Case study on Moral Conduct during Confinement by COVID-19 and its Synergy with Civic Education and Politics

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Abstract

In this text are exposed the results of a case study on moral conduct carried out in the Villaverde neighborhood (Madrid/ Spain) in 2020 during home confinement due to COVID-19.

Similarly, it reflects the way in which politics and civic education have synergy with the development of behaviors linked to autonomous morality or heteronomous in people; And the same thing is connected with cultural anthropology.

Finally, the way in which education in values can help to build democratic societies, individuals with critical thinking and the relevance of contemplating the school as an agora of learning at the service of integral development in human individuals, with special Emphasis on the aspect concerning the acquisition of prosocial behavior patterns and the preservation of the natural, cultural and artistic legacy.

Keywords: *Moral development, politics, COVID-19, citizenship education, behavior.*

INTRODUCTION

The confinement caused by COVID-19 marked a before and after in people's lives and, among other issues, revealed what Huanca (2017) indicated about the fact that the human being not only lives for himself as an individuality, Rather, he finds himself constitutively turned towards the members of his own species, being in the relationship with others where he discovers and models himself as a person.

In the previous sense, authors such as Tamayo, Miraval & Mansilla (2020) maintain that the relationship with other humans is essential for development, since the individual exists to the extent that he coexists with others, and is in contact with the community of the same species and even with other congeners how to become truly human, discovering oneself, the others that are part of a us that must be functional and mature (Oronoz, 2021) and the world in which it lives.

Linked to what has been described, as indicated by Leiva, Nazar, Martínez-San Sangüinetti, Petermann-Rocha et al (2020), when the outbreak of coronavirus disease (COVID-19, English Coronavirus Diseases) was reported in the province of Hubei (Wuhan, China) at the end of 2019, no one could have predicted that we were at the gates of one of the biggest health and humanitarian crises in the history of humanity, and neither could they have imagined the psychosocial dimension that the pandemic would bring .

The consequences of confinement during the SARS-COV2 virus had repercussions on various levels for humans, among which the emotional one especially stands out, as Tamayo, Miraval & Mansilla (2020) point out, the social and moral, since the behavior of

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individuals is It was modified, making this question possible to study aspects of moral development at the anthropological and educational level; since, it could be said that humanity faced new moral dilemmas that entailed testing the fruits of the ethical-civic education that they had received up to now.

With regard to the aforementioned, various scientific studies have revealed some of the psychosocial aspects that most affected and continue to affect humans, among which head the list psychological, affective and behavioral disorders that seem to be connected with the way in which the management of the psychosocial effects of the COVID-10 pandemic was proposed from the governmental, social-community and individual levels.

Among the measures for the indicated management, the authors Leiva, Nazar, Martínez-San Sangüinetti, Petermann-Rocha et al (2020), compiled the following:

At the government level:

- Establish short-term quarantine or total confinement measures, emphasizing their altruistic nature.

- Protect intersectorality in the design and implementation of measures to mitigate the effects of the pandemic on mental health.

- Deliver clear and timely information, emphasizing the reasons behind the modalities implemented.

- Ensure provision of food, hygiene, security and basic health benefits for the population.

- Availability of simple and accessible psychoeducational material for the population.

- Promote access to information technologies and connectivity.

- Facilitate access to specialized mental health for vulnerable groups.

- Implement strategies for the promotion and prevention of mental health problems in health teams.

At the social-community level:

- Maintain active territorial and community networks and existing social organizations in the community.

- Strengthen the capacities of social organizations to educate the community in ways that are socially and culturally relevant.

- Establish measures to promote mental health and prevent the psychosocial consequences of the pandemic in school populations.

- Establish collaboration and assistance networks for vulnerable groups (immigrants, the elderly, caregivers of dependent people, among others).

- Censor the stigmatization of infected people or racial groups.

At the individual level:

- Understand that psychological discomfort, fear and sadness are normal responses to an unknown situation.

- Get information through official media and not disseminate information from unreliable sources.

- Maintain health care and use of medical prescriptions.

- Be attentive and ask for help when there are persistent and acute symptoms of anxiety, sadness or irritability, unnecessary and compulsive hygiene or health monitoring behaviors, and alcohol or other substance abuse.

- Maintain habits and routines of personal care, sleep, physical activity and leisure and recreation.

- Develop physical activity and meditation for its beneficial effects on well-being.

In addition to this, in the Community of Madrid (Spain), some issues to be met during the state of alarm were stipulated, such as the following:

• Leaving home exclusively for essential activities, not being able to visit friends and/or relatives except for health reasons.

• Wear a mask indoors and outdoors.

• Maintain a minimum safety distance of one meter with other people.

• Economic sanctions for non-compliance with the rules that were established.

Having indicated the above, it goes without saying that the social scenario of confinement made it possible to carry out studies on the way in which humans behaved, what type of moral reasoning they manifested, and if there was obedience to authority out of fear, out of personal conviction, etc. Being able to link the same to issues of education in values, autonomous or heteronomous moral development, and even to the exercise and perception of governance processes and formal, informal and non-formal education.

At that time, as described in previous paragraphs, mandatory guidelines were offered from the government applicable to the entire Community of Madrid, such as restricting exits from the home exclusively to what is essential, wearing a mask and even not being able to visit relatives at home. In the same way, it was made an obligation to wear a mask in the car itself if he left with another person (even if he was a regular cohabitant).

At this point, it is convenient to think about whether the individuals followed the rules under what is known as moral autonomy, that is, out of their own conviction or if, on the contrary, they did so out of moral heteronomy to avoid punishment or have some kind of reward (as could be in this case the approval of one's own conduct by other individuals of the same community).

Therefore, the study carried out with the synergy between civic education and political anthropology has a lot to do with it, since it aims to analyze whether the informants who answered the survey carried out within the framework of this study seemed to show autonomous or heteronomous morality during confinement, trying to serve the above as a starting point to approach the following question: did individuals follow the norms established at the political level during the confinement due to political imposition or due to an autonomous moral duty?", which in turn, is related to the concept of power and authority in an intimate way, and therefore indissolubly with politics and with the way of educating citizens in values, leading to the question of whether said learning-teaching process was being carried out to promote thinking and autonomous moral behavior or, on the contrary, it was linked more to an education in moralizing values linked to obedience to self (and therefore to moral heteronomy).

This small approach to the issue begins by briefly differentiating the concepts of power and authority based on what is indicated in Kottak, C. (2019) :

Power: the ability to exercise one's will over others.

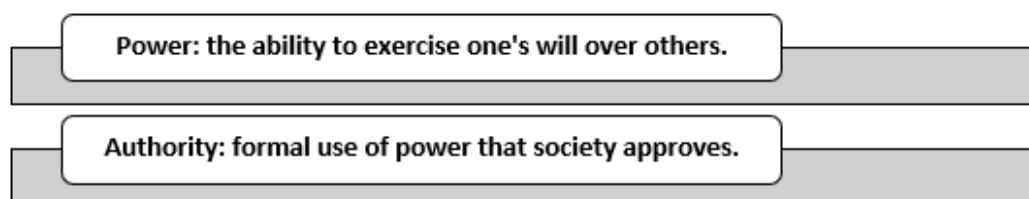Authority: formal use of power that society approves.

Figure 1. Difference between power and authority as described by Kottak, C (2019).

Continuing with the above, it is highlighted that social behavior is highly conditioned by the type of civic education that individuals have received (Espino-Martín, 2017) and, it is highlighted that the Villaverde district is considered one of the most depressed in the Community of Madrid since before the State of Alarm by COVID-19. In this sense, this place was selected to carry out the study to try to verify why the residents of said place accepted the norms stipulated by the government.

For its part, it is pointed out that correct or incorrect behavior in a society is usually framed in a set of rules or cultural norms, and in the state of alarm, these have undergone changes due to the situation that has occurred, now, what Why do individuals proceed to comply or fail to comply with these norms? Is the above question due to an "internalized moral obligation" or simply to "obedience for fear of punishment" or for having "social reinforcement"? To what extent does the social control established by the political system affect compliance with the regulations stipulated by the government to follow during a state of alarm?

In order to provide an approximation to the state of the matter referring to the above issues, a case study was carried out with a sample of 358 participants in the already indicated district.

Next, the material and methods section is reflected, and a posteriori, the results and discussion; as well as the main conclusions that were drawn from the experience.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

In the first place, a narrative review of the scientific literature has been carried out, locating documents on the situation of confinement by COVID-19 in databases such as SCOPUS, Latindex and Google Scholar, having consulted original articles, reports, literature reviews. , nationally representative surveys, conducted in other countries affected by COVID-19, and reports from international organizations such as the United States Center for Disease Control (CDC), and the European Center for Disease Control (ECDC).

On the other hand, to compile the proposals in the management of the pandemic, the information extracted from a search that included reviews, brief communications, surveys and reports from international organizations has been used, identifying a total of 6 documents by the authors Leiva , Nazar, Martínez-San Sangüinetti, Petermann-Rocha et al (2020) in a scientific article published in the Ciencia y Enfermería journal.

Finally, the data related to the study on autonomous or heteronomous moral behavior with residents of the Villaverde district were collected following the sample design that is exposed below:

Table 1. Sample design of the case study.

Sample	358 informants from the Villaverde district.
Universe	145,523 according to data from the Official Site of the Villaverde district board.
Data Collection Tools	Anonymous questionnaire using Google Forms.
Data analysis tolos.	Excel.
Sampling type.	Intentional. The form was sent to residents of the Villaverde district.

Error range	5,17%

The study was carried out between the months of March and April 2020, and it was decided that it would be carried out only in the Villaverde district to try to analyze the moral attitude in an area classified as a conflictive neighborhood, of medium socio-economic level. under.

Given the nature of the research, it should be taken into consideration that there could be social desirability biases in the responses of the informants; however, it was insisted that the responses were voluntary, anonymous and confidential and that in no case would anything be indicated to the police or health authorities on the results collected.

On the other hand, it is highlighted that the answers reflected in the following section were collected during the time of the strictest confinement, in which leaving the home was not allowed other than to buy or go to jobs considered essential and that were not could be carried out telematically.
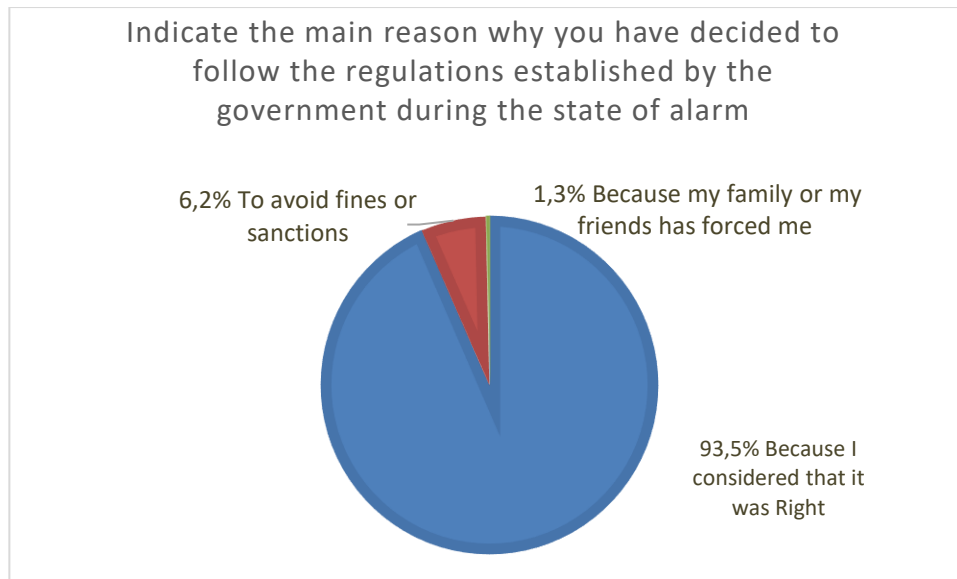
RESULTS

Below are the results of the study carried out in the Villaverde district with a sample of 358 informants whose main objective is to approach the knowledge of moral behavior during the state of alarm caused by the confinement by COVID-19, and reflect on if it is closer to a type of autonomous or heteronomous morality in individuals who resided in the Villaverde district.

•   88.7% of informants indicated that during the state of alarm the confinement was not skipped at any time to see friends or relatives or relatives.
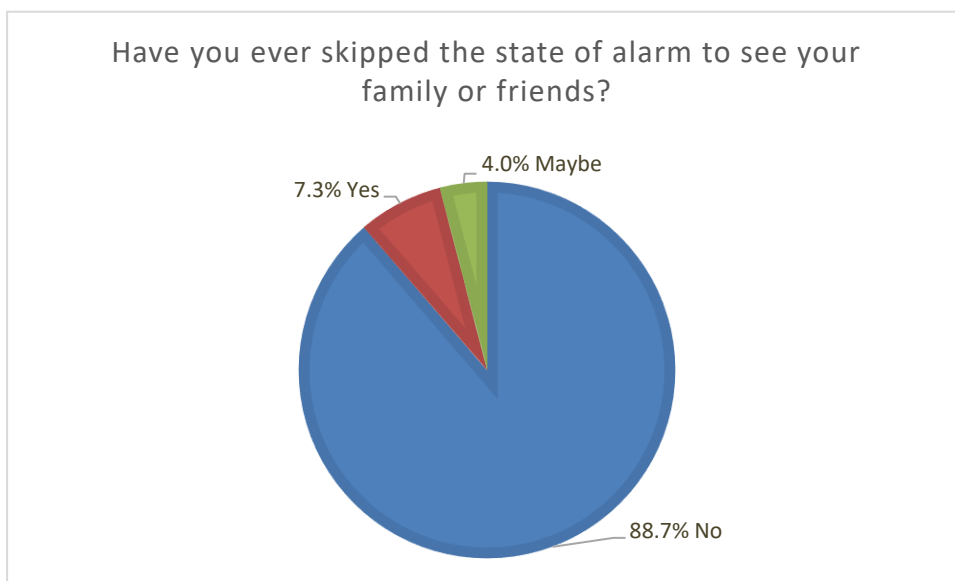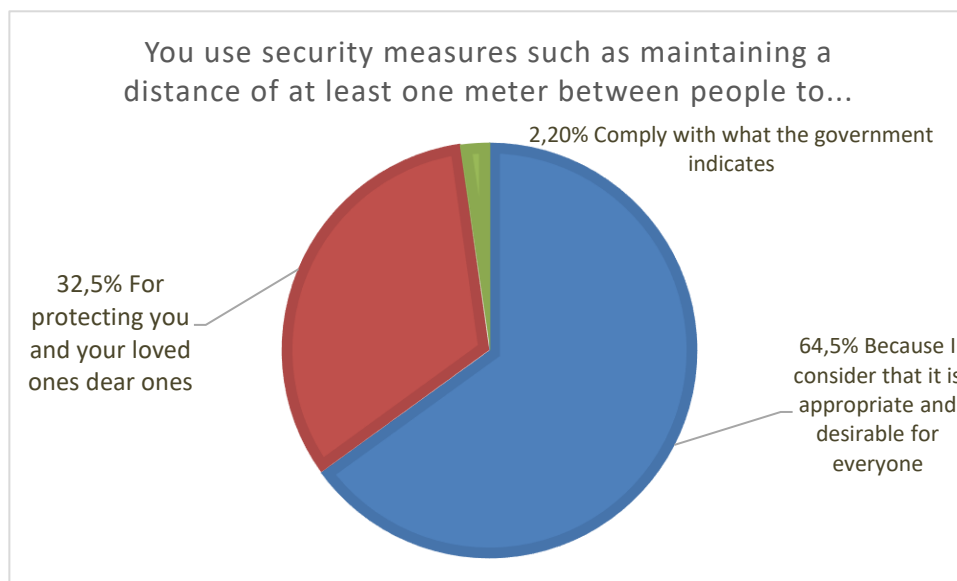

Graph 1. Result on whether home confinement was respected.

•   93.5% indicated that they followed the regulations established by the government during the state of alarm because they considered it the right thing to do.

Indicate the main reason why you have decided to follow the regulations established by the government during the state of alarm

6,2% To avoid fines or sanctions

1,3% Because my family or my friends has forced me

93,5% Because I considered that it was Right

Graph 2. Result on the monitoring of the regulations during the state of alarm.

• 32.5% answered that they respected the minimum distance of one meter between people to protect themselves and their loved ones, and 64.5% indicated that they did so because they considered it the right and desirable thing for everyone.

You use security measures such as maintaining a distance of at least one meter between people to...

2,20% Comply with what the government indicates

32,5% For protecting you and your loved ones dear ones

64,5% Because I consider that it is appropriate and desirable for everyone

Graph 3. Result on whether the minimum distance was respected.

• 54% indicated that they used a mask to protect themselves and their loved ones, 33,3% to avoid infecting others, and 12,1% that they did not use it (1- Mainly protect you and your loved ones, 2- to avoid infecting others, 3- I don't wear a mask, 4- So that the police do not punish me).
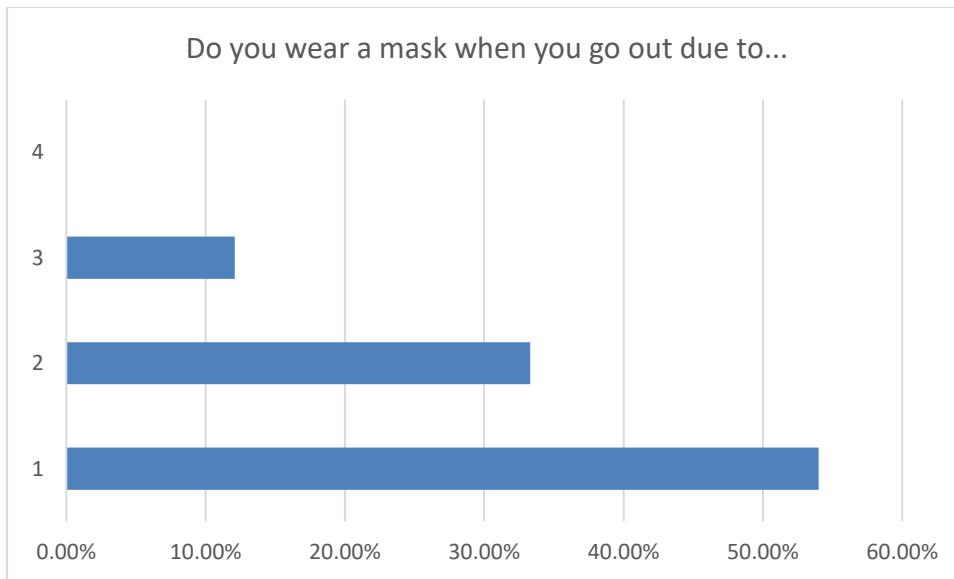
Graph 4. Result on whether a mask was used during the state of alarm

• 81.5% indicated that they did not touch items in stores because they considered it their duty, and 17.2% indicated that they did so to comply with government guidelines.
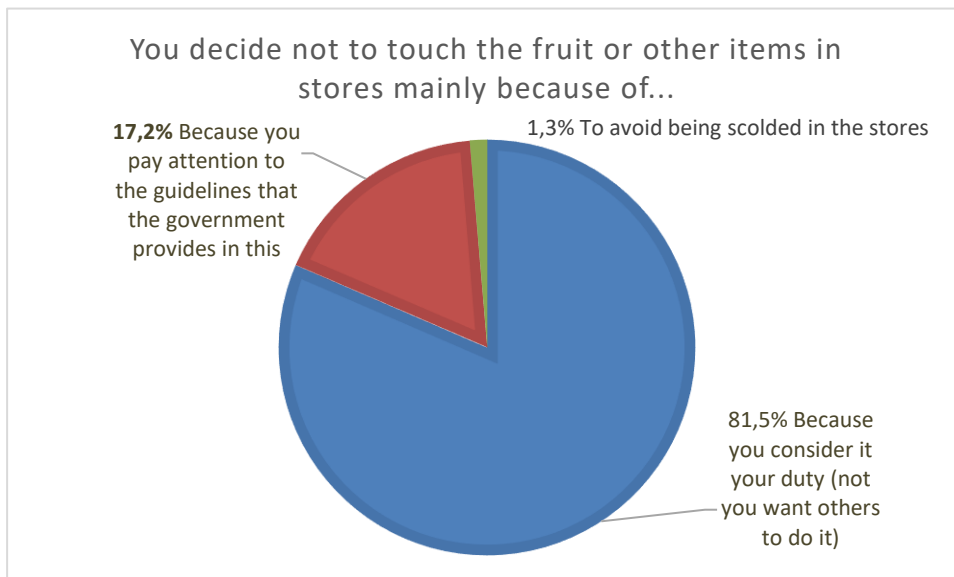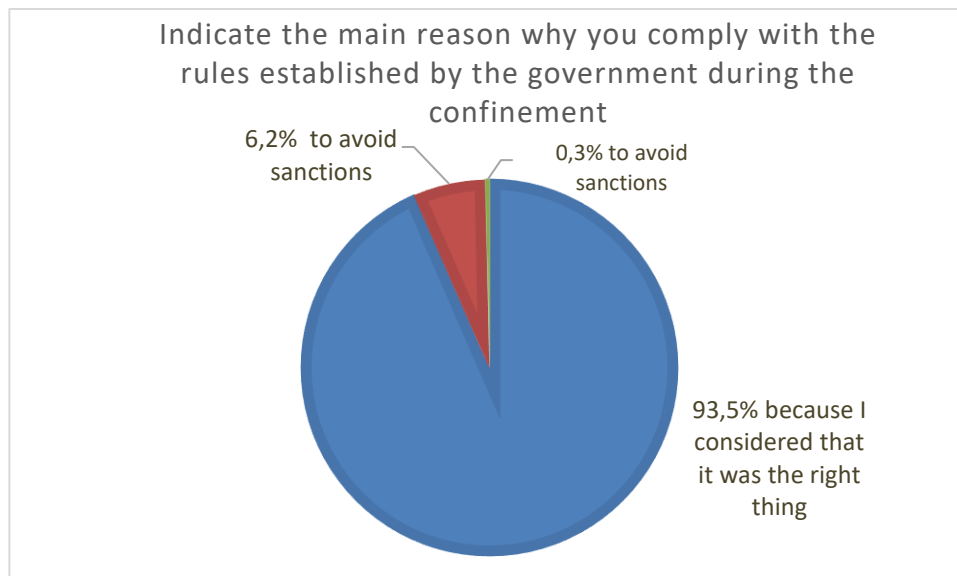

Graph 5. Result on whether articles were not touched due to duty or to obey the norm.

• In relation to the assumptions about what would happen if they did not penalize for going out at any time, 68,5% considered that they would continue to respect the guidelines, considering that it is the right thing to do, and 27,4% maintained that they would continue to be confined at home to protect yourself and your loved ones (1- Would you continue to respect the guidelines because you think it would be the right thing to do, 2- Would you continue to be homebound for protect yourself and your loved ones, 3- You would leave at any time without problem).

If you were not penalized for going out at any time...
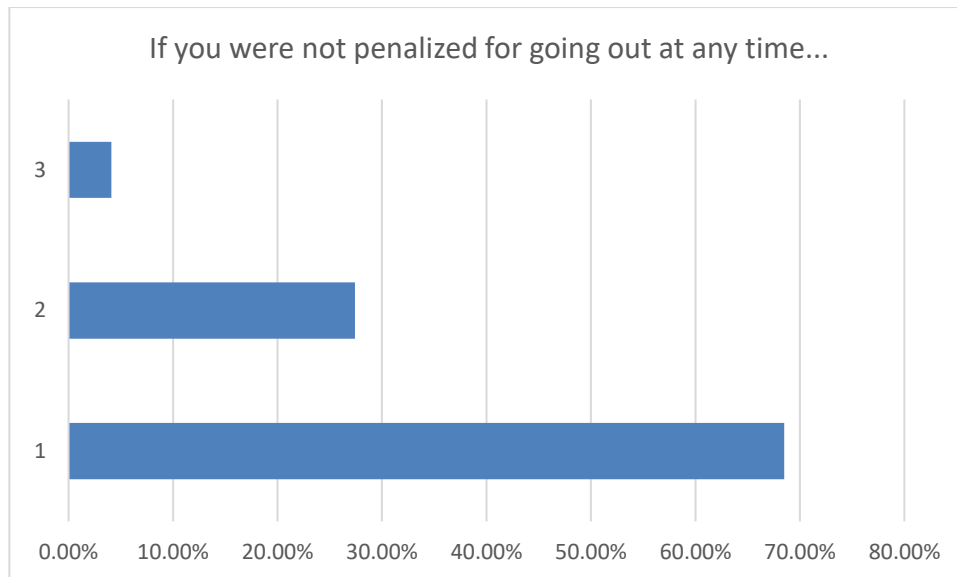
Graph 6. Result on the perception of whether or not the rules would be respected during the state of alarm if there were no sanction.

• 93,5% indicated that the main reason they complied with the rules during the state of alarm was because they considered that it was what they should do, and that they would do it the same if instead of "rules" they were "advice".

Indicate the main reason why you comply with the rules established by the government during the confinement

6,2% to avoid sanctions

0,3% to avoid sanctions

93,5% because I considered that it was the right thing

Graph 7. Result on the reasons why the rules were complied with during the state of alarm.

• 63.2% considered that the residents of Villaverde were not being looked after from politics, 28.5% indicated that perhaps, and 8.3% affirmed that they did believe that it was being done.
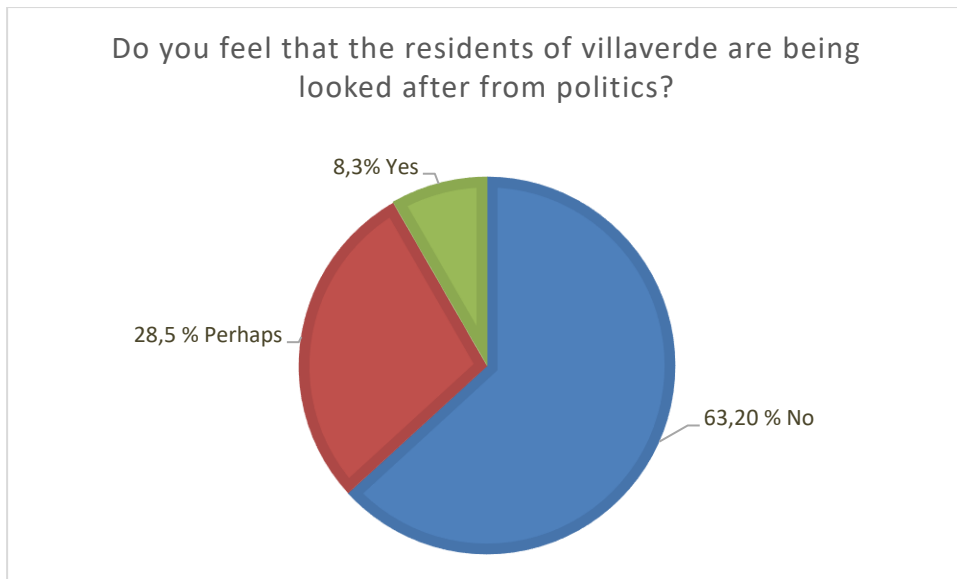
Graph 8. Result on the perception of the informants on whether they felt that from politics they were being looked after as citizens.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

As Lewen (2012) argues in his text "Evolution of the state", currently, in many countries, power is concentrated in the words of a president or head of government, and this can be the object of authentic holocausts with enormous direct and collateral consequences. for populations, an issue that is highly relevant if one reflects on the current situation in the state of alarm for COVID-19.

The previous author speaks of "agricultural and animal domestication" as part of the formation of a new social structure, in light of this issue, one could reflect on the process of "human domestication" that would occur through education, media, and in general derived from any act of intentional communication, which affects the modus operandi of the subjects. For the human, from his earliest childhood, learns significantly through imitation.

In this sense, it is highlighted with the data analyzed, that, in the case of the residents of Villaverde, it seems that respect for the "imposed" norms, during the state of alarm is not motivated solely by a heteronomous morality, but rather could glimpse autonomous morality based on them.

For its part, politics is the way in which humans can become truly human beings, as well as through education (Mosterín 2006); Through the correct grouping, now, what happens to the people when political decisions do not coincide with their minimum ethics? Do individuals act "adequately" before the norms imposed by the political system during the state of alarm for an autonomous moral , or under "orders from others" out of fear or social desirability because a heteronomous morality governs them?

In relation to this question, it is observed that the answers are not so linked to a way of acting merely out of respect for the established norms, but rather, in many cases, obedience to them is reflected to preserve one's own health and that of others. your loved ones.

This is directly linked to politics, and would be the object of study by anthropology.

Within the answers collected, it is possible to make a connection with what authors such as Kohlberg (1982) maintained in his theory of moral development, as well as with the

ideas of Eisenberg, Miller McNalley & Sea (1989) regarding moral development and Social.

In addition to this, what is indicated is indicated that the words of the media, educators and even politicians (García & Rico 2001), can influence the behavior of individuals, who, on many occasions, move for a heteronomous morality, with all that this entails.

Continuing with the idea set forth in the previous paragraph, interventions by leading figures such as certain politicians, who in broad strokes came to indicate that "putting an end to the older population was something valuable at this time", can lead to catastrophic actions by part of the people, in relation to this, Lewen (2012) in connection with the idea of Malthus (1846) that when the population tends to exceed the level of food resources, this tendency is counteracted by disease, hunger and war ", it is worth considering whether it is morally appropriate for a society to allow this type of comment by its leaders.

The data analyzed reflects that less than 10% of the sample considers that the residents of Villaverde were being looked after from politics, which could lead one to think that a significant percentage of people were not satisfied with the actions taken; This could mean that at some point they could be revealed by ceasing to consider reference figures to government representatives.

In the previous aspect, the differences between various "social strata", and even between neighborhoods in the face of confinement, could lead to a decentralization of power if the grouped individuals stopped seeing members of politics who violate their ethics as leaders. minimum, or even against its survival in extreme situations such as current.

It goes without saying that, in order to achieve a true process of self-development to which Lewellen (2012) alludes, it would be necessary for the government to make the pertinent adaptations to the situation that has occurred, although it is difficult for everyone to be happy with the measures taken, a Greater dialogue with the people to reach consensus and avoid the rise of totalitarian systems or violent actions. In this sense, the political system must act with prudence, veracity and other virtues that Aristotle2 already spoke of if it is intended that the people act putting duty before pleasure, prioritizing "we" over "I".

It is also desired to bring to light the idea of "Dominants and dominated" by Lewelen (2012), whose relationships are characterized by the political dominance of the former and the tax obligations of the latter (Claessen & Skalnik, 1978), thereby, the feeling of trust of individuals in their political representatives would be totally necessary to guarantee compliance with regulations.

Next, it is stated that the lack of truthfulness perceived by the people can cause them to lose confidence in politics, and can have an impact on non-compliance with measures such as the use of masks, gloves, going out as little as possible, etc.

On the other hand, it is necessary to reflect on the issue of COVID-19 as an issue addressed mainly from the political point of view; because it gathers all the characteristics of what Kottak (2019) defines as "the political". In this sense, its synergy with population control is mainly highlighted as one of the specialized functions found in all states (Ibidem:135)

At this time, it is worth questioning if this is not separating the issue from the perspective of the social, from the individual, seeing itself as something so global that it falls into the dehumanization of each life, becoming seen as a mere number among the dated figures. as "dead" or "affected" and to which the continued exposure makes the subjects perceive it as "normal" within the news in the news that they face daily.

It is very possible that politics as it is currently conceived, starts from such an egocentric bias that it is giving blindsides due to the inability to broaden its vision and unite with areas so related and that should be indissoluble to it as education.

With regard to the aforementioned, understanding the crisis caused by COVID-19, the component of "trying to undermine the power of rivals" should be eliminated, join forces to promote the achievement of public objectives and reach agreements that allow increase the most effective and efficient measures to deal with an unprecedented situation in which experts would have a lot to say whose words are blocked by the inability of politics to embrace the rest of related disciplines.

Reuniting everything described, and in relation to the concept of legitimacy inserted in the text by Marc J. Swartz, Víctor W. Turner and Arthur Tuden (2019), the values appear; formulated, influenced and modified for political purposes, and "absorbed by individuals".

If the legitimacy of the political system is accepted, it must, without a doubt, promulgate the values closest to the minimum human ethic in favor of the benefit for all, without discrimination for any type of reason, be it gender, ethnicity, socio-class. economy, place of birth or even species. Based on this, the Political Community should foster cooperative relationships that maximize the most pertinent guarantees of quality of life in connection with the ideas of the aforementioned authors.

It is time for the current government to be subjected to the judgment of individuals to verify whether or not it is legitimate based on making decisions according to their expectations, and that is that, as Parsons (1963 b) indicates, it should understood that power rests on legitimacy.

In this way, this would be legitimized, to sanction negative behaviors of those who do not comply with a duty in favor of preserving the safety of their peers. In this sense, an obedience based on the autonomous morality of the "governed" would be desirable. Some type of "citizen duty" focused on a leader whose exemplary performance would be of reciprocal benefit to the political system and to the people with tacit actions at all times should have a rational and legitimized place.

For the above, the code of authority that should be used from politics at all times, would need to rely in an inalienable way on shared values between "powerful and dominated", because otherwise, just as the people vote for their leader, it is It is possible that you turn against him, it's simple, everything is based on symbiotic relationships.

It is highlighted once again, in light of the above, that less than 10% of the participants in the survey felt that they were being looked after from politics, an issue that could have endangered that code of authority to which allusion has been made.

For its part, it is considered that no political system should use non-legitimate elements of persuasion and influence, since this could lead to the obedience of the people encouraged by changes in beliefs and attitudes of people who would act without true knowledge of the causes. Habermasian discursive ethics has much to contribute to this issue.

On the other hand, the results of the survey are positively valued in relation to the reflection of data that indicate a behavior of the residents of Villaverde with a tendency to an autonomous type of morality, which does not seem to reside in mere civil obedience; although in many cases it is not due to an exclusively altruistic behavior, but somewhat self-centered in favor of preserving one's own health, and that of their loved ones.

In turn, great relevance seems to provide the data that broadly reveals the discontent of more than half of the sample in relation to political actions in the district analyzed.

Finally, the importance of promoting a quality civic education that encourages critical thinking and the development of autonomous morality is highlighted, understanding

formal education within the framework of meaningful, democratic learning, in which the school is an agora of learning (Oronoz, 2022), and together with this, the governance processes go hand in hand in the conformation of a society with a true height of human vision, which leads to the valorization of the planet as a whole, as well as of all the congeners that in they inhabit and for the conservation of the natural, cultural and artistic legacy.

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