




Girl YouTubers: Interaction, creation, educational content and emotions during COVID-19 confinement

Javier Gil-Quintana*, Antonio Ruiz Galisteo**, Luis M. Romero-Rodríguez***

*  Department of Didactics, School Organization and Special Didactics, National University of Distance Education, Faculty of Education, National University of Education at Distance - UNED (Spain) (jgilquintana@edu.uned.es)

**  Department of Didactics, School Organization and Special Didactics, National University of Distance Education, Faculty of Education, National University of Education at Distance - UNED (Spain) (antonior85@gmail.com)

***  Department of Communication Sciences and Sociology, Rey Juan Carlos University. Faculty of Communication and Arts, Nebrija University (Spain) (luis.romero@urjc.es)

Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic forced absolute confinement in Spain from March 15 to July 21, 2020. On the other side of the screen, YouTubers girls and boys, creators of specific content for their peers, took the opportunity to increase their productions. This research examines 73 creations made during the confinement period by six Spanish girls YouTubers categorized as influencers by the number of reproductions and followers of their channels through content analysis to evaluate the interactions, the content generated, and subjective aspects of projection of the emotional state of these minors. The results show increased interactors, positioning the female sector as the most prevalent gender. The contents have been related to the COVID-19 theme, while, in the emotional aspect, the influencers were not affected by the great sadness that hit Spain with the death of thousands of people.

Keywords: Kids, video blog, YouTube, influencers, content creators, emotions.

Introduction

In this society, and as an innate digital seed, we are living in an era in which, from childhood, collaborative creators are offered immense possibilities of creation from digital reality, a new way of creating. The use of devices has become normalized and widespread among children, giving young citizens a greater capacity for creation and interaction through social networks in the midst of an ocean of uncertainty (Fernandez Enguita, 2001).

An increasing number of social environments and digital platforms allow us to create, co-create, generate content, interact, share ideas, or influence emotionally. Among the different platforms we know today, YouTube stands out as one of the references, and it is in this social space where the YouTuber model is positioned, giving voice to the interacting subject and content creator (Gil-Quintana, Malvasi, Castillo Abdul, and Romero-Rodríguez, 2020).

Thanks to social networks, staging this profile of subjects which, from an early age -and even from childhood- publicly show their creations, interactions, opinions, and visions of the world around them has been made possible. To do so, they are previously forced to dominate different media and transmedia languages. Boys and girls acquire these languages from non-formal educational spaces through learning by inquiry and discovery, empowering social networks through their different channels. These young citizens

become protagonists, either alone or accompanied by a family member or friend, exercising the role of content curator and community manager of their content.

It is remarkable that, although in Spain, fourteen years old is established as the minimum age to have a Gmail email account, a prerequisite for creating a channel on the YouTube platform, these children already have channels with millions of followers on the interface. In these cases, it is usually the families in charge of managing the email accounts to access the platform, thus establishing essential research perspectives on ethics, privacy, the safety of minors, or the legality of YouTube in the field of children.

The present research analyzes Spanish girl YouTubers' interest in addressing the forced confinement caused by the COVID-19 pandemic crisis. On the part of the Spanish government, these events meant the declaration of a state of alarm to face the health emergency situation. These circumstances would cause, in addition to the rest of the population, children would spend days without leaving their homes, specifically between March 15 and April 25, 2020, in temporary intervals of the strictest confinement.

According to a Statista report (2022), the Spanish population between the ages of 4 and 15 spent an average of an hour and a quarter a day watching content published by this open video platform. A time that, in the case of British and American children, was even longer. Specifically, its child population spent between 80 and 100 minutes on YouTube daily, with minors in the United States spending the most minutes in front of the screen. Of course, in the three countries, children's consumption increased from 25 to 40 minutes with respect to the time dedicated to this purpose in May of the previous year.

Starting from this unique social context in the 21st century, it was decided to focus the study on the creations made by these content creators and published during the period of absolute confinement, taking as an objective the analysis of the aspects related to the interactions, the contents generated, and the subjective issues related to the projection of the emotional state of these minors protagonists.

The study is organized around the following research questions:

- RQ1: How does the forced confinement caused by the COVID-19 pandemic influence the interaction, creation, and content generated by the minor youtubers?
- RQ2: Is confinement a specific theme that conditions your creations?
- RQ3: Does confinement cause the projection of specific emotional states by the girl YouTubers?
- RQ4: What profile (age and gender) of followers do Spanish girl YouTubers have?

The sixty-three creations published by the six selected protagonists have been largely related to the COVID-19 theme, projecting themselves in a transmedia way in their discourses that are shared on other social networks they own. As we will discover at the end of the study, these channels have become especially important in confinement, increasing the number of interactors and interacting with young women standing out. From the eight primary emotions (Goleman, 1996) analyzed in their creations (anger, sadness, fear, joy, love, surprise, aversion, and shame), a negative emotional state does not prevail; instead, the minor youtubers have acted in a way that is alien to the social problems that sadly plague Spanish society.

Theoretical framework

YouTube allows, through its channels, the exercise of the four fundamental freedoms that define us as interacting people living in a democratic society: freedom of speech, information, opportunities, and integration (Castillo-Abdul, Romero-Rodríguez, and Larrea-Ayala, 2020) but it also provides "digital citizenship" with the capacity for creation, expression, information, personal growth, and even labor or

market growth, as well as the ability to increase their relationships and social interactions and position themselves as "influencers" of the Postdigital Era (Escaño, 2019).

Followers, with their interactions and transmedia projection (Scolari, Ardèvol, Pérez-Latorre, and Lugo Rodríguez, 2020), make this positioning a successful phenomenon for YouTubers to such an extent that they come to define co-created and sometimes remixed content, thus constituting a model of collaboration between creators and consumers (Tur-Viñes, Núñez Gómez, and González Río, 2018), unique in the culture of participation (Aparici and Osuna-Acedo, 2013).

Regardless of the subject matter of his creations, the YouTuber does not guarantee a minimum of quality in terms of form or content, but this does not become a determining factor for success but is determined by the interest they arouse. The YouTuber communicative model has a strong presence in children today since, at this stage, they prefer consumption through this interface, adding that 33% of minors are connected to the Internet and that YouTube is one of the sites of preference thanks to the variety of entertainment content it offers them (Martínez Pastor, Ongkrutraksa, and Vizcaíno Laorga, 2020). Being a youtuber is one of the most desired professions in childhood. This profession can currently be practiced by boys and girls with the support of their parents (Tur-Viñes, Núñez Gómez and González-Río 2019), predicting a future where the number of child influencers will increase considerably (Bermúdez, 2020).

Visualization of YouTube content by children under 14 years old is reported by 7% of children aged 3 to 4, 13% of children aged 5 to 7, and 36% of children aged 8 to 11 (OFCOM, 2016). According to the study presented by the Office of Communications, from a very early age, these minors have at their disposal mobile devices with which they spend a great deal of time consuming diverse content. This causes that, at this stage of life, in addition to being consumers, they pretend to be content creators, imitating roles and models pre-established by the influencers (Gil-Quintana, Santoveña-Casal, and Romero-Riaño, 2021; Castaño, 2022), since, at a child's age, the construction of identity and social integration comes into play and, later on, as teenagers, they will feel the need to be accepted or approved by the group, opting for the use of platforms or social networks to share their productions, even exposing their private life, thus achieving a great diffusion in a context of "media spectacle" (Montes Vozmediano, García Jiménez, and Menor Sendra, 2018).

The interactors create diverse content ranging from challenges to songs or even bad jokes, depending on trends, tendencies, or movements. This fact is identified as "virality", behavior acquired by content published on social networks or specific platforms, conditioned by a series of external and intrinsic elements, reaching a more significant impact than expected by the broadcaster and based on its form or content, which leads to a higher number of visits than other similar content (Picazo Sánchez, 2016). This "virality" can affect any content on the network, but the production published on YouTube and TikTok can be considered the audiovisual content that best represents this phenomenon.

The capacity of the new generations to be part of this transmedia world is evident; they naturally use all kinds of platforms, such as YouTube, to create and consume content, but how important do they consider their analog world? How do current social affairs influence the communicative and relational model they practice?

For its part, the COVID-19 pandemic, in addition to generating an immediate and significant health crisis, has affected all areas of society, generating the loss of many jobs, an economic crisis, and, worst of all, the loss of many lives. The Spanish government declared a state of alarm on March 14, 2020, establishing

absolute confinement that caused millions of children to face a situation never known before for them and their families. As part of this measure, the complete closure of all schools was decreed, a fact of crucial relevance for this research. During this period, influencers used their productions to encourage citizenship, explained the Spanish Ministry of Health indications to prevent contagion, and joined these campaigns to deal with content on this topic.

Nevertheless, not all minors have the possibilities to create, consume or enjoy content on the Internet. A large sector of the population did not have access to the network to continue even with their academic work, which brought to light the social inequalities in education that persist in Spain and worldwide.

Materials and method

Research objective and design

The main objective of this study is to analyze the interactions and content generated by girl YouTubers and the subjective aspects related to the projection of their emotional state from their videos. This objective is articulated around the following secondary objectives:

- 1) To analyze objectively the importance or weight acquired by the confinement in the productions of the girl YouTubers.
- 2) To study the productions disseminated by the girl YouTubers throughout the period of absolute confinement, from March 14 to April 25, 2020, in their corresponding profiles.
- 3) To assess the emotions shown or transmitted by the girls in their productions.

Concerning the study's objectives, the hypotheses are presented as possible results or attempts to explain the problem that arises (Sarantakos, 2005). This study aims to validate the following hypotheses:

- 1) Hypothesis 1. The profiles featuring the girl YouTubers with the highest positive interactions have more followers.
- 2) Hypothesis 2. Girl Youtubers, during the confinement period, have created more content on their channels, thus increasing the number of publications and the number of followers.
- 3) Hypothesis 3. The bulk of the audience of girl YouTubers coincides with these in age, gender, and nationality.
- 4) Hypothesis 4. Girl Youtubers have made creations related to COVID-19.
- 5) Hypothesis 5. Girl Youtubers show emotional patterns that indicate some affectation about the period of confinement.

Based on the objectives, the study was designed based on a mixed method that uses the content analysis technique. This approach makes it possible to analyze any content and discourse expression in multiple languages by quantifiable or unquantifiable indications. In this study, the quantitative research is designed and oriented to prove and demonstrate existences -but not inferences- while the qualitative design contributes to their discovery and understanding (Ruiz Olabuénaga, 2012) as an exploratory means. The first was based on analyzing a series of data obtained through the Influencity app, allowing us to obtain real-time statistics on any influencer. Thanks to the data collected, tables and a series of figures were created using the IBM SPSS statistical package, which allows us to make a comparative analysis between the different profiles, analyzing aspects such as channel activity (likes/dislikes), engagement rate, number of visits, the average number of followers over time, gender and age of the audience, and countries with the largest audience.

Sample

The study we present refers to girl YouTubers aged 14 years or less with a large number of followers. In Spain, according to a report by Social Blade in 2021, the minors positioned according to the number of followers are Ryan's world (30.4M) and Las ratitas (23.6M). In our study, we have chosen to analyze the presence of the female gender as influencers within these children's channels. The sample was limited to 73 creations made by six girl YouTubers during the period of confinement mentioned above, from March 14 to April 25, 2020. The selection of the profiles presented in Table 1 was made taking into account a series of premises such as residence in Spain, the high but disparate number of followers (from 20,000,000 to approximately 100,000), being female (to establish similarities in their creations), and with a high activity of content creation in this video social network.

Table 1: Number of followers per channel of the sample under study

Channel	Number of followers (aprox.) (December 2021):
<i>Las Ratitas</i>	19,000,000
<i>DivertiGuay</i>	1,800,000
<i>Silvia Sánchez</i>	960,000
<i>El mundo de Indy</i>	530,000
<i>Mellizas Channel</i>	188,000
<i>Las Cosas de Lucía</i>	120,000

Data analysis process

The peculiarity and novelty of this study are determined by the observation period since most of the research focuses on the analysis of the productions published by these minors on YouTube throughout the days of strict confinement derived from the COVID-19 pandemic, which spans between March 15 and April 25, 2020. In its qualitative aspect, the content analysis technique is applied in the hermeneutic unit of analysis (63 videos) based on three categories that delimit the observation and data collection due to the need to establish inferences derived from the study. This observation involved viewing more than 14 hours of content among the different YouTube channels starring minors (see Table 1). The two categories proposed for the study encompass different aspects, for which variables have been established that have allowed carrying out a guarantee investigation:

a) Category 1

The importance or relevance of confinement in the productions of the girl YouTubers is analyzed. For this purpose, an analysis is made based on a general variable of each channel, taking into account the videos published during the period of confinement. The number of creations in the period before the one studied (same duration), which runs from January 31 to March 14, was also considered. To complete this analysis, a distinction is made between creations dealing with topics directly related to the virus and/or restrictions during the confinement period and those not directly related. A relationship is also sought between the different channels studied, assessing the coincidences in the topics related to the virus and confinement to draw conclusions about the "virality" of the contents selected by the YouTubers for their videos.

b) Category 2

The second category analyzes the interactions of the girl YouTubers with their audience based on two variables: the first studies whether or not the girls make references to their followers, and the second,

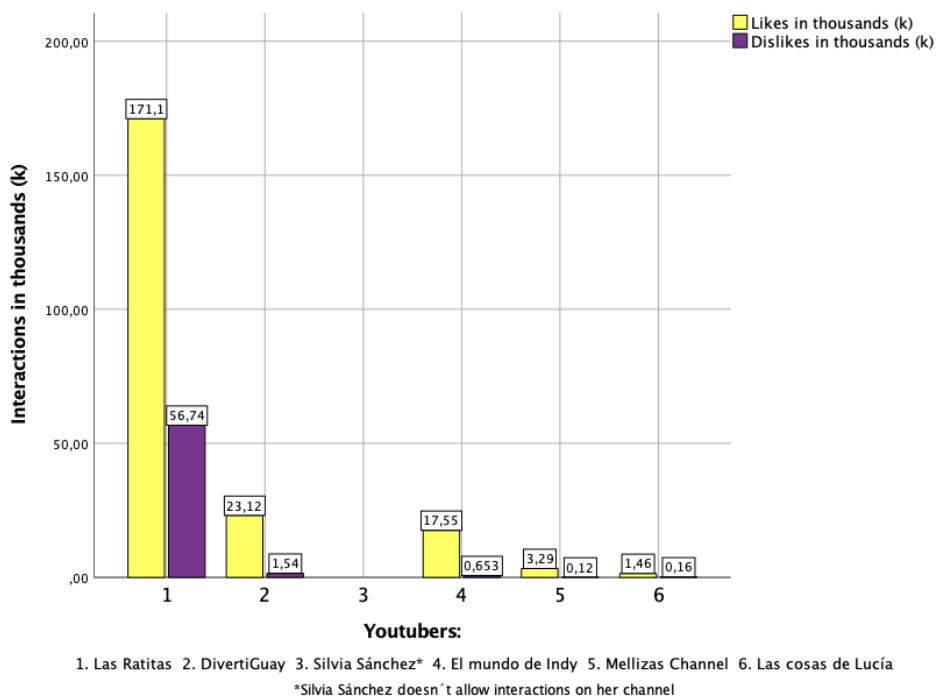
whether or not they recommend other YouTube channels or social network profiles in which they are also protagonists. This category also studies the emotional state of the minors in their productions, analyzing to what extent confinement could influence their lives. The analysis of the emotions of the YouTubers is carried out after thorough testing of primary and secondary emotions, the former being treated as basic emotions, and the latter derived from them. Finally, it was decided to prioritize the analysis of primary emotions since secondary emotions do not have characteristic facial features, nor a particular tendency to action (Bisquerra, Pérez Gonzalez, and García Navarro, 2015). In this sense, Goleman (1996) classified primary emotions: anger, sadness, fear, joy, love, surprise, aversion, and shame. As in the previous category, creations between March 15 and April 25, 2020, are used.

Results

Interacting and interacting confined audience

The audience following the girl YouTubers interacts with them by projecting positivity (likes) or negativity (dislikes), the former being more numerous than the latter. As can be seen in Figure 1, Las Ratitas stands out with 228 thousand total interactions (75% positive), DivertiGuay with a total of 24.7 thousand interactions (93.6% positive), El mundo de Indy with 18.2 thousand interactions (96.43% positive), the Mellizas Channel with 3.41 thousand interactions (96.48% positive) and, in the last place, Las cosas de Lucía with a total of 1.62 thousand (90.12% positive). Significant is the great difference in the percentage of positive interactions between Las Ratitas and the rest of the YouTubers, reaching more than 20% difference with El mundo de Indy and Mellizas Channel. It was not possible to analyze the specific case of Silvia Sánchez since she does not allow this type of interaction on her channel.

Figure 1: Likes and dislikes (audience reactions) on videos



Source: Own elaboration.

Table 2 shows the engagement rate of each of the six profiles studied, according to the followers' loyalty. The number of doubtful or loyal followers is expressed in millions (M) or thousands (K), depending on the numbers reached in each channel. It can be seen how the profiles obtain a high percentage, with *Silvia Sánchez* being the least valued channel (90%) and *El mundo de Indy* the best (90.25%), there being barely a 0.25% difference between them. The rest of the YouTubers studied present very similar figures, ranging between 90.09% and 90.14%, coefficients that make it abundantly clear the considerable level of loyalty that these minor content creators achieve among their audience.

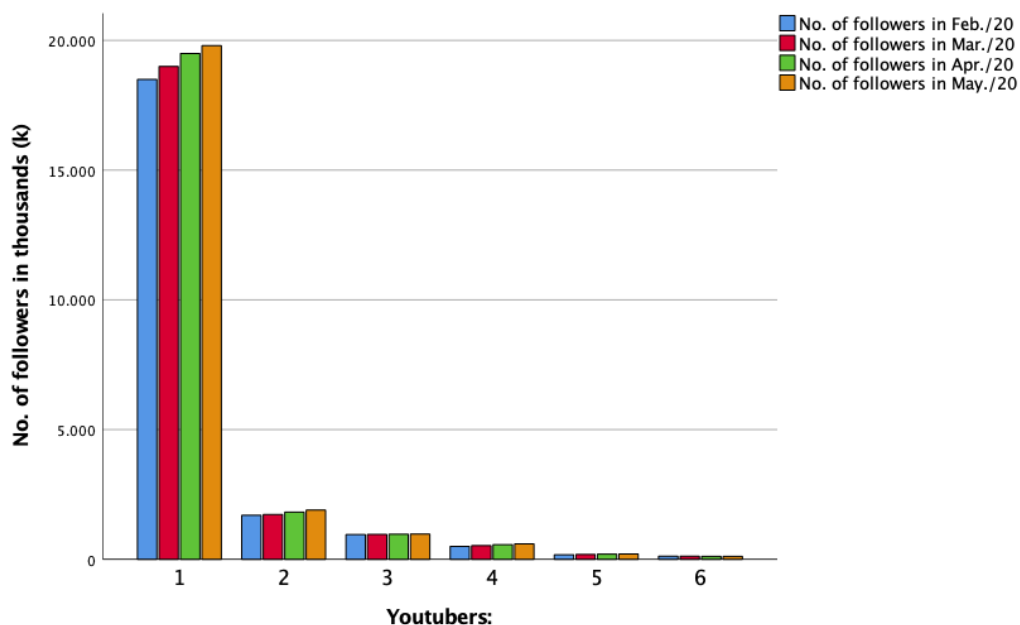
Table 2. Engagement rate of each channel, based on audience loyalty

	Las Ratitas	DivertiGuay	Silvia Sánchez	El mundo de Indy	Mellizas Channel	Las cosas de Lucía
Doubtful followers	1.99 M	236.78 K	113 K	64.96 K	21.59 K	11.85 K
Loyal followers	18.11 M	2.15 M	1.02 M	601.04 K	197.41 K	108.14 K
Engagement rate	90.10%	90.09%	90%	90.25%	90.14%	90.12%

Note: K= Thousands; M= Millions.

For the analysis of the number of followers, the data from February to May 2020 were determined to analyze the period of forced confinement and assess its progressive regression. It can be seen in Figure 2 that five of the six YouTubers studied have increased the number of followers throughout the confinement. The most remarkable case is *Las Ratitas*, with a pronounced and stable increase in the number of followers; *Las cosas de Lucía* remains stable without significant increases or decreases, while the rest of the sample increases the number of followers progressively, such as *Silvia Sánchez*, although she shows a slight increase, not as significant as her peers.

Figure 2. Progressive regression *n* followers per channel



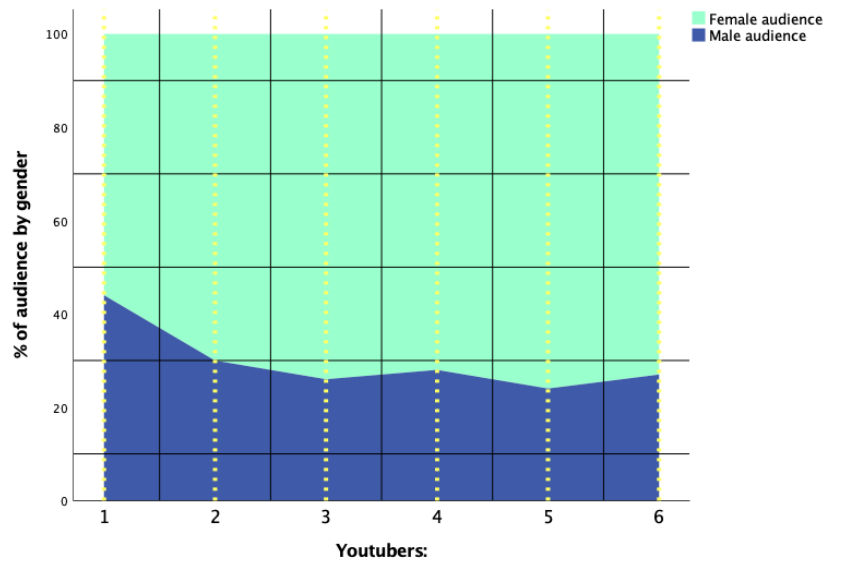
1. Las Ratitas 2. DivertiGuay 3. Silvia Sánchez 4. El mundo de Indy 5. Mellizas Channel 6. Las cosas de Lucía

Source: Own elaboration.

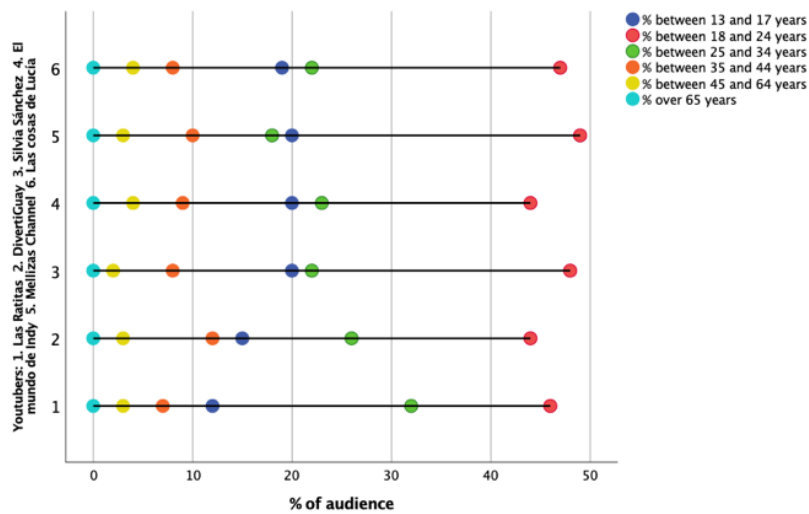
Concerning the average number of visits for the total of the six profiles studied, the month of March reaches the maximum number -coinciding with the absolute confinement-. However, there is a notorious decrease after this month, dropping by 5.85% until April and by 4% from April to May.

All YouTubers stand out for having a higher number of female followers, as detailed in Figure 3, with *Mellizas Channel* being the highest percentage -around 76% of the total- and *Las Ratitas* the channel with the lowest percentage -around 56% of the total. As for the audience's age, the data are very similar for all of them. No channel has followers over 65 years of age, and each of them has the highest number of followers between 18 and 24 years of age, with very similar percentages between 44% and 49%, and between 13 and 17 years of age, with a percentage of around 20%, as shown in Figure 4.

Figures 3 and 4. Audience gender and age



1. Las Ratitas 2. DivertiGuay 3. Silvia Sánchez 4. El mundo de Indy 5. Mellizas Channel 6. Las cosas de Lucía



Source: Own elaboration.

Spain is the leading country of interaction, with percentages varying between 11% and 43%. It is important to note that *Las Ratitas* has many followers from the United States (9% of the total), a country that does not have a significant presence among the rest of the YouTubers.

Creations, productions, interactions, and emotional display

The number of creations made during confinement varied among the different profiles. It should be noted that a more significant number were published during the period of confinement than in previous periods, with *Silvia Sánchez* standing out as having doubled its frequency. In contrast, *Las cosas de Lucía* published half as many articles during the period of confinement as in the previous period, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Productions during confinement

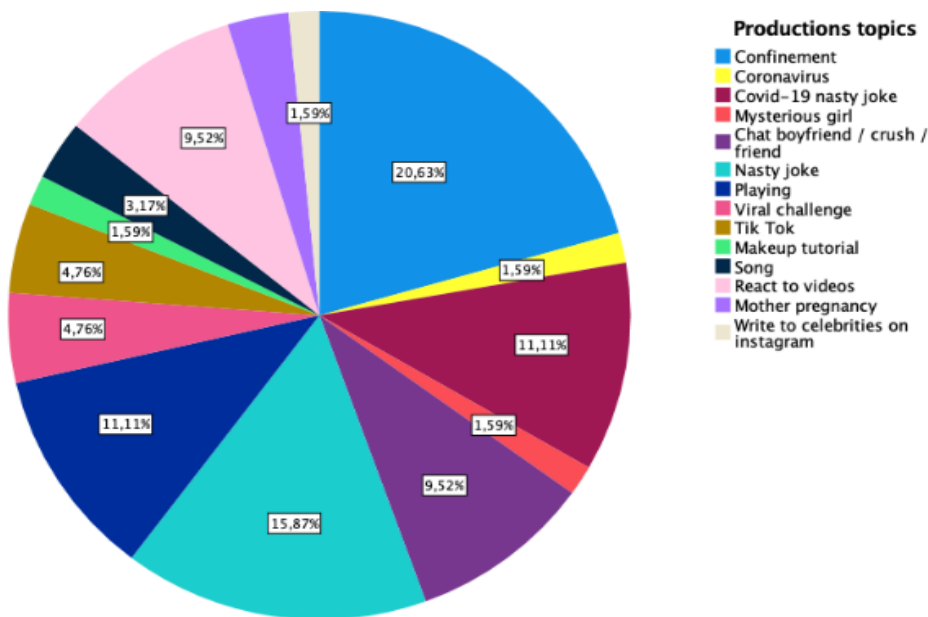
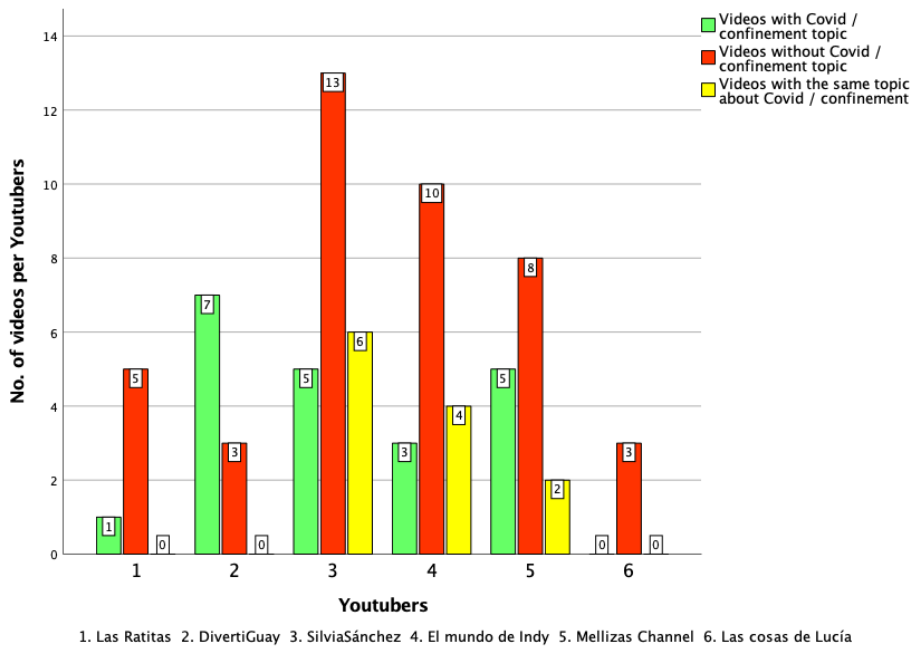
Channel	NVP	NVPA	NVT	NVNT	NVCT
Las Ratitas	6	5	1	5	0
DivertiGuay	10	6	7	3	0
Silvia Sánchez	18	9	5	13	5
El mundo de Indy	13	11	3	10	4
Mellizas Channel	13	13	5	8	2
Las cosas de Lucía	3	6	0	3	0
Totals	63	50	21	42	11

Note: Carried out in the period of confinement (NVP), carried out in the same period before confinement (NVPA), with topics directly related to the virus-confinement (NVT), with topics not related to the virus-confinement (NVNT) and, with topics directly related to the virus-confinement (NVCT).

The increase in the number of creations during confinement is related to the importance of the COVID-19 theme. Figure 5 shows that it has become a recurring theme, although it does not account for most productions. *DivertiGuay* uses this theme to a great extent since 70% of its creations refer to confinement. Significant is the number of thematic overlaps among all YouTubers, as more than 50% of the content and form of the publications are similar in form and content. In Figure 6, they are classified based on 14 different themes that have been established based on the similarities found during the analysis: *confinement, coronavirus, Covid-19 practical joke, mystery girl, chatting boyfriend/crush/friend, practical joke, playing, viral challenge, Tik Tok, makeup tutorial, own song, reacting to videos, pregnancy/mother and writes to celebrities on Instagram.*

The most frequently repeated theme in the productions is *confinement*, representing 20.6%. If we add coronavirus and Covid-19 practical jokes to this theme, we would have a third of the total (33.33%). It is worth mentioning themes such as *practical jokes, playing games, reacting to videos, and chatting with boyfriend/friend/crush*, which represent 16%, 11%, 9.5%, and 9.5%. Two themes, *Tik Tok* and *viral challenge* occupy 4.8% of the total. The remaining topics vary between 1.2% and 3.7% of the total, depending on whether the topic appears in one or two of the productions analyzed.

Figures 5 and 6. Topics of the videos.

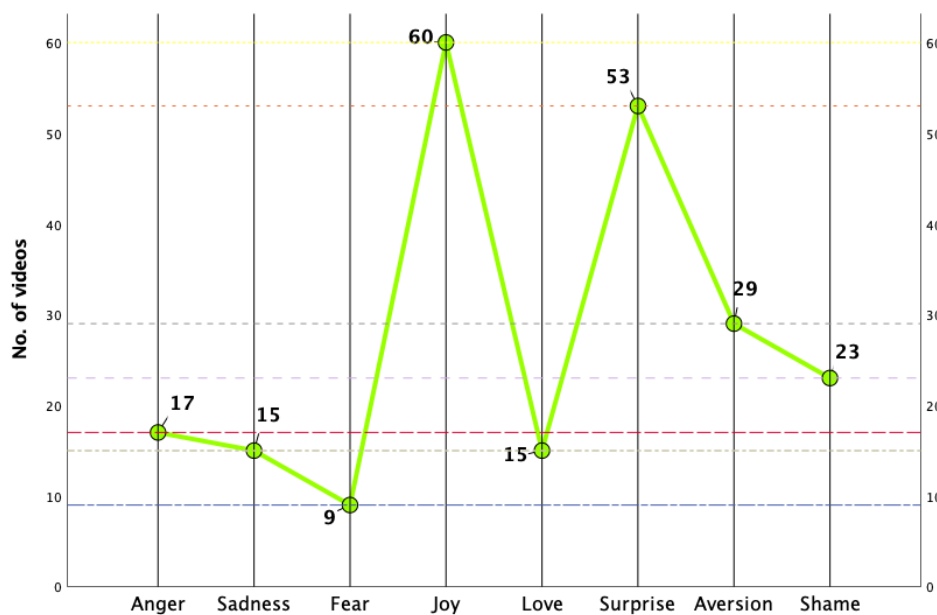


Source: Own elaboration.

About interactions with the audience, of the 63 units of analysis reviewed, in 98.41% of the total, specific mention is made to the followers, either by using an alias that defines them, greeting them, or simply thanking them for watching their videos. Only in one unit of analysis, representing 1.59%, no specific mention is made of the followers, this being video number 6 belonging to *Las Ratitas*. Regarding the mention made by the YouTubers in their productions about other YouTube channels, accounts, or profiles on social networks starring them, it is necessary to indicate that this mention is made in each of the creations analyzed.

Finally, referring to the analysis of the emotional state presented by the YouTubers in their productions during the confinement period, of the eight primary emotions analyzed (e.g., Goleman, 2016), only two appear in the vast majority of them the productions studied. In Figure 7, we can see how *Joy* is present in 93.7% of the videos and *Surprise* in 82.5%. In contrast, *Fear* appears in only 14.3% of the videos studied. A group of three emotions appears in approximately a quarter of the videos analyzed, and these are *Anger* (27%), *Sadness*, and *Love* (both with 23.8%). *Aversion* is present in half of the productions, specifically in 46%. Finally, *Shame* appears in 34.9% of the total number of units of analysis.

Figure 7. Number of videos in which each emotion appears



Note: Anger (E1), sadness (E2), fear (E3), joy (E4), love (E5), surprise (E6), aversion (E7), and shame (E8).
Source: Own elaboration.

Discussion

The YouTubers, protagonists of the profiles studied, have had a more significant number of interactions with their followers during the period of confinement than in previous stages. These minors, who seek to position themselves as influencers, the more subscribers they have, the higher their degree of interaction and, therefore, the number of people who follow the contents of their channel. In contrast, we have observed that the percentage of positive interactions is not related to the number of followers, being the channel with the highest number of interactors with the worst data regarding the percentage of positive interactions.

The importance of rich channel submissions with quality content underpins the basis of audience engagement and, as a consequence, determines the potential of accounts as future influencers in other types of digital marketing campaigns and other commercial actions (De Casas Moreno, Tejedor-Calvo, and Romero-Rodríguez, 2018). In this post-digital society, these minors have positioned themselves as highly influential individuals, and this projection is likely to increase over the years. For this reason, their followers thus become potential customers of brands or products advertised on their channels (Mera Konrad and

Rojas Gutiérrez, 2018)), causing substantial transformations in the ways of thinking and doing society, characterized by consumption, volatility, and «social liquidity» (Escaño, 2019).

On the other hand, girl YouTubers reached their highest peaks in March, a critical period in the confinement stage. This sharp drop continued in May, with El Mundo de Indy being the only one to increase its visits. We must point out that, once the confinement period was decreed, this fact changed drastically with a generalized decrease, thus lowering the number of visits of each channel in April.

The YouTubers under study have thousands and even millions of followers, most of whom are not in a similar age range, and none of the protagonists is older than 13 years old. Based on the data collected, we can corroborate that the audience of these spaces is located in the range of 18 to 24 years, followed by the age range of 25 to 34, thus coinciding with the figures published by YouTube, which establishes users between 18 and 34 years old as the primary consumers of content on this platform, although as explained above, a person under 18 cannot legally have an account on this platform, so it is understood that in this range there are also children and adolescents using accounts of their parents or made *ad hoc*.

Although the common perception is that the representation and promotion of women's participation culture on YouTube is much lower than that of men, being the majority only in some productions based on themes such as beauty and musical content (Regueira, Alfonso Ferreira, and Da Vila, 2020), the study shows a very high percentage of female followers, which indicates that the content created is interesting for the female gender or is more accessible to be consumed by certain specific family situations (Serrano Argüeso, 2020). The COVID-19 theme or related to the coronavirus crisis has been recurrent on YouTube throughout the months before, during, and after the confinement period. Numerous influencers resorted to the COVID-19 theme, and it came to monopolize a large part of the content they published (González Romo and Iriarte Aguirre, 2020). The girl YouTubers surpassed these data since the themes dedicated to aspects related to the pandemic occupied more than a third of the content created (Magis-Weinberg, 2021). We highlight that more than half of these creations were based on other models of their peers, turning their productions into stories based on the remix culture (Lessig, 2012), taking as reference products that have gone viral on the Internet.

The confinement situation has also diminished the youth collective, causing a substantial impact on the psychological and academic aspects, being resilience an essential capacity for this adaptation (Lozano Díaz, Fernández Prados, Figueredo Canosa, and Martínez Martínez, 2020). For this reason, the study of emotions in children has been and will be necessary for educational environments inside and outside the classroom. The projection of emotions in YouTubers' creations during confinement will not be easily replicable in the future, or at least it is a wish. Two emotions, such as *joy* and *surprise*, stand out above the others, these being understood as positive and not consistent with an emotional state charged with worry or fear caused by the situation (Manganello, 2021).

The emotions closest to such a state would be *sadness* and *fear*, barely reflected in the analyzed productions, being the two emotions with the lowest incidence. These emotions are influenced by the language traditionally used by influencers (Martínez Pastor, Vizcaíno Pérez and López Medel, 2022), although overacting is also a constant in the publications of content creators on YouTube (Fernández-Gómez, Fernández Vázquez and Feijóo Fernández, 2022), resorting to the expression of emotions always based on exclamation and exaggeration (Arias Delgado, 2017). The girls, in this case, act without further action, oblivious to the problems surrounding them, even using these issues in their productions.

Conclusion

Establishing a starting point through a brief review of the literature and a brief initial analysis of the method has been essential to developing this study, which concludes here, although not definitively. Any research must be humble in establishing conclusions and always be open to future discussions or revisions, which allow for improvement and enrichment of this and other future research that may be related to it.

The analysis of the results and subsequent discussion has determined that the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has not diminished the growth of the Spanish girl YouTubers' profiles, which have generally increased their projection, both in terms of the number of interactors and the number of people interacted with. The content generated by these youtubers is of interest and is followed by a majority of young women. Despite the increase in content creation by the girl youtubers during the confinement, none of their profiles have increased the number of views, which is not in line with the increase in global consumption on YouTube. This content published during the period under study has among the most recurrent themes related to COVID-19, content projected as viral among these minors. The creations made by these youtubers have not determined a negative emotional state, which would be related to the hard times experienced by Spanish families. The girls, in this case, act without further ado, oblivious to the problems that surround them, even though they use these themes in their productions.

It is essential to mention the study's limitations with a view to future research that will help to understand the different aspects addressed. In the initial analysis of the study, the possibility of conducting interviews with the children in the presence of their legal guardians was considered to enrich the study of their emotional state. To this end, an attempt was made to contact their families through the communication channels they established publicly on YouTube or other networks, but after several attempts, no success was obtained, and it was decided to abandon this option. Establishing direct contact with the YouTubers could help to understand their true emotional state beyond what can be extracted from the content of the videos, which performances and histrionics may taint.

It is interesting to promote the culture of participation from childhood and enable access to the creation and dissemination of content, but we must not forget that we can make minors increasingly dependent on these platforms. For this reason, "it is crucial that we understand how they work and what can be done" (Smicek, 2018, 116) in the Postdigital context in which we find ourselves and where the fact of "being digital" is only noticed by its absence and not by its presence (Negroponte, 1995).

IRB and informed consent statement

This study did not involve the collection of personal data, being a documentary research that extracts data from YouTube channels with a standard license from the platform. The Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the authors' institutional affiliations was not required because the study did not require analysis of people or animals.

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