

Intergenerational Environmental Leisure. Motivations for Practice

Ocio ambiental en clave intergeneracional. Motivaciones para su práctica

Lazer ambiental intergeracional. Motivações para sua prática

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KEYWORDS: Leisure; environment; old age; childhood; motivation.	ABSTRACT: Intergenerational environmental leisure and, more specifically, that shared by grandparents and their grandchildren, brings numerous benefits. As a dimension of leisure directly linked to nature and outdoor activities, it contributes to achieving different objectives compatible with sustainable development. It is perceived as an enriching, attractive, and flexible experience that joins and strengthens the bonds between generations. Objective: to examine the environmental leisure shared by grandparents and grandchildren and the motivations linked to this practice. Quantitative (N=350) and qualitative (N=18) methodologies were combined using an ad hoc questionnaire and focus groups. Results show that intergenerational leisure activities in natural environments are increasingly practiced; trips, as well as the care of plants, vegetable gardens, and animals, are the preferred activities. The preferred motives for these shared experiences are transmitting knowledge and affection and the care grandparents give their grandchildren. Prospective research aims to investigate whether the value granted to environmental leisure has grown after the pandemic due to its potential to facilitate intergenerational contact in safe environments.
PALABRAS CLAVE: Ocio; medio ambiente; vejez; infancia; motivación.	RESUMEN: El ocio ambiental intergeneracional y, más en concreto, el compartido entre abuelos y abuelas con sus nietos y nietas, aporta numerosos beneficios. Al tratarse de una dimensión del ocio directamente vinculada a la naturaleza y a actividades al aire libre, contribuye a la consecución de distintos objetivos compatibles con el desarrollo sostenible, percibiéndose como una experiencia enriquecedora, atractiva y flexible, que cohesiona y estrecha los vínculos entre generaciones. El propósito de este trabajo fue examinar el ocio ambiental compartido entre abuelos y nietos, y las motivaciones vinculadas a dicha práctica. Se combinó metodología cuantitativa (N=350) y cualitativa (N=18), utilizando cuestionario un ad hoc y un grupo de

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	discusión, respectivamente. Los resultados muestran que las actividades de ocio intergeneracional en entornos naturales cada vez son más practicadas; los viajes, así como el cuidado de plantas, huerto y animales son las actividades preferentes. Los motivos preferentes para la realización de estas experiencias compartidas son la transmisión de conocimientos y afecto, y el cuidado que profesan los abuelos y abuelas a sus nietos y nietas. La prospectiva apunta a profundizar si tras la pandemia ha crecido el valor concedido al ocio ambiental, por su potencial para facilitar el contacto intergeneracional en entornos seguros.
PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Lazer; ambiente; velhice; infância; motivação.	RESUMO: O lazer ambiental intergeracional e, mais especificamente, aquele compartilhado entre avôs e avós com seus netos e netas, proporciona inúmeros benefícios. Sendo uma dimensão do lazer diretamente ligada à natureza e às atividades ao ar livre, contribui para a concretização de diferentes objetivos compatíveis com o desenvolvimento sustentável, sendo percebido como uma experiência enriquecedora, atrativa e flexível, que une e reforça os laços entre gerações. Objetivo: examinar o lazer ambiental compartilhado entre avós e netos e as motivações atreladas a essa prática. Metodologia quantitativa (N=350) e qualitativa (N=18) foi combinada, usando um questionário ad hoc e um grupo de discussão, respectivamente. Os resultados revelam que as atividades de lazer intergeracionais em ambientes naturais são cada vez mais praticadas; as viagens, assim como o cuidado com as plantas, jardim e animais são as atividades preferidas. Os motivos preferenciais para a realização dessas experiências compartilhadas são a transmissão de conhecimento e afeto, e o cuidado que os avós têm com seus netos e netas. A prospectiva pretende aprofundar se após a pandemia aumentou a valorização do lazer ambiental, devido ao seu potencial para facilitar o contacto intergeracional em ambientes seguros.

Introduction

The environmental-ecological dimension of leisure, the central theme of the thesis, is defined as “a specific manifestation of leisure characterized by the experience of satisfactory experiences motivated by the context, in the sense of being in a place and/or environment” (Cuenca, 2016, p.13). This dimension, directly linked to nature and outdoor activities, such as traveling, hiking, hunting and fishing, or caring for animals and plants, contributes to the achievement of different objectives compatible with sustainable development, as stated in the 2030 Agenda established by the General Assembly of the United Nations (Government of Spain, 2018).

Leisure practices that take place in natural environments on a regular basis favor the emotional, physical, and mental well-being of their participants (Castell, 2020; Ried, 2015; Rodríguez et al., 2019). Likewise, when this type of practice is shared by family members, specifically by grandparents and grandchildren, the intergenerational encounter is perceived as an enriching, attractive, and flexible experience, which joins and strengthens the bonds between generations (Becerril & Bores, 2019; Castell, 2020; Yoo & Russell, 2020). Recent studies have shown that spending time outdoors as a family fosters a sense of connection with the environment and increases opportunities for social interaction, as well as the development of intergenerational learning, and contributes to environmentally friendly behavior (D’amore, 2016; Izenstark & Ebata, 2017; Wynveen et al., 2011).

The benefits of these experiences for children are reflected in the improvement of cognitive and motor skills, as well as a greater probability of their becoming active adults in the future (Dadvand et al., 2015; Laaksoharju et al., 2012). For older people, such experiences improve their integral development, favoring a more active and healthy aging, thus providing more optimal levels of well-being (Castell, 2020; Martínez et al., 2017; Rodríguez et al., 2019).

Among environmental initiatives, family or urban gardens should be highlighted for their ability to transform how spaces, resources, and social relations are managed, favoring intergenerational learning (García et al., 2017; Hake, 2017). Authors like Jamieson (2016), Kala y Galcanová (2016), and Ried (2015) underline the importance of the community dimension in the participation of these experiences linked to these gardens because responsibilities are assumed in the areas where they are installed, focusing on a lifestyle connected to sustainable and beneficial practices with the environment.

The scientific literature indicates that grandparents have a greater preference for nature than individuals of younger generations (Ding, 2017; Jorgensen & Anthopoulou, 2007; Kemperman & Timmermans, 2006; Wen et al., 2018), finding that older people’s favorable attitudes towards natural environments increase their personal satisfaction (Asah et al., 2012; Taye et al., 2019). It is also clear that the taste for leisure activities in natural environments of adults in general--and grandparents in particular--can be transmitted to

the new generations of the family (Asah *et al.*, 2012; Taye *et al.*, 2019; Thompson *et al.*, 2008).

Recently, society has been exposed to extreme conditions due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Concerning leisure, social distancing greatly limited the possibilities for activities and interpersonal connection and broadened the educational and social gap between the most vulnerable groups (Alonso *et al.*, 2020; UNICEF, 2014; Wang *et al.*, 2020). Family structures and the interactions among their members were altered due to the fear of contagion and the vulnerability of older family members (McDarby *et al.*, 2020; Valdemoros *et al.*, 2021). Leisure activities had to be adapted and restructured to the new situation, with great limitations for their development, in some cases, suppressed due to their non-viability (Alonso *et al.*, 2020; Wang *et al.*, 2020).

1. Rationale and Objectives

Due to the pandemic, physical activities in the natural environment have been reduced, while an increase in exposure and contact with technological devices has been detected (Kotrla *et al.*, 2021; Varela *et al.*, 2023), especially in minors (Konok *et al.*, 2020; Yogman *et al.*, 2018). Moreover, poorer eating habits and more sedentary routines have been revealed, with some exceptions in this aspect, depending on the age or socio-economic level of the families, among other issues (Jenssen *et al.*, 2021).

Nevertheless, at present, the effects of the pandemic and climate change have increased pro-social and pro-environmental attitudes (Clayton, 2018; Varela *et al.*, 2023; Wade-Benzoni & Plunkett-Tost, 2009) as well as more responsible attitudes concerning future generations (Syropoulos & Markowitz, 2020, 2021; Wagner, 2020).

In times of the pandemic, the families' role has been essential to adapt to the new situation and restructure leisure practices that allowed all its members to reduce the stress and anxiety derived from this scenario (Álvarez *et al.*, 2023; Gammon & Ramshaw, 2020). Thus, the parents played the role of ensuring adequate management of spaces, times, and resources that facilitated active and healthy entertainment, favoring quality leisure practices despite the limitations presented (Moore *et al.*, 2020).

In summary, it is more than evident that the pandemic has affected the relationships between grandparents and grandchildren, creating challenging situations, either due to limitations or the longing for past situations (Dalton *et al.*, 2020).

Once the benefits of intergenerational environmental leisure and the barriers that affected

family relationships in times of the pandemic were verified, the objective of this study was to analyze the environmental leisure practices shared by grandparents and their grandchildren in the north of Spain in the period immediately before COVID-19, with emphasis on the motives for such practice. We think that, in this way, valuable information will be obtained on the motivations that drive adults and children to share this type of leisure, a source of benefits for both generations and susceptible to be enjoyed in safer environments. This will make it possible to carry out proposals that promote this kind of shared practice.

2. Methodology

Quantitative and qualitative methodology have been combined through descriptive and cross-sectional design, considering their suitability in this research for providing a better understanding of the problem and achieving richer results by complementing objective and quantifiable data with the researchers' interpretation.

Participants

In the quantitative study, the sample consisted of 357 grandfathers and grandmothers of children aged 6 to 12 years living in the north of Spain. This northern area comprised 8 Spanish provinces: Cantabria, Biscay, Guipuzcoa, Alava, La Rioja, Navarre, Burgos, and Palencia).

In a previous phase, the study population was defined based on the statistical data published by the ministries and departments of education of each participating autonomous community. The data collected showed a population size of 250,357 Primary Education students in northern Spain.

Setting an absolute error of 3%, a 95% confidence level, and considering the assumption of $p = q = 0.5$, the sample size was estimated at 1,075 students. With an experimental mortality of 1.11%, the final sample size consisted of 1,063 students, from whom we obtained the sample of the 357 grandparents who voluntarily agreed to participate in the study.

Considering age, 26% were under 65, 27% were between 65 and 69, 25% were between 70 and 74, and 22% were over 75. Most were retired (71%), 13% were doing household chores, only 9% were working (6% self-employed and 3% employed), 4% were pensioners, and 3% were unemployed.

On the other hand, in the qualitative study, the selection of the participants was structural. The different groups were formed according to the criteria of belonging to the group. Homogeneity was guaranteed concerning the social group of

reference (grandparents/grandchildren) and the grandchildren's age range (6-12 years), as well as heterogeneity according to sex, number of grandchildren, and family typology, in addition to ensuring a balance in the number of participants according to the grandparents' geographical origin (rural or urban area).

We followed the recommendations of the experts (González Ríos, 1997; Ibáñez, 2000; Suárez, 2005) to decide the number of participants in the discussion groups, consisting of 9 members: 5 grandfathers and 4 grandmothers. In all cases, they had grandchildren enrolled in primary education, ages 6 to 12 years. All the participants resided in the Autonomous Community of La Rioja.

Instrument

For the quantitative study, an ad hoc questionnaire was used, validated through a pilot test carried out in six educational centers of the different autonomous communities, and evaluated by 10 experts from seven Spanish universities, who approved the definitive application. This questionnaire allowed us to collect relevant information for this study based on 3 variables, defined below:

- Shared leisure with grandchildren. This is a dichotomous variable that records whether the participants share any type of leisure activity with their grandchildren (cultural activities, recreational activities, digital activities, environmental-ecological activities). The established categories are yes/no.
- Leisure-environmental activities shared with grandchildren. This is a dichotomous variable that states whether participants share environmental leisure activity with their grandchildren: traveling, excursions, fishing, or hunting, caring for animals, caring for plants, gardening. The established categories are yes/no.
- The reasons that lead older people to share environmental leisure with their grandchildren, a categorical variable that collected the reasons that guide the practice, through the item "Indicate the reasons why you practice leisure" (1 = *simply because I like it*; 2 = *I take care of them while their parents work*; 3 = *I have no other people with whom to share that activity*; 4 = *They have no other people with whom to share that activity*; 5 = *They know a lot about that activity and teach me*; 6 = *I master that activity and teach it to them*; 7 = *To entertain them*; 8 = *To spend more time with them*).

In the qualitative study, two discussion groups were carried out, configured by grandfathers and grandmothers with grandchildren from 6 to 12 years old, at two different times, once before and once after the pandemic.

The construction of the system of categories used a theoretical basis on leisure within the framework of intergenerational relationships prior to the examination of the transcriptions-deductive phase. Then, in the course of the analysis of the testimonies, the categories increased and branched into several subcategories-inductive phase. A system of 8 general categories and 44 subcategories was thus configured. Table 1 shows the two categories of analysis object of this study.

The subcategory under analysis, environmental leisure, was defined as "occupations related to the environment and ecology that usually take place outdoors and require the presence of some living being, such as animals or plants. This set includes circumstances belonging to nature, whether in the wild or outdoor conditions, or in contexts linked to the cultivation, breeding, or exploitation of living beings to obtain resources".

Finally, we proceeded to validate the system of categories and subcategories of analysis through experts' judgment, obtaining satisfactory results (Valdemoros *et al.*, 2020). Six university research professors, all of them PhDs from the field of Leisure and Pedagogy, intervened as experts.

To measure validity, we used Cohen's (1960, 1968) Kappa index, which indicates the level of agreement between the principal investigator and the rest of the experts. The analysis yielded an almost perfect level with three experts (.862, .818, and .822) and substantial among the other three (.742, .695, and .678).

On the other hand, we calculated the Fleiss (1971) Kappa coefficient, which provides the level of agreement between the experts involved. This coefficient showed a degree of agreement between moderate and very good (between .514 and .907), so we considered the category validation procedure satisfactory (overall score of .697).

Procedure

The questionnaire was applied to the grandparents of students from the schools in each of the 8 provinces that make up the northern part of the Spanish state. The student body received a consent form for the research to give to their parents and/or legal guardians. It contained information about the study, and they were asked to write down the contact of the grandparent who wished to participate to be delivered to the school.

Table 1. System of analysis categories and subcategories		
Category 1	Reasons why they share leisure activities	
Subcategory 1.1	Family feelings	
Subcategory 1.2	Time availability	
Subcategory 1.3	Enjoyment	
Subcategory 1.4	Mutual learning	
Subcategory 1.5	Mutual aid	
Subcategory 1.6	Prevent abuse of digital devices	
Subcategory 1.7	Caregiver role	
Subcategory 1.8	Permissive role	
Category 2	Type of shared leisure activities	
Subcategory 2.1	Physical and sports leisure activities	
Subcategory 2.2	Recreational-Leisure activities	
Subcategory 2.3	Digital leisure activities	
Subcategory 2.4	Ecological-Environmental leisure activities	
Subcategory 2.5	Cultural leisure activities	
Subcategory 2.6	Other	
Source: Valdemoros et al. (2020).		

Five trained investigators contacted the grandparents by phone and completed the questionnaire according to their testimonies. The recording time of the questions was around 30-45 minutes.

The Ethics Committee of the University of La Rioja approved this procedure on December 17,

2019. The positive report of this Ethics Committee was recorded with the code CE_O2_2019.

In the qualitative study, a protocol of questions was followed (Table 2), which served as a guide, also considering the interconnection between the storyline and the research objectives in the process (Rubio & Varas, 2004).

Table 2. Discussion Group Protocol
What leisure activities do you usually share with your grandchildren?
Why do you share leisure with your grandchildren?
Where do these shared activities usually take place?
When (time/season/holiday/frequency) are they usually shared?
What benefit does sharing leisure activities with your grandchildren provide to you?
What benefit does sharing leisure activities provide to your grandchildren?
Source: Valdemoros <i>et al.</i> (2020)

To begin the colloquium, we asked questions of a more general nature and, subsequently, questions more focused on the analysis of the typology of shared leisure activities and, in particular, questions referring to the environmental dimension, as well as the reasons that lead grandparents to share leisure with their grandchildren.

To increase reliability, a single moderator was responsible for initiating, maintaining, and directing the conversation without intervening directly, with the intention of delving into key issues for the study.

With prior authorization, the testimonies were recorded using an audio recorder and subsequently transcribed verbatim, indicating

when and who intervened. The focus group lasted approximately one hour.

Data analysis

Data analysis was performed in two phases using the SPSS 23.0 statistical program. A descriptive study was carried out that, through the frequency statistic, allowed determining the leisure activities that grandparents shared with their grandchildren, the typology of shared environmental leisure activities, and their reasons for this practice.

For the qualitative analysis of the data, NVivo Release 1.6 software was used, which allows the storage and coding of data, the creation of memos, notes, etc., the import of files and documents, and their connection with fragments of speeches.

3. Results

The combined results of the quantitative and qualitative phases obtained before the pandemic are

presented below. We highlight those derived from the post-pandemic discussion group to observe the evolution of environmental leisure practices shared by grandparents and grandchildren in the north of Spain in the context of COVID-19.

All the grandparents surveyed shared leisure activities with their grandchildren, although different percentages were detected depending on the type of leisure (Figure 1), as some activities were hardly shared, and others were widely shared.

Just over 78% carried out some environmental leisure activity with their grandchildren. These data place this type of leisure in an intermediate position regarding other typologies, obtaining figures very similar to festive activities and, at some percentage distance, recreational leisure and cultural leisure, almost universal categories among the grandparents analyzed.

As for the less practiced activities, the differences concerning physical activities are relatively broad. Digital leisure and, above all, solidarity activities, had a practically residual presence.

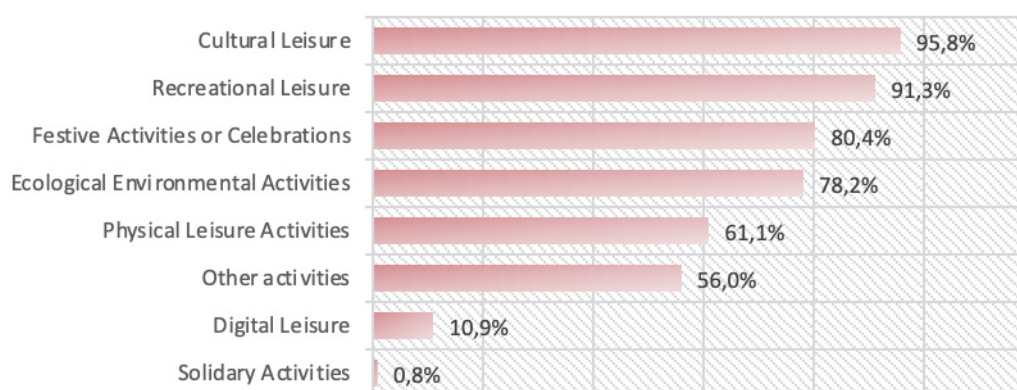


Figure 1. Type of shared leisure activities.
Source: author elaboration

Environmental leisure is not, therefore, the main type of leisure practiced, but it is widespread among a large majority of the population, as almost 8 out of 10 grandparents share it with their grandchildren.

Regarding the type of shared environmental leisure activity (Figure 2), 44.3% of the grandparents participate in trips with their grandchildren, followed by 37.5% who invest their shared leisure time in excursions. Thirty-seven percent carry out activities with their grandchildren related to the care of plants or vegetable gardens, 22.1% to the care of animals, and, finally, a minority, 4.2%, are linked to hunting and fishing.

By focusing on the qualitative analysis, it becomes clear that, before the pandemic, the type of intergenerational environmental leisure practices included those linked to gardens, where, in addition

to vegetables and fruit, it is usual to have a small pen for animals. Some grandparents' testimonies reflecting the most shared environmental leisure activities are transcribed below:

I have an orchard in Baños [La Rioja village] and I have a swimming pool; and in summer, especially, my granddaughters spend a month. They bathe at any time, and they also go at night, I have an indoor pool, and the youngest said, "Yayo, shall we bathe?" And I say yes! [68-YEAR-OLD MALE]

I have had livestock, and the grandchildren took care of the animals with me; they learned to milk and make cheese. I would put a cap on them, I taught them how to do everything, and there was a lot of work, with four grandchildren. And they were delighted, they went up with me ever since they were little. I have photos of them making cheese, and they remember,

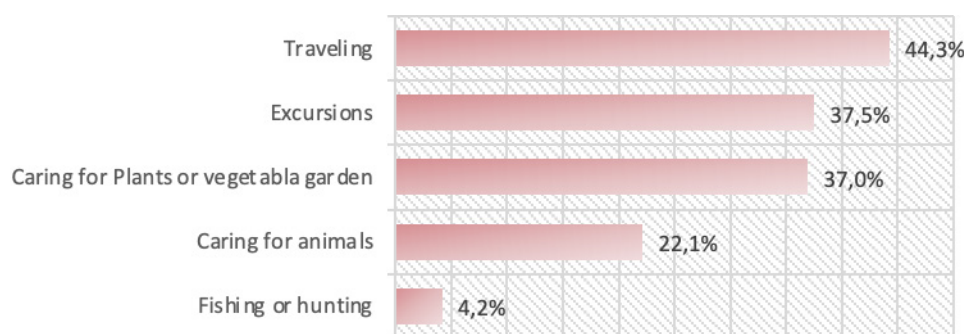


Figure 2. Ecological environmental leisure activities practiced by grandparents and grandchildren.
Source: author elaboration

they tell me: Grandmother! What a pity that I don't have them now! [WOMAN 70 YEARS]

He has given names to all of them, this one X, the other one Y. [68-YEAR-OLD MALE]

From the grandparents' viewpoint, this shared environmental leisure space provides the grandchildren with direct contact with animals, something difficult to experience in the urban context, promoting value towards living beings and understanding that they are vital for our subsistence. This is evidenced in one of the speeches:

I have chickens, and when we are on the farm, we keep them in a fenced pen. As we have a dog, then, the grandson takes them out with a stick, and looks like a shepherd. He takes them with the stick to their place, and they shout at the dog, "Don't you move!"

Regarding the motivations to share this type of leisure, we find two different groups. The two most frequently mentioned reasons, "because I like it" (76.7%) and "to spend more time together" (71%), show the predominant affective or emotional nature of this type of activity. The most practical and useful motivations, such as "to entertain them" (60.6%) or "I take care of them while their parents work" (23.7%), take second place. These five categories are significantly different, both for the practice of general environmental leisure and broken down by the type of activities of this dimension of leisure.

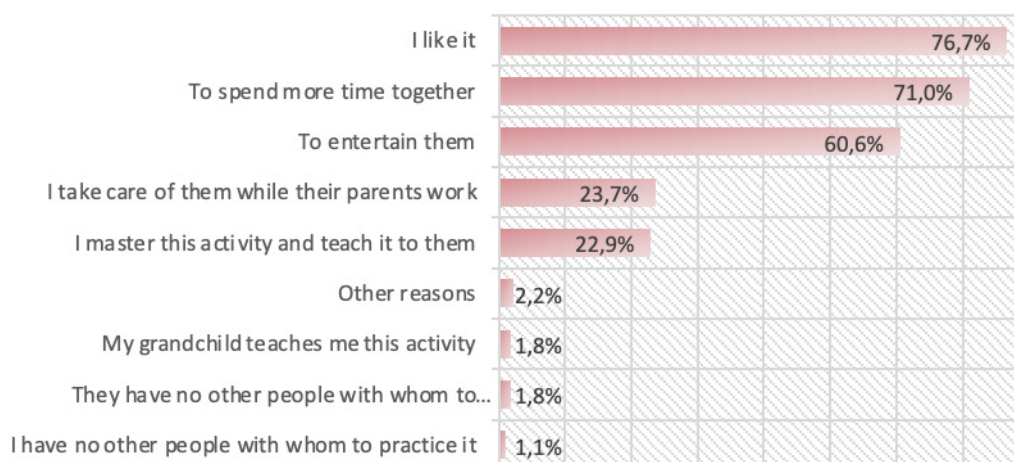


Figure 3. Reasons why environmental leisure experiences are shared.
Source: author elaboration

The pattern of motivations is repeated for the most concrete activities. However, we observe some significant differences, as in the case of "taking care of plants or vegetable gardens" or "hunting," which are related to mastering the activities because they require knowledge and experience that the grandchildren do not possess.

Another difference is in the case of traveling, and its low score in "I take care of them while their parents work", which can be understood by the frequency with which parents accompany grandchildren and grandparents in these cases.

From the grandparents' testimonies in the discussion groups carried out before the

pandemic, it is clear that knowledge and shared experience are especially valuable as reasons for this type of experience together. This is evident in the speech of one of the grandfathers:

My 6-year-old grandson, one day when planting onions, says: Grandpa, I help you! So, you put an onion, pin, pin, pin, and you do it [I said]. And I taught him, and he enjoyed collaborating [70 YEARS OLD]

This sense of sharing, feeling recognized in his tasks by the grandchild, is very gratifying, considering that these experiences will last forever in the grandchildren's memory. They are regarded as natural learning, a product of the context and the lived experience, really significant for his grandson. This is evidenced in another of the testimonies:

My grandson is 24 years old and he hasn't forgotten anything we did in the garden when he was 5 or 6. [WOMAN 65 YEARS]

Intergenerational experiences are also of great richness in the school context, and the presence of grandparents in classes brings children closer to situations that they will hardly be able to experience nowadays. This is related by one of the grandparents, who spent three years telling his experiences to a classroom of Early Childhood Education, through stories, poetry, and memories of his childhood, with the children entering an unknown world that they will most likely not get to visit.

They enjoy seeing me, I bring them birds' nests without eggs, I put in four hazelnuts as eggs in the autumn. The parents tell them that "now, there are no nests," but they tell them, "yes, because somebody's grandfather has brought some nests," because at school, I am the grandfather of Jaime or Millán: "Millán's grandfather!" they say. They enjoy it, but I enjoy it even more with them. [72-YEAR-OLD MALE]

When comparing the discourses about intergenerational environmental leisure obtained in the two discussion groups surrounding the pandemic, before the pandemic, we observe the presence of different topics, among which stand out life in the countryside and nature as an educational element of the grandchildren's leisure, as well as the importance of vegetable gardens. They reflect on the differences between living in the countryside and the city. In this pre-pandemic period, grandparents focus on the importance of summer and the possibilities it offers to increase environmental leisure shared with their grandchildren.

The discourses analyzed in post-pandemic times indicate a change in social and family relationships,

which have been modified in everyday life and, therefore, the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren has deteriorated. As arguments in favor, they express the excellent relations facilitated by the countryside and the villages, the vegetable garden, and the swimming pool, which are identified as ideal meeting and recreation places. They consider the village as their own space to educate grandchildren. In this period, summer also stands out as the ideal time to be with the grandchildren and interact with them and, again, the pool and the vegetable garden take center stage as preferred spaces for environmental leisure.

The grandparents feel that the pandemic has broken the thread that maintained the relationship, especially the family one. They have the feeling that nothing will ever be the same. They live from the memory of "before," with the feeling that, at their age, this lost time is very important in their life, and they will probably not return to the real normality of physical and affective contact they were previously carving out with so much effort and dedication. This is expressed in speeches such as the following:

Although I, after the confinement, see them much more, I hardly do any activities. The parents don't let me do any activities with them. And if we are together, we must be separate. Instead of a neck hug, we give them a waist hug. I just don't know how to tell you. This is very sad. [WOMAN 68 YEARS]
The social relationship has been lost. We have less illusion, less desire to go out, to relate. We have lost a lot of contact compared to what we were doing before the pandemic. [72-YEAR-OLD MALE]

The grandparents regret the consequences that have accompanied the pandemic and confinement in some shared environmental activities that they enjoyed so much, as evidenced in this speech:

We started that garden between my friend and me, which, by the way, is now abandoned. All the kids came with the plants, and you had to make a hole and put them in. We planted potatoes-nobody had seen what a potato was like-we planted it; they thought they came from heaven [smiling]. [68-YEAR-OLD MALE]

The grandparents agree that in the post-pandemic period, it is more necessary and important, if possible, to share this type of environmental activities, citing reasons such as those reflected in the following testimonies:

You feel more like going up to the village. Walking because when you walk through the mountains, you

don't have to wear a mask... It's different. Now there is more contact with nature because it is the best alternative to be together [the whole group agrees]. [WOMAN 70 YEARS]

It's never going to be the same anymore. Nothing can be the same. Everything is different. They go to the mountains and take some sandwiches, and try to be outdoors on the weekend if possible, if it does not rain. [WOMAN 68 YEARS]

4. Discussion and Conclusions

Although environmental activities are not the main type of leisure shared by grandparents and grandchildren, it can be said that they are widespread among the population of this study. We found that leisure activities that take place in natural environments are increasingly practiced by grandparents and grandchildren, with natural spaces constituting exceptional scenarios to share intergenerational leisure, a finding that aligns with other previous studies (Iso-Ahola, 1980; López Quintás, 1998; Varela et al., 2023).

Regarding the type of shared environmental leisure activity, trips and excursions hold a preferential position, followed by those related to caring for plants or a vegetable garden, and the care of animals. At the other extreme, with hardly any presence, are activities related to hunting and fishing, although some studies (Spyrou et al., 2021) highlight the potential of intergenerational fishing activities to generate a significant sense of identity and belonging, given the important social relationships and the processes of learning and transmission of knowledge that occur in them.

From the grandparents' viewpoint, these experiences are fundamental for the grandchildren to have direct contact with nature, which is difficult to experience in the urban context and which promotes value and respect for living beings and the understanding that they are vital for our subsistence.

The transmission of knowledge to grandchildren in natural environments is established as a cardinal reason for grandparents when sharing environmental-ecological leisure activities with children, a statement that agrees with the findings of other authors (Asah et al., 2012; Taye et al., 2019; Thompson et al., 2008).

Likewise, in tune with Kobayashi et al. (2019), affective or emotional reasons are revealed as outstanding for this shared practice, as they are linked to autotelic leisure and the satisfaction generated by spending more time with the grandchildren. More practical and useful reasons also gain prominence, considering the children's

care (Di Gessa et al., 2020) and entertainment, and the grandparents' conviction that the enjoyment of outdoor activities is transmitted intergenerationally (Lee and Burns, 2022).

Although the pattern of motivations is repeated for most of the environmental activities analyzed, our study has found some significant differences, as in the case of caring for plants or vegetable gardens and hunting, where the motives involve mastering the activity, as these practices require knowledge and experience that the grandchildren do not yet possess. Another difference is shown in the low score obtained in care as a stimulus to share trips, which could be justified by the frequency with which the parents accompany the grandchildren and grandparents in these cases.

The testimonies of the discussion groups reinforce the above, verifying that the knowledge and shared experience, which translates into genuine and meaningful natural learning for grandchildren, are highly valued as reasons for intergenerational environmental leisure practice.

Grandparents perceive that they have increasingly less time to enjoy this type of shared leisure, which may be because the pandemic has conditioned the experience of intergenerational leisure, forcing them to allocate more time to a different kind of leisure at home (Kotrla et al., 2021), sacrificing the activities they enjoyed outdoors (Alonso et al., 2020).

However, activities such as gardens have become excellent places, both for grandparents and grandchildren, for the practice of shared environmental leisure, which could be maintained and even increased. This has occurred also after the pandemic, helping to strengthen affective bonds, and allowing the transmission of knowledge (García et al., 2017; Hake, 2017).

COVID-19 has had negative effects, especially on grandparents, by reducing intergenerational contact times and making them feel obliged to adapt the leisure activities shared with their grandchildren that were previously part of their daily lives, as reported by Wang et al. (2020).

Although intergenerational leisure in the natural environment and rural areas was highly valued by grandparents, after the pandemic, this value has increased even more.

In summary, these are the conclusions that emerge from this study:

- Outdoor leisure activities are widely practiced among grandparents and grandchildren. The village, the countryside, the mountain, or vegetable gardens are excellent scenarios to share leisure between the two generations.

- The environmental leisure activities practiced in gardens favor intergenerational relations, improve the links between grandparents and grandchildren, and favor the transmission of knowledge.
- There is currently a greater interest in nature and outdoor activities than in pre-pandemic times.
- The transmission of knowledge within environmental leisure activities is one of the main motivations encouraging grandparents to practice them with their grandchildren. Working in the garden, caring for animals and plants, as well as collaborating in farming tasks are experienced by the grandparents as a source of intergenerational learning.
- After the pandemic, the value attached to contact with villages and natural environments has increased, as they facilitate intergenerational contact in safer environments.

As a limitation of the study, we note that it was impossible to apply the same questionnaire in person immediately after confinement, given the imposed restrictions, so the information collected for the comparison was reduced to the discussion groups. Likewise, social desirability may have conditioned the grandparents' discourse concerning leisure activities shared with their grandchildren (Caputo, 2017).

Given the current importance and impact of technologies for use in outdoor activities and nature, as a future line of research, we propose to deepen the possibilities of this type of device in environmental leisure practices. In this way, we can delve into the opportunities they offer for the optimization of this practice shared by grandfathers, grandmothers, granddaughters, and grandsons to take advantage of the transformative potential of education for a more sustainable, ecological, and social future (Luzón *et al.*, 2023).

Contributions

Contributions	Authors
Conception and design of work	Author 1, 2, 3
Documentary search	Author 1
Data collet	Author 1, 2, 3
Analysis and critical interpretation of data	Author 3
Review and approval of versions	Author 2

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Conflict interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

Notas

¹ Throughout the document, we attempt to use inclusive language, although “under Law 3/2007 of 22 March, for the effective equality of women and men, any reference to positions, persons, or groups included in this document in the masculine, are to be understood as including both women and men.”

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