

Revista da Faculdade de
Letras da Universidade do Porto

Julho – Dezembro 2025
Vol. 53

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Cândido da Agra
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Troels Schultz-Larsen
Kristian Nagel Delica
João Queirós
Bernard Lahire
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DEPARTAMENTO
DE SOCIOLOGIA
DS-FLUP



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Indexação

Sociologia, Revista da Faculdade de Letras da Universidade do Porto é indexada em SciELO, Latindex, EBSCO (Open Science Directory e Fonte Académica), Sherpa/Romeo, DOAJ – Directory of Open Access Journals, Newjour, CAPES e EZB – Electronic Journals Library.

Coordenação e Revisão Editorial:

Assistência editorial: Marta Pereira de Sousa.

Design gráfico: Tomás Ferreira.

Trabalho financiado pela Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia no âmbito do Projeto UID/00727/2025 (<https://doi.org/10.54499/UID/00727/2025>).

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Os artigos foram submetidos a *peer review*.

Depósito Legal: 92384/95 **ISSN:** 0872-3419 **DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.21747/08723419/soc53>

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Editorial

Editorial

Sociologia em movimento: razões substantivas para uma leitura atenta

Não faltam motivos para ler com atenção o número 53 de *Sociologia — Revista da Faculdade de Letras da Universidade do Porto*. Trata-se de um número diversificado, com contributos muito originais e incisivos, que ajudam a ampliar as incidências analíticas e os espaços de questionamento científico sobre a realidade social.

A revista abre novamente com um regresso à obra e à vida sociológicas de Michael Burawoy. Cihan Tuğal, seu colega próximo na Universidade da Califórnia em Berkeley, no artigo "The 'bloody brilliant' sociologist's unfinalized heresy: Resolving Michael Burawoy's tensions to reconstruct the social sciences", apresenta a versão escrita da conferência que dedicou ao autor de "Revisits: An outline of a theory of reflexive ethnography" (Burawoy, 2003), que teve lugar recentemente na Universidade do Porto. Neste artigo, Tuğal concentra a sua atenção nas implicações teóricas e metodológicas transformadoras do trabalho de Burawoy nas ciências sociais, destacando a diversidade de temas, desde a teoria e a metodologia sociológicas até ao trabalho, ao colonialismo e à educação, e salientando o significado das tensões não resolvidas na reconstrução das bases da sua prática científica.

A perspetiva de análise muda de seguida e incide sobre temas específicos, resultado de investigação empírica sistemática. Em "Differences in Driving Behavior Between Professional and Nonprofessional Drivers", Mariana Sebastião Machado, Cândido da Agra e Carla Sofia Cardoso dirigem o seu olhar para as diferenças comportamentais entre condutores profissionais e não profissionais. Recorrendo a um estudo que analisa tais diferenças numa amostra de 560 condutores profissionais e não profissionais portugueses, através de um inquérito sobre comportamentos de condução e histórico de acidentes, o estudo demonstra diferenças comportamentais entre os condutores e a sua relação com os acidentes rodoviários. Por sua vez, José Neves Cruz, no estudo "Rational voting in Portuguese local elections: A fuzzy-set analysis on how corruption, education, inequality and government efficacy affect voter turnout", centra a sua atenção num tema clássico do modelo económico de explicação do voto: o paradoxo do eleitor racional, ou seja, a escolha de votar apesar das hipóteses mínimas de influenciar os resultados. O estudo em questão tem como objeto de estudo a racionalidade do voto nas eleições locais portuguesas, considerando a eficácia do governo, a desigualdade, a corrupção e a educação, a partir de uma abordagem que permite identificar as combinações que explicam a variação da participação. Neste caso, a corrupção e a má governação mobilizam os eleitores, ao passo que a desigualdade desincentiva a participação. Em "*Sport For Life Club*: um projeto de inovação social através do desporto para jovens em acolhimento", André Reis Xavier Pereira e Mafalda Isabel Aguiar Mateus analisam os resultados do projeto-piloto *Sport For Life Club*, que decorreu no Porto entre abril e

outubro de 2024, numa instituição de acolhimento residencial. Ao tomarem o desporto e a educação não formal como fatores de promoção do desenvolvimento de competências socioemocionais em jovens em acolhimento, os autores procuram condições favoráveis à inclusão social. Recorrendo a um dispositivo de avaliação baseado em métodos quantitativos e qualitativos, o estudo demonstra o potencial educativo e relacional da atividade desportiva em contextos de vulnerabilidade social, salientando as mudanças positivas em termos de estabilidade emocional, responsabilidade, empatia, sentimento de pertença e cooperação entre os jovens estudados.

O foco dos trabalhos apresentados reorienta-se, de seguida, para questões com forte incidência no domínio da conceptualização sociológica. Loïc Wacquant, no seu artigo "Por que a discriminação de classe é invisível", lembra a necessidade de questionar as razões da persistente invisibilidade da discriminação de classe. Atentando no debate judicial norte-americano, o autor demonstra como, neste, o posicionamento social é usado como critério moral e preditivo. O artigo defende a necessidade de um quadro analítico preciso que evidencie a normalização institucional da discriminação de classe. Por sua vez, em "Policy schizophrenia and the sociology of fragmentation", Kristian Nagel Delica e Troels Schultz Larsen propõem-se visitar a forma como têm trabalhado o conceito de "esquizofrenia política", introduzido no seu livro *Fragmenting Cities* (Schultz Larsen & Delica, 2024), recentemente publicado, e que tiveram oportunidade de discutir publicamente na Universidade do Porto em maio de 2025. Ao demonstrar como os governos democráticos recorrem a políticas estigmatizantes e discriminatórias para gerir a marginalidade urbana, o conceito de "esquizofrenia política" emerge como uma ferramenta intelectual que permite compreender a inconsistência e os efeitos fragmentadores das políticas urbanas num contexto de inovação burocrática acelerada. O artigo dedica particular atenção à «lista de guetos» dinamarquesa e defende que a fragmentação é intrínseca ao governo neoliberal, registando como a descontextualização, a deshistorização, a despersonalização, a desproporcionalidade, o desacoplamento e a desumanização a concretizam. O trabalho explora também a sua aplicabilidade a contextos nacionais diferentes da Dinamarca, utilizando a ascensão do partido Chega em Portugal como exemplo. Aprofundando o debate em torno do argumento sociológico da obra, João Queirós faz uma revisão a "Fragmenting Cities: The State, Territorial Stigmatization and Urban Marginality".

O último trabalho apresentado também se centra no aprofundamento da conceptualização sociológica. "Em busca das estruturas fundamentais da vida humana. Entrevista com Bernard Lahire" retoma o núcleo argumentativo gerado por um dos mais recentes livros de Bernard Lahire, "Les Structures Fondamentales des Sociétés Humaines" (Lahire, 2023), que esteve no centro da mais recente conferência anual do Instituto de Sociologia da Universidade do Porto, proferida pelo próprio autor. João Teixeira Lopes e António Firmino da Costa entrevistam Bernard Lahire e exploram o quadro teórico proposto na obra que lhe serve de referência e o potencial analítico que alberga, num trabalho em duas partes que também será publicado na revista *Sociologia, Problemas e Práticas*.

Referências bibliográficas

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Artigos

The “bloody brilliant” sociologist’s unfinalized heresy: Resolving Michael Burawoy’s tensions to reconstruct the social sciences¹

Cihan Tuğal

University of California Berkeley

Artigo recebido a 21/12/2025.

Aceite para publicação a 31/12/2025.

Abstract

Through workplace ethnographies on three continents, as well as methodological and theoretical interventions, Burawoy transformed the social sciences. In his last years, he wrote extensively on race and colonialism. He also encouraged his students to apply the lessons of his earlier work to labor in education. These strands of his scholarship sat uneasily alongside one another, and he did not develop an explicit framework to resolve the apparent contradictions between, and within, them. The unfinalized tensions in Burawoy’s late work lay the groundwork for a reconstructed scientific practice.

Keywords: Marxism; Colonialism; Capitalism.

¹ A note from the Organising Committee and the Board of *Sociologia – Revista da Faculdade de Letras da Universidade do Porto*: This text is a revised version of the closing lecture of the 'Três Vivas a Burawoy!' event. This 'brief cycle of tributes to Michael Burawoy', initiated by Ana Cristina Santos, José Soeiro, Lígia Ferro and Luísa Veloso, took place in October and November 2025. The event aimed to highlight the relevance of the British sociologist's legacy, opening a space for collective debate around three central themes of his work: modes of knowledge and public sociology; a critical analysis of capitalism, work processes, and production policies; and the importance of working-class ethnography, revisits, and extended case studies. Organised by three leading Portuguese sociological institutions (CES, CIES-ISCTE and IS-UP) and supported by the Portuguese Sociological Association, the cycle sought to bring together different perspectives, experiences and readings. Held in three cities – Coimbra, Lisbon and Porto – it featured Ana Cristina Santos, Anália Torres, Carolina Fraga, Hermes Costa, Isabel Roque, Isabela dos Reis, João Teixeira Lopes, José Soeiro, Lígia Ferro, Luísa Veloso, Paula Abreu, Rafael Jesus, Romeu Carvalheira, Tiago Santos, Tomás Nery, Vasco Castro Pereira and Virgílio Borges Pereira. On 3 November 2025, Cihan Tuğal attended the final session at the Faculty of Arts and Humanities of the University of Porto, having been invited by the university's Institute of Sociology.

A heresia inacabada do «bloody brilliant» sociólogo: Resolver as tensões de Michael Burawoy para reconstruir as ciências sociais

Resumo

Através de etnografias laborais em três continentes, bem como de intervenções metodológicas e teóricas, Burawoy transformou as ciências sociais. Nos seus últimos anos, escreveu extensivamente sobre raça e colonialismo. Também incentivou os seus alunos a aplicar as lições das suas investigações anteriores ao trabalho na educação. Essas vertentes da sua pesquisa académica conjugam-se com dificuldade, e ele não desenvolveu uma estrutura explícita para resolver as contradições aparentes entre elas e dentro delas. As tensões não resolvidas no trabalho tardio de Burawoy lançam as bases para uma prática científica reconstruída.

Palavras-chave: Marxismo; Colonialismo; Capitalismo.

L'hérésie inachevée du «bloody brilliant» sociologue: résoudre les tensions de Michael Burawoy pour reconstruire les sciences sociales

Résumé

Grâce à des ethnographies laborales menées sur trois continents, ainsi qu'à des interventions méthodologiques et théoriques, Burawoy a transformé les sciences sociales. Au cours de ses dernières années, il a beaucoup écrit sur la race et le colonialisme. Il a également encouragé ses étudiants à appliquer les enseignements de ses travaux antérieurs au travail dans le secteur de l'éducation. Ces différents volets de ses recherches coexistaient difficilement, et il n'a pas développé de cadre explicite pour résoudre les contradictions apparentes entre eux et en leur sein. Les tensions non résolues dans les derniers travaux de Burawoy jettent les bases pour une pratique scientifique reconstruite.

Mots-clés: Marxisme; Colonialisme; Capitalisme.

La herejía inconclusa del «bloody brilliant» sociólogo: resolver las tensiones de Michael Burawoy para reconstruir las ciencias sociales.

Resumen

Através de etnografías del lugar de trabajo en tres continentes, así como de intervenciones metodológicas y teóricas, Burawoy transformó las ciencias sociales. En sus últimos años, escribió extensamente sobre raza y colonialismo. También animó a sus alumnos a aplicar las lecciones de sus trabajos anteriores al trabajo en educación. Estas vertientes de su investigación coexistían de forma incómoda, y él no desarrolló un marco explícito para resolver las aparentes contradicciones entre ellas y dentro de ellas. Las tensiones no resueltas en la obra tardía de Burawoy sientan las bases para una práctica científica reconstruida.

Palabras clave: Marxismo; Colonialismo; Capitalismo.

As one of the most prominent sociologists of the last decades, Michael Burawoy shaped the way we think about social science, Marxism, and life itself ². He owed this impact not only to his legendary theoretical and methodological brilliance, but also to his willingness to discover brilliance in others throughout his participation in the lives of countless people on several continents. Burawoy’s research, teaching, and public contributions provide cues regarding how the social sciences might be able to contribute to creating a better world through learning from the people we study. In this article, I will trace Burawoy’s footsteps throughout his adult life to unpack this impact. I will also discuss the gaps and tensions in his theorization and how we could follow *his* method to resolve these.

Burawoy’s interests pushed him to travel from the colonial world through advanced capitalism to state socialism ... and then throughout the capitalist globe. These travels were deeply shaped by his theoretical proclivities, but also by a deep empathetic engagement with human suffering and his unbending hope for liberation: By a conviction that each person is special, and has the capacity to overcome adversity and contribute to human liberation.

Burawoy was a scholar, first and foremost. But he was also a worker, and in his practices of both, he never quite fit in. And despite *and through* never fitting in and being a heretic, he enabled others to rediscover the world and sowed the seeds of a deep transformation. In much of this article, I will write as if a scholarly path and a proletarian path are essentially distinct. And in most ways, they obviously are. Despite that, in the second half of the article, I will point out that Burawoy’s theorization and cumulative fieldwork prepared the scene for a *generalized labor theory* of scholarly and non-scholarly existence.

I begin by summarizing Burawoy’s first set of ethnographic studies and describing how his initial statement regarding a research programme captured the crosscutting themes of that field experience. I then discuss how multiple factors problematized his earlier research programme and opened the doors to not only a reformulated scientific programme but an entirely new way of approaching social theory. In the second half of his scholarly trajectory,

² Thanks to José Soeiro and other members of the audience for their questions during my presentation at the University of Porto, Zachary Levenson and Tyler Leeds for reading and commenting on the text, and Justin Germain and Leslie Salzinger for providing feedback.

Burawoy formulated his boldest theoretical statements. But as the following section shows, since he was so deeply committed to the study of practice, these abstractions were guided by his exploration of new empirical realms: knowledge, education, and intellectual work regimes. In the final two sections, I assert that a rethinking of the unresolved tensions within Burawoy’s theory, in interaction with fresh empirical studies and praxis, will pave the way for a radically transformed social sciences.

The worker-scholar’s travels from African mines to Eastern Europe’s factories

Burawoy’s first major research project was situated in the mines of post-colonial Zambia. He worked there in the Personnel Research Unit (PRU) of the Copper Industry Service Bureau as an office employee tasked with crafting job evaluation schemes, a position from which he sought to act as both a participant and observer of (what he would later call, following Marx and Braverman) the labor process. Out of this study emerged his MA thesis and his first book: *The Colour of Class on the Copper Mines: From African Advancement to Zambianization*. Burawoy (1972) pointed out in this text that the color bar shifted, but did not disappear after independence. Whenever black workers were promoted, their white supervisors would be promoted further upward, resulting in administrative overload.

Echoing Karl Marx and Frantz Fanon (1968)³, Burawoy explained this post-independence persistence of racial hierarchy based on class interests. The allegedly color-blind job evaluation schemes he helped build actually served to reinforce the color bar, along the interests of the young post-colonial capitalist state. They evaluated performance through crudely “mathematical” reasoning and were blind to social context (Burawoy 2021a, pp. 56-61). The post-independence reproduction of what we today call “racial capitalism” incited Burawoy to dig deeper into the hard-to-discern forces that render inequalities resilient.

³ As discussed further below, Fanon deeply shaped Burawoy’s thinking and teaching for decades. He further developed Fanon’s point that that races, like classes, aren’t monoliths. He also took from the *Wretched of the Earth* the point that the Black working class was itself stratified and fragmented.

His disillusionment with this attempt to have quick social impact put him on a path to seeking a PhD degree in the United States. His doctoral studies at the University of Chicago and the field work that accompanied them would culminate in his classical book *Manufacturing Consent: Changes in the Labor Process Under Monopoly Capitalism* (Burawoy, 1979). As a machine operator at agricultural and construction equipment company Allis-Chalmers in the 1970s, Burawoy participated in the games Chicago laborers played to make life enjoyable and bearable. Such games, concocted to pass time, ironically had the effect of making workers more productive because they had fun as they willfully submitted to capitalist discipline, which they augmented through their own playful acts.

Burawoy’s ideas about the American factory were an expansion of Antonio Gramsci’s (1971) analysis of Fordism. The Sardinian wrote in open awe of how the bosses of the New World built consent within capitalism’s satanic mills. Burawoy’s findings, and their Marxist-Gramscian interpretation, transformed the sociological study of work. When he began his career, industrial sociology was myopic. It focused on the firm at the expense of broader historical and structural forces. It refused to speak of the capitalist system as a whole as the general matrix in which the firm was shaped. He rattled industrial sociology by fusing Marxism and participant observation. But in a few years, the impact of this fusion went far beyond industrial sociology. Burawoy’s work demonstrated that all macro-processes have micro-foundations and vice versa, that the quotidian and the structural are part of a singular process — an approach that transformed many sociologists’ handling of macro-structures, micro-dynamics, and generalizing theory. The fusion of macro-structural analysis and subjective viewpoint was considered heresy until Burawoy, and those influenced by him, institutionalized it. But his heresy didn’t stop there.

After writing his classical book on American capitalism, he traveled to the state socialist world to work in its factories. This step, counter-intuitively, resulted partially from his interactions with the staunchest of anti-Marxists. Rather than dismissing their harsh criticisms of his early work, he incorporated them — an incorporation that shaped his research trajectory. Robert Merton, one of the top sociologists of the 20th century, contended that Burawoy had not demonstrated his claims that the undemocratic nature of industrial bureaucracy in America

emanated from the capitalist nature of the economy, rather than industrialism as such. A defense of the Marxist critique of exploitation would require comparison with industrial bureaucracy in a non-capitalist society (Burawoy, 2009). Burawoy appropriated Merton’s criticism and used it to fashion a heterodox Marxism based on his studies of labor in the state socialist world.

His first idea was to study the Solidarity movement in Poland. However, after the repression in 1981, he was forced to shift to Hungary. His work in that country’s factories, as well as interactions with its scholars, reshaped his ideas about socialism, and also about *how* capitalism should be analyzed and criticized. For Burawoy, an honest, critical, empathetic, and realistic engagement with socialism was absent in much of the thinking on the Left and the Right, as he explained in a paper co-authored with Hungarian scholar János Lukács (Burawoy & Lukács, 1985):

“Both orthodox Marxists and neo-classical economists are guilty of a methodological error: comparing an empirical reality of one society with an ideal type of another. Marxists have tended to undertake a critical analysis of capitalism through a usually implicit comparison with a speculative socialism – a society without classes in which individuals are reconciled with the collectivity through their self-conscious making of history. This ideal type is usually left unexamined and is therefore utopian. At the same time Marxists avoid examining actually-existing socialism... as a relevant contrast to capitalism. They have generally regarded such societies as in transition between capitalism and some “true” socialism..., a form of capitalism..., or a legacy of pre-capitalist “Asiatic” modes of production.” (p. 723-724).

This salvo against Marxist orthodoxy⁴ was not just heterodox, it was heretical. In making these claims, Burawoy upset and disturbed Marxists of all stripes during the last decade of state socialism. Figures like G. A. Cohen, who built a Marxist theory in dialogue with liberalism precisely by dismissing actually-existing socialism as well as unreconstructed Marxists who

⁴ Notice that in the quoted passage Burawoy uses “orthodoxy” in a very broad manner, including arguments (such as Cliff’s “state capitalism” accusation against the USSR) that would be considered “heterodox” by other measures.

ignored the horrors of state socialism, fell afoul of Burawoy’s injunction to an exploration that would be both critical and realistic.

As importantly, Burawoy argued against *critical* traditional Marxists like Ernest Mandel and Tony Cliff, who maintained that the USSR and its satellites were either state capitalist or degenerate, i.e. not worthy of sympathetic and analytical consideration as case studies of socialism. As in the seminal *The Radiant Past*, his solo-authored and co-authored books and articles on socialism advanced the idea that these were cases of socialism, and the problems they faced were those of socialism with “bureaucratic-despotic” factory regimes (Burawoy & Lukács, 1992). Exemplifying a pattern he would repeat in the rest of his studies, he incorporated some core ideas from anti-Marxist thinkers but reconstructed them for Marxist purposes. He adapted neoclassical economist Kornai’s thesis that “shortage” was the main tenet of state socialism. Burawoy believed that this could only be overcome through cooperative labor and democratic bargaining of factories with central authorities – his antidote to both Kornai and Stalinism. State socialist societies faced additional difficulties because they dealt with labor shortage through bureaucratic despotism or at best “bureaucratic bargaining,” pushing themselves into underproduction.

Unlike “Western” or other critical Marxists, he dove into state socialist factories, sweated there as a blue-collar worker, and traced the promise of socialism in the practices of the laborers under these authoritarian states. He participated in these now-failed experiments not to serve as an apologist for state socialism, as did the rapidly shrinking number of uncritical Marxists during that fateful decade, but to look for the promise of the future *in the actual, concrete practices of concrete laborers themselves*, rather than in abstract socialist theory or a revolution forever-relegated to a distant horizon.

Burawoy’s quest for a democratic transition from within state socialism culminated in frustration (Burawoy, 2009). Critical Marxists who argued that “socialist” bureaucrats were in fact building capitalism turned out, to his dismay, to be partially right. Nevertheless, as his books and articles demonstrated, the transition from state socialism to capitalism was not a foregone conclusion. And as importantly, the fulfillment of critical Marxists’ prediction did not

salvage traditional Marxism in its entirety. As other heterodox Marxists in socialism studies also underline, bureaucratic tendencies similar to twentieth-century state socialist ones will most likely kick in during any attempt at socialist transformation. Marxists therefore need more analyses of social dynamics, including but not restricted to classical forms of class struggle, that can secure the gains of labor and democratically expand them under such circumstances.⁵

Politics of Production: The early research programme

Burawoy crowned his studies of factory regimes under colonial, advanced capitalist, and state socialist cases with an ambitious theoretical statement, which can be seen as the condensed expression of the first two and a half decades of his scholarship (Burawoy, 1985). This breathtaking book was published in 1985 but shaped what he would do for yet another decade. Even though the book’s explicit and central topic is factory regimes, *Politics of Production* harbored insights that he would carry forward into his 21st century scholarship too.

The book had two interrelated goals: 1) reasserting the role of the industrial proletariat in social change, without assigning it a messianic role, and 2) emphasizing the centrality of production without taking an economic stance. In other words, it emphasized the ideological and political aspects of the productive process. Burawoy’s criticism and reconstruction of Marx and Braverman were core to this project.

Marx’s model of capitalist production *and especially of the labor process* (as developed in *Das Kapital, Volume 1*) is based on England. Unlike *Volume 2*’s theorization of reproduction and *Volume 3*’s arguments on the tendency of the rate of profit to fall, *Volume 1*’s statements on the labor process were untouched until Braverman (1974). Braverman’s model transformed Marxism by arguing that the essence of monopoly capitalist production is the separation of execution and conception.

⁵ For a recent discussion along these lines, see Zhang (2024).

Burawoy pointed out that Braverman’s statements were timeless and did not take geography into account. Braverman could not capture how, and more importantly, *why* control is essential to the capitalist system; he idealized early, competitive capitalism and ignored the deskilling therein; and ultimately fell short of exploring the core contradictions of late, monopoly capitalism. The real core of the capitalist mode of production is the *securing and obscuring of* surplus appropriation, according to Burawoy. Overemphasizing the separation of execution and conception brought Braverman to a magical hope for this separation, whereas putting the emphasis on surplus appropriation draws attention to class struggles. In short, an adequately sociological outlook required us to revise Braverman’s reconstruction of Marx, and pay more attention to the *ongoing* ideological and political struggles in factories, and how they paved the way for social change.

A comparative analysis allowed Burawoy to break away from the timelessness of existing sociology and of Marxism. He posited four major types of factory regimes: hegemonic; market despotic; bureaucratic despotic; self-management. He also pointed out that there were variations within some of these. However, rather than handling these factory regimes as separate ideal types, he developed a relational model in which these developed in response to each other. Bottlenecks of early market despotism (market chaos; overproduction; revolutionary class struggles) gave birth to hegemonic factory regimes in the West and bureaucratic despotism in the East. Hegemonic factory regimes produced their own contradictions and class struggles, as a response to which new forms of (export-oriented) despotism were born in the colonies, with their own class and class faction struggles. These developments ultimately undermined hegemony in the West, pushing most factories into hybrid (hegemonic-despotic) regimes.

Burawoy thereby reconstructed Braverman, who failed to theorize the historicity and specificity of the late American system and took it as the culmination of capitalism as such. Burawoy, by contrast, pointed out that all of these regimes are specific nodes within the *combined and uneven development* of the world economy. For instance, the specific factory regimes, even in socialism, were responses, in part, to the world market.

What followed was a repudiation of the messianic investment in the proletariat (understood in the economic sense) *without* an abandonment of all investment of hope in class struggle. The working class was still central to social change in Burawoy’s interpretation of the world, even though its struggles led neither to the downfall of capitalism nor to the triumph of a non-despotic socialism — another lesson absorbed from Fanon and reconstructed with late 20th century sociological language. Coupled with other social struggles and with factional conflicts within and among metropolitan and colonial bourgeoisies, proletarian struggles accounted for shifts from one factory regime to another in world-historical time.

But if class struggle was not over and done with nor paved the way for a non-despotic socialism on its own, what should be the scholar’s next step? Here, there were many troubling, or even *existential* difficulties for Burawoy. After the end of the 1980s, he turned his attention to the Soviet Union and then to ex-Soviet Russia. Unintentionally, he ended up studying post-socialist paths to capitalism. Based on these empirical studies of the 1990s, Burawoy produced some of his best work (e.g. Burawoy, 2001; Burawoy & Krotov, 1992). Nevertheless, in stark contrast to his fieldwork in Africa, the United States, and Eastern Europe, he never wrote a book on Russia! How to explain this *quite uncharacteristic* move?

Burawoy tangentially discussed this issue in a few lines in his autobiography: “I looked for lineaments of a countermovement to the market [in Russia] but discovered only a new authoritarianism. ... Although I saw Russia as the leading edge of a global descent into a neoliberal dystopia, I couldn’t connect the dots to the rest of the world... The darkness of the moment outweighed any light of a better future” (Burawoy 2021a, p. 157). I have also heard, through informal channels, about some technical difficulties he was having with the data. However, in my interpretation, the issues went beyond these. The 1990s – including his fieldwork in Russia – were a major moment of soul-searching and self-reflexive reconstruction for Burawoy. The existential crisis and the intellectual crisis reinforced each other. He could no longer stick to the entirety of the research programme he laid out in *Politics of Production*. He wanted to retain the anti-capitalist and anti-despotic sensibilities that shaped it, but neither the conjuncture nor the longer-term processes (at least as understood within the confines of his existing research programme) justified his stubborn commitment to Marxism.

This soul-searching, along with several other factors, heralded his turn to questions of education and knowledge, and ultimately, also to post-colonialism and theories of race.

The agenda for 21st century Marxism

If Burawoy’s “long 1990s” did not culminate in a book on Russia or the Soviet Union, it did produce two now-classic books co-written with his graduate students (Burawoy *et al.*, 1991; Burawoy *et al.*, 2000). These were not only among his most important methodological interventions but also attested to his commitment to education and mentoring. In this section, I will explain how his practice as an educator and mentor went beyond reflecting his theoretical commitments. It helped him reconstruct sociology and Marxism and refurbished him with fresh hope after his dark 1990s.

If you go by surface appearances, in the early 2000s, Burawoy shifted in a more “subjectivist” direction than he would have approved in the 1970s and 1980s. He started to emphasize the transformative role of non-proletarian social movements. In his earlier studies, he seemed to be criticizing the so-called “Newer Left” regarding this stance (e.g. see *Politics of Production* (1985)). But this was only a convergence with them in appearance: a Gramscian reconstruction of Polanyi allowed him to study and interpret apparently non-proletarian social movements in a clearly socialist and materialist manner.

In a seminal article, Burawoy (2003) laid out what he perceived to be the three core postulates of classical Marxism: 1) classical Marxism overemphasized the capitalist economy’s tendency to crash; 2) overinvested in the escalation of class struggle; and 3) assumed socialism would follow from the coupling of this crash and struggle. Gramsci and Polanyi, by contrast, noticed that advanced capitalism usually developed economic and civic mechanisms both for the appeasement of economic ills and for the containment of class struggle. Gramsci was better at analyzing the historical legacies of civil society, but Polanyi had a more global-theoretical theorization of its modern genesis. Polanyi also had a more explicit theorization of how the demise of liberal capitalism can lead to three distinct routes: socialism, social democracy, and

fascism. However, he failed to appreciate the persistence of capitalist hegemony in the “embedded markets” of postwar democracy.

Burawoy’s Gramsci-Polanyi synthesis led to *the three core postulates of sociological Marxism*: 1) the capitalist economy is perpetually marked by occasional crises, but *capitalist society* and *state* develop the tools to regulate them; 2) class and other social struggles mostly help capitalism innovate and discover new ways of reforming capitalism, even though they do harbor potentials that could undermine it; 3) the path to socialism can be paved only through a coordinated long-term strategy of bringing disparate struggles together, not through class struggle or Polanyian “embedding” alone.

Burawoy also criticized the productivism of Marxism (including even that of Gramsci), which led theorists to neglect the realm of exchange and commodification as primary sites of social struggles, with strong potentials for socialism. We could argue, however, that he bent the stick too far in the “exchange” direction in this article, culminating in the argument that the productive sphere could no longer offer any space for organizing anti-capitalist struggles (2003, pp. 230-231). We still need a “production” foot of hegemonic struggles, which Burawoy appeared to grant in other pieces he penned in the following years. (E.g. notice his emphasis on the “abode of production” in his and his graduate-student co-authors’ study of the university). You can’t build ecosocialism, for instance, without a new approach to production, shouldered by a new working class. This and other loose strands require a broader reconstruction of the points made in this article for a fuller programme for 21st century Marxism.

In the last pages of the article, Burawoy also underlined the centrality of postcolonial criticism and gender. These pages show us the way forward: the integration of postcolonial theory; then, as his later work further emphasized, race theory; along with a reproductive-feminist theory into the Gramsci-Polanyi synthesis. *However*, these final remarks do *not* exhibit the “neatness” and parsimony of his “three postulates” and counter-postulates.

Nevertheless, he left many guidelines behind. For instance, when it comes to colonialism, postcolonialism, and race, Fanon informed his thinking from very early on. In his latest

writings (and also, very unfortunately unpublished public and teaching lectures) he sought ways to rethink the entire Black Marxist tradition for a retheorization of race. In a synthetic article on Du Bois and Fanon, Burawoy (2025a) discusses both thinkers’ shift from a relatively (if unevenly) subjectivist phenomenology to a phenomenologically informed Marxism. Nevertheless, his discussion of the overlaps and differences between Fanon and Du Bois does not culminate in a coherent framework that accounts for Black experience. The text, just like Burawoy’s writing in his last decade in general, appears to imply that a thorough deepening of Black Marxism would eventually lead to a sufficiently Marxist reconstruction of sociology’s theorization of racial domination (see especially the third paragraph of the article’s conclusion). Yet, this case is never made explicitly. For a viable reconstruction of Marxism on this front, we will need more sustained attempts from theorists working across disparate geographical and racial contexts⁶. A racial/ethnic counterpart of Burawoy’s Gramsci-Polanyi article is awaiting its authors.

The couple of essays and articles he penned on Palestine also harbor some hints on where his thinking was headed. Burawoy’s (2025b) final piece on the issue “prefigured,” in his own words, the contribution he hoped to make. The essay argues that the different trajectories of settler colonialism in South Africa and Palestine – one ending in compromise, the other in a genocide – can be traced back to their material roots: This happened because the first is based primarily on labor exploitation, the latter land appropriation. South African capital’s dependence on racialized exploitation gave the Blacks “structural power.” Since Israeli capital’s dependence on Palestinian labor declined over time, and especially after the early 1970s, the indigenous population became redundant from its standpoint. Burawoy was careful to point out that this material difference did not exhaust the contrast. He analyzed differences of international and local politics and movements, including the influence of the Right in both contexts, to further theorize the differentiation. We see the general Gramscian formula repeated for this particular case: exploitation-based “compromise” and

⁶ Tyler Leeds, Zachary Levenson, and Marcel Paret are currently editing some of Burawoy’s unfinished essays and articles on Du Bois, which might provide even more novel ways of thinking about the unresolved issues discussed here. Zachary Levenson and Marcel Paret are also working on reinterpreting his contributions regarding race and capitalism.

expropriation-based “irreconcilable conflict,” Burawoy stated, are “*only potentialities* which, in combination with the balance of military forces, *set the terrain for political and ideological struggles*, which have international as well as national determinations and repercussions” (emphases mine).

Just like in the case of Black Marxism, Burawoy’s superb comparative analysis laid the groundwork for an expanded Marxist theory of settler colonialism but did not result in generalizable postulates in the manner of his Gramsci-Polanyi article. True, one can see the traces of a Gramscian-Polanyian restructuring of the theory of colonialism and postcolonialism here: starting with labor and land, and then building up to associations and politics. But how would his ongoing dialogue with Du Bois shape the translation of these analytical insights into bold *theoretical* postulates? Michael had not yet provided a formula when he was taken from us by a reckless driver. Again, the well-rounded answer awaits future Burawoyians.

Knowledge production and labor

In this second phase of his scholarship, Burawoy focused most on education. Can we find more solid clues regarding a reconstructed Marxism there? In this sphere, his retheorization was more deeply intertwined with his own practice.

In lecture halls, office hours, and even one-on-one interactions with colleagues, Burawoy embodied the 3rd thesis on Feuerbach: Marx’s insistence that it is essential to educate the educators themselves. He learned from everybody, everywhere. He would start many a conversation by saying, “I don’t assume anything” or “I don’t know anything, you need to tell me.” Curiosity, hunger for knowledge, and sincerely treating every interaction as a source of possible new insights... These made him who he was. Even after he became a Berkeley professor, he took summer courses from graduate students! One of these courses would in fact lay the groundwork for his and his graduate students’ ongoing interventions in methodological debates for decades to come.

Along with not being able to perform heavy manual labor after his fifties, his ongoing – actually, increasing – commitment to education was one of the reasons why Burawoy turned his lenses to the academia and intellectual labor. Unlike myself, he was not fascinated with post-structuralist thought. But he understood how Foucault (1977) extended one key point, the seeds of which were already in *Das Kapital* and Gramsci’s *Prison Notebooks*: “prisons resemble factories, schools, barracks, hospitals, which all resemble prisons”. Despite privileged academics’ protection and deceptive isolation from broader capitalist forces, he provocatively asked his students if we (along with the intellectual and manual labor force that sustains our cherished research time) are living in the post-Fordist factory (or prison). When I arrived in Berkeley in the mid-2000s, I noticed that some of Burawoy’s colleagues and students called the corridors of the Social Science Building “the mills.” The wording might have been around before Burawoy, but his reconstructed Marxism helped me figure out what it really meant (beyond being a dark and depressing joke). Nevertheless, he called being a part of Berkeley Sociology his dream job, too. In all seriousness and irony, he most certainly meant both. He dedicated his last two-plus decades to transforming “the mills” from within, in solidarity with lecturers, students, and manual workers who had been waging the fight for a long time.

This wasn’t only a local and specific fight. Sociological Marxism was committed to expanding and transforming the entirety of higher education, as one part of a broader anti-capitalist and anti-despotic struggle. Foucault (1980) famously glorified the specific intellectual (i.e. expertise-based professional) against the “universal” and “organic” intellectuals. Burawoy’s research and life exemplify how Foucauldian “specific” struggles can be fought with a solid orientation to integrate them with a global anti-capitalist horizon, so sorely lacking in much of post-structuralism-inspired thought.

In his last decade and a half, Burawoy studied higher education, knowledge, and intellectual labor. He underlined the emancipatory potential of public education, which was increasingly colonized by privatization. Education reached higher numbers of people from disadvantaged backgrounds, but in market-oriented United States, this also brought together with it administrative bloat and incredibly high salaries for top bureaucrats. Moreover, the economy

is in no shape to absorb the increasing number of college graduates. Burawoy argued that this gave birth to a ballooning “precariat,” which led many of the explosive social movements of our era, such as Occupy Wall Street.

Core to Burawoy’s reorientation in the second half of his professional life was an emergent, expanded theory of labor. With his students, he studied educational and more broadly intellectual labor as an essential, under-theorized part of the labor process. In the 2000s, he had a relatively more Habermasian angle on the potential and limits of education. He studied education and the social sciences as a core part of what this greatest inheritor of the Frankfurt School called the “public sphere” – a realm of interactive and creative human action which needs to be protected from colonization by markets and states. Even though this pedigree is often neglected, his development of the concept “public sociology” (Burawoy, 2005) was through a creative reinterpretation of Habermas⁷. But in his last decade, he and his students increasingly applied the lessons of his *earlier* research to the questions of education and, more broadly, intellectual labor (Burawoy *et al.*, 2024). This collaborative work underlined that much of the exploitative processes identified in *Das Kapital* (and further theorized by Braverman) applied to intellectual labor itself. Nevertheless, argued these sociologists, autonomy and flexibilization – rather than the totalistic control theorized by Braverman – allowed intense exploitation of intellectual laborers. These “labor process”-related points are front and center in his collaborative publications with his students, and each of his student’s own work, but Burawoy’s solo-authored articles still put most emphasis on the commodification of knowledge (if now from a more Polanyian rather than Habermasian angle) rather than labor exploitation. This is yet another of the unresolved tensions of Burawoy’s later work, and its resolution will mark one of the key frontiers in developing an expanded labor theory of social life.

⁷ Bourdieu was a more explicit reference in his work on education and intellectuals (Burawoy, 2019). I am deliberately avoiding the topic of his relationship with Bourdieu and Bourdieusians in this essay, since that relationship is much more complex than usually noticed by Burawoy’s interpreters, and my divergent interpretation (which is partially based on my contentious disagreements with him regarding Bourdieu in countless conversations) would require a meticulous unpacking of both authors’ texts.

Even though these contributions are necessary steps towards an expanded theory of labor, Burawoy and his students have not (yet) linked the exploitation of intellectual labor to the broader exploitation (of manual labor, reproductive labor, nature) that surrounds and enables it. Exploited intellectual laborers, including those at the university, can come to their offices and work there each day thanks to the labor of (on average) less privileged individuals and groups who take care of them emotionally at home, clean their offices, take care of the logistics of labs and of administration, and cook their food. Nutrition and maintenance at and around Burawoy’s own campus (UC Berkeley), for instance, run on the backs of racialized laborers who commute to this pleasant university town from less attractive corners of the Bay Area. Burawoy’s students have been researching the links between this campus and other campuses and the educators’ strikes there; and how all these strikes radicalized some educators, e.g. led them to join the Bernie campaign. These efforts will hopefully spur research on how the entire academic machine is located within broader (local and global) social and political economies.

Utopias, anti-utopias, and the educator as their embodiment

Another key to Burawoy’s post-1980s self-transformation was his ongoing interactions and collaboration with his beloved friend Erik Olin Wright. Both were relatively closer to traditional Marxism in their earlier decades, despite their frequent criticism of it: they were relatively objectivist, put class in the center, and appeared to despise utopianism – as one can tell from the 1985 quotation above, where he and Lukács criticized Marxists’ investment in an idealized version of socialism as “utopian.”

Wright (2010) took the lead in transforming the established Marxist meaning of “utopia.” In Wright’ late writings, utopia came to mean not a non-existent country or social formation, but alternative egalitarian and democratic practices that were flowering within current, oppressive society despite all hurdles. He highlighted socialist and anarchist cooperatives, Wikipedia’s free knowledge platform, and the idea of universal basic income as some examples; and argued that socialism of the future would be built through the growth of such

“real utopias” rather than through revolutionary mass action or top-down reform⁸. Burawoy (2021a) appreciated Wright’s redefinition of “utopia,” but – through his signature Gramscian optimist-pessimism – balanced his friend’s new research programme with an emphasis on what he called “anti-utopias.” In his final writings, he defined the latter as negative and limiting social structures, actions, and processes that prevent or distort the flowering of the highest human ideals (liberty, equality, and solidarity). He observed that utopias were always counter-balanced and frequently dissipated by anti-utopias, and it was social science’s task to fully analyze both, rather than swinging too much in either direction.

For the mature Burawoy, public education was one of the primary “real utopia”s. His life came to be increasingly invested in broadening its sphere, especially as he lost hope in and practical connections with the industrial proletariat. As I discussed above, his redefined commitment to education went hand in hand with a full realization of the inequalities and exploitation that were also inevitably a part of the public university system (and constituted its anti-utopian dimensions) – and as I also argued, these two strands of his work co-existed in a tension that is not yet resolved. Nevertheless, his embrace of the real utopia of public education was neither abstract nor ungrounded. To the contrary, he sought to live his own life *as though* the emancipatory potential of public education could be realized through refashioning the educator’s everyday practices. I could clearly see this as I interacted with Burawoy throughout the years and also witnessed others’ interactions.

There were three stages to many people’s (his students’, mentees’, and colleagues’) journey with Michael. After he did extraordinary things for you, unexpectedly created time to deal with intellectual challenges you were facing, abundantly praised your essay, draft, or even some random thought of yours, you decided you must be smarter and more special than you ever thought!

Yet... second stage... in time you found out that he treated others in almost the same way. Any undergraduate student who attempted to seriously engage the texts he assigned, for

⁸ For institutionalist and Marxist criticisms of this orientation, and Wright’s (in my reading, escapist) riposte, see Fourcade *et al.* (2012).

instance, was showered with phrases like “bloody brilliant!” Well, not everybody can be *that* brilliant, no? You decided you are not that special after all.

But then... stage three... you came to understand that he *believed* every word he was saying. That this man had taken to heart Gramsci’s dictum that *every* person is a philosopher. He most probably thought so instinctively before ever reading a single line from Gramsci.

One easily fell under the spell of his veneration of all those he crossed paths with⁹. The difficulty was (and still is, for those of us he left behind): what do you do with the realization that each interlocutor is potentially special, and it is partially on you if you cannot bring that out?¹⁰

There can’t be a universal answer, and I never posed the question to him in this way (I wish I did!). Yet, his life trajectory gives an indication of how he dealt with the existential angst that could be caused by the challenge of treating each engaged person you encounter as “bloody brilliant”: he went to the darkest depths of brutality and exploitation and built his faith in humanity from there. This was the “anti-utopian” dimension of his thought. With this reconceptualization of utopias and anti-utopias, and the researcher’s and educator’s role in analyzing *and* embodying them, what Burawoy had been doing ever since his first publications on the colonies came under a fresh light. He could keep faith in labor and humanity after all his disappointing excursions into colonialism, advanced capitalism, and state socialism not simply because of his legendary joviality, but due to his resolution to consistently expose all of his ideals to the test of anti-utopias; seek to discover new glimmers of hope and signs of specialness in each engaged person he encountered; and reconstruct theory and sociology in their light.

⁹ None of this should be read as saying that he had smooth relationships with his colleagues and mentees. Especially in his early years, he had a reputation of being harsh to his graduate students, possibly with the intention of bringing out the best in them. He once commented to me that serving as Director of Graduate Studies, then as Chair, in his later years made him “a better person,” which was certainly an incomplete transformation, as it is for every one of us.

¹⁰ Recognizing and bringing out specialness are not only cognitive and emotional processes but also processes of *labor*. The intensely involved, emotionally draining, and physically exhausting process of interactive education is analyzed in Germain (2024).

We can’t know for sure that labor will ever be emancipated. Nor that the specialness in each of us will see the light of day. Yet, we can lead our lives as if both are within our collective capacity and individually contribute our best to both projects. That is our neo-Pascalian wager.

Labor: from the messiah to the articulator of autonomous struggles?

To carry Burawoy’s Marxism into the late 21st century, we will need a fuller debate on the conceptual and empirical relationships between the proletariat and the precariat; between production in factories and fields, and service and knowledge production. Are the proletariat and the precariat overlapping segments of the population as Burawoy frequently implied, or do we lose analytical rigor if we do not conceptually distinguish them, as Guy Standing argues? What is the exact place of the precariat and the proletariat in leading social struggles? Some of Burawoy’s latest writing further gives further clues as to how this debate could be enhanced. For instance, in his preface to the Chinese edition of *Politics of Production* (Burawoy, 2023)¹¹, he discussed how the many dissertations he supervised and the research projects he inspired, reformulated, expanded, and revised his earlier arguments about the labor process. In the same piece, Burawoy emphasized the ongoing centrality of the proletariat not only to social struggles, but to life as such, as can be seen in the case of “essential workers.” Directed tellingly at a Chinese social science audience, the article finished with these hopeful lines and warnings:

“Digitalization also gives us the imagination of an alternative world, a future world of collective self-regulation based on peer-to-peer collaboration in which essential work is distributed across the population to reduce the length of the working day. This may be the only way forward – a collective self-regulation, necessary to tackle the challenge of climate change in the age of pandemics. Of one thing we

¹¹ The English version of this preface is available at <http://burawoy.berkeley.edu/Prefaces,%20etc/Preface.Chinese%20Edition%20of%20PofP.pdf>

can be sure, the idea of such a socialism will never disappear before its capitalist stimulant disappears.” (Burawoy, 2023, p. 8)

The tone might sound “naïvely 19th/20th century.” But this ongoing commitment to labor and self-regulating socialism resulted from decades of disillusionments and reconstructions, as I emphasized above. My take on this illuminating passage is that the collective laborer *is* the agent of transformation. But this is what it is: an interpretation of a very complex, evolving, and *unfinished* body of thought, marked by deep *ambiguities*, frequently lurking under forceful and elegant analyses and postulates.

One should also note that audience matters. At a conference in Paris (l’ENS) in 2020 – the same year his preface to the Chinese edition was published –, Burawoy downplayed the centrality of the working class (Burawoy 2021b, pp. 127-128, 130). Did Burawoy have one Marxism for the West and another for the East?

The same ambiguity marks Burawoy’s late thinking on the relationship of class struggle to other social struggles. Some of Burawoy’s final essays might be misread as saying Black Marxism (and possibly other strands of Marxism too) can go their own way: unlike his Gramsci-Polanyi article, he appeared to be moving away from an integrated agenda that would necessarily reorganize all Marxist analysis around a few postulates. However, an article he published in the early 2010s (and then had translated to French in the early 2020s with minimal changes) clarifies his stance. Burawoy (2013; 2021c) forcefully asserts in this article that the Marxism of our times *has* to be global and all-encompassing *while fully taking into account regional and national variation*. This is distinct from 19th century Marxism, which developed mostly under the illusion of a false universality. But it is also different from the Western, Soviet, and Third World Marxisms of the 20th century, which either isolated themselves from each other or sought to vanquish the other Marxisms. What Burawoy calls third-wave Marxism, by contrast, has the potential of being universal *through integrating the particulars*. Take the example of Black Marxism: in my reading, his writings implied that it should neither be isolated nor obliterated. It should instead be a solid part of a global sociological Marxist project *while maintaining its autonomy*.

Also notice that, as discussed above, labor was *at the center of* his emergent analysis of the Palestinian question, but in this case mostly marked by its absence rather than by its centrality to production regimes or games at workplaces. Still, he mentioned that he saw the reintegration of the Palestinian working class back into the Israeli economy as the only way to stop total annihilation. Labor still held the key even in this “negative” case¹².

Assuming that Burawoy would live a healthy, productive life for at least another decade, I kept postponing the challenge I always wanted to pose to him. Despite all his dismissal of the idea of the proletariat as the universal liberator, didn’t his *own theory* warrant the idea of a leading social agent that would articulate disparate social struggles? Why else would we need an integrated Marxism – except for intellectual satisfaction? And if yes, was this “leading” social agent to be certain factions of the world proletariat, or the precariat? We talked about many questions that revolved around this problem but never got to discuss the ultimate issue squarely.

Praxis, research, and Burawoy’s unfinalized heresy

I therefore end my essay with an exploration of civic and political practice, which might shed light on how we should keep tackling this question. Marxism’s call is ultimately about the proletariat’s and other subaltern sectors’ taking control of production and of life. Burawoy was a mainstay of strikes, demonstrations, and picket lines... but without ever any “left-communist” or anarchistic fallacies about their magical qualities. I will highlight in these last pages what strikes and demonstrations can and can’t accomplish.

The unfinished reconstruction of Marxism I have been discussing throughout this piece has multiple implications for political and civic practice. Burawoy redefined what Manchester anthropologists called the extended case method: using instances of falsification¹³ to refine,

¹² I do not imply here that he did not take struggles around land and dispossession seriously – several of his students including Julia Chuang, Zach Levenson, and Mike Levien focused on just that, and he was on board with their projects. My comment is only about how he still perceived labor to be central even in cases where it was apparently out of the picture.

¹³ Burawoy upheld sociology as a science that seeks “falsifiable and generalizable explanations of empirical

revise, and expand research paradigms, rather than abandoning them. The same logic applies to organizational efforts: “failures” are not total defeats as long as they can be sublated to build more effective and popular working-class organizations.

Defeatism can lead to a dystopian future, which can be defined as the evaporation of the dialectic between utopia and anti-utopia. Burawoy (2021a) sharply differentiated dystopianism from his attention to anti-utopias. The study of anti-utopias is necessary for a realistic approach to social transformation. Dystopianism, by contrast, feeds despair rather than the will. Ever since the late 1970s, the world has been moving in this dystopian direction, and even more frighteningly so with the rise of eco-pessimism, the toxic sentiment that brackets out capitalism and holds that “modern civilization” is bound to destroy the earth¹⁴ – a collective destruction that would not go down without endless wars and genocides. And hence, we normalize genocide.

Today, there is an apparent break with the hegemonic blocs of the last forty-five years, which imposed a mostly slow and surreptitious death on the earth and its peoples. Trump’s America, continuous in content and *starkly ruptural* in form, embraces dystopia. Resistance abounds, but does not have a direction, and is loosely integrated by a desire to avoid the worst of Trumpism, Erdoğanism, and other instances of the far right. Even the will to evade defeatism, however, would be empty if not grounded in a solid orientation that reconnects the pieces and threads that Marx, Gramsci, Burawoy, and others attempted to weave together in their own ways, without reaching conclusive statements.

As much as research, public engagement, and campus and non-campus organization, teaching is another way to connect these fragmented, broken lines¹⁵. On February 4, the day after he passed, I told my mass undergraduate class about how I learned to teach on picket lines from Burawoy, and how that fit into his research trajectory and into my pedagogy. At the end of

phenomena” (1998, pp. 6, 11), but – unlike in positivist science – in his scientific practice falsification played the role of spurring reconstruction rather than burial of theories.

¹⁴ See Moore (2015) for a criticism of this widespread apocalypticism.

¹⁵ I owe the phrase “broken lines” to Matthieu Renault’s essay (2015) on Sultan-Galiev. See <https://viewpointmag.com/2015/03/23/the-idea-of-muslim-national-communism-on-mirsaid-sultan-galiev/>

February, I took them to the joint strike of custodial and research workers, after a full hour on Max Weber's anti-Marxist theorization of class struggle and markets. I told them – even on the picket line! – that we will read more from Weber to critically interrogate the intentions, processes, and the health of the outcomes of class struggles.

Since February 2025, whenever I lose my spirit or the audience’s attention in the middle of a lecture, I remind myself of the enthusiastic tone in which Michael spoke of the increasing number of first-generation and formerly incarcerated students on our campus. I pull myself together by channeling his distinctive jocular-Freirian lecturing style, and thereby attempt to pique the students’ interest again. So far, it is working. Even when energetic sessions on the *1844 Manuscripts* and *On the Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State* – always two student favorites! – are followed by radio silence during a thick lecture on Money-Commodity-Money chains, they come back to pound me with 25 minutes of tough questions on the intricacies of *Das Kapital* after yet another thick, one-and-a-half-hour lecture. Most of our students do not share my passion for the dark humor of Weber, but I can see in their probing eyes the eagerness to get what they can out of this arch-anti-utopian. Their “bloody brilliance” is shining through.

Nevertheless, even a Freirian uplifting of our students’ brilliance will never be sufficient on its own. We witness the germs of a new world in the strikes and demonstrations that have been spreading throughout the world in the last fifteen years. Will we be able to equip our students (and broader publics) to engage in these struggles *critically*? Without critical engagement – and yes, it must be *critical* – we risk failing to understand the centrality of capitalist and statist forces that undermine creative human action, and we get stuck on conjunctural political excesses that we ultimately associate with evil personalities. If actions against these excesses and “evil”s keep on being mostly reactive, if they retain their distance to organizations informed by sociology and Marxism, they will also keep on feeding right-wing reaction without collecting the force to defeat it. Marxism and the social sciences themselves need to be reconstructed daily in the light of these actions and what they teach us about how the world works and how we can make it a better place. The way to critically and practically (re)read Burawoy is through connecting these broken lines – these fragmented struggles and

publics scattered throughout the world – by retheorizing the unfinished parts of his conceptualization in light of new findings about the collective struggles of the subaltern.

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Differences in Driving Behavior Between Professional and Nonprofessional Drivers

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Artigo recebido a 20/10/2025.

Aceite para publicação a 13/01/2026.

Abstract

Research has been highlighting possible behavioral differences between professional and nonprofessional drivers, beyond their distinct involvement in accidents. This study explores these differences in a sample of 560 professional and nonprofessional Portuguese drivers, using a self-reported survey on driving behaviors and accident history. Results showed i) that nonprofessional drivers presented more aggressive driving behaviors; ii) the existence of a positive association between aggressive driving behaviors and road accidents only in the nonprofessional drivers; iii) no group differences regarding prosocial driving behaviors, although professional drivers reported significantly more prosocial driving behaviors than aggressive. The study's results, and limitations are discussed.

Keywords: Aggressive and prosocial driving behaviors; Professionals drivers; Nonprofessional drivers.

Diferenças no Comportamento de Condução entre Condutores Profissionais e Não Profissionais

Resumo

Têm sido destacadas possíveis diferenças comportamentais entre condutores profissionais e não profissionais. O estudo explorou as referidas diferenças entre estes grupos numa amostra

de 560 condutores portugueses, através de um questionário de autorrelato sobre comportamentos de condução e histórico de acidentes. Os resultados indicaram: i) que os condutores não profissionais apresentavam mais comportamentos agressivos, e que a relação entre esta variável e envolvimento em acidentes apenas era significativa neste grupo; ii) a ausência de diferenças nos comportamentos pró-sociais, embora os condutores profissionais reportassem significativamente mais comportamentos pró-sociais do que agressivos. Os resultados e as limitações do estudo são discutidas.

Palavras-chave: Comportamentos de condução agressivos e pró-sociais; Condutores profissionais; Condutores não profissionais.

Différences dans le Comportement de Conduite entre les Conducteurs Professionnels et Non Professionnels

Résumé

Des différences comportementales possibles entre conducteurs professionnels et non professionnels ont été mises en évidence. Cette étude a exploré ces différences au sein d'un échantillon de 560 conducteurs portugais, à l'aide d'un questionnaire d'autoévaluation sur les comportements de conduite et l'historique d'accidents. Les résultats ont montré: i) que les conducteurs non professionnels manifestaient davantage de comportements agressifs, la relation entre cette variable et l'implication dans des accidents n'étant significative que pour ce groupe; ii) l'absence de différences dans les comportements prosociaux, bien que les conducteurs professionnels en rapportent davantage que de comportements agressifs. Les résultats et limites sont discutés.

Mots-clés: Comportements de conduite agressifs et prosociaux; Conducteurs professionnels; Conducteurs non professionnels.

Diferencias en el Comportamiento de Conducción entre Conductores Profesionales y No Profesionales

Resumen

Se han señalado posibles diferencias de comportamiento entre conductores profesionales y no profesionales. El estudio exploró dichas diferencias en una muestra de 560 conductores portugueses, mediante un cuestionario de autoinforme sobre comportamientos de conducción e historial de accidentes. Los resultados indicaron: i) que los conductores no profesionales mostraban más comportamientos agresivos, y que la relación entre esta variable y la implicación en accidentes solo era significativa en este grupo; ii) la ausencia de diferencias en los comportamientos prosociales, aunque los conductores profesionales reportaron significativamente más comportamientos prosociales que agresivos. Se discuten los resultados y las limitaciones del estudio.

Palabras clave: Comportamientos de conducción agresivos y prosociales; Conductores profesionales; Conductores no profesionales.

1. Introduction

The literature has been highlighting the possibility of differences between professional drivers (i.e., individuals whose profession is driving) and nonprofessional drivers concerning the behaviors adopted in the context of driving. Indeed, one cannot overlook the existence of differences related to the task of driving between these two groups of drivers, such as exposure to driving, the consequences of their actions, and motivations for driving (Caird & Kline, 2004; Maslač *et al.*, 2018; Sullman *et al.*, 2002).

However, despite the prevalence of professional drivers on the roads, only some studies have focused explicitly on professional drivers or the differences between them and nonprofessional drivers (e.g., Almallah *et al.*, 2025; Davey *et al.*, 2007; Dias *et al.*, 2022; Sullman *et al.*, 2002), and the existing studies tend to focus on the differential involvement of professional and nonprofessional drivers in road accidents. In this scope it is postulated that professionals - given the high number of annual kilometers they drive and their continuous exposure to traffic - are at greater risk of being involved in road accidents, once they are more prone to stress, and frustration (Davey *et al.*, 2007; Öz *et al.*, 2010).

Taking this into account, the present study aims to investigate potential differences between professional and nonprofessional drivers in what concerns their driving behaviors, as well as the associations between these behaviors and road accidents, through a quantitative study in a Portuguese convenience sample.

1.1. The task of driving: professional versus nonprofessional

Driving as a professional activity has different demands, as the tasks of professional drivers are mainly predetermined, unlike those of nonprofessional drivers. Driving for professional drivers becomes a less self-regulated task, as various factors, such as schedules, increase the demands of their tasks. Furthermore, professional drivers are exposed to organizational factors (e.g., company culture, safety practices) that largely determine the safety with which they drive (Caird & Kline, 2004; Öz *et al.*, 2010). Conversely, for nonprofessional drivers, driving is a more individualized task, allowing them to determine the degree of difficulty and

risk taken, travel time, and driving speed (Caird & Kline, 2004; Öz *et al.*, 2010). All these differences may influence the behaviors adopted by these two groups of drivers and the way they interact with the other road users.

Additionally, the daily, prolonged, and continuous frequency of driving by professional drivers may lead to increased fatigue (Adavikottu & Velaga, 2021; ERSO, 2023), which can affect their attention capacity and self-control, important aspects for the adoption of aggressive behaviors (Liu *et al.*, 2022), given that is considered an integral part of the processing of information, which also plays a critical a role in the implementation of behaviors (Deffenbacher *et al.*, 1994; Machado *et al.*, 2024).

It should be noted that only some nonprofessional drivers use the vehicle for the same purposes. Different motivations make people drive, such as leisure or going to work or college: driving as an end by itself and a means to reach an end, respectively. Considering this, it is crucial to understand if these groups of nonprofessional drivers are also different. In this line, Agra and Queirós (2004) identified three distinct groups of nonprofessional drivers, namely: i) drivers for fun (i.e., those who use the vehicle for participating in competitions, competing with friends, tuning); ii) regular drivers (i.e., those who use the vehicle as a means of transportation for fixed-schedule activities, such as commuting to work, attending classes, or transporting family members); and iii) leisure drivers (i.e., those who use the vehicle for off-road driving, orientation circuits outside the city). According to the authors (Agra & Queirós, 2004), these different groups exhibit distinct characteristics, with drivers for fun presenting higher indices of severe traffic violations compared to the remaining two groups.

1.2. Driving behaviors: aggressive and prosocial

Traffic violations and road accidents represent significant social problems (with human, social, and economical costs), resulting from the interaction between cognitive and emotional processes, as well as situational and personal variables (Donário & Santos, 2012; van den Berg *et al.*, 2020; Yagil, 2001). The research has highlighted that the human factor plays a crucial role in road accidents, with drivers' behaviors, a form of social behavior (van den Berg *et al.*, 2020), and specifically their aggressive behaviors, being a risk factor for their occurrence (e.g.,

Galovski & Blanchard, 2004; Zinzow & Jeffirs, 2018). Therefore, given their detrimental consequences to the "offender," "victim," and society, this type of act has been a topic of interest in different fields of research. As noted by Factor (2008), contrary to other types of delinquent, antisocial, criminal, and transgressive behaviors that generally involve only a small group of offenders, in the driving context this group is composed of most of the drivers. Moreover, the manifestations of these behaviors are widespread, and it is expected that any country with cars, roads, and drivers will present rates of aggressive driving behaviors (Miles & Johnson, 2003). In this context, it is noteworthy that Portuguese drivers are often described as *risk takers*, due to the aggressive maneuvers frequently recorded by surveillance equipment (Tavares *et al.*, 2008).

A varied range of acts expressed in different forms, from making rude gestures, running red lights, honking, and driving too fast (e.g., Galovski & Blanchard, 2004; Houston *et al.*, 2003; Shinar, 1998) are typically classified as aggressive driving behaviors. In this study, the adopted conceptualization aligns with those of Houston *et al.* (2003) and Tasca (2000). According to the authors', aggressive driving behavior is a pattern of deliberate, insecure, and risky behaviors that compromise the safety of drivers and/or others, probably increasing the risk of road accidents. These behaviors are driven by different motives – ranging from hostility to an attempt to save time. With this definition, we only focus on observable behaviors, not considering cognitions or emotions that may arise during driving (e.g., anger and frustration), recognizing that not all aggressive behaviors arise from anger and aim to hurt another person. Nevertheless, in the daily day of driving, both aggressive, hostile, insecure, and prosocial, positive, and secure behaviors are present (Guého *et al.*, 2014; Özkan & Lajunen, 2005) – they are not mutually exclusive (Yu *et al.*, 2023). While the prosocial behaviors in driving have received little attention, there are reasons to explore them (Harris *et al.*, 2014; Shen *et al.*, 2018). In fact, understanding both types of behaviors will allow a better and more holistic view of driving behavior and driving dynamics, which, in turn, will help promote and improve a safer driving environment (Shen *et al.*, 2018; Yu *et al.*, 2023).

According to Harris *et al.* (2014, p.4), prosocial driving behaviors are a "pattern of safe driving behaviors that potentially protect the well-being of passengers, other drivers, and

pedestrians, and that promotes effective cooperation with others in the driving environment", being effective forms of driving behavior that can diminish/avoid road accidents. Here, we can include the altruistic actions that the drivers take to cooperate reasonably with other drivers, such as giving way to other vehicles, but also with pedestrians, for instance, driving with special care near them (Harris *et al.*, 2014; Shen *et al.*, 2018). This definition of prosocial driving behaviors is consistent with the broader definitions of prosocial behaviors, such as those presented by Batson (2012) and Eisenberg *et al.* (2010), with the authors stating that prosocial behaviors include a large spectrum of behaviors realized to benefit or help one or more people. According to the literature (e.g., Eisenberg *et al.*, 2010), these behaviors can be motivated by four factors: selfishness, altruism, collectivism, and principle. Making the parallel to driving context, Harris *et al.* (2014) states that prosocial driving behaviors can emerge from the desire to help others or themselves; to conform to the group's norms regarding safe driving; and because their principles involve obedience to the rules of driving.

Regarding the different involvement of professionals and nonprofessionals in these two driving behaviors, scientific research is still scarce and nonconsensual. To the best of our knowledge, no research has focused on the differences between prosocial driving behaviors in professional and nonprofessional drivers. Concerning aggressive driving behavior, for example, in the study of Öz *et al.* (2010), conducted with a sample of 234 male drivers, the results showed that the nonprofessional drivers ($n = 38$) drove significantly more above the speed limit than the professional's drivers, namely: taxi drivers ($n = 69$), truck drivers ($n = 64$), and minibus drivers ($n = 63$). Also, taking into consideration the subscale of "Aggressive driving violations" [(i.e., Conflict behaviors towards other road users that represent a type of aggressive traffic violation – Lawton *et al.*, 1997)] of the Driving Behavior Questionnaire, the results obtained by Maslać *et al.* (2018) indicate that professional drivers committed fewer violations of this type, compared to nonprofessional drivers. In contrast, Wu *et al.* (2016), measuring another type of aggressive driving behavior, concretely red light running (RLR), found that the RLR rate of taxi drivers was statistically higher than that of nonprofessional drivers. In the same line, Dias *et al.* (2022), using observational data, indicated that professional drivers in Qatar drove more aggressively than nonprofessional drivers.

1.3. Road accidents: association with driving behaviors, and groups of drivers

As previously referred, road accidents represent critical social problems with various costs, from human to economic, being a product of different processes and variables (van den Berg *et al.*, 2020; Yagil, 2001). Only in Portugal, between 2019 and 2023, there were more than 157 thousand road accidents with victims, including 2.751 fatalities (ANSR, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023).

Regarding the relationship between driving behaviors and road accidents, the literature has focused on the association between aggressive and risky driving and crash involvement. For example, the study of Adavikottu and Velaga (2021) reported that "aggressive" drivers were 2.79 and 1.81 times more prone to be involved in a road accident than "cautious" and "normal" drivers, respectively. Also, the authors concluded that professional drivers were 0.564 times more likely to be involved in road accidents than nonprofessional drivers.

As noted earlier, the investigation into the scope of prosocial driving behaviors still needs to be conducted. Nevertheless, the existing results showed that safe and prosocial driving behaviors were negatively associated with road accidents, driving violations, and driving fines (e.g., Harris *et al.*, 2014; Karras *et al.*, 2022, 2024; Shen *et al.*, 2018).

1.4. Present Study

The present study aims to extend and consolidate existing evidence by examining differences in driving behaviors among three groups of drivers in the Portuguese context: professional (e.g., taxi drivers), regular (i.e., those who use the car for fixed-schedule activities), and leisure drivers (i.e., those who use the car for recreational purposes). Specifically, this study intends to examine i) differences in the practice of aggressive and prosocial driving behaviors, and ii) the differences in the involvement and number of road accidents in the last three years between and within the three groups of drivers. Moreover, it attempts to analyze the association between aggressive and prosocial driving behaviors and road accidents among the three groups of drivers and distinguish and compare the strength of these associations between the three groups.

2. Material and methods

2.1. Participants

The study sample consisted of 560 participants ($n = 328$, 58.57% female) taken by convenience from the population of Portuguese drivers. Of the total, 56 (10%) reported being professional drivers, and the remaining reported being nonprofessional drivers ($n = 504$, 90%), using the car to perform regular activities, such as going to work ($n = 391$, 77.58%), and for leisure activities ($n = 113$, 22.42%) (Table 1). The sample age ranged from 18 to 67 years old ($M = 32.25$, $SD = 12.73$), and their driving experience varied from 1 month to 49 years ($M = 12.62$, $SD = 11.92$). Moreover, predominantly, the participants reported driving daily ($n = 233$, 41.60%).

The professional drivers were primarily male ($n = 42$, 75%), aged between 19 and 63 years old ($M = 43.02$, $SD = 11.65$), with a mean driving experience of 22.41 years ($SD = 11.64$), and reported driving every day ($n = 46$, 82.10%). The group of regular drivers was primarily female ($n = 247$, 63.30%), aged between 18 and 67 years old ($M = 32.78$, $SD = 12.68$), with a mean driving experience of 13.14 years ($SD = 11.92$), and 47.30% ($n = 185$) of the drivers reported driving every day. Lastly, the leisure drivers were primarily female ($n = 67$, 59.30%), aged between 18 and 55 years old ($M = 25.27$, $SD = 8.67$), with a mean driving experience of 6.19 years ($SD = 7.57$), and mostly drove only a few times a month ($n = 40$, 35.40%) or during the weekends ($n = 38$, 33.60%).

Finally, it should be noted that the group of professional drivers was significantly older [$H(2) = 81.51$, $p < .001$; Mean order professional drivers = 412.51, Mean order leisure drivers = 181.11, Mean order regular drivers = 290.00] and drove for more time [$H(2) = 76.56$, $p < .001$, Mean order professional drivers = 406.51, Mean order leisure drivers = 183.99, Mean order regular drivers = 289.13] than the other two groups of drivers.

Table 1 - Characterization of driver groups according to their sociodemographic characteristics and driving experience.

Variables	n	%	M	SD
Professional drivers (N = 56)				
Sex				
Female	14	25.00		
Male	42	75.00		
Age			43.02	11.65
Driving regularity				
Several times per month	1	1.80		
Weekends only	1	1.80		
Almost every day	8	14.30		
Every day	46	82.10		
Driving experience (years)	-	-	22.41	11.64
Involvement in road accidents (yes)	11	19.60		
Driving license apprehension (yes)	4	7.10		
Regular drivers (N = 391)				
Sex				
Female	247	63.30		
Male	143	36.70		
Age			32.78	12.68
Driving regularity				
Several times per month	19	4.90		
Weekends only	11	2.80		
Weekdays only	22	5.60		
Almost every day	154	39.40		
Every day	185	47.30		
Driving experience (years)	-	-	13.14	11.92
Involvement in road accidents (yes)	58	14.80		
Driving license apprehension (yes)	19	4.90		
Leisure drivers (N = 113)				
Sex				
Female	67			59.80
Male	45			40.20
Age			25.27	8.67
Driving regularity				
Several times per year	10	8.80		
Several times per month	40	35.40		
Weekends only	38	33.60		
Weekdays only	1	.90		
Almost every day	22	19.50		
Every day	2	1.80		
Driving experience (years)	-	-	6.19	7.57
Involvement in road accidents (yes)	11	9.70		
Driving license apprehension (yes)	2	1.80		

Source: The authors.

2.2. Measures

Aggressive driving behavior was assessed through the Aggressive Driving Behavior Scale (Houston *et al.*, 2003). ADBS is an 11-item self-report questionnaire, where aggressive driving behaviors, representing unsafe driving behaviors that show hostility or can hurt the driver, other drivers, and pedestrians (Harris *et al.*, 2014), are presented. Participants were asked to indicate the frequency of adopting these behaviors over the past six months on a six-point Likert scale (from 1 = Never to 6 = Always). Besides the general index of aggressive driving behavior ($\alpha = .75$), the ADBS includes two subscales: conflict behavior (7 items, e.g., *Intentionally tap my brakes when another car follows too closely*; $\alpha = .67$) and acceleration (4 items, e.g., *Drive 20 miles per hour faster than the posted speed limit*; $\alpha = .62$). The conflict behavior subscale addresses direct social interactions with other drivers, highlighting inconsistent actions that provoke conflict (Houston *et al.*, 2003). On the other hand, the acceleration subscale pertains to behaviors involving unsafe driving practices that may occur independently of other drivers (Houston *et al.*, 2003). The three scores are derived by summing the scores of the items within each scale. The general index of aggressive driving behavior ranges from 11 to 66, the conflict behavior score from 7 to 42, and the acceleration score from 4 to 28. In every instance, higher values indicate more aggressive driving behaviors.

Prosocial driving behavior was assessed using the subscale of the Prosocial and Aggressive Driving Inventory (Harris *et al.*, 2014). PADI pro social subscale is composed of 17 items referring to prosocial behaviors performed in the context of driving (e.g., *Driving with special care near pedestrians*"; $\alpha = .87$). Participants are asked to report, on a six-point Likert scale (from 1 – "Never" to 6 – "Always"), the frequency with which they have engaged in each described behavior over the past six months. The score ranges from 17 to 102, with higher values indicating more prosocial driving behaviors.

Demographic information and the participants' driving experience were collected: sex (0 = female), age, years of driving, involvement (yes/no), and number of road accidents in the last three years. Finally, it was asked the participants to report which function of driving mainly represents them, namely: i) *"I am a professional driver, e.g., taxi and TVDE driver / I use the*

car as an essential transport to practice my profession, e.g., transporter"; ii) "I use the car as a means of carrying out a regular activity, e.g., go to work; iii) "I use the car as a means of transport for leisure; and iv) "I use the car to participate in a competition, to compete with friends, to perform tuning". Taking into consideration the participants' responses, three groups of drivers were created, namely: i) the professional drivers (those who identify their function of driving as i), ii) the regular drivers (those who choose option ii), and iii) the leisure drivers (those who choose option iii). Only two participants chose option iv) and, therefore, no group of drivers for fun was created and analyzed.

2.3. Procedure

The questionnaire was developed using the LymeSurvey and distributed online through universities and driving associations across all 20 regions of Portugal. The only mandatory criteria for participation were having a valid driver's license and active driving.

The questionnaire started with an information sheet that detailed the study's objectives and the mandatory requirements for participation. The sheet also outlined the participation requested, emphasizing the anonymity and voluntary nature of the participation.

A total of 2075 individuals accessed the survey. Of these, 374 (17.54%) progressed until the informed consent, and 174 (8.39%) only responded to the socio-demographic questions. Therefore, these individuals were excluded from the final database. Additionally, 975 participants (46.99%) only completed part of the survey and were not considered for the present study. Lastly, 2 (.10%) individuals identify themselves as drivers for fun, and given the small number of elements of the group, they were not considered for analysis. Given that, the final sample comprised 560 Portuguese drivers.

3. Results

Given the study's objectives, statistical analyses based on both correlational and group differences approaches were performed. Since all variables were non-normally distributed, non-parametric tests (i.e., Spearman's and Point Bi-serial correlation coefficients, Krustal-

Wallis, chi-square tests, Wilcoxon Signed-Ranks, and Fisher's Z test) were employed. Kruskal-Wallis's test does not indicate which specific groups have significantly different distributions. Therefore, it was necessary to use multiple comparisons of mean ranks (Marôco, 2011), namely Dunn's post-hoc test to identify which groups were statistically different (Dinno, 2015).

3.1. Aggressive and prosocial driving behaviors associations and differences: within groups

Negative associations between aggressive driving behaviors and prosocial driving behaviors were found across the three groups of drivers (r ranging from $-.21$ to $-.64$) (Table 2). To assess whether the strength of the associations differed significantly between groups, the correlation values between Aggressive driving behavior and Prosocial driving behavior were compared across groups. Fisher's Z test results showed no significant differences between the "Professional" and "Regular" drivers ($Z = -1.10$, $p > .05$), "Professional" and "Leisure" drivers ($Z = -1.39$, $p > .05$), or "Regular" and "Leisure" drivers ($Z = -0.67$, $p > .05$).

Table 2 - Associations between aggressive driving behavior and prosocial driving behavior – within groups.

	1	2	3	4
Professional drivers (N = 56)				
1. Aggressive driving behavior	-	.87***	.88***	-.56***
2. Conflict behavior		-	.55***	-.38**
3. Acceleration			-	-.64***
4. Prosocial driving behavior				-
Regular drivers (N = 391)				
1. Aggressive driving behavior	-	.87***	.78***	-.44***
2. Conflict behavior		-	.41***	-.28***
3. Acceleration			-	-.51***
4. Prosocial driving behavior				-
Leisure drivers (N = 113)				
1. Aggressive driving behavior	-	.88***	.85***	-.38***
2. Conflict behavior		-	.54***	-.21*
3. Acceleration			-	-.44***
4. Prosocial driving behavior				-

Note. * $p < .05$; * $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

Source: The authors.

Subsequently, Wilcoxon Signed-Ranks tests were conducted to determine whether these behavioral measures, in addition to being associated, differed significantly within each group of drivers. Given that the variables resulted from the sum of a different number of items and were evaluated using distinct Likert scales, the variables were previously standardized, and the aggressive and prosocial driving behavior levels were compared. Significant differences were found in the professional group ($Z = -2.02$, $p < .05$, $r = .09$), and leisure drivers ($Z = -2.40$, $p < .05$, $r = .10$) (Table 3).

In the group of professional drivers, considering the values of the negative (23.96) and positive (31.67) ranks, the individuals had higher levels of prosocial driving behaviors than aggressive driving behaviors. Conversely, leisure drivers showed higher levels of aggressive than prosocial driving behaviors (Negative ranks = 58.15, Positive ranks = 56.35). It should be noted that the effect sizes were considered insignificant and small, respectively, taking into consideration Cohen's (1988) systematization.

Table 3 - Differences between aggressive driving behavior and prosocial driving behavior – within groups.

	Negative ranks		Positive ranks		Ties	Z	r
	N	Mean rank	N	Mean rank			
Professional drivers (N = 56)	23 ^a	23.96	33 ^b	31.67	0 ^c	-2.02*	.09
Regular drivers (N = 391)	208 ^a	192.19	183 ^b	200.33	0 ^c	-.74	
Leisure drivers (N = 113)	41 ^a	58.15	72 ^b	56.35	0 ^c	-2.40 *	.10

Note. ^a: Prosocial driving behavior < Aggressive driving behavior. ^b: Prosocial driving behavior > Aggressive driving behavior. ^c: Prosocial driving behavior = Aggressive driving behavior; * $p < .05$.

Source: The authors.

3.2. Behavioral differences among drivers' groups

The results indicated significant differences in all analyzed variables regarding aggressive driving behaviors (Table 4). Considering the total index of ADBS, the Krustal-Wallis test was significant [$H(2) = 17.53$, $p < .001$, $r = .52$], showing that the three groups differed from each other. The comparisons through the method of pairwise showed that the group of regular drivers and leisure drivers differed between them ($p = .000$, $r = .13$). Considering the mean

orders of each group (Leisure drivers = 228.04, Regular drivers = 298.43), the data showed that the regular drivers had higher levels of aggressive driving behaviors.

In the same line, the results indicate the existence of differences in the variable Conflict behaviors [$H(2) = 12.44, p < .01, r = .37$], with the post hoc test of Dunn showing that the regular drivers and the leisure drivers were differed between them ($p = .002, r = .15$). Considering the mean orders of each group (Leisure drivers = 237.34, Regular drivers = 295.77), the data indicated that the regular drivers had higher levels of conflict behaviors.

The same pattern of results was found in what concerns the variable Acceleration [$H(2) = 13.56, p < .001, r = .41$], with the test of Dunn showing that the regular drivers and the leisure drivers differed between them ($p = .001, r = .16$). In line with the previous results, the data indicated that the regular drivers had higher levels in the variable of acceleration, compared to the leisure drivers (Mean order_{leisure drivers} = 233.57, Mean order_{regular drivers} = 295.94).

Table 4 - Differences between groups of drivers: aggressive driving behavior and prosocial driving behavior.

Variables	Professional drivers (N = 56)				Regular drivers (N = 391)				Leisure drivers (N = 113)				H	r
	Q1	Mdn	Q3	Mean order	Q1	Mdn	Q3	Mean order	Q1	Mdn	Q3	Mean order		
Aggressive Driving behavior	17	20.50	25	261.15	18	23	26	298.43	15	19	24	228.04	17.53***	.52
Conflict behaviors	9	11	14	260.94	10	12	15	295.77	9	11	13	237.34	12.44**	.37
Acceleration	6	9	11.75	267.39	8	10	12	295.94	6	8	10.50	233.57	13.56***	.41
Prosocial Driving behavior	85.50	92	97.50	323.16	83	90	95	274.09	83	90	95	281.53	4.52	

Note. Q1: First quartile; Mdn: Median; Q3: Third quartile; N: Number of subjects; H: Value of Krustal-Wallis; r: effect size ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

Source: The authors.

3.3. Road accidents: differences between groups of drivers

Table 5 presents the descriptive statistics of the variables regarding the involvement in road accidents in the last three years. The results indicated that, although regular drivers showed

higher levels and frequencies in all variables under study, there were not significant differences between groups.

Table 5 - Descriptive statistics of road accidents for each group of drivers, and differences between them.

Variables	Professional drivers (N = 56)			Regular drivers (N = 391)			Leisure drivers (N = 113)			
	M(SD)	Mdn	n	M(SD)	Mdn	n	M(SD)	Mdn	n	
Road accidents_prevalence										
Yes	-	-	11	-	-	58	-	-	11	$\chi^2 (2) = 3.32$
No	-	-	45	-	-	333	-	-	102	$p=.190$
Road accidents_incidence (number of accidents)	1.18(.41)	1	-	1.14(.35)	1	-	1.00(.00)	1	-	$H = 1.96,$ $p=.375$

Note. M (SD): Mean (Standard-deviation); Mdn: Median; N: number of subjects in each group; n: absolute frequency; χ^2 = chi-square value; H = Krustall Wallis value; p = p value.

Source: The authors.

3.4. Associations between driving behaviors and driving incidents: within groups

Regarding the association with aggressive driving behavior, no significant associations were found in the group of professional drivers (Table 6). In the group of regular drivers, a positive correlation was observed between the variables Accident Prevalence, Aggressive Driving Behavior ($r = .15, p = .01$), and Acceleration ($r = .16, p = .05$), indicating that those who had been involved in road accidents in the past three years exhibited higher levels of aggressive driving behaviors, particularly those related to speeding. For the group of leisure drivers, the results showed that those who had been involved in road accidents in the past three years demonstrated a higher frequency of aggressive driving behaviors ($r = .26, p = .01$), specifically speeding behaviors ($r = .33, p = .01$).

In both the "Professional Drivers" and "Leisure Drivers" groups, the strength of the relationships between the variables Acceleration and Accident Prevalence was stronger than those observed between the total ADBS score and Accident Prevalence. The Fisher's Z test revealed that the associations between these two pairs of variables did not differ significantly between the two groups [(Aggressive Driving Behavior x Accident Prevalence, $Z = -1.06, p > .05$; Acceleration x Accident Prevalence, $Z = -1.68, p > .05$)].

Finally, no significant associations between prosocial driving behavior and road accidents (frequency and incidence) were found among the three groups.

Table 6 - Associations between driving behaviors and road accidents – within groups.

	Aggressive driving behavior	Conflict behavior	Acceleration	Prosocial driving behavior
Professional drivers (N = 56)				
Road accidents_prevalence (yes/no) ¹	.05	.09	-.07	.12
Road accidents_incidence (number of accidents) ²	.53	.46	.38	.08
Regular drivers (N = 391)				
Road accidents_prevalence (yes/no) ¹	.15**	.09	.16**	-.08
Road accidents_incidence (number of accidents) ²	.12	.13	.14	-.20
Leisure drivers (N = 113)				
Road accidents_prevalence (yes/no) ¹	.26**	.13	.33**	-.17
Road accidents_incidence (number of accidents) ²	-	-	-	-

Note.¹: Point-Biserial coefficients; ²: Spearman coefficients.

Source: The authors.

4. Discussion

The primary objective of this study was to examine the possible differences between professional and nonprofessional drivers in terms of their aggressive and prosocial driving behavior levels. Moreover, the present study also explored the association between aggressive and prosocial driving behaviors and road accidents within different groups of drivers, addressing the implications for road safety and policy.

Firstly, our results demonstrated the existence of negative associations between aggressive driving behaviors and prosocial driving behaviors in the three groups of drivers analyzed (i.e., professional, regular, and leisure drivers). These findings indicate that those who display more aggressive behaviors behind the wheel show less prosocial driving behaviors, supporting previous research, such as Harris *et al.* (2014) and Kerwin and Bushman (2020), that reported a negative association between prosocial and aggressive driving behavior. Moreover, and in

line with our results, the study of Kerwin and Bushman (2020) provides experimental evidence supporting this pattern. The authors asked the participants to rate the aggressiveness of the driving behaviors displayed in various short videos, with the results showing that higher levels of prosocial driving behaviors (measured through PADI) were associated with lower perceived aggressiveness in the speeding driving scenarios [i.e., showing the driven car or a third person car overtaking at 50 MPH (86 KPH) a line of cars going 35 MPH (56 KPH) (Kerwin & Bushman, 2020, p.3)].

Also, despite aggressive and prosocial driving behaviors being negatively associated, the Wilcoxon Signed-Ranks test showed that the levels of aggressive and prosocial driving behaviors were statistically different in the professional and leisure drivers' groups. Concretely, the group of professional drivers had higher levels of prosocial than aggressive driving behaviors, and the leisure drivers presented higher levels of aggressive driving behaviors than prosocial. These results reinforce the idea that professional drivers develop safer and more regulated driving behaviors due to their occupational exposure and increased accountability (Maslać *et al.*, 2018). Also, our results demonstrated that the group of nonprofessional drivers, specifically the regular ones, had higher levels of aggressive driving behaviors (conflict and acceleration) than the remaining distinguished groups. The obtained results align with those reported by Maslać *et al.* (2018), which demonstrated that professional drivers committed fewer aggressive driving violations. According to the authors, this type of result can be due to two main reasons, namely: i) professional drivers are more prone to be visible taking these types of behaviors, given the physical characteristics of the vehicles, and ii) the consequences of doing such actions are more severe for professional drivers than for nonprofessional drivers. Considering these two factors, professional drivers can inhibit themselves from engaging in aggressive driving behaviors (Maslać *et al.*, 2018). Therefore, the "capable guardian" (Cohen & Felson, 1979) seems more present for professionals than nonprofessional drivers. Moreover, the hypothesis of Maslać (2018) highlights that for this group of drivers that have the task of driving as a profession, the deterrence from committing these types of acts is more significant, given that the losses from them are bigger than the gains. For example, they can have monetary losses and labor penalties.

Regarding road accidents, our results demonstrated the nonexistence of differences between groups, neither in the frequency nor incidence of road accidents in the last three years. Also, positive associations between aggressive driving behaviors and road accidents emerged only in the two groups of nonprofessional drivers. The results indicated that regular and leisure drivers with higher levels of aggressive driving behaviors, concretely acceleration ones, had a higher frequency of road accidents. These results concord with the scientific evidence that speeding is one of the factors that most contributes to the probability and severity of road accidents (e.g., Elvik, 2012). According to the scientific literature, the decision to speed is influenced by demographic characteristics, such as sex and age (with women and older people having less of these behaviors), and psychological factors, such as risk perception and driving habits (e.g., Alonso *et al.*, 2015; Zhang *et al.*, 2013). Moreover, the fact that professional drivers had more responsibility while driving, given that is their profession, may explain not only the fact of them having more prosocial than aggressive driving behaviors – as referred above – but also the absence of association between their levels of aggressive driving behaviors and frequency of road accidents.

Despite the contributions of the current study, the same is not absent of limitations. Firstly, the current study is cross-sectional, which limits the inference of causal relations. Secondly, the use of self-report measures. Besides the advantages of questionnaires and the fact that research has proven that this data collection method is reliable and valid, the results obtained should be confirmed through behavioral measures. With regard to driving, individuals may not be the best to judge their performance, and self-reporting may be vulnerable to social desirability (e.g., Lajunen & Summala, 2003). Given that, future studies could use virtual reality and simulators to immerse individuals in realistic scenarios, potentially enhancing the data's validity and enabling real-time measurement of behavioral responses (Zinzow & Jeffirs, 2018). Moreover, despite the study's relatively large total sample, the participants were drawn from the general population, with the majority being college students or staff. In fact, concerning professional drivers, the number of subjects was highly diminutive ($n=56$), which can diminish the generalizability of the findings and the possible absence of statistical differences between this group and the remaining. Nonetheless, according to Hill & Hill (2000), in the specific case of comparing three groups, each should consist of a minimum of

27 cases – which was ensured in this study. Even so, future research should attempt to sample more professional drivers and more diverse professionals' drivers in what concerns sex, as most of the participants of this group were male. Also, and as referred to above, the continuous frequency of driving by professional drivers may lead to fatigue, affecting their capacity for attention and, consequentially, their perception of the driving situations and actions of other drivers (Deffenbacher *et al.*, 1994). Therefore, future studies should explore differences between professional and nonprofessional drivers concerning their perception of driving interactions with other road users and their possible behavioral responses to those situations. It should be noted that studies that adopt mixed methods approaches have a greater depth of knowledge of the subjective experiences of professional drivers, which can provide a richer understanding of driving behavior. Still regarding the study sample, the fact that only data from individuals who totally completed the questionnaire were considered for analysis may have led to the “loss” of more impatient and impulsive individuals—traits that are associated with a higher likelihood of engaging in aggressive driving behaviors (e.g., Miles & Johnson, 2003). Finally, given that professional drivers were significantly older and drove for more time than the remaining two groups of drivers analyzed, future studies should explore the influence of these variables on the obtained results, as these aspects may have influenced the results obtained. As referred above, scientific research has been consistent in reporting the existence of a negative association between age and aggressive driving behaviors, highlighting that older drivers are generally safer drivers, while younger drivers are more prone to engaging in aggressive and risky driving behaviors (e.g., Liu *et al.*, 2022; Wells-Parker *et al.*, 2002). Concerning driving experience, despite some exceptions, most of the studies demonstrate a negative association between driving experience and aggressive driving behavior and driving violations (e.g., Cardoso *et al.*, 2024).

4.1. Final conclusions and practical implications

Overall, the current results have implications for road security interventions. First, our results suggest that professional drivers may benefit from occupational contexts that promote supervision and deterrence, which foster more regulated and prosocial driving behaviors. This highlights the possibility of extending similar mechanisms to nonprofessional drivers, such as

increased enforcement or educational campaigns that emphasize social responsibility and the negative consequences of aggressive driving behaviors. Moreover, given that aggressive driving behaviors were associated with road accidents exclusively among nonprofessional drivers, targeted prevention strategies should focus particularly on this group. Third, and related to the previous point, the study emphasizes the importance of incorporating prosocial driving behaviors into road safety policies and driver education programs. Promoting such behaviors, in cognitive behavioral programs, may not only reduce aggressive driving but also contribute to a safer overall traffic environment. In this sense, road safety campaigns and training programs could shift from an exclusive focus on the negative aspects of driving toward a broader emphasis on positive driving behaviors.

Declarations of interest: None (on behalf of all the authors).

Funding: The first author received a PhD grant from the Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology [FCT – <https://doi.org/10.54499/2021.04650.BD>].

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Rational voting in Portuguese local elections: A fuzzy-set analysis on how corruption, education, inequality and government efficacy affect voter turnout

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Artigo recebido a 31/10/2025.

Aceite para publicação a 31/12/2025.

Abstract

The rational voter paradox — voting despite the minimal chance of influencing results — has inspired extensive research on electoral participation. In Portugal, low voter turnout raises doubts about democratic representativeness. This study examines the rationality of voting in Portuguese local elections, considering the influence of government efficacy, inequality, corruption, and education. Using fuzzy-set Qualitative Comparative Analysis, it concludes that different combinations explain turnout variation: corruption and poor governance mobilize voters, while inequality discourages participation. Thus, Portuguese electoral behavior appears relatively consistent with the rational voter theory.

Keywords: Rational voting; Local voter turnout; Corruption.

Voto racional nas eleições municipais portuguesas: uma análise «fuzzy-set» sobre como a corrupção, a educação, a desigualdade e a eficácia da governação afetam a participação eleitoral

Resumo

O paradoxo do eleitor racional — votar apesar da mínima probabilidade de influenciar resultados — originou muita investigação sobre a participação eleitoral. Em Portugal, a baixa participação eleitoral levanta dúvidas sobre a representatividade democrática. Este estudo analisa a racionalidade do voto nas eleições autárquicas portuguesas, considerando a influência da eficácia da governação, da desigualdade, da corrupção e da educação. Através

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"Rational voting in Portuguese local elections: A fuzzy-set analysis on how corruption, education, inequality and government efficacy affect voter turnout",

Sociologia: Revista da Faculdade de Letras da Universidade do Porto, Vol. LIII, pp. 67 - 109

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.21747/08723419/soc53a3>

da Análise Qualitativa Comparativa “fuzzy-set”, conclui-se que diferentes combinações explicam a variação da participação: a corrupção e a má governação mobilizam o eleitorado e a desigualdade desmotiva-o. Assim, o comportamento eleitoral português mostra-se relativamente consistente com a teoria do eleitor racional.

Palavras-chave: Votação racional; Participação nas eleições autárquicas; Corrupção.

Vote rationnel lors des élections municipales au Portugal : une analyse «fuzzy-set» sur l’influence de la corruption, de l’éducation, des inégalités et de l’efficacité gouvernementale sur la participation électorale

Résumé

Le paradoxe de l’électeur rationnel — voter malgré la faible probabilité d’influencer les résultats — a suscité de nombreuses recherches sur la participation électorale. Au Portugal, la faible participation soulève des doutes sur la représentativité démocratique. Cette étude examine la rationalité du vote aux élections municipales, selon l’efficacité gouvernementale, les inégalités, la corruption et l’éducation. Grâce à l’analyse qualitative comparative «fuzzy-set», elle conclut que différentes combinaisons expliquent la variation de la participation: la corruption et la mauvaise gouvernance mobilisent les électeurs, tandis que les inégalités les découragent. Le comportement électoral portugais apparaît cohérent avec la théorie de l’électeur rationnel.

Mots-clés: Vote rationnel; Participation électorale locale; Corruption.

Voto racional en las elecciones municipales portuguesas: un análisis «fuzzy-set» sobre cómo la corrupción, la educación, la desigualdad y la eficacia gubernamental afectan la participación electoral

Resumen

La paradoja del elector racional —votar pese a la mínima probabilidad de influir en los resultados— ha generado investigación sobre la participación electoral. En Portugal, la baja participación plantea dudas sobre la representatividad democrática. Este estudio analiza la racionalidad del voto en elecciones municipales, considerando la influencia de la eficacia del gobierno, la desigualdad, la corrupción y la educación. Mediante el Análisis Cualitativo Comparativo “fuzzy-set”, se concluye que distintas combinaciones explican la variación de la participación: la corrupción y la mala gobernanza movilizan, mientras la desigualdad desmotiva. El comportamiento electoral portugués resulta relativamente coherente con la teoría del elector racional.

Palabras clave: Voto racional; Participación electoral municipal; Corrupción.

CRUZ, José Neves (2025),

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.21747/08723419/soc53a3>

Introduction

The act of voting is the foundation of democracy, since by voting individuals express their preferences for the various proposals that will shape the public choice of communities. It is expected that voters are rational when voting. According to McGann (2016: 2), “a choice is rational if it is the best way of achieving a certain, logically consistent end.” If the electorate does not vote rationally, democracy ceases to be a system of collective decision-making that corresponds to the preferences of the electorate. If voters do not choose rationally, it is not possible to punish or reward governments that move away from or closer to voters' preferences, as there are no criteria for accountability. The rational choice model of voting assumes that people make their voting decisions based on a consideration of the benefits and costs associated with voting (Downs, 1957). However, it is well known that voting in large elections cannot be explained by the selfish benefits of voting to the individual, as the probability of an individual's vote influencing the election is close to zero, meaning that the benefits of voting rarely exceed the costs. Nevertheless, “a majority of the voters do in fact vote” (Hansen, 1994: 6). The rational choice approach thus makes it difficult to understand why people vote at all (rational voter paradox). Given these difficulties, other arguments have emerged in recent decades that attempt to understand the determinants of voter turnout (Riker & Ordeshook, 1968; Aldrich, 1993; Blais, 2006).

Rational choice models generally assume that actors have instrumental preferences driven by selfish motivation. According to Edlin, Gelman and Kaplan (2007), to overcome the rational voter paradox, social motivations, such as social gratifications, should be added to the selfish benefits of the model when considering instrumental motives to vote. Rationality cannot be limited to the assumption of selfishness, because the act of voting can be rational on the basis of a social motivation, i.e., “the voter's judgment of the expected social consequences of the election outcome as distinct from the direct consequences to that voter” (Edlin, Gelman & Kaplan, 2007: 294). Edlin, Gelman, and Kaplan (2007: 293) “show that voting is rational even in large elections when individuals have ‘social’ preferences and care about social welfare”. This calls into question the rational voter paradox. Based on this debate, this study examines

the extent to which a combination of selfish and social motives influences voter turnout in local elections in Portugal.

This study focus on four factors (some are mainly self-interested, others are more socially motivated) that are known to be related to voter turnout not only in national elections (e.g. Cruz, 2023), but also in local elections: *government efficacy* (e.g. McDonnell, 2020; Modise & Nxumalo, 2022), *inequality* (e.g. Szewczyk & Crowder-Meyer, 2022; van Holm, 2018), *corruption* (e.g. Giommoni, 2021; Lacombe *et al.*, 2016), and *education* (e.g. Harka & Rocco, 2022; Lindgren, Oskarsson & Persson, 2019).

We seek to understand how these (instrumental) factors condition voter turnout in Portuguese local elections by applying the fuzzy-set Qualitative Comparative Analysis (fsQCA) method. The fsQCA allows us to determine whether these factors (conditions) are necessary or sufficient causal conditions (individually or in combination) for high or low voter turnout in Portuguese local elections. Based on the results, it will be possible to assess the extent to which instrumental motivations influence voter turnout. For example, if some of these factors are causal conditions for higher turnout, the rational voter paradox will not be supported, as voters will be mobilized despite the low probability that their vote will influence the outcome of the election. The fsQCA thus provides a macro view of individual decisions regarding the choice to vote.

Local elections provide a useful context to study rationality as they are less ideologically driven than national elections (Dodeigne *et al.*, 2022). Although many people vote along party lines in local elections, there is evidence “that local candidates do make a difference and contribute strongly to the salience of electoral decisions on the local level.” (Marien, Dassonneville & Hooghe, 2015: 898).

In Portugal, local governments have limited power over important policy areas such as the economy or security, which reduces ideological influence. Moreover, Portuguese local elections have a high abstention rate — 47.4% in 2013, 45% in 2017 and 46.4% in 2021 —

underlining the relevance of the rational voter paradox. Nevertheless, the majority go to the polls, which justifies a closer look at the reasons for their voting decision.

The article begins with a literature review on the four factors, later presenting the empirical study and its results, and concludes with a discussion on rationality in voting behavior.

1. Conditions that affect voter-turnout

1.1. Government efficacy

Government efficacy can be seen as a primarily selfish motivation for voting, as people are concerned with personal economic outcomes (Caillier, 2010). Governments with low efficacy provide little well-being to their citizens. However, “the assessment can be based on personal economic outcomes or can be sociotropic (how the economy in general has done for everyone)” (McGann, 2016: 3). In the first case, behavior is driven by a selfish motivation, but in the second case it is driven by a social motivation, i.e., an evaluation of the societal benefits of macro-social outcomes such as economic growth, low inflation, low inequality. However, as mentioned above, the powers of local governments in Portugal are limited in areas of great social or ideological importance, such as economic performance, taxation, price evolution, unemployment or correction of inequalities. Therefore, the analysis of local government efficacy will be essentially based on the scope of local government powers specifically focused on local public goods and local facilities, such as sanitation, water treatment, drinking water supply, maintenance of public squares and gardens, management and maintenance of public roads, construction, housing and other facilities with a local dimension that have a concrete impact on the lives of local citizens. The significance of the link between government efficacy and voter turnout can therefore be seen primarily in the selfish motivation of rational voting decisions, although it cannot be ruled out that there are voters who are primarily socially motivated by the quality of local government for the whole community (Miles, 2015).

If high government efficacy is a causal factor for high turnout, this could indicate that voters want to ensure that incumbents are re-elected (whether for selfish or social motivations) and

shows that instrumental rationality drives turnout and thus rational voter paradox is not supported. The same is true if low government efficacy is a causal factor for high turnout. In this case, voters aim to punish incumbents by voting to prevent their re-election. Again, the rational voter paradox is not supported. If voters do not respond to government efficacy in the form of electoral mobilization, the rational voter paradox remains uncontested. If voter turnout decreases as a result of high or low government efficacy, it becomes even more difficult to understand why the majority of voters participate, further reinforcing the rational voter paradox.

Some studies have found evidence of a positive relationship between government efficacy and voter turnout in local elections. Hansen (1994), for example, found evidence of higher voter turnout in Norwegian local elections in municipalities with more effective government. McDonnell (2020) found that citizens who experience political efficacy participate more in local politics. Modise and Nxumalo (2022), in a study of the fifth local government elections in the North West Province of South Africa in 2016, found that voter turnout fell sharply in municipalities with poor governance, which seems to indicate that voters have lost confidence in the ability of their vote to change the situation.

However, a negative relationship between government efficacy and voter turnout can also be explained by the influence of instrumental rationality on voting decisions. This is the case when low government efficacy mobilizes voters to punish and replace incompetent rulers. According to Wang (2016: 292), “it is distrust rather than trust that stimulates political engagement”.

1.2. Inequality

As mentioned above, Portuguese local governments have limited powers in important distributional matters, both in tax and expenditure policy. However, local governments can influence poor and rich citizens differently, as local politicians can respond differently to the interests of different income groups. For example, local governments can allocate public funds to wealthier neighborhoods by investing in infrastructure that improves their quality of

life — such as pedestrian areas, urban beautification, and better accessibility — while increasing property values. Alternatively, they can prioritize social support for lower-income residents by providing free school meals or improving infrastructure and access to disadvantaged neighborhoods. These policy decisions have a significant impact on the distribution of benefits across socio-economic groups. The relationship between inequality and voter turnout in local elections may therefore reflect how different income groups perceive governance in relation to their personal interests, depending on the potential gains or losses they experience. In this context, the influence of inequality on voter turnout can be interpreted through the lens of selfish rationality. For example, if a candidate promises to prioritize the poor in the community if elected, both affluent and low-income voters may be motivated to vote, but for opposite reasons: the latter to achieve policies that benefit them, and the former to prevent the election of a candidate who might undermine their interests. Still, it must be acknowledged that some voters find the persistence of inequality at the local level so repugnant that they feel compelled to vote solely out of social concern for local candidates who promise change. Inequality thus serves as an instrumental motivation — be it selfish or social — for voters to participate in local elections.

A review of the literature on the relationship between inequality and voter turnout reveals the presence of conflicting theories (Stockemer & Scruggs, 2012). While *relative power theory* suggests a negative correlation, *conflict theory* argues for a positive one. According to the first theory, the greater the inequality, the lower the political participation of the poorest (Dash, Ferris and Voia, 2023).

If it turns out that greater inequality leads to lower voter turnout, as this theory predicts, it becomes even more difficult to understand why the majority of voters go to the polls, so the rational voter paradox is not called into question.

In contrast, *conflict theory* assumes that an increase in inequality mobilizes the poor and the rich. According to Stockemer and Scruggs (2012), “This increases the two groups' possible gains and losses in elections by giving citizens more incentives to turn out” (Stockemer & Scruggs 2012: 766).

If it turns out that greater inequality leads to higher voter turnout, as the *conflict theory* predicts, the rational voter paradox is not sustained. If it is unlikely that voter turnout changes with increasing or decreasing income inequality, the rational voter paradox remains undisputed.

The empirical results on the influence of inequality on voter turnout in local elections reflect the opposing views. Schäfer and Schwander (2019) examine local data from 402 counties in Germany between 1998 and 2017 and conclude that there is “a consistently negative effect of income inequality on turnout, with mostly statistically significant coefficients that strengthen confidence in the findings.” (Schäfer & Schwander, 2019: 407). In contrast, van Holm (2018) analyzed civic participation at the local level in the United States in a sample of small and medium-sized cities and found that income inequality correlates with higher engagement rates. In the same vein, Szewczyk and Crowder-Meyer (2022) show that local income inequality increases political participation. Kouba, Novák and Strnad (2021) analyzed the determinants of voter turnout in local elections using a sample of 275 elections in 97 countries and found that inequality is not related to local turnout.

To summarize, “the influence of inequality on voter turnout is inconclusive” (Stockemer, 2017: 712).

1.3. Corruption

Several studies point to the negative economic and social consequences of corruption. In the economic dimension, corruption acts as a “major deterrent to growth and development” (Jain, 2001: 71). Corruption has been shown to affect the quality of public services: “whenever public contracts go to the highest bribe payer instead of to the best service provider, then governments and bureaucracies dissipate resources and slow down infrastructure projects” (Stockemer & Calca, 2013: 535). In the social dimension, it is emphasized that corruption jeopardizes the social contract and harms democracy (Drapalova *et al.*, 2019; Kubbe & Engelbert, 2018; Lagunes, 2012). According to Stockemer (2013), corruption is widespread in all types of institutions and affects municipalities, regions, and countries.

Given the macro (economic and social) consequences of corruption described above, its influence on voter turnout could be primarily due to a social motivation (Miles, 2015). However, one could also argue that corruption has a direct personal impact on citizens and causes them to vote for selfish motives. This would be the case with clientelism, where votes are exchanged for personal gain, and with voters who perceive the damage to their personal situation caused by corrupt practices. However, the number of people who benefit from corruption is rather small compared to the electorate. The benefits usually accrue to certain powerful corporations or interest groups that have access to resources and are partners in public contracts (Olson, 1965). Moreover, the personal harm caused by corruption is difficult to be recognized by citizens, as they are ill-informed about a crime that is inherently well hidden and whose victims cannot be easily or directly identified (Friedrichs, 2010). Thus, social ethics and appreciation of the quality of institutions can give corruption a prominent role in influencing voter turnout through social motivation.

Stockemer (2013) points out that corruption can have a *mobilizing effect* on voter turnout. According to Wang (2016), the *mobilizing effect* arises from the lack of trust in institutions caused by corruption. Since elections are an opportunity to punish corrupt rulers, participation is a form of protest. The *mobilizing effect* can also arise from clientelism, as elections enable the election of corrupt politicians who trade votes for public goods. According to Muñoz, Anduiza and Gallego (2016), it also may arise when corrupt politicians govern successfully.

If, regarding to the rational choice model, it turns out that more corruption leads to higher voter turnout, as predicted by the *mobilizing effect*, the rational voter paradox cannot be upheld.

Conversely, corruption can have a *demobilizing effect* and cause citizens to abstain from voting because they do not believe they can influence the behavior of policy makers (Stockemer, LaMontagne & Scruggs, 2011). In this case, corruption socially discourages voters from voting because “people will only vote if they are confident that the political system is responding in some way to their voting behaviour” (Putnam, 2010; cited in Hadjar & Beck,

2010: 527). If citizens do not believe that they can prevent corrupt behavior with their vote, they lose interest in politics and stop going to the polls (Stockemer, LaMontagne & Scruggs, 2011).

If it turns out that higher corruption leads to lower voter turnout, as predicted by the *demobilizing effect*, it becomes even more difficult to understand why the majority of voters go to the polls. The rational voter paradox remains unchallenged. The same is true if turnout is unlikely to change as corruption increases or decreases.

Both the *mobilizing effect* and the *demobilizing effect* find empirical support in empirical studies investigating the relationship between corruption and voter turnout in local elections. Empirical evidence for a positive relationship between corruption and voter turnout (*mobilizing effect*) at the level of local elections can be found in studies by Escalera, Calcagno and Shughart II (2012), Karahan, Coats and Shughart II (2006), Lacombe *et al.* (2016), Neskova and Kalesnikaite (2019), Stockemer and Calca (2013). Stockemer and Calca (2013) found a positive correlation between corruption and voter turnout in Portuguese local elections. Examples of evidence for the *demobilizing effect* in local elections are the results of Chong *et al.* (2015), Costas-Pérez (2014), Giommoni (2021), Johnson (2024).

There are also studies that find no significant relationship between corruption and voter turnout (e.g., Kostadinova, 2009).

In short, the debate remains open as to whether corruption helps to decrease or increase voter turnout, or whether it has no effect.

1.4. Education

According to the basic rational choice model, voters will be ill-informed because the cost of acquiring and selecting information quickly becomes greater than the expected benefit of voting, given the low probability that each voter's vote will affect the outcome of the election. According to Downs (1957), it is not rational for citizens to be well informed about how to

vote correctly. As Mladenović and Vasić (2024: 959) point out: “a single vote doesn’t add much to the result of the election, why bother to gather information on how to vote?”

Dalton (1988) points out that there is a very large literature in political science dealing with the question of whether voters have the informational and cognitive skills to make democracy work. Cahan and Kaempfer (1992) examined the level of information voters have about the political programs of candidates in various elections and concluded that voters are poorly informed. Elmendorf and Schleicher (2013) refer to the “voter information problem” and emphasize that “Most voters are astonishingly ignorant of basic facts about government and politics” (Elmendorf & Schleicher, 2013: 365). The extensive literature on fiscal illusion also provides evidence of voter misinformation (e.g. Dell’Anno & Mourão, 2012; Parlevliet, Giuliadori & Rooduijn, 2023).

Parlevliet, Giuliadori and Rooduijn (2023), who investigated the problem of fiscal illusion, concluded that “higher literacy and information provision contribute to more prudent fiscal preferences” (Parlevliet, Giuliadori & Rooduijn, 2023: 201). The same can perhaps be said in relation to other issues on the ballot: better informed voters are more likely to vote according to their preferences.

The literature clearly shows that better informed voters are more likely to vote (Lassen, 2005; McMurrey, 2015), which underpins the rationality of the act of voting.

Several studies argue that education develops civic skills, promotes political knowledge and increases political interest (Berinsky & Lenz, 2011; Dee, 2004; Milligan, Moretti & Oreopoulos, 2004). Sondheimer and Green (2010: 186) confirm “that education increases one’s general interest in and knowledge of politics” and find “evidence of a causal relationship between education and political interest.” These authors also find evidence that “education may set in motion not only changes in outlook but also changes in the way that one is engaged by one’s social and political environment” (Sondheimer & Green, 2010: 186). It is therefore expected that a population with a higher level of education will be better informed about political issues and better involved in the community and political endeavors and therefore more likely to

vote. The prediction that education has a positive effect on voter turnout is known as the *absolute education model* (Burden, 2009; Persson, 2013a).

If greater knowledge of politics, governance and democracy, imparted through education, mobilizes voters to the polls, this means that people with a higher level of education have greater social motivation to vote. That is, the rational mobilizing element that expresses the influence of education is social motivation and not so much selfish motivation. However, this may also be the case if a higher level of education enables a better perception of the personal impact of governance.

If, with regard to the rational choice model, it turns out that more education leads to higher voter turnout, as predicted by the *absolute education model*, the rational voter paradox cannot be supported.

There is also no correlation or negative correlation between education and voter turnout in the literature. Weinschenk and Dawes (2022), for example, find no significant positive correlation between civic education and voter turnout. Persson (2013b) finds a negative relationship, which supports the *relative education model*. According to this approach, education is seen as a positional good, i.e., as something that is only valuable to some people on condition that others do not have it. The more people acquire higher education, the lower the social status of a college degree becomes. This leads to a drop in the social status of qualified people. Considering that people with higher social status are more likely to vote because they belong to networks with higher political knowledge and strong social norms (Ahlskog, 2021; Sondheimer & Green, 2010), the loss of social status leads to lower political participation. Thus, if a large proportion of the population has a high level of education, this is no longer a distinguishing feature for voting. According to the *relative education model*, an increase in the proportion of the population with higher education can therefore dampen overall political participation.

If it turns out that a higher level of education leads to lower turnout, as predicted by the *relative education model*, it becomes even more difficult to understand why the majority of

voters go to the polls. The rational voter paradox remains unchallenged. The same is true if turnout does not change with increasing or decreasing levels of education.

There is evidence to support both the *absolute* and *relative* models of education at the level of local elections in different countries. Several studies found a positive relationship supporting the *absolute education model* (Bhatti *et al.*, 2019; Haman & Školník, 2020; Tavares & Raudla, 2018). However, a negative relationship was also found in accordance with the *relative education model* (Harka & Rocco, 2022). There are also several studies that indicate that the relationship is not statistically significant, suggesting that education is not a direct cause of political participation (Lindgren, Oskarsson & Persson, 2019; Freire, Martins & Meirinho, 2012; Tavares, Raudla & Silva, 2020).

In short, with education, as with corruption and inequality, the question remains open as to whether it helps to reduce or increase voter turnout, or whether it has no effect.

2. Hypotheses

With the aim of understanding the rationality of voting in local elections in Portugal, and taking into account the arguments put forward - which have been shown in the literature to be relevant to understanding the level of turnout -, this study analyses the following hypotheses:

a. Hypotheses that call the rational voter paradox into question

a₁ High government efficacy is a causal condition for high voter turnout (vote to reward and re-elect - mainly selfish motivation);

a₂ Low government efficacy is a causal condition for high voter turnout (vote to punish and change – mainly selfish motivation);

a₃ High inequality is a causal condition for high voter turnout (*conflict theory* – mainly selfish motivation);

a₄ High corruption is a causal condition for high voter turnout (*mobilizing effect* – mainly social motivation);

a₅ High education is a causal condition for high voter turnout (*absolute education model* – mainly social motivation).

b. Hypotheses that sustain the rational voter paradox

b₁ High inequality is a causal condition for low voter turnout (*relative power theory*– mainly selfish demotivation);

b₂ High corruption is a causal condition for low voter turnout (*demobilizing effect* – mainly social demotivation);

b₃ High education is a causal condition for low voter turnout (*relative education model* – mainly social demotivation).

3. Method

The fuzzy-set Qualitative Comparative Analysis (fsQCA) can be used to investigate complex causality (Ragin, 2000). Specifically, in this study it is used to determine whether government efficacy, inequality, corruption, and education, individually or in combination, are necessary and/or sufficient conditions for high or low voter turnout in Portuguese local elections. From the results, conclusions can be drawn about rational behavior in electoral decisions. Voter turnout has been identified as an issue where complex causality is present (Frank & Coma, 2021), but surprisingly, the use of fsQCA to study this issue is very rare, especially in the context of local elections.

3.1. Procedure

The fsQCA, which is based on Boolean algebra, is widely used in the social sciences (Pappas & Woodside, 2021; Roig-Tierno *et al.*, 2017). It identifies necessary and sufficient conditions —

causal pathways — for a particular outcome. In contrast to traditional multivariate statistics, fsQCA considers multiple causality (different combinations leading to the same outcome) and non-symmetry (the causes of high turnout may differ from those of low turnout) (Pappas & Woodside, 2021).

FsQCA uses set membership scores from 0 (non-member) to 1 (full member), where 0.5 is the point of maximum ambiguity. In data calibration, these scores are assigned using percentiles — 95 (full membership), 50 (crossover point) and 5 (full non-membership) — a method commonly used in fsQCA studies (Choi & Cho, 2018).

Causality in fsQCA follows Boolean logic. A condition is necessary if all cases with the outcome are also members of the condition set. It is sufficient if membership in the condition always implies the outcome. Key concepts include consistency (how reliably a condition leads to an outcome) and coverage (the proportion of cases that are explained by a pathway). According to Ragin (2000, 2008) and Fiss (2011), a consistency threshold of 0.9 is required for necessity and 0.75 for sufficiency. A solution should have a consistency of more than 0.75 and ideally a coverage of more than 0.5.

FsQCA offers three types of solutions: complex, intermediate and parsimonious solutions. The parsimonious solution includes only the most important causal conditions that cannot be omitted. The intermediate solution incorporates theoretical assumptions and includes both the parsimonious and complex components. Given the empirical ambiguity in this study, the parsimonious solution is the most appropriate (Pappas & Woodside, 2021)¹.

3.2. Models

Given the possibility of asymmetry allowed by the fsQCA method, the necessary and sufficient conditions for high and low turnout were examined separately.

The models are:

¹ The complex solution is limited as it excludes counterfactual, i.e., combinations of conditions without membership cases defined as 'false', which restricts the results.

\sim Abstention = g (Efficacy of Government; Inequality; Corruption; Education) – (high voter turnout model, i.e., low abstention in elections);

Abstention = f (Efficacy of Government; Inequality; Corruption; Education) – (low voter turnout model, i.e., high abstention in elections).

3.3. Research Cases

Portugal has 308 municipalities: 278 on the mainland, 19 in the Azores and 11 in Madeira. On the mainland, there are two levels of government — central and municipal — while the islands have a third, regional level due to their particular characteristics. Nevertheless, municipal powers are consistent across regions.

As Ragin (2000) notes, the fsQCA requires homogeneity of cases. However, there are significant organizational and socio-cultural differences between densely populated urban areas and sparsely populated rural areas. Grouping such different communities together could undermine the validity of the fsQCA and lead to ambiguous results. For example, Vuković (2020) shows that the factors influencing voter turnout vary by municipality size, and Harka and Rocco (2022) find different dynamics in the relationship between education and voter turnout in less populous and less urbanized municipalities. Following this rationale, Portuguese municipalities were divided into four groups based on their size. The size of the municipality was calculated based on the population size of the municipality and the population density, which is an indicator of the degree of urbanization (Tavares *et al.*, 2018). The groups were divided into quartiles based on the statistical distribution of the two indicators.

In the 308 Portuguese municipalities, according to the 2021 Census, the municipalities in the 1st quartile had less than 6250 inhabitants; the median number of inhabitants of the municipalities was 13747 inhabitants and the average number of inhabitants was 33581 inhabitants. In terms of population density, the 1st quartile included municipalities with a population density of up to 25 inhabitants per square kilometer, with the median population density of the municipalities being 66 inhabitants per square kilometer and the average being

292.5 inhabitants per square kilometer. Taking these values into account, the following groups of municipalities were formed:

i) VS (VERY SMALL) – population and population density in the first quartile - 35 municipalities ($VS \leq 6250$ inhabitants; $VS \leq 25$ inhabitants per km^2);

ii) S (SMALL) - population and population density between the first quartile and the median - 25 municipalities (6250 inhabitants $< S \leq 13747$ inhabitants; 25 inhabitants per $\text{km}^2 < S \leq 66$ inhabitants per km^2);

iii) M (MEDIUM) - population and population density between median and average - 43 municipalities (13747 inhabitants $< M \leq 33581$ inhabitants; 66 inhabitants per $\text{km}^2 < M \leq 292,5$ inhabitants per km^2);

iv) L (LARGE) - - population and population density above the average - 46 municipalities ($L > 33581$ inhabitants; $L > 292,5$ inhabitants per km^2).

In total, 149 municipalities were included in the analysis (48,4% of all Portuguese municipalities).²

3.4. Measures

ABST - Abstention is measured by the average percentage of abstention in two Portuguese local elections (2013 and 2017)³.

PRCO – Prevention of corruption is measured by “Dimension E – Rule of Law and Prevention of Corruption” - of the *Local Democracy Quality Index (IQDL)* by Tavares *et al.* (2018). According to the authors, this dimension of the index measures “the Rule of Law and the absence of corruption” (Tavares *et al.*, 2018: 82). Corruption is, therefore, captured in reverse (corruption prevention). The measure includes the average payment period for services,

² Corvo and Lajes das Flores, two very small municipalities in the Azores, were excluded as no Gini index data is available for them.

³ The 2021 election results were not included, as data on corruption prevention and government efficacy were only available up to 2016. Source: Database PORDATA. [Consult. to 29.10.2025]. Available at: <https://www.pordata.pt/>.

materials, and equipment, the preference for transparent contracting methods, the quality of municipal public contracts and complaints from residents about the municipality and its facilities. This measure captures citizens' perceptions of local government's efforts to prevent corruption and the degree of transparency in procurement. It is therefore consistent with the social motivation of voters in relation to the phenomenon of corruption. However, it is an indirect measure of corruption. But Kauffman, Kraay and Mastruzzi (2007) argue that it is not the actual level of corruption that matters, as the use of direct corruption measures is likely to lead to an underestimation of the extent of corruption. Vuković (2020:129) points out that, "Unless there is a criminal investigation followed by a court hearing, these transactions will remain hidden from the public eye". Stockemer and Calca (2013) used a direct measure of corruption and pointed to the "skewness of the data in favor of none or few corruption cases" (Stockemer & Calca, 2013: 540). The data refer to the period 2013 to 2016.⁴

EDUC – The level of *Education* is measured by the percentage of the resident population aged 15 or older who have completed secondary education (average of 2011 and 2021 Census values).⁵

INEQ - *Inequality* is measured by the municipal Gini coefficient for 2017.⁶

EFFI - *Efficacy of the government* is measured by "Dimension C – Governmental Efficacy" - of the *Local Democracy Quality Index (IQDL)* by Tavares *et al.* (2018). According to the authors, this dimension of the index comprises "Criteria that captures the quality of public services, the absence of political patronage, and the quality and credibility of policies formulated and implemented" (Tavares *et al.*, 2018: 39). The data refer to the period 2013 to 2016.⁷

⁴ Data were provided by Tavares *et al.* (2018).

⁵ Source: Database PORDATA. [Consult. to 29.10.2025]. Available at: <https://www.pordata.pt/>.

⁶ Source: 'Portal do INE: Estatísticas do Rendimento ao nível local - Indicadores de rendimento declarado no IRS: [Consult. to 29.10.2025]. Available at: https://www.ine.pt/xportal/xmain?xpid=INE&xpgid=ine_destaquesandDESTAQUESdest_boui=382407872andDESTAQUESmodo=2andxlang=pt.

⁷ Data were provided by Tavares *et al.* (2018).

3.5. Calibration thresholds

As mentioned earlier, data were calibrated in the range between zero and one, using as thresholds the percentiles 95 (full membership), 50 (central point), and 5 (full non-membership). The fsQCA calibration thresholds, the data of the sets and calibrated data are in the Appendix.⁸

4. Results

4.1. Necessary conditions

Table 1 - Necessary conditions for membership in high/low voter turnout.

SETS	Outcome: HIGH VOTER TURNOUT – Consistency				Outcome: LOW VOTER TURNOUT - Consistency			
	VS	S	M	L	VS	S	M	L
High PRCO	0.61	0.57	0.69	0.68	0.73	0.59	0.72	0.67
Low PRCO	0.72	0.68	0.59	0.63	0.60	0.66	0.58	0.63
High EDUC	0.71	0.67	0.485	0.46	0.57	0.45	0.69	0.83
Low EDUC	0.57	0.55	0.77	0.85	0.71	0.76	0.59	0.46
High INEQ	0.50	0.47	0.60	0.53	0.71	0.75	0.61	0.69
Low INEQ	0.76	0.76	0.67	0.75	0.56	0.48	0.69	0.58
High EFFI	0.59	0.68	0.59	0.61	0.653	0.69	0.69	0.69
Low EFFI	0.67	0.60	0.68	0.64	0.62	0.57	0.61	0.55

Notes: Values rounded to two decimal places.

Source: The author.

As can be seen in Table 1, the consistency of all conditions in the four groups of municipalities is below 0.9, which means that none of these conditions or their combinations are a necessary condition for high or low voter turnout.

4.2. Sufficient conditions

Table 2 presents the sufficient conditions of the parsimonious solution for high voter turnout in the four groups of municipalities.

⁸ The data were computed using the fsQCA 3.0 software package developed by Charles Ragin and Sean Davey, which uses the Quine-McCluskey algorithm. [Consult. to 29.10.2025]. Available at: <http://www.socsci.uci.edu/~cragin/fsQCA/software.shtml>.

Table 2 - Sufficient conditions for high voter turnout (low abstention).

Gr.	Sufficient conditions (pathways)	Consist.	Nr. of mun.	Freq. cut-off	Consist-cut-off	Solution consist.	Solution cover.
VS	\sim INEQ \wedge EDUC \wedge \sim EFFI	0.909706	5	-----	-----	-----	-----
	\sim INEQ \wedge EDUC \wedge \sim PRCO	0.906358	4	2	0.915556	0.902256	0.540541
S	\sim INEQ \wedge EDUC	0.835869	8	-----	-----	-----	-----
	\sim INEQ \wedge \sim EFFI	0.856474	4	-----	-----	-----	-----
	\sim INEQ \wedge \sim PRCO	0.806162	4	1	0.828423	0.78508	0.718699
M	\sim EDUC \wedge \sim EFFI	0.836218	8	-----	-----	-----	-----
	\sim INEQ \wedge EFFI \wedge \sim PRCO	0.879245	2	1	0.847568	0.831549	0.656292
L	\sim EDUC \wedge \sim EFFI	0.888039	9	-----	-----	-----	-----
	\sim EDUC \wedge \sim INEQ	0.916201	12				
	\sim EDUC \wedge \sim PRCO	0.89410	8	1	0.86002	0.878365	0.820018

Notes: The prefix ‘^’ denotes “and”; ‘~’ means the “negation of a condition”.

Source. The author.

Table 2 shows that high voter turnout is the result of several combinations of conditions in all groups of municipalities, suggesting multiple causality. In general, low government efficacy, low inequality and low corruption prevention are associated with higher voter turnout.

In very small municipalities, two combinations are sufficient: (i) low inequality *and* high education *and* low government efficacy, and (ii) low inequality *and* high education *and* low corruption prevention.

Small municipalities show similar patterns with three combinations: (i) low inequality *and* high education, (ii) low inequality *and* low government efficacy, and (iii) low inequality *and* low corruption prevention.

In medium-sized municipalities, the patterns remain similar, although the role of education changes and government efficacy shows mixed effects.

In large municipalities, three pathways lead to high voter turnout, with government efficacy behaving as in smaller groups. The role of education is similar to that in medium-sized

municipalities. Thus, it appears that education mobilizes voters only in smaller municipalities. The fact that the influence of education varies by municipality size suggests that contextual factors may influence voter turnout.

Table 3 shows the sufficient conditions for low voter turnout in the four groups of municipalities.

Table 3 - Sufficient conditions for low voter turnout (high abstention).

Gr.	Sufficient conditions (pathways)	Consist.	Nr. of mun.	Freq. cut-off	Consist. cut-off	Solution consist.	Solution cover.
VS	INEQ ^ ~EDUC	0.827712	6	-----	-----	-----	-----
	INEQ ^ PRCO	0.872266	7	2	0.885756	0.812261	0.614849
S	INEQ ^ PRCO	0.884498	2	-----	-----	-----	-----
	INEQ ^ EFFI	0.858855	4	1	0.850498	0.84289	0.57874
M	~INEQ ^ EDUC	0.824365	8	-----	-----	-----	-----
	PRCO^EDUC	0.839399	6				
	~PRCO^INEQ^EFFI	0.832962	4	1	0.84957	0.781664	0.719161
L	EDUC	0.850195	17	-----	-----	-----	-----
	INEQ ^ PRCO	0.902422	8	1	0.907035	0.841387	0.910202

Notes: The prefix '^' denotes "and"; '~' means the "negation of a condition".

Source: The author.

Table 3 shows that high inequality lowers voter turnout and supports earlier findings (Table 2) on the differential effects of education by municipality size. In very small municipalities, low turnout is associated with (i) high inequality *and* low education, and (ii) high inequality *and* high corruption prevention.

In the small municipalities this sufficient condition still applies, and in the former, high government efficacy appears in place of low education.

In the medium-sized municipalities, the biggest difference from the small municipalities is that a high level of education is associated with a low voter turnout. Finally, in the large municipalities, this relationship persists and the results for inequality and corruption prevention are in line with those of the other municipality groups.

An overview of the differences between municipality groups in Tables 3 and 4 suggests that the interaction between voters and governments does not differ significantly by municipality dimension, except for education. There is little asymmetry in voter turnout (high vs. low).

5. Discussion

The main aim of this study was to analyze whether rationality, driven by selfish and social motivations, helps to explain the level of turnout in Portuguese local elections. The study is based on existing evidence on the influence of four factors on electoral voting levels in local elections: government efficacy, inequality, corruption prevention, and education. The literature reveals that the influence of these factors can be explained by opposing theories regarding their effects on voter turnout. Furthermore, the influence of these factors on voter turnout levels may express the result of rational choices regarding the act of going to vote, based on selfish or social motivations, with government efficacy and inequality more linked to selfish motivations, and corruption and education more based on social motivation.

Fuzzy-set Qualitative Comparative Analysis (fsQCA) was used to test several hypotheses to assess the role of each factor and its rational motivation. The findings help determine whether rational choice theory explains voter turnout and challenges the rational voter paradox. The fsQCA is well suited for this analysis because it handles asymmetry, allows for multiple causal pathways, and provides simplified solutions without strict assumptions - which is consistent with the conflicting theoretical perspectives of the study.

Taking into account the results of previous studies showing differences in causality patterns depending on the population size and the degree of urbanization of the municipalities (e.g. Vuković, 2020), Portuguese municipalities were classified into four groups based on these dimensions: very small, small, medium and large.

The results show that no single factor, either alone or in combination, is necessary for high or low voter turnout in Portuguese municipalities. However, several combinations of factors

(multicausality) are sufficient and enable an answer to the previously formulated hypotheses through complex interactions.

The results regarding *government efficacy* indicate a certain mobilizing effect when governance is poor. This confirms hypothesis a_2 , but not a_1 . In fact, low government efficacy is part of the sufficient conditions for high voter turnout. Only for medium-sized municipalities is there some ambiguity. These results confirm the view of Wang (2016: 292), who states that “it is distrust rather than trust to stimulate political engagement”. This means that voters see elections as an opportunity to change the situation. This shows that voters vote rationally and believe that their vote is important, which calls into question the rational voter paradox based on a selfish motivation in response to low government efficacy.

Inequality shows a stable relationship in the study and proves to be an important factor for the lack of voter turnout. In fact, inequality is the most common factor across all municipality groups—except for medium-sized ones, where results are inconclusive. Overall, the results support *relative power theory*, which posits that poorer voters lose interest in local politics as a way to give voice to their aspirations because they believe that policymakers are essentially responsive to the interests of high-income groups (Dash, Ferris & Voia, 2023). Accordingly, hypothesis b_1 is confirmed and a_3 is not confirmed. The inequality results support the rational voter paradox as they do not indicate mobilization in response to inequality.

Corruption prevention, in conjunction with other factors, helps to explain voter turnout in all community groups. Low corruption prevention appears in at least one pathway for high voter turnout in each group, suggesting that perceived corruption risks mobilizing voters. This supports hypothesis a_4 , disproves b_2 , and is consistent with the findings of Stockemer and Calca (2013). These results challenge the rational voter paradox by showing that voters act when corruption is high. One may wonder whether clientelism is at play here, as Lacombe *et al.* (2016) suggest. Are voters mobilized to secure benefits from corrupt governments or to punish them? A comparison of the 2013 and 2017 local elections in municipalities that meet the pathways for high voter turnout, including the condition of low corruption prevention, can help to understand the reasons for the *mobilizing effect*. Of the 18 municipalities that

fulfill a sufficient condition for high turnout (Table 2), 7 changed ruling parties⁹, 5 recorded a significant decrease in the incumbent's vote share¹⁰, and only 6 recorded gains¹¹. This indicates that voters overwhelmingly reject incumbents in contexts with weak corruption prevention. Therefore, as also indicated by Neskkova and Kalesnikaite (2019: 689), it appears that "This finding suggests that at least at the local level, where ties between the community and public officials are presumably stronger, the public has not given up on corruption".

Education has mixed effects depending on the size of the municipality. In very small and small municipalities, higher education is associated with higher voter turnout, which supports the *absolute education model* and confirms hypothesis a_5 (not b_3). In medium and large municipalities, the opposite is true — high education is associated with lower voter turnout, which supports the *relative education model* and confirms hypothesis b_3 (not a_5). This suggests that education in larger municipalities reflects social status rather than civic engagement and leads to demobilization when it no longer distinguishes voters from others. Education as such does not challenge the paradox of the rational voter in these areas. Harka and Rocco (2022) also found a negative relationship between education and voter turnout, but their findings focused on poorer areas with low social capital, which does not apply to the large Portuguese municipalities in this study.

From a political science perspective, the overall findings support the rational voter model and suggest that both self-interest and social motivations influence voter turnout - in line with Edlin, Gelman and Kaplan (2007), who question the rational voter paradox.

From a policy perspective, the findings emphasize the importance of reducing inequality, improving corruption prevention, and ensuring government efficacy to increase voter turnout at the local level.

⁹ (VS) Alter do Chão, Alandroal, (S) Celorico da Beira, (L) Esposende, Paredes, Vila do Conde, and Felgueiras.

¹⁰ (VS) Góis, (S) Vila Viçosa, Tábua, (M) Póvoa do Lanhoso, and (L) Barcelos.

¹¹ (VS) Avis, (S) Madalena, (M) Tondela, (L) Paços de Ferreira, Penafiel, and Guimarães.

Conclusion

Despite the high abstention rate in Portuguese local elections, this study provides evidence that voters behave rationally, challenging the rational voter paradox. Voter turnout is shaped by multiple causal configurations, with corruption acting as a mobilizing factor and inequality contributing to disengagement. Notably, high levels of education do not lead to high voter turnout in densely populated, urban municipalities. In addition, citizens tend to respond to poor governance by participating in elections.

These findings suggest that the local political system in Portugal is functioning as a mechanism for the collective expression of citizen preferences, with electoral participation serving as a response to governance failures and corruption.

A limitation of the study, beyond those of the fsQCA described in Roig-Tierno *et al.* (2017: 17-18), is that generalizing the results to all municipalities that were not included should be done with caution, as it is a qualitative, i.e., case-based, analysis.

Disclosure of interest.

The author reports there are no competing interests to declare.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Luís de Sousa, one of the authors of Tavares *et al.* (2018), for providing the data on the Quality Index of Local Democracy and its components.

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Appendix

Table 4 - Sets and fsQCA calibration thresholds.

Groups	SETS	Full membership – percentile 95	Central point-percentile 50	Full non-membership – percentile 5
VS	ABS	40.035	28.550	23.720
	PRCO	82.07691549	24.41542017	-76.73409583
	EDUC	22.21	18.3	14.7
	INEQ	26.73	22.6	20.07
	EFFI	73.634	38.187	-21.044
S	ABS	45.280	36.450	32.340
	PRCO	58.50015394	30.94465769	-57.18871837
	EDUC	23.84	18.9	16.42
	INEQ	26.7	23.8	21.2
	EFFI	61.215	10.940	-55.697
M	ABS	51.500	44.300	34.030
	PRCO	52.54073884	16.72762053	-90.93800753
	EDUC	26.61	22.4	19.03
	INEQ	27.94	24.1	21.92
	EFFI	66.317	11.042	-63.941
G	ABS	59.050	48.475	30.500
	PRCO	63.9983338	22.59762796	-133.8724337
	EDUC	29.275	23.85	20.5
	INEQ	29.375	24.7	21.825
	EFFI	63.067	5.093	-82.616

Source: The author.

Table 5 - Data set Very Small Municipalities (VS).

Municipalities	ABST	PRCO	INEQ	EDUC	EFFI
Alandroal	24.35	-70.3307	19.3	18.8	18.3508
Alfândega da Fé	30.95	37.8622	27.5	18.3	-26.7637
Aljezur	39.6	-60.9701	25.4	24.8	-6.48657
Almeida	35.5	53.7759	23.5	16.7	25.3373
Alter do Chão	27.75	-14.8538	21.6	19.1	64.976
Arronches	20.25	80.1987	21.6	20	19.4713
Avis	27.7	15.0884	21	20.7	39.3358
Boticas	46.55	39.3824	25.9	14.4	75.7424
Carraceda de Ansiães	37.3	104.947	26.8	16.3	44.9522
Castelo de Vide	26.5	27.5502	22.9	20.5	52.6712
Crato	23.75	19.3015	20.4	17	56.4232
Fig. de Castelo Rodrigo	26.15	-43.4625	25.6	15.3	64.9467
Freixo de Espada à Cinta	24.35	3.07368	22.7	16.9	-61.8738
Fronteira	23.65	-2.56686	24.7	20.5	-2.51968
Gavião	30.75	-25.9098	21.1	16.7	72.7306
Góis	27.05	11.5597	21.7	19.6	-10.0453
Marvão	24.9	24.7342	20.9	16.9	33.8931
Mêda	33.5	57.6213	24.9	14.7	-18.5926
Mértola	26.95	46.519	22	19	63.7996
Monchique	28.55	10.2771	22.9	20.4	28.3251
Mora	39.1	86.4595	21.2	17	20.4376
Nisa	30.9	54.4464	22.6	17.9	48.0012
Oleiros	28.1	24.4154	22.9	15.5	49.2299
Ourique	24.6	-91.6753	23.6	20.8	11.8279
Pampilhosa da Serra	33.55	-23.9729	20.1	14.7	43.1626
Penamacor	28.95	-146.016	21.6	17.4	38.1875
Portel	29.1	36.7344	21	22	66.2445
São Roque do Pico	31.15	6.03192	26.2	21.7	147.313
Sousel	26.3	37.2114	21.8	19.6	-2.89213
Viana do Alentejo	35.1	20.8353	22.3	22.7	46.8322
Vidigueira	33.45	-47.5421	22.8	21	16.9732
Vila de Rei	27.1	32.5105	20.1	18.7	25.4175
Vila Flor	35.9	55.7364	26.7	17.6	38.8793
Vila Velha de Ródão	27.55	54.4802	20	17.7	13.7028
Vimioso	41.05	53.445	25.5	14.9	39.7973

Source: The author.

Table 6 - Data set Very Small Municipalities (VS) calibrated Data (c).

Municipalities	cABST	cPRCO	cINEQ	cEDUC	cEFFI
Alandroal	0.07	0.06	0.02	0.59	0.27
Alfândega da Fé	0.65	0.67	0.97	0.5	0.04
Aljezur	0.95	0.07	0.88	0.99	0.09
Almeida	0.86	0.82	0.66	0.21	0.34
Alter do Chão	0.38	0.24	0.23	0.65	0.91
Arronches	0.01	0.95	0.23	0.79	0.28
Avis	0.37	0.43	0.13	0.86	0.52
Boticas	0.99	0.69	0.92	0.04	0.96
Carraceda de Ansiães	0.91	0.99	0.95	0.16	0.64
Castelo de Vide	0.22	0.54	0.55	0.84	0.77
Crato	0.05	0.46	0.07	0.25	0.82
Fig. de Castelo Rodrigo	0.18	0.12	0.9	0.08	0.91
Freixo de Espada à Cinta	0.07	0.35	0.52	0.24	0.01
Fronteira	0.05	0.31	0.82	0.84	0.11
Gavião	0.64	0.18	0.14	0.21	0.95
Góis	0.28	0.41	0.26	0.73	0.08
Marvão	0.09	0.5	0.12	0.24	0.45
Mêda	0.78	0.85	0.84	0.05	0.05
Mértola	0.27	0.76	0.33	0.63	0.9
Monchique	0.5	0.4	0.55	0.83	0.38
Mora	0.94	0.96	0.16	0.25	0.29
Nisa	0.65	0.83	0.5	0.42	0.7
Oleiros	0.43	0.5	0.55	0.09	0.72
Ourique	0.08	0.03	0.67	0.87	0.21
Pampilhosa da Serra	0.79	0.19	0.05	0.05	0.6
Penamacor	0.53	0.01	0.23	0.32	0.5
Portel	0.54	0.65	0.13	0.94	0.91
São Roque do Pico	0.66	0.37	0.93	0.93	1
Sousel	0.2	0.66	0.28	0.73	0.11
Viana do Alentejo	0.85	0.47	0.41	0.97	0.68
Vidigueira	0.78	0.11	0.54	0.89	0.25
Vila de Rei	0.29	0.6	0.05	0.58	0.34
Vila Flor	0.87	0.84	0.95	0.36	0.51
Vila Velha de Ródão	0.35	0.83	0.04	0.38	0.22
Vimioso	0.96	0.82	0.89	0.06	0.53

Source: The author.

Table 7 - Data set Small Municipalities (S).

Municipalities	ABST	PRCO	INEQ	EDUC	EFFI
Alijó	35.9	31.3526	25.4	17.2	-92.1236
Arganil	35.35	61.3102	21.9	20.8	5.23791
Campo Maior	32.25	55.7043	21.1	25	45.504
Castro Daire	38.95	24.6852	25.1	16.5	53.4426
Celorico da Beira	34.95	-59.362	23.4	17.6	-53.8632
Ferreira do Zêzere	32.1	32.49	21.6	20.1	9.79847
Gouveia	41.75	21.1988	24.5	17	5.75479
Madalena	33.4	-1.33443	23.2	21.7	50.5134
Melgaço	55.35	-48.4955	24.8	16.6	16.2798
Moimenta da Beira	44.4	13.0841	26.7	18.9	-17.9879
Mondim de Basto	42.25	-7.68153	25.4	18.2	-56.1549
Mortágua	40.2	31.5585	23.8	16.7	23.5465
Oliveira de Frades	35.55	59.1991	22.3	21.8	28.8497
Paredes de Coura	36.45	-13.3365	23.1	19.4	9.74445
Penacova	41.35	34.3292	21.9	18.3	79.8556
Penalva do Castelo	36.5	-0.71633	24.7	15.6	23.5582
Ponte da Barca	39.65	31.1133	25.7	21.3	-9.2987
São João da Pesqueira	34.8	-139.228	27.3	16.5	9.87049
Sátão	45.5	39.0295	25.2	19	37.7074
Tábua	35.1	3.68129	21.6	20.2	-19.9276
Vendas Novas	41.45	37.6928	22	23.6	27.2109
Vieira do Minho	33.25	30.9447	25.6	18.3	-7.61688
Vila Pouca de Aguiar	43.65	45.7747	26.7	16.4	39.646
Vila Viçosa	32.7	-21.8026	20.8	23.9	63.158
Vouzela	33.35	32.4845	22.3	19.2	10.9399

Source: The author.

Table 8 - Data set Small Municipalities (S) calibrated Data (c).

Municipalities	cABST	cPRCO	cINEQ	cEDUC	cEFFI
Alijó	0.4	0.51	0.84	0.11	0.01
Arganil	0.31	0.96	0.1	0.76	0.44
Campo Maior	0.04	0.94	0.04	0.98	0.89
Castro Daire	0.7	0.45	0.79	0.05	0.93
Celorico da Beira	0.25	0.04	0.39	0.17	0.05
Ferreira do Zêzere	0.04	0.54	0.07	0.67	0.49
Gouveia	0.86	0.42	0.67	0.09	0.44
Madalena	0.1	0.25	0.33	0.85	0.91
Melgaço	1	0.06	0.74	0.06	0.58
Moimenta da Beira	0.94	0.35	0.95	0.5	0.21
Mondim de Basto	0.88	0.21	0.84	0.3	0.05
Mortágua	0.78	0.52	0.5	0.07	0.68
Oliveira de Frades	0.34	0.96	0.15	0.85	0.74
Paredes de Coura	0.5	0.18	0.31	0.58	0.49
Penacova	0.84	0.59	0.1	0.33	0.98
Penalva do Castelo	0.5	0.25	0.72	0.02	0.68
Ponte da Barca	0.75	0.5	0.88	0.81	0.29
São João da Pesqueira	0.23	0	0.97	0.05	0.49
Sátão	0.96	0.71	0.81	0.52	0.83
Tábua	0.27	0.28	0.07	0.69	0.2
Vendas Novas	0.85	0.68	0.11	0.95	0.73
Vieira do Minho	0.09	0.5	0.87	0.33	0.3
Vila Pouca de Aguiar	0.92	0.83	0.95	0.05	0.85
Vila Viçosa	0.06	0.14	0.03	0.95	0.96
Vouzela	0.09	0.54	0.15	0.55	0.5

Source: The author.

Table 9 - Data set Medium Municipalities (M).

Municipalities	ABST	PRCO	INEQ	EDUC	EFFI
Albergaria-a-Velha	40.65	35.9274	22.3	22.9	11.1047
Alcochete	45.7	-224.002	28.2	28	31.5364
Almeirim	51.6	10.3553	24.2	22.7	32.3879
Amares	37.65	-17.218	24.7	23.6	-26.5419
Anadia	45.3	29.6987	24.4	20.5	21.0586
Arruda dos Vinhos	39.6	4.67437	25.5	24.8	29.6144
Azambuja	45.95	7.29209	22.6	25.4	-7.72145
Baião	35.2	36.2659	24.1	18.7	3.80506
Batalha	44.6	45.1278	21.9	22.8	54.8378
Caminha	35.7	8.62423	27.4	23	-10.3748
Cantanhede	48.4	56.2947	25.2	20.1	37.9819
Cartaxo	47	-56.7284	23.2	25.1	-115.821
Castelo de Paiva	25.3	-5.26753	22.4	19.8	-51.2293
Celorico de Basto	36.1	56.7761	24.1	19.3	-8.5665
Cinfães	33.9	52.6426	25.8	18.2	5.45495
Condeixa-a-Nova	44.3	11.8558	23.5	23.3	33.3342
Estarreja	49.5	50.1031	23.5	22	18.8512
Horta	37.95	30.9859	26.4	22.6	65.066
Lagoa	50.6	7.42827	26.6	25.8	50.9752
Lagos	53.45	39.6303	25.8	26.8	-8.3923
Lamego	37.1	-15.4782	28.3	20.5	-25.3383
Lourinhã	45.95	-6.05329	25.6	22.9	-34.3087
Lousã	46.45	34.5493	22.9	25.6	41.9567
Machico	43.9	-93.3498	24.1	19.8	-65.3091
Mangualde	42.95	22.1696	23.7	19.7	25.01
Mealhada	49.05	51.6239	23.1	22.7	72.8223
Monção	40.35	44.6723	24.8	20.5	-16.3005
Montemor-o-Velho	38.6	-69.2316	22.1	22.4	-51.6262
Nazaré	50.1	-193.654	23.4	22.6	-119.439
Oliveira do Bairro	46.8	33.782	23.1	23.1	14.7778
Oliveira do Hospital	33.8	33.9947	21.6	20.3	69.5147
Peso da Régua	40.2	1.73714	26.5	21.2	-27.8435
Porto de Mós	41	30.4323	21.5	22	11.0419
Póvoa de Lanhoso	35.65	13.8745	23.7	19.9	66.456
Ribeira Grande	45.65	16.7276	28	19	53.9852
Rio Maior	41.9	-23.9338	23	24.3	-0.07635
Salvaterra de Magos	51.95	47.6015	23.2	22.4	20.7744
Sines	45.5	-0.35542	25.2	26.7	-21.4037
Tondela	41.25	-52.1709	23.6	19.7	26.2045
Torres Novas	46.4	22.8285	23.6	23.6	-9.78581
Vagos	46.6	27.2833	24.1	21.4	-17.441
Vale de Cambra	36.05	28.4643	22.8	19.3	-29.9723
Vila Praia da Vitória	50.4	-7.16031	24.8	20.4	32.1878

Source: The author.

Table 10 - Data set Medium Municipalities (M) calibrated Data (c).

Municipalities	cABST	cPRCO	cINEQ	cEDUC	cEFFI
Albergaria-a-Velha	0.26	0.83	0.08	0.59	0.5
Alcochete	0.64	0	0.96	0.98	0.75
Almeirim	0.95	0.46	0.52	0.55	0.76
Amares	0.13	0.28	0.62	0.7	0.18
Anadia	0.6	0.75	0.56	0.16	0.63
Arruda dos Vinhos	0.2	0.42	0.75	0.85	0.73
Azambuja	0.67	0.43	0.11	0.89	0.32
Baião	0.07	0.84	0.5	0.04	0.43
Batalha	0.53	0.92	0.05	0.57	0.92
Caminha	0.08	0.44	0.93	0.61	0.3
Cantanhede	0.85	0.96	0.7	0.11	0.81
Cartaxo	0.75	0.11	0.22	0.87	0.01
Castelo de Paiva	0	0.35	0.09	0.09	0.08
Celorico de Basto	0.08	0.97	0.5	0.06	0.31
Cinfães	0.05	0.95	0.79	0.02	0.44
Condeixa-a-Nova	0.5	0.47	0.3	0.66	0.77
Estarreja	0.9	0.94	0.3	0.41	0.6
Horta	0.14	0.77	0.86	0.54	0.95
Lagoa	0.93	0.44	0.88	0.92	0.9
Lagos	0.98	0.87	0.79	0.96	0.31
Lamego	0.11	0.29	0.96	0.16	0.19
Lourinhã	0.67	0.35	0.76	0.59	0.14
Lousã	0.71	0.82	0.16	0.91	0.84
Machico	0.47	0.04	0.5	0.09	0.05
Mangualde	0.4	0.61	0.37	0.08	0.68
Mealhada	0.88	0.95	0.2	0.55	0.97
Monção	0.24	0.91	0.63	0.16	0.25
Montemor-o-Velho	0.16	0.08	0.06	0.5	0.08
Nazaré	0.92	0	0.28	0.54	0.01
Oliveira do Bairro	0.74	0.81	0.2	0.62	0.55
Oliveira do Hospital	0.04	0.81	0.03	0.13	0.96
Peso da Régua	0.23	0.4	0.87	0.26	0.17
Porto de Mós	0.28	0.76	0.03	0.41	0.5
Póvoa de Lanhoso	0.07	0.48	0.37	0.1	0.95
Ribeira Grande	0.64	0.5	0.95	0.05	0.91
Rio Maior	0.33	0.24	0.18	0.79	0.39
Salvaterra de Magos	0.96	0.93	0.22	0.5	0.63
Sines	0.62	0.38	0.7	0.96	0.21
Tondela	0.29	0.13	0.33	0.08	0.69
Torres Novas	0.71	0.63	0.33	0.7	0.3
Vagos	0.72	0.71	0.5	0.29	0.24
Vale de Cambra	0.08	0.73	0.14	0.06	0.16
Vila Praia da Vitória	0.93	0.34	0.63	0.14	0.76

Source: The author.

Table 11 - Data set Large Municipalities (L).

Municipalities	ABST	PRCO	INEQ	EDUC	EFFI
Albufeira	59.85	47.6629	25.4	29.4	31.3592
Almada	57.65	41.0274	26.2	26.9	-5.07608
Amadora	58.25	16.4901	24.9	27.1	68.3174
Aveiro	50.95	-125.722	25.9	23.7	-56.8748
Barcelos	29.6	21.5396	22	21.5	-4.1189
Barreiro	52.3	23.6557	23	27.7	64.2064
Braga	41.25	-54.2817	26.5	24.1	18.304
Cascais	59.25	-15.8865	29.9	27	61.9956
Coimbra	48.55	26.947	27.7	22.1	20.5318
Esposende	40.75	-52.981	26.3	22.1	63.4243
Faro	54.5	-1.06569	26.4	26.4	-37.9559
Felgueiras	34.15	13.2956	20.9	20.5	26.2302
Funchal	48.4	-8.22704	27.4	23.4	-19.7931
Gondomar	46.7	25.2707	24.4	25.1	-70.4803
Guimarães	36.4	11.3459	22.3	21.2	-42.0787
Ílhavo	58.1	49.5205	25.2	23.3	21.4983
Lisboa	51.85	30.7285	32.2	21.1	-20.7242
Loures	49.1	51.3194	24.2	26.4	54.3222
Lousada	29.8	66.6559	21.8	20.5	-12.4038
Mafra	48.95	48.1008	26.6	26.8	45.9201
Maia	46.45	35.025	26.1	25	-32.2662
Matosinhos	49	-38.8737	26.9	23.3	16.4102
Moita	58.45	-1.72743	21.8	28.1	58.0212
Odivelas	55.2	-4.75081	24.1	26.8	31.6021
Oeiras	48.75	29.642	27.8	25.2	49.9948
Olhão	57.25	-15.4333	24.5	25.7	-26.1971
Oliveira de Azeméis	42.3	34.2814	22.4	21.1	-17.6821
Ovar	46.65	73.8293	24.2	23.8	38.728
Paços de Ferreira	33.45	-113.978	21.9	19.6	-34.2731
Paredes	32.6	-136.589	24.9	22.2	17.168
Penafiel	28.45	-57.6861	23.9	22.2	-14.2311
Portimão	58.2	-164.384	25.1	27.1	-68.7212
Porto	46.85	34.9912	31	20.9	31.5175
Póvoa de Varzim	50.5	24.6372	26.8	22.6	53.6686
Santa Cruz (Madeira)	42.95	-31.4147	24.4	27	-86.6608
Santa Maria da Feira	43.65	85.133	23.7	21.7	-33.3385
Santo Tirso	35.85	56.0255	22.4	20.2	-20.5128
Seixal	58.9	-17.128	23.6	28.9	-0.46322
Setúbal	59.1	-151.478	25.3	27.2	-21.9718
Sintra	58.65	31.9827	24.4	30.8	2.87582
Trofa	33.95	47.4235	22.4	22.7	-95.2472
Valongo	47.7	50.5914	23.9	25	7.30965
Vila do Conde	40.6	5.96167	25.5	22.1	25.4314
Vila Franca de Xira	53.7	44.2473	22.4	29.8	35.2285
Vil. Nova de Famalicão	35.75	27.7643	22.3	23	45.6234
Vila Nova de Gaia	47.25	12.8449	26.3	23.9	-86.6977

Source: The author.

Table 12 - Data set Large Municipalities (L) calibrated Data (c).

Municipalities	cABST	cPRCO	cINEQ	cEDUC	cEFFI
Albufeira	0.96	0.86	0.61	0.96	0.8
Almada	0.93	0.79	0.72	0.84	0.41
Amadora	0.94	0.47	0.53	0.86	0.96
Aveiro	0.67	0.06	0.68	0.47	0.11
Barcelos	0.04	0.49	0.06	0.11	0.42
Barreiro	0.75	0.52	0.15	0.89	0.96
Braga	0.23	0.19	0.76	0.53	0.66
Cascais	0.96	0.32	0.97	0.85	0.95
Coimbra	0.51	0.58	0.87	0.17	0.69
Esposende	0.22	0.19	0.74	0.17	0.95
Faro	0.85	0.39	0.75	0.8	0.19
Felgueiras	0.08	0.46	0.02	0.05	0.75
Funchal	0.5	0.36	0.85	0.4	0.3
Gondomar	0.43	0.55	0.42	0.67	0.07
Guimarães	0.12	0.45	0.08	0.09	0.17
Ílhavo	0.94	0.88	0.58	0.38	0.7
Lisboa	0.72	0.64	0.99	0.08	0.29
Loures	0.54	0.89	0.37	0.8	0.93
Lousada	0.04	0.96	0.05	0.05	0.35
Mafra	0.53	0.86	0.77	0.84	0.89
Maia	0.42	0.71	0.71	0.65	0.22
Matosinhos	0.54	0.24	0.8	0.38	0.64
Moita	0.94	0.39	0.05	0.91	0.94
Odivelas	0.87	0.37	0.35	0.84	0.8
Oeiras	0.52	0.62	0.88	0.68	0.91
Olhão	0.92	0.33	0.45	0.74	0.26
Oliveira de Azeméis	0.26	0.7	0.08	0.08	0.31
Ovar	0.42	0.98	0.37	0.49	0.85
Paços de Ferreira	0.08	0.07	0.05	0.02	0.21
Paredes	0.07	0.05	0.53	0.19	0.65
Penafiel	0.03	0.18	0.3	0.19	0.34
Portimão	0.94	0.03	0.56	0.86	0.07
Porto	0.43	0.71	0.98	0.07	0.8
Póvoa de Varzim	0.64	0.54	0.79	0.25	0.93
Santa Cruz (Madeira)	0.28	0.26	0.42	0.85	0.04
Santa Maria da Feira	0.31	0.99	0.26	0.13	0.21
Santo Tirso	0.11	0.92	0.08	0.04	0.29
Seixal	0.95	0.32	0.24	0.94	0.45
Setúbal	0.95	0.03	0.6	0.86	0.28
Sintra	0.95	0.66	0.42	0.98	0.48
Trofa	0.08	0.86	0.08	0.26	0.03
Valongo	0.47	0.88	0.3	0.65	0.53
Vila do Conde	0.21	0.42	0.63	0.17	0.74
Vila Franca de Xira	0.81	0.83	0.08	0.96	0.83
Vil. Nova de Famalicão	0.11	0.59	0.08	0.32	0.89
Vila Nova de Gaia	0.45	0.45	0.74	0.51	0.04

Source: The author.

Sport For Life Club: um projeto de inovação social através do desporto para jovens em acolhimento

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Artigo recebido a 28/03/2025.

Aceite para publicação a 02/01/2026.

Resumo

Este artigo apresenta os resultados do piloto do projeto *Sport For Life Club*, desenvolvido entre abril e outubro de 2024 numa instituição de acolhimento residencial do Porto. O projeto utilizou o desporto e a educação não formal para promover o desenvolvimento de competências socioemocionais em jovens em acolhimento e condições favoráveis à inclusão social. A avaliação, baseada em métodos quantitativos (TIPI-P) e qualitativos (*focus groups* e dinâmicas), revelou mudanças positivas em estabilidade emocional, responsabilidade e empatia, bem como maior sentimento de pertença e cooperação. As conclusões reforçam o potencial educativo e relacional do desporto em contextos de vulnerabilidade.

Palavras-chave: Jovens em acolhimento; Competências socioemocionais; Desporto.

Sport For Life Club: a social innovation sport-based project for youth in foster care

Abstract

This article presents the results of the pilot project *Sport For Life Club*, carried out between April and October 2024 in a foster care institution in Porto. The project used sport and non-formal education to promote the development of socio-emotional competencies among young people in foster care and to create conditions conducive to social inclusion. The evaluation, based on quantitative (TIPI-P) and qualitative (focus groups and group dynamics)

RIES, André, & MATEUS, Mafalda (2025),

"*Sport For Life Club: um projeto de inovação social através do desporto para jovens em acolhimento*", *Sociologia: Revista da Faculdade de Letras da Universidade do Porto*, Vol. LIII, pp. 111 - 140

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.21747/08723419/soc53a4>

methods, revealed positive changes in emotional stability, responsibility, and empathy, as well as an increased sense of belonging and cooperation. The findings highlight the educational and relational potential of sport in vulnerable contexts.

Keywords: Youth in foster care; Socio-emotional competencies; Sports.

Sport For Life Club: un projet d'innovation sociale à travers le sport pour les jeunes en institution

Résumé

Cet article présente les résultats du projet pilote *Sport For Life Club*, mené entre avril et octobre 2024 dans une institution d'accueil résidentiel à Porto. Le projet a utilisé le sport et l'éducation non formelle pour favoriser le développement des compétences socio-émotionnelles des jeunes en situation d'accueil et créer des conditions propices à l'inclusion sociale. L'évaluation, fondée sur des méthodes quantitatives (TIPI-P) et qualitatives (groupes de discussion et dynamiques collectives), a révélé des changements positifs en matière de stabilité émotionnelle, de responsabilité et d'empathie, ainsi qu'un plus grand sentiment d'appartenance et de coopération. Les conclusions soulignent le potentiel éducatif et relationnel du sport dans les contextes de vulnérabilité.

Mots-clés: Jeunes en institution; Compétences socio-émotionnelles; Sport.

Sport For Life Club: un proyecto de innovación social a través del deporte para jóvenes en acogimiento residencial

Resumen

Este artículo presenta los resultados del proyecto piloto *Sport For Life Club*, desarrollado entre abril y octubre de 2024 en una institución de acogimiento residencial de Oporto. El proyecto utilizó el deporte y la educación no formal para fomentar el desarrollo de competencias socioemocionales en jóvenes en acogimiento y generar condiciones favorables para la inclusión social. La evaluación, basada en métodos cuantitativos (TIPI-P) y cualitativos (grupos focales y dinámicas grupales), reveló cambios positivos en la estabilidad emocional, la responsabilidad y la empatía, así como un mayor sentido de pertenencia y cooperación. Las conclusiones subrayan el potencial educativo y relacional del deporte en contextos de vulnerabilidad.

Palabras clave: Jóvenes en acogimiento; Competencias socioemocionales; Deporte.

Introdução

No contexto atual de crescente desigualdade social e exclusão de grupos vulneráveis, a promoção da inclusão social torna-se um desafio central para as políticas públicas e iniciativas comunitárias. A busca por estratégias que favoreçam a equidade e a inclusão social, especialmente em contextos de vulnerabilidade, é essencial para garantir o acesso pleno de todos os indivíduos às oportunidades de desenvolvimento pessoal, social e profissional. Nesse sentido, a inovação social assume um papel fundamental no desenvolvimento e implementação de soluções novas e eficazes (Murray *et al.*, 2010).

A exclusão social, em suas diversas manifestações, continua a ser um fenómeno generalizado que afeta principalmente crianças e jovens em situação de acolhimento, que enfrentam barreiras significativas em termos de acesso à educação, rede de apoio familiar e oportunidades de integração social. Essas barreiras resultam em problemas emocionais, baixos níveis de autoestima, dificuldades de socialização e um atraso no desenvolvimento de competências essenciais para a vida adulta e autónoma (Câmara Municipal do Porto, 2023; Sacur & Diogo, 2021). Nesse cenário, a educação não formal oferece oportunidades complementares à educação formal e cria espaços seguros para o desenvolvimento e formação integral de jovens em situação de vulnerabilidade.

Projetos sócio-desportivos, como o *Sport For Life Club* (SFLC), atualmente designado por *HomeClub*¹, surgem como uma poderosa ferramenta de intervenção social, combinando atividades físicas com metodologias psicopedagógicas. O SFLC foi concebido para dar resposta à vulnerabilidade social de jovens em situação de acolhimento, utilizando o desporto como meio para promover a inclusão social e o desenvolvimento pessoal. Por meio do uso de treinos desportivos, assembleias participativas e atividades pedagógicas, o projeto proporcionou um ambiente de aprendizagem não formal, onde as jovens puderam

¹ Após a conclusão do piloto, o projeto passou a se chamar *HomeClub* – o clube da casa – para traduzir com maior precisão a essência do projeto: um espaço seguro, acolhedor e participativo. Consultar em: HomeClub. Social Innovation Sports. <https://www.socialinnovationsports.org/programas/playground4all/homeclub>

desenvolver competências emocionais e sociais, além de construir relações mais saudáveis e significativas.

Este artigo tem como objetivo central explorar a implementação do piloto de seis meses do SFLC, um projeto desenvolvido pela *Social Innovation Sports* (SIS), uma associação sem fins lucrativos dedicada à promoção da inclusão social através do desporto, discutindo suas metodologias e resultados. O piloto ocorreu em colaboração com a Associação de Proteção à Infância Bispo D. António Barroso (APIBAB), casa de acolhimento apenas para meninas. Este estudo busca analisar as mudanças observadas a curto prazo do SFLC em termos de integração social, desenvolvimento de competências socioemocionais e mudanças observadas nos participantes ao longo do período, proporcionando *insights* valiosos para a intervenção a longo prazo e futuras iniciativas semelhantes.

Por meio deste trabalho, pretendemos contribuir com o conhecimento acerca de programas desportivos inclusivos que atuam na transformação social e no fortalecimento das competências socioemocionais, com o intuito de fornecer direções práticas e académicas para o campo da inclusão social, educação não formal e desporto. O estudo busca também refletir sobre as lições aprendidas e os desafios enfrentados, como a necessidade de sustentabilidade financeira e de ajustes contínuos na abordagem pedagógica, para a continuidade e expansão do impacto do SFLC.

1. Sport For Life Club: um projeto de inovação social

O SFLC surgiu dentro do contexto do Laboratório de Inovação Social (LAB.IS), um concurso promovido pela Câmara Municipal do Porto (CMP) com o objetivo de apoiar a criação e implementação de soluções inovadoras para problemas sociais urgentes na cidade do Porto. A primeira edição do LAB.IS concentrou-se em três grandes questões sociais que afetam a cidade do Porto: i) o isolamento social dos idosos; ii) a vulnerabilidade social dos jovens que saem das casas de acolhimento para a autonomia de vida; iii) a desinserção social e simbólica das pessoas com deficiência. O SFLC foi desenvolvido para dar resposta à segunda destas questões.

O LAB.IS representa, por si só, uma expressão prática da inovação social, ao reunir entidades públicas, privadas e da economia social em torno da criação de respostas sustentáveis para desafios complexos. A inovação social implica desenvolver abordagens novas ou significativamente melhoradas para responder a necessidades sociais persistentes, criando valor público e fortalecendo a coesão comunitária (Murray *et al.*, 2010).

Durante as fases do laboratório, o desenho do projeto passou por uma série de atividades colaborativas, envolvendo especialistas de diversas áreas e estudos de caso que ajudaram a moldar a proposta inicial. Os desafios específicos enfrentados por esses jovens – como saúde mental debilitada, falta de uma rede de suporte estável e a saída mal preparada das instituições de acolhimento – foram analisados com o apoio de um caso de estudo (Câmara Municipal do Porto, 2023) e relatórios como o CASA (Instituto da Segurança Social (ISS), 2023) e deram origem a um plano de ação que usaria o desporto como ferramenta de intervenção social.

Após as três fases de desenvolvimento do projeto dentro do concurso, o projeto foi selecionado para a implementação de um piloto de seis meses – que ocorreu na já mencionada APIBAB. Assim, trabalhou-se apenas com meninas, embora o projeto não tenha sido desenhado exclusivamente para este género.

A equipa do projeto estabeleceu como objetivos principais estimular melhorias nos cinco fatores de personalidade avaliados pelo TIPI-P (Nunes *et al.*, 2018) — abertura à experiência, conscienciosidade, extroversão, amabilidade e estabilidade emocional —, promovendo o crescimento pessoal e emocional das jovens em acolhimento. Paralelamente, buscava-se fortalecer a responsabilidade, a convivência e o sentimento de pertença, num ambiente seguro, colaborativo e afetivo, que favorecesse o desenvolvimento integral e a coesão do grupo.

A metodologia do projeto foi elaborada com o auxílio de especialistas em inovação e empreendedorismo social, e a validação da proposta de projeto com as próprias jovens foi um aspeto central do desenho da solução. Definiram-se três fases distintas, embora simultâneas, para garantir um desenvolvimento contínuo e integrado dos jovens: Relação e

Exploração, Experimentação e Avaliação. Na fase de Relação e Exploração, o foco era criar um ambiente seguro e de confiança, essencial para o envolvimento das jovens nas atividades propostas. A fase de Experimentação envolvia as assembleias participativas e a prática desportiva, ambas complementadas com atividades pedagógicas, que proporcionaram as jovens a oportunidade de se envolverem na criação do clube e na definição das atividades. Já a fase de Avaliação concentrava-se no *feedback* contínuo e na medição do impacto, utilizando ferramentas de avaliação qualitativa e quantitativa para monitorar o progresso das participantes.

As assembleias desempenham um papel fundamental no processo de coconstrução do clube, onde as jovens participam ativamente na tomada de decisão sobre diversos aspetos do clube, como a escolha do nome, das cores e a definição das regras e responsabilidades. Esse formato de participação procura seguir uma pedagogia libertadora, inspirada em Paulo Freire (2019), que valoriza o diálogo, a reflexão crítica e o empoderamento dos participantes. Além de decisões operacionais, as assembleias são também momentos de desenvolvimento pessoal, nos quais se estabelece uma articulação entre a dimensão coletiva do clube e o percurso individual de cada participante, promovendo discussões sobre temas relevantes como autoconhecimento, cidadania e direitos. Os treinos desportivos no SFLC seguem a metodologia do Treino Social (GIZ, 2016), que combina a prática física com o desenvolvimento de competências socioemocionais. Essas atividades não só promovem a saúde física, mas também ajudam a melhorar competências como comunicação, autoestima e resiliência emocional. As atividades pedagógicas complementam os treinos desportivos e as assembleias, com jogos, dinâmicas, momentos de reflexão e partilha.

O piloto do SFLC foi realizado entre maio e outubro de 2024, semanalmente, às terças e quintas-feiras, das 18h às 20h, as atividades foram realizadas principalmente no Externato Perpétuo Socorro, o que foi muito bem recebido pelas jovens, pois ofereceu um ambiente fora do contexto da casa de acolhimento. Também se realizaram corridas e caminhadas na zona da Ribeira da cidade do Porto – local muito próximo à APIBAB. Ainda, o campo desportivo da Quinta da Bonjoia foi utilizado durante o verão, proporcionando atividades ao ar livre como o futebol e caminhadas. Houve também dois momentos de convívio: um

piquenique e um jantar. Todos os momentos eram focados em promover o bem-estar físico e emocional das participantes, ao mesmo tempo que contribuíram para fortalecer laços entre as jovens e a equipa técnica do projeto.

Durante o piloto, o número de participantes variou ao longo do tempo devido a saídas de jovens por diversos motivos, como a ida para a universidade, reintegração familiar ou as fugas da instituição – um desafio que não foi devidamente previsto pelo projeto. Ao longo dos seis meses, passaram pelo projeto 16 jovens, todas do sexo feminino (como já foi referido), com idades variando de 8 a 20 anos, e um número médio de oito participantes por sessão.

2. A vulnerabilidade social de crianças e jovens em situações de acolhimento

As crianças e jovens em situação de acolhimento representam uma das populações mais vulneráveis, especialmente considerando os desafios que enfrentam ao longo do início de suas vidas. Em Portugal, mais de 6.300 crianças e jovens estavam em acolhimento em 2021, correspondendo a 0,24% da população portuguesa entre 0 e 24 anos (ISS, 2023). Essas crianças provêm de contextos de negligência, abuso ou abandono, o que coloca em risco seu bem-estar emocional e psicológico. A transição para a vida independente, especialmente quando deixam as casas de acolhimento, é um processo desafiador. Em grande parte, essa dificuldade está associada a três fatores críticos: problemas de saúde mental, falta de rede de apoio e baixos níveis de educação (Câmara Municipal do Porto, 2023).

Estudos apontam que os jovens que passam por acolhimento institucional enfrentam problemas de saúde mental, como depressão, ansiedade e transtornos comportamentais. Isso ocorre, em parte, devido ao ambiente desestruturado e às experiências traumáticas que muitas dessas crianças vivenciam antes e durante o acolhimento (Delgado, 2023). A institucionalização prolongada, caracterizada pela ausência de vínculos afetivos estáveis e pela falta de continuidade nas figuras de cuidado, é um dos fatores que mais impacta negativamente a saúde mental das crianças.

Em Portugal, a maior parte dos jovens continua em instituições de acolhimento até à maioridade, o que prolonga esses efeitos prejudiciais, com estudos mostrando que as crianças em acolhimento residencial apresentam maior incidência de transtornos psicológicos do que aquelas em acolhimento familiar (Sacur & Diogo, 2021).

A falta de rede de apoio é outro fator que exacerba a vulnerabilidade desses jovens. Muitos deles não têm contato com familiares ou figuras de referência, o que os coloca numa posição de extrema fragilidade emocional e social. A ausência de uma rede de suporte familiar e social impede que esses jovens desenvolvam competências necessárias para lidar com os desafios diários da vida adulta, resultando em isolamento social e dificuldades de socialização (Delgado, 2023). Além disso, muitos jovens em acolhimento não possuem o suporte necessário para desenvolver uma rede de amizades estável e saudável, o que piora ainda mais o seu quadro de vulnerabilidade. O isolamento social também é agravado pelas dificuldades emocionais relacionadas com a falta de autoestima e com a sensação de rejeição, frequentemente sentida por aqueles que não conseguem adaptar-se ao sistema de acolhimento.

Em relação aos baixos níveis de educação, a situação é igualmente preocupante. Muitos jovens que saem de casas de acolhimento enfrentam dificuldades educacionais devido ao abandono escolar precoce, a dificuldades cognitivas e à falta de apoio educacional adequado (Montserrat *et al.*, 2021). A instabilidade emocional associada ao processo de institucionalização também compromete o desempenho académico desses jovens, tornando difícil que alcancem o nível de escolaridade necessário para uma inserção social bem-sucedida. Dados nacionais indicam que muitos jovens em acolhimento não conseguem concluir o ensino secundário, o que dificulta ainda mais a sua entrada no mercado de trabalho e a sua integração social (Sacur & Diogo, 2021).

O sistema de acolhimento residencial em Portugal, caracterizado por grandes unidades com mais de 25 crianças, enfrenta desafios significativos no que diz respeito à qualidade do cuidado oferecido. Estudos indicam que as instituições de acolhimento em Portugal, na sua maioria, ainda seguem uma abordagem assistencialista e carecem de recursos suficientes

para atender às necessidades educacionais e psicológicas dessas crianças e jovens. O número elevado de crianças por cuidador, juntamente com a falta de formação especializada para os profissionais, contribui para a deficiência do suporte educacional e para a baixa qualidade do acompanhamento pedagógico (Delgado, 2023).

Em comparação com a tendência internacional, onde se prioriza cada vez mais o acolhimento familiar, a realidade portuguesa ainda está fortemente ancorada no acolhimento institucional (Tomás *et al.*, 2019). Embora se reconheça a importância do acolhimento familiar na promoção do bem-estar psicológico e educacional, apenas 3% das crianças em Portugal estão em acolhimento familiar, o que coloca o país em desacordo com as práticas recomendadas pela União Europeia e outras organizações internacionais (Baptista *et al.*, 2024). Esse contexto evidencia a necessidade de uma transição para formas de acolhimento mais personalizadas e de soluções inovadoras e holísticas que abordem não apenas os aspetos individuais das crianças e jovens, mas também as dinâmicas sociais e emocionais que envolvem o seu crescimento, favorecendo a construção de laços afetivos estáveis e um ambiente mais adequado ao desenvolvimento emocional e educacional das crianças e jovens em acolhimento.

3. O diálogo entre inclusão social, o desporto e o *Sport for Life Club*

Segundo Berg e Ostry (2011), a desigualdade é parte integral da economia de mercado e reflete-se nos mais pobres, restringindo o acesso destes a diversas oportunidades de financiamento, investimento e empreendedorismo ao longo do tempo. A inclusão social é um processo que visa garantir que todos os indivíduos, especialmente os mais vulneráveis, tenham acesso a oportunidades de participação e desenvolvimento dentro da sociedade. Trata-se de um conceito amplo, que envolve a eliminação de barreiras estruturais, económicas e sociais que impedem o acesso a direitos fundamentais, como educação, saúde, emprego e bem-estar (Mota & Lopes, 2017). A inclusão social não significa apenas o acesso a esses direitos, mas também a participação ativa na vida social e cultural, de maneira que o indivíduo possa contribuir para a construção de uma sociedade mais equitativa. Para alcançar

a verdadeira inclusão, é necessário um esforço coletivo, no qual a sociedade como um todo deve organizar-se para acolher e oferecer condições para que todos se sintam parte dela.

Por outro lado, a exclusão social é o processo pelo qual indivíduos ou grupos são afastados das oportunidades e benefícios que a sociedade oferece, resultando em marginalização e isolamento. A exclusão social pode ser vista como um fenómeno multifacetado, que não apenas se manifesta em termos económicos, mas também em aspetos culturais, sociais e psicológicos. A exclusão gera uma sensação de deslegitimação e impede a plena participação dos indivíduos na vida comunitária e cívica, criando um ciclo de desigualdade difícil de quebrar (França, 2020). Isso é especialmente visível em contextos de pobreza, discriminação étnica ou de género, e falta de acesso à educação e outros recursos, levando a um estigma social que agrava ainda mais a situação de vulnerabilidade dos excluídos.

Em relação a jovens e crianças em acolhimento, a exclusão social assume uma dimensão ainda mais profunda. Esses jovens, frequentemente provenientes de contextos de abuso, negligência ou abandono, enfrentam enormes desafios na construção da sua identidade e no acesso a oportunidades de desenvolvimento. Ao saírem das instituições de acolhimento, muitos desses jovens deparam-se com uma sociedade que, por vezes, os vê como marginalizados e incapazes de se integrar plenamente. Além disso, a falta de redes de apoio estáveis e a fragilidade emocional que muitos deles carregam dificultam ainda mais a adaptação ao mundo exterior (Delgado, 2023). As dificuldades de integração social desses jovens não se limitam às barreiras económicas, mas também envolvem a ausência de apoio emocional e educacional, criando um cenário de exclusão social prolongada, com pouca ou nenhuma perspetiva de mobilidade social.

Já o desporto tem vindo a consolidar-se como uma das ferramentas mais eficazes para a inclusão social, sobretudo devido à sua capacidade de promover valores como a solidariedade, o respeito e a cooperação (Paulos et al., 2012; Schulenkorf et al., 2016; Ries, 2023). Além de ser uma atividade física, o desporto funciona como um meio pedagógico que favorece a construção de laços sociais e o fortalecimento da autoestima. No contexto de exclusão social, o desporto oferece um espaço onde os indivíduos se podem sentir parte de

algo maior, independentemente da sua origem ou condição. A prática desportiva permite que os jovens experimentem a igualdade de oportunidades, pois os resultados não dependem de características como a classe social, a etnia ou o género, mas sim do esforço, da dedicação e do trabalho de equipa (Marivoet & Ramalho, 2018).

Enquanto ferramenta pedagógica, o desporto vai além da simples atividade física. Ele promove o desenvolvimento de competências socioemocionais, como a autodisciplina, a gestão de emoções, a colaboração e a resolução de conflitos. Como enfatiza Huizinga (2000), o desporto e o jogo têm uma função social profunda, ao permitir que os indivíduos, num ambiente controlado e estruturado, experimentem situações de conflito e de resolução, aprendendo habilidades que podem ser transferidas para o dia a dia. O desporto torna-se, assim, um veículo de aprendizagem social, no qual os participantes não só desenvolvem as suas capacidades físicas, como também se preparam para lidar com desafios emocionais e sociais de forma mais eficaz (Costa, 1992).

No SFLC, o desporto é utilizado de forma intencional como ferramenta pedagógica e de inclusão social, criando uma metodologia integrada que visa o desenvolvimento completo dos jovens. Pretende-se formar cidadãos e não “apenas” atletas. O projeto parte do conceito de Huizinga (2000), que diz que o jogo é

“uma atividade ou ocupação voluntária, realizada dentro de certos limites definidos de tempo e espaço, segundo regras livremente aceites mas absolutamente vinculativas, que tem em si mesma o seu objetivo e é acompanhada por uma sensação de tensão, alegria e pela consciência de que é “diferente” da “vida quotidiana”” (p.24).

Depois, integra o desporto, que mantém a essência lúdica do jogo, mas acrescenta-lhe estrutura e organização. Segundo a Carta Europeia do Desporto (Conselho da Europa, 2021), entende-se por desporto

“todas as formas de actividades físicas que, através de uma participação organizada ou não, têm por objectivo a expressão ou o melhoramento da condição física e psíquica, o desenvolvimento das relações sociais ou a obtenção de resultados na competição a todos os níveis” (p.3).

Por fim, integramos o conceito de *sport for development*, entendido como o uso do desporto para promover efeitos positivos em áreas como a saúde pública, a socialização, a inclusão de grupos desfavorecidos, o desenvolvimento económico e a interação intercultural (Schulenkorf *et al.*, 2016). Ou seja, trata-se de utilizar o desporto de forma intencional para enfrentar os desafios sociais.

Dentro das atividades do projeto, as assembleias participativas são fundamentais para o processo de cidadania ativa, pois permitem que os jovens se envolvam na construção do clube, tomando decisões sobre as atividades e regras do grupo, o que fortalece o seu sentimento de pertença e os prepara para a vida adulta com maior autonomia e responsabilidade (Freire, 2019). Realizam-se com os jovens sentados em círculo, promovendo diálogo aberto; um participante é responsável por redigir a ata, e cada encontro inclui uma atividade relacionada com os temas discutidos. Através dessa participação ativa, o projeto cria um ambiente seguro onde os jovens podem expressar-se e aprender sobre as dinâmicas sociais, promovendo a sua integração na comunidade.

As atividades desportivas, baseadas no método de Treino Social (GIZ, 2016), não se limitam ao desenvolvimento técnico ou do corpo, mas estendem-se ao fortalecimento das competências emocionais e sociais dos jovens. Incluem exercícios individuais, em duplas ou em grupo, dinâmicas orientadas para uma competência específica (como a comunicação ou a confiança) e a realização do *debriefing* (reflexão coletiva sobre o que aconteceu durante o treino). A prática desportiva no SFLC oferece um espaço para superar barreiras emocionais, desenvolver a autodisciplina e melhorar o trabalho em equipa, habilidades essenciais para a integração social e a vida adulta. Os jovens aprendem a lidar com desafios e adversidades de uma maneira saudável, utilizando os princípios do desporto como ferramenta para enfrentar as dificuldades que surgem na vida quotidiana (Paulos *et al.*, 2012; França, 2020; Ries, 2023).

Além das atividades físicas, o SFLC oferece atividades pedagógicas que promovem competências essenciais para a vida diária dos jovens, como autoconhecimento, reflexão e pensamento crítico. Entendemo-las como o conjunto de ações e situações planeadas e organizadas por educadores que proporcionam as melhores condições e permitem o

envolvimento para promover a aprendizagem e o desenvolvimento integral dos alunos (Asbahr, 2005). As atividades são desenvolvidas fora do contexto escolar formal e contribuem para o desenvolvimento dos participantes, ao fornecerem conhecimentos aplicáveis tanto a contextos profissionais quanto a situações de interação social.

A pedagogia do desporto, no contexto do SFLC, também se conecta ao pensamento de Huizinga (2000), que defende que o jogo e o desporto têm um papel central na sociedade, ajudando os indivíduos a expressar as suas emoções e a aprender sobre limites e regras. Costa (1992) destaca igualmente que o desporto reflete as estruturas sociais, tendo simultaneamente a capacidade de as questionar e transformar, promovendo uma sociedade mais justa e igualitária.

No SFLC, o desporto não só é utilizado para desenvolver capacidades físicas, como também para promover um instrumento de transformação social, criando espaços de refúgio, lazer e pertença para os jovens em situação de acolhimento, ajudando-os a conviver dentro da instituição e a desenvolver-se pessoalmente.

A inclusão social, portanto, não se resume à integração económica ou ao acesso a recursos, mas à participação ativa e ao desenvolvimento de competências emocionais e sociais essenciais para a autonomia. O SFLC oferece uma resposta holística a essas necessidades, utilizando o desporto como uma ferramenta pedagógica e social para garantir que os jovens em acolhimento superem as barreiras da exclusão e se integrem, no futuro, de forma plena e positiva na sociedade.

4. Metodologia de análise e avaliação do impacto do projeto

A avaliação do impacto é uma parte essencial de qualquer projeto social, pois permite medir a eficácia das intervenções e validar os resultados alcançados em relação aos objetivos propostos. No entanto, esta atividade pode enfrentar desafios, como a falta de ferramentas eficazes e a complexidade das intervenções em contextos vulneráveis (França, 2020).

A avaliação exige uma abordagem rigorosa e sistemática, sendo fundamental que as metodologias aplicadas sejam tanto científicas quanto sensíveis ao contexto das populações atendidas. A participação no Laboratório de Inovação Social (LAB.IS) foi um marco decisivo para o SFLC, pois forneceu a orientação necessária para a definição e implementação de ferramentas de avaliação, além de incentivar a equipa a desenvolver um processo rigoroso e científico para medir seus impactos.

A avaliação do piloto baseou-se no pressuposto de que mudanças reais em contextos de acolhimento não se traduzem apenas em números, mas também em processos subjetivos e relacionais. Por isso, a metodologia adotada combinou ferramentas quantitativas e qualitativas, permitindo observar tanto as tendências comportamentais e emocionais das jovens como as percepções e significados atribuídos à sua experiência no projeto. Essa escolha segue as diretrizes de Creswell (2014), que destaca a importância de integrar abordagens quantitativas e qualitativas para fornecer uma compreensão abrangente dos fenómenos sociais. Contudo, não poderíamos falar em impacto, que pressupõe uma mudança duradoura, diante de uma intervenção de apenas seis meses. Por isso, tratamos os resultados obtidos como preliminares ou por mudanças observadas nas jovens participantes.

A avaliação quantitativa foi realizada com o uso do TIPI-P, *Ten-Item Personality Inventory* (Gosling *et al.*, 2003), validado para a população portuguesa por Nunes *et al.* (2018). Todos os dados recolhidos foram introduzidos e analisados no *software* Microsoft Excel, sendo avaliadas as tendências de mudança nas dimensões de personalidade das participantes, como extroversão, afabilidade, conscienciosidade, neuroticismo e abertura a novas experiências – que se relacionam com o desenvolvimento de competências socioemocionais. Embora o pré-teste tenha sido realizado logo no início da intervenção pela psicóloga que compunha a equipa, o pós-teste do TIPI-P foi realizado por uma psicóloga externa à equipa que desenvolvia as ações com o grupo de jovens, assegurando, assim, a manutenção da imparcialidade e precisão no processo de avaliação.

A avaliação qualitativa, utilizada para captar dimensões menos mensuráveis e realizada apenas ao fim dos seis meses, contou com o apoio das professoras universitárias voluntárias

e membros do Coletivo A3S, que participaram da análise final do piloto, também com o objetivo de garantir a imparcialidade dos resultados. Como destacam Minayo e Costa (2018), a pesquisa qualitativa em contextos sociais exige que o pesquisador compreenda as *nuances* dos fenómenos sociais, considerando a subjetividade dos participantes. A avaliação qualitativa procurou capturar o impacto subjetivo da intervenção, identificando não apenas os resultados alcançados, mas também as percepções e sentimentos das jovens em relação às transformações vivenciadas durante o processo (Flick, 2009).

Para garantir uma avaliação rica e diversificada, a metodologia qualitativa incluiu *focus groups* e dinâmicas coletivas e individuais. O primeiro *focus group* foi realizado com a equipa técnica da instituição APIBAB, com o objetivo de obter uma visão sobre os impactos do piloto nas práticas e no ambiente da instituição. O segundo *focus group* envolveu a equipa do projeto, permitindo que os membros do SFLC refletissem sobre a implementação e o desenvolvimento do piloto, além de identificarem pontos fortes e áreas de melhoria. Por fim, as dinâmicas coletivas e individuais foram conduzidas com as jovens participantes, permitindo um espaço seguro para que as próprias jovens compartilhassem as suas experiências e percepções sobre o impacto do projeto nas suas vidas. O uso de dinâmicas coletivas também é essencial, pois, segundo Creswell (2014), elas permitem a coleta de dados ricos e aprofundados a partir da interação entre participantes, facilitando a identificação de temas e padrões emergentes nas discussões.

A combinação da avaliação quantitativa com a qualitativa foi essencial para fornecer uma visão holística do impacto do piloto. O uso combinado dessas abordagens proporcionou uma compreensão mais ampla dos efeitos a curto prazo do SFLC, assegurando que a avaliação fosse tanto objetiva quanto sensível às experiências vividas pelas jovens. A metodologia de avaliação adotada pelo SFLC foi, portanto, fundamental para fornecer evidências científicas sobre a eficácia do piloto e seus resultados no processo de desenvolvimento pessoal e fortalecimento de competências socioemocionais das jovens participantes.

Além disso, a análise de dados e das percepções das participantes contribuiu para o aprimoramento contínuo da prática pedagógica, garantindo que o SFLC continue a ser uma

intervenção relevante a longo prazo e eficaz na vida dos jovens em acolhimento. Permite não apenas medir o impacto das intervenções, mas também entender o processo de mudança vivenciado pelas jovens, criando um ciclo de avaliação que apoia o crescimento e a evolução do projeto.

Finalmente, toda a recolha e análise dos dados respeitou os princípios éticos da investigação social e as diretrizes do Regulamento Geral de Proteção de Dados (RGPD), garantindo o anonimato, o consentimento informado e um ambiente seguro para a partilha de experiências. A diversidade de perspetivas — das jovens, da instituição e da equipa — permitiu criar uma visão mais completa sobre o impacto do projeto e as suas potencialidades de melhoria.

5. Resultados e análise do projeto *Sport For Life Club*

Como visto anteriormente, a avaliação do impacto do piloto do *Sports for Life Club* (SFLC) utilizou uma abordagem mista, combinando dados quantitativos e qualitativos para analisar as mudanças nas competências emocionais e sociais das jovens participantes.

5.1. Avaliação Quantitativa

A avaliação quantitativa foi conduzida com o uso do TIPI-P (*Ten-Item Personality Inventory*) (Nunes *et al.*, 2018), um questionário de dez itens, que mede cinco dimensões principais da personalidade: extroversão, afabilidade, conscienciosidade, estabilidade emocional e abertura a novas experiências (Figura 1).

Figura 1 - TIPI-P - Inventário de Personalidade de 10 Itens – Versão Portuguesa.

Discordo totalmente	Discordo moderadamente	Discordo um pouco	Nem concordo nem discordo	Concordo um pouco	Concordo moderadamente	Concordo totalmente
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<i>Vejo-me como uma pessoa</i>						
1. Extrovertida, entusiasta. _____						
2. Conflituosa, que critica os outros. _____						
3. De confiança, com auto-disciplina. _____						
4. Ansiosa, que se preocupa facilmente. _____						
5. Com muitos interesses, aberta a experiências novas. _____						
6. Reservada, calada. _____						
7. Compreensiva, afetuosa. _____						
8. Desorganizada, descuidada. _____						
9. Calma, emocionalmente estável. _____						
10. Convencional, pouco criativa. _____						

Fonte: Nunes *et al.*, 2018

Para efeitos deste estudo, as pontuações do TIPI-P foram categorizadas em três níveis (baixo, normativo e elevado), permitindo identificar tendências gerais nas cinco dimensões de personalidade.

- *Elevado*: refere-se aos níveis mais altos de cada característica de personalidade, em relação aos valores normativos da população, indicando maior expressão da dimensão em questão (por exemplo, maior extroversão ou maior empatia).
- *Normativo*: indica níveis de personalidade que se aproximam da média da população, representando uma norma esperada para essa característica.
- *Baixo*: refere-se a níveis mais baixos de uma característica, por comparação aos valores normativos da população, indicando uma menor presença da qualidade em questão, como, por exemplo, menor extroversão ou capacidade de empatia.

O pré-teste, realizado antes do início da intervenção, e o pós-teste, realizado ao fim dos seis meses, permitiram observar como as jovens mudaram ao longo do piloto em cada uma dessas dimensões. A seguir, apresentamos os resultados obtidos em cada uma das dimensões de personalidade, considerando apenas as 10 participantes que participaram nas avaliações pré-

e pós-teste, permitindo, assim, assegurar a comparabilidade dos dados ao longo do período de intervenção.

5.1.1. Extroversão

A extroversão refere-se à sociabilidade, à energia e à tendência a buscar interações sociais (Costa & McCrae, 1992). No início da avaliação, 73% das jovens estavam na faixa normativa, 18% apresentavam níveis elevados de extroversão e 9% estavam na faixa baixa. No final do projeto, houve uma manutenção no nível normativo de extroversão, com 20% das jovens apresentando resultados elevados (aumento de 2%) e 10% na faixa baixa (aumento de 1%). Embora o projeto não tenha gerado uma grande mudança na extroversão, ele teve um efeito positivo na promoção de interações sociais, especialmente em atividades coletivas como treinos e assembleias participativas.

Além disso, o SFLC tem como objetivo, no futuro, trabalhar com mais de uma instituição de acolhimento, criando oportunidades de interação entre jovens de diferentes contextos. Isso permitirá que eles participem de eventos interinstitucionais, proporcionando mais espaços de socialização e potencialmente potenciando a extroversão desses jovens, ajudando-os a expandir suas relações sociais e a fortalecer sua capacidade de interagir com outros grupos, o que poderá gerar uma maior sociabilidade e empatia entre os jovens (Marivoet & Ramalho, 2018).

5.1.2. Afabilidade

A afabilidade está associada à empatia, cooperação e à capacidade de estabelecer relações harmoniosas com os outros (Costa & McCrae, 1992). No início do projeto, 73% das jovens apresentaram resultados elevados nesta dimensão, com 18% na faixa normativa e 9% na faixa baixa. No final do projeto, 80% das jovens estavam na faixa elevada, com um aumento de 7% nos resultados elevados e 20% na faixa normativa (aumento de 2%). Esses resultados sugerem que o SFLC resultou numa mudança positiva na promoção de empatia e cooperação entre as participantes, favorecendo relações mais respeitosas e colaborativas. Esse efeito pode ser atribuído às atividades coletivas, como os treinos desportivos e as assembleias participativas,

que estimularam a solidariedade e a cooperação entre as jovens, conforme evidenciado pela avaliação qualitativa.

5.1.3. Conscienciosidade

A conscienciosidade refere-se à responsabilidade, à organização e à capacidade de cumprir metas e objetivos (Costa & McCrae, 1992). Nos resultados iniciais, 64% das jovens estavam na faixa elevada e 36% na faixa normativa. Ao final do projeto, observou-se que 80% das participantes estavam classificadas na faixa elevada, representando um aumento de 16 pontos percentuais em relação ao início, enquanto 20% permaneceram na faixa normativa. Essa mudança indica um avanço na organização pessoal, planeamento e cumprimento de responsabilidades. As atividades que exigiam gestão de tempo, como a organização das modalidades desportivas e das assembleias, ajudaram as jovens a desenvolverem habilidades de autodisciplina e responsabilidade, promovendo um maior compromisso com as tarefas e com o grupo. A avaliação qualitativa também destacou a perceção das jovens de que aprenderam a gerir o seu tempo e organizar as suas atividades, melhorando as suas estratégias de conciliação de responsabilidades, o que foi especialmente desafiador no início do projeto.

5.1.4. Estabilidade Emocional

A estabilidade emocional está relacionada com a capacidade de controlar as emoções e manter o equilíbrio emocional diante de adversidades (Costa & McCrae, 1992). Nos resultados iniciais, 55% das jovens estavam na faixa baixa de estabilidade emocional, com 45% na faixa normativa. No final do projeto, verificou-se que 80% das participantes foram classificadas na faixa normativa, enquanto 20% permaneceram na faixa baixa. Esse padrão corresponde a uma diminuição de 35 pontos percentuais na proporção de resultados baixos, o que é compatível com indicadores de maior controle emocional e níveis reduzidos de ansiedade. A melhoria na estabilidade emocional reflete o impacto positivo das atividades desportivas, que promoveram a resiliência e a gestão de frustrações. A prática desportiva tem sido associada à melhoria da regulação emocional, com as jovens a aprender a lidar com a frustração e a superar dificuldades num ambiente seguro e controlado. A avaliação qualitativa

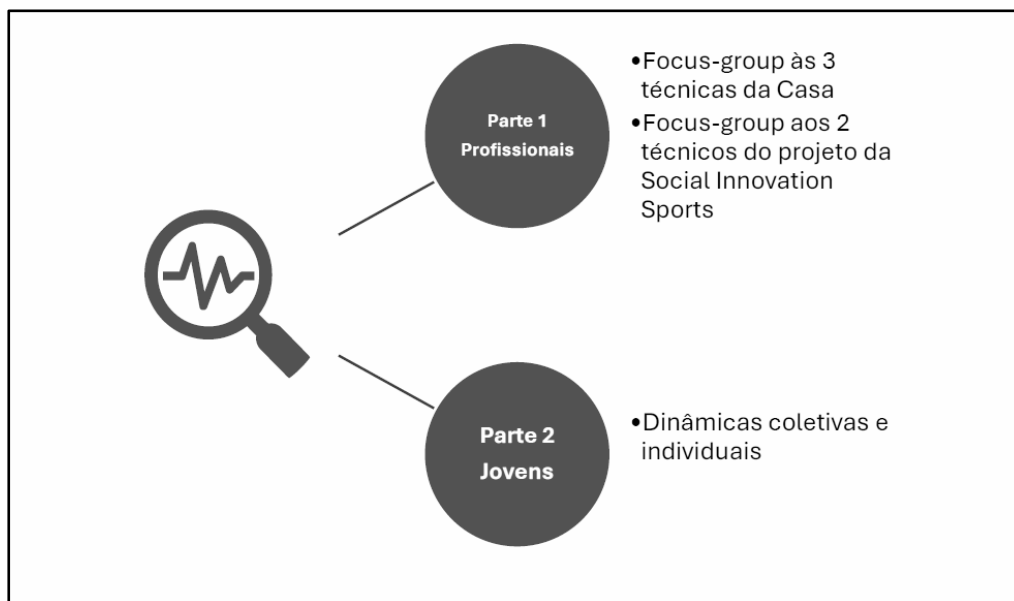
destacou que as jovens se tornaram mais resilientes e conseguiram lidar melhor com as dificuldades emocionais, como ansiedade e frustração, devido ao ambiente estruturado e de apoio do projeto.

5.1.5. Abertura a Novas Experiências

A abertura a novas experiências está associada à curiosidade, disposição para tentar coisas novas e flexibilidade cognitiva (Costa & McCrae, 1992). No início do projeto, 64% das participantes estavam na faixa normativa, 27% apresentaram resultados elevados e 9% estavam na faixa baixa. No final, 60% estavam na faixa normativa e 40% estavam na faixa baixa, indicando que esta dimensão registou menor evolução positiva comparativamente às restantes. Embora a curiosidade tenha sido um aspeto mais forte em algumas jovens, o projeto teve menos impacto na exploração de novas experiências fora do contexto desportivo e pedagógico. Esse resultado pode ser explicado pela natureza estruturada do projeto, que não se expandiu tanto para novas formas de expressão criativa ou para atividades fora da sua esfera habitual.

5.2. Avaliação Qualitativa

A avaliação qualitativa foi essencial para complementar os dados quantitativos e fornecer uma compreensão mais profunda sobre a experiência das jovens e as transformações subjetivas vivenciadas ao longo do projeto. As dinâmicas coletivas e individuais com as jovens (ver Figuras 3 e 4), o *focus group* com os técnicos do projeto e o *focus group* com a equipa técnica da APIBAB, realizados apenas ao fim dos seis meses, forneceram informações valiosas sobre o impacto do piloto nas dimensões emocionais e sociais das participantes (ver Figura 2).

Figura 2 - Estrutura da avaliação qualitativa do projeto piloto.

Fonte: Os autores.

A equipa técnica da APIBAB observou alterações nas jovens ao longo da participação no SFLC. De acordo com as técnicas da instituição, uma das melhorias mais notáveis foi o aumento da sociabilidade das jovens, que passaram a interagir mais abertamente com as demais e a desenvolver uma cooperação mais eficaz. A capacidade de trabalhar em equipa foi outra área de desenvolvimento identificada, principalmente nas atividades em grupo, como nos treinos e nas dinâmicas coletivas. As jovens também demonstraram uma maior capacidade de planejar e organizar as suas atividades, o que foi fundamental para conciliar a participação nas dinâmicas do projeto com outras responsabilidades diárias, como os compromissos da casa de acolhimento. Esses achados estão em sintonia com os resultados quantitativos, particularmente nas áreas de empatia e estabilidade emocional.

Também a equipa técnica do SFLC observou mudanças nas jovens, principalmente em aspetos relacionados à autoestima e ao compromisso com as atividades do projeto. As dinâmicas de grupo e o modelo colaborativo facilitaram a participação ativa das jovens, permitindo-lhes expressar as suas ideias e tomar decisões sobre as atividades a serem realizadas, o que contribuiu para o fortalecimento da cidadania ativa e do sentimento de pertencimento ao grupo. A equipa do projeto destacou que a cooperação e o companheirismo aumentaram, especialmente entre as mais velhas e as mais novas, quebrando barreiras geracionais e

promovendo um ambiente de apoio mútuo. Além disso, a abordagem pedagógica adotada, que envolvia práticas democráticas, foi fundamental para desconstruir a competitividade e estabelecer uma cultura de colaboração.

Finalmente, as jovens participantes relataram que o projeto teve um impacto relevante nas suas vidas. Elas destacaram a sensação de pertença ao grupo, sentindo-se acolhidas e ouvidas, o que as motivou a engajar-se de forma mais intensa nas atividades. O aumento da confiança foi uma das mudanças mais observadas pelas próprias jovens, que se sentiram mais fortes e capazes de lidar com os desafios do dia a dia, tanto no contexto do projeto quanto fora dele. Um ponto recorrente nas falas das participantes foi o quanto elas passaram a valorizar mais as suas competências sociais, como comunicação, cooperação e empatia. O projeto ajudou a melhorar a autoestima das jovens, proporcionando um ambiente onde elas puderam testar as suas habilidades emocionais, expressar-se livremente e experimentar novas formas de interação com as colegas. A sensação de ser ouvida foi crucial para o desenvolvimento da confiança nas próprias capacidades. De acordo com as jovens, o espaço de confiança construído no âmbito do projeto permitiu ultrapassar constrangimentos internos sentidos, como a timidez e a dificuldade de se expressar, o que as tornou mais abertas a novas experiências e menos reservadas em suas relações sociais.

Figuras 3 e 4 – Dinâmica de representações do percurso do projeto pelas participantes.

Fonte: Os autores.

Além disso, as jovens destacaram melhorias físicas e emocionais, como o aumento da autoestima associado à força e à capacidade física que desenvolveram durante as atividades desportivas. Elas expressaram a sensação de superação das suas próprias expectativas, mencionando que o projeto as ajudou a verem-se de maneira diferente, mais confiantes em relação ao corpo e à sua capacidade de aprendizagem. Melhorias na coordenação motora também foram notadas pelas jovens, com destaque para a melhoria na realização de movimentos mais complexos, como aqueles exigidos nos treinos de futebol e voleibol. O aumento da empatia e o sentimento de solidariedade entre as participantes também foram mencionados com frequência, especialmente a cooperação entre as mais velhas e as mais novas, o que ajudou a criar um ambiente mais inclusivo e solidário. Algumas jovens relataram, ainda, que o projeto lhes deu a sensação de pertença a algo maior, comparando o grupo a uma família, onde sentiram que poderiam confiar e ajudar-se umas às outras, independentemente das dificuldades enfrentadas no quotidiano.

5.3. Constrangimento e limitações da avaliação

A avaliação do SFLC enfrentou limitações inerentes à dinâmica e à instabilidade das próprias instituições e dos seus beneficiários. Esses fatores afetaram tanto a continuidade da participação como a homogeneidade da amostra, influenciando a consistência dos dados recolhidos e, conseqüentemente, o alcance empírico dos resultados. Ainda assim, o processo de avaliação permitiu identificar tendências e transformações significativas, ainda que dentro de um cenário de grande variabilidade.

Durante o período de seis meses do piloto, treze jovens participaram no início das atividades, das quais três deixaram a instituição antes do final da intervenção. Outras três ingressaram em momentos distintos, o que alterou a composição do grupo ao longo do tempo. Além disso, a presença das jovens não foi constante, devido a fatores como compromissos escolares, estágios curriculares e regras institucionais. Essa flutuação impactou a recolha de dados, especialmente na aplicação dos instrumentos quantitativos, tornando difícil a comparação direta entre pré- e pós-teste. No entanto, a própria rotatividade tornou-se um dado sociologicamente relevante, revelando a instabilidade que caracteriza a vida em acolhimento e os desafios na criação de vínculos e rotinas consistentes.

Outro constrangimento observado foi o intervalo etário alargado das participantes — dos 8 aos 20 anos —, o que exigiu adaptações metodológicas nas atividades. Algumas dinâmicas, mais reflexivas, foram simplificadas para atender às mais novas, enquanto outras, relacionadas a temas de autonomia e futuro profissional, foram aprofundadas com as mais velhas. Essa diversidade, embora desafiante, enriqueceu o projeto ao promover a aprendizagem intergeracional, mas também impôs limites à uniformidade analítica e à generalização dos resultados obtidos.

6. Considerações finais e lições aprendidas

O piloto do projeto *Sport For Life Club* representou uma primeira experiência prática de utilização do desporto como ferramenta pedagógica e de inclusão social para jovens em acolhimento. Ao longo dos seis meses de implementação, foi possível observar alterações relevantes nas competências socioemocionais das participantes, em especial nas dimensões de estabilidade emocional, responsabilidade e empatia, medidas por meio do instrumento TIPI-P. A avaliação qualitativa, por sua vez, confirmou e aprofundou estas percepções, revelando maior confiança, cooperação e sentido de pertença entre as jovens, além de uma melhor comunicação e convivência no grupo.

Os resultados, ainda que preliminares, indicam que a combinação de treinos desportivos, assembleias participativas e atividades pedagógicas cria condições para o desenvolvimento de competências pessoais e relacionais, essenciais para a vida em comunidade e para a transição para a autonomia. As avaliações qualitativa e quantitativa mostraram-se complementares, permitindo captar tanto as tendências objetivas de mudança como as transformações subjetivas percebidas pelas jovens e pela equipa.

Contudo, algumas limitações devem ser consideradas. A curta duração do piloto e a rotatividade das participantes, típica do contexto de acolhimento, dificultaram a consolidação de dados comparativos entre o pré- e o pós-teste. Além disso, a variação etária e a frequência irregular exigiram adaptações constantes na metodologia. Para futuras edições, seria relevante incluir avaliações contínuas (*ongoing*), como um diário de observação participante ou autoavaliação periódica dos participantes, realizadas ao longo do processo e não apenas no seu final, o que permitiria monitorizar o progresso e ajustar as intervenções em tempo real.

Há também dimensões que merecem ser aprofundadas em próximas fases. Uma delas é a possibilidade de analisar a relação entre o projeto e o número de fugas da instituição, comparando registos antes e depois da intervenção, ainda que reconhecendo a complexidade de estabelecer uma correlação direta. Outra é a avaliação física, que poderia contribuir para

compreender melhor os efeitos do desporto na saúde e no bem-estar corporal dos participantes, complementando a análise socioemocional. Também uma avaliação longitudinal, após a saída dos jovens das instituições, para verificar os percursos dos mesmos após o acolhimento.

Por fim, o *feedback* contínuo, já realizado de forma informal nas assembleias, pode evoluir para um dispositivo estruturado de monitorização participativa, no qual as jovens contribuem ativamente para a definição, revisão e melhoria das atividades. Essa prática, além de fortalecer o sentimento de pertença e corresponsabilidade, permitirá que a avaliação se torne parte orgânica do próprio processo educativo.

No final da fase piloto, foram identificados outros desafios, especialmente no que diz respeito ao financiamento e à captação de recursos para a continuidade do projeto.

Embora o apoio da Câmara Municipal do Porto tenha sido fundamental para a realização do piloto e teste da metodologia, garantir financiamento contínuo seria essencial para a expansão e a sustentabilidade do SFLC. O projeto depende de fundos adicionais e parcerias com instituições públicas e privadas para garantir a continuidade das atividades e a possibilidade de alcançar um número maior de jovens.

Além disso, a necessidade de avaliar o modelo económico do projeto, levando em consideração o custo-benefício das atividades e o retorno social obtido, é um ponto crucial para a sua sustentabilidade a longo prazo. Uma abordagem que poderia ser explorada para avaliar o impacto social do projeto é o SROI (*Social Return on Investment*), uma metodologia que quantifica o valor social gerado em relação aos recursos investidos. O uso do SROI pode fornecer uma avaliação mais clara do impacto social e económico do projeto, ajudando a justificar a captação de recursos e a garantir que o SFLC continue a oferecer benefícios reais e mensuráveis para jovens em acolhimento.

Foi ainda identificada a necessidade de expandir as interações sociais para além do contexto da instituição, incluindo outros jovens de diferentes contextos, e de acrescentar mais atividades criativas.

A experiência mostrou que a flexibilidade no horário e espaço físico adequado são fundamentais para garantir que os jovens possam participar de forma mais contínua e com menos obstáculos logísticos.

Em conclusão, o SFLC foi uma experiência positiva que gerou mudanças significativas nas jovens participantes, promovendo o seu bem-estar e desenvolvimento pessoal. O projeto demonstrou que o desporto, aliado a metodologias pedagógicas, pode ser uma ferramenta favorável na transformação social de jovens em acolhimento. As lições aprendidas durante a implementação do piloto forneceram uma base sólida para a expansão do projeto, permitindo que futuras edições do SFLC possam alcançar um número maior de jovens e potencializar ainda mais os resultados em termos de bem-estar, socialização e competências para a vida.

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Por que a discriminação de classe é invisível

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Artigo recebido a 26/12/2025.

Aceite para publicação a 31/12/2025.

Resumo

O artigo analisa as razões da persistente invisibilidade da discriminação de classe. Defende que a classe social é frequentemente percebida como uma categoria flexível e meritocrática, contribuindo para a legitimação das desigualdades como resultados justos do mercado. Atentando no sistema judicial norte-americano, o artigo demonstra como os magistrados favorecem disposições associadas às classes médias, usando a pertença de classe como critério moral e preditivo. O artigo conclui propondo um quadro analítico mais rigoroso para tornar visível a normalização institucional da discriminação de classe.

Keywords: Classe social; Discriminação; Invisibilidade.

Why class discrimination is invisible

Abstract

The article analyses the reasons for the ongoing invisibility of class discrimination. It argues that social class is often perceived as a flexible, meritocratic category, which contributes to the legitimisation of inequalities as fair market outcomes. Focusing on the US judicial system, the article demonstrates how magistrates favour provisions associated with the middle classes, using class membership as a moral and predictive criterion. Ultimately, the article proposes a more rigorous analytical framework to highlight the institutional normalisation of class discrimination.

Keywords: Social class; Discrimination; Invisibility.

WACQUANT, Loïc (2025).

"Por que a discriminação de classe é invisível",

Sociologia: Revista da Faculdade de Letras da Universidade do Porto, Vol. LIII, pp. 141 - 151

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.21747/08723419/soc53a5>

Pourquoi la discrimination de classe est invisible

Résumé

Cet article analyse les raisons pour lesquelles la discrimination de classe reste invisible. Il soutient que la classe sociale est souvent perçue comme une catégorie flexible et méritocratique, ce qui contribue à légitimer les inégalités en tant que résultat équitable du marché. En se penchant sur le système judiciaire américain, il montre comment les magistrats privilégient les dispositions associées aux classes moyennes, en utilisant l'appartenance de classe comme critère moral et prédictif. Il conclut en proposant un cadre analytique plus rigoureux pour rendre visible la normalisation institutionnelle de la discrimination de classe.

Mots-clés: Classe sociale; Discrimination; Invisibilité.

Por qué la discriminación de clase es invisible

Resumen

Este artículo analiza las razones por las que la discriminación de clase sigue siendo invisible. Afirma que la clase social se percibe a menudo como una categoría flexible y meritocrática, lo que contribuye a legitimar las desigualdades como resultado equitativo del mercado. Al examinar el sistema judicial estadounidense, se muestra cómo los jueces privilegian las disposiciones asociadas a las clases medias utilizando la pertinencia a una clase social como criterio moral y predictivo. El artículo concluye proponiendo un marco analítico más riguroso para visibilizar la normalización institucional de la discriminación de clase.

Palabras clave: Clase social; Discriminación; Invisibilidad.

“Os aspetos mais importantes das coisas ficam ocultos devido à sua simplicidade e familiaridade. (Não conseguimos perceber algo porque está sempre diante dos nossos olhos.)”

— Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, §129 (1950).

Porque é que as ciências sociais não conseguiram desenvolver um conceito robusto de discriminação de classe — definido como tratamento diferenciado e impacto desigual injustificado com base nas origens ou na pertença de classe — em pé de igualdade analítica com a discriminação racial e a discriminação de género? A primeira razão reside nas diferenças inerentes entre estes conceitos como «princípios sociais de visão e divisão» (para

usar a linguagem de Bourdieu) ¹. De modo geral, a raça e o género são facilmente *visíveis*, *claramente delimitados* e os seus limites são amplamente consensuais². Em contrapartida, a classe refere-se a categorias amplamente invisíveis — os símbolos externos da posição de classe são facilmente manipuláveis — cujos fundamentos e demarcações são difusos e contestados, tanto no meio académico como na vida privada e na cultura pública.

Em segundo lugar, acredita-se que o sexo social e a etnia naturalizada são *herdados*, *incorporados e permanentes*, ao passo que a classe é herdada, mas a posição pode ser perdida ou ganha com base nas variações no volume de capital económico, cultural, social e simbólico acumulado dentro e entre gerações. Embora exista um habitus de classe, este é maleável até certo ponto: basta pensar em alguém oriundo da província — por exemplo, uma pessoa nascida e criada no sul dos Estados Unidos ou da França — que consegue perder o seu sotaque carregado. A crença na meritocracia, que muitos intelectuais abraçam por sentirem que a sua própria biografia a exemplifica, reforça a visão coletiva de que a classe é conquistada e, portanto, justa, ao passo que a raça e o género são atribuídos e, por conseguinte, não devem prejudicar os seus membros, de acordo com os valores liberais de igualdade e liberdade. A atribuição de credenciais académicas, em grande parte baseada no capital cultural acumulado na família, santifica a desigualdade de classe. Nenhuma instituição formal legítima de forma semelhante a desigualdade étnico-racial e de género.

Em terceiro lugar, nos EUA, a raça e o género, embora fluidos até certo ponto, foram *oficializados e congelados pelo Estado* (nas sociedades europeias, a etnia goza de vários graus de reconhecimento oficial). Servem de base inquestionável para a produção da identidade individual e de oceanos de dados administrativos, pelo que há um incentivo implícito para que as pessoas e os investigadores usem e pensem em termos destas categorias burocráticas rígidas. Não é o caso da classe social, que não tem existência oficial, embora muitas vezes as organizações e as mobilizações se baseiem nela, ainda que discretamente. Experiência

¹ Para uma elaboração teórica da questão da classificação na sociedade e na história, ou seja, a classificação de criaturas sociais que são elas próprias «classificadas e classificantes» e as «lutas de classificação» que daí advêm, ver Pierre Bourdieu (2014, pp. 18-29, 52-53, 67-75, 84-87, 93-96 e 126-139).

² Sobre a maleabilidade e porosidade comparativas das fronteiras raciais e sexuais e sua recente contestação, leia Rogers Brubaker (2016).

mental: imagine como seriam diferentes os debates académicos e públicos se as agências governamentais produzissem rotineiramente dados administrativos codificados por classe (utilizando uma combinação de educação, profissão, rendimento, bens e situação habitacional) juntamente com a etnia, dos dois lados do Atlântico.

Em quarto lugar, nas sociedades capitalistas, a discriminação de classe é normalizada por um *apelo* tácito ou explícito *ao mercado* como distribuidor justo de recompensas materiais e simbólicas. A revisão completa e atualizada da investigação em ciências sociais sobre a discriminação, publicada por Issa Kohler-Hausmann na *Oxford Bibliographies Online* (2019), aborda a dificuldade de definir o fenómeno e a discriminação contra grupos socialmente relevantes específicos, definidos com base na raça, sexo, orientação sexual, etnia, origem nacional, religião, idade e deficiência. Notavelmente, a classe está ausente, sendo implicitamente descartada quando a autora escreve: "A discriminação é tipicamente considerada algo antitético às normas de tratamento justo e igualitário numa sociedade de mercado democrática" (Kohler-Hausmann, 2019). Isto sugere que os resultados do mercado são "justos e igualitários", o principal pilar ideológico que legitima a discriminação de classe.

Uma quinta razão, relacionada com a ausência da classe nos debates sobre discriminação, prende-se com a possibilidade, probabilidade e *política da mobilidade categórica*: os membros de categorias étnicas e sexuais desfavorecidas tendem a manifestar o seu descontentamento coletivo por se sentirem presos, por assim dizer, à sua categoria, ao passo que os membros da classe baixa têm a possibilidade e a tendência para ascenderem individualmente à classe média³. A canonização estatal e a mobilização coletiva mantêm uma relação de reforço mútuo. De facto, a razão pela qual as discriminações racial e de género estão tão firmemente estabelecidas nas ciências sociais é o facto de terem sido salientadas e tornadas passíveis de ação como categorias jurídicas pelos movimentos insurgentes dos afro-americanos e das mulheres, que se insurgiram contra a sua rejeição para um plano secundário e o tratamento injusto de que eram alvo. Desde meados do século XX que nenhum movimento de massa semelhante contra o domínio burguês surgiu e perdurou nas sociedades avançadas. De facto, vivemos numa era em que a mobilização de classe e a política foram

³ Esta é uma aplicação do esquema clássico elaborado por Albert Hirschman (1972).

corroídas, sendo substituídas, num número crescente de países avançados, por alguma variante do etno-populismo autocrático (Tuğal, 2021, pp. 327-347), e isso apesar de uma polarização sem precedentes da estrutura de classes.

A invisibilidade da discriminação de classe nas ciências sociais também está enraizada nas peculiaridades da sociedade americana enquanto centro global da produção sociológica. Trata-se de uma sociedade descendente de uma colônia agrária de colonos, cercada, por um lado, pela escravatura e, por outro, por uma fronteira em movimento baseada no genocídio. Como resultado, a etnicidade racializada ficou inscrita como uma divisão fundamental do espaço social, das estruturas simbólicas e da cultura pública (Roediger, 2019). As divisões de classe, embora profundas e brutais, foram atenuadas pela crença coletiva no "excepcionalismo americano", ancorada na noção de abertura social e fluidez, construída em contraposição à imagem da velha Europa como um lugar fechado, rígido e dominado pelas classes. Esta crença moldou profundamente as ciências sociais dos EUA desde as suas origens (Ross, 1991). Assim, existe uma longa linhagem de investigações que documentam e explicam por que razão os trabalhadores americanos não conseguiram desenvolver uma forte consciência de classe, identificando-se, em vez disso, como "classe média" e aspirando a subir na escala social existente, em vez de se mobilizarem coletivamente para a transformação social (Sombart, 1913; Centers, 1949; Jackman & Jackman, 1983; Wright, 1997).

Por fim, e talvez de forma controversa, defendo que existe um problema mais profundo: as ciências sociais não conseguiram desenvolver um *conceito analítico adequado de discriminação*, de qualquer tipo, tendo-se baseado, em vez disso, numa mistura de noções jurídicas e de senso comum que insinuam sub-repticiamente valores morais no raciocínio científico social. Tal faz com que a discriminação prejudicial seja equiparada à discriminação em si mesma (que pode, de facto, ser positiva ou negativa) e seja rotineiramente confundida com outras formas elementares de dominação etnorracial, nomeadamente categorização (incluindo preconceito, parcialidade e estigma), segregação, guetização e violência⁴.

⁴ Sobre as cinco formas elementares de dominação etnorracial e suas combinações, ver Loïc Wacquant (2024, pp. 113-160).

Permita-me apresentar uma ilustração empírica do funcionamento da discriminação de classe numa instituição que se autointitula como a encarnação da justiça: o tribunal criminal. Os estudiosos da justiça criminal nos Estados Unidos têm-se mostrado particularmente obcecados com a discriminação *racial*, um tema que também tem tido um grande impacto dentro e fora da academia inglesa, após a publicação da *Lammy Review* (2017). Têm investido uma energia teórica e uma criatividade metodológica infinitas na tentativa de conceptualizar, documentar e medir essa discriminação⁵. O motor por trás desta investigação não é apenas um interesse genérico pela desigualdade, mas uma indignação moral influenciada pelo senso comum nacional: que escândalo maior poderia haver do que os tribunais tratem os arguidos de forma diferente consoante a sua "raça" (ou seja, etnia naturalizada) e, assim, infligirem-lhes penas mais severas, violando o princípio sacrossanto da igualdade perante a lei, que constitui o cerne da democracia liberal?⁶

Curiosamente, a relação nociva entre classe social e tribunal está notavelmente ausente do debate académico e público sobre justiça criminal. No entanto, a posição social e a trajetória são rotineiramente e abertamente invocadas pelos profissionais da justiça como base para a tomada de decisões, por exemplo, quando um juiz justifica tratar um arguido com clemência, exclamando em audiência pública que "o seu emprego é a sua salvação", ou quando o procurador no período de instrução considera um "pacote de atenuação" composto por recursos de classe reunidos pelo advogado de defesa. Ninguém naquela sala de audiências acha que há algo de estranho, questionável ou escandaloso nessa justificação. Imagine a indignação moral, a comoção profissional e as sanções legais desencadeadas se o mesmo juiz dissesse a um arguido branco: "A sua raça é a sua salvação".

Todos os intervenientes no processo judicial aderem ao princípio dogmático de que os infratores que têm um emprego, uma residência estável, procuram educação e sustentam uma família são mais flexíveis e recetivos e, portanto, merecem uma medida de clemência, sem que haja provas concretas disso *no caso específico em questão*. Na prática, estão a aplicar a «discriminação estatística» no sentido rigoroso do termo, ao usarem o estatuto social como

⁵ Dois exemplos representativos são: Schoenfeld, Walker e Rosa (2025, pp. 122-154) e Sampson (2025, pp. 1-21).

⁶ O moralismo é particularmente prevalente em investigações interdisciplinares recentes sobre punição e desigualdade, conforme demonstrado por Rubin (no prelo).

indicador de conduta (i)legal futura⁷. Mas não só: a posse de um capital mínimo nas suas diferentes formas traduz-se numa presunção automática de carácter moral, uma vez que a posição social na América é concebida como o resultado do esforço e das virtudes individuais, o que se traduz numa redução da pena. Esta tradução raramente é examinada, muito menos contestada, por profissionais do direito, juristas e cientistas sociais.

Em termos simples, o princípio de funcionamento parece ser o seguinte: caso se tenha uma vida convencional, a instituição penal deve fazer tudo o que estiver ao seu alcance para a preservar; caso se viva uma existência miserável, pode absorver-se toda a força da sanção estatal, porque não há muito a perder. Esta é a base da bifurcação do processo penal em "penalidade no papel", digna, e "penalidade nas ruas", degradante. A posição burguesa merece proteção; o estatuto proletário não tem clemência. *A discriminação de classe é galopante* nos tribunais criminais e está à vista de todos, mas escondida.

A vantagem de classe no sistema judicial não se limita à *posição* objetiva definida pelo volume e composição do capital (económico, com emprego; cultural, com educação; social, com laços familiares; e simbólico, com prestígio). Estende-se também à disposição subjetiva, de acordo com uma lógica de condicionamento e incorporação descrita por Pierre Bourdieu no seu livro clássico *La Distinction* (Bourdieu, 1979). Pequenos marcadores de classe, como o vestuário (para arguidos que comparecem sem custódia), a postura corporal e a expressão facial, aprendidos (ou não) na família e cultivados (ou repreendidos) pelo grupo de pares, são interpretados pelos profissionais do sistema penal como sinais externos de respeito ou desrespeito pela autoridade convencional⁸. Estes garantem ao arguido um mínimo de

⁷ O artigo fundamental de Edmund S. Phelps, *The Statistical Theory of Racism and Sexism* (1972), merece uma leitura atenta. Note-se que este não inclui a classe, mas sim duas identidades categóricas oficialmente reconhecidas pelo Estado e protegidas por estatutos legais incluídos na nova legislação federal (Título IV dos Direitos Cívicos de 1964). A outra teoria económica da discriminação, proposta anteriormente pelo economista Gary Becker no seu livro clássico *The Economics of Discrimination* (1971 [1957]), tem um mecanismo mais simples: propõe que o discriminador (por exemplo, um empregador) cede ao seu "gosto" por certos grupos, mas deixa essa preferência sem explicação.

⁸ No seu metódico estudo sobre o policiamento da Skid Row, em Los Angeles, Forrest Stuart mostra que os sem-abrigo adotam as mesmas performances públicas de docilidade social e decência moral nas ruas, manifestadas através do vestuário, comportamento, cuidados com o corpo e linguagem corporal, «na esperança de escapar às suposições padrão de criminalidade dos agentes». (Stuart, 2016, p. 127).

compaixão e uma pequena redução da pena, pois sinalizam um mínimo de reverência social e flexibilidade moral perante o Ministério Público. Através dos seus acessórios e conduta, os arguidos *reconhecem* efetivamente o poder judicial e submetem-se a ele, como esperado pelo Leviatã. Como acontece com todos os poderes simbólicos, o reconhecimento gera uma certa magnanimidade. Em contrapartida, não é dada qualquer consideração especial aos arguidos que não conseguem domar o seu habitus de rua no tribunal. Considere-se esta pequena história sobre "um casaco e uma gravata", contada por um procurador num tribunal criminal da Califórnia, onde me integrei durante cerca de três anos para produzir uma etnografia do Estado penal:

“Procurador Julius: Tenho um certo respeito por um arguido quando entra no tribunal de gravata ou, sabe, de casaco. Nem precisa de ser do tamanho certo, percebe? O que estão a dizer é: ‘Respeito esta sala, respeito este processo e quero que saibam que compreendo que o que fiz foi errado.’ Sem dizer nada, mostram isso. E, quando vejo alguém assim, sinto alguma compaixão por essa pessoa, pois penso: ‘Pelo menos, esta pessoa está a levar este processo a sério.’

LW: — Considerando que, se entrarem com os sapatos desapertados...

Procurador Julius: E com as calças completamente para baixo...

LW: Por vezes, até vejo jovens no corredor a usar *t-shirts* (Procurador Julius: Exatamente!) que dizem, não ‘Foda-se a polícia’, mas algo muito semelhante!

Procurador Julius: Eles estão de alguma maneira a expressar isso. E você pensa: ‘O que estou a ver? Alguém que vou ver novamente.’ E, para mim, esses jovens — porque a maioria é jovem — acabarão por entender. Ou serão criminosos inveterados, sem vida nem futuro... E, em algum momento, dizem: ‘Nunca mais farei isto, nunca mais voltarei aqui. Não gosto daqui.’ É isso que o tipo de casaco e gravata me diz”⁹.

Para garantir que não se trata de uma idiosincrasia de um único promotor, é pertinente citar exhaustivamente esta observação meticolosa de um tribunal criminal em Connecticut, feita há meio século por Malcom Feeley no seu livro clássico *The Process is the Punishment* (1979), pois mostra o fenómeno em todo o seu esplendor, mesmo sem lhe atribuir um nome:

“Se familiares ou amigos preocupados [do arguido] comparecerem no tribunal, os funcionários podem interpretar isso como um sinal de estabilização na vida do arguido e podem ‘reduzir’ a gravidade do

⁹ Há uma reviravolta reveladora nesta pequena história: Julius é um procurador afro-americano de uma família de classe média-baixa, que foi criado num bairro pobre e segregado, e que experimentou uma notável mobilidade social ao longo de duas gerações, tornando-o altamente perspicaz em relação aos marcadores de classe. Para um retrato e análise, ver Wacquant, *Rethinking the Penal State*, capítulo 3 (no prelo).

caso. Os pais, os clérigos, os professores, os conselheiros e os empregadores também contribuem para esta atitude. Normalmente, porém, os amigos não comparecem no tribunal. Se o arguido estiver empregado, a estudar ou tiver aspirações profissionais ambiciosas, isso é considerado um sinal de estabilidade e contribui para uma revisão em baixa da gravidade do caso.

Tais considerações levantam *dilemas éticos* que alguns procuradores, juízes e advogados de defesa sentem de forma bastante acentuada, dado serem *parciais em relação aos arguidos da classe média*. Por exemplo, os advogados de defesa abordam ocasionalmente um promotor e pedem um *nolle* (arquivamento do caso), explicando que uma condenação prejudicará as hipóteses de o seu cliente entrar na universidade, na faculdade de direito ou noutra programa de aperfeiçoamento. O seu apelo é geralmente acompanhado da seguinte pergunta retórica: ‘Não quer arruinar a vida deste rapaz por causa desta brincadeira insignificante, pois não?’ O procurador enfrenta uma situação paradoxal: se tratar casos semelhantes de forma igual, causará danos desiguais. Um operário fabril, que provavelmente permanecerá em empregos não qualificados ou semiquilificados, não perderá o seu posto de trabalho como resultado de uma condenação, ao passo que um estudante da classe média pode ver todo o seu futuro comprometido. Por uma lógica perversa, mas convincente, o procurador é forçado *a dar um tratamento preferencial à pessoa mais privilegiada e a justificá-lo em nome da igualdade*¹⁰.

É desnecessário dizer — mas é melhor dizê-lo para evitar confusões — que prestar atenção à discriminação de classe não nega nem descarta a discriminação étnico-racial ou a discriminação de género (na verdade, qualquer forma de discriminação baseada em princípios de visão e divisão social, visível ou invisível, formal ou reconhecida pelo Estado). Pelo contrário, o objetivo é estudar a primeira precisamente para a conjugar com a segunda, a fim de obter uma visão o mais completa possível do tratamento diferenciado, positivo ou negativo, justificado ou injustificado, nas instituições que selecionam, classificam e distribuem pessoas com diferentes encargos, consoante a sua classe, etnia e género. Será que os cientistas sociais abrirão os olhos e começarão a compreender o que sempre esteve à sua frente?

¹⁰ Malcom Feeley, *The Process is the Punishment: Handling Cases in a Lower Criminal Court* (1979, pp. 164-165), itálico meu.

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Policy schizophrenia and the sociology of fragmentation

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Artigo recebido a 24/10/2025.

Aceite para publicação a 31/12/2025.

Abstract

This article revisits the concept of ‘policy schizophrenia’, introduced in *Fragmenting Cities* (Schultz Larsen & Delica, 2024), to analyse how democratic governments increasingly govern urban marginality through stigmatizing and discriminatory policies. The concept captures the ambivalence, incoherence, and fragmenting effects of contemporary urban governance shaped by rapid political and bureaucratic change. Grounded empirically in the Danish “ghetto list,” the article situates policy schizophrenia within debates on neoliberalism, arguing that fragmentation is intrinsic to neoliberal governance. It outlines six interrelated logics of practice as analytical tools and concludes by framing policy schizophrenia as a social diagnosis, briefly exploring its relevance beyond Denmark through the analysis of the rise of Portugal’s Chega party.

Keywords: Policy schizophrenia; Fragmentation; Urban policies.

Esquizofrenia das políticas e a sociologia da fragmentação

Resumo

Este artigo revisita o conceito de “esquizofrenia política”, introduzido em *Fragmenting Cities* (Schultz Larsen & Delica, 2024), para analisar como os governos democráticos governam cada vez mais a marginalidade urbana por meio de políticas estigmatizantes e discriminatórias. O conceito captura a ambivalência, a incoerência e os efeitos fragmentadores da governança

urbana contemporânea moldada por rápidas mudanças políticas e burocráticas. Baseado empiricamente na «lista de guetos» dinamarquesa, o artigo situa a esquizofrenia política no âmbito dos debates sobre o neoliberalismo, argumentando que a fragmentação é intrínseca à governança neoliberal. Ele descreve seis lógicas de prática inter-relacionadas como ferramentas analíticas e conclui enquadrando a esquizofrenia política como um diagnóstico social, explorando brevemente a sua relevância para além da Dinamarca através da análise da ascensão do partido Chega em Portugal.

Palavras-chave: Esquizofrenia política; Fragmentação; Políticas urbanas.

Schizophrénie des politiques et la sociologie de la fragmentation

Résumé

Cet article revisite le concept de «schizophrénie politique», introduit dans *Fragmenting Cities* (Schultz Larsen & Delica, 2024), afin d'analyser comment les gouvernements démocratiques régissent de plus en plus la marginalité urbaine par le biais de politiques stigmatisantes et discriminatoires. Ce concept rend compte de l'ambivalence, de l'incohérence et des effets fragmentateurs de la gouvernance urbaine contemporaine, façonnée par des changements politiques et bureaucratiques rapides. S'appuyant empiriquement sur la « liste des ghettos » danoise, l'article situe la schizophrénie politique dans le cadre des débats sur le néolibéralisme, en affirmant que la fragmentation est intrinsèque à la gouvernance néolibérale. Il présente six logiques de pratique interdépendantes comme outils analytiques et conclut en présentant la schizophrénie politique comme un diagnostic social, explorant brièvement sa pertinence au-delà du Danemark à travers l'analyse de la montée en puissance du parti portugais Chega.

Mots-clés: Schizophrénie politique; Fragmentation; Politiques urbaines.

Esquizofrenia de las políticas y la sociología de la fragmentación

Resumen

Este artículo retoma el concepto de esquizofrenia política, introducido en *Fragmenting Cities* (Schultz Larsen y Delica, 2024), para analizar cómo los gobiernos democráticos gobiernan cada vez más la marginalidad urbana mediante políticas estigmatizantes y discriminatorias. El concepto capta la ambivalencia, la incoherencia y los efectos fragmentadores de la gobernanza urbana contemporánea, moldeada por los rápidos cambios políticos y burocráticos. Basándose empíricamente en la «lista de guetos» danesa, el artículo sitúa la esquizofrenia política en el marco de los debates sobre el neoliberalismo, argumentando que la fragmentación es intrínseca a la gobernanza neoliberal. Esboza seis lógicas de práctica interrelacionadas como herramientas analíticas y concluye enmarcando la esquizofrenia política como un diagnóstico social, explorando brevemente su relevancia más allá de Dinamarca a través del análisis del auge del partido Chega en Portugal.

Palabras clave: Esquizofrenia política; Fragmentación; Políticas urbanas.

Introduction

Our recent book *Fragmenting Cities* (Schultz Larsen & Delica, 2024) addresses the question of how it came about that democratic governments increasingly have come to rely on forms of stigmatization and discrimination with regard to the governance of urban marginality. Underpinning this paradox are processes of social change and struggle, which constitute the fundamental objects of analysis in our book, and especially the concept of *policy schizophrenia*, that we developed throughout its writing. As a concept, policy schizophrenia is intended to capture the ambivalence, the incoherence, the disturbances, and the fragmenting effects of many contemporary urban policies, in tandem with the rapid political and bureaucratic innovations needed to govern increasingly fragmented societies and cities. While policy schizophrenia has already proved to be a valuable social scientific concept in our work, we nonetheless keep questioning its construction. Not least because we understand that the concept may evoke strong emotions or even accusations about using a catchy metaphor founded on stigmatizing terminology when researching the structures, mechanisms, and effects of urban marginality, discrimination, and stigmatization.

In line with this reflexive orientation, in this article we return to the very production process and different aspects of the concept. First, we return to 2010, where the first version of the Danish 'ghetto list' was launched to outline how this policy innovation became central to our research trajectory and how the systematic analysis hereof formed the first more empirical gist of the concept. From here we turn toward an outlining of policy schizophrenia as a scientific concept, grounding it in Wacquant's (2022) principles for forging robust concepts. On this foundation we highlight the intricate relationship between policy schizophrenia and the continuous debates about the contemporary state of neoliberalism, arguing that, as an analytical concept, it can help qualify core, yet overlooked, aspects of neoliberalism, namely those relating to forms of fragmentation as something inherent and part and parcel of neoliberalism.

The next section '*Researching policy schizophrenia and Identifying logics of practice*' condenses the central, conceptual results from the extensive empirical analysis that forms the book's backbone regarding policy schizophrenia. This is where we specify that policy

schizophrenia, as an analytical concept, refers to a range of different (but interrelated) logics of practice or dispositions that inform political, bureaucratic, and organizational position-taking and practices that are founded on different forms of fragmentation. We specify these logics as de-contextualization, de-historicization, de-particularization, dis-proportionality, decoupling, and finally de-humanization. Here it is important to underline that we do not see these as substantialist invariants, but rather as provisional, intrinsic, and generic invitations to do empirical research across fields and contexts beyond urban sociology, as well as beyond the Danish context in which they were forged.

By way of summing this article up, we provide two sections that, in different ways, look ahead. Firstly, by taking stock across the six logics of practice to argue how policy schizophrenia can be viewed as a *social diagnosis*, providing a novel view on contemporary neoliberalism. Secondly, via an excursus on how policy schizophrenia might travel and open for fruitful analytical insights well beyond the Danish case, we briefly discuss, by way of example, how we see, from outside and afar, the inherent contradictions and fragmentation in the recent tilting to the right of the Portuguese political field via Chega Party's rapid rise and establishment as a political power and how this party pushes debates on immigration, national identity, institutional reforms, and welfare retraction to the forefront.

1. The '*Ghetto list*' and the discovery of policy schizophrenia

In the autumn of 2010, the first iteration of the now internationally (in)famous Danish 'ghetto list' was introduced by the Government. At first glance, the ghetto list, which at the time represented the first and only state-sanctioned definition of a ghetto in the world, appeared to be a populist attempt by the liberal Prime Minister to attract voters in the run-up to the elections. Political programs and policy ideas are, after all, floated and launched frequently during these periods. Despite the openly stigmatizing, discriminatory and symbolically violent nature, there was no indication at that time that the list would gradually become assimilated into the structures of political and bureaucratic fields. We had no idea that this electoral ballooning – and its political and bureaucratic success – would become a central element in

our future research in the impetus for writing the book. Furthermore, we could not foresee the profound, practical political influence that it would have on housing policies, immigration policies, and the wider political climate in Denmark and abroad. In hindsight, one of the astounding things about the 'ghetto list' is how it developed into a real political 'Swiss knife' governance tool, suitable for multiple purposes.

In autumn 2016, we decided to embark on a collaborative project on the stigmatization of housing in Denmark (BOSID). Our original intention was to focus, in relatively narrow terms, on the territorial stigmatization of housing, considering especially the not-for-profit housing estates in Denmark, and to document the varied and complex consequences it has for places and social groups (Schultz Larsen, 2018; Schultz Larsen & Delica, 2019). However, several questions kept nagging us around the production of territorial stigmatization and the apparent deep-seated nature of territorial stigma once established. Pondering these questions in the context of the political and academic discussions about the 'ghetto list' gradually led us to consider the state and its role in the production of territorial stigmatization. It became increasingly clear that we kept falling back on the state in our attempts to comprehend the spatialization of advanced marginality and the entrenchment of territorial stigmatization. At first, we did not consider the state *per se*, but rather concentrated on the political forces that produced forms of territorial stigmatization and their exploitation of state power for their political projects (e.g., Schultz Larsen, 2014, 2018; Schultz Larsen & Delica, 2019). It was not until we began bringing together the questions of the production of territorial stigmatization *and* territorial de-stigmatization that the fundamental, ambivalent involvement of the state became more apparent, not least when we began to question how and by whom they were produced in practice (Schultz Larsen & Delica, 2021). This discovery of the state's indisputable simultaneous role in both the production of territorial stigmatization and of de-stigmatization processes was what led us initially to construct the concept of policy schizophrenia and constituted our initial definition of the concept: as situations of political and bureaucratic stigmatization from above, in combination with policy initiatives directed at de-stigmatization from below.

Once defined, the concept helped sharpen the construction of our object of research by posing new questions – as such, this process can be seen as an example of reflexive sociology in practice (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). It meant posing the simple question of how the state could be responsible for the ghetto list and its de-stigmatization policies at the same time. It also opened for more specific questions, for instance, concerning the ways in which the various ministries and different levels of government were involved, how different agents of the state were sometimes in competition or direct confrontation with each other while other times promoting collaboration within and across the state, the extent to which they were grounded in different rationalities depending on their position within the state, etc. To us, all these new questions helped frame the importance of the state and bring it, explicitly and empirically, into the equation. Additionally, the concept helped us view the policy efforts in response to the deep-seated nature of territorial stigma in a new light, whereby the double-sided, Sisyphean character of efforts to destigmatize are not unforeseen policy consequences of addressing a wicked problem but partly integral to the political and institutional logics of wider state and housing policies (Schultz Larsen & Delica, 2021), something that feeds directly into the concept of policy schizophrenia, comprehended as *a social diagnosis which designates processes whereby policies and initiatives are as much directed toward transforming state institutions themselves as toward the city and its residents.*

One of the most potent examples of the schism between policies of stigmatization from above and political ambitions to destigmatize at neighborhood level was the launch of the Parallel Society Act (PSA), in 2018. It took place under intense media attention, not least because the launch was staged in the most blighted and blemished place in Denmark over the past two decades: Mjølnerparken, in the heart of ‘Wonderful Copenhagen.’ Here, the Prime Minister, flanked by seven ministers, including the Minister of Housing responsible for destigmatization, showed up with a massive security presence without any warning and ousted the residents from their own community house. In a speech given by the Prime Minister in the community house, a place designed to foster local belonging and community, he proclaimed that:

“Around the country, there are parallel societies where many people with the same problems are lumped together, and it creates a negative spiral. A counterculture. Where people do not take responsibility, do not participate, and do not use the opportunities we have in Denmark – they stand outside” (Løkke Rasmussen, 2018).

The PSA, which allegedly would eradicate all ghettos (and thereby stigmatization) by 2030, comprised 22 proposals, including increased policing and social surveillance, as well as that 60% of the not-for-profit family housing units in so-called ‘ghetto areas’ should be demolished, privatized, or transformed into non-family housing units. As a direct outcome, the community house in Mjølnerparken was demolished in 2022, and around 260 families have since been displaced as part of the process because their apartments were sold off to private developers. All along, several publicly sponsored area-based programs were kept going to ensure support to the residents, helping local youth in the educational system, getting a foothold on the labour market, etc. (for an in-depth analysis of the Mjølnerparken case, see Söderberg, 2024).

Simultaneously, through our empirical research, we documented a continuous strengthening of the collaboration at the local level between local politicians, municipalities, housing associations, civil society organizations, and residents concerning the development and implementation of territorial de-stigmatization policies and strategies across numerous municipalities all over Denmark. This was what alerted us to the wider implications of policy schizophrenia *as a process*. It implies fundamental shifts within the state in the very definition of what constitutes a legitimate social problem (for instance, poverty or lack of social integration), which type of institutions should deal with these social problems (redistributive, empowering, or correctional), with what types of agents (welfare officers, social workers, or police), and so forth.

Our empirical engagement with this ambiguous and contradictory process led us to consider policy schizophrenia more systematically, and aim at developing it into a rigorously constructed scientific concept, not least given the contemporary discussion on ableism and the long and intensive stigmatization of people suffering from the effects of mental health

issues relating to schizophrenia. In the following section, we unpack the construction of policy schizophrenia as a scientific concept.

2. The construction of policy schizophrenia as a scientific concept

In *The Invention of the 'Underclass'*, Wacquant (2022) stresses the need to test our concepts to ensure that they are a) *clear and neutral* in order to minimize the risk of misreading and misuse, while at the same time not playing on emotions, ideology, or moral verdicts; b) *coherent and specific* in such a way that their attributes do not contradict each other while at the same time identifying a distinctive configuration or object of research and separating it from other objects; and c) *empirically adequate and theoretically productive*, thus helping to generate rich, nuanced data, hypotheses, and comparisons across multiple cases and scales, while also linking up and engaging with other concepts and theories to validate, refute, or develop them.

Turning to the concept of policy schizophrenia and viewing it through this lens, we note that the prefix 'policy' is deliberately placed before the suffix 'schizophrenia.' This runs parallel to the arguments within ableism, which stress that we should place object attributes before identity characteristics. Thus, the focus is first on *policy* and how policies are part of, or are the outcome of, political, bureaucratic, and institutional struggles (e.g., classification struggles in Bourdieu's (2018) sense) and concern the principles of vision and division of the social world or within a given field, guiding decision-making and shaping the social conditions for action. Policy thus underscores the relations to the political and bureaucratic fields (i.e., the state, politics, and regulation). The suffix '*schizophrenia*' indicates a diagnosis of a novel type and form of policies and policymaking that we should consider and which we need to classify and specify as distinct from other forms of policy. Drawing on the US *DSM-5* and international *ICD-11* classifications of diseases, schizophrenia denotes an empirically identifiable diagnostic construct with a distinct set of criteria, albeit one characterized by multifactorial causes and a significant heterogeneity of signs, symptoms, process courses, and outcomes within and across multiple domains (see also Valle, 2020). Specifically, the suffix of policy schizophrenia

underscores a focus on symptoms, processes, and outcomes relating to ambivalence, incoherence, disturbances, and fragmentations within and across multiple domains. In this way, both policy schizophrenia and the clinical concept are diagnostic constructs, each with a distinct set of criteria which are nonetheless open-ended, adequate, and deliberately designed to be applied to a variety of empirical cases and situations across different contexts and places.

Yet, and this is very important, we should not forget that policy schizophrenia differs from the clinical concept in addressing the classification and diagnosis of social and urban problems and *not* individual mental disturbances. Neither should we forget that just as social problems are contested, so is the clinical concept of schizophrenia. In fact, it is highly contested and characterized by wide disagreement within the medical field, especially in pathology and nosology, concerning its definition, causes, and practical clinical classifications regarding its precise diagnosis. In other words, the concept of schizophrenia itself represents a specific type of classification struggle while simultaneously constituting a classificatory concept. An important facet here is the reciprocal legitimation between a (medical) science with a high degree of autonomy guaranteed by the state – this relative autonomy means that the classificatory struggles are principally based on medical principles, which are not directly influenced by political or economic interests. The outcome of these struggles in turn tends to be institutionalized by the state as the official (medical) definition. Hence, we can already note here that the concept of policy schizophrenia is explicitly constructed to highlight the important relations between classification struggles and the state.

Finally, as already mentioned, the use of the term ‘schizophrenia’ in public discourse is highly controversial, as it is often reductionist and used misleadingly and interchangeably with other mental health conditions. It also relies on common stereotypes, prejudices, and misunderstandings, which results in the legitimization of stigmatization and discrimination. Combining both parts of the concept, policy schizophrenia highlights the fact that classification struggles over categories of perception of the social world are not only symbolic but also practical, institutional, and material (i.e., people and bodies are marked and defined); more importantly, at their core, such concepts and classification struggles are related to

power and, ultimately, the state. Therefore, policy schizophrenia also implies that forms of stigmatization inevitably relate to the social and structural conditions of their production, which in contemporary societies underscore the need to comprehend the role of the political field and the state in such processes. In our case, it involved breaking away from the doxic concession that territorial stigmatization is the result of neighborhood effects and/or the poor choices of the poor and analysing it as an integral component of contemporary neoliberal urban governance.

In sum, the two parts of the concept enable us to capture processes characterized by ambivalence, incoherence, disturbances, and fragmentations in multiple domains and dimensions across social, symbolic, and physical space. These processes have an inherent duality: they are partly the effects of struggles over the perception, representation, and classification of social and urban problems, as well as struggles over the organization and allocation of resources for responses to these problems. This social scientific comprehension of policy schizophrenia has very little to do with the unjust and tragic stigmatization of people living with a severe mental health condition and should not be confused with it.

3. Policy schizophrenia as a specification of contemporary neoliberalism

To further substantiate our arguments, we will briefly outline two interconnected arguments that link policy schizophrenia to neoliberalism: the first, empirical, the second more theoretical. Firstly, as argued above, policy schizophrenia is a novel type and form of policy directly relating to the gradual expansion of neoliberalism, which increasingly pervades every sector of social and urban space. Secondly, it has become a key feature of neoliberalism, and to comprehend it, we must include in the analysis the increasing number of ambivalences, disturbances, disjunctures, disorders, fragmentations, and self-contradictions that it produces, not as wicked problems, unfortunate events, or unintended side- or site-effects, but as integral to neoliberalism in its different forms.

This requires us to provide further specification to the current understandings of neoliberalism. For instance, according to Harvey (2005, 2006), neoliberalism is a theory of

political economic practices that champions the idea that self-regulating markets are the most efficient and ethical way to allocate resources. Moving beyond Harvey, we argue that we should also conceive neoliberalism as a political philosophy, at the core of which is the belief that economic freedom is a prerequisite for political and personal freedom. Together, these conceptions essentially translate into both practical and moral questions of political legitimacy on how to adequately conceive the relation between the political, economic, and social order. This is in line with Wacquant's (2009, 2023) arguments that underscore how neoliberalism is not merely an economic doctrine but also a practical political project that reshapes the state itself. We concur with this but want to underscore how neoliberalism is not only a project intending to reshape the state but also to reshape the social space and the physical space through processes that are related in at least two ways. Firstly, to champion the idea and practice self-regulating markets involves efforts to fragment social collectives and microcosms not based on, or directly opposed to, such market regulation. Fragmenting social collectives can be very hard and, in many cases, require a strong state, but with entirely different capacities than that of the welfare state. Nonetheless, an effect of such fragmentation of different social collectives is a wider fragmentation of social space and a weakening of cohesion across multiple domains. Secondly, to govern increasingly individualized and hence fragmented social domains often requires measures across scales and sectors that readily contradict neoliberal ideology and orthodox economic rationality. These include expanded state regulation – especially targeting marginalized groups and sectors advocating for democratic welfare – alongside with nationalism, stigmatization, ethnicization, welfare contraction, aggressive labour market policies, and the privatization of public space and housing. Public management reforms, while ideologically celebrating entrepreneurship and private-sector efficiency, often contradict these ideals in practice (Harvey, 1989; Hood, 1991; Hood & Dixon, 2015; Osborne, 2006; Osborne & Gaebler, 1992).

Together, this paints a picture of neoliberalism as fragmented and incoherent, but also as very flexible and adaptive. In other words, neoliberalism gives rise to ambivalences, incoherences, fragmentations, and schisms within the state and between different scales of the state, in social spaces, between social groups, and in the city, over the use, value, and right to different types of spaces and places. At the same time, however, neoliberalism involves a highly

productive and flexible rearticulation of these spaces, which may be reintegrated and governed as marketable places and financial objects designed for consumption, circulation, investment, and exploitation. It is this multiplicity of practical-political struggles, ambivalences, and fragmentations – and their governance – that we intend to capture with the concept of policy schizophrenia as a specific articulation of neoliberalism.

On this backdrop, policy schizophrenia may tentatively be defined *as processes based on efforts to fragment ideas of public services, welfare, and social security (including public space) and to transform the social collective associated with them into sets of individuals with their own personal interests and tastes, the state and its varied institutions into the (re)producers and guarantors of self-regulating markets*. Consequently, an implicit core process in policy schizophrenia becomes the struggle to direct state power against the relatively autonomous social microcosms that are not in line with market rationalities, including those that rely on the state for their existence. Something that in practice will mean the direction of state power against state institutions. This, of course, entails resistance, which means that processes of policy schizophrenia necessarily include the production, organization, and implementation of policies to overcome resistance and to legitimize such interventions.

4. Researching policy schizophrenia and identifying logics of praxis

The argument we unfold through the empirical analysis in *Fragmenting Cities* (Schultz Larsen & Delica, 2024) is that the fragmentation of the state, the city, and society are not unfortunate side effects of wicked problems but integral parts of neoliberal state crafting and governance of advanced urban marginality. As an analytical concept, policy schizophrenia refers to the increasing extent to which a cumulative set of *logics of practice* or dispositions that inform political, bureaucratic, and organizational position-taking and practices are founded on fragmentation, peripheralization, division, and individualization. As such logics of practice become more interwoven, more dominant and more taken for granted across multiple domains, they give rise to several systematic inconsistencies within and across the state, the city, and the conceptions of citizenship, rights, and duties. Through our empirical analysis, we

identified six such distinctive characteristics of policy schizophrenia, which we believe can be applied fruitfully to understand how the driving logics of forms of neoliberalism and advanced marginality are produced and legitimized in struggles in and over the urban and the state.

In other words, each characteristic constitutes an invitation to ‘site-specific’ analyses across the whole gamut of the state and its policy fields based on the logics of fragmentation of social collectives, groups, and institutions – especially those attempting to uphold universality and public goods as something worth defending. This is also our argument for the use of the dissociating prefixes *de-* and *dis-* in the following specification. They serve to remind us that the state is not a unified and unifying institution in its own right; it can and does, in fact, in many cases, produce fragmentation:

De-contextualization. In our case, this refers to the de-contextualization of the stigmatized housing estates, the de-contextualization of ‘the areas’ from the surrounding city, and of the flows of people, goods, and resources. This is achieved by constructing ‘the area’ as a *container category*, which, on the one hand, is claimed to represent a ‘natural’ physical space, yet ignores the wider geography and the social and symbolic boundaries and networks of everyday life. This makes changing the political scale possible. In our case, it meant that it was possible to circumvent the issue of equality and *class politics* at the national level through a *politics of places* that focused on the high concentration of social problems at the local level and the categorization of these places. From a wider perspective, de-contextualization can be defined as the artificial isolation of a given social phenomenon or a given public problem from its social, spatial, and symbolic contexts.

De-historicization is, in a sense, a specific temporal form of de-contextualization. In our case, it involves the isolation of the problems of ‘the area’ and the residents living there to the ‘here and now.’ The annual publication of the ‘ghetto list’ is a clear example of this logic. More broadly, de-historicization amounts to the production of *amnesia genesis* – forgetting the history of the production of a social condition – which legitimizes the neglect of the long-term historical struggle that shaped the stigmatized housing estates, including the fight over the political economy of the housing market, the labour market, and the education system. An

additional consequence is that it becomes possible to neglect the historical struggles over the rights to, and over the distribution of, public goods, services, and resources.

De-particularization involves invoking short-term project logics attuned to the conjectures of the political field rather than those of the policy field, which in our case manifested in the annual publication of the list, the launch of new initiatives as part of election campaigns, and changing the framework for the relevant goals and measurements in de-stigmatization work every four or five years. These short-term logics also help to ratify ‘the area’ as something that is independent from the wider social space – a socially produced artifact that can be measured, compared (with other areas), and manipulated. Furthermore, the combination of a short-term logic and the lack of a structural and historical analysis to partly explain why people live where they do enable the political shift to the shame and blame of personal misfortunes at the individual level, while further supporting the increasing ascription of negative social honour to both places and people.

Dis-proportionality. Within jurisprudence, proportionality is used as a criterion of fairness and justice in statutory interpretation processes – to determine the right balance between a restriction imposed by law and the severity of the act committed (i.e., the punishment should fit the crime). In our case, it constitutes a lack of proportion between the actual social problems and how they are portrayed in public, as well as a lack of proportion between the social problems and the measures and initiatives implemented to address them.

De-coupling of the different scales of (urban) governance means, in our case, that the national level is being increasingly decoupled from the local level, which fosters stigmatization from above and below simultaneously. This is achieved by *de-centralizing* responsibility while *re-centralizing* control over the definition of the problem that ‘the area’ (defined centrally) is facing (i.e., the *allocation of resources*) and by standardizing the production of knowledge about de-stigmatization, especially through evaluation and application standards. With this double movement of de-centralizing and re-centralizing, the state is naturalized as something outside and above the area. In fact, this constitutes a mode of knowing (a *doxa*) that neglects the role of the state and the political process in reducing ‘housing research and knowledge

production' to questions focused on processes, policies, interventions, implementation, and evaluation. This fits hand-in-glove with the division of labour in the scientific field in Denmark, in which think tanks and sector research institutions deliver evaluations of current urban problems without questioning more critical perspectives or the given definitions delivered by the state.

De-humanization. Following Bauman (2000), dehumanization is characterized by three central components: (1) producing distance between decisions, actions, and consequences; (2) casting the objects of action (be they particular social groups or individuals) from any position of social or moral worth, from which they may challenge the actions or the social agents of the given action; and (3) reducing the object of action itself from a whole object to a semblance of a finite or limited set of attributes constituting a political problem and never a whole object in its own right, let alone an object that can be ascribed any social or moral worth.

Thus, including de-humanization as a logic of practice enables us to connect the concept of policy schizophrenia with Baumann's (2000) analysis of bureaucratic rationality, Wacquant's (2024) re-conceptualization of race and ethnicity as the social ascription of the estimation of honour of different social groups, and Elias and Scotson's (1994) conceptions on the logics of the 'minority of the worst.' Overall, this casts a new light on the efforts to respond to persistent territorial stigma, implying that their apparently Sisyphean character of dealing with sticky stigmas is not an unforeseen policy consequence of addressing a wicked problem but is integral to the institutional logics of urban governance. In fact, the Sisyphean character of territorial de-stigmatization has come to legitimize current radical policy measures of (territorial) stigmatization, demolition, eviction, gentrification, and re-privatization of the neglected territories. De-humanization represents a regression from the welfare state rationalities of universality, redistribution, and citizenship rights towards a return to the moral and moralizing distinction between the deserving and the undeserving based on individual conduct and on social origin (based on a particular hierarchization of a mix of categories of differentiation such as class, ethnicity, and race, etc.). In practice, this comes to constitute social investment and enablement of the deserving and stigmatization and sanctioning of the

undeserving. Hence, de-humanization is also linked to the production of invisibility, interchangeability, and indifference, in combination with the production of ignorance, all of which inform, underpin, and legitimize a wide range of policies and initiatives. This occurs by generalizing findings and experiences, which are often based on standardized evaluations, statistical aggregation models, and overarching policy models. In practice, this becomes evident in many ways, such as in the increased reliance on think tanks as key entrepreneurs in the business of the development and import-export of new ideas. Furthermore, de-humanization is also supported via the institutionalization of so-called ‘evidence-based evaluation’ and ‘knowledge production’ based on narrow politically defined criteria and goals, the increased reliance on in-house (interministerial) knowledge production, and the ignoring of critical academic research, engaged frontline workers, and citizen perspectives.

Spanning these six characteristics and linked to each of them is *knowledge production*, which involves intensive classification struggles over the politics of knowledge and ignorance, which both Slater (2021) and Wacquant (2022) underscore, and which we have tried to demonstrate and address throughout our analysis. These political precursors are central not only to the actual production of contemporary advanced marginality but also to the production of *toxic agnotology*. Toxic because it becomes increasingly difficult for individuals to question and oppose decisions concerning their welfare as these are increasingly based on abstract administrative processes and data collected from across the public sector. In its most radical form, this form of agnotology involves experimentation with and implementation of AI and machine-based prediction, which seeks to identify those most likely to commit crimes, ‘cheat’ on the welfare benefits system, or put children at risk, without wider democratic discussion about the underlying assumptions on which the algorithms are founded nor about their societal implications (Jørgensen, 2023; see also Jørgensen *et al.*, 2022; Pereira & Raetzsch, 2022). More commonly, the production of agnotology takes the form of grey bureaucratic literature without authors (only ministries, institutions, consultancies, think tanks, etc.), produced without consideration of the historical conventions of scientific knowledge production, but instead reliant on the symbolic power often granted by the state. Increasingly, this literature is drawing from scientific papers, which are chosen precisely because their conclusions support desired pre-established conclusions and because of the

symbolic credibility they lend to the grey literature, and not because they are state-of-the-art. In such roundabout ways, academia also increasingly lends itself to the production of policy-based evidence in opposition to evidence-based policy.

5. Placing policy schizophrenia in the field of the social sciences

The strategies and territorial de-stigmatization efforts are not without effect. We do not claim that the managers and social workers involved in the efforts are simply reproducing specific forms of social and symbolic domination. It is important to emphasize the multiple, often positive, effects of many area-based strategies and initiatives – especially at the local and individual level (Christensen, 2013; Jensen & Christensen, 2012; Mazanti & Pløger, 2003) – and the numerous ways in which frontline workers and project managers strive to make a difference within this regime of urban governance. Nevertheless, these logics become part of the very production of territorial stigmatization at the national level, and under these conditions, there is a constant risk that de-stigmatization efforts will uphold this regime. As such, novel regimes of urban governance that rely on policy schizophrenia constitute a distinct dynamic of contemporary advanced urban marginality and a characteristic of contemporary neoliberal political economy in the urban sphere, which stresses the urgent need to analyse and comprehend the historical formation of policy schizophrenia and the role of the state in this process, which is exactly what we pursue in the subsequent analysis.

The logics of policy schizophrenia briefly outlined here are based on our empirical and analytical findings in the book. From a neo-Bourdieuian perspective, the components take the form of practical logics that inform position-taking, political strategies, and bureaucratic regulation. As such, they should be expected to manifest themselves in different ways depending on the context (other policy fields, countries, or cultures). In this way, they are explicitly constructed to support comparative analysis. These practical logics are founded on an anti-collective view of the social world, which, in principle, only acknowledges the individual. As a result, these logics inform praxis and political position-taking with the aim of fragmenting, dividing, or completely dismantling social collectives and institutions, notably

collective forms of welfare in their different forms. This is why these logics have an entirely different status than, for instance, the characteristics and driving mechanisms of advanced marginality outlined by Wacquant in *Urban Outcasts*, or the four institutional logics of neoliberalism he discusses in *Punishing the Poor* (Wacquant, 2008, 2009). This is because even though the practical logics of policy schizophrenia are the result of a concrete empirical analysis of different social positions and their points of view (i.e., an analysis of the visions of the social world seen from different particular positions through the analysis of particular agents as representatives of these positions), they are also, at the very same time, a representation of the structures of perception informing these agents' visions of the social world. These practical logics constitute part of different 'socio-symbolic dispositional programs' that manifest themselves in practice without there being a need for explicit individual will, as Bourdieu (1967) asserts in his rearticulation of habitus as a sociological concept.

In this sense, *Fragmenting Cities* identifies some of the fundamental logics that underlie contemporary *neoliberal reality*. This includes the struggles over the state's ability to have these logics become state-certified principles taken for granted. This implies an analysis of the state and its role in producing and legitimizing policy schizophrenia and its logics and practices. This is also where we extend and integrate Bourdieu's analysis of the field of power, the political field, and the bureaucratic field by rearticulating the state itself as a set of relatively autonomous yet nested fields (for an in-depth outlining of the state as nested fields, see Schultz Larsen & Delica, 2024, chapter 2).

An analysis that takes the struggle over the nested fields of the state into account will allow us to assess the extent to which different policies, initiatives, and strategies, which are manifestations of social struggles among contending positions, are shaped and founded on logics of praxis and categories of perception, which can be said to be neoliberal. This analysis, however, is only possible if it also considers that neoliberalism as a theory/ideology (Harvey) and as state crafting and institutional dynamics (Wacquant) is represented by some of the contending positions that are part of the struggles over the state but nonetheless take an interest in the state. Taken together, this allows us to single out the collectivity at the heart

of individual agency – via common and collectively shared categories of perception – without neglecting the individual’s potential for adaptation, innovation, and improvisation, as well as situations in which agents are acting out of place. Situations like these may arise when an individual’s categories of perception or dispositions are out of concordance with the position and/or field in which the agents are struggling, which may occur gradually over time because of aging or a change of career position, or more rapidly due to migration/immigration or upward/downward social mobility. This restores the individual agent to structural and institutional analysis and helps us comprehend the messy and complex varieties of existing neoliberalism, which is then understood as the outcome of historical struggles between existing agents and collectives endowed with different chances to succeed in preserving or changing the principles of vision and division in accordance with their social position and the categories of perception and recognition that inform their dispositional intuition.

This analysis shares some similarities with Foucault’s (2014; see also Foucault & Senellart, 2008) conception of neoliberalism as a political and governmental rationality that leads to specific ways of problematizing social phenomena and addressing them by applying different forms of knowledge and techniques. For Foucault, these forms of problematization and action are first and foremost organized around the concepts of market and free competition. Second, and in contrast to earlier forms of liberalism, neoliberal political rationality underscores the need for the state to actively pursue and produce marketization and competition, which in turn entails that the state itself should be organized according to these principles. Third, for Foucault, a key principle of the neoliberal state is that, once organized according to these principles, the state should govern as little as possible. Building on this general comprehension of neoliberalism as a political rationality focusing on marketization, competition, and ultimately the reduction of government has led to a shift in focus from the state towards the various and varied political projects it fosters, supports, and organizes, as well as the different forms these take, their uneven distribution, and their impact in different contexts (Brenner, Peck & Theodore, 2010; Harvey, 2005; Jessop, 2013). While this shift has been theoretically productive, it has paved the way for the analytical neglect of the state itself and how the very structures and institutions help shape the role of the legitimate control and use of diverse forms of state power. This is especially true in cases such as ours, where we

analyse how state institutions and powers are being directed *against* social institutions and social collectives that constitute a part of the state itself or that rely on, and are guaranteed by, the state for their existence.

The process of turning *the state against the state* is another key feature of the concept of policy schizophrenia. By relegating neoliberalism to a political or governmental rationality, the analysis of its various and uneven forms risks ignoring that its self-contradictory and practical aspects are the outcome of historical struggles between contending positions over symbolic, social, and material profits and risks overemphasizing particular traits as comprehensive. Such a claim could be made for concepts such as Harvey's (1989) *entrepreneurial state*, Cerny (1997), Hirsch (1995) and Jessop's (2004) *competition state*, Giddens' (1999) *social investment state*, and Wacquant's (2009) *centaur state*. Rather than overemphasizing particular traits and developments, the different conceptions of the state can be viewed as an exposition of aspects of practical strategies that are informed by similar or homologous logics of praxis. Hence, to consider *policy schizophrenia* as a social diagnosis from this perspective is also to point out the similarity in the numerous practical strategies aimed at fragmenting social collectives and producing the social conditions of sustaining and producing agents with an appreciation of market rationalities across varied cultural and social contexts.

6. Policy schizophrenia as a social diagnosis

Viewing the logics of practice in our outlining of policy schizophrenia together enabled us to draw the contours of a novel regime of neoliberal governance. This shifts the register from the logics of practice themselves to the analysis of the regime, including the character, role, and effect of the state in the historical production of the social conditions, for these logics to become institutionalized as official state logics operating as modes of defining and dealing with public problems. Finally, policy schizophrenia allows us to play with the registers of social diagnosis, which amounts to outlining some of the more general properties of our case and, by extension, its potential for comparative analysis.

As a social diagnosis, policy schizophrenia can be said to designate a regime of governance consisting of specific forms, modes, means, and instruments of fragmentation at multiple scales, in combination with the development of the modes, means, and instruments of governing fragmenting cities and societies under the pretext of addressing the challenges that globalization, migration, pandemics, digital capitalism, authoritarianism, and so on pose to social cohesion, social values, and the thriving of the nation. This in turn also allows us to underline how policy schizophrenia – as a particular specification of neoliberalism – does not presuppose any opposition between neoliberalism and the state. On the contrary, our diagnosis and specification of neoliberalism underscore the struggle to appropriate and use public resources and different forms of power against social collectives, institutions, rights, and social microcosms not founded on general market logics, many of which the state has historically come to be the guarantor of. In this sense, policy schizophrenia as a social diagnosis becomes a case of the state being turned on itself, not with the intent of reducing its size, but rather to fundamentally reorganize it, which in many cases leads to its practical expansion. One reason for this is that establishing and upholding (quasi)markets is costly, and further exposing public goods and services to market logics requires huge resources for control, regulation, and knowledge production, including boosting knowledge and know-how of contractual specification, the functional and organizational separation of principal, provider/producer, and recipient (consumer) of the public services, and so on.

What is more carrying through a great transformation, in Polanyi's vocabulary (Polanyi, 2001), or a symbolic revolution, in Bourdieu's sense (Bourdieu, 2017), involves long and hard battles against all those who are invested in, have an interest in, or are dependent on the microcosms involved, and in our case of housing, especially those related to public services and welfare. As we have argued, the practical logics of policy schizophrenia are exactly key components in producing the social conditions needed to fragment and stigmatize social collectives to undercut investments in and dependencies on collective welfare and public goods. The cost of the social, symbolic, and ideological labour and resources needed to legitimize, instrumentalize, and institutionalize this regime is massive – not least in terms of social suffering. This is so not least because of the neoliberal struggle to reorganize the state, which has been and is being met with strong resistance: wide factions of the population, especially

those most dependent on the welfare state, whether through redistribution, the provision of public services, or employment, do not readily accept the logics of practice informing policy schizophrenia. Overcoming this resistance has called for not only the increasing reliance on forms of stigmatization and symbolic violence but also for the tightening of the control over the people contesting the institutions of the state.

Another key mechanism has been the increasing political and societal concern with public expenditure. This concern has fostered an acceleration in knowledge production and public innovations in terms of governance techniques and technologies that can discern between those who are deemed eligible for public resources and those who are not, and increasingly we see how the allocation of public resources has become a moral question of who is worthy and unworthy of receiving support. The demand for such knowledge and means of governance (including theories, methods, measurements, assessments, evaluations, etc.) comes from different agents in the political field. It also comes from within the bureaucratic field, not least treasuries, which have an explicit interest in controlling expenditures, not just out of devotion to their public office and duty, but also to increase their position and power within the bureaucratic field and implicitly in the political field. Capturing how policy schizophrenia operates in practice as polyphonic and attuned to several registers at the same time, while being linked via logics of practice relating to forms of fragmentation, enables us to argue that both the logics of practice and policy schizophrenia as a regime of neoliberal governance and state crafting have wider application beyond the Danish case.

Further, an ambition in developing policy schizophrenia as a scientific concept is a firm belief in the need for interdisciplinary research. In this vein we end this piece by highlighting that the six logics can be generalized into orientational *foci* points, forming the outline of a research program adaptable to analysing and asking questions at different scales in different national contexts.

De-contextualisation sharpens the sociological focus on structures and institutions, *de-historicization* makes a case for the relevance of the genesis of social conditions and social struggles, *de-particularization* focuses explicitly on the political struggles used to impose

political logics (e.g. short time) and reduce the relative autonomy of any specific field, *dis-proportionality* adds a focus on the process behind the circumventing of juridical logics of rights, citizenships and proportionality and how these are replaced with moral justified distinctions between deserving and undeserving people (often targeting immigrants), the logic behind *de-coupling* provides a spatial element drawing on the geographical separation of different scales according to the economic distinction between principal (centre/national) and agents (periphery/local), and, finally, as humanistic compass, our explicit focus in tendencies to *de-humanization* sharpens our awareness on the process behind subversion of questions of *human worth* and *social justice* as a core element always asking who benefits and in which ways, regarding ongoing and historical processes of change.

7. An excursus: policy schizophrenia in contemporary Portugal

The following excursus, which we hope will be read on a principle of charity, can only be very preliminary and provisional. We are no experts on the Portuguese political field, and we rely on the limited existing English language academic literature referring to the recent rise of the Chega Party. Our intentions are to, humbly, provide an invitation for Portuguese colleagues and fellow researchers to think about how an analysis in terms of ‘nested fields’ and ‘policy schizophrenia’ might travel and open for fruitful analytical insights.

Looking from Denmark to Portugal (and beyond) through the lens of policy schizophrenia, we register the explosive success of the Chega Party and the tilting to the right of the political space. While Portugal has been praised, over the past decade, as an European exception for managing to hold off the right-wing populism sweeping across the continent (Heyne & Manucci, 2021; Manucci, 2024; Mendes, 2021; Quintas Da Silva, 2018), the country celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Carnation Revolution, which marked the end of almost 50 years of the fascist-authoritarian *Estado Novo* regime, dealing with the fact that right-wing populism has come to the forefront in the wake of the Chega Party’s extraordinary political ascendancy. From one seat in parliament in the 2019 national election to 50 in 2024, before reaching 60 seats in the 2025 election, when Chega became the second-largest party in

parliament, just behind the Social-Democrat Party, and despite Chega's falling short of expectations in the latest municipal election, Portugal has witnessed the rise of this party as a new major political force in Portugal, bringing about a major challenge to the traditional balance between the two major parties, a balance that has been in place since the Carnation Revolution (Manucci, 2024; Mendes, 2021).

Chega's rise in Portugal mirrors a broader European trend of increasing support for far-right populism. While this phenomenon is undoubtedly part of a continental shift that has been unfolding over the past two decades and has intensified in recent years, it is also very localized and founded on the particular history and cleavages of the Portuguese political space (Manucci, 2024; Mendes & Dennison, 2021). Hence, Chega's register and tactics are both highly context-dependent, yet well-known and consisting of harsh populist rhetorics, including André Ventura's unconstitutional call for the chemical castration of pedophiles, sprinkled with the nationalism targeting immigrants (often Muslims and, in the case of Chega, Romani minorities), advocating austerity measures and welfare chauvinism in combination with a broad call for a restoration of both 'law and order' and 'personal freedom.' Without engaging in a full socio-political analysis of the social conditions, deep causes, and political conjectures underlying the sudden rise of right-wing populism and of the Chega Party, we will merely point towards a register of fragmentations and a range of contradictions, each being part and parcel of policy schizophrenia, that we see signs of in Chega's policies.

Firstly, Chega presents itself as being a party catering to a diverse set of lower and (former) working-class voters. This by blending and bending different forms of conservatism, traditional conservatism ('country and nationalism') with Christian conservative values ('God and family'), with economic conservatism ('tax reductions' and 'institutional reforms'), with authoritarian nativist conservatism (anti-immigration stances and practically absorbing right-wing activists and mobilizers), while at the same time barring them from attaining formal positions to maintain its formal distance to the radical right (Marchi, 2023). This volatile mix of conservative ideologies produces a flexibility which allows Chega to channel and mobilize a wide range of protest voices who have 'had enough' and lost trust in major traditional parties. In this sense, it can be argued that Chega has an interest in both exploiting and

contributing to a fragmentation of political space by contributing to a *crisis of belief* in the traditional political system while presenting itself as an explicit protest against this system and the answer to solve the crisis (Manucci, 2024). This involves the combination of several practical logics, including a deliberate de-contextualization and de-historicization of the historical backdrop and democratic and social rationales of the system.

Secondly, through its variegated mix of conservative ideologies, Chega positions itself as simultaneously being tough on crime, being anti-establishment and critical of the established political elite, and in favour of tax reduction, welfare cutbacks and institutional reform. Furthermore, Chega's policy visions combining tax cuts for the wealthy and attacks on pensions and social benefits will, likely, if put to practice, worsen inequality and increase the hardship of large swaths of the voters it claims to represent. This indicates another contradiction or fragmentation of the bureaucratic field. Chega criticizes the welfare state as a producer of problems in tandem with demanding a stronger, more authoritarian state to impose its vision and solve the problems of the social state. As such, Chega seems in line with our analysis of policy schizophrenia in the Danish case to be less about supplanting the state with a self-regulating economic market (in Polanyi's sense) and more about a specific form of neo-liberal state crafting. This in turn can be claimed to involve de-coupling different scales, such as selling tax cuts and institutional reforms as anti-establishment at the national level, while separating these from their actual impact on local communities.

Thirdly, as observers of Portuguese politics have noticed, Chega, in general, avoids detailed economic debates, instead often focusing on cultural and identity issues, both right-wing identitarian and anti-leftist identitarian ones. Together with Chega's strong claims for 'law and order', especially directed against specific social groups (e.g. sex offenders, immigrants, Roma people, the 'corrupt establishment'), is its support of nativism and forms of racism supporting the distinctive production of othering (Marchi, 2023; Mendes, 2021). This strategy means the party lacks a coherent economic plan, leading to mixed messages and potential policy contradictions, but it has also enabled the mobilization of a diverse voter segment, at the cost of the production of a fragmentation of social space (Küppers & Stapleton, 2024; Marchi, 2023; Mendes, 2021; Mendes & Dennison, 2021). This fragmentation of social space

is squarely bound up with both dis-proportionality and de-humanization in so many different aspects that it almost goes without saying.

While we believe there is merit in outlining these multiple fragmentations, two key aspects of an analysis in terms of policy schizophrenia would be to look into the accumulative effects of these fragmentations across the different fields and scales and, secondly (and more importantly), to engage in an analysis of the long term and structural processes that led to the social conditions enabling the formation, mobilization, and rise of a right-wing populist party such as Chega.

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Recensão

Recensão: SCHULTZ LARSEN, T., & DELICA, K. N. (2024), *Fragmenting Cities: The State, Territorial Stigmatization and Urban Marginality*. Edward Elgar Publishing.

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Escola Superior de Educação do Politécnico do Porto

Artigo recebido a 15/12/2025.

Aceite para publicação a 31/12/2025.

Para quem possa não conhecer o trabalho que há vários anos Troels Schultz Larsen e Kristian Nagel Delica vêm desenvolvendo a propósito das relações entre Estado, políticas públicas e processos de estigmatização territorial e marginalização social em contexto urbano, será certamente surpreendente descobrir que foi na Dinamarca, um dos mais consolidados e robustos Estados-Providência da Europa e do mundo, e um país conhecido pela sua defesa dos direitos humanos e a sua aposta na promoção dos valores da cidadania democrática, que se instituiu a primeira e até hoje única “lista de guetos” [*ghetto list*] sancionada oficialmente pelo Estado. Vigente desde outono de 2010, esta “lista de guetos” identifica e caracteriza os contextos habitacionais considerados pelas instâncias estatais como “problemáticos”, para conseqüentemente os instituir em áreas objeto de intervenção pública. Apesar do seu caráter manifestamente estigmatizante e discriminatório – exemplo aliás extremado da violência simbólica que o Estado é capaz de produzir e exercer sobre determinados territórios e determinados grupos sociais –, a “lista de guetos” não só viria a estabelecer-se como referente da visão pública sobre os “problemas sociais e urbanos”, como seria paulatinamente assimilada pelas estruturas dos campos político e burocrático dinamarqueses, determinando o perfil e o modo de concretização das respetivas práticas.

QUEIRÓS, João (2025),

“*Fragmenting Cities: The State, Territorial Stigmatization and Urban Marginality* (2024), T. Schultz Larsen & K.N. Delica. Edward Elgar Publishing.”,

Sociologia: Revista da Faculdade de Letras da Universidade do Porto, Vol. LIII, pp. 185 - 190

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.21747/08723419/soc53r1>

A “lista de guetos” dinamarquesa é o ponto de partida para o estudo apresentado por Schultz Larsen e Delica em *Fragmenting Cities: The State, Territorial Stigmatization and Urban Marginality*. Publicado em 2024 pela casa editorial Edward Elgar, e discutido em Portugal em maio de 2025, numa conferência organizada pelo Instituto de Sociologia da Universidade do Porto que contou com a presença dos autores – e que foi antecedida da dinamização de uma oficina sobre os desafios epistemológicos e metodológicos associados ao estudo da cidade contemporânea enquanto “cidade fragmentada” –, o livro é, sem dúvida, um marco nos estudos urbanos à escala europeia e mundial. Kristian Delica e Troels Schultz Larsen oferecem neste trabalho uma crítica densa e rigorosa da estruturação e implicações das políticas urbanísticas, habitacionais e sociais dinamarquesas, revelando como um dos Estados de Bem-Estar mais sólidos do mundo se tornou recentemente num laboratório de formas agressivas de estigmatização territorial e engenharia social.

Segundo os autores, o conteúdo deste livro pode prestar-se a quatro leituras distintas (Schultz Larsen & Delica, 2024, pp. 7-19): i) enquanto caso de estudo interdisciplinar acerca da “fragmentação social e urbana”; ii) enquanto proposta de integração de conceitos centrais no estudo das relações entre Estado, cidade e sociedade, com foco na clarificação do papel do Estado na definição, organização e institucionalização dos “problemas sociais e urbanos”; iii) enquanto diagnóstico social da “cidade fragmentada” pela “esquizofrenia das políticas” [*policy schizophrenia*] característica da governança urbana neoliberal; e iv) enquanto tomada de posição crítica acerca da realidade atual da ação estatal neste domínio e das relações que se estabelecem (ou que deveriam estabelecer-se) entre processos de produção e disseminação de conhecimento científico e determinação das políticas públicas.

A apresentação e discussão do conceito de “esquizofrenia das políticas”, a que os autores conferem especial centralidade, ocupa, não surpreendentemente, o primeiro capítulo do livro. Para Schultz Larsen e Delica, a sua mobilização justifica-se pela capacidade que a noção terá de conotar o carácter ambivalente, incoerente e até contraditório que hoje assumem as políticas públicas direcionadas para a intervenção em áreas urbanas “problemáticas”. A “esquizofrenia das políticas” traduz as intensas lutas que atravessam o Estado a propósito da

percepção, representação e classificação dos problemas sociais e urbanos e das modalidades da sua confrontação e resulta, por exemplo, no estabelecimento de contradições gritantes entre medidas e programas que promovem a “estigmatização territorial a partir de cima” (medidas como a que se refere à instituição da “lista de guetos”) e medidas e programas que se orientam para a “desestigmatização territorial a partir de baixo” (isto é, a partir da intervenção promovida nos contextos pelas instâncias que operam no rés-do-chão do Estado).

Mesmo que persistam dúvidas quanto ao carácter científico da noção – Schultz Larsen e Delica esforçam-se por conferir-lho, admitindo, todavia, a possibilidade de uma receção controversa (ver, a este propósito, o texto publicado pelos autores no presente número desta Revista) –, e mesmo que a sua mobilização se fique simplesmente (o que talvez seja mais adequado) pela respetiva consideração enquanto metáfora da ideologia e ação do Estado na cidade contemporânea, a referência à “esquizofrenia das políticas” é sonante precisamente porque expõe a atuação paradoxal das instâncias estatais, suscitando interrogações com grande potencial heurístico acerca do modo como o Estado se estrutura e organiza para produzir – e, depois, para resolver (ou não) – tais incongruências e suas implicações.

Para além de configurar um exercício muito completo de especificação empírica e analítica do fenómeno da estigmatização territorial, dialogando e enriquecendo o estado-da-arte neste âmbito (na senda do programa de pesquisa proposto Wacquant, Slater & Pereira, 2014), o livro apresenta como ponto forte o quadro teórico-concetual e analítico proposto no Capítulo 2. Nele, os autores avançam aquilo a que chamam um “modelo neobourdiesiano” (talvez pudesse dizer-se simplesmente “bourdiesiano”) do Estado enquanto conjunto de campos “embutidos” ou “encastrados” [*nested fields*] – campos que, precisamente pela sua sobreposição e encastramento, e pelas lógicas de estruturação e atuação diferenciadas e nunca plenamente alinhadas e articuláveis que apresentam, produzem as tensões e contradições na origem da “esquizofrenia” que as políticas públicas dinamarquesas hoje manifestam.

Suportada explicitamente na noção bourdiesiana de “campo” e na conceção de Estado proposta pelo sociólogo francês (ver Bourdieu, 2012, 2014), e apoiada pelos

desenvolvimentos conceituais e analíticos que Wacquant oferece à perspetiva bourdieusiana acerca das relações entre espaço social, espaço físico e espaço simbólico (ver a síntese avançada em Wacquant, 2022, 2023), a proposta de leitura de Schultz Larsen e Delica sublinha a natureza do Estado enquanto “campo de campos estratificado” no seio do qual se produzem e processam as “lutas pela visão e divisão legítimas do trabalho de dominação”, designadamente por via das “lutas pela definição das taxas de câmbio entre os diferentes capitais e pela determinação das posições dos diferentes campos (económico, académico, artístico, etc.) nas suas relações uns com os outros” (Shultz Larsen & Delica, 2024, p. 51). A mobilização da noção de campo e a adoção desta conceção do Estado permite aos autores de *Fragmenting Cities*, nas suas próprias palavras, “escapar à infrutífera separação weberiana entre Estado, mercado, sociedade (civil) e comunidade (espaço físico) como ‘esferas da vida’ separadas”, introduzindo um pensamento relacional que permite “questionar e determinar as relações e os graus de autonomia relativa entre estas diferentes ‘esferas e espaços’, ao invés de presumir que eles estão fundamentalmente separados, e fazendo-o sem assunções *a priori* sobre a natureza empírica destas relações” (Schultz Larsen & Delica, 2024, p. 52, itálicos no original).

Ainda que ao modelo analítico proposto pareça por vezes faltar alguma parcimónia – os campos “encastrados” vão sendo multiplicados pelos autores, nem sempre de forma plenamente justificada (à análise do “encastramento” entre os campos “do poder”, “político” e “burocrático”, teorizados por Bourdieu, são adicionadas referências às relações instituídas entre aqueles e os campos “académico” e “jornalístico”, para depois se discutir a configuração e ação de um “campo das políticas do setor habitacional não-lucrativo” [*policy-field of not-for-profit housing*], por sua vez conformado e modulado por diferentes “campos de poder locais” [*fields of local power*]) –, a sua mobilização constitui uma instigante apropriação do pensamento bourdieusiano sobre o Estado e uma via para o questionamento crítico das perspetivas dominantes no seio da economia política urbana ou da chamada “geografia política crítica” (Schultz Larsen & Delica, 2024, pp. 53 e seguintes).

A proposta apresentada no Capítulo 2 é prolongada nas páginas subsequentes, que discutem a crise do Estado Social, a partir da referência ao caso dinamarquês, e detalhada nos Capítulos 4 e 5, no âmbito dos quais há lugar a uma exploração aprofundada da fragmentação hoje característica do dito “campo das políticas do setor habitacional não-lucrativo” e a uma explicação cuidadosa do processo de instituição e institucionalização da “lista de guetos” dinamarquesa, antes de dois exercícios de síntese dedicados à exploração das relações entre a “fragmentação da cidade” e a constituição de “sociedades paralelas” e ao modo como a “esquizofrenia das políticas” concorre para aquela fragmentação.

Sintonizado com a literatura que mais recentemente se tem debruçado sobre os temas centrais deste livro – literatura que lê e escrutina com critério e detalhe –, *Fragmenting Cities* constitui referência de leitura obrigatória para quem esteja a iniciar nesta altura, ou queira aprofundar, o estudo das relações entre Estado, estigmatização territorial e marginalidade urbana na cidade contemporânea. O convite que os autores fazem à mobilização criativa, noutros tempos e contextos, do seu modelo analítico deve sem dúvida ser considerada, pois dessa mobilização resultarão seguramente – e entre outros ganhos – pistas relevantes para a discussão de tópicos que Schultz Larsen e Delica tratam no livro de forma menos aprofundada – como os que se referem às relações sociais e à ação concreta que, em contextos urbanos estigmatizados e marginalizados, é dirigida às medidas e programas das “esquizofrénicas” políticas públicas (designadamente pelas alianças entre os setores dominados – e eventualmente refratários – dos campos político e burocrático e as populações e organizações locais); os que respeitam ao modo como as políticas de regulação e controlo das migrações se articulam com, e influenciam, a produção das políticas urbanas e sociais dirigidas àqueles contextos e aos seus residentes (grande parte deles com *background* migrante); ou os que se relacionam com os efeitos pessoais, familiares e comunitários dos processos de estigmatização territorial e, depois, dos processos de recomposição socioterritorial (demolição de habitações, desalojamento e dispersão de moradores, criação de novos bairros e sua gestão) que as políticas “esquizofrénicas” e “fragmentadoras” suscitam.

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Entrevista

Em busca das estruturas fundamentais da vida humana. Entrevista com Bernard Lahire.

Entrevista por

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Artigo recebido a 22/12/2025.

Aceite para publicação a 26/12/2025.

Resumo

Esta entrevista a Bernard Lahire aborda o seu quadro teórico sobre as estruturas fundamentais das sociedades humanas, propondo uma ampliação da sociologia às “ciências sociais do vivo”. Identificando regularidades trans-históricas da vida social, analisa dominação, hierarquia, cooperação e transmissão cultural, articulando fatores biológicos e sociais sem determinismo. Discute implicações epistemológicas, superação de dicotomias clássicas, limites da mudança social e o papel ambivalente da ciência.

Palavras-chave: Estruturas fundamentais; Ciência social do vivo; Regularidades sociais.

In search of the fundamental structures of human life. Interview with Bernard Lahire.

Abstract

This interview with Bernard Lahire addresses his theoretical framework on the fundamental structures of human societies, proposing an expansion of sociology to the 'social sciences of the living'. Identifying trans-historical regularities in social life, he analyses domination, hierarchy, cooperation and cultural transmission, articulating biological and social factors without determinism. He discusses epistemological implications, overcoming classical dichotomies, the limits of social change, and the ambivalent role of science.

Keywords: Fundamental structures; Social science of the living; Social regularities.

LAHIRE, Bernard (2025).

"Em busca das estruturas fundamentais da vida humana. Entrevista a Bernard Lahire.", Entrevista por João Teixeira Lopes e António Firmino da Costa,

Sociologia: Revista da Faculdade de Letras da Universidade do Porto, Vol. LIII, pp. 193 - 207

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.21747/08723419/soc53ent>

*À la recherche des structures fondamentales de la vie humaine.
Entretien avec Bernard Lahire.*

Résumé

Cette interview de Bernard Lahire aborde son cadre théorique sur les structures fondamentales des sociétés humaines et propose d'étendre la sociologie aux « sciences sociales du vivant ». Il y identifie les régularités transhistoriques de la vie sociale et y analyse la domination, la hiérarchie, la coopération et la transmission culturelle, articulant les facteurs biologiques et sociaux sans déterminisme. Il aborde également les implications épistémologiques, le dépassement des dichotomies classiques, les limites du changement social et le rôle ambivalent de la science.

Mots-clés: Structures fondamentales; Science sociale du vivant; Régularités sociales.

*En busca de las estructuras fundamentales de la vida humana.
Entrevista a Bernard Lahire.*

Resumen

Esta entrevista a Bernard Lahire aborda su marco teórico sobre las estructuras fundamentales de las sociedades humanas, proponiendo una ampliación de la sociología a las «ciencias sociales de lo vivo». Identificando regularidades transhistóricas de la vida social, analiza la dominación, la jerarquía, la cooperación y la transmisión cultural, articulando factores biológicos y sociales sin determinismo. Discute las implicaciones epistemológicas, la superación de las dicotomías clásicas, los límites del cambio social y el papel ambivalente de la ciencia.

Palabras clave: Estructuras fundamentales; Ciencia social de lo vivo; Regularidades sociales.

A obra de Bernard Lahire é analiticamente intensa e inovadora, a cada passo (cf, por exemplo, Lahire, 1995; 1998; 2010; 2019) interrogando e debatendo os quadros teóricos estabelecidos e alargando o horizonte da perspectiva sociológica. Os autores desta entrevista têm-na mobilizado em várias ocasiões (Costa, Lopes & Caetano, 2014; Lopes, 2012), procurando, mais recentemente, animar um trabalho de interpretação e divulgação do seu recente livro *Les structures fondamentales des sociétés humaines* (Lahire, 2023), o que resultou numa conferência em Lisboa, no CIES-ISCTE e na vinda do autor francês ao Porto, para as jornadas de investigação do IS-UP, ambas em 2025. Além do mais, aproveitamos a sua presença em Portugal para lhe realizarmos duas entrevistas (esta a que o leitor agora acede e outra

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publicada na revista *Sociologia – Problemas e Práticas*), profundamente ligadas e cuja leitura se recomenda em conjunto. Em ambos os casos pretendemos debater este novo quadro de compreensão da vida humana, em profunda conexão com as outras espécies (Lahire, 2025) que habitam o planeta e enaltecendo as virtudes de uma perspetiva que alarga o seu escopo às estruturas sociais fundamentais comuns às sociedades humanas — e, em certos casos, partilhadas com outras espécies sociais.

A entrevista evidencia uma inovação epistemológica relevante: as estruturas fundamentais são propriedades e mecanismos gerais que explicam características universais da vida social humana, coexistindo com as variações e singularidades das sociedades.

Deste modo, a proposta insere a sociologia nas “ciências sociais do vivo”, superando dicotomias entre natureza/cultura, geral/particular, macro/micro. Lahire defende que esse alargamento do quadro de inteligibilidade da atividade humana permite hierarquizar explicações, excluir modelos manifestamente ideológicos ou pré-científicos e reforçar a cumulatividade do conhecimento sociológico — ainda que reconheça que os resultados científicos possam ser apropriados tanto por projetos emancipatórios como por estratégias de dominação.

J. T. L. e A. F. C. — Em *As Estruturas Fundamentais das Sociedades Humanas* [Lahire, 2023], a tua análise das grandes regularidades antropológicas surge como uma tentativa de identificar as condições de possibilidade de toda a vida social. Contudo, ao descreveres as formas de dominação e de hierarquia como produtos recorrentes e quase universais, não se corre o risco de naturalizar essas formas e de atenuar a sua dimensão histórica? Como pensas o equilíbrio entre a necessidade de reconhecer regularidades estruturais e a de não as transformar em fatalidades sociais? De que modo a tua teoria evita o determinismo e preserva a abertura à ação e à transformação histórica? Em que medida é possível pensar a dominação simultaneamente como estrutura fundamental e como construção contingente, dependente de contextos sociais e culturais específicos?

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Trata-se de uma questão muito importante, que exige simultaneamente lucidez sobre as sociedades humanas e subtileza na dosagem dos elementos em jogo. Em primeiro lugar, o facto de todas as sociedades humanas conhecidas serem atravessadas por relações estruturais de dominação é uma realidade objetiva que não invento nem resulta do meu ponto de vista (como tendem a pensar certos construtivistas que “desrealizam” quase tudo). As formas de dominação variam ao longo da história e entre sociedades, mas não se conhece nenhuma sociedade humana sem desigualdades entre as partes que a constituem.

Alguns arqueólogos e antropólogos falaram de “sociedades igualitárias” a propósito de sociedades de caçadores-recolectores, mas a expressão é enganadora, porque se refere apenas à ausência de desigualdades económicas. Isso é evidente: não pode haver desigualdade económica em sociedades sem riqueza, sem armazenamento de bens ou de alimentos. Nessas sociedades, contudo, subsistem pelo menos duas grandes assimetrias: entre homens e mulheres e entre velhos e jovens. Encontram-se, aliás, essas duas grandes assimetrias em numerosas sociedades de primatas. Mesmo no caso dos bonobos, a dominação das fêmeas sobre os machos — invertendo a configuração mais conhecida nos chimpanzés — mostra que a igualdade entre sexos não é a regra.

Além disso, em muitas sociedades animais existem hierarquias mais ou menos lineares, com machos, fêmeas ou casais alfa que dominam o resto do grupo, bem como posições hierárquicas diferenciadas para cada membro. Em suma: a dominação não é uma simples construção mental; impôs-se historicamente como uma necessidade da vida social. Etólogos que trabalharam espécies muito distintas observam, paradoxalmente, que hierarquias tendem a pacificar as relações interindividuais dentro do grupo: quando são perturbadas, os indivíduos confrontam-se e lutam, e o desfecho fixa o lugar de cada um. Quando as posições se estabilizam e são reconhecidas, diminui a conflitualidade aberta — pelo menos enquanto a hierarquia não é contestada.

Nos chimpanzés, Frans de Waal mostrou que pretendentes tentam, com apoio de aliados, derrubar o macho alfa; este, por sua vez, dispõe de aliados capazes de o defender em caso de ataque. Tudo depende da forma física do macho alfa, do seu envelhecimento, do

reconhecimento e do prestígio no grupo — configurações muito próximas de situações humanas bem conhecidas.

Isto significa que a dominação é “natural”? A minha resposta é claramente negativa. Ela é, desde logo, social; mas quando digo “social”, não digo “cultural”. Existem invariantes sociais que se transformam com grande dificuldade. Aquilo que muitos investigadores em ciências sociais têm em mente como “social” é, na realidade, “cultural”: construções instituídas por via de socialização, dispositivos simbólicos (como o direito) ou costumes, etc. Ora, a cultura tem dificuldade em transformar certas grandes relações sociais. Mesmo grupos de extrema-esquerda ou anarquistas — que contestam toda a hierarquia — tendem a reproduzir hierarquias no seu interior. E, apesar dos esforços parentais para não abusar do poder sobre os filhos, não é possível não o exercer: a assimetria de força física, estatura, peso, autonomia, experiência e conhecimentos acumulados torna inevitável algum grau mínimo de autoridade. Mesmo as práticas educativas mais permissivas instituem sempre um limiar de autoridade, no próprio interesse das crianças.

A lucidez e o realismo — atitudes que Marx valorizava contra o idealismo e o romantismo pseudo-revolucionário — conduzem-me a sustentar que devemos, antes de mais, reconhecer o existente e admitir a dificuldade da transformação da ordem social, quando se considera legítimo — como é o meu caso — desejar mais igualdade e emancipação. Só depois de compreendida a escala dos problemas estruturais, plurimilenários, é possível inventar (e tudo está ainda por fazer) meios propriamente culturais — educativos, políticos, jurídicos — para nos aproximarmos do ideal de igualdade nos diferentes domínios da vida social.

Mas esta política racional, fundada em conhecimento científico da realidade, não constitui, para mim, uma “saída” do determinismo social. Uma política emancipatória só pode contrapor determinadas forças a outras, isto é, fazer operar certos determinismos contra outros, sem jamais se libertar de todo o determinismo. Por exemplo: não se faz voar um avião abolindo a gravidade, as restrições aerodinâmicas e as forças de fricção; faz-se voar um avião conhecendo precisamente essas leis e restrições e organizando outras forças que tornam possível o voo.

J. T. L. e A. F. C. — O teu projeto intelectual parece articular duas exigências potencialmente contraditórias: por um lado, a identificação de estruturas universais das sociedades humanas; por outro, a atenção às variações históricas e culturais. Como concilias esta dupla ambição? As “estruturas fundamentais” são simples condições de possibilidade invariantes ou quadros ativos que pesam sobre dinâmicas históricas concretas?

A minha resposta está em grande medida contida no que precede, na medida em que a história é outro nome para a cumulatividade cultural. As sociedades transformam-se porque produzem novos saberes, instituições e costumes a partir de um estado cultural herdado. Ainda assim, convém acrescentar alguns esclarecimentos.

As estruturas sociais fundamentais são de dois tipos. Algumas são propriedades emergentes quando um grupo social se constitui — imperativos sociais trans-históricos e transculturais, por vezes mesmo trans-específicos. É o caso do binómio cooperação–competição, presente em quase todas as espécies sociais, tal como os factos hierárquicos que limitam conflitos interindividuais. Para etólogos e biólogos evolucionistas, isto tornou-se evidente: sempre que existe vida coletiva, coloca-se a questão de “fazer grupo” — cooperar quando necessário, defender-se em conjunto, caçar e partilhar recursos, criar juvenis comunitariamente — e de evitar que a proximidade aumente a agressividade interindividual. As vantagens seletivas da vida social (dissuasão de predadores pelo número, termorregulação, ajuda mútua) não podem ser anuladas por desvantagens ainda maiores.

Outras estruturas fundamentais — como o esquema relacional dependência–dominação — são consequências sociais (ou correlatos sociais) de propriedades biológicas da espécie. Falei de várias consequências da altricialidade secundária, mas pode também considerar-se a divisão sexuada, a viviparidade, a longa gestação, a uniparidade, a divisão sexuada do trabalho reprodutivo, a longevidade, etc. Tomemos a longevidade: os humanos pertencem ao conjunto das espécies de grande longevidade (como elefantes ou baleias), o que tem consequências decisivas para a cumulatividade cultural — tanto pela acumulação individual

de experiências ao longo de décadas como pela coexistência de três (ou mais) gerações, ampliando a transmissão cultural intergeracional.

Por isso, não oponho “condições de possibilidade invariantes” a “quadros ativos que pesam sobre dinâmicas históricas concretas”. As estruturas sociais fundamentais são, simultaneamente, condições de possibilidade invariantes e quadros que pesam continuamente sobre as dinâmicas históricas concretas. A cultura constrói-se sobre essas estruturas: não pode recomeçar do zero, como se fosse possível reconstruir culturalmente, ao gosto do voluntarismo, todas as relações sociais. Pensar assim é aderir ao que chamo uma “teologia da criação cultural do homem pelo homem”.

A cultura pode, no entanto, infletir significativamente essas estruturas, compensar efeitos negativos e inventar instituições de contrapeso. Em termos concretos, é preferível para uma mulher nascer numa sociedade moderna do que numa sociedade de caçadores-recolectores como a dos Aborígenes australianos; ainda assim, estamos longe de uma igualdade plena entre homens e mulheres em todos os planos. A história (ou cultura) pode melhorar — ou degradar — uma situação social, mas não pode refazê-la integralmente por via voluntarista.

J. T. L. e A. F. C. — Se as estruturas fundamentais definem os limites no interior dos quais se desenvolvem as práticas humanas, onde situar o imprevisto, o acontecimento, a rutura? A tua proposta admite zonas de indeterminação ou espaços de criação social que não sejam dedutíveis dessas estruturas? E, nesse caso, que estatuto científico atribuir a essas exceções que parecem escapar à regularidade?

Trabalhei casos de sucessos escolares improváveis, e os resultados mostram que esses percursos se explicam por múltiplos determinismos que compensam *handicaps* (nomeadamente, défices de capital cultural parental). Contudo, a baixa percentagem de trânsfugas de classe não altera estruturalmente a configuração da sociedade.

Não tenho afinidade científica com a visão romântica de alguns sociólogos que concebem o mundo social como “criação contínua”. Por exemplo, Luc Boltanski sustenta que a incerteza está no cerne de cada nova ação; para afirmar tal coisa, parece-me necessário perder contacto com dados estatísticos que mostram precisamente o contrário: o mundo social é, em grande medida, previsível. Sinto-me mais próximo de Goffman, que observava que, sempre que dois jogadores de xadrez iniciam uma partida, não reinventam o xadrez. Dizia-o, justamente, contra a imagem de um ator absolutamente livre e criativo que certas leituras interacionistas lhe atribuíram.

O mesmo se aplica a muitos aspetos do mundo social: a criança que nasce não inventa a língua em que aprende a falar, nem a moeda, o Estado, o direito, o automóvel, a eletricidade, a escola ou a ciência. Adapta-se ao estado cultural em que chega e “apanha o comboio em andamento”. As grandes transformações resultam muito mais das contradições internas de uma sociedade — que escapam largamente à vontade dos indivíduos.

J. T. L. e A. F. C. — Ao propores uma “ciência social do vivo”, procuras reforçar o rigor e a explicação causal nas ciências humanas. Contudo, a linguagem científica é ela própria um campo de poder simbólico, com os seus modos de legitimação e exclusão. Como evitar que a tua teoria das estruturas fundamentais se torne, por sua vez, um dispositivo de autoridade epistemológica, suscetível de marginalizar outras abordagens ou vozes dissidentes no interior da sociologia?

Antes de mais, falar de “ciência social do vivo” não visa, no essencial, um “ganho de rigor” ou de “explicação causal”. Trata-se de alargar o quadro a partir do qual pensamos os objetos. Só esse alargamento permite destrinçar o que é “biológico”, “social” e “cultural”, e compreender melhor a razão das estruturas, comportamentos, processos e mecanismos observados nas sociedades humanas. Quando constatamos que uma estrutura ou mecanismo se observa em várias espécies sociais, já não é possível atribuir tudo à cultura ou à “escolha cultural”; isso obriga a interrogar as constricções que conduzem sociedades (humanas e não humanas) a

soluções semelhantes para desafios análogos — aquilo que biólogos designam por convergência.

Depois, tudo depende do que se entende por “vozes dissidentes”. Se o meu trabalho vier a impor-se ao ponto de tornar mais difícil a sobrevivência de “sociólogos” - ideólogos pré-científicos, que sustentam — contra a evidência — que somos os únicos a viver em sociedade e que organizamos a vida social segundo mera vontade, só posso regozijar-me. Quando Darwin ofereceu um quadro geral para o estudo do vivo ao formular a evolução (variação, seleção natural e hereditariedade), tornou impraticáveis muitas teorias fixistas que colocavam Deus na equação e afirmavam que as espécies tinham sido criadas de uma vez, há seis mil anos. A sua autoridade epistemológica estreitou o campo dos possíveis explicativos, e a história deu-lhe razão. A confirmação posterior do papel dos genes (Mendel) e do ADN reforçou esse quadro. O caminho para a verdade científica é, por vezes, longo.

Hoje, mesmo estudos sobre células cancerígenas mostram que estas podem seguir processos evolutivos de seleção natural (ou seleção “artificial”, no caso de tratamentos), o que permite estratégias terapêuticas mais eficazes. Em física, química e biologia, a eficácia prática do conhecimento tende a separar teorias mais robustas de teorias frágeis. Nas ciências sociais, sem provas tão decisivas, modelos muito maus coexistem com teorias mais científicas, com consequências políticas relevantes — e dispensar-nos-íamos bem de certa “pluralidade” interpretativa. Ainda assim, não desespere de poder contribuir para um estado científico mais saudável das disciplinas.

J. T. L. e A. F. C. — As estruturas fundamentais que identifica parecem produzir inevitavelmente hierarquias e desigualdades. Contudo, a história testemunha momentos de emancipação e reinvenção das formas sociais. Como compreendes esses momentos de deslocamento? São anomalias temporárias, variações internas à estrutura, ou transformações das condições fundamentais da vida social?

Não penso que sejam “anomalias temporárias”. Quando sociedades aboliram a escravatura, deram um passo claro para maior emancipação. Ao contrário do senso comum, a escravatura

não foi exclusivamente ocidental em relação a povos africanos; existiu em numerosas sociedades consideradas outrora “primitivas”, nas quais, após conflitos violentos, prisioneiros eram reduzidos à escravatura. A escravatura respondia a “necessidades” económicas e sociais; quando essas “necessidades” puderam ser satisfeitas no quadro do trabalho assalariado, a escravatura pôde ser abolida.

Como dizia Marx em *A Guerra Civil em França* (1971), a propósito da emancipação operária, “Ela sabe que, para realizar a sua própria emancipação (...) terá de passar por longas lutas (...) que transformarão completamente as próprias circunstâncias. Ela não tem de realizar um ideal, mas apenas de libertar os elementos da sociedade nova que a velha sociedade burguesa, em colapso, traz no seu seio.” (p. 46)

A emancipação da classe operária continua, infelizmente, por cumprir. Quanto à escravatura, o assalariamento é simultaneamente um progresso relativamente a ela e uma aceitação contratual de exploração. As formas de dominação deslocam-se sem desaparecerem. O mesmo vale para o Antigo Regime e a Revolução Francesa de 1789: aboliram-se privilégios, mas a burguesia substituiu a nobreza na dominação social (política, económica e ideológica), e os privilégios assumiram novas formas — razão pela qual Bourdieu falou em “nobreza de Estado”.

Falar de invariantes — na dominação ou noutros domínios — não significa imobilidade. Tudo se move na história em função de lutas e correlações de força, mas a dominação permanece. Por vezes desloca-se em direção à maior emancipação; por vezes, produz regressões maciças. Se proletariados ocidentais conquistaram direitos e proteção social, foi também porque o capitalismo encontrou meios de sobreexplorar, sem escrúpulos, trabalhadores — homens, mulheres e crianças — noutras regiões do mundo.

J. T. L. e A. F. C. — Se as ciências humanas são elas próprias produto das estruturas que estudam, em que medida podem transformá-las? A tua proposta de uma ciência social cumulativa e interdisciplinar inclui uma dimensão reflexiva sobre a posição do cientista no

interior das estruturas de dominação simbólica? Em que sentido a produção científica pode funcionar como prática emancipatória e não apenas como descrição de regularidades sociais?

A descrição das regularidades sociais e a análise das suas causas ou das suas origens constituem o primeiro passo para uma política verdadeiramente emancipatória. Não se faz a revolução apoiando-se em visões falsas da realidade. Numa política emancipatória consistente, o conhecimento rigoroso da realidade precede sempre a imaginação da forma adequada de a transformar. Além disso, a ciência exerce frequentemente, sem o pretender, efeitos críticos e emancipatórios. Darwin, que vivia num meio profundamente crente, sabia que a sua teoria sobre a origem das espécies o conduzia a romper com as visões teológicas. Isso perturbava-o profundamente, até porque a sua mulher era muito crente e ele teria desejado não a magoar. Escrevia ao seu amigo Hooker que as suas conclusões o levavam a pensar que «as espécies não são imutáveis», e que isso lhe dava «a sensação de confessar um assassinio». Darwin não matou Deus sozinho; a evolução objetiva das sociedades encarregou-se disso, mas ele contribuiu claramente para a sua morte no plano do saber. Respondendo a Napoleão, que lhe perguntava «Onde está Deus em tudo isto?», o matemático e astrónomo Pierre-Simon Laplace afirmou: «Deus é uma hipótese de que não tive necessidade.»

Por outro lado, o facto de a ciência social poder contribuir para a emancipação, sendo simultaneamente um produto das estruturas de dominação, não tem nada de contraditório. As classes dominantes necessitam frequentemente da ciência para se manterem ou se expandirem, nomeadamente das ciências físicas e químicas, para produzir tecnologias cada vez mais eficazes. Mas necessitam também das ciências sociais, que lhes permitem pensar o *management* e, de forma mais geral, estratégias de manipulação simbólica — políticas, de *marketing* ou publicitárias. Bourdieu estava plenamente consciente de que, lidos pela burguesia, livros como *A Distinção* ou *A Nobreza de Estado* podiam funcionar como instrumentos de racionalização de estratégias de distinção e de reprodução. Eu próprio vivi essa experiência com *Enfances de classe*. Aceitei ser entrevistado por uma jornalista da área da educação do *Le Figaro*, jornal francês de direita, que me colocou questões perfeitamente

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.21747/08723419/soc53ent>

corretas. Mas, no final, o seu artigo poderia resumir-se à resposta à seguinte pergunta: “Como permitir que as crianças das classes superiores tenham ainda mais sucesso do que já têm, sistematizando as ‘boas práticas’ que os seus pais aplicam apenas de forma intuitiva ou por sentido prático?” Não escrevi o livro *Enfances de classe* com esse objetivo, mas é isto o que alguns podem fazer dele.

A mesma ciência pode servir os dominantes como os dominados, os conservadores como os reformistas e os revolucionários. Trata-se de um facto difícil de contestar, e penso que é preferível ter consciência disso a sonhar com uma ciência proletária. O que me desespera, em contrapartida, é que o campo da emancipação não procure, tanto quanto seria necessário, encarar a realidade de frente. Marx detestava os jovens hegelianos de esquerda, revolucionários de fachada, idealistas ao ponto de acreditarem que mudar as palavras bastaria para mudar as coisas. Receio, infelizmente, que existam hoje demasiados jovens — e menos jovens — hegelianos de esquerda.

J. T. L. e A. F. C. — Em *As Estruturas Fundamentais das Sociedades Humanas*, o sujeito individual parece inserido numa rede densa de determinações biológicas, sociais e culturais. Contudo, a tua obra anterior sobre disposições individuais insistia na pluralidade das experiências e dos contextos de formação. Como articular hoje essa pluralidade com a existência de estruturas fundamentais? Existe ainda espaço para experiência singular, criatividade ou irrupção de sentido no interior deste sistema de constrangimentos?

Estes dois aspetos não são incompatíveis. A experiência individual e os destinos individuais são uma coisa; as estruturas sociais em que essas experiências se realizam são outra. A existência de trânsfugas de classe ou de desclassificados por queda não põe em causa a existência de um “topo” e de uma “base”, ainda que, ao nível biográfico, seja vivido como transformação profunda. Não se devem exagerar os efeitos estruturais de exceções estatisticamente raras.

Além disso, estes planos são tanto menos incompatíveis quanto formulei duas leis em *SFSH* que sintetizam parte das minhas pesquisas à escala individual. A primeira é a Lei do desfasamento entre o “transmissor” e o “recetor” de capital cultural — ou entre disposição e contexto de ação/receção — salientando que as condições de transmissão explicam processos permanentes de deformação–reinterpretação–transformação do existente. A segunda é a Lei da variabilidade intergrupala, interindividual e intraindividual das condutas humanas, sublinhando que a variabilidade é constante: entre indivíduos (mesmo na mesma família) e entre contextos de ação no mesmo indivíduo. Existem condições estruturais para a pluralidade das disposições incorporadas. Já o sublinhava em *O Homem Plural*, recordando que o conceito de habitus foi usado por Durkheim para pensar efeitos homogeneizadores de instituições educativas muito envolventes (família nos primeiros anos; escola em regime de internato) e por Bourdieu para analisar socializações em sociedades pouco diferenciadas, que produzem patrimónios de disposições mais homogéneos e coerentes.

Identificar linhas de força invariantes das sociedades humanas — modos de produção, parentesco (incluindo relações pais–filhos), relações homens–mulheres, socialização/transmissão cultural, produção de artefactos, expressividade simbólica, ritos e instituições, mágico-religioso, diferenciação social das funções — não impede a apreensão das criatividades individuais, como pude fazê-lo, por exemplo, no caso de Franz Kafka.

Tal como na relação entre microbiologia e macrobiologia, ou entre a física do infinitamente pequeno e a do infinitamente grande, um nível de análise não invalida o outro; ambos devem ser permanentemente articulados. A compreensão das estruturas fundamentais não anula a singularidade da experiência, mas fornece o quadro no interior do qual essa singularidade se torna inteligível sociologicamente.

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Sociologia: Revista da Faculdade de Letras da Universidade do Porto, Vol. LIII, pp. 193 - 207

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.21747/08723419/soc53ent>

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Estatuto Editorial

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A *Sociologia: Revista da Faculdade de Letras da Universidade do Porto*, da responsabilidade do Departamento de Sociologia, iniciou a sua edição em 1991, na sequência da criação da Licenciatura em Sociologia, em 1985, e do Instituto de Sociologia da Universidade do Porto, três anos depois.

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a) Livro de um autor: LUHMANN, Niklas (1990), *Essays on self-reference*, Nova York, Columbia University Press.

b) Livro com mais de um autor: BERGER, Peter; LUCKMANN, Thomas (2004), *A construção social da realidade: um livro sobre a sociologia do conhecimento*, Lisboa, Dinalivro.

c) Livro com mais de quatro autores: SIBLOT, Yasmin, et al. (2015), *Sociologie des classes populaires contemporaines*, Paris: Armand Collin.

d) Capítulo de livro: GOFFMAN, Erving (1999), “A ordem da interação”, in Yves Winkin (ed.), *Os momentos e os seus homens*, Lisboa, Relógio d’Água, pp.

e) Artigo em publicação periódica: ASTOR, Avraham; GRIERA, Mar; CORNEJO, Mónica (2019). «Religious Governance in the Spanish City: Hands-On Versus Hands-Off Approaches to Accommodating Religious Diversity in Barcelona and Madrid. » *Religion, State, and Society*, 47 (4-5): 390-404.

f) Artigo em publicação periódica online: FERNANDES, António Teixeira (1991), “Formas e mecanismos de exclusão social”, *Sociologia*, Revista da Faculdade de Letras da Universidade do Porto, vol. I, pp. 9-66, [Consultar. até 15.07.2014]. Disponível em:

g) Publicações online: PRESIDÊNCIA DO CONSELHO DE MINISTROS (2011), Programa do XIX Governo Constitucional Português, [Consultar. até 15.07.2014]. Disponível em:

h) Comunicações em eventos científicos: QUINTÃO, Carlota (2004), “Terceiro Sector – elementos de referência teórica e conceptual”, in V Congresso Português de Sociologia. Sociedades Contemporâneas: Reflexividade e Acção, Braga, Universidade do Minho, 12- 15 de Maio de 2004.

i) Teses: CARVALHO, Paula (2006), Caminhos de construção em Lisboa. Do Cine-Teatro Monumental ao Edifício Monumental: Estudo de Caso, Tese de Licenciatura em Sociologia, Lisboa, Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas, Universidade Nova de Lisboa.

j) Legislação: Lei n.º 147/99, de 1 de Setembro, Lei de Protecção de Crianças e Jovens em Perigo.

14. As referências bibliográficas deverão ser colocadas no final do texto e ordenadas alfabeticamente pelo sobrenome do autor. Caso haja mais de uma referência com a mesma autoria, deverão ser listadas da mais antiga para a mais recente.

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16. Não são excluídos da avaliação manuscritos que tenham sido previamente publicados em servidores de preprints.

17. Os originais deverão ser submetidos à plataforma

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