular movements of the anti-apartheid ideology have gained ground in different African countries. In this sense, the first scenes of the video (0:08s) of Untitled, in which many bodies of militants appear in protest [1] trying to bring down the iron railings of the gates in a public space (image

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[1] It is taken here the question of the discursiveness of the protest in the constant work of the politician in its relation with the symbolic. This emptying (deleting) effect, put in evidence, passes inevitably through the process from which other senses are silenced (ORLANDI, 1992) producing a certain textuality. It can be seen the superposing of images of young people (and their bodies) in the crowd, in Europe, and the bodies of militants occupying the streets of Zimbabwe in South African. The scenes (from images 1 and 2) mark, thus, the confluence between different temporalities and different spaces, which passes through the filming spectrum. The art edition works producing certain meaning effects. Reflecting with Nilton Milanez, images register "the movement of bodies in a succession of scenes [...] making other images resurrect in us, which form a chain of displacements in the movement of the meanings" (MILANEZ, 2011, p. 36-37). From this analysis perspective, it is important here to emphasize, that both the "intersection of different materialities" and "the significant material imbrication", according to Lagazzi (2011, p. 402).

3) are thus crossed by an ideology of social struggle, of struggle for freedom against a segregationist political system (in contrast to images of crowds of young people gathered at rave festivals on the streets of Europe, indicating in this case not a political struggle only, but also form of "expression" and "celebration" of freedom.

Image 3 – Protesters fighting against Apartheid. Source: Untitled (2005)

It is possible to observe, therefore, the criticism that Dan Halter's work establishes by denouncing that some are freer than others. These initial scenes converge with the statements echoing from the verses of Rozalla's song, producing a sense effect of a spokesperson in a kind of "defense" of the black movement on the streets of South Africa. Thus, the sense of mobilization through / for the union of people is enunciated from verses like "[...] brother and sister / together we'll make it through" "[...] we are a family that should stand together as one / helping each other instead of just wasting time".

From these reflections of the author on the indissociability between life, discourse and art, it is also possible to observe, on the other hand, that "it is the material interlacing between the verbal and the visual that enables the formulated criticism" (LAGAZZI-RODRIGUES, 2011, p. 11). In this case, it can be said that this is a criticism that goes through the constant irruption of the sense between the political ideology of oppression/segregation as an element that can be overcome by bodies gathered in protest and in struggle, occupying a given space at a historical moment. It is also possible to identify other meaning effects that this work of Dan Halter produces, as the art curator of the Cultural Video Brazil Association (which hosted this documentary in Brazil in 2014) points out, highlighting that:

[...] the dynamic edition, reminiscent of the English scratch videos of the 1980s, creates a parallel between two situations that, subject to the media re-contextualization, lose their potential for confrontation. The raves, marked by the refusal of the yuppie lifestyle, gain an image of empty fashion; the contestation movements in Africa seem to be devoid of causes. The freedom of dance as protest and protest as a dance is

framed by the television rectangle, and rendered as a metaphor of a process of appropriation and emptying (VIDEO BRASIL, 05/08/2014).

[...] emphasize that it is not a matter of analyzing an image and the speech and musicality, for example, as additions to each other, but rather of analyzing the different signifying materialities one intermingled with the other. (author's translation)

Hence, the visual language which is also the place of failure, of aperture/holes, of equivocation, of erasure is constituted by producing such meaning effects that escape from the total apprehension of the symbolic, being that something which always returns through different ways of signification.

In this analysis, considering the important parallel between body materiality and the visual formulations of the body in contrast (on one hand, of bodies in spaces of protest; and on the other hand, of bodies occupying the spaces of rave parties), I question myself about how the relations of alterity (of the body in relation to the other) are structured in the images in terms of regularity.

These parallels leave marks on the discourse threads, which I seek to examine from the images here in question. The massive concentration of people, for example, brought together by a common interest, the permanent movement, the climate of exaltation, the escapism, the search for freedom and the streets taken by bodies in protest suggest that the visual formulations of the body "unfold in different images of the subject and show us the importance of the remission of the intra-discourse to the inter-discourse" (LAGAZZI, 2014a, p. 111).

"Rave" as a term in English designating outdoor electronic music festivals can be understood as "moving or advancing violently". The contrast of meanings (constituted by a discursive heterogeneity) highlights, in this case, some white young people who have the privilege of meeting to celebrate, while some black people of different ages (not just young ones) need to come together to claim the most basic human rights. Hence the movement of bodies in struggle to break paradigms and make important (social as well as political...) revolutions.

Taking into account then the idea of a collective body as a discourse support (the discourse of resistance, the discourse of social and political protest), it is possible to understand the issue of otherness as a dialogical bridge, in Bakhtin's terms, and formulated in terms of distinction, contrast, in spaces of signification in which the bodies are interpellated by memory, by the social and by the different positions occupied by the subjects in the discourse. From this perspective, I consider how the meanings pass through these bodies and how the meanings of occupation put these bodies in motion. Thus, there are meanings occupying these bodies, as well as these bodies emerge occupying different spaces discursively and ideologically.

An example of this is the case of the typical African dance from Zimbabwe, present in the protests that appear in Untitled (images 4 and 5). The movements and gestures of the bodies forming marches (in the dance called Toyi-Toyi [4], very common in the forces of ZIPRA, Revolutionary Army of the Zimbabwean People) represent signs integrated in different meanings. According to Gilbert (2008), Toyi-Toyi is a "militant dance", organized in protest marches and accompanied by songs and slogans. In the following frames, extracted from Dan Halter's documentary, it is possible to observe some images of the body being placed in the borders of signification between the political, the ideological and the social, from the Toyi-Toyi marches.

Image 4 – Bodies occupying the street of Zimbabwe

Image 5 – South-African militants in the Toyi-Toyi marches

Used not only to intimidate the African police forces during the anti-apartheid protests, the Toyi-Toyi "is still present in some specific contexts, such as political protests, rallies and trade union movements" (BRAZ DIAS, 2012, p. 100). In the words of the anthropologist Juliana Braz Dias, "toyi-toyi is part of a sequence of practices that refer to the armed struggle in a symbolic way only because of the impossibility of

carrying out the actual armed struggle" (p. 103). In the author's reflections, she points out that in this form of protest "we would have a case of 'symbolic compensation' for the absence of power" (p. 103). So by observing the images of these bodies in struggle, Braz Dias (2012, p. 110-111) describes that:

[...] the approach of the protesters is announced by a sharp cry: "Amandla!" – which, in zulu and xhosa, means "poder". The answer comes from the crowd, in chorus: "Awethu!" ("For us!"). The images start to [...] focus on the movement of resistance to apartheid. They are young people who at gunpoint sing songs of protest, evoking their leaders: Oliver Tambo and Nelson Mandela. Carry posters in which is read: [...] "Freedom, justice and peace, now!"; "How long will we be humiliated, kicked, strangled, beaten, raped, and killed?". (author's translation)

This reflection by Braz-Dias interlaces to Eni Orlandi's words on a discursive theory of the subjects' resistance forms, when the discourse analyst states that "there are forms of omnipotence also in the social domain: 'together we can do anything', a position that is supported by the quantity and by the intended collective conscience" (ORLANDI, 2012, p. 213) (ORLANDI, 2012, p. 2013) 35. Such consideration made by Eni Orlandi echoes in the description of the bodies assembled in the Toyi-Toyi marches as a form of struggle and popular resistance, as the Braz Dias (2012, p. 111) sates that:

[...] many of them carry in their right hands a piece of wood, like a spear. Others only have their hands closed. Several wear school uniforms; some with the tie – a traditional part of the uniform – tied to the forehead, remembering the adornments worn by the Zulus warriors. Many wear a serious expression on their faces. Others reveal a slight smile as they sing the songs and let their bodies follow the movement together: with their knees high, alternately, and fists in the air. (author's translation)

Taking into account the discourse of the body mobilized in the relation with the other, there is the sliding and (re)displacement of meanings in the memory paths in which the said, the already said and the pre-constructed meanings are reformulated.

At another point, the relation of otherness of bodies and subjects in different spaces is interlaced to certain prototypical scenes of protests and images of bodies occupying the urban spaces, in Dan Halter's work, so that different relations between the "I" and the other are easily indentified. Examining, further, the documentary Untitled, it is possible to see, for example, some scenes highlighting the different positions occupied by both the African militants and young people having fun at rave parties in Europe, in contrast (by the visual) with the positions occupied by the police authorities which are placed in the streets in constant vigilance of the crowd (images 6 and 7).

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Image 6 – Policers watching young people in raves

Image 7 – Armed guards and African protesters

These scenes let slip in the discourse thread different meanings attributed to the body. There are, on one hand, bodies expressing certain meanings of freedom during the parties, others expressing people's union to fight and to protest for the conquest of freedom (and at the same time as a form of escapism or a escape from reality, often oppressive), and there are, on the other hand, bodies that stand on the social frontiers exercising power in positions of control and vigilance, as reflects Nascimento (2017) – remembering what, for Althusser (1971), works as a Repressive State Apparatus, which guarantees to certain agents of the dominant classes the power to rule and assure their domination over other classes.

It is fundamental to take into account, from the words of Suzy Lagazzi, that "we do not have materialities that are completed by each other, but that are related by the contradiction, each working the incompleteness in the other" (LAGAZZI, 2009, p. 68). There is in the film process the displacement of meanings in a continuous (dis)cadence of scenes that, as Sabino (2008, p. 49) says:

[...] get together, overlap each other, merging each other into the images that, together with words and music, play with the rhythmic senses of modernity. Rhythm of music, of images that get together (and separate), find disparate images, of images that are in between (within) other images [...]: conjunction and heterogeneity from the observer's view and listening. They are different textualities that conjugate in this filmic fabric allusive meanings alluding to a modernity in the daily life of 20th century, and that opening in intertextual and interdiscursive windows, play with meanings that (dis)organize, that unravel, which highlight and erase the relations between events and meanings, exposing the daily life in a relationship of confluence with memory. (author's translation)

Metaphorically, it is observed how image projects in the object in focus the repressed meanings in condensation (LAGAZZI, 2014b). Thus, it is possible to notice, from these scenes a relation of alterity by a drifting process. Metonymically, the image marks the

lack in the meanings slipping by the reiteration of the close-up view of the object in focus: the guns (in hands or at waists) of the policemen watching the crowd. Metaphorizing itself into prototypical images of protests, these sense-of-vigilance effects work on the boundaries between saying and not saying, silence and gesture in an ever-moving structure.

Final considerations

Considering the analysis made at the end of this article, the work of Dan Halter marks the confluence between the verbal and non-verbal materiality of the space crossed by silence, by the sonority, by the image and also by the body slipping in the interlacement and enlacement either by the senses mobilized by the music of the Zambian singer Rozalla or by the presence of the dominant other in a position of vigilance. The marches and the bodies in the streets and the public spaces, the meanings of the dance (the raves, the Toyi-Toyi, the moonwalk) slide in the discourse threads, for example, in the crossing of the refugee, which has in the bridge the symbolic place (space) of reference marked by an instant (temporally) marked by the very duration of the crossing, which allows this body to mean differently from its movement. Meaning movements. Meanings in movement. Bodies that put the discourse in the borders with the social (also in movement).

In view of these considerations, therefore, what is perceived, in the meshes of the social, the political and the discursive, is that both the testimonial of the immigrant and the South African movements against Apartheid are rebuilt by the look of Art as a sort of (re)constitution of indissoluble movements in history interpellated by (re)formulated some senses that are updated in memory. Thus, one can observe the experience, for example, of a refugee working in confluence with memory as kind of a discursive window where meanings overflow, so many of them exposed, so many of them silenced.

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Democracy and Popular Protest in Europe: The Iberian Case (2011)

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Abstract

In recent years, Europe has witnessed social movements that break away from the conventional patterns typical of 19th and 20th century movements. The party-or trade union-organised social movements, very much centred on 19th century political and economic issues, or the New Social Movements centred on more universal values such as peace, environment, gender, ethnicity, of the 20th century seem to be changing their 'repertoire'. At the beginning of the 21st century, parties and trade unions have been losing their leading role in the organisation of demonstrations and strikes and collective actions prepared and led by specific actors have given way to new forms of social action, without leaders, without organisation, without headquarters, and which use social networks as a form of mobilisation. These are social movements that contest not to have more rights but to exercise those that exist, a full citizenship that offers the freedom to express one's opinion and the regalia of participation in political, economic, social, educational areas. In Europe, there are various types of such movements, but we will highlight the "Geração à Rasca (Scratch Generation)" movement in Portugal and that of the "Indignados (Outraged)" or 15 M in Spain, both started in 2011, and which had repercussions in the main European capitals. Using a qualitative methodology, through these protest movements we seek to understand how the complexity of today's social movements and their non-institutionalisation represent a challenge to European democracy.

Keywords: Democracy, protest, Iberian, challenge, Europe

Introduction

The post-war democracy made possible an opening for economic and social development and the industrialisation process led society to a profound transformation: the industrial society gave way to the information society and today we speak of a network society (Castells, 1999). Democracy, as a historical process, was the result of many popular protests over time and one of the consequences of the democratic process is the existence of social movements, which may or may not be

democratic (Tilly, 2004, p.56). However, the relationship between democracy and social movements is not consensual, since these are sometimes considered a threat to democracy, and at other times a symbol of its vitality, of the dynamism of civil society. Digital technologies have reinforced the way in which social movements are viewed. It can be said that social organisation in digital technology networks is a new form of social organisation that transcends the physical territorial spaces of each state and becomes global. This technology has created a generation of internet users who favour this medium to communicate among themselves, thus escaping the channels created by the institutions of society, namely the traditional media, giving rise to "self-commanded mass communication" (Castells, 2007, p.248). Now, from network communication to the mobilisation of network movements was such a rapid step that European democratic institutional bodies, imbued with the full weight of their tradition of representation and bureaucracy, have difficulty in seeing and understanding the real significance of these movements.

The concept of social movement has evolved as society has been and in the last three decades of the 20th century, authors such as Touraine (1969, 1973, 1978) and Melucci (1996) understood social movements as a form of sustained collective action, whereby actors sharing identities or solidarities confront dominant social structures or cultural practices. In this way, current social movements (post 2000) have become more complex and analysis little consensual, mobilise in networks and on the margins of institutional mechanisms, question institutional political and party structures, acting on their margins, as happened in Iberian, with the Scratch Generation and 15 M or "Indignados" but assert themselves as a social actor to the extent that they put democratic governments in dialogue with social movements.

Thus, through a qualitative methodology, using information conveyed in Portuguese and Spanish newspapers about the movements " Scratch Generation " and "Indignados", we seek to understand how the complexity of today's social movements and their non-institutionalization represent a challenge to European democracy.

1. Analysis: The Iberian Movements

1.1. The 'Scratch Generation' movement in Portugal

It was in the context of economic insecurity and political mistrust in Portugal that the so-called 'Scratch Generation' movement, which campaigned against unemployment and precariousness, was born (Baumgarten, 2013). The movement grew from the challenge launched by young people via social networks and it essentially targeted young people. The promoters of the 'Scratch Generation' were themselves young people, graduates and symbols of the generation, given their status as trainees, fellows or unemployed. They felt angry that their generation was experiencing difficulties becoming economically independent of their parents despite their academic training, and they shared their anxieties with other young people via the internet. They decided to send an open letter to civil society explaining the need to

address the precarious working conditions in Portugal, where qualifications, skills and experience were not mirrored by salaries and decent contracts, and where they were pejoratively referred to as 'the generation of five hundred euros'. In fact, in their Facebook appeal, they stated, 'We, the unemployed, "five-sevens" and other poorly paid, disguised slaves, subcontractors, contractors, false self-employed, intermittent workers, interns, trainees, student workers, students, mothers, parents and children of Portugal, let us express our discontent' (Scratch Generation Protest Blog, 2011). The protest stemmed from the right of all citizens to demand education and employment, an expression of citizenship that was not subsumed by the right to vote, as one young person commented. It was also an affirmation of the young people's distrust in the political system; therefore, they affirmed that the movement was to be 'a nonpartisan, secular and peaceful protest, that tries to reinforce participatory democracy in the country' (Scratch Generation Protest Blog, 2011). Comments and behaviour such as this corroborate the opinion of researchers that 'the most educated young people are more active, have more civic awareness and make more use of citizenship rights' (Ferreira & Silva, 2005, p. 146).

The aim of the 'Scratch Generation' movement was, according to the promoters, to contribute to 'triggering a qualitative change in the country' (Scratch Generation Protest Blog, 2011. They wanted to find solutions to Portugal's problems and to then be part of those solutions. Lacking prospects for the future and in a profound state of frustration, they felt the need to unite and to manifest in the public sphere their claims to rights that were being withheld.

The lack of employment experienced by this generation of qualified young people was not merely a conjunctural problem, since, due to the massification of higher education, there had been an exponential increase in the number of students during the 1990s (Abrantes, 2003). In fact, the number of students in higher education in Portugal rose from around 11,000 to 60,500 during that decade (Abrantes, 2003), making it increasingly difficult for graduates to enter the labour market. Of course, at the time the movement was launched, this structural issue was the least of the young people's worries.

Thus, on 12th March 2011, at 3 pm, the squares in the main cities of Portugal were filled with 'Scratch Generation' protesters. Demonstrations were held in several centres of portuguese cities, squares and streets that were historically emblematic.

In the capital, Lisbon, the largest demonstration took place on Avenida da Liberdade. Approximately 200,000–500,000 participants (the number varies according to the information source, that is, the police or the organisation itself) protested against the precarious situation in which they lived. Crowds came from all sectors of society, with the number of demonstrators far exceeding the expectations of both the young promoters and the general participants. The demonstration was surprising not just due to the number of participants, but also due to the different age groups that took

part (Jornal de Notícias, 2011). A few years earlier, this kind of intergenerational union was almost unthinkable in the context of a single protest. Secondary school students took part in several demonstrations against the global tests that had to be passed in order to enrol in university. As a result, the older generations labelled them the 'scratchy generation'. This pejorative labelling was generalised in the society of the time, which created a generational gap that would eventually undo itself, at least momentarily, during the demonstration of 12th March 2011. On that day, acting together and taking part in the same march, were not only those directly affected by the economic crisis (i.e. young people), but also the parents and grandparents of those who were 'unemployed and precarious', who had to continue to financially support children who should have been able to self-sustain. The complaints of the young were also the complaints of their older relatives, since the professional instability experienced by the young resulted in the economic degradation of previous generations. As mentioned in an article in Visão (2011, p. 70), one in five young people aged 25–35 was at that time economically dependent on family. In some cases, even at the age of 40, people reported having no stable salary and so no ability to fund their own house or family (Diário de Notícias, 2011), although many of these people held higher education qualifications. During the last quarter of 2010, the number of unemployed graduates rose to 68,500, which was equivalent to 11.2% of all unemployed people (Loureiro, 2012, p. 337). With so many living in such precarious economic circumstances, reports of individual injustices quickly circulated via social media, eventually being transformed into a collective injustice. This was reflected in the posters people held during the demonstration, which featured slogans such as 'Living Communism - Spreading Anarchism', 'Capitalism is Abominable', 'The Country is Scratchy' and 'Scratchiness is Precariousness'. Several politicians also joined the Lisbon march despite it being a non-partisan movement, as did members of right-wing extremist groups, anarchists and members of the LGBT community (Jornal de Notícias, 2011).

The solemn parades of yesteryear, which progressed at a slow and almost reverent pace, have now given way to demonstrations in which music and dance add a certain colour to the event. Although these manifestations of protest in Portugal had a playful component, the spectacularity they exhibited was only modest when compared to the performances seen during other European anti-globalisation mobilisations, in which masks and disguises alluded to a certain subversion of the carnival theme, which gave the events a high level of visibility in traditional media outlets.

As an article in Visão (2011) said of the demonstration seen in Lisbon and which also applied to those in other cities:

It is not only a manifestation, but several: the manifestation of precarious workers, the manifestation of university students with no future, the manifestation of the

unemployed, the manifestation of pensioners by anticipation, the manifestation of pensioners of 200 euros, the manifestation of the unschooled workers ... (p. 66).

The movement was a collective action driven by individual interests. Each individual spontaneously joined in after reviewing the situation, as, just like the organisers, they felt themselves to be without future prospects. Effectively, they lacked a group goal that would keep them together beyond the circumstances of the moment. As Pinto (2011) notes, they took part in the demonstration: for a future, for a job, for the end of green receipts, out of curiosity or just to see what it was like, for raising the minimum wage, for the father, for the daughter, dancing, singing, applauding, shouting, or even in silence, no one dared to imagine that the voices and words would merge into one message (p. 34).

In recent years, a number of studies have pointed to the distancing of young people from 'traditional' or 'conventional' politics, such as participation in party voting or a party affiliation, and the growing interest among this population in 'unconventional' politics, such as collaboration in organisations or associations and protest actions (Magalhães & Sanz Moral, 2008, p. 27). The popularity of the 'Scratch Generation' movement with young people may be a sign of the divergence of the institutional politics of the democratic state from popular politics, that is, a demonstration that young people have both civic and political awareness, although they distrust the methods of representative democratic politics.

1.2. The 15M Movement or "Indignados".

Two months after the Portuguese movement, in Madrid, the May 15 2011 demonstration was an example of the challenge that leaderless mobilisations organised through the internet represent for Democracy. Here, as in other European demonstrations, it was through social networks, especially Facebook and Twitter, that there was a mobilisation for the May 15 protest. This year, Spain was immersed in the crisis affecting the Eurozone, unemployment reached 22% (47% were young people), and the government, to contain the deficit, promoted cuts in health, education, social service. To make matters worse, the socialist executive approved the Sinde law (control and censorship of information on the Internet), which mobilised some activists to create a digital platform, which they called "Democracía Real Ya" (Real Democracy Now), and to make their discontent known. On the aforementioned networks, Democracía Real Ya called a demonstration for 15 May 2011, a Sunday, exactly seven days before the municipal elections. Through a manifesto they explained the reasons why they were calling on citizens to take to the streets on 15 May. With the emblematic phrase ""we are not merchandise in the hands of politicians and bankers" they tried to attract the attention of internet users to their manifesto.

Then, through a simple and direct text, they touched on the crucial points of collective dissatisfaction. It began like this: "We are ordinary people. We are like you: people who get up in the morning to study, work or look for work, people with families and

friends. People who work hard every day to live and give a better future to those around them...". They then explained in several items the reasons for their indignation and apprehension, among which they highlighted corruption among politicians, businessmen and bankers, and the absence of a true Democracy, since the political class did not even listen to the people. And they ended: "We are people, not merchandise. I am not only what I buy, why I buy and for whom I buy. For all these reasons I am outraged. I believe I can change. I believe I can help. I know that united we can do it. Come with us. It's your right" (Manifesto Facebook).

This call and the reasons that were given for the demonstration went against the disharmony that hovered in society, especially among the youth, highly qualified, unemployed and without a glimpse of a better future. The same disenchantment popularised Stephane Hessel's book "Indignant", which referred to social inertia in the face of the "international dictatorship of financial markets" and called for a "peaceful insurrection" (Hessel, 2011). This hero of the French resistance to Nazism considered that the worst attitude of citizens was indifference, since it led to inaction and consequently could lead to the loss of acquired rights. Hessel's little book had many readers in Spain, and was perhaps inspirational for the mentors of "Democracia Real Ya" and those who took to the streets on 15 May. On that Sunday, around 130,000 people, according to the organisers, gathered in Madrid at Puerta del Sol, the city's central square to protest. The newspaper El País reported that many of the demonstrators were unemployed poorly paid, subcontracted, mortgaged, outraged by the economic crisis and the resulting social problems (El País, 15 May 2011). Among the most underprivileged were young people, who being supporters of netactivism "new type of action in connected digital networks", (Di Felice, 2012), contributed to the rapid dissemination of the message and the turnout of so many people at the demonstration. The participants, armed with slogans such as "this crisis we are not paying for it", "it is not illegal the voice of the people", or "politicians do not represent us" (El País, 15 May) walked through the main streets and squares in the centre of the capital (Gran Vía, Paseo del Prado, Atocha) and demonstrated their feelings towards governments, banking, the political class, and above all the mismanagement of the crisis by a "dysfunctional and irresponsible political system" (Castells, 2013a, p.90). Through this non-partisan form of organisation they showed their lack of confidence in leaderships, parties and trade unions to represent them, similarly to other European citizens and others. They therefore introduced an innovative form of mobilisation into social movements, although in the street they used the old methods: marches, lectures, posters, to make the reasons for the demonstration visible to the community and the traditional media. In the Spanish capital the demonstration did not end without clashes with the police (El País, 15 May).

The "Indignados" of Madrid were joined by other malcontents who at the same time protested in around 50 cities in Spain, as well as in Portugal, Ireland, Holland, France

and the United Kingdom. In all countries, historically symbolic places were chosen for the space of representation, sharing and discussion, in a search for community solidarity lost in the anonymity of mobilisation. Once the demonstration was over, a group of indignados from Madrid decided to stay in Puerta Del Sol to reinforce the dimension of their displeasure and discuss the meaning of real Democracy. In the early hours of the 16th, the camp was violently broken up by the police. The repression acted as a rallying factor to call a new camp for that night and for the whole week, until the Sunday of the municipal elections. The Electoral Commission considered the encampments illegal because they did not allow the calm required for democratic reflection (El País, 17 May 2011).

Suddenly, this social movement took on a life of its own and surpassed the aim of the "Democracía Real Ya" platform. From then on, the "encampments", as they became known, either in Puerta del Sol or in other squares, were no longer organised by "Democracía Real Ya". This platform participated in the encampments but together with other collectives, including Attack, Anonymous, No Les Votes, Juventud Sin Futuro. The 15M or, as it was popularised by the media, "Indignados", ended up becoming another movement from the "encampments" (Elecciones 24, 20 May 2011), with the implementation of a kind of "micropolis" where a micro model of real democracy was experienced.

The exercise of real democracy was carried out during the Spanish "encamped" and in all the encampments that were spread across the main European squares. In these encampments, as in the demonstration, mainly young people participated, although middle-aged and senior people could be

found in them, who shared the concern about the economic, political and social situation, who did not see themselves in political parties or trade unions, and who came together to seek change (Elecciones 24, 20 May 2011). The capitalist economic system had generated the crisis but the politicians defended the financial interests of the banking and bankers more than the interests of those who elected them, the citizens.

These, in turn, found it legitimate to claim their right to be indignant and fight for "a new society that prioritises life rather than protecting economic and political interests" (Elecciones 24, 20 May 2011). In a peaceful and orderly way they tried to implement in the squares where they camped a new social and political organisation, based on community fraternity and a participatory politics.

In a true practice of direct democracy all decisions concerning the camp and its messages outside it were decided in a general assembly.

These assemblies met, as a rule, daily, with around two thousand people. Similar to what happened in the Athenian public square (agora) each citizen standing in the Puerta del Sol, arm in arm, voted on each measure to be taken for the benefit of the

community. To implement the measures decided in the Assembly they created working committees, autonomous from each other, which dealt with basic issues such as hygiene, safety, communication, to the elaboration of proposals to be submitted to the Assembly, there were also committees for concrete and specific actions: agroecological initiatives, reform of the electoral law, preventing evictions.

There were no leaders, it was a collective but in which each participant was there in an individual capacity, only representing himself. Each person was free to say what they thought or felt, without needing intermediaries, which for Javier Toret (a member of Democracia Real Ya) is a "paradigm shift between citizen and governments, unions and media" (quoted by Castells, 2013a, p.99). We are facing an empowerment of citizens, collective unity concentrates popular strength and gives them power, if only that of visibility, that of spreading their thoughts.

The citizens camped in Madrid's Puerta del Sol drew up a series of proposals that were approved in a general assembly, regarding the change of the electoral law, respect for the basic rights enshrined in the constitution, reform of the working conditions of the political class, tax reform, education, regulation of the markets, participatory and direct democracy, true separation between State and Church, promotion of renewable energies, effective separation of powers, recovery of privatised public companies, reduction of military spending, recovery of historical memory, total transparency in the financing of political parties and their accounts as a means of curbing corruption.

In this movement there was never a formal organisation, with a defined programme; there were proposals, many of them, not only from the Madrid campers but also from those of other cities and countries, although their aim was not to fulfil them immediately. The participants of the "encampments" knew that positioning themselves outside the established institutional system would not make any proposal viable (Castells, 2013b, p.103), but in the long term it could present an alternative, as eventually happened when citizens who participated in the movement formed a new party.

These camps, where they implemented a new democratic model, as they existed in default of the established power could not last long. This exercise in real democracy implied the occupation of public space, and even assuming that it belongs to everyone, it was still seen as an "affront" to the holders of political power, a kind of counterpower. Consequently, the response to this action, on the part of the Spanish government and other European governments where there were encampments, was a ban on staying in the squares, often accompanied by police repression (El País, 3 August 2011). In addition, this occupation brought problems of maintenance of the area itself.

It was not possible to stay indefinitely in the camp because life deteriorated and it began to be the home of the homeless. This circumstance, together with the fact that with the passing of time only young people without family responsibilities could take

part full-time in the assemblies, began to empty the movement, inside and out, in the eyes of public opinion. Standing meant shrinking crowds and they couldn't risk being reduced to half a dozen camped activists if they wanted to give a voice to the whole population. So at the end of June they lifted the Madrid camp and the others came after. The movement was continued in the neighbourhoods through residents' assemblies, which functioned along the same lines. The assembly was sovereign, leaderless and with independent committees. Its decisions were disseminated over the internet so that they could be debated by everyone. The activists built an "organisational culture" based on values such as diversity, subjectivity, transparency, open confrontation aimed at building consensus and "ideological contamination" in the face of dogmatism (Della Porta, 2005).

Castells considers this movement "essentially political". The sociologist says that "it was a movement for the transformation of a pseudo-democracy into an authentic democracy" (2013a, p.102) and, despite only having assumed this character in the second phase, the truth is that it was the original manifesto which triggered the movement, therefore, which originated its existence.

The novelty of this movement and of the later European movements was, according to Camargo, "the appearance of "tides" in which various sectors joined in protest, claiming their own issues but merging them into a common protest"(Camargo, 2013, p.136). And in this novelty lies a great challenge of the social movements, in that they reached a human and geographical dimension not imaginable in previous movements and put institutional powers into dialogue and attempts to negotiate with non-institutional actors.

2. Discussion: the challenge of social movements for European democracy

The movements of 12 March and 15 May 2011 in the Iberian Peninsula were not isolated cases, they are part of a line of contestation that crossed Europe in crisis. Movements arise for diverse reasons, as we have seen, but the current ones, for Castells, result from the "contradiction and conflicts of specific societies, and express people's revolts and projects resulting from their multidimensional experience" (Castells, 2013a, p.170). For Romanos (2011) in Spain, the 15M movement inaugurated a cycle of protest whose extent and intensity, capacity of convocation and transversality are unprecedented in the recent history of this country.

These Iberian mobilisations follow the wave of transnational mobilisations of indignation that started in North Africa and the Middle East and that network communication has facilitated, making these global movements a challenge for European leaders.

For Bela Irina Castro they represent a "countercultural social contestation movement that seeks to rescue the debate and the political decision into everyday life through the occupation of public spaces" (2012, p.124).

Social movements have demonstrated citizens' divergence from the liberal political model and capitalist economy governing European states, demanding a less elitist and more participatory politics. The movements that have occupied the squares and streets of Europe appeared spontaneously through mobilisation in social networks, without party or trade union organisation, even rejecting established leaderships. This new form of mobilisation and action seems to refer to the citizens' disagreement with the systems of representation, whether parties or unions, and to the emergence of a global citizenship that shares the desire for a renewed Democracy, and becomes a challenge insofar as the connection in networks leads to an alteration of the social. As Di Felice points out, "net-activism marked the first forms of social conflictualities that through the internet displace social action to a planetary computer spatiality" (2013, p.55). This spatial displacement of action, ease of appearance and expansion in space, makes institutional control difficult and enables the survival of movements such as the "Indignados", as well as the appearance of more demonstrations in the European public space. On the other hand, the internet functions as a protective factor against repression and as a facilitator of widespread communication, not only with the participants/sympathisers of the movement but with the whole of society, and, most importantly, it establishes a connection with the culture of today's societies which, in Castells' opinion, is "the culture of autonomy" (Idem: 171). Citizens claim autonomy from historically constituted institutions, embodied in "a new social contract" (ibid.). This contract is based on the freedom that communication through the Internet grants to its users (Idem, 172). Thus, for this author, "behind the scenes of this process of social change is the cultural transformation of our societies" (idem, ibidem), which is reflected in the will to transform the democratic political process (idem, 113). In the case of the 15M, mistrust of conventional politics brought together people with or without ideology in a non-partisan movement, but with political aims and a reaction to the current political system itself, which is why they are running away from the corporate mechanisms of politics.

Another challenge they pose is that of security, as they break the rules of institutional bodies they cause a certain fear, leading governments to respond with police repression to movements that are presented as peaceful. The current democratic political organisation does not know how to deal with all "this dizzying multiplication of communication, this taking over of the word by a growing number of subcultures" (Vattimo, 1989, p.87). The cultural dimension and that of social change which some researchers have identified in social movements (Goodwin and Jaspers, 2004) are evident in the movements which have recently emerged in Europe. Proof of this is the emergence of new political forces such as "Podemos" in Spain or "Syriza" in Greece.

Does this mean that social movements are leading us towards the construction of a European public sphere? The answer to this question already takes us into the sphere of European political contestation. According to Della Porta and Caiani, there are several obstacles to the Europeanisation of political conflict: the low visibility of the

EU in political terms; the enormous power of corporate and institutional actors; a certain isolation of NGOs from political networks; the high cost of transnational mobilisations; or even the predominance of organisations historically anchored in the nation-state. For the above-mentioned authors, European collective action will have to involve the union of social actors, in the sense of stimulating common identity. However, this may not be such a far-off challenge for the European Union, given the protests of the last four years. The crisis situation has highlighted similar problems and struggles among citizens of the various EU nation states, which has contributed to a strengthening of identities, especially among those most disadvantaged by social policies (Della Porta and Caiani, 2009).

To conclude, we understand, like Gohn, that the fact that these demonstrations are part of a "new form of social movement composed predominantly of young people, educated, connected by and in digital networks, horizontally organised, critical of traditional ways of doing politics" (2014) becomes the biggest challenge of social movements for the European space, because they call into question this model of representative democracy.

Conclusion

The collective actions currently taking place in the streets pose European democratic governments the challenges of dealing with large-scale movements, operating in networks but spontaneous in appearance, mobilised through the internet, and of seeing the urban public space occupied by movements not organised by parties or trade unions, outside institutional formalism and state control.

As in previous centuries, social movements reflect the society in which they are embedded. If today technology has made available to individuals the opportunity to be both actor and receiver of information, the possibility to become visible without intermediaries, this technique is naturally harnessed for the promotion of social discontent, as once were the traditional media, especially newspapers. Despite all the technology, we think that it is in the streets and not in the networks that movements are challenging democracies as promoters of social and political change. It was the social problems that brought people to the streets and not Facebook or Twitter, because if there was no dissatisfaction, injustice and social inequality there would be no place for these protests. We have the Iberian examples analysed here, in particular the "Indignados". It was their permanence on the streets that allowed them to create complicity,

It was their presence on the streets that enabled them to create complicity, discover idiosyncrasies, make suggestions, leading some of the elements that made up the 15M (although already disconnected from the movement) to move forward with proposals of a political nature. And, as in the past, political power only adapts to the changes demanded by society through contestation. However, it should be noted that this protest movements, which has manifested itself in unison within Europe, does not

reflect a desire for a single government in the European Union; on the contrary, one of the criticisms expressed in these demonstrations by citizens was the subservience of nation states to the European Union. This means that these protests are still nationally oriented, reflecting more an internalisation than an externalisation of European collective action.

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The Role of Social Media in the Times of the Covid-19 Pandemic

Bora Erdem

Abstract

In the aftermath of natural disasters and other catastrophes, social media usage has been reported to boost. Understanding how social media works is critical for the scientific community to advance our capacities and build a more buoyant society. With social media communication, the research community may communicate more quickly around the globe to disseminate the most important outcomes of disease, leading to a faster information transfer time to other medical professionals. It's important to organize research and information in this era of uncertainty and deliberate fake news. During the global epidemic of 2020, social media has developed into an accomplice as well as a potential threat(Anwar, Malik, Raees, & Anwar, 2020). It may be challenging for healthcare providers to discern truth from chaos when a significant volume of data is packed into a short period. One of social media's current flaws is its ability to quickly disseminate incorrect facts, which may be confounding and distracting. Researchers and professionals with advanced degrees are anticipated to be pioneers in delivering fact-based information to the general public (Chan, Nickson, Rudolph, Lee, & Joynt, 2020). Consequently, during times of distress, it is important to be pioneers in social media dialogues to give factual and helpful information and knowledge to those seeking answers.

Keywords: Covid-19, social media, pandemic, communication, public health emergency, infodemic, global health

Introduction

Research Methods

Some of the research methods that were used to collect data include both qualitative and quantitative probably because the research involves information that has to be described numerically and to develop a more mechanistic understanding of the topic this methods were crucial. To answer the research question, both primary and secondary sources of data were implemented whereby articles from different authors have been used to gather crucial information that is imperative to the study.

Secondary data helped in the research because it helped in synthesizing existing knowledge, analyzing historical trends and even identifying patterns on a large scale.

Methodology

The methods used in this study are qualitative and quantitative methods in addition to both secondary and primary methods. The methods are important to the research because they help in obtaining detailed information regarding the research question which is the role of social media in the times of Covid-19. The instruments that were used to collect some of the information that is incorporated in the research include surveys that were conducted by different individuals and also observation based on the fact that the effects of Covid-19 ad social media helped were experienced by everyone. Most of the data in this research paper was obtained from research that has been conducted by experts. However, despite the fact that the information provided was obtained through different methods, the statistical data that is included in the paper might differ based on the fact that the pandemic came in different phases.

Findings

COVID-19, which first appeared in Wuhan, China, in December 2019, is a new viral illness that has quickly spread throughout the globe. It is a severe issue for global welfare, as well as personal and community health. Individuals expect to know what steps may be taken to prevent and cure this virus, just as they did with previous communicable diseases. Because no specific management for the prevention and treatment of this disease has yet been established, prompt identification and diagnosis are essential because not only does the patient get engaged in the condition, but the danger of spreading infection and illness breakout also increases. As a result, the need for self-care and self-control in preventing the spread of this illness is critical. Individuals in affected areas must understand to safeguard themselves from the virus's possible risks. Staying home, shunning everyday physical encounters, and establishing domestic confinement are some of the ways for regulating and minimizing the disease's transmission. Members of the community utilize information technology tools to raise public awareness, teach, and keep track of health-related issues in this respect.

Information technology has become widely utilized in the healthcare sector in recent years. Social media is one of the most extensively utilized information technology platforms in the world. Social networks are web-based platforms that allow people to communicate with one another via computer networks. They allow for two-way interaction. Different varieties of these predictive algorithms have been produced following the establishment of the first form of social media, and using these networks has become a daily habit for many individuals. Among the most significant websites and prominent virtual socializing apps are Instagram, Telegram, Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp. These virtual networks are more beneficial and effective in developing new interactions, preserving existing and previous ties, strengthening

social involvement, and expanding knowledge and job abilities. Furthermore, one of the dangers of social media is the propagation of rumors and false information, as well as the failure to monitor these networks (Tasnim, Hossain, & Mazumder, 2020). Many studies have shown that social media may be utilized effectively in educational and therapeutic settings. In healthcare, it's been utilized to keep or enhance peer-to-peer and clinician-to-patient contact.

With the onset of the coronavirus 2019 epidemic, personal actions on social media have intensified (COVID-19). During this time, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram were among the most popular social media platforms. Different people broadcast their opinions, perspectives, attitudes, and sentiments regarding the crisis on social networks and share them with others. Twitter, arguably among the most popular social media platforms is typically employed by individuals to express their thoughts and ideas. The global progress of the illness is monitored on this social network and essential news and information regarding the illness such as confinement and other connected topics are exchanged (Abd-Alrazaq, Alhuwail, Househ, Hamdi, & Shah, 2020). Abd-Alrazaq et al. (2020) found that the issues published by Twitter users are divided into four main categories, comprising the inception of COVID-19, the cause of a novel coronavirus, the consequences of COVID-19 on individuals and nations, and ways for reducing COVID-19 transmission. According to another survey, the most common topics on social media were "incident notification," "proliferation of preventive and treatment," and "government action." There were also statements concerning COVID-19 and older individuals on Twitter, the majority of which were personalized remarks, pranks, and insults with no helpful substance, and only a third of the material was meant to offer information to elderly patients and suggestions to the public at large. Older persons, on the other hand, are known to be susceptible to this condition. These individuals also utilize social media to learn more about the condition and to express their opinions.

In social networking sites, speed and resource distribution are crucial qualities. For example, Chan et al. shared a model infographic in the field of safeguarding health professionals from COVID-19 on Twitter, WeChat, and their hospital's official website. The pace of re-sharing and visiting this instructional material on social media, particularly Twitter, was substantially faster than on websites, according to their findings. Social media is beneficial for obtaining up-to-date and rapid knowledge throughout the globe in relation to current changing situations due to the high pace of content distribution. During the quarantine time, social media may also be used to influence modern schooling. When it comes to the COVID-19 pandemic, social media, when used correctly, may provide quick and effective avenues for critical knowledge. As a result, connectivity to high content from verified outlets on social media may be the best reaction of international healthcare to the COVID-19 pandemic. Social media platforms comprising Twitter have altered interaction and healthcare delivery, and individuals may utilize this medium to discuss "social health"

issues. For clinicians and the general public, timely information on the occurrence and susceptibility to antimicrobials is critical.

Students and instructors have been using social media for medical education to get around the boundaries of conventional face-to-face educational approaches. Twitter has been used to construct worldwide information networks by enabling academic discussions and crowdsourcing intellectual work. Brevity is encouraged on social media, and snappy tweets and visual-heavy material are frequently used to replace it. Infographics efficiently correlate data with less cognitive load and greater reader preferences by reducing daily statistics and developing measurements into bits of knowledge that are readily conveyed to both the public and healthcare organizations. An infographic for surgical treatment for suspected COVID-19 patients was released via Twitter and WeChat in Hong Kong, assisting healthcare professionals (HCWs) from all over the world. Disease diagnosis can also improve from the usage of social media. Twitter messages, especially when location services are labeled, can offer near-real-time estimates of illness recurrence without the wait for official reports. The popularity of key terms can reveal societal anxieties providing authorities with insight into public opinion. For instance, Public administrators in Wuhan, China, were able to recognize the aged as a vulnerable demographic by mining data from Sino Weibo and then directing the proper assistance resources to them. In today's world of digitized globalization, any infectious illness study would be meaningless without utilizing the potential of technologies and social media for its advancement.

Unfortunately, social media's characteristics, such as its broad reach and quick transmission of information, have paradoxically contributed to the fast spread of fake news across its different platforms. According to the research that has been performed by the WHO regarding coronavirus, disinformation was detected in 27.5 percent of the most popular COVID-19 YouTube videos, which had 62 million views worldwide. False information like this causes widespread public worry, life-threatening self-medication, and non-compliance with COVID-19 requirements (WHO, 2020). The World Health Organization has established an Information Network for Pandemics to combat the "infodemic" by rectifying and limiting the transmission of erroneous information distributed via social media (Cinelli et al., 2020). Educating the public about the promiscuous transmission of false news, as well as assuring the accessibility of authorized sources of information to enable the verification of internet material, are two measures that may be taken.

Guo, Xie, Liang, & Wu (2020) had a satisfactory encounter in offering dental patients with knowledge and programs via online social networks (WeChat). Due to the unique conditions of the coronavirus crisis, which necessitated reduced traffic and home isolation, they had a great engagement with remote healthcare services and found social media to help prevent the disease's spread. In addition, during the coronavirus epidemic, existent websites on specific diseases and health care were

more engaged and reacted to people's worries (Singhal, 2020). Furthermore, on social media, immersive series of question sessions for certain disorders have been held in a desired and effective manner. COVID-19 patients are also informed of present treatments and conditions thanks to the usage of social media to deliver more reliable health information and services. Social media may also be used as a forum for exchanging medical resources across medical provider organizations, reducing ambiguity, as well as ensuring the quality of service, and reducing burden. In general, social media cannot substitute public health measures; nevertheless, by giving news and important and truthful information, they can help people become more aware of the COVID-19 situation (Greaves et al., 2013). For example, section of patients contended that while they still feel that public health measures are indispensable, they agreed that the information they gathered from various social media platforms including Covid-19 protocols helped them protect their loved ones and manage or cope with the disease. They can also assist medical practitioners in difficult decision-making situations.

Because of the coronavirus outbreak and a shortage of face-to-face contacts between people and specialists, social media has been utilized to gather data and get poll replies distantly. Correspondingly, because the display of ideal promotional trends on Facebook has resulted in an increase in the numerical material's rebuttal to the questionnaire Facebook as a social media network can be an effective and cost-effective analysis technique for accumulating beneficial data on a large scale pertaining to the COVID-19 pandemic. Facebook has also proven to be effective in the design, development, and implementation of health communication promotion projects, as well as in the reduction of health risks. The public's understanding of the condition may be tracked via social media and online surveys. The polls can be disseminated without restriction not only inside a single civilization but also across many nations. The usage of social media results in more effective deployment of individualized social distancing. The effects of a paucity of communication among individuals, on the other hand, can help to minimize alienation. Basic social distance guidelines can assist to prevent the propagation of COVID-19 illness as well as the social, emotional, and financial constraints on individuals. As a result, governments and organizations, as well as politicians, prioritize initiatives based on social networks. During the COVID-19 situation, social media has also been effective in facilitating public involvement and facilitating government-to-individual connection. The responsibility of individuals as residents of civilization becomes increasingly apparent as a result of access to knowledge on these platforms, and the composition of social media can foster involvement and growth of the social distancing culture. Social media may also be utilized to enhance emotional connections and raise awareness.

During this epidemic, the lack of physical contact has harmed how we perform patient-centered care, which is defined by in-person connection. HCWs may allow

virtual connection between lonely and sometimes dying patients and their loved ones by utilizing social media's numerous resources, whether in the form of voice or text, therefore soothing patients. Social media can also give emotional assistance for frontline HCWs who are experiencing severe psychological suffering as a result of increasing workload, social isolation, stigmatization, and fears of infecting themselves and their families. WeChat was utilized in Wuhan to assist frontline employees suffering from bereavement and fatigue. Locally, senior management employees use digital channels to frequently send messages of inspiration to all frontline workers in and outside of the healthcare sector. Social professionals and therapists may also create and encourage peer support groups using controlled digital tools. These platforms are critical in allowing HCWs to exhibit intense emotions while navigating complicated problems of loss, uncertainty, and ethical challenges related to their responsibility of care to patients. Members of the public can communicate with one another through social media. The public can also show gratitude to HCWs and correct preconceptions about them, so increasing HCW-community solidarity.

Notwithstanding its, benefits HCWs may claim a lack of technical understanding when it comes to utilizing social media. Some HCWs view social media as wasteful and a nuisance that diverts time and resources away from their essential responsibilities. To stimulate and optimize the use of social media, a comprehensive partnership between the appropriate stakeholders, such as government agencies, physicians, HCWs, and different healthcare-related community organizations, is required. Given the worldwide character of such communicable disease epidemics, a multinational effort to utilize social media is equally critical. Only until many layers of society recognize the value of social media and are confident of its safety will it gain momentum in reducing the negative effects of any healthcare crisis, particularly one as viral as COVID-19. The Covid-19 epidemic has struck at a moment when humanity has never been more interconnected. While physical connectedness has expedited the spread of the illness throughout the world due to increased travel, technological connectivity provides a tool that, when used appropriately, can lessen its impacts. This is the first digital-era pandemic.

It is imperative to note that the distribution of accurate and timely information is a critical aspect of the collective reaction in the event of a global catastrophe such as a pandemic. Social media, or electronic communication that facilitates the transmission and exchanging of knowledge ideas, photographs, and videos, can be an especially useful tool for this. Social media has proven to be beneficial in giving reliable information, timely updates, and appropriate guidance to the public during prior outbreaks, according to research (Sahni, & Sharma, 2020). Government groups and huge institutions such as (WHO) have not only developed a representation on the platform but depend on it as a vital element of their communications policy. The WHO acknowledges that social media may be utilized to inform the populace, enable peer-to-peer interaction, develop contextual understanding, monitor and react to cases of

disinformation, PR, and fears during an emergency, and promote local-level interventions." Similarly, Irish government agencies including the Department of Health and the HSE have retained significant positions on major social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter, delivering concise, verifiable, and timely information to the community.

Social media plays an invaluable role in encouraging professionals and physicians to interact, in addition to encouraging interaction among representatives of the intellectual and clinical communities. Doctors on the front lines across the globe have had access to fast and consistent knowledge allowing them to operate with a level of accuracy and dexterity that would otherwise be impossible. Medics are flocking to specialized social media groups with tens of thousands of members to ask inquiries and discuss responses in real-time. With 30,000 members, one Facebook group dubbed the "PMG Covid-19 Subgroup" allows users to quickly communicate via text, audio, or video recordings. This maximizes the speed and efficiency with which timely information is disseminated. Backed by government instructions of relational distance and solitude, social media use has enabled the maintenance of social contact without physical contact, in addition to serving as a channel for health information. Physical separation measures clash with our natural want to connect with people, therefore social media has proven to be an important tool for developing and maintaining morale (Brindha, Jayaseelan, & Kadeswara, 2020). The extensive distribution of photos, videos, and status updates from people who are remaining at home has helped to foster a feeling of community, normalize the behavior, and promote conformity.

Prominent international personalities, particularly those who were among the first to catch the infection have shared their personal stories, helping to clarify and de-stigmatize sickness caused by the new coronavirus. Social networking has also made it easier to form formal support groups for the community's most susceptible individuals. While public awareness of the virus's considerable hazards is necessary, excessive disease-related information is likely to generate greater tension, anxiety, and concern. Exposure to disturbing events in the media regularly has been found to be damaging on its own. Repeated bombing-related mainstream coverage was linked to higher stressful events than direct exposure to the incident itself, according to a study conducted after the Boston Marathon bombing (Thompson, Jones, Holman, & Silver, 2019). Excessive information about Covid19 should be avoided, according to the WHO (WHO, 2020). They recommend checking for updates consistently, and warn against the adverse implications of a "near-constant stream of news items." This is fundamentally at odds with the conventional trend of social media use, in where newsfeeds are modified in real-time. A positive reinforcement loop might emerge as a result of the acute stress produced by this stimulation, with individuals who are most anxious seeking out Covid-19-related materials more frequently.

The computational nature of social media programming will compound this, since searching for Covid-19-related connections will lead to the software suggesting more connections on a related thread, resulting in reinforcement bias and a distorted perceived risk. While the comparative risk of Covid-19 is significant on an epidemiological scale, it is modest for individuals, particularly those who do not fall into the recognized high-risk groups. Health concerns caused by excessive media exposure can generate undue anguish and lead to help-seeking behavior that is out of scale to genuine need. This can assume the form of erroneous presentations to emergency rooms or general practitioners, as well as requests for Covid-19 testing. This puts a load on a healthcare system that is already overburdened. Early on in the disease's development, significant social media exposure of panic purchase of household products like toilet paper and hand sanitizer gave a false impression that these things were limited. The Covid-19 epidemic has led to a substantial quantity of incorrect information being spread on social media, in addition to the harm that can result from overwhelming exposure to factual material. The WHO's technical risk communication and social media groups are in charge of responding to the "excessive amount of information – some correct, some not" that renders it difficult for individuals to access reputable sources and solid assistance when they need it. They keep track of misconceptions and rumors and react to them, refuting them with evidence-based material and disseminating factual information through their social media channels. The need of providing meaningful information at regular intervals from credible sources is highlighted by research on social media misinformation during crisis events. In the dearth of updates from official sources, misinformation tends to spread.

Discussion

The (COVID-19) pandemic has resulted in a worldwide health catastrophe that has had a profound influence on our perceptions of the universe and our daily lives. Not only was our sense of stability jeopardized by the virus's sustained release and trends of propagation, but the safety initiatives put in conceived to avert the virus's proliferation also required social distancing by desisting from doing what is intrinsically human which is to seek convenience in the corporation of others. The significance of diverse mass media platforms on people's lives cannot be understated. By influencing a huge number of people, social and mass media may portray a sense of oneness. False information and prejudice may be spread through social media.

People can make use of the versatility and prevalence of social media platforms to promote public adherence to the COVID-19 safety precautions endorsed by global health organizations. Adaptive reactions to promote a positive health attitude and compliance to preventative measures are promoted by various media businesses and platforms for public dissemination. During the COVID-19 epidemic, social media may play a beneficial role by advocating effective techniques for supporting persons in

dealing with social and physical seclusion, as well as eliminating humiliation, discrimination, bigotry, and inequities. The majority of individuals who come across false information regarding COVID-19 may believe it to be real, which might induce fear. People in Pakistan are prone to spreading false information and instilling dread about something that isn't always real. Misinformation, particularly concerning COVID-19, has the potential to trigger panic. Individuals who read false material on social media may believe they are viewing the truth. The coronavirus was designed to begin a biological war against China to stifle their economic expansion, according to a conspiracy circulated on social media.

The claims that the coronavirus was scientifically produced at a Wuhan bioweapons facility and then unleashed globally proliferated through social media in China and other nations jeopardizing the collaboration between Chinese and Western researchers on the creation of a vaccine against COVID-19. Misleading information was also spread via Twitter in Iran, claiming that therapies that are not technically proved such as herbal goods, mint beverages, and spices like saffron, will cure COVID-19. Critical concerns emerge at times of emergency and calamity, and they must be answered right now (Bridgman et al., 2020). The challenge in developing nations is that officials do not always give correct information promptly. Subjective perspectives and unconfirmed assertions spread more quickly through communal and media propaganda in public than actual technical and biological facts, which is a painful truth in contemporary culture. The mechanism for holding individuals responsible for what they post on social media is ineffective. Public authorities in the COVID-19 epidemic are wary of making early declarations, preferring to carefully design remarks to assure accuracy and avoid the traps of misunderstanding and embellishment. Surprisingly, this cautious attitude may help to create an information gap, which rumors and lies are all too eager to occupy. Governments can use the media to encourage citizens to abstain from publishing anything on social media concerning COVID-19 that mocks, scorns, or trivializes the issue. Public health officials, spiritual, and politicians should raise the issue through the various social networks to ensure that their adherents are aware of what is happening and the general situation in their communities, at the local, national, and international levels.

On a personal level, social networking is used to keep in touch with friends and family. This, on the other hand, maybe broadened to include people utilizing social media to network for job opportunities, locate individuals around the world with similar interests, and just express their grievances and feelings. While these apps are still utilized for comparable purposes today, they are being employed more frequently as a consequence of the pandemic's imposed seclusion. People who previously disliked social media and shunned it at all expenses as a means of communication have unwillingly agreed to use these forums to communicate with their loved ones. While these apps are still utilized for comparable purposes today, they are being employed more frequently as a consequence of the pandemic's imposed seclusion. People who

previously disliked social media and shunned it at all expenses as a means of communication have unwillingly agreed to use these forums to communicate with their loved ones. People attempt to portray their lifestyles in the effective manner possible on these virtual platforms, whether through direct messaging tools accessible on numerous applications or by publishing images from their everyday lives. The usage of social media before and during the epidemic is closely linked to the concept of the social self.

Social media has shed light on another dimension of healthcare, particularly in the wake of the epidemic. Many healthcare providers created public profiles on social media channels to provide timely information regarding the virus, social distancing protocols, and vaccination updates. The authors investigated the many advantages and hazards of being an active user of social media in peer-reviewed research released before COVID. Increasing contacts with others, having more available knowledge social support, and the ability to influence various health-related legislation are just a few of the advantages (Moorhead et al., 2013). Many of the healthcare professionals whose following grew dramatically during the pandemic have turned to social media as a side business, accepting financial remuneration for everything they post and even cooperating with major corporations to motivate individuals to remain safe and healthy during the epidemic. However, there were certain drawbacks to the increased usage of social media during the epidemic. It influenced different aspects of a person's social self as well as the dynamics between diverse groups (O'brien, Moore, & McNicholas, 2020). The self-discrepancy hypothesis is a social psychology paradigm that may be extended to social media use. Individuals contrast their "real" selves to their "ideal" selves, and any contradictions between the two produce enormous distress in the individual, according to this hypothesis. This is especially true of how individuals use social media, as it pushes them to compare their "real" self to "ideal" selves represented on platforms.

Individuals may begin to see themselves in two distinct manners while attempting to portray their lives in the best conceivable light. As a result, a great deal of unpleasantness may emerge within people, as they may feel an overwhelming desire to be their "ideal" self, which may not be reasonable to the lifestyle they currently live. In a 2006 study, researchers looked at the link between self-discrepancy in terms of body perception and how it influences societal comparison involvement. It was shown that women with high measures of self were more prone to evaluate themselves to others as a consequence of exposure to the thin-ideal and that these assessments can lead to self-inflicted negative repercussions (Bessenoff, 2006). This impact may be increased in teens who witness many of their favorite celebrities/peers displaying their "idealized" selves and begin to feel that everyone is displaying their "real" selves rather than their "idealized" selves, which may be detrimental to their personality. At some point or another, all advocates may be criticized for doing so. It's difficult to find a celebrity who does not post about the

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terrible occurrences in their lives and does not provide a caricatured perspective of what they do daily.

This may also be related to how social media is used to promote an individual's self-esteem, as many people use social media to showcase the positive aspects of their lives while entirely ignoring the negative aspects. With such a near-ideal representation of oneself on social media, many people may comment on how fantastic you look and how amazing your life is, which may have a direct impact on (and raise) one's self-esteem. People portray themselves on social media in the way they believe others perceive them or in the way they want to be perceived, which may be troublesome for the younger population that use these forums, giving them false aspirations of what they should look like and how life should be lived. Ultimately, while social networking may appear to be a terrific method to stay in contact with loved ones while adhering to global social distance laws, it may also have several negative consequences and issues. Individuals may feel more at ease behind a phone/computer screen and use that familiarity to cyberbully their peers and influences. According to peer-reviewed research published by a U.S non-profit think tank Council for Foreign Relations this familiarity can lead to people manipulating public opinion and perpetrating additional hate crimes that they wouldn't have the guts to do in person (Laub, 2019).

The circulatory system is predominantly affected by Covid-19, with signs varying from headache, coughing, and moderate shortness of breath to serious desaturation and fluid overload. Although the new virus causes lung damage in the form of adult hypoglycemic shock syndrome, there have been instances of it generating a thromboembolic state in the body, resulting in atrial fibrillation and pulmonary embolism. In certain people, it can potentially lead to renal failure. Droplets, airborne, or feco-oral dissemination, as well as contact spread, are all possible modes of transmission. Viruses have been reported to survive on surfaces for anything from a few hours to many days. This diverse spectrum of sickness is troubling, and it is one of the causes of the disease's increasing mortality rate (Li et al., 2020). These factors cause public concern and push people to seek assistance in the most approachable manner possible.

The internet or media, which encompasses print and broadcast alternatives, are the most popular choices for most individuals. The internet is seen as a global medium. Preventing the transmission of illness is a primary prerequisite in an epidemic or pandemic. It necessitates early symptom assessment, rapid diagnostic actions, a good home and hospice treatment, and suitable preventative measures. This, in turn, necessitates the participation of several sectors spanning from administration to healthcare, media, and the general public. When a novel viral or bacterial illness forms, it goes through a process of limited dissemination, escalation in the spread, and eventually extinction with effective treatment. Control techniques are

implemented at each link in the chain. Forecasting of a pervasive infection, early diagnosis, effective confinement, control and mitigation strategies, and, finally, eradication is all part of the plan. It entails the synchronization of respondents, a robust health information network, and the management of communication hazards, as per the WHO. At each stage, the media plays an important role. People's behavior and views are influenced by the way news is reported.

Yan Q. et al. presented a study in 2016 that demonstrated how individuals' reactions to media stories can shift and, as a result, how burgeoning disease control may be affected. The media's coverage of the disease's progression during the 2009 H1N1 epidemic heightened public concern and knowledge. On the one hand, it aided individuals in taking necessary precautions. On the other side, due to incorrect comments posted in some media, some individuals began denigrating ill individuals. This is an instance of how the link between media exposure and illness control works in both directions. After the SARS outbreak of 2003-2004, the media effect framework was created to analyze the effects of the media on epidemiological data. This was ambiguous as to whether media has a generally beneficial or negative influence, necessitating the need to expand the model and research its impacts. Again, the media had a role in the MERS epidemic in 2012. With technological improvements and increasing online access to the general population, public awareness has risen dramatically, pushing improved adherence to critical public health policies. The influence of social media in the MERS pandemic in 2012 and the H7N9 outbreak in China was investigated, with the H7N9 pandemic exhibiting a stronger reaction. It emphasizes the significance of the point of interest.

Following the virus's spread, Asians were vilified and dubbed "Corona" on the streets. Many examples of discriminatory statements were reported, reinforcing pre-existing prejudices. This happened in Toronto in 2003, provoking a patriotic reaction, and it happened once more with the coronavirus epidemic. It had a significant influence leading the Chinese government to close all supermarkets and outlaw the intake of livestock. This was a crucial step in preventing the virus from spreading. Consequently, it gave the entire world a false sense of security, and no one took the necessary precautions when the incidents were limited to China. Another source of knowledge was that the infection had evolved as a byproduct of ongoing nuclear weapons research at Wuhan institutes. It sparked a flurry of tweets about US army soldiers bringing the infection to Wuhan in October 2019 while on military duty. Individuals have been using the media to spread misinformation for a long time. For instance, in 1985, the CIA was suspected of engineering HIV, prompting comparable reactions in official perceptions of the disease's propagation and containment. Such assumptions exacerbate animosity between countries, create imaginary boundaries, and stymie international governance among specialists in the quest for solutions. This transpired also with the COVID-19 vaccine, and the task became a creative and innovative competition between Washington and China rather than a remedy for

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public health. As a consequence, the world's two most powerful corporations have set their eyes on conquering the fight for supremacy and gaining enormous power.

People have developed a tendency of posting every element of their lives on social media. This includes their successes, worries, and excursions on a regular and hourly basis. Since the shutdown began, people's use of social media has surged by 87 percent. Individuals started gathering and believing material from unfamiliar groups and web pages. Spiritual webpages began to gain prominence during upheavals by disseminating false information regarding the virus's prevention and treatment. The questionable claim that the virus exclusively affected the old made the young vulnerable. As a consequence, the virus affected a large number of youngsters. This unfounded and irrational belief spread like flames via the medium, instilling various intellectual and psychological concerns in the aged. There have been reports of aging persons being removed from their residences, and also an increase in incidents of psychological abuse among them. Due to various societies ' fast reactions, the community's perception of the elderly has shifted, resulting in an increase of melancholy among them (Yu, Li, Yu, He, & Zhou, 2020). But from the other side, teenagers, undergrads, and middle school students raced to the coasts to party in readiness for their annual Spring Break, which ended to be hazardous. People's synapses were wrecked by the spread of incorrect material about the virus on social media and many started questioning the importance of social distance (Bishop, Bauer, & Becker, 1998). In addition, job interruptions and extensive usage of social media during free time highlighted concerns such as racism and wealth disparities. Family abuse was also reported on many occasions. This just compounds the melancholy which had already crept in due to the seclusion.

Distress is the usual stress response of humanity to a range of unfavorable situations that happen in life. Those who are helpless to suppress it experience depression and anxiety. Tension can take many different physically and emotionally forms, which vary from person to person. To fight it, some adaptive responses or medications may be required. Individuals rely on the media to remain updated, educated and entertained. During the COVID-19 catastrophe, the media's positive impact in supporting mental stability among citizens was shown. Platforms and institutions have started to publish films about health and wellbeing on social media sites like Facebook and Instagram. Many different meditative approaches were advocated, and the material was made accessible for free. Scholastic ensured that young kids would be able to access books for free and in a timely way. There was a plenty of examples like this. Many university-affiliated individuals began offering personalized learning sessions to children and adults. Numerous organizations were formed to help those who were homeschooling their children by providing out worksheets constantly. Toddler routines at home aided parents to the point where they were immersed in periodic healthful exercises. Additionally, as a result of widespread media promotion, shops began offering substantial discounts on educational toys. Individuals were

reminded of the CDC's numerous helpful instructions for avoiding COVID-19 through conspicuous adverts on widely used social media sites. Through free and widely distributed advertisements, Facebook, Instagram, and broadcast media promoted the necessity of "social distancing" and "staying at home."

Telemedicine is a service that provides health-related information, answers questions, and monitors illnesses to patients through a secure connection, protecting patient-doctor anonymity. However, the telemedicine service has typically been underutilized. According to a poll conducted in the United States in 2017, 82 percent of individuals do not utilize this service (Bishop et al., 1998). The fundamental cause might be due to a lack of supply, particularly in rural regions, or cultural factors. However, in times of cyclones or catastrophe management, the current regime has always used this method. It employs a variety of technologies, including audio-video sessions and consolidated medical information platforms to assist in the treatment of community-based sick individuals (Goel & Gupta, 2020). Telemedicine has become the foundation of clinical treatment in the COVID-19 era. Online patient therapy began at the onset of the epidemic. People grew apprehensive of visiting clinics, even for minor ailments. A hotline was also established to allow individuals to determine whether their symptoms were relevant to COVID-19 testing. The media was utilized to publicize it and so keep the shutdown in place. Many more local remedies surfaced on social media and spread quickly via communications, and steam inhalation was just the start. COVID-19 has yet to be cured, hence any prospective remedy has been offered without the benefit of a legitimate medical study. As a prophylactic step against the disease, it was commonly recommended that people take vitamin C and vitamin D to enhance their immunity and improve their bodies.

Various psychiatric health groups have devised a systematic method to addressing the rapidly expanding mental ailment burden in this time of psychological crisis. Individuals suffering from depression as a result of social seclusion, anxiety as a result of sickness ambiguity, monetary losses as a result of enterprise layoffs, hopelessness as a result of prejudice, and sleeplessness as a result of boredom. The number of individuals who commit suicide is on the rise(Monteith, Holliday, Brown, Brenner, & Mohatt, 2020) . The prevalence of family violence is on the upswing. Grief and mourning at the loss of loved ones are also being acknowledged. In this case, an experienced team has been assembled to assist. Online mental health services are fighting mental illnesses, and online psychotherapists offer free counseling. The public's mental health awareness is being aided by social media. In the middle of the virus's confusion and fear, news outlets played a part in disseminating panic as well. Various news outlets began reporting conflicting information on the outbreak, including the number of infections and fatalities globally.

The map generated by the John Hopkins Center of Systems Science and Engineering emerged as a ray of hope in this dark period. It created a database of those who were

impacted and died as a result of the disaster. Professor Lauren Gardner and her doctoral candidate created the platform, which provides a user-friendly way for public health officials, academics, and the public at large to follow documented incidents and deaths. The ambiguity regarding the virus's geographic distribution was reduced as a result of mapping the virus's transmission throughout the world, making it easier for governments in various nations to develop and implement timely responses. This demonstrates how the internet may help in times of crisis, as it did in COVID-19. It cleared the path for new detection systems to emerge. Another instance is Worldometer, which provides real-time data and news on the coronavirus. It cleared the door for others to create tracking systems, making it possible for the average individual to keep track of their own excel data and utilize it for study or understanding.

This media breakthrough assisted nations in predicting how the pandemic would unfold and, as a result, enabling them to put in place critical precautions at the proper moment. This allowed experts and academics to create several projection algorithms for the pandemic's path, such as developing and directing about the pinnacle of cases and fatalities in each location. It also gave hope in this dire scenario by displaying the number of restorations. Computer-based geographical studies incorporating physio-epidemiological methodologies are already being used to detect new possible epidemic locations. In relation to the publicity of chloroquine, the media is the major source of data and performs an essential role in mass education. When excessively enthusiastic sources disseminate information without sufficient confirmation, it can not only be detrimental but may also have unforeseen repercussions. Social media has played an important and beneficial role in disseminating health knowledge from peer engagement to the general population. Peer support refers to the informative assistance supplied by individuals who are assisting to share their perspectives in order to give health information about the COVID-19 pandemic's health problem (Cuello-Garcia, Pérez-Gaxiola, & van Amelsvoort, 2020). Help to match health-related information demands for social media users is the most productive and beneficial peer support. Patients with risk factors require immediate medical attention. Users are eager to learn new things and keep in touch with others, and they all have a sentiment of affiliation to the same group of individuals.

Individuals gain career counseling through social media and other online tools, which boosts self-efficacy and self-esteem while lowering the likelihood of self-doubt. People who require medical care due to health difficulties must seek health-related knowledge through social media and social contact. Peer engagement via social media and online tools, on the whole, supports communication objectives to maintain human interaction and lessen the social isolation required to address mental health illnesses, melancholy, anxiousness, and secondary trauma. Persons looking for health-related knowledge on the COVID-19 contagion might utilize social media to find it. People have resorted to social media for accurate medical data and to stay

connected with their colleagues, relatives, and family as a result of the coronavirus pandemic, which has put them under a lot of scrutiny and placed their welfare in danger. During the start of the COVID-19 crisis, social media was utilized to disseminate knowledge that might influence performance evaluation. Because most social networking sites enable all users to share content and because there is no professional supervision of health information released on social media, the danger of individuals sharing erroneous information during the COVID-19 issue is seen as the most pressing worry. Inaccurate medical information, unsubstantiated material, and even fake material, such as claims based on evidence on the worldwide COVID-19 outbreak, are spreading at an alarming pace on social media. Meanwhile, incorrect herbal supplements and devoted consultations posted on social media might raise the chance of a coronavirus epidemic (Hussain, 2020). The quick distribution of false information on social media, as well as users' incapacity to distinguish between right and inaccurate information, has heightened community anxieties and worries regarding the development of COVID-19 illness. Nevertheless, based on a person's gender, age, and educational background, their worries and effects on social media may differ.

Conclusion

During the coronavirus crisis, social media sites have a great opportunity to assist, inform and enhance awareness, education, and healthcare, according to the findings of this research. It's also good for preserving social distance and motivating individuals to stay at home and avoid long trips. Although consumers and the general public benefit from the usage of social media, the dangers, and problems that may develop at the community level should not be neglected. As a result, relevant organizations and professionals should educate individuals on how to properly utilize social media. Reliable archives should also be presented to the public in order to acquire knowledge The LitCovid hub, which was built with the backing of the US National Institutes of Health's institutional development program and is constantly updated with freshly scientific publications, is one of these scientific databases. Additionally, during times of crisis, authorized and acknowledged healthcare groups and professionals should be more proactive in these platforms, providing users with the appropriate training while monitoring social media. Governments and experts may also utilize social media encounters to avoid the spread of COVID-19 sickness and other such disasters in the future.

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A Modern-Day Diary: Notes for Future Humans

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Abstract

Time and being can be seen as a space. A modern-day diary is a way of exploring that space or state of being. Outlining and shaping it requires word, image and imagination. The question is framed cultural-philosophically, and the mode of writing is poetic essayism. Otherwise, the creative untangling and differentiation of the poetics of lived space is not possible. After all, the goal is to combine science and art and weave them into the same reflective fabric. The essential aspects include thoughts about the fullness and filling of something, about its fulfilment. Then the present moment is not seen as marking a boundary in just one direction: it is not just an endpoint of the past. Nor is it exclusively the starting point of the future. The present must be seen as a boundary in two directions. The researcher's gaze can simultaneously focus on both the bygone and the future. Consciousness meanders backwards down memory lane and journeys forwards on a trip of anticipation. A moment of insight means the fulfilment of time. Time is right for a deepening of self-understanding. Simultaneously, it also means fulfilling the ideal of self-reflection: an overall picture, clear and enlightened, of the the self's place in time and being. When humans long for the past or dream of the future, they are living in the impasse of a now-moment. It is not a boundary in any direction. It is, in fact, a dimensionless photographic moment. Its spatial self-containedness results in no more than semi-fulfilment. The present becomes irrelevant. In fulfilment, humans themselves are the boundary facing in all directions. The overall perception of the enlightened subject reveals a reality that includes freedom, space, and human existence. Then it is easy for each and every person to exist as their own self.

Keywords: modern-day diary, temporal topos, spatial topos, machine man, essay writing, utopia, life journey

Introduction

This is a narrative within a narrative: a partial story constructing a larger story[1]. Without this framework narrative, the whole would be incomplete. It would lack a plot. It would be like the empty frame of a work of art: a surround without a painting.

Time builds the frame. Being shapes the content. The researcher is both spectator and artist. As an essayist, he plays the simultaneous roles of sender and recipient. From the parts making up the whole, he shapes a unified composition. In its implementation, the composition is a philosophical inquiry: the joint narrative of image and word.

What could the existential recipe mean to a future human? How could we describe this present moment to an inhabitant of days yet to arrive? What kind of existential memory of the 2020s is worth passing on to future times as a document? How would it be possible to make assumptions about the thinking of future humans, and what would we assume? Would their everyday life be reminiscent of the habitual daily course of modern man? Or would some things have significantly changed? What would be similar and what would be crucially different? Would the presentness of the future also mean some kind of period of upheaval? Can time automatically mark a turning point in being? What is the human's place at such existential turning points?

Contemporary observations

There is no shortage of interesting questions. My thinking needs a helping hand. An excellent work to support my reflections is von Wright's book *Ihminen kulttuurin murroksessa* (Man in the Transformation of Culture). In it, he examines Spengler's philosophy of history and focuses on the symbolism of space. What is important is von Wright's observation on Greek and Latin. The text sparks enthusiasm for further rumination: "It is worth noting that there is no word in Greek, nor in Latin, that exactly corresponds to the word *space*. The Greek topos means place, i.e. the position of an object relative to other objects. The Latin *spatium*, on the other hand – from which English and French have derived the word *space* - refers mainly to the distance or gap (between two objects)". (von Wright, 1996, p. 122.)

Here we shall do some adapting and draw a parallel between levels of time and objects. The contemporary observer thus investigates three "time objects": past, present, and future. Perhaps now we could also use the term experiential space. The distance and relationship between the time dimensions are examined through the concepts of memory, perception, and expectation or anticipation. Language and photographs will function as the vehicles of time travel. Likewise, the idea of a period of upheaval is central, which always involves a critical turning point with some aspects undergoing a decisive existential change. Things take a new direction. The spirit of the age changes, becomes different. Usually, the situation then also requires people to apply themselves and make sacrifices. There has to be a steadfast belief and trust in ideals.

A temporal topos is inevitably also a spatial topos: from some point we must make contemporary observations and interpret the present moments of different periods. The precise same physical location means something different in the past, present, and future. Then we are talking about the relation of a place to itself, to its

quintessential qualities in both its past and future. The significance currently attributed to a place changes in relation to the bygone and the hereafter. Often the change and the period of upheaval occur together. In other words, a turning point brings about an alteration in the reality of values – at least momentarily. Of course, some of the changes may be permanent. Contemporary observation needs to be refined.

Nationality and internationality, what was their significance before? And what is the significance of familiarity and strangeness now and in the future? The distance between these states is thus both local (spatial) and temporal. It is also closely linked to national sentiment as well as to one's view of world citizenship. Mere reflection is no longer enough. I need some additional material to support my thinking and interpretations: my deliberations call for literature and photographs.

Professor Mazzarella's extensive production includes numerous interesting works. Her text also lends itself to the analysis of contemporary observations. The book *Alma* is skilfully constructed. It describes phases in the life of Alma Söderhjelm, Finland's first female professor. The Latin word "spatium" mentioned by von Wright occurs as she remembers Paris and the time spent there working on her dissertation. The temporal distance between what was then the present and the past is poignantly described. The past and Paris display themselves as existential highpoints:

 "As soon as I close my eyes, I can relive my walks in Paris. The lines of the beautiful buildings, the Seine with its boats, the twilight above the bridges, splendidly outlined against the heavy winter sky or gracefully in the spaciousness of spring days, the riverfront streets with their boxes of books where I often spent hours browsing and reading, the winding streets, the never-ending boulevards – I liked this more than anything else I've ever liked, with the exception of human beings." (Mazzarella, 2018, p. 119.)

So it is possible for us to get attached even to a place. Or is it that we are attracted to a certain era and a place associated with it? Still, the fascinating attachment to a place is obviously different from the way we become attached to another person. A couple of pictures will help to refine our contemporary observation.

Photograph 1. Vyborg Castle.

Photograph 2. Life in Vyborg Market Square.

The 1940–1941 interim peace and especially the 1944 final peace marked disastrous turning points in Finnish history. There was no going back. The concrete direction of people's existence was forward. Their inner direction, however, was the direction of longing: people's thoughts gravitated back to their lost home and to Karelia. At the same time, two spatium elements also appear in reality: temporal and locational distance. Vyborg begins to resemble the Paris in Mazzarella's work. The most important difference, however, is the difference between coercion and choice. Vyborg remained beyond the border, and it was out of bounds. Alma Söderhjelm, on the other hand, was able to go back to Paris if she wanted. Measured in kilometres, Vyborg was not far from the new border. In time measured by a clock, the distance was still quite short in the 1950s. However, the distances between internal time and the time of longing were quite different. And it is there that the content of eternity is defined in a new way. Even a short temporal difference can feel like an eternity.

For many, photographs one and two probably told of a dreamtime, an era of happiness, and I don't mean the ongoing Continuation War. It is a time of affection and of being at home. So it amounts to the same thing as Söderhjelm's liking of Paris. Yet it is a liking that differs from affection for another person. A return to the blissful past is possible by closing your eyes. Then an eternity transforms into a presence. Temporal and locational distance disappear. Perhaps the moment could be called an expanded instant of imagination or memory. Actually, at this point, the most important thing is atmosphere, which is why we are justified in looking simultaneously at Vyborg Castle and its market life.

What would a person of that time have told a future person about Vyborg? What kind of chronicle would they have sent to posterity in an imaginary future? Perhaps they would have started their description with a short quote from the moving book *Karjala, muistojen maa* (Karelia, Land of Memories). At the end of the book there is a short section of text which includes Lempi Jääskeläinen's eloquent piece "Beautiful, Old Vyborg". Jääskeläinen's use of words is skilful: "Dear old Vyborg – I thank you for everything. For a bright, sunny childhood, when I ran along your old ramparts with my hair flowing and fluttering in the wind and I collected yellow dandelions or their fluffy balls, blowing every seed out and away just like the other children of old Vyborg - and the blue Vyborg Bay sparkled in the dazzlingly bright sunshine…" (Jääskeläinen, 1940, page number missing.)

Modern men and women, beings of the 2020s, how would they read the emotional beginning of a letter? What would Vyborg mean to them today? Probably it would be just a transit point en route to St. Petersburg. If this is a correct assumption, the end result is both sad and without history. Beautiful writing demands the right kind of reader for whom Jääskeläinen's words would be a lived reality and a reflection of a lost time. If a person has lived during the time when Vyborg was part of Finland, they will be able to understand the national significance of the market square and the castle. Admittedly, attachment to a place can also arise from the stories recounted by

people close to you. So, in that way, the Vyborg story may acquire transgenerational importance. Art is likewise simultaneously able to make a similar impression. The narrative power of word and image should not be underestimated.

A short excerpt from Kersti Bergroth's novel *Nuoren lotan päiväkirja* (The Diary of a Young Lotta Svärd) provides a link between the photographs and the extract from Lempi Jääskeläinen. Bergroth's beautiful description brings the reader to a stop: "*We are all thinking of Vyborg these days*. We are beginning to realize that the time to leave Vyborg may soon have come. [– –] Vyborg, my hometown. You are almost like a living creature to me. [– –] No one who has lived in Vyborg can imagine anything as crushingly sweet as spring on the ramparts of Vyborg. It has all the things you long and yearn for – a longing for the sea, a longing for hope, a longing for Karelia, a longing for history. When you are young and walk on the ramparts of Vyborg, you sense the heartfelt rapture of the whole world." (Bergroth, 1940, p. 95.)

How much does the knowledge that something has definitively been lost influence your attachment to your hometown? Jääskeläinen's and Bergroth's attachment to Vyborg is even stronger than Söderhjelm's attachment to Paris. An essential element, however, is probably the idea of the home or being at home. Maybe that's the very reason why photos one and two make Vyborg seem so close. The photos probably also bring back memories of wartime days. We can assume that Jääskeläinen's touching words encapsulate the feelings of an entire generation: "You bring to mind more and more bright new pictures from years ago… You have given me everything under the sun a person can ask for. A home – youth – happiness – a life mission… Then I lost everything with you. - When I left, you stayed to be destroyed and disappear into the night… Ah, dear old Vyborg…" (Jääskeläinen, 1940, page number missing.)

It is as if the power of Bergroth and Jääskeläinen's emotion multiplies and intensifies the amount of affection that Alma Söderhjelm felt for Paris. It cannot be merely a matter of language. Of course, the potency of the description or perhaps even its fervour significantly affects the reader's interpretation. Vyborg Castle has obviously also had a symbolic importance. Its loss and the hoisting on its tower of a foreign power's flag was a concrete sign of the conclusive arrival of "destruction and night". Perhaps it is only at the moment of loss that the magnitude of something is revealed. Then all the platitudes and truisms cease to exist. Nothing can replace the preciousness of a home. Only a person who has experienced loss may somehow understand the overwhelming harshness of the pain. The imagination of later generations is not enough.

One more pair of pictures is needed. An essential element is the Round Tower, still located on the Vyborg Market Square and visible in photo two. Thus, in photographs three and four, the viewer moves inside shot number two: into the Round Tower. And so a very multi-level journey through time begins.

Photograph 3. The tower of books.

Photograph 4. The tower of hospitality.

Understanding the past requires imagination. There has to be an ability to see the time path leading into the past, as well being able to imagine journeying along that existential path. The time landscape also opens up in a forward direction. It is in that direction that the path to the future takes you. Even then, hiking the path requires imagination. In other words, in addition to a destination, you have to somehow know the different stages of the hike.

Professor Mazzarella touches on the path of time in her interesting book *Marraskuu* (November): "It was impossible to imagine what it would be like to be fifty. In fact, it was impossible to imagine what it would be like to be thirty or forty. This was precisely where the problem was: she could imagine how it felt to be like a grandmother, old and wise, with a life already lived, but she couldn't visualize the path that led there." (Mazzarella, 2004, p. 169.)

There is truth in a word. Language is truth's mode of being. The book is the home where word, language, and truth reside. At historic turning points, we endeavour to protect that home of civilization. Or we consciously seek to destroy it. It may also well be that there exist truths from different eras. Can the truth ever be timeless, immutably permanent?

The existential frame of both photograph three and four is still war. The essential and precise point here is that it was the time of the Continuation War. Then things were being recaptured and not merely lost. Who has collected and placed this literary mound in the tower of books? The question is, in fact, of decisive importance. The act of piling is based on either respect or contempt. From the point of view of Finnishness, it can only be a matter of respect. For the Soviet Union, it would have probably meant mere contempt.

However, the curent investigations are not war correspondence or propaganda. Neither is it a question of war toursim. Therefore, any war-related reflections and interpretations will be left for another time. Now the focus is on other things.

In the spirit of Mazzarella's text, it would now be possible to ask, "How, for example, can I, as a person of the 2020s, imagine a path to the towers of books and hospitality?" What about a person of the future compared to me: how will an inhabitant of the 2040s find an existential path back to the past and to the days of the Continuation War? Does imagination backwards differ from imagination forwards? There is written and pictorial evidence of the past. The future, though, can be connected to intimations or harbingers. In general, the inklings we have then mean daydreams or nightmares. It is a different matter to depict the state of the world using memories rather than predictions. Which is why a letter of the past and a letter of the future differ somewhat.

A letter from the tower of books might begin, for example, as follows: "Can contempt for our national society and culture be more clearly visible? Belittling the intellectual achievements of a neighboring nation is an excellent way of showing power. At the

same time, however, it also reveals one's own barbarity." What are all the things that a person of the future could read from those words? Or what things could they imagine finding out from the books?

By following tracks, we can return to the bygone. So how do we then move towards the days that have yet to arrive? The Round Tower was a nationally symbolic place. It was easy for the conqueror to show his supremacy by raising his own flag on the castle tower and stacking up nationally important works in the Round Tower. It is easy for a person of the future to be appalled by such information. The impression can be further heightened by the emotional nature of the description of a contemporary letter sent from the past. The reply posted to the past could also be bemoaning and lamenting in tone. How else could one really think of comforting people who have lost their homes?

A knowledge of history is required. So what would a knowledge of the future then mean? It is possible to write about hopes, expectations and dreams from the past to the future. The essential point often seems to be the idea of change. Actually, photo four is more expressive than photo three. So next it is worth focusing on the eloquence of the fourth shot.

During the period it is recaptured the tower of hospitality means the Round Tower. It also means a return to Vyborg. A suitable guide for acquainting ourselves with the spirit of the age is the *Muonituslotan käsikirja* (Lotta Svärd Catering Handbook), written by Elli Malmgren. In the chapter "Division of Labour in the Group", the duties of waitresses were described as follows: "[Waitresses] prepare sandwiches for the men, take care of food distribution, wash dishes, keep the workplace clean and tidy both during and after work, pack and organize the stores according to lists, wash towels and facecloths, and assist the cook in the initial preparation of foodstuffs"(Malmgren, 1939, pp. 36–37).

The guiding principle of the era could have been hospitality as a duty. It probably means, at least in part, the same as hospitality as a profession. Without one or other of these elements, professional cultural activity is likely to remain soulless, devoid of spirit. In the tower of hospitality, such a procedure would not have worked. The era required dedication. The ability to assign yourself to a minor role was also needed. The ideal of selfless hospitality prevailed. Only honesty of action and dedication could guarantee that war-induced fear would be overcome. It also had to be in harmony with the historical dignity of the place.

The letter to the future could begin as follows: "Dear generations of the ages to come, will you ever be able to truly understand what we have been and are going through right now. It may well be that only those who have actually experienced it for themselves grasp the meaning of the events. Stories heard or read can only convey some kind of approximation of the world of my time." Thus, imagination and empathy will probably remain the means of understanding for the person of the future. And on

their basis interpretations will then be made. Perhaps it simultaneously becomes fiction: truth and fable mingle and merge into each other. What if that really is the ultimate purpose of time travel?

The opposite direction, from the future to the past, would also be of interest with regard to sending a time letter. As a recipient the human of a bygone age would probably find it particularly difficult to imagine the path to the present at the moment of posting. On the other hand, the person of the future might have difficulty to avoid adopting the role of an omniscient narrator. It would be so easy to hand out advice not to do such and such. The descendants' representative would presumably try to steer his predecessor away from making mistakes. Would he not then be playing an omnipotent God?

How to start a letter from the future to the past? Perhaps something like this would be appropriate: "Dear bygone person, I am a little unsure about the correct form of address, whether I should use informal or formal 'you'[2]. Using the polite 'you' form might have been a better mode of address than the familiar one. I'm a child of my time and I choose for myself the more familiar 'you' form. I would prefer not to seem intrusive. I know what all the things are that are waiting for you ahead. I'll venture to say that our nation is working honourably. Such hard and busy times will require a lot of effort. However, industry and diligence will be rewarded. Don't doubt it for a moment. Like many others, I am proud of you." Did I convey the spirit of my own modern age to the human of the past?

The above question should be answered, at least in part, in the affirmative. Our way of thinking and worldview are influenced by, for example, teaching at school, people close to us, literary fiction, films and public opinion. They control the content and formatting of a letter to be sent to the past. This is probably an inescapable fact. Photographs and literature always seem to depict a past that is more beautiful and innocent than our own present-day, which is why we long to go back there. People are nostalgic: they have a yearning for a lost past. This is why the Tower of Hospitality in photograph four is so cogently eloquent. In it, the ideal of hospitality would seem to manifest itself at its best.

A thorough examination of the matter still requires a piece of verbal or literary evidence to support the photograph. Kersti Bergroth's use of language is beautiful and sophisticated. Perhaps the bliss of bygone days also appears in her phrasing. *Kadonnut kaupunki* (The Lost City), a work about Vyborg, touches even today's readers. Bergroth wrote it together with Lempi Jääskeläinen and Viljo Kojo. For example, this work may well have shaped the modern person's image of the era associated with the Tower of Hospitality. It is also apparent in the introductory sentences of the letter above written to the past.

Bergroth's description speaks to us appealingly: "Spring came to us Vyborgians along the seas and along the great lands of the east. It was some kind of world spring, bigger

than elsewhere. Vyborg may have been small, but it received greetings from the ends of the earth, from huge distances. When I think of the Vyborg spring, I remember the tiny little details that radiate the dearest warmth, and the great big space-embracing feelings and moods. (Bergroth, 1951, p. 12.)

I now return to von Wright's thoughts, which were examined in the section "Contemporary Observations". After all, he stated that the word topos means place in Greek: the position of an object in relation to or compared to other objects. The Vyborg of the memory is a different place than the Vyborg of the imagination. To a modern person Bergroth's Vyborg means the Vyborg of the imagination. It would still seem justified to look at the past, present and future as time objects. When you look back from the present, you see things that have happened and that already exist. There again, when you look ahead, the horizon of time is perceived through the eyes of the soul, that is, as envisionments. The past often overflows with nostalgia. The future is filled with utopias. Yearning is involved in both directions. In other words, we dream of returning somewhere or arriving somewhere. The present moment is a dimensionless topos. The constant aim is to leave it, to move or travel somewhere.

Now we should move forward on our expedition. After all, the traveler thirsts to see the big wide world again.

Amidst the ruins of time

Varkaus

It is also possible to send a time letter to the Finland which has survived as Finland. Then the element of the lost local homeland disappears. Or Karelian evacuees had of course arrived in different parts of the country, including Varkaus and Turku. There was also talk of resettled Karelians or Karelian migrants. However, this is not a study of war migration. Therefore, we'll limit our discussion of an important topic to a short mention.

What would an inhabitant of bygone Varkaus write to a future inhabitant about his or her present? Or vice versa: what kind of letter would be sent from the Varkaus of the future to the Varkaus of the past? I'll begin my examination of the matter with a pair of pictures.

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Photograph 5. Commercial Varkaus.

Photograph 6. Industrial Varkaus.

In photograph six, a tank is driving along Mikkelintie towards Pirtinniemi. The functionalist Maxim cinema differs a lot from the other buildings on the street. Or, actually, there are at least three ages or times simultaneously presented in the view. A contemporary probably doesn't see or think about it. Only the gaze of a future person is capable of discovering this feature. It is also a good starting point for writing a time letter.

The dialogue with Dr Mazzarella is also still needed. Her thought-provoking work *Täti ja krokotiili* (The Aunt and the Crocodile) contains some high-quality essay writing. Mazzarella's text highlights the essentials: "Isn't it obsession with experiences combined with the contempt felt for tourists which is the reason we are fascinated by trips that still have the character of an individual adventure, trips that seem to have retained their authenticity? And if nothing else, we surely all nevertheless want our own life journey to be genuine – we don't want to be tourists in life." (Mazzarella, 1995, p. 229.)

The concept of war tourism is only possible from the perspective of the present. In other words, the idea of a time letter written from the present to the past is suitable for its analysis. The goal of modern man would presumably be to have intense experiences. It would probably be the experience of war he would write about in his communication. For him, a visit would be an adventure: a trip to the real sites of war. The requirement of authenticity would thus be fulfilled. He would defintely talk about war tourism and would call himself specifically a war tourist. So in no way whatsoever would he be a war tourist. Supposedly authenticity for him would be to get to ride along Mikkelintie in a tank. This would mean a partial restaging of the situation in photograph five. It would be about some kind of restoration of the past.

The tank and the functionalist cinema tell a story of different times. People of the future have only seen wartime in photographs and films. For them, then, it is somewhat imaginary. Standing face-to-face with a tank gun in a real war situation is different from looking at a photo. After all, there are real ammunition shells and in cinematography just likenesses of shells. Because of this, the man of the past probably does not understand the whole idea of war travel or war tourism. And there shouldn't be anything surprising about that. In such a situation, is consensus possible at all?

Photo five captures a wartime winter moment. It is one instant in the continuum of life. What kind of time letter could be sent from that existential trice to the future? It could begin with the following words: "It is late winter in the early 1940s. There is quite a severe frost. The existential stage is Varkaus' main street, Mikkelintie. This is the centre of business life. Or maybe busyness life, ceaseless, forward-moving existence[3]. From 'somewhere over there' the boom of war can be heard. Here, everyday life continues. The Maxim cinema is showing news films from the front. There in the future, they are just short film reports. For us, they mean a lived life. This is not about an adventure. The fear is genuine. For me and my contemporaries, this is

a bitter experience. My dear successors, maybe for you this is just an art experience. There is an unbridgeable gap between our views. Still, I wish you a safe future."

An extract from the possible reply from the human of the future: "I have looked with fascination at the overall entity formed by photos five and six. After all, they show a journey that starts from Taulumäki Square and ends in a workshop yard. This route could be shown at the present-day Maxim. I would love to watch a cinematographic trip back into history. It would be best if people were offered the opportunity to make an authentic journey in a real tank. That would be an unparalleled tourist experience with the right amount of speed and excitement. I could film it on my smartphone and post my video on the internet. Then other people would be able to admire my journey as well. That would be my war experience."

Indeed, the ideal of shared understanding would not be realized. The journey of both the past and the future human is certainly genuine. Nor do I believe that either thinks of themselves as a tourist on their life journey. I don't even know if someone can be a tourist in their own existential narrative. Even the people in photos five and six were just living their lives. They had not been able to choose the era of their existence. They had arrived in a finished world, an existential framework that was there earlier than they themselves. The boundaries of their life story had thus been drawn even before they appeared. If someone transcends the boundaries of their life story, is he then inauthentic, fake? (See also Itkonen, 1993.)

The environment in photo six is Pirtinniemi: the heart of Varkaus' shipbuilding and munitions refurbishment. Here we are at the centre of Varkaus' metalworking industry. The tank in the photograph has also been refurbished in the Pirtinniemi workshop. In the background, behind the fence, stands the functionalist building of the Kansallis-Osake bank. War and the world of money were thus located side by side. Men dressed in military uniform seem proud of their status and mission. They must have been testing the tank's condition and operational readiness. If a person of the 2020s received a letter from the early 1940s, they would not be able to fully comprehend the prevailing spirit of the age in photos five and six. Nor would someone living through days of war fully understand the essence of this current present. When reading a letter from the distant future, they would surely be amazed and disturbed by descriptions of the information technology era and the coronavirus situation. Human beings are permanently tied to their own present moment. They need imagination to perceive and give shape to other eras. (See also Itkonen, 2012; 2015; 2018; 2020b, for reflections on Varkaus and the spirit of time and place.)

The investigation of Varkaus and Turku will continue in another context. Let this examination be the prelude to a major essay.

Turku

It is possible to be in the figurative, physical and mental ruins of time. Perhaps that first, the metaphorical aspect, is now the most pertinent. War destroys, and peace builds. Does such a rhythm of being also prevail in the rest of life? Or is it just a feature of times of upheaval?

The expressive power of photographs is needed once again.

Photograph 7. Sotalaisten Hill.
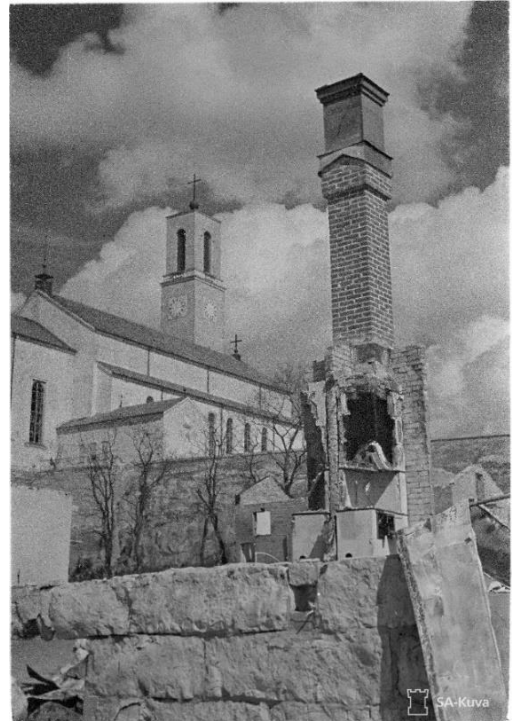
Photograph 8. Martin's Church.

There are many ways a person can be out there in the wide world. Therefore, a crucial element is also the quintessential nature of writing. Professor Mazzarella has interestingly characterized the nature of her essay writing in her book *Elämä sanoiksi* (Life into Words). With great merit she describes the telling of her own life story through writing: "I think of my essays in particular as an invitation to readers to reflect on their own answers. After all, an essay means an attempt, by nature an essay is not an absolute certainty but an open, curious sniffing around: Montaigne, the father of the essay, said that 'he was taking his mind for a walk'. I mostly write rather short sections, leaving a blank space between them. I don't want to connect these fragments together too tightly, I'd rather let readers draw their own conclusions about how they fit together. An empty space is an invitation for the reader to step inside and continue making associations. In recent years, I have also been greatly

inspired by the blog format and the opportunities it provides for combining the big and the small, the experienced and the thought." (Mazzarella, 2013, pp. 41–42.)

It may well be that the essay and the photograph are similar in nature. In keeping with Mazzarella's interesting view, it is possible to think that each is an invitation to reflect on our own answers. Then the respondent also acts as the interrogator. The process is only successful using a thought-provoking photograph or text. It is then a soliloquy: a dialogic monologue inspired by a touching object of experience.

In photograph seven, two girls are standing amidst bombed-out ruins. In the background we see an out of focus Martin Church, as if on the horizon waiting for something. In photograph eight, on the other hand, the church is situated at the centre of perceptual reality. The hands are missing from the tower clock. Does the hands-free clock show the time is zero? Perhaps even when writing a travel letter, it would be worthwhile to follow Mazzarella's principle of leaving a blank space between short sections. The supposed reader fills the gaps by imagining their contents or imagining contents for them. The two pictures are really like an invitation for the reader to enter wartime Turku. The Martin Church seems to take on a symbolic meaning. The chimney rising from the ruins of time is also highly expressive. Now, however, instead of a travel letter, our investigations will focus on a present-day diary.

When a child keeps a diary, it contains no empty trivia. There are no lists with bullet points summarizing the day's events. In the same way, a letter is (hopefully) put together from encounters and experiences.

Nowadays, the problem is the consuming of experiences, some kind of ingestion of lived life. Email and the computer have more generally distanced people from the very essence of writing: you cannot write without being part of that same something. The idea of the technicalization and (at least partial) control of one's existence should probably be regarded as a kind of techno-utopia – and also as the existential milieu of machine man*, robo sapiens*. So let's move on from the consuming of experiences to the actual living of experiences.

What exactly would a modern-day diary look like? What would the modern person write in it? To whom or for whom would they make those written entries? Who would they invite in their text to be a reader of their diary? How would this be affected by the combining of opposites mentioned by Mazzarella? Would connecting the big and the small or the experienced and the thought to each other help make the writing interesting? Or even to formulate it to be warmly inviting? Mazzarella mentions the blog as a text format. So could today's diary be realized as an electronic document, i.e. as a web diary?

I have no hesitation in answering the above question in the negative. A modern-day diary must be in the form of a physical notebook, in which the entries are made by hand. Its essential elements, then, are pen and paper. In this context, I will focus on

the modern diary of the 2020s. I will also engage in a discussion with photos seven and eight. Is it possible for me to act as an unreliable narrator? If so, whom would I be trying to mislead and why? In both photos, the towers rising up from the ruins of time seem to be stretching upwards to the sky. Are they reaching out towards a time of peace? Living in the modern age, I probably look at this scene of devastation in Turku in a different way than those living before me. Still, I would make my entry specifically for them, for those people, to read.

Neither photograph tells everything, meaning that both photos contain blank spaces. Continuing Mazzarella's line of thought, I could argue that blanks and gaps have been deliberately inserted in both images. For the viewer the empty space is an invitation to enter the photograph's time and world. Are the girls looking for firewood to heat their home? Did photo eight want to emphasize the important role of the church and religion in everyday life at a time of upheaval? Is that why the crosses stand out so distinctly against the sky? Even in the midst of destruction, there is still hope left. The spirit of Turku will not disappear. It will not cease to be the oldest and most poetic city in Finland. The people of Turku are even more proud of their bombed hometown. Would such things have been considered by my predecessors? Was the photographer thinking the same way when he composed the view? As a modern person, I can only get answers to my questions using my imagination. However, I venture to say that the photographs speak to me. Without them, I wouldn't be able to imagine anything. Wartime Turku would remain a mute era for me.

I can only indirectly become part of the world of previous generations. I can read various signs of the times in retrospect. They have invited me to reflect on the missing answers. I fill in the missing parts myself and mark them on my interpretative path. So it is that in these my modern-day journal entries I move along that trail. It is entirely possible that my predecessor would build a different path than I have. He might get lost as my path proceeds. Each of us sees the same path in our own way. There are, then, paths for the writer and the reader. They are not separate but nested pathways to being and time where it is good for the writer and the reader to go side by side. It means a stereophonic or dual-channel modern world, with the gaze directed from the present to the past and from there back to the present. It is an omniscient gaze. (See also Itkonen, 2019; 2020a, for reflections on Turku and the spirit of time and place.)

Conclusion

It is probably reasonable to assume that the future is usually imagined to be more developed and more technicized than each moment of the present. Imagination is almost always about a utopia, an ideal time and an ideal society. Humanity needs futuristic fantasies and visions. Otherwise, development will stop.

In her book *Ei kaipuuta, ei surua* (No Longing, No Sorrow), Professor Mazzarella dealt interestingly with the theme of the future dream. In it she describes one day in the life

of Zacharias Topelius. Topelius imagines the twentieth century and new age Helsinki. These are his views of 20th-century Helsinki: "He had often thought of it: the century of mechanics had begun. It was only a matter of time before we would be able to turn water into fuel, when we would sail unobstructed in the sea of the air and beneath the ocean surface, when we would photograph the surface of the moon from a kilometer away, or find the one and only element of which all the existing sixty or seventy so-called simple elements are mere variations. [– –] He had imagined a canal from Töölönlahti to the North Harbour, he had imagined huge factory buildings lining the bay, he had imagined electric-powered ships and electric trams criss-crossing the harbour." (Mazzarella, 2009, pp. 27–28.)

Topelius's utopia is reminiscent of the world depicted in films about the future. His vision is harmonious and full of hope. Technology serves people. It does not enslave anyone. In its electrified form, the future presents itself as a time of happiness and efficiency. It means the poet's view of the days lying ahead. Even modern people find such a view thought-provoking.

English translation by Glyn Hughes

Notes

1) The text is the first in a series of essays from which a Finnish national self-image will be constructed. My philosophical research will also examine the spirit of time and place. I shall draw a verbal artistic creation from the different ages of Finland.

2) Translator's note. Finnish has two forms for the word 'you'. The singular 'sinä' is informal, suggesting friendliness and casualness, whereas the plural form, 'te', when used to address just one person, is considered more formal and polite.

3) Translator's note. The Finnish word for 'business' is 'liike'. The same word also means 'movement, motion'.

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[2] Photograph 2. Photographer corporal E. Heinänen. Online at *http://sa-kuva.fi/*.

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Italian Migration and Entrepreneurship's Origins in the United States of America: A Business History Analysis from the Post Second World War Period to the Present Day

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Abstract

The opening of international markets following World War II highlighted the differences between territories at regional and national level in terms of the attractiveness of economic activities, investment and human resources. In this context, an important aspect concerned the entrepreneurial process: businesses and entrepreneurs have played a leading role in the activation of the paths of economic growth on the product value, employment and international competitiveness. From this perspective, the study of entrepreneurial dynamics - who the entrepreneurs are, their formation, the path followed for the creation of the enterprise, socio-economic and institutional context in which they acted - becomes crucial to understand the influence of economic and social conditions in the countries of origin as well as the employment and market opportunities, infrastructures and attractiveness of the destination countries. From this point of view, the entrepreneurial path is linked to the migration process and requires a study to highlight the relationship between these two phenomena and their impacts on the development and territorial competitiveness. Starting from the analysis of the literature and researches available at national and international level, in this paper we present the first results of a quantitative and qualitative research at the Archives of the American Chamber of Commerce in Italy, as well as in other American economic institutions. The study aims to highlight the scale of the phenomenon in the Italian-Americans economic relations after World War II, the characteristics of firms with immigrant entrepreneurs, as well as the relationship between immigrant entrepreneurship and entrepreneur training. Even though the two authors share the article's setting, please note that introduction and paragraph 1 are by Vittoria Ferrandino and paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 are by Valentina Sgro. Both of the authors wrote the conclusions.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, migration, italian american migration, Italian American relations, economy, economic history.

Introduction

People and goods in the relationship between US and Italy in the post Second World War period

At the end of World War II, Italians needed food, raw materials and capital goods to replace destroyed or obsolete machinery. Almost everything had to be imported from abroad, there was a lack of funds since reserves of gold and foreign currency were exhausted, exports were poor, tourism languished for the destruction of a large part of the ways and means of communication. A third of the national wealth had been destroyed, the income earned in 1945 was halved compared before the war, the cost of living was increasing day by day and unemployment was rampant. The measures taken by the fascist government to prevent the emigration had fallen. The new government implemented a policy to facilitate and regulate emigration, in order to give an outlet to the burgeoning unemployment and recover foreign currency in the balance of payments.

From 1946 to 1947, the deficit of the balance of payments had jumped from 5 to 6.8 billion for the excess of imports over exports and the increased sea transport costs. Immediately after the war, in fact, imports had registered a strong growth both in relation to food needs, both for the essential requirements of economic recovery. Compared to the pre-war period, the balance food presented the most negative trend: in 1938, had been active for about $ 70 million, while in 1946 he presented a deficit of approximately $ 235 million, mainly because of large imports of cereals, sugar and milk. Traditionally, the so-called invisible receipts concurred to cover the trade deficit. Income from tourism had suffered a collapse in the early postwar years due to the lack of means of transport and prohibitions on leaving the country for tourism. The savings of emigrants could cover only 3 percent of the revenue of the balance.

To exit from the crisis, bilateral trade agreements were stipulated with several countries, the International Monetary Fund, the UNRRA plan drawn up by the United States and the plane ERP gave aids. At the same time, there were initiatives to liberalize trade and facilitate international payments. These initiatives allowed the settlement of the trade deficit and that of payments, but mainly they were used to repair the damage caused by the war and start the country's economic recovery. The deficit in the balance of payments disappeared in 1948 (at constant prices, imports had decreased by 8% while exports had increased by 58%) and a surplus of about one

billion was recorded in 1949[1]. The contribution of migrants, as their remittances were able to cover only 5% of revenue in 1949 and approximately 4% in the following year.

Immediately after the war, the major protagonists of the migratory phenomenon were unemployed people of the northern regions and the relatives of migrants who were unable to leave Italy during the war. European countries were the favourite destinations. From 1946 to 1948, the number of departures almost increased threefold, rising from 110.000 to 310.000. But in 1950, arrivals went down to 200.000, and the movement took on the characteristics of the first fifteen years of the twentieth century, which was composed for the most part by Southerners who, unable to find work in the regions of origin, departed for overseas countries. Northerners, however, emigrated mainly in Germany and Switzerland to escape to a temporary labor crisis.

The decrease in 1950 was started slowly in the previous year and was recorded mainly in the direct flow in Belgium and Switzerland, where, due to excessive emigration in the previous two years, the jobs available were sold out, so governments were forced to put a stop to the movement. Even emigration to the United States decreased, due to a crisis of production in manufacturing industries and mining.

From 1950 to 1975, there was a significant change in the traditional patterns of Italian emigration. The expatriation of southerners joined the north in the increasing seasonal and temporary exodus to European countries. Since the early years of the century, emigrating to Europe became more convenient because social insurance for workers had improved and the prices of certain foreign currencies had increased against the Italian lira. The emigration of young people under the age of thirty years to European countries grew, and that of mature men, older than 50 years decreased. The reverse occurs for expatriates in overseas countries. The number of returns increased.

The causes of migration after 1950 are numerous, but at least three are to be mentioned: the search for a stable job and better paying, so the farming craft were abandoned; the increased use of female labor paid with low wages and mainly the type of industrial development adopted in Italy after the war. Essentially, it regarded

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[1] The reduction in imports was mainly due to the absence of accumulation of speculative stocks of industrial raw materials because, as pointed out in the annual report of the Bank of Italy, failing the previous currency speculation among the determinants of their size, stocks were reduced to a level sufficient for the actual needs of the industry, demand that the increasing ease of supply had contributed to the low; the major exports were attributable to finished products and semi-finished industrial products. Their weight, compared to 1938, increased respectively from 36 to 48% and from 20 to 28%, while the food's influence went down from 34 to 20%. Thus, for the export trend was emerging that, as we will see in the future would characterize Italian trade balance.

the production of goods to be exported abroad, those of the chemical and steel industries characterized by high intensity of capital and poor workmanship.

Permanent migration was towards the overseas countries as a result of restrictions on immigration into the United States of America, Canada and Australia, as well as for the frequent currency crises, economic and political Latin American countries. Meanwhile, however, the sedimentation of arrivals during the first half of the twentieth century had produced some important social stratification. The first one was that of the great migration of the descendants of immigrants who came between 1880 and 1920, a group that had been emancipated from their ethnic ambience thanks to university studies and who had reached positions of prestige within the State, the army , in the courts, in the political world. The second one collected those were coming at that time, which were beginning to acquire a specialization, trying to crown their American dream with the property of pizzerias, bars and grocery stores, but also becoming framers, barbers, skilled workers in the construction of galleries[1].

The start-ups of Italian origin in the United States was particularly important at a time when trade liberalization, commissioned by the Italian government in the immediate post-war period, even under the influence of the conditions that the United States had placed at the base of the various aid programs, met with the opposition from some Italian producers who did not share the rapid implementation. The different positions reflected the specific interests of different sectors of activity. On the one side, in fact, there were representatives of small and medium industries in more traditional sectors, from textiles to light engineering, that based their competitiveness in international markets on the widest possible use of labor at low cost; on the other side, there were the representatives of big business, in favor of maintaining protectionist barriers. Even *Confcommercio* lined up in favor of a greater liberalization of trade, outside of individual industrial segments, always in line with the interests of their sector, expressing strong opposition to the import quota system.

Import – Export trends between Italy and the US from the Sixties.

The relationship between Italy and the United States in the years after World War II had gradually stabilized not only from the political point of view, but also from an economic and commercial perspective. In those years, the Italian foreign trade grew rapidly and it gradually extended its range. In particular, the interchange Italy-USA recorded a positive trend for the entire period of the Italian economic miracle and extending until the Seventies.

However, the export of the United States to Italy scored some contraction in 1962 (-3.4%). The export itself, in fact, decreased from 794 to 761.1 million dollars. However,

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[1] The third one, not concerning Italian Americans, might be that of managers, financial experts, entrepreneurs, scientists and contemporary cultural workers, transnational figures par excellence, that might work in New York as in London, Paris or Shanghai.

exposuring such numbers requires a qualification since that one relating to 1961 was particularly high because in that year supplies of American grain have been held to Italy for $86 million with a nature quite exceptional. So, if we abstract from such supplies and confront each other only exports annually recurring, we have that in fact export from the United States to Italy has increased in 1962 compared to 1961 by approximately 8 % and that is even more than the total exports has risen from this country. Moreover, imports from Italy to the United States in 1962 has had a very favorable trend, rising from 376 to 452.4 million dollars, the most that has ever been achieved in a year. In percentage terms, the increase was 20.3%, higher than those that occurred in the importation from any other European country and almost double the increase in overall average (11.4%). The increase of import from Italy was quite uniform despite having registered in certain sectors, such as that of knitwear, special spikes. However, it is interesting to note that the Italian participation in the total imports of the United States is further increased from 2.6% in 1961 to 2.8% in 1962, an increase even more significant when you consider that it was achieved in a market where competition is particularly strong[1].

As far as the sales from the United States to Italy, in 1962, they had been generally favorable , except for the end of the outstanding shipments of grain that took place towards Italy in 1961 and rather sensitive contractions occurred in exports of raw cotton (increased from 65.5 41.1 million dollars) and refined copper (38.1 to 32.7 million dollars). They are in fact increased exports of oilseeds (+10.6 million), raw coal (11.5 million), and especially of machinery and vehicles (+30.8 million). Among the latter, there had been significant increases in American expeditions to Italy of machine tools (5.7 million) and electronic instruments (+2.4 million).

In the metals sector and artifacts, there has been a decline in shipments of scrap iron and steel (2.6 million), iron (2.0 million), Tinplate (- € 1.9 million), and of refined copper (-5.4 million) but, on the other hand an increase in exports to our country of fabricated metal products (+2.2 million) and aluminum scrap (+1.7 million).

In general, in 1962, there was a further major claim of the United States on the Italian market in the capital goods and some raw materials, and was not noticed any substantial change in shipments in Italy of durable consumer goods (radio and tv, office machines, etc..) and goods for immediate consumption.

In the difficult period for Italy, both economically and socially, in the course of the Seventies, the US investment played a key role as it gave skilled labor to over 200,000 people (only 40,000 in the South), spending 500 billion dollars a year in new plants and equipment for 9% of total Italian exports[2]. As regards, in particular, the

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[1] Archive of American Chamber of Commerce in Italy, Milan (A.AmCham from now on), Italian American Business, the Monthly Review of the American Chamber of Commerce for Italy, Vol. XIV, July – August.

[2] A.AmCham, Italian American Business, Vol. XXIX, n. 3, March, 1978, pag. 2.

commercial relations of Italy with the United States, the 1977 was for the interchange Italy - United States the year in which Italy regained a surplus, after four years of deficit in bilateral trade balance. As can be seen from the analysis of ISTAT data on foreign trade, given in the following Table 2, Italian exports to the United States in 1977 almost doubled in value compared to 1975, recording a steady growth throughout the decade. As for imports, the most important values for Italy's foreign trade were recorded especially, and to a lesser extent than evident, just in relation to the USA.

Tab. 2.1 - *Export from Italy to the main Countries outside the European Union (1971 – 1979) (values in thousands of current euros).*

ANNI	Svizzera	Turchia	Stati Uniti	Cina	Giappone	India
1971	227.677	39.378	**474.344**	18.925	37.215	9.886
1972	252.222	46.773	**548.550**	23.173	45.872	15.639
1973	313.280	57.210	**573.896**	22.447	83.955	14.241
1974	426.197	136.496	**776.561**	35.357	109.103	28.856
1975	445.204	164.251	**768.995**	49.437	100.848	29.729
1976	599.094	235.889	**1.038.162**	58.962	138.437	28.465
1977	827.109	224.916	**1.376.938**	40.447	164.241	35.675
1978	1.009.336	202.268	**1.748.312**	82.505	226.349	55.795
1979	1.323.063	238.481	**2.002.221**	119.718	335.756	78.688

Source: ISTAT Archive, *International trade survey*.

Fig. 2.1 - *Trend of exports from Italy to the USA, (1971 – 1979) (values in thousands of current euros).*
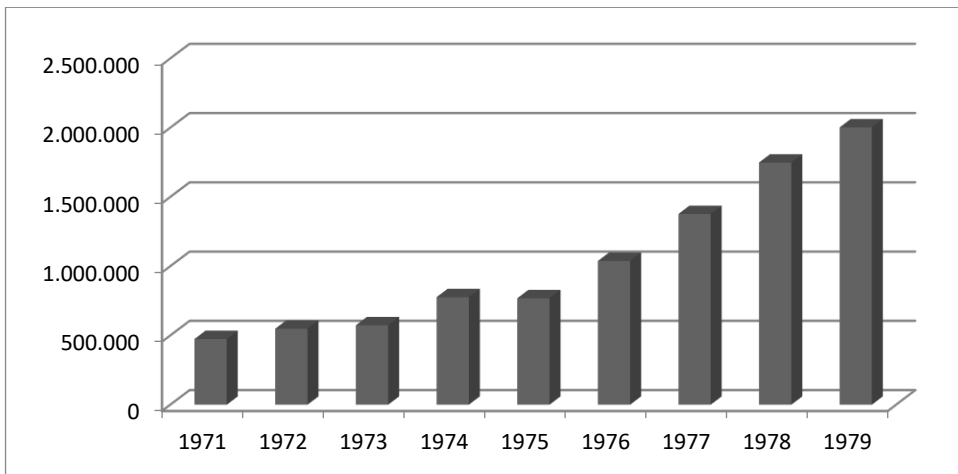
Source: ISTAT Archive, *International trade survey*

Tab. 2.2 *Italian imports from the main Countries outside the European Union (1971 – 1979).*

(values in thousands of current euros)

ANNI	Svizzera	Turchia	**Stati Uniti**	Cina	Giappone	India
1971	109.441	19.454	**460.924**	20.594	63.978	10.260
1972	125.687	22.683	**480.743**	25.469	75.000	15.340
1973	191.501	49.554	**698.267**	38.849	111.757	25.231
1974	283.646	45.493	**1.052.262**	39.434	148.752	32.474
1975	301.321	35.234	**1.132.982**	43.734	154.444	28.824
1976	459.780	96.118	**1.494.280**	67.702	255.824	63.856
1977	595.552	93.518	**1.523.587**	74.269	291.039	76.672
1978	744.353	91.091	**1.672.770**	89.550	297.100	83.159
1979	915.618	128.368	**2.262.376**	169.166	379.757	125.207

Source: ISTAT Archive, *International trade survey*.

Fig. 2.2 *Trend of Italian imports from USA (1971 – 1979).*

(values in thousands of current euros)
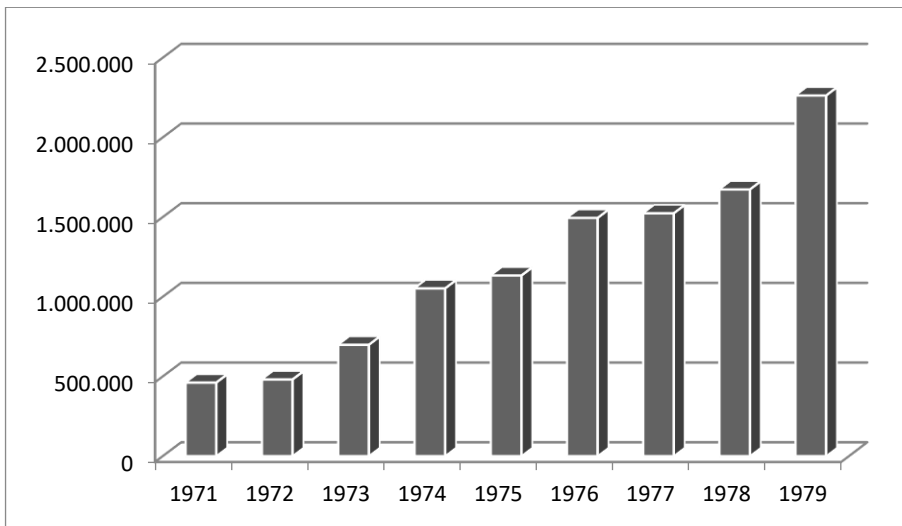
Source: ISTAT Archive, *International trade survey*

The increase in Italian exports to the United States in 1977, however, was less than the total American imports, thus continuing the escaping process of the Italian share of the American import market began in the late Sixties. The key sectors of Italian exports to the United States in those years, jewelry, wine, yarns and fabrics and organic chemicals, they did score significant increases, while the footwear and automobiles continued to lose weight in the total of Italian sales to USA.

In the early Eighties, the Italian export to the United States suffered a severe setback as a result of the intensification of the unfavorable economic situation, the continuing and general price increases which led to a loss of competitiveness in a wide range of Italian and more greater competition from other countries and then even by American producers, whose production costs were lower than those of many Italian products that had also to absorb the shipping costs.

As a direct consequence of these negative factors, there was a reversal in the trend of Italian exports to the United States for which the beginning of 1980, the foreign trade Italian - American closed with a deficit for Italy of 870 million dollars , against a surplus of 669 million dollars in the corresponding period last year, due to a decrease of 12% of Italian exports and an increase of 35.7% of American exports. The decline in Italian exports, which involved a reduction in terms of exchange of 446 million dollars over the previous year was mainly caused by a reduction in exports of consumer goods. The sectors that were most severely affected by the American economic recession were footwear and jewellery[1]. As can be seen from the following table, in the mid-eighties, Italian exports to the markets of the Member States made a

[1] A.AmCham, Italian American Business, vol. XXXII, n. 7-8, July-August 1981, pag. 13.

spectacular leap forward, coming to occupy first place among the major industrialized countries of the OECD and among the newly industrialized[1].

The global value of trade Italian - Americans reached the $ 2.9 billion in 1984, increasing by 33% compared with the previous year. Italian exports to the United States rose to $ 8.5 billion, an increase of 46.1% compared to 1983, while imports from the United States rose to $ 4.4 billion, an increase of 12% compared to the prior year. Italy, exporting to the USA over 15,000 billion lire of goods thus came to occupy the tenth place among supplying countries the United States. This spectacular result can be attributed to the favorable effect of the high exchange rate of the dollar against the pound, but even the more shrewd promotional activities developed by Italian companies.
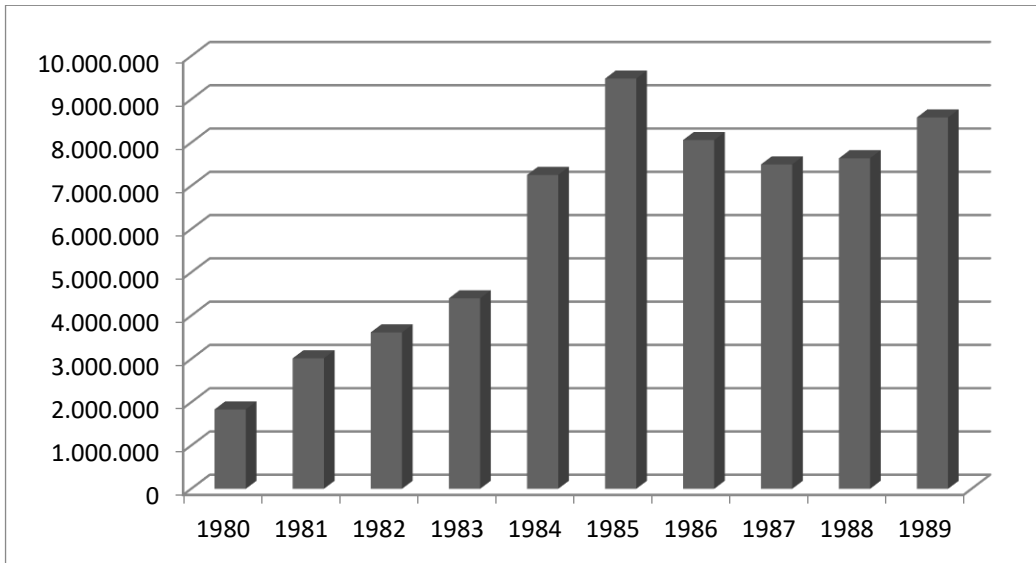
Tab. 2.3. *Italian Exports to the main Countries outside European Union. (1981 – 1989).*

(values in thousands of current euros)

YEARS	Switzerland	Turkey	USA	China	Japan	India
1980	1.524.393	188.977	**1.835.747**	113.652	312.850	108.185
1981	1.784.338	275.594	**3.016.818**	189.842	393.897	153.527
1982	2.045.668	329.996	**3.614.834**	146.368	551.864	200.624
1983	2.362.284	433.999	**4.401.986**	208.193	620.631	208.632
1984	2.709.276	599.102	**7.253.796**	408.188	765.100	264.481
1985	3.135.049	695.482	**9.480.467**	778.496	911.769	270.092
1986	3.412.333	648.651	**8.059.127**	772.190	1.015.441	262.278
1987	3.666.081	704.796	**7.496.061**	729.844	1.244.117	303.766
1988	4.048.144	616.853	**7.639.148**	872.739	1.621.864	263.661
1989	4.450.438	714.541	**8.581.916**	876.622	2.274.552	330.302

Source: ISTAT Archive, International trade survey

Fig. 2.3. *Trend of Italian export to the USA (1981 – 1989)(values in thousands of current euros).*

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[1] http://seriestoriche.istat.it

Source: ISTAT Archive, International trade survey.

Tab. 2.4. *Italian Imports from the main Countries outside the European Union (1971 – 1979) (values in thousands of current euros).*

YEARS	Switzerland	Turkey	**USA**	China	Japan	India
1980	1.123.469	124.261	**3.057.928**	193.485	573.670	117.046
1981	1.704.693	167.286	**3.631.738**	234.482	741.560	133.703
1982	2.057.592	213.808	**4.061.286**	297.790	762.915	153.487
1983	2.445.295	327.563	**3.752.773**	325.327	871.997	143.670
1984	3.150.190	491.138	**4.705.406**	395.114	1.224.816	227.010
1985	3.443.085	453.244	**5.316.528**	578.784	1.460.274	224.499
1986	3.349.383	394.660	**4.387.620**	525.075	1.611.162	193.123
1987	3.991.407	484.132	**4.493.519**	686.294	1.793.127	272.561
1988	4.162.309	642.567	**5.211.354**	962.129	2.349.563	307.559
1989	4.694.085	873.283	**5.910.128**	1.194.840	2.500.106	371.423

Source: ISTAT Archive, International trade survey

Fig. 2.4. *Trend of Italian import from USA (1981 – 1989).*

(values in thousands of current euros)
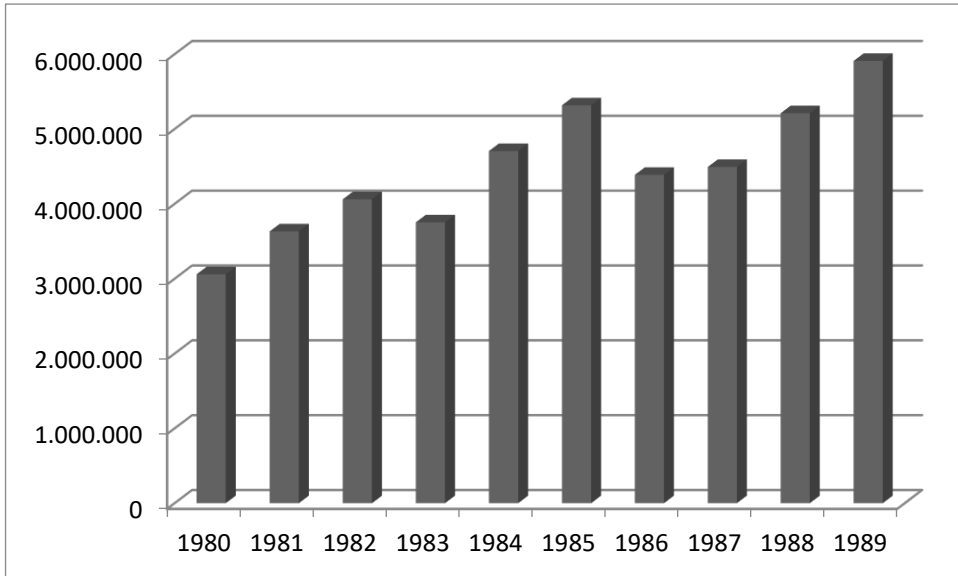
Source: ISTAT Archive, International trade survey.

The American Chamber of Commerce in Italy

The American Chamber of Commerce for Italy was founded in Milan in 1915 by a group of merchants and industrialists who had business relations with the United States and who believed that a close cooperation between the Italian and the American economy would become more and more necessary, being Italy at the eve of the Great War[1]. AmCham met at once the favor of financial industrial and commercial circles, and by the end of that year, it had about one hundred members. The most important Italian companies became its associates and the importance of its function was recognized both by the Italian and American authorities. During the First World War, the Chamber actively collaborated to facilitate trade relations between the two countries and the USA's entry into the war in 1917 deepened the already very cordial relations between the two countries and led to a substantial increase in the number of members. As observed by studying the balance sheets and minutes of board meetings of the Chamber, the serious economic crisis of 1930 and 1931, and, shortly after, the serious restrictions on trade flows with foreign autarkic program introduced by the government of the time, greatly influenced the development of the Chamber. The authority of the institution was in decline, the relationship with the United States became less frequent and the number of members was reduced to about

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[1] A.AmCham, Minutes of Board Meetings from 1915.

350 Practically, the membership of the Chamber meant more like a statement of sympathy to the United States, an expression of faith in the great principles of freedom of trade and international cooperation in the economic field.

With the beginning of World War II, the AmCham had to close its offices and executives took care only to preserve their archives and office equipment. After the war, the communications with the United States were re-opened, the Washington government began a wide and generous support and cooperation policy with Italy and, at the end of 1945, the practices to restore life the Chamber were started. The political and social climate had changed entirely, the urgent need to revive trade with America immediately assured the success of the initiative. Since then the development of the Chamber has been continuous and has shown that the importance of economic relations with the United States is deeply felt in Italy and how much interest our circles productive follow anything done in the United States and the progress that is perform in each field.

The American Chamber of Commerce in Italy is affiliated with the Chamber of Commerce in Washington D.C., the American Commercial Association composed of more than three million member companies. It is also a founding member of the European Council of American Chambers of Commerce, the organisation which protects free trade between the European Union and the United States. In addition to its headquarters in Milan, AmCham's presence extends throughout the major Italian and American cities by means of a network of local chapters. AmCham's aims to develop and promote economic and cultural relations between the United States and Italy, to support and protect the interests of its associates' commercial activities between the two countries, and to disseminate information concerning AmCham's own activities amongst its members. As well as playing a key role as a facilitator of economic dialogue between Italy and the United States, AmCham regularly organizes meetings and conferences with key international decision makers in order to develop and maintain communication links between both institutions and businesses, as well as to promote the development of economic and managerial knowledge required to compete within international markets. Whether by means of business expansion overseas or the pursuit of strategic goals, rapid evolution and commercial sensitivity has become critical to business success. Thanks to a longstanding experience of almost one hundred years, Amcham may be the key partner to your business' success. The American Chamber of Commerce in Italy is able to offer its members a wide range of business support services. From more general macroeconomic analyses to more focused assistance, including the provision of contacts specific to external know-how, AmCham can provide a comprehensive and integrated business support service. Moreover, thanks to our lobbying initiatives, AmCham can provide member companies a «fast track», enabling them to communicate directly with key representatives of both Italian and American economic and political institutions; this

privilege due to AmCham's standing as an institutional authority, after 100 years of activity.

Italian American Entrepreneurs.

Italian roots in most of the United States have had an essential role in the relationships established over the years between Italy and the United States. There have been many entrepreneurial initiatives started both in the US by Italian-American entrepreneurs, both in Italy thanks to the essential role of remittances from emigrants themselves, which sent home much of their savings, positively influencing the Italian balance of payments, but not affecting in a direct way on the socio-economic growth of the country. Very interesting is also how, in the paths of Italians abroad can be observed some well-defined territorial vocations; In fact, while the favorite destination for emigrants from northern regions were mostly European countries, Southern emigrants preferred definitely the transoceanic routes. In addition, since the resumption after World War II, the South of Italy was definitely the most involved area by migratory movement. World War II emphasized the changes in the physiognomy and in the perspectives of the population of Italian origin in America. On one hand, about 3300 Italians were interned in detention camps for suspected fascist sympathies; on the other, more than 1.2 million Italian American soldiers, among 12 million, were engaged in the US Army during the conflict[1]. Emigration was a need not only of individuals but also of the entire country, and although not always Italian emigration has been a great success story, there have been many entrepreneurial initiatives overseas, over the years, thanks to the bravery and the ability of Italian immigrants, or at least people of Italian descent. Italy has become in recent decades a major immigration country, but at the same time has also continued to be an important country of emigration. Italian emigration, in fact, is not only a phenomenon in the history of the country, but a phenomenon that affects in a significant way, even the current situation of the country itself. This happens not only because there are still large communities of Italians abroad who identify themselves as emigrants, but there are still important migration flows between Italy and other countries.

Thanks to the skills brought from Italy, to their entrepreneurial talent and to the opportunities of the American market, many entrepreneurs were able to expand their presence in many sectors[2]. In many biographies, an ethnic trait of the entrepreneurial path taken emerges: Italian wine and food. Wine, in particular, has often been a trait of cultural continuity which gave place to the launch of the wine industry by Italian emigrants in many parts of the world (the United States, Argentina, South Africa, and

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[1] V.V.A.A., Gli Italiani negli Stati Uniti d'America, MAE, Osservatorio sulla Formazione e sul Lavoro degli Italiani all'Estero, 2003, pag. 6.

[2] B. Osborne, P. Battaglia, Trovare l'America, Modena, 2013, Pag. 184.

Australia). More in general, the food industry explains other successful entrepreneurial events (fruit, sausages, chocolate, biscuits, and fish product)[1].

As for the food industry in USA, for instance, in 1888, Amedeo Obici (Oderzo, Treviso, 1878 – Suffolk, Virginia, 1947) immigrated to the United States from Italy and went to live with his uncle in Scranton when he was 11, arriving from Italy with a tag on his coat to identify where he was going since he didn't speak English. He worked with his uncle at a produce stand while he went to night school to learn English. When he had enough savings, he opened his own fruit stand and bought a peanut roaster. He developed a special way to prepare nuts and decided to invest more in peanuts production. In 1906, Obici partnered with a fellow Italian immigrant, Mario Peruzzi, to rent a factory to produce peanuts; they called their business the Planters Peanut Company[2]. Obici realized that prices and first profits were not nearly so important as repeating business and he proved his operation based on quality and brand name were important for continued success. Two years later the business was incorporated as *Planters Nuts & Chocolate Company*[3]. In 1913, Obici built his first mass processing plant in Suffolk, VA. By 1960, there were almost 200 Planters store locations across the country and in 1961, the Planters Nuts & Chocolate Company was acquired for $20 million by Standard Brands, Inc. who eventually, in 1981 merged with Nabisco Brands, which was integrated in Kraft Foods business worldwide in 2000. Today, Planters Peanuts and Mr. Peanut are seen everywhere because of one Italian immigrant who came to the United States not knowing a word of English. Even though he had very little formal education, his initiative, mind set, vision of potential, and ability to advertise boosted him to success. He took something so small, a peanut, and made it a commodity in a growing nation. From owning a small fruit stand to starting the largest peanut-processing company, Amedeo Obici lived the American dream.

Another interesting business history case in the food industry belongs to *Chef Boyardee*. Ettore Boiardi was born in Piacenza, Italy in 1897 and on May 9, 1914, he sailed to America on the French ship La Lorraine[4]. He arrived at Ellis Island following his brother Paolo to the kitchen of the Plaza Hotel in New York City, working his way up to head chef. While working at The Greenbrier hotel in Greenbrier, West Virginia, he directed the catering for the reception of President Woodrow Wilson's wedding in 1915. His entrepreneurial skill became polished and well known when he opened his first restaurant, *Il Giardino d'Italia,*, in Cleveland, in 1926. When customers began begging Chef Boiardi for either his spaghetti sauce recipe, or a sample to take home,

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[1] F. Chiapparino (edited by), The Alien Entrepreneur. Migrant entrepreneurship in Italian Emigration (late 19th – 20th Cent.) and in the Immigration in Italy at the Turn of the 21st Century, Milano, 2011, pag. 28.

[2] V.V.A.A., The Italian American Experience. An Encyclopedia, New York, 2000.

[3] J.J. Bonocore, Raisend Italian-American. Stories, Values and Traditions from the Neighborhood, Bloomington, 2005.Pag. 171

[4] B. Moreno, Ellis Island's Famous Immigrants, Chicago, 2008, pag. 38.

he began filling old milk bottles with his sauce and giving them to customers[1]. By 1928, the demand increased to the point that factory production became necessary. Eventually the sauce sales surpassed even his restaurant's business. In 1938, Boiardi moved his factory to Milton, Pennsylvania and began to develop a national marketing strategy for his food.

Proud of his Italian heritage, Boiardi sold his products under the brand name "Chef Boy-Ar-Dee**"** so that his American customers could pronounce his name properly. During World War II, Boiardi's company was the largest supplier of rations for U.S. and allied forces and for his contribution to the war effort, Boiardi was awarded a gold star order of excellence from the United States War Department[2]. In 1946, Chef Boyardee sold his brand to American Home Foods for 6 million dollars. Boiardi invested much of the proceeds from his company's sale into The Milton Steel Company, which produced goods for the Korean war effort. Apparently, the investment paid off very well, making the already wealthy Boiardi even richer.

Italian-American food, like spaghetti and meatballs, had emerged from the isolation of small Italian neighborhoods in large cities into a general American culinary culture. Pasta and sauce were easy to produce en masse, and could be sold at reasonable prices at a time when the average American didn't have much money to spend on food. Boiardi died in 1985, but his face still appears on cans of *Beefaroni*, ravioli, and other canned Italianesque food.

A successful Italian entrepreneur in the toy industry is Antonio Pasin. He was born in Venice, Italy in 1897, son of a cabinetmaker, he moved to America in 1913 when he was 16 to begin a new life in Chicago. He made his way through several jobs, and by 1917 had saved enough money to purchase some used wood working equipment and rented a one-room workshop. In this workshop, Pasin began fashioning wagons by night and selling them during the day. By 1923, Pasin's business grew to include several employees. They became known as the Liberty Coaster Company, named after the Statue of Liberty. In the Twenties, despite the rising pressures of the times, Pasin and the Liberty Coaster Company pushed forward, with the automotive industry as inspiration. Pasin began using metal-stamping technology to produce steel wagons and with his consistent eye for innovation, applied mass-production techniques to wagon-making, creating, in 1927, he first wagon, the Radio Flyer after his amazement of the radio and the wonders of flight. He renamed his company the *Radio Steel and Manufacturing Company* in 1930. The Depression years were surprisingly good for American toy manufacturers. With one-third of the total population out of work, the American country needed to be entertained. Inexpensive toys with high play value,

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[1] S. Cinotto, The Italian American Table. Food, Family and Community in New York City, Chicago, 2013, pag. 153

[2] S. Scardigno, Mulfies, Stories of immigrants, Bloomington, 2014, pag.169

such as the Radio Flyer Wagon, were very lucrative investments[1] and Pasin became the largest producer of toy wagons, producing 1,500 wagons a day[2]. After World War II, Mario Pasin, the founder's son took over the business and renamed the company Radio Flyer, expanding its offerings to include wheelbarrows, farden carts, and outdoor furniture. But its staple has always been wagons and, in 1987, Radio Steel was renamed Radio Flyer, after its most popular product.

Antonio Pasin died in 1990 but, in 2003, he was honored by becoming the 44th toy innovator to be inducted into the Toy Industry Hall of Fame. To keep up with the technology of the 21st century, the company has released motorized All-Terrain Wagons and Sport Utility Wagons[3]. Today the Radio Flyer Company is still owned by the Pasin family and have a great success thanks to an Italian immigrant young man who was able to create a successful family owned company and create a product that became an American Icon from one generation to the next.

One of the first Italian American millionaires was Generoso Pope. He was born in Arpaise, a small town near Benevento in 1891 and emigrated to the USA in 1906. One of his first jobs was to deliver water to the construction workers, earning three dollars per week. In 1925 he was able to buy the Colonial Sand and Store Company, a company in which he had worked and that became the largest supplier of building materials in the United States, participating in projects such as the Empire State Building and the Yankee Stadium. In 1928, he acquired *Il Progresso Italo-Americano* along with many other ethnic newspapers. Furthermore, Pope was one of the most important Fascists propagandist, as publisher of pro-Fascism papers. His Fascist activities, however, were not entirely subsumed by his newspaper. As a man of influence, Pope played a role in legitimizing fascism by his participation in public events that extolled Mussolini and Italian Fascism[4].

One of Pope's ethnic newspapers was turned into the popular weekly The National Enquirer, directed by the son of Generoso, Generoso Jr., while his other son, Fortunato remained at the helm of Il Progresso which was an important part in the business history of another migrant Italian family, in particular two brothers, Agostino and Carlo De Biasi.

In 1872 Giuseppe De Biasi, then a prominent small town lawyer, married in Sant'Angelo dei Lombardi Maria Antoniello. They raised eight children: Ida (1873), Agostino (1875), Pasquale (1876), Mario (1878), Flora (1882), Esther (1890), Bruno (1893) and Carlo (1896) the donor of the collection. Agostino was the first to immigrate to America. Apparently wishing to elude home-town intrigues, he arrived

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[1] S.M. Scott, Toys and American culture. An encyclopedia, Santa Barbara, CA, 2010, pag. 24.

[2] V.V.A.A., Sharing wisdom, building values. Letters from Family Business Owners to their successors, New York, 2011, pag. 20.

[3] S.M. Scott, Toys and American culture. An encyclopedia, cit., pag. 257.

[4] A.A. Block, Space, time and organized crime, New Brunswick , NJ, 1994, pp. 145-146.

in New York in 1900. Already a seasoned journalist, he became associated with the Italian language daily *Il Progresso Italo Americano* assuming, a few months later, the post of editor-in-chief. He simultaneously served as editor of *Il Telegrafo* (1905-1907) and founded the Philadelphia daily *L'opinione*. In 1908 Agostino's father died and immediately therafter his mother and sister Flora came to New York. In time, Mario, Bruno, Pasquale and Carlo joined them. The latter arrived in 1913. Bruno became a prominent physician, Pasquale a competent journalist associated at one time with *Il Carroccio* and with *Progresso Italo-Americano*. Mario started a successful business venture, the *De Biasi Advertising Agency*. The bulk of the material founded at the Center for Migration Studies of New York City, however, pertains to the journalistic careers of Agostino and Carlo De Biasi. Agostino De Biasi served his relationship with *Il Progresso* in 1911 and assumed the post of editor-in-chief of *L'Araldo Italiano*, another New York daily. In 1915, he founded the journal Il Carroccio, which for the next twenty years consumed all his energies and finances. A monthly review dedicated to the promotion of Italian national interests and culture, *Il Carroccio* served during the Mussolini era as a potent vehicle for fascist propaganda in the United States. Widely read, and highly respected,it numbered among its contributors some of the best journalists from both sides of the ocean. In spite of Agostino De Biasi's fierce Italian loyalties, he fell out of favour with the fascist regime in 1927[1]. *Il Carroccio* was banned from Italy and completely ceased publication between 1928 and 1931. When it did resume, it was only for a short while. Broken in spirit and financially ruined, Agostino gave up the venture in 1935. Withdrawing from active journalism Agostino continued, nevertheless, to write. During the war years – while still an Italian citizen – he contributed unsigned articles to *Il Crociato*, the catholic weekly founded and directed by his brother Carlo. Subsequently he wrote a weekly column which was carried by dozen of Italian American newspapers from coast to coast. He was, moreover, the author of several books, among them: *Tradition of Italian Nationalism* (1911), *The Gesture of Premuda* (1919), *In defence of victory* (1920), *Kara-kiri* (1922), *The battle of Italy in the United States* (1927). Agostino's main occupation after 1935 was, however, the management of the De Biasi Advertising Agency" founded by his late brother Mario. Agostino De Biasi participated actively in the affairs of the Italian American community in New York. He was, for example, the moving force behind the Italy America Society and founded the Dante Alighieri Society in New York. The Italian government honoured him with the Order of the Crown of Italy in recognition of his many services. He died in 1964 at the age of 89. Carlo De Biasi, unlike his brother Agostino, took out American citizenship shortly after his arrival in the United States in 1913 and served during the World War I with the American expeditionary force in France. He was also a talented writer, translator, and journalist and actively collaborated on many books, journal and newspapers. Under the signature CDB he published a weekly column in the *Progresso Italo Americano* on

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[1] Center for Migration Studies - Archives, New York City, De Biasi Family Paper Collection, Series IV

subjects related to Catholic life and culture. He edited several books for the Vatican City Religious Book Company of New York, translated Archbishop Cicognani's book *Sanctity in America* into Italian and edited between 1920 and 1930 the magazine *La Voce dell'Emigrato* published in New York by Mons. Germano Formica. Carlo De Biasi's life work, however, was the catholic weekly Il Crociato, published in Brooklyn under the direction of Mons. Ciocia. He served as its managing editor from its inception in September 1933 through his retirement some three decades later. Carlo De Biasi was, moreover, like his brother, actively involved in Italian American community affairs. He presided over the "Sant'Angelo dei Lombardi Mutual Help Society" after helping to found it in 1925. From 1931 on, he served as secretary of the Italian Benevolent Institute and Hospital, and during the Second World War he worked on behalf of the Italian prisoners of war. His generous services to the community, the Catholic Church and to the diocese of Brooklyn were duly recognized as St. John's University conferred upon him the Doctorate of Letters and the Catholic Church made him a Knight of the Order of Saint Gregory the Great. After his death in 1971 at the age of 75, his widow generously donated this collection to the Centre for Migration Studies.

Conclusion

A system of economic relations does not arise from nothing but it needs habits, relationships, strong shared interests. Companies established abroad by entrepreneurs of Italian origin increased considerably and engaged millions of people. The role of entrepreneurship in the Italian community abroad, however, was not limited in related annual product (the value of orders entrusted to Italian companies and industries). Through the activities of their companies and their image of successful men, entrepreneurs of Italian origin abroad had, in fact, also contributed to the spread of knowledge of Italian products and the Italian style in their migration countries. They favored the commercial success of Made in Italy, and the cultural success of Italian way of life, often supporting cultural initiatives of Italian origin (from libraries to schools). Still today their heritage help to strengthen the already strong commercial, cultural and social bond between Italy and the United States of America.

Anyways, it is well know that each business community, even if linked to more or less consolidated relation systems, basically remains stateless. It does not feel affected by national values but by a behaviour, a taste, a mentality. Big and small Italian brands affirmed themselves not only as Italians but also because they could convey a fantasy imaginary, a taste, those *savoir vivre & savoir faire* that characterize Italian people and can be reproduced everywhere.

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