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Rural population and global citizenship: Information, media and opinions on world problems
--Manuscript Draft--

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Abstract:	Support for global citizenship depends not only on the will of governments, but also on the opinions and feelings of their citizens. Success in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals for 2030 depends to a great extent on the level of information and the awareness of the population. This qualitative study examined the main sources from which the inhabitants of rural areas receive information on global issues. It also sought their opinions on global citizenship. To this end, we held interviews with qualified informants and focus groups with residents of municipalities of different sizes in north-eastern Spain. The results highlight the importance of television and internet as the media most used by the rural population as sources of information. Physical proximity was also found to be a crucial factor in motivating rural citizens who often feel distanced from global issues. Many others do not support development cooperation policies, because they feel isolated and live in areas with dwindling populations.

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Author Comments:	Dear editor, I appreciate the reviewers' evaluations. I am attaching... - A rebuttal letter with a point-by-point response to each of the editor's and reviewers' comments. - A marked-up version of the revised manuscript with the changes highlighted in colour. - A clean version of the revised manuscript. In case the article could be accepted for publication, I should make a slight change in one of the figures. thank you! I had the time to make the changes.

	Regards,
	the authors
Response to Reviewers:	Thank you very much for deciding that our manuscript could be reconsidered for publication after making significant changes. We have carefully considered the reviewers' comments. Our answers to the comments made by the respective referees are set out here below (in red).
	Reviewer #1:
	The manuscript addresses an interesting topic for the Social Sciences. My suggestions for its improvement are:
	The first part of the summary is not sufficiently related to the second (in relation to the results obtained). The first part is too abstract and should be made more concrete. It would be interesting to add some more literature on media consumption by citizens (now almost non-existent).
	The reviewer is right. We have significantly changed the first few pages of the introduction. We have deleted about 900 words and added approximately 1500 new words. In these new ideas we highlight the addition of around 16 references.
	Authors must clearly define what the concept of global citizenship refers to.
	The reviewer is right. We have decided to use the definition provided by Nussbaum (1994) and have also consulted other research that discusses this definition (Stromquist 2009; Boni Aristizábal 2011).
	It is necessary for the authors to explain which contents have the interviews carried out with mayors and journalists.
	We have included the central questions explored in the interview with the mayors: needs and concerns of the inhabitants; interest in local, national and international affairs; communication channels between the mayor's office and the citizens
	Instead of using the term analog, the authors should use analog. Likewise, social networks should also be changed to social media, when the authors refer to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or WhatsApp.
	We did not understand the first sentence of this observation very well. Anyway, we have removed all references that speak of the "analog/digital" binomial to talk about traditional and new media. We have changed "social networks" to "social media".
	The section "Reasons to support development policies: The section on the crucial factor of isolation and few resources" is very underdeveloped. The authors should dig a little deeper into these questions, as the results are now sketchy at this point. Furthermore, figure 3 is not sufficiently explained in the manuscript.
	We appreciate this suggestion. We have expanded this section and explained Figure 3 better.
	My main criticism of the manuscript is that the concept of global citizenship is not articulated convincingly enough with the analysis of media consumption by the rural population and the rest of the items studied. I believe that authors should strive to interconnect in a fluid and coherent way the different elements that they introduce in their research (global citizenship, rural environment, media consumption, emotions and isolation). Now, in my opinion, there is little connection between these aspects and that conveys the feeling of some disorganization in the manuscript and the lack of a coherent and focused research. It seems that the manuscript is changing topics without a smooth transition and the final feeling when reading it is one of some confusion and bewilderment. This causes that the core claims of the paper are not explicitly clear.
	We recognize this structural problem and consider that it has now been resolved. Following the work of Nussbaum (1994) we present the idea of global citizenship as public policy (UNESCO 2015) on the basis of his theory of cosmopolitanism. In addition, the concept of cosmopolitan empathy (Beck, 2006) connects with information on global problems, rural population, media and emotion.
	Is the paper methodologically and/or analytically sound? Is sufficient detail provided? The methodology is adequate and well described. It is necessary for the authors to explain which contents have the interviews carried out with mayors and journalists. Done
	Does it provide appropriate evidence or reasoning for the conclusions? Yes, the conclusions are based on the results obtained
	Does it make a contribution to the literature (however incremental)—irrespective to perceived magnitude or significance? If not, please identify the major papers that suggest otherwise. The contribution made by the manuscript is limited. The

articulation of the different concepts used by the research and their consistency should be improved
We have included 16 new references
Is the paper presented in an intelligible fashion and in standard English? Is the manuscript clearly written and structured? If not, how could it be made more accessible?   Some style changes need to be made on some concepts.
Done. The paper has been carefully corrected and the style has been improved.
What are the core claims of the paper? Are these clearly conveyed in the abstract and conclusions?   The core claims of the paper core claims of the paper are not clear
This issue has been resolved
Is the surrounding relevant and recent literature adequately presented? It would be interesting to add some more literature on media consumption by citizens (now almost non-existent)
This issue has been resolved

Reviewer #2:

This is a well-written and methodologically sound paper about the influencing of Information, media and opinions on world problems in rural areas. As a suggestion for enriching the work, authors may consider the possibility of considering the effects of Information, media and opinions they have on each other, giving more meaning to the managerial and policy implications of the paper, which could be improved.
We have improved the theoretical relationship between information, media and opinions based on Zeller's theory of public opinion (1992). We have also improved the relationships between these concepts based on the results and conclusions.

Reviewer #3:
I am interested about the topics brings by this manuscript. I believe that the article and its findings will be of interest to the readers of this journal. There are several points that need to be take care of. In general is a high potential article that could be strengthened through the revision. Despite the meaningful nature of the topic, the literature review doesn't do enough to establish a clear theoretical or practical problem that this research is trying to address. I suggest the author choose a theory relate to or able to explain global citizenship, for example, cosmopolitanism, to make the manuscript theoretically significant.
We thank the reviewer for his/her comments and suggestions because they have helped us improve the article. We have significantly increased the literature review, including 15 new references and have restructured the first part completely. Following his/her suggestions, we have included the theory of cosmopolitanism proposed by Nussbaum (1994).
This will also help the author strengthen the conclusion and discussion. In the current manuscript, the conclusion and discussion are too interpretative but not contribute to related theory.
We have improved the conclusions and discussion to include the central findings of the research
In addition, the authors declare that they use semantic and interpretive analysis, which is not appropriate to use here. Considering the result part, the authors are in fact using discourse analysis or critical discourse analysis. The authors need to distinguish and clarify the exact methods they use.
This observation is very relevant and we have incorporated critical discourse analysis as proposed by Fairclough (2013).
Is the paper methodologically and/or analytically sound? Is sufficient detail provided? This paper uses appropriate method to study the phenomenon. Although it's not sufficient, but in general acceptable.
We hope to have improved the methodology by eliminating the references to semantic interpretation and leaving only the critical discourse analysis.
Does it provide appropriate evidence or reasoning for the conclusions? Yes. This paper provides data from interviews and focus groups to support their conclusion.
Does it make a contribution to the literature (however incremental)—irrespective to perceived magnitude or significance? If not, please identify the major papers that suggest otherwise.   The literature of this paper is relatively weak. The authors need to improve.
We have included 16 new references
Is the paper presented in an intelligible fashion and in standard English? Is the

manuscript clearly written and structured? If not, how could it be made more accessible?   Yes. The language uses in this paper is standard and the manuscript is well structured.

What are the core claims of the paper? Are these clearly conveyed in the abstract and conclusions?   The core research question is quite clear but the core claims are not clear. The authors need to have a better conclusion.

This issue has been resolved

Is the surrounding relevant and recent literature adequately presented? No. This is the weakest part of the manuscript which need to be take care of.

This issue has been resolved

Rural population and global citizenship: Information, media and opinions on world problems

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Declarations

The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare that are relevant to the content of this article.

Data availability statement

Our manuscript contains data which cannot be made available for reasons disclosed in the data
availability statement.

They are qualitative interviews, in the original language, Spanish, with people who requested
anonymity and confidentiality in the interviews. In the paper we offer information on the
positions, professions, hometowns and sociodemographic variables to guarantee the accuracy
of the sources, but we cannot reveal the verbatim transcripts of the interviews because, in small
towns, in particular, the participants would be easily recognizable.

ABSTRACT

Support for global citizenship depends not only on the will of governments, but also on the

opinions and feelings of their citizens. Success in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals

for 2030 depends to a great extent on the level of information and the awareness of the population.

This qualitative study examined the main sources from which the inhabitants of rural areas receive

information on global issues. It also sought their opinions on global citizenship. To this end, we

held interviews with qualified informants and focus groups with residents of municipalities of

different sizes in north-eastern Spain. The results highlight the importance of television and

internet as the media most used by the rural population as sources of information. Physical

proximity was also found to be a crucial factor in motivating rural citizens who often feel distanced

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from global issues. Many others do not support development cooperation policies, because they feel isolated and live in areas with dwindling populations.

INTRODUCTION

Attention to global issues, international development and cooperation are constituent elements of the foreign policy of states. Their importance on the government agenda depends on interests, beliefs and political ideologies which, given their public nature, are influenced by the available information, and the attitudes, opinions and motivations of the population. This study aims to analyse, from a qualitative perspective, the main sources from which the inhabitants of rural areas obtain information on global issues, the quality of this information and their reasons for supporting or rejecting development policies.

The seminal study by Zaller (1992) argues that public opinion is formed by the interaction between the information received by the public from many different sources in their everyday lives and their own particular predispositions. Information is an organized set of processed data about events. These data are dynamic and variable. Our predispositions are by contrast the product of a varied spectrum of interests, values, beliefs and personal experiences which are themselves determined to some extent by our role or status within society. These predispositions affect the way we reach a judgement or come to a conclusion about a particular event.

The purpose of this research is to find out how the inhabitants of rural areas inform themselves and what their predispositions are regarding support for international development cooperation and global citizenship. In order to be able to answer this question, we must first define what we mean by global citizenship and observe how people inform themselves about global affairs, focusing particularly on the rural population. We will then go on to analyse the fundamental role played by predispositions in the formation of opinions and attitudes.

Global citizenship and information media in the rural population

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Global citizenship is a complex issue. There are many possible definitions, some of them quite vague and others more precise (Stromquist 2009). In this article we will be highlighting the perspective of global citizenship proposed by Nussbaum (1994), who was inspired by the cosmopolitanism of the Stoics and adapted it to a contemporary viewpoint (Boni Aristizábal 2011). For Nussbaum there are a series of universal functions and activities that lead to a good life. These include life, health, bodily integrity, sociability, emotions, thought and respect for nature. Nussbaum was concerned about the growing provincialism of the United States and defended an education system that taught human diversity and prepared its students to be future citizens of the world. In this sense, global citizenship is a form of citizen identity that is committed to the community of human beings as a whole. Nussbaum considers that this community will progress if global problems can be resolved through international cooperation. In this way, global citizenship promotes a sense of belonging to a human community through political, economic, social and cultural interdependence (UNESCO 2015).

Nussbaum (1994) recognizes the importance of knowledge and information about humanity's problems. Several other studies of democratic participation policies have also highlighted the role played by information and knowledge about rights in the base scale of civic commitment and engagement (Rojas & Puig 2009; Östman 2012, Monk 2013; Carlsson & Nilsson 2016).

Information is an indispensable requirement for forming an idea about a particular public issue (Zaller 1992; McCombs 2018). Information about the causes of global problems can promote civic participation (Argibay et al. 1997; Yubero & Larrañaga 2002) and build cosmopolitan empathy (Beck, 2006).

Within our specific context, it is therefore necessary to ask: How do people in rural areas obtain information about global problems? The answer depends on the country, the age group, and the region in which people live. In recent years, the most important change in terms of sources of information has been the expansion of social media. Social media technologies have opened up many new ways of engaging with news beyond the scope of what has traditionally been regarded as journalism, ranging from liking Instagram photos to forming discussion groups on WhatsApp (Swart et. al. 2018). For some researchers, the main contribution of social media is that they enable audiences to participate in many different ways (Park et al. 2011).

In the United States of America, two-thirds of adults (65%) use social media to get information (Perrin, 2015). Social media have affected all walks of life such as work, politics, the economy and culture. People are informed and share information on social media about everything and anything. By age, young people are the most connected, while those over 65 are the least (only 35%).

Spain has one of the highest levels of Internet connection in Europe. 93.2% of people from 16 to 75 years use the Internet and 69.4% use social media (71% women; 67.5% men). However, and this is very important for our research, Internet use decreases in line with the size of the town or city. In cities with over 100,000 inhabitants, 90.4% of the population are users, whereas in small towns with less than 10,000 inhabitants the figure is lower at 83.7% (INE, 2020).

There is no academic consensus regarding the impact of new media in rural areas. Some conclude that face-to-face communication remains important in rural areas and that citizens also obtain information from local newspapers and television (Miller et. al. 2012; Warburton et. al. 2014; Rumata & Sakinah 2020). Some talk about hybrid information and complementary communication (Perrin 2015; Núñez Ladevéze et. al. 2019; Villafañe et. al 2020), while others conclude that the new media are completely changing communication and information supply (Costera Meijer & Groot Kormelink 2014) in rural areas (Kavanaugh et. al. 2014; Carlsson & Nilsson 2016; Swart et. al. 2018).

In the first group we should highlight the work of Miller et. al. (2012), who argued that, despite major technological changes, rural residents are still more inclined to trust word-of-mouth sources (Miller et. al. 2012). His work compared information sources and topics of interest in rural communities, small cities, suburbs, and large cities.

The residents of small towns and villages are more likely to rely on traditional news platforms such as television and newspapers for their local news; newspapers are especially important as a source of civic information (about for example community events, schools, arts and culture, etc.). Residents of smaller towns are also the most likely to worry about what would happen if the local newspaper no longer existed (Miller et. al. 2012).

Small city residents (31%) and rural residents (34%) are more likely than those in larger cities (21%) and suburbs (16%) to rely solely on "traditional" forms of media for their local news such as local print newspapers and broadcast television (Miller et. al. 2012). Rural communities are

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less interested in following international news compared to larger towns and cities (54% vs. 58%). The larger the population, the greater the interest in international affairs. By contrast, rural communities are more interested in local news (73%) than people in large cities (68%).

The second line of research proposes hybrid information sources. These experts talk about a convergence between old and new media (Perrin 2015; Núñez Ladevéze, et al. 2019; Villafañe et al. 2020). In the USA more than half of rural residents use social media. Those who live in rural areas are less likely to use social media than those in suburban and urban communities, a pattern that has remained consistent over the past decade. In 2015, 58% of rural residents, 68% of suburban residents, and 64% of urban residents used social media (Perrin, 2015). In Spain, despite the progressive penetration of new devices for accessing social media, the number of TVs has not declined. Television remains a product of mass consumption (Núñez Ladevéze et. al. 2019).

The third group are more pessimistic about traditional media as a source of information in their specific research with rural communities. Europe and Asia are undergoing a similar process of digitalisation of journalism and the rise of social media (Kavanaugh et al. 2014; Carlsson & Nilsson 2016). Carlsson & Nilsson (2016) discovered a new discursive technique that contributes to knowledge production, and helps form rural identities around social media. When rural communities use social media, they are seen as a new way for community news and public service institutions to reach certain segments of the audience that they would otherwise miss. For many small and rural communities in different parts of the world, information has shifted away from traditional sources such as local newspapers, radio and TV coverage of local issues to new online sources (Kavanaugh et al. 2014).

Swart et al. (2018) observed declining subscription and viewing rates for traditional media; they found that attention to the public information spread by legacy news media institutions can no longer be assumed, and therefore that newspapers and broadcasters may become less valuable as shared frames of reference within society.

Some studies from this third group affirm that today, with all the changes in communication technology, we do not even have to search for news items that might be of interest to us as these are fed to us directly (Costera Meijer & Groot Kormelink 2014). Accessing news is now so easy (and even entertaining) that checking a news app is the first thing that many people do when they

wake up. In addition, the digitalization of journalism has created an enormous range of opportunities and options for reading, watching, viewing, listening, checking, snacking, monitoring, scanning, searching and clicking on news (Costera Meijer & Groot Kormelink 2014).

Predispositions and public opinion on development cooperation

The object of this research is to discover how the inhabitants of the rural areas of north-eastern Spain obtain information and what reasons they put forward for supporting development cooperation and global citizenship. There are currently very few qualitative studies in Spain that have explored these issues (Llopis-Goig 2007; Miguel-González et al. 2012; Carracedo et al. 2016).

Conversely, a great deal of research has been done in other countries on the levels of public support for global citizenship and development cooperation policies (Zimmerman 2007; Van Heerde and Hudson 2010; Milner and Tingley 2013; Heinrich, Kobayashi and Bryant 2016).

Some of these studies analyse, using a quantitative, public opinion approach, different sociodemographic variables for identifying patterns regarding the reasons and opinions that lead people to support or reject the idea of global citizenship. These variables include gender, educational level, (Henson and Lindstrom 2013), income (Chong and Gradstein 2006) and the economic context (Heinrich, Kobayashi & Bryant 2016). These studies concluded that public opinion prefers the 'native' poor to the poor from other countries, especially during periods of economic recession, and the higher the level of individual income, the more likely the person was to support human rights and international aid.

Identifying the sources of information on international news and the variables that influence support for development cooperation is an important first step, but we must also ask ourselves what people do with the information they receive. As mentioned earlier, there is a second ingredient when it comes to forming an opinion or attitude, namely predispositions (Zaller 1992). Rugeley & Gerlach (2012) argue that the way in which people build their attitudes can only be modified at high cost, so that citizens receive the information and heuristically process it to form their opinions. They found that with more complex problems, citizens rely on familiar shortcuts such as party identification, ideology and the media.

In addition to these shortcuts, there is other research that cites the importance of emotions in building public opinion on national and global problems. According to Miller (2007), media exposure can increase accessibility to information, which in turn can influence decisions of national importance, although his thesis is that emotions can be more decisive than accessibility. A possible determinant of the priority given to the different issues on the political agenda is the emotional reactions aroused by a news story. There are at least three ways people can use emotions to help them decide whether a problem is important: (1) the threat this problem entails; (2) the negative consequences of the problem; and (3) the belief that the problem has been neglected. All of these reasons arouse negative emotional reactions. Valentino *et al.* (2008) explored the role of emotion as a mediator in the process of becoming a politically informed citizen. The only emotion that boosted the search for information and learning was anxiety. Anger tended to reduce the search for information.

Much of the recent research in the global citizenship field has analysed the construction of opinions, perceptions and motivations in favour of the environment and against climate change (Leggewie & Welzer 2010; Rugeley & Gerlach 2012; Robison & Jansson-Boyd 2013; Rajapaksa, Islam & Managi 2018). There are few studies, however, that analyse rural people's opinions about global problems and their reasons for supporting or rejecting cooperation and development policies.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The purpose of this study is to identify the main media sources and the quality of the information obtained by the rural population in the province of Zaragoza on global problems. We will also be analysing the reasons they put forward for supporting or rejecting development policies. To this end, we used a critical discourse analysis (Fairclough 2013) based on qualitative techniques with a primary information source, specifically interviews with qualified informants and discussion groups with residents from small, medium and large municipalities in the province. This type of study is exploratory because it seeks to identify emerging relationships between categories and discourses. It is not intended for use as a basis for more generalized conclusions.

Primary Information Source

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The province of Zaragoza is located in the northeast of the Iberian Peninsula. It consists of 292 municipalities (the capital of the province is excluded) distributed in 17 counties (*comarcas*). According to the Aragon Institute of Statistics (IAEST), these municipalities had 257,093 inhabitants in 2019.

The study sample was made up of three municipalities in the province of Zaragoza. These towns were selected on the basis of their size so as to find out whether size can influence people's perceptions of global issues (Gómez-Quintero *et al.* 2019). In addition to size, other selection factors included distance from the provincial capital and the fact that they belonged to different counties.

One of the municipalities was small (fewer than 2,000 inhabitants), one was medium-sized (between 2,000 and 10,000 inhabitants) and the other was large (more than 10,000 inhabitants). These are the standard definitions of town size used by the IAEST. The following towns were chosen: small town (in the Campo de Belchite county); medium-sized town (Valdejalón county); and large town (Cinco Villas county). The three towns are located in different geographical areas of the province which are representative of the different counties.

After selecting the municipalities, we then selected and interviewed representatives of the local administration. We also held three focus groups with citizens of both sexes and different ages (Table 1). The age scales were chosen according to Gómez-Quintero *et al.* (2019), who investigated the levels of information, interest and commitment regarding global issues in the rural population. The first group consisted of passive subjects who were not interested in international information, composed mainly of people over 55 years of age. A second group consisted of aware but inactive people, and comprised young people aged from 15 to 34. The third group was made up of proactive individuals, with good specific information and ethical commitment, in this case adults between 35 and 55 years old.

Another of the goals of this research was to identify the sources local people used to find information on global problems. To this end we decided to contact local leaders of public opinion in rural areas, and in particular mayors and journalists. The local journalists' point of view is particularly important given the influence of the news media as builders of public opinion. To this end we interviewed three local journalists who are experts on media information in their local communities. They told us which media are most popular, what the main issues of interest are

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and which issues people tend to ignore. Their work consists of selecting information, contextualising it, explaining it and presenting it to the public. There were no journalists resident in the small and medium-sized towns, so we met journalists from nearby municipalities or regional media (Table 2).

Mayors are elected by the people of the town and are normally well aware of their needs and proposals. In rural areas, in particular, mayors have a close relationship with the citizenry. With this in mind we conducted interviews with the mayors of three towns of different sizes. In these towns we also organized focus groups for which we chose a total of 22 citizens of different sexes, age groups and ideological positions (Table 1). They were all encouraged to express their opinions, beliefs and motivations.

Table 1.

Selection of qualitative sample in the different towns

Town*	Focus group	Interviews	Date
Small town 551 residents	8 people: 4 women, 4 men. Age: 3 under 34; 5 older than 55.	Mayor	18 December 2017
Medium-sized town 2,894 residents	8 people: 4 women, 4 men. Age: 4 under 34; 4 older than 55.	Mayor	15 December 2017
Large town 17,596 residents	6 people: 4 women, 2 men. Age: 5 under 34; 1 older than 55.	Mayor	19 December 2017

* Source: (Municipal Register 2017). Source: Official Population statistics from Aragon Institute of Statistics. BOE (Official State Bulletin) 29/12/2017. Accessed: 16 March 2018.

Table 2.

Interviews with local or regional journalists

Media	Journalists interviewed
Press office in the Municipality of Calatayud	Date: 15 December 2017. Journalist
Radio Station: Cadena SER, Radio Zaragoza	Date: 15 December 2017. Journalist
TV Channel: Aragon Television	Date: 20 December 2017. Journalist

Information Gathering and Data Analysis Techniques

The methodological framework is grounded in qualitative research, and specifically in critical discourse analysis (Fairclough 2013), which seeks to understand the phenomenon being studied by exploring the experiences of the participants, and placing emphasis on substantive meanings. We decided that the most suitable methods for gathering information would be focus groups and in-depth interviews. Focus groups are ideal ways of gathering people's opinions because they

encourage debate and participation (De Miguel 2005). We set up a focus group in each locality with a representative group of local residents. We used a non-standard method (Anguera 2004), where the researcher proposes a range of open topics to encourage discussion between the participants, without a predetermined script of questions and without intervening in the conversation between the members of the group.

The focus group discussions were divided into three blocks: sources of information on global issues; global citizenship and the types of issues they found most interesting or concerning; reasons for supporting global citizenship and development policies.

For journalists and mayors, we used individual structured interviews and a script with specific questions on topics such as the needs and concerns of local people; their interest in local, national and international affairs; communication channels between the mayor's office and the citizens. We carried out a categorical, interpretive and deductive analysis with a view to identifying emerging categories. Using deductive analysis, we designed a map with a list of categories selected on the basis of existing literature and field notes (Table 3).

Table 3.

Categories and segments selected

Categories	Nº Textual segment selected
1 Information	43
2 Motivation	82
3 Social commitment	40
4 Awareness raising	38
5 Knowledge	30

With this code map, we proceeded to categorise and analyse the textual segments obtained and selected. Of the 648 segments, 233 were selected as being particularly representative and explanatory of the categories set out in Table 3 (information, motivation, social commitment awareness raising and knowledge). The order in which these categories appear in the table is also important as it follows the ranking of development and global citizenship proposed by Ortega-Carpio (2008) and UNESCO (2015). Analysis was carried out through the MaxQDA computer data program, which facilitated the encoding and categorisation process and helped pinpoint conceptual relationships between classes to generate critical discourse analysis.

'Open coding' was used to develop early provisional interpretations; 'axial coding' was applied to examine each code in depth and find out more about their properties and relationships; and there

was also a 'central category', which was able to integrate and summarise all emerging categories through 'selective coding'. This provided the essential framework for our interpretation of the results (Gibbs 2012).

RESULTS

The qualitative results seek to establish the significance of the answers provided during the testimony of informants and participants. This study also seeks to identify and classify discursive positions that have so far been little investigated in exploratory studies in this field of knowledge. We present the results of our analysis according to the following structure: the main media sources of information on global problems, the quality of the information obtained, the ways this information can affect emotions and the reasons for seeking information on global issues and supporting development policies. One striking finding was that a feeling of isolation amongst the rural population was related to the withdrawal of support for these policies.

What are the Main Sources of Media Information on Global Problems?

In the discussions on media and sources of information, many participants highlighted the substantial differences between traditional and new media. Some pointed out that it is important to 'know how to look' when using the Internet, while the mainstream media select particular news stories or information which the public then reads, hears or sees. They believe that users are just as likely to find reliable information (or misinformation) on the Internet as in traditional media.

In addition to the Internet, some informants also regarded television as their favourite medium. There were three main reasons for this: the emotional impact engraved on the retina or visual memory, the dynamic combination of image, sound and movement, and the testimonial value of the live narrator.

Participants claimed to recall news of international importance due to the visual and emotional impact of the event. In fact, one of the informants used an interesting metaphor to describe this process: 'hot stamping'. This metaphor probably alludes to the branding of cattle with hot irons. The pain suffered by the branded animal is metaphorically compared to that endured by the viewer of shocking news images:

'Look now, because after a few years, even decades, in major disasters like September 11, the first thing that comes to mind is the image on television of the towers and you have that memory [...] It means that the memories stay with you, as if hot stamped.' (Man, under 34 years old - Large town).

The second and third arguments in favour of television are related to the combination of powerful visual images, movement and sound and reporters who broadcast live, expressing their feelings about the event in question:

'You have a journalist telling you in a broken voice that the disaster has just occurred and… I don't know, in that sense it is true that there may be things on television that are hard to stomach. I think you feel that more and it makes more of a mark on you... I think more so with television than with other media.' (Man, under 34 years old - Large town).

In this case, the fact that the story is being told by a journalist who has witnessed the events or is at the scene evokes credibility and responsiveness. The 'broken voice' of the narrator combined with dramatic visual images are important factors that distinguish TV from the press or radio. The informant talks about feelings and also uses the same expression of 'branding/hot stamping' images which are engraved on the receiver's mind.

After internet and television, but at a far more minor level, informants cite radio and the press in traditional print format.

'Local and regional radio stations are the ones that are really heard, because we hear them both in shops, when going shopping, or when listening to your own radio' (Journalist, Calatayud Town Hall press office).

Access to international news is thus occasional and unintentional, and mainly takes place when local stations hand back to central studios offering national and international news.

A similar selection process occurs with the press, whereby people tend to search specifically for local information to the detriment of national and international news. As one participant noted: 'you go through the international pages quickly'. The main local newspapers are also readily available in all the local bars. However, each reader goes directly to their own local information. 'People look at local information in the newspapers, as it's closer to them, not the international pages; when people come to those pages, they flick through them quickly' (Mayor of medium-sized town).

In addition to Internet and the mass media, another important source of information on global affairs is face-to-face testimonial information, which was repeatedly mentioned in the interviews and focus groups analysed as a highly valued source. This method is often used by NGOs in exhibitions, workshops and talks with aid workers and returning volunteers. This way of passing on testimonial information is perceived as highly credible and responsive, especially in the case of first-hand experience shared by 'one of us'.

> 'In our school there is a teacher that [...] decided to go to the Sahara. Later she told us about everything she had experienced, using pictures and videos. As an important person for the educational community, you view her differently from someone you see on TV.'
> (Focus group. Woman, less than 34 years old. Large town).

In this extract, we observe not only the attribution of belonging and high status to the person conveying the message, but also the experiential nature of the message. It is very likely that the often expressed idea that '*you see things differently'* in situations of this kind has to do with a transition that combines enhanced cognitive receptivity of the message with the emotions and auditory, visual and physical sensations transmitted by the speaker.

There are other communication strategies that might be labelled as *mixed* because they combine traditional and new media. They also link interpersonal credibility with the mainstream media. In this way, the recommendation and retransmission of reports or articles in digital editions of the mainstream media by other members of our networks create a phenomenon by which, according to Genette (1989), we experience hyper-meta-textuality.

If hypertextuality is a structured set of information linked by logical connections in digital format, the rise of social networks has enabled dual mediation: the news as told by the reporter (first mediation) and as passed on by a commentator (a social media contact) who recommends it to his/her friends or followers (second mediation).

If we assume that testimonial mediation and interpersonal communication are a highly credible source, the information supplied by the members of a social network will enjoy a high degree of additional credibility. Informative pieces selected and retransmitted on social media are considerably more striking than information provided directly by traditional or new media outlets. In this case the retransmission (second mediation) of news content by members of a social network of belonging enhances the value of the information. The success of the hoaxes or fake

news circulating on social media or WhatsApp groups is not just pure chance. The retransmission of misinformation by a member of the network helps to legitimize it.

'We also receive lots of information through WhatsApp, of course... but in this case we could almost describe it as fake news, with a lot of memes, getting our political information from memes.' (Journalist, Calatayud Town Hall press office).

Rural citizens identified the power of information passed on within WhatsApp messages. The fact that this information is forwarded by someone who belongs to the same network generates confidence and credibility. The hyper-metatextuality of networks reinforces the legitimacy of the information.

Facebook and Instagram are also very popular in these towns. Facebook is widely used by all population groups, although it is particularly prevalent among young adults and middle-aged people. Instagram has a younger following and is widespread amongst adolescents and young adults. Twitter is the social networking service with the fewest followers. The people from the smaller municipalities attributed the fact that a smaller percentage of their inhabitants follow social media not only due to the average age of the population, but also to the poor coverage of broadband services and the low quality of the internet connection.

One of the younger participants talked about alternative media with specific information on matters of international interest, some of them with a critical view regarding situations of international conflict.

'I get my information from an alternative magazine, very dense; I've just read an article on Palestine. I found it in a bar that has a lot of alternative press.' (Focus group. Man, less than 34 years old. Small town).

Supply and demand for these alternative media is scarce. But the information they provide is normally the product of the political activism and high commitment to the entire human community of social organisations and movements.

On the basis of the different sources of information mentioned in the interviews and focus groups, we can draw up an overview diagram:

Figure 1.

How rural people obtain information about global problems

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<u>Quality of Information, Emotional Responses and Physical Proximity</u>

The participants cited a varied repertoire of feelings and emotions in response to news stories. Respondents mentioned shock or trembling when faced with tragic news; tiredness and insensitivity due to the monotonous repetition of facts; hopelessness regarding the possibilities of change; empathy with people and situations that are nearby and, finally, fear of travelling alone as aid workers.

One of the journalists interviewed noted that the most dramatic news items are often those most followed. The proximity of the facts and an emotional approach tend to be determining factors for the success of the broadcast message.

> 'It's completely visceral, suffering, and designed to get you hooked. It's a vicious circle. The audience watch it; the Media says 'that's what they want to watch' [...] Proximity is a factor. At the end of the day, information comes across better if it appeals to emotions.' (Journalist, Aragon Television).

Some, however, pointed out that the frequent recurrence of events makes people less sensitive. Although the following informant considered that the media were to blame for this:

> 'The media has accustomed us to it. This morning the coastguard discovered a boat with 18 people, and I don't know if a child or someone else. And I was saying, look, again, without it turning my stomach; the media has inured us to it'. (Focus group. Woman, 55 years old. Small town).

It is significant that these two informants used expressions relating to the human digestive system: stomach and viscera. It suggests that the news only impacts on the receiver when it induces a gut reaction inside their body. The indirect consequence is that the repetition of images that initially stir the heart eventually gives rise to despondency, indifference and pessimism, producing adaptive responses in the form of personal self-protection, habituation and compromise.

Other emotions, such as resignation and despondency, are closely linked to acceptance of the status quo. Some participants expressed scepticism about the real possibilities of achieving progress through cooperation, as well as indifference and pessimism regarding possible solutions to the problems faced by developing countries.

> 'I, personally, am so sceptical about cooperation... I think that people do not cooperate selflessly.' (Focus group. Woman, less than 34 years old. Medium-sized town).

'Every day is the same. Countries that devote themselves to arming others and making wars […] And you see the same headlines day after day. I don't see there being any solution to this.' (Focus group. Man, more than 55 years old. Small town).

The second speaker uses generalised expressions such as 'none', 'nothing' and 'everything is the same', evoking frustration or anger, emotions that express helplessness at the magnitude of the problems, which in turn give rise to different individual responses: habituation, accommodation or self-protection in painful situations.

One person expressed fear, because although she was reluctant to give up aid work, she was afraid of travelling alone.

'I would like to continue with my aid work… but I think that the problem is always the fear of travelling alone. If they created networks so you could get in touch with other people who share the same concerns...' (Focus group. Woman, under 34 years of age. Large town).

One of the few positive emotions that came out of the interventions of the participants was empathy, mostly triggered by proximity. For many it is the differentiating factor for awareness.

'We can say that proximity does work. I was with the UNHCR for a year and now I'm a member of an NGO who knocked on my door and I really liked their ideas. You're helping children and you exchange letters with the child you sponsor.' (Focus group. Man, less than 34 years old. Large town).

Proximity is present as both a theoretical and a reflexive construct throughout the discourse of local citizens, journalists and mayors, and refers to their interest in situations and events in some way related to their immediate spatial and temporal environment.

'If there is no face-to-face contact, it is very difficult to get a real commitment from someone'. […] The direct consequence of this closeness is the trust that is generated when it comes to motivating people on development cooperation issues. (Journalist, SER Station Calatayud).

We can summarise the main emotions and trigger stimuli in the following diagram:

Figure 2.

Informational stimulation, emotions, and adaptive responses to global problems

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From the testimonies above, we can distinguish three main forms of proximity. Firstly, closeness occurs because there is a prior relationship with the person who serves as a socio-educational agent on these issues. In our case, a local teacher visited a developing country and on her return home described her experiences to her students, highlighting the role of global citizenship and cosmopolitanism inside and outside the school. Secondly, proximity can result from the link that is created at the time of the visit or meeting (due to the speaker's physical presence). And, finally, there is a closeness that arises from their appeal to emotion, whose mere existence tends to arouse interest in the issue in question.

Reasons to Support Development Policies: Isolation and Limited Resources are a Crucial Factor

Disinterest in global issues is often caused by the problems of life in rural areas, such as depopulation and lack of resources compared to the city. The phenomenon of depopulation, cited by several interviewees, means that young people are leaving small towns and villages. As a result, the population group with most energy and time available to become informed and take part in activities related with global issues is dwindling in size or absent.

> 'They should be coming to promote local initiatives, more than other international issues...
> A village has a problem, which is basically keeping its population'. (Focus group. Woman,
> less than 34 years old. Medium-sized town).

Rural areas often lack basic resources. These shortcomings mean that residents see local issues as a priority over global problems.

> 'I think that people don't really see it as an issue that is close to them. I think that people
> have many problems of their own and they have other priorities'. (Mayor of medium-sized
> town).

> 'For there to be cooperation from the rural areas, there has to be cooperation with the
> rural areas'. (Focus group. Man, 55 years old. Small town).

This last opinion is very significant; the speaker distinguishes between 'cooperation *from* rural areas' and 'cooperation *with* rural areas', insinuating that the State should first address the country's internal problems before trying to help with outside issues. This reveals the rural inhabitants' perception of themselves as demanders of development aid, rather than as donors.

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It is understandable that rural people are less likely to care about the problems of the global human community if they feel abandoned by their own state and public institutions.

However, isolation, lack of resources and youth emigration do not by themselves explain the limited support for international cooperation and global citizenship. The fact that rural citizens perceive international problems to be far away and that many news stories only stimulate negative, passing emotions, are also important factors in dissuading them from potential cosmopolitanism.

Finally, if we take into account the media information, feelings, proximity and isolation of rural people, it is clear that there are both tangible and intangible reasons for interest or disinterest in information on global issues and development policies (Fig. 3). The tangible reasons include the resources available to the donor region. Citizens of rural areas in northern Spain receive limited resources compared to the cities and this prompts them to prioritise their own needs over those of people in other countries.

Figure 3.

Reasons why people become interested in global problems and support development policies

This research identifies a range of tangible and intangible reasons that motivate people to learn about global issues, and boost their concern for the human community and their support for development policies. The intangible reasons include the direct testimonies of the international volunteers (face to face communication), the perception of physical closeness and the values of global citizenship and cosmopolitanism that they pass on. The tangible reasons for supporting these policies centre above all on the availability of resources and investments in rural areas.

These needs, perceptions and values act as predispositions that could be taken into account by the government and other actors in civil society.

The tangible and intangible reasons that disillusion people are the scarcity of resources in their own local areas, the perception of remoteness from global problems and the news programmes

that reproduce tragedies daily, so turning them into mundane events. There is also a sense of frustration and helplessness to bring about real change.

It is clear therefore that rural citizens could also become global citizens without losing their local identity, although this depends a great deal on the tangible and intangible factors that shape their attitudes.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Our opinions on global issues are a construction resulting from the information we receive and our own internal predispositions. In this article we analyse how people in rural areas obtain information about global problems and examine what leads them to become interested and concerned about these issues and to support policies of international cooperation and global citizenship.

The media most used by the rural population to source information on global citizenship issues are television and the internet. Our results on the importance of television coincide with the findings of Darnton (2009), Henson et al. (2010), and Miller et al. (2012).

However, we also noted that expansion of the Internet over the last decade means that it is now the primary source of information, ahead of traditional sources such as radio and print media. We also found that traditional and new media are compatible, which means we can also talk about hybrid information sources (Perrin 2015; Núñez Ladevéze et al. 2019; Villafañe et al. 2020).

As regards content, we discovered that rural people are much more interested in local news than in international events. The same trend was documented by Miller et. al. (2012). International news only arouses interest and concern when it deals with very serious events such as natural disasters or terrorist attacks, although it does not generate long-term commitment, let alone cosmopolitan identity.

Rural citizens are interested and concerned about news and issues they perceive as close or nearby. The cosmopolitan idea of belonging to a global community is alien and far away. Interest, empathy and commitment are only aroused when information related to global problems includes personal testimonies and human stories, and when the communication channel is face-to-face or through social media and family members.

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Our suggestions for public and non-governmental organisations also concur with the recommendations of Henson *et al.* (2010). One way to connect more effectively with the public would be to provide more 'human interest' stories about poor people coming out of social exclusion. It is easier for the public to relate to the improvements they can "see" in the lives of suffering people. Direct testimony, face-to-face, is what works best in raising awareness of global problems. Respondents also gave much more credence to the experiences of friends and family members who had travelled more extensively or had worked in developing countries.

We agree with Rugeley & Gerlach (2012) when they say that with more complex problems, citizens rely on familiar shortcuts such as party identification, ideology and the media. If the information reaches them via a forwarder who is part of the same network, this generates additional confidence and credibility. The hyper-metatextuality of social media reinforces the legitimacy of the information. This mode is perceived as highly credible and responsive if the testimonial information, especially experiential, is shared by 'one of us'.

On the other hand, we found that a widespread feeling of isolation and lack of resources in the villages was related to a lack of interest in global issues and withdrawal of support for international development policies. This is one of the most innovative findings that governments and other stakeholders in civil society should consider. On this question we agree with Boni Aristizábal (2011), who stated that new information technologies can be effective tools for promoting both local and global connection. The poor broadband connections in small towns and villages in northern Spain lead many inhabitants to feel ignored and abandoned. When this happens, they tend to wonder "Why don't they care about us?", and only a small number ask themselves, "Why should I care about others?"

To promote development policies, global citizenship (Monk 2013) and cosmopolitan values (Nussbaum 1994; Beck 2006), government policies and NGO actions should consider the interaction between cognitive information, socio-emotional stimulation, rural context and other tangible and intangible reasons for supporting the search for solutions to global problems as core dimensions for social change, both at home and abroad.

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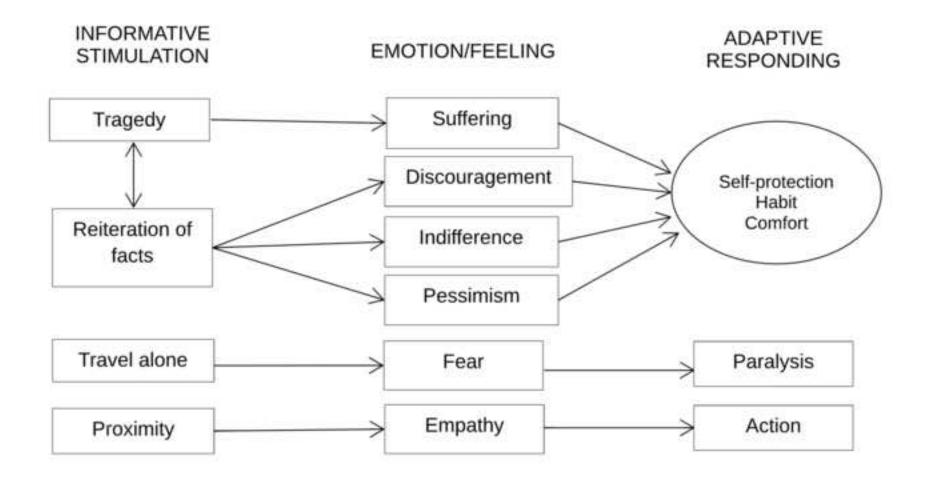
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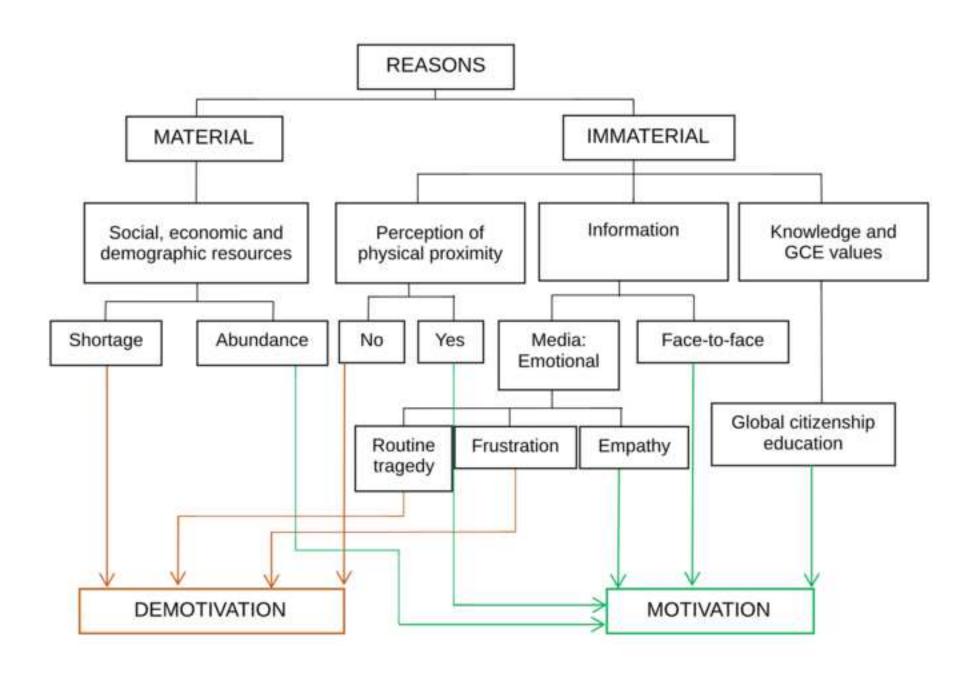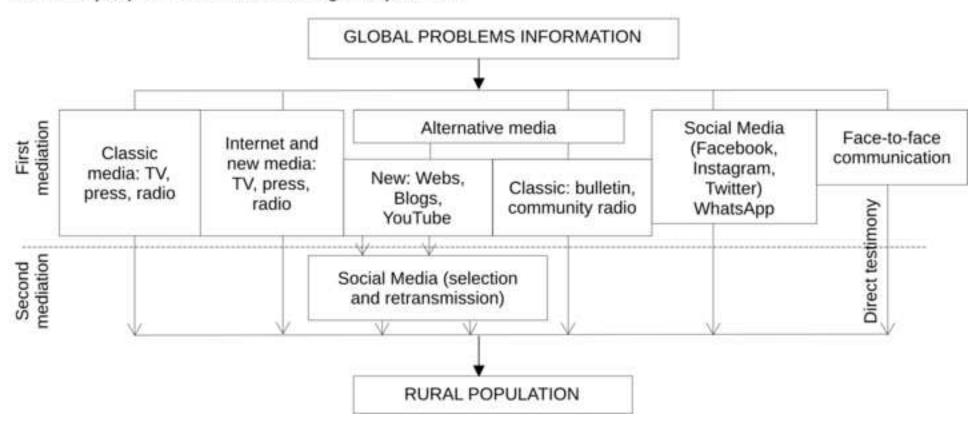
Figure 2

Figure 2

Figure 3

Figure 3

Figure 1

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Figure 1.

How rural people are informed about global problems

SN Social Sciences

Thank you very much for deciding that our manuscript could be reconsidered for publication after making significant changes. We have carefully considered the reviewers' comments. Our answers to the comments made by the respective referees are set out here below (in red).

Reviewer #1:

The manuscript addresses an interesting topic for the Social Sciences. My suggestions for its improvement are:

The first part of the summary is not sufficiently related to the second (in relation to the results obtained). The first part is too abstract and should be made more concrete. It would be interesting to add some more literature on media consumption by citizens (now almost non-existent).

The reviewer is right. We have significantly changed the first few pages of the introduction. We have deleted about 900 words and added approximately 1500 new words. In these new ideas we highlight the addition of around 16 references.

Authors must clearly define what the concept of global citizenship refers to.

The reviewer is right. We have decided to use the definition provided by Nussbaum (1994) and have also consulted other research that discusses this definition (Stromquist 2009; Boni Aristizábal 2011).

It is necessary for the authors to explain which contents have the interviews carried out with mayors and journalists.

We have included the central questions explored in the interview with the mayors: needs and concerns of the inhabitants; interest in local, national and international affairs; communication channels between the mayor's office and the citizens

Instead of using the term analog, the authors should use analog. Likewise, social networks should also be changed to social media, when the authors refer to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or WhatsApp.

We did not understand the first sentence of this observation very well. Anyway, we have removed all references that speak of the "analog/digital" binomial to talk about traditional and new media. We have changed "social networks" to "social media".

The section "Reasons to support development policies: The section on the crucial factor of isolation and few resources" is very underdeveloped. The authors should dig a little deeper into these questions, as the results are now sketchy at this point. Furthermore, figure 3 is not sufficiently explained in the manuscript.

We appreciate this suggestion. We have expanded this section and explained Figure 3 better.

My main criticism of the manuscript is that the concept of global citizenship is not articulated convincingly enough with the analysis of media consumption by the rural population and the rest of the items studied. I believe that authors should strive to interconnect in a fluid and coherent way the different elements that they introduce in their research (global citizenship, rural environment, media consumption, emotions and isolation). Now, in my opinion, there is little connection between these aspects and that conveys the feeling of some disorganization in the manuscript and the lack of a coherent and focused research. It seems that the manuscript is changing topics without a smooth transition and the final feeling when reading it is one of some confusion and bewilderment. This causes that the core claims of the paper are not explicitly clear.

We recognize this structural problem and consider that it has now been resolved. Following the work of Nussbaum (1994) we present the idea of global citizenship as public policy (UNESCO 2015) on

Is the paper methodologically and/or analytically sound? Is sufficient detail provided? The methodology is adequate and well described. It is necessary for the authors to explain which contents have the interviews carried out with mayors and journalists.

Done

Does it provide appropriate evidence or reasoning for the conclusions? Yes, the conclusions are based on the results obtained

Does it make a contribution to the literature (however incremental)—irrespective to perceived magnitude or significance? If not, please identify the major papers that suggest otherwise. The contribution made by the manuscript is limited. The articulation of the different concepts used by the research and their consistency should be improved

We have included 16 new references

Is the paper presented in an intelligible fashion and in standard English? Is the manuscript clearly written and structured? If not, how could it be made more accessible? Some style changes need to be made on some concepts.

Done. The paper has been carefully corrected and the style has been improved.

What are the core claims of the paper? Are these clearly conveyed in the abstract and conclusions? The core claims of the paper core claims of the paper are not clear

This issue has been resolved

Is the surrounding relevant and recent literature adequately presented? It would be interesting to add some more literature on media consumption by citizens (now almost non-existent)

This issue has been resolved

Reviewer #2:

This is a well-written and methodologically sound paper about the influencing of Information, media and opinions on world problems in rural areas. As a suggestion for enriching the work, authors may consider the possibility of considering the effects of Information, media and opinions they have on each other, giving more meaning to the managerial and policy implications of the paper, which could be improved.

We have improved the theoretical relationship between information, media and opinions based on Zeller's theory of public opinion (1992). We have also improved the relationships between these concepts based on the results and conclusions.

Reviewer #3:

I am interested about the topics brings by this manuscript. I believe that the article and its findings will be of interest to the readers of this journal. There are several points that need to be take care of. In general is a high potential article that could be strengthened through the revision. Despite the meaningful nature of the topic, the literature review doesn't do enough to establish a clear theoretical or practical problem that this research is trying to address. I suggest the author choose a theory relate to or able to explain global citizenship, for example, cosmopolitanism, to make the manuscript theoretically significant.

We thank the reviewer for his/her comments and suggestions because they have helped us improve the article. We have significantly increased the literature review, including 15 new references and have restructured the first part completely. Following his/her suggestions, we have included the theory of cosmopolitanism proposed by Nussbaum (1994).

This will also help the author strengthen the conclusion and discussion. In the current manuscript, the conclusion and discussion are too interpretative but not contribute to related theory.

We have improved the conclusions and discussion to include the central findings of the research

In addition, the authors declare that they use semantic and interpretive analysis, which is not appropriate to use here. Considering the result part, the authors are in fact using discourse analysis or critical discourse analysis. The authors need to distinguish and clarify the exact methods they use.

This observation is very relevant and we have incorporated critical discourse analysis as proposed by Fairclough (2013).

Is the paper methodologically and/or analytically sound? Is sufficient detail provided? This paper uses appropriate method to study the phenomenon. Although it's not sufficient, but in general acceptable.

We hope to have improved the methodology by eliminating the references to semantic interpretation and leaving only the critical discourse analysis.

Does it provide appropriate evidence or reasoning for the conclusions? Yes. This paper provides data from interviews and focus groups to support their conclusion.

Does it make a contribution to the literature (however incremental)—irrespective to perceived magnitude or significance? If not, please identify the major papers that suggest otherwise. The literature of this paper is relatively weak. The authors need to improve.

We have included 16 new references

Is the paper presented in an intelligible fashion and in standard English? Is the manuscript clearly written and structured? If not, how could it be made more accessible? Yes. The language uses in this paper is standard and the manuscript is well structured.

What are the core claims of the paper? Are these clearly conveyed in the abstract and conclusions? The core research question is quite clear but the core claims are not clear. The authors need to have a better conclusion.

This issue has been resolved

Is the surrounding relevant and recent literature adequately presented? No. This is the weakest part of the manuscript which need to be take care of.

This issue has been resolved

Rural population and global citizenship: Information, media and opinions on world problems

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Declarations

The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare that are relevant to the content of this article.

Data availability statement

Our manuscript contains data which cannot be made available for reasons disclosed in the data availability statement.

They are qualitative interviews, in the original language, Spanish, with people who requested anonymity and confidentiality in the interviews. In the paper we offer information on the positions, professions, hometowns and sociodemographic variables to guarantee the accuracy of the sources, but we cannot reveal the verbatim transcripts of the interviews because, in small towns, in particular, the participants would be easily recognizable.

ABSTRACT

Support for global citizenship depends not only on the will of governments, but also on the

opinions and feelings of their citizens. Success in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals

for 2030 depends to a great extent on the level of information and the awareness of the population.

This qualitative study examined the main sources from which the inhabitants of rural areas receive

information on global issues. It also sought their opinions on global citizenship. To this end, we

held interviews with qualified informants and focus groups with residents of municipalities of

different sizes in north-eastern Spain. The results highlight the importance of television and

internet as the media most used by the rural population as sources of information. Physical

proximity was also found to be a crucial factor in motivating rural citizens who often feel distanced

from global issues. Many others do not support development cooperation policies, because they feel isolated and live in areas with dwindling populations.

INTRODUCTION

Attention to global issues, international development and cooperation are constituent elements of the foreign policy of states. Their importance on the government agenda depends on interests, beliefs and political ideologies which, given their public nature, are influenced by the available information, and the attitudes, opinions and motivations of the population. This study aims to analyse, from a qualitative perspective, the main sources from which the inhabitants of rural areas obtain information on global issues, the quality of this information and their reasons for supporting or rejecting development policies.

The seminal study by Zaller (1992) argues that public opinion is formed by the interaction between the information received by the public from many different sources in their everyday lives and their own particular predispositions. Information is an organized set of processed data about events. These data are dynamic and variable. Our predispositions are by contrast the product of a varied spectrum of interests, values, beliefs and personal experiences which are themselves determined to some extent by our role or status within society. These predispositions affect the way we reach a judgement or come to a conclusion about a particular event.

The purpose of this research is to find out how the inhabitants of rural areas inform themselves and what their predispositions are regarding support for international development cooperation and global citizenship. In order to be able to answer this question, we must first define what we mean by global citizenship and observe how people inform themselves about global affairs, focusing particularly on the rural population. We will then go on to analyse the fundamental role played by predispositions in the formation of opinions and attitudes.

Global citizenship and information media in the rural population

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Global citizenship is a complex issue. There are many possible definitions, some of them quite vague and others more precise (Stromquist 2009). In this article we will be highlighting the perspective of global citizenship proposed by Nussbaum (1994), who was inspired by the cosmopolitanism of the Stoics and adapted it to a contemporary viewpoint (Boni Aristizábal 2011). For Nussbaum there are a series of universal functions and activities that lead to a good life. These include life, health, bodily integrity, sociability, emotions, thought and respect for nature. Nussbaum was concerned about the growing provincialism of the United States and defended an education system that taught human diversity and prepared its students to be future citizens of the world. In this sense, global citizenship is a form of citizen identity that is committed to the community of human beings as a whole. Nussbaum considers that this community will progress if global problems can be resolved through international cooperation. In this way, global citizenship promotes a sense of belonging to a human community through political, economic, social and cultural interdependence (UNESCO 2015).

Nussbaum (1994) recognizes the importance of knowledge and information about humanity's problems. Several other studies of democratic participation policies have also highlighted the role played by information and knowledge about rights in the base scale of civic commitment and engagement (Rojas & Puig 2009; Östman 2012, Monk 2013; Carlsson & Nilsson 2016).

Information is an indispensable requirement for forming an idea about a particular public issue (Zaller 1992; McCombs 2018). Information about the causes of global problems can promote civic participation (Argibay et al. 1997; Yubero & Larrañaga 2002) and build cosmopolitan empathy (Beck, 2006).

Within our specific context, it is therefore necessary to ask: How do people in rural areas obtain information about global problems? The answer depends on the country, the age group, and the region in which people live. In recent years, the most important change in terms of sources of information has been the expansion of social media. Social media technologies have opened up many new ways of engaging with news beyond the scope of what has traditionally been regarded as journalism, ranging from liking Instagram photos to forming discussion groups on WhatsApp (Swart et. al. 2018). For some researchers, the main contribution of social media is that they enable audiences to participate in many different ways (Park et al. 2011).

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In the United States of America, two-thirds of adults (65%) use social media to get information (Perrin, 2015). Social media have affected all walks of life such as work, politics, the economy and culture. People are informed and share information on social media about everything and anything. By age, young people are the most connected, while those over 65 are the least (only 35%).

Spain has one of the highest levels of Internet connection in Europe. 93.2% of people from 16 to 75 years use the Internet and 69.4% use social media (71% women; 67.5% men). However, and this is very important for our research, Internet use decreases in line with the size of the town or city. In cities with over 100,000 inhabitants, 90.4% of the population are users, whereas in small towns with less than 10,000 inhabitants the figure is lower at 83.7% (INE, 2020).

There is no academic consensus regarding the impact of new media in rural areas. Some conclude that face-to-face communication remains important in rural areas and that citizens also obtain information from local newspapers and television (Miller et. al. 2012; Warburton et. al. 2014; Rumata & Sakinah 2020). Some talk about hybrid information and complementary communication (Perrin 2015; Núñez Ladevéze et. al. 2019; Villafañe et. al 2020), while others conclude that the new media are completely changing communication and information supply (Costera Meijer & Groot Kormelink 2014) in rural areas (Kavanaugh et. al. 2014; Carlsson & Nilsson 2016; Swart et. al. 2018).

In the first group we should highlight the work of Miller et. al. (2012), who argued that, despite major technological changes, rural residents are still more inclined to trust word-of-mouth sources (Miller et. al. 2012). His work compared information sources and topics of interest in rural communities, small cities, suburbs, and large cities.

The residents of small towns and villages are more likely to rely on traditional news platforms such as television and newspapers for their local news; newspapers are especially important as a source of civic information (about for example community events, schools, arts and culture, etc.). Residents of smaller towns are also the most likely to worry about what would happen if the local newspaper no longer existed (Miller et. al. 2012).

Small city residents (31%) and rural residents (34%) are more likely than those in larger cities (21%) and suburbs (16%) to rely solely on "traditional" forms of media for their local news such as local print newspapers and broadcast television (Miller et. al. 2012). Rural communities are

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less interested in following international news compared to larger towns and cities (54% vs. 58%). The larger the population, the greater the interest in international affairs. By contrast, rural communities are more interested in local news (73%) than people in large cities (68%).

The second line of research proposes hybrid information sources. These experts talk about a convergence between old and new media (Perrin 2015; Núñez Ladevéze, et al. 2019; Villafañe et al. 2020). In the USA more than half of rural residents use social media. Those who live in rural areas are less likely to use social media than those in suburban and urban communities, a pattern that has remained consistent over the past decade. In 2015, 58% of rural residents, 68% of suburban residents, and 64% of urban residents used social media (Perrin, 2015). In Spain, despite the progressive penetration of new devices for accessing social media, the number of TVs has not declined. Television remains a product of mass consumption (Núñez Ladevéze et. al. 2019).

The third group are more pessimistic about traditional media as a source of information in their specific research with rural communities. Europe and Asia are undergoing a similar process of digitalisation of journalism and the rise of social media (Kavanaugh et al. 2014; Carlsson & Nilsson 2016). Carlsson & Nilsson (2016) discovered a new discursive technique that contributes to knowledge production, and helps form rural identities around social media. When rural communities use social media, they are seen as a new way for community news and public service institutions to reach certain segments of the audience that they would otherwise miss. For many small and rural communities in different parts of the world, information has shifted away from traditional sources such as local newspapers, radio and TV coverage of local issues to new online sources (Kavanaugh et al. 2014).

Swart et al. (2018) observed declining subscription and viewing rates for traditional media; they found that attention to the public information spread by legacy news media institutions can no longer be assumed, and therefore that newspapers and broadcasters may become less valuable as shared frames of reference within society.

Some studies from this third group affirm that today, with all the changes in communication technology, we do not even have to search for news items that might be of interest to us as these are fed to us directly (Costera Meijer & Groot Kormelink 2014). Accessing news is now so easy (and even entertaining) that checking a news app is the first thing that many people do when they

wake up. In addition, the digitalization of journalism has created an enormous range of opportunities and options for reading, watching, viewing, listening, checking, snacking, monitoring, scanning, searching and clicking on news (Costera Meijer & Groot Kormelink 2014).

Predispositions and public opinion on development cooperation

The object of this research is to discover how the inhabitants of the rural areas of north-eastern Spain obtain information and what reasons they put forward for supporting development cooperation and global citizenship. There are currently very few qualitative studies in Spain that have explored these issues (Llopis-Goig 2007; Miguel-González et al. 2012; Carracedo et al. 2016).

Conversely, a great deal of research has been done in other countries on the levels of public support for global citizenship and development cooperation policies (Zimmerman 2007; Van Heerde and Hudson 2010; Milner and Tingley 2013; Heinrich, Kobayashi and Bryant 2016). Some of these studies analyse, using a quantitative, public opinion approach, different sociodemographic variables for identifying patterns regarding the reasons and opinions that lead people to support or reject the idea of global citizenship. These variables include gender, educational level, (Henson and Lindstrom 2013), income (Chong and Gradstein 2006) and the economic context (Heinrich, Kobayashi & Bryant 2016). These studies concluded that public opinion prefers the 'native' poor to the poor from other countries, especially during periods of economic recession, and the higher the level of individual income, the more likely the person was to support human rights and international aid.

Identifying the sources of information on international news and the variables that influence support for development cooperation is an important first step, but we must also ask ourselves what people do with the information they receive. As mentioned earlier, there is a second ingredient when it comes to forming an opinion or attitude, namely predispositions (Zaller 1992). Rugeley & Gerlach (2012) argue that the way in which people build their attitudes can only be modified at high cost, so that citizens receive the information and heuristically process it to form their opinions. They found that with more complex problems, citizens rely on familiar shortcuts such as party identification, ideology and the media.

In addition to these shortcuts, there is other research that cites the importance of emotions in building public opinion on national and global problems. According to Miller (2007), media exposure can increase accessibility to information, which in turn can influence decisions of national importance, although his thesis is that emotions can be more decisive than accessibility. A possible determinant of the priority given to the different issues on the political agenda is the emotional reactions aroused by a news story. There are at least three ways people can use emotions to help them decide whether a problem is important: (1) the threat this problem entails; (2) the negative consequences of the problem; and (3) the belief that the problem has been neglected. All of these reasons arouse negative emotional reactions. Valentino *et al.* (2008) explored the role of emotion as a mediator in the process of becoming a politically informed citizen. The only emotion that boosted the search for information and learning was anxiety. Anger tended to reduce the search for information.

Much of the recent research in the global citizenship field has analysed the construction of opinions, perceptions and motivations in favour of the environment and against climate change (Leggewie & Welzer 2010; Rugeley & Gerlach 2012; Robison & Jansson-Boyd 2013; Rajapaksa, Islam & Managi 2018). There are few studies, however, that analyse rural people's opinions about global problems and their reasons for supporting or rejecting cooperation and development policies.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The purpose of this study is to identify the main media sources and the quality of the information obtained by the rural population in the province of Zaragoza on global problems. We will also be analysing the reasons they put forward for supporting or rejecting development policies. To this end, we used a critical discourse analysis (Fairclough 2013) based on qualitative techniques with a primary information source, specifically interviews with qualified informants and discussion groups with residents from small, medium and large municipalities in the province. This type of study is exploratory because it seeks to identify emerging relationships between categories and discourses. It is not intended for use as a basis for more generalized conclusions.

Primary Information Source

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The province of Zaragoza is located in the northeast of the Iberian Peninsula. It consists of 292 municipalities (the capital of the province is excluded) distributed in 17 counties (*comarcas*). According to the Aragon Institute of Statistics (IAEST), these municipalities had 257,093 inhabitants in 2019.

The study sample was made up of three municipalities in the province of Zaragoza. These towns were selected on the basis of their size so as to find out whether size can influence people's perceptions of global issues (Gómez-Quintero *et al.* 2019). In addition to size, other selection factors included distance from the provincial capital and the fact that they belonged to different counties.

One of the municipalities was small (fewer than 2,000 inhabitants), one was medium-sized (between 2,000 and 10,000 inhabitants) and the other was large (more than 10,000 inhabitants). These are the standard definitions of town size used by the IAEST. The following towns were chosen: small town (in the Campo de Belchite county); medium-sized town (Valdejalón county); and large town (Cinco Villas county). The three towns are located in different geographical areas of the province which are representative of the different counties.

After selecting the municipalities, we then selected and interviewed representatives of the local administration. We also held three focus groups with citizens of both sexes and different ages (Table 1). The age scales were chosen according to Gómez-Quintero *et al.* (2019), who investigated the levels of information, interest and commitment regarding global issues in the rural population. The first group consisted of passive subjects who were not interested in international information, composed mainly of people over 55 years of age. A second group consisted of aware but inactive people, and comprised young people aged from 15 to 34. The third group was made up of proactive individuals, with good specific information and ethical commitment, in this case adults between 35 and 55 years old.

Another of the goals of this research was to identify the sources local people used to find information on global problems. To this end we decided to contact local leaders of public opinion in rural areas, and in particular mayors and journalists. The local journalists' point of view is particularly important given the influence of the news media as builders of public opinion. To this end we interviewed three local journalists who are experts on media information in their local communities. They told us which media are most popular, what the main issues of interest are

and which issues people tend to ignore. Their work consists of selecting information, contextualising it, explaining it and presenting it to the public. There were no journalists resident in the small and medium-sized towns, so we met journalists from nearby municipalities or regional media (Table 2).

Mayors are elected by the people of the town and are normally well aware of their needs and proposals. In rural areas, in particular, mayors have a close relationship with the citizenry. With this in mind we conducted interviews with the mayors of three towns of different sizes. In these towns we also organized focus groups for which we chose a total of 22 citizens of different sexes, age groups and ideological positions (Table 1). They were all encouraged to express their opinions, beliefs and motivations.

Table 1.

Selection of qualitative sample in the different towns

Town*	Focus group	Interviews	Date
Small town 551 residents	8 people: 4 women, 4 men. Age: 3 under 34; 5 older than 55.	Mayor	18 December 2017
Medium-sized town 2,894 residents	8 people: 4 women, 4 men. Age: 4 under 34; 4 older than 55.	Mayor	15 December 2017
Large town 17,596 residents	6 people: 4 women, 2 men. Age: 5 under 34; 1 older than 55.	Mayor	19 December 2017

* Source: (Municipal Register 2017). Source: Official Population statistics from Aragon Institute of Statistics. BOE (Official State Bulletin) 29/12/2017. Accessed: 16 March 2018.

Table 2.

Interviews with local or regional journalists

Media	Journalists interviewed
Press office in the Municipality of Calatayud	Date: 15 December 2017. Journalist
Radio Station: Cadena SER, Radio Zaragoza	Date: 15 December 2017. Journalist
TV Channel: Aragon Television	Date: 20 December 2017. Journalist

Information Gathering and Data Analysis Techniques

The methodological framework is grounded in qualitative research, and specifically in critical discourse analysis (Fairclough 2013), which seeks to understand the phenomenon being studied by exploring the experiences of the participants, and placing emphasis on substantive meanings. We decided that the most suitable methods for gathering information would be focus groups and in-depth interviews. Focus groups are ideal ways of gathering people's opinions because they

encourage debate and participation (De Miguel 2005). We set up a focus group in each locality with a representative group of local residents. We used a non-standard method (Anguera 2004), where the researcher proposes a range of open topics to encourage discussion between the participants, without a predetermined script of questions and without intervening in the conversation between the members of the group.

The focus group discussions were divided into three blocks: sources of information on global issues; global citizenship and the types of issues they found most interesting or concerning; reasons for supporting global citizenship and development policies.

For journalists and mayors, we used individual structured interviews and a script with specific questions on topics such as the needs and concerns of local people; their interest in local, national and international affairs; communication channels between the mayor's office and the citizens. We carried out a categorical, interpretive and deductive analysis with a view to identifying emerging categories. Using deductive analysis, we designed a map with a list of categories selected on the basis of existing literature and field notes (Table 3).

Table 3.

Categories and segments selected

Categories	Nº Textual segment selected
1 Information	43
2 Motivation	82
3 Social commitment	40
4 Awareness raising	38
5 Knowledge	30

With this code map, we proceeded to categorise and analyse the textual segments obtained and selected. Of the 648 segments, 233 were selected as being particularly representative and explanatory of the categories set out in Table 3 (information, motivation, social commitment awareness raising and knowledge). The order in which these categories appear in the table is also important as it follows the ranking of development and global citizenship proposed by Ortega-Carpio (2008) and UNESCO (2015). Analysis was carried out through the MaxQDA computer data program, which facilitated the encoding and categorisation process and helped pinpoint conceptual relationships between classes to generate critical discourse analysis.

'Open coding' was used to develop early provisional interpretations; 'axial coding' was applied to examine each code in depth and find out more about their properties and relationships; and there

was also a 'central category', which was able to integrate and summarise all emerging categories through 'selective coding'. This provided the essential framework for our interpretation of the results (Gibbs 2012).

RESULTS

The qualitative results seek to establish the significance of the answers provided during the testimony of informants and participants. This study also seeks to identify and classify discursive positions that have so far been little investigated in exploratory studies in this field of knowledge. We present the results of our analysis according to the following structure: the main media sources of information on global problems, the quality of the information obtained, the ways this information can affect emotions and the reasons for seeking information on global issues and supporting development policies. One striking finding was that a feeling of isolation amongst the rural population was related to the withdrawal of support for these policies.

What are the Main Sources of Media Information on Global Problems?

In the discussions on media and sources of information, many participants highlighted the substantial differences between traditional and new media. Some pointed out that it is important to 'know how to look' when using the Internet, while the mainstream media select particular news stories or information which the public then reads, hears or sees. They believe that users are just as likely to find reliable information (or misinformation) on the Internet as in traditional media.

In addition to the Internet, some informants also regarded television as their favourite medium. There were three main reasons for this: the emotional impact engraved on the retina or visual memory, the dynamic combination of image, sound and movement, and the testimonial value of the live narrator.

Participants claimed to recall news of international importance due to the visual and emotional impact of the event. In fact, one of the informants used an interesting metaphor to describe this process: 'hot stamping'. This metaphor probably alludes to the branding of cattle with hot irons. The pain suffered by the branded animal is metaphorically compared to that endured by the viewer of shocking news images:

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'Look now, because after a few years, even decades, in major disasters like September 11, the first thing that comes to mind is the image on television of the towers and you have that memory [...] It means that the memories stay with you, as if hot stamped.' (Man, under 34 years old - Large town).

The second and third arguments in favour of television are related to the combination of powerful visual images, movement and sound and reporters who broadcast live, expressing their feelings about the event in question:

'You have a journalist telling you in a broken voice that the disaster has just occurred and… I don't know, in that sense it is true that there may be things on television that are hard to stomach. I think you feel that more and it makes more of a mark on you... I think more so with television than with other media.' (Man, under 34 years old - Large town).

In this case, the fact that the story is being told by a journalist who has witnessed the events or is at the scene evokes credibility and responsiveness. The 'broken voice' of the narrator combined with dramatic visual images are important factors that distinguish TV from the press or radio. The informant talks about feelings and also uses the same expression of 'branding/hot stamping' images which are engraved on the receiver's mind.

After internet and television, but at a far more minor level, informants cite radio and the press in traditional print format.

'Local and regional radio stations are the ones that are really heard, because we hear them both in shops, when going shopping, or when listening to your own radio' (Journalist, Calatayud Town Hall press office).

Access to international news is thus occasional and unintentional, and mainly takes place when local stations hand back to central studios offering national and international news.

A similar selection process occurs with the press, whereby people tend to search specifically for local information to the detriment of national and international news. As one participant noted: 'you go through the international pages quickly'. The main local newspapers are also readily available in all the local bars. However, each reader goes directly to their own local information. 'People look at local information in the newspapers, as it's closer to them, not the international pages; when people come to those pages, they flick through them quickly' (Mayor of medium-sized town).

In addition to Internet and the mass media, another important source of information on global affairs is face-to-face testimonial information, which was repeatedly mentioned in the interviews and focus groups analysed as a highly valued source. This method is often used by NGOs in exhibitions, workshops and talks with aid workers and returning volunteers. This way of passing on testimonial information is perceived as highly credible and responsive, especially in the case of first-hand experience shared by 'one of us'.

> 'In our school there is a teacher that […] decided to go to the Sahara. Later she told us about everything she had experienced, using pictures and videos. As an important person for the educational community, you view her differently from someone you see on TV.'
>
> (Focus group. Woman, less than 34 years old. Large town).

In this extract, we observe not only the attribution of belonging and high status to the person conveying the message, but also the experiential nature of the message. It is very likely that the often expressed idea that '*you see things differently'* in situations of this kind has to do with a transition that combines enhanced cognitive receptivity of the message with the emotions and auditory, visual and physical sensations transmitted by the speaker.

There are other communication strategies that might be labelled as *mixed* because they combine traditional and new media. They also link interpersonal credibility with the mainstream media. In this way, the recommendation and retransmission of reports or articles in digital editions of the mainstream media by other members of our networks create a phenomenon by which, according to Genette (1989), we experience hyper-meta-textuality.

If hypertextuality is a structured set of information linked by logical connections in digital format, the rise of social networks has enabled dual mediation: the news as told by the reporter (first mediation) and as passed on by a commentator (a social media contact) who recommends it to his/her friends or followers (second mediation).

If we assume that testimonial mediation and interpersonal communication are a highly credible source, the information supplied by the members of a social network will enjoy a high degree of additional credibility. Informative pieces selected and retransmitted on social media are considerably more striking than information provided directly by traditional or new media outlets. In this case the retransmission (second mediation) of news content by members of a social network of belonging enhances the value of the information. The success of the hoaxes or fake

news circulating on social media or WhatsApp groups is not just pure chance. The retransmission of misinformation by a member of the network helps to legitimize it.

'We also receive lots of information through WhatsApp, of course... but in this case we could almost describe it as fake news, with a lot of memes, getting our political information from memes.' (Journalist, Calatayud Town Hall press office).

Rural citizens identified the power of information passed on within WhatsApp messages. The fact that this information is forwarded by someone who belongs to the same network generates confidence and credibility. The hyper-metatextuality of networks reinforces the legitimacy of the information.

Facebook and Instagram are also very popular in these towns. Facebook is widely used by all population groups, although it is particularly prevalent among young adults and middle-aged people. Instagram has a younger following and is widespread amongst adolescents and young adults. Twitter is the social networking service with the fewest followers. The people from the smaller municipalities attributed the fact that a smaller percentage of their inhabitants follow social media not only due to the average age of the population, but also to the poor coverage of broadband services and the low quality of the internet connection.

One of the younger participants talked about alternative media with specific information on matters of international interest, some of them with a critical view regarding situations of international conflict.

'I get my information from an alternative magazine, very dense; I've just read an article on Palestine. I found it in a bar that has a lot of alternative press.' (Focus group. Man, less than 34 years old. Small town).

Supply and demand for these alternative media is scarce. But the information they provide is normally the product of the political activism and high commitment to the entire human community of social organisations and movements.

On the basis of the different sources of information mentioned in the interviews and focus groups, we can draw up an overview diagram:

Figure 1.

How rural people obtain information about global problems

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<u>Quality of Information, Emotional Responses and Physical Proximity</u>

The participants cited a varied repertoire of feelings and emotions in response to news stories. Respondents mentioned shock or trembling when faced with tragic news; tiredness and insensitivity due to the monotonous repetition of facts; hopelessness regarding the possibilities of change; empathy with people and situations that are nearby and, finally, fear of travelling alone as aid workers.

One of the journalists interviewed noted that the most dramatic news items are often those most followed. The proximity of the facts and an emotional approach tend to be determining factors for the success of the broadcast message.

'It's completely visceral, suffering, and designed to get you hooked. It's a vicious circle. The audience watch it; the Media says 'that's what they want to watch' [...] Proximity is a factor. At the end of the day, information comes across better if it appeals to emotions.' (Journalist, Aragon Television).

Some, however, pointed out that the frequent recurrence of events makes people less sensitive. Although the following informant considered that the media were to blame for this:

'The media has accustomed us to it. This morning the coastguard discovered a boat with 18 people, and I don't know if a child or someone else. And I was saying, look, again, without it turning my stomach; the media has inured us to it'. (Focus group. Woman, 55 years old. Small town).

It is significant that these two informants used expressions relating to the human digestive system: stomach and viscera. It suggests that the news only impacts on the receiver when it induces a gut reaction inside their body. The indirect consequence is that the repetition of images that initially stir the heart eventually gives rise to despondency, indifference and pessimism, producing adaptive responses in the form of personal self-protection, habituation and compromise.

Other emotions, such as resignation and despondency, are closely linked to acceptance of the status quo. Some participants expressed scepticism about the real possibilities of achieving progress through cooperation, as well as indifference and pessimism regarding possible solutions to the problems faced by developing countries.

'I, personally, am so sceptical about cooperation... I think that people do not cooperate selflessly.' (Focus group. Woman, less than 34 years old. Medium-sized town).

'Every day is the same. Countries that devote themselves to arming others and making wars […] And you see the same headlines day after day. I don't see there being any solution to this.' (Focus group. Man, more than 55 years old. Small town).

The second speaker uses generalised expressions such as 'none', 'nothing' and 'everything is the same', evoking frustration or anger, emotions that express helplessness at the magnitude of the problems, which in turn give rise to different individual responses: habituation, accommodation or self-protection in painful situations.

One person expressed fear, because although she was reluctant to give up aid work, she was afraid of travelling alone.

'I would like to continue with my aid work… but I think that the problem is always the fear of travelling alone. If they created networks so you could get in touch with other people who share the same concerns...' (Focus group. Woman, under 34 years of age. Large town).

One of the few positive emotions that came out of the interventions of the participants was empathy, mostly triggered by proximity. For many it is the differentiating factor for awareness.

'We can say that proximity does work. I was with the UNHCR for a year and now I'm a member of an NGO who knocked on my door and I really liked their ideas. You're helping children and you exchange letters with the child you sponsor.' (Focus group. Man, less than 34 years old. Large town).

Proximity is present as both a theoretical and a reflexive construct throughout the discourse of local citizens, journalists and mayors, and refers to their interest in situations and events in some way related to their immediate spatial and temporal environment.

'If there is no face-to-face contact, it is very difficult to get a real commitment from someone'. […] The direct consequence of this closeness is the trust that is generated when it comes to motivating people on development cooperation issues. (Journalist, SER Station Calatayud).

We can summarise the main emotions and trigger stimuli in the following diagram:

Figure 2.

Informational stimulation, emotions, and adaptive responses to global problems

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From the testimonies above, we can distinguish three main forms of proximity. Firstly, closeness occurs because there is a prior relationship with the person who serves as a socio-educational agent on these issues. In our case, a local teacher visited a developing country and on her return home described her experiences to her students, highlighting the role of global citizenship and cosmopolitanism inside and outside the school. Secondly, proximity can result from the link that is created at the time of the visit or meeting (due to the speaker's physical presence). And, finally, there is a closeness that arises from their appeal to emotion, whose mere existence tends to arouse interest in the issue in question.

Reasons to Support Development Policies: Isolation and Limited Resources are a Crucial Factor

Disinterest in global issues is often caused by the problems of life in rural areas, such as depopulation and lack of resources compared to the city. The phenomenon of depopulation, cited by several interviewees, means that young people are leaving small towns and villages. As a result, the population group with most energy and time available to become informed and take part in activities related with global issues is dwindling in size or absent.

> 'They should be coming to promote local initiatives, more than other international issues...
> A village has a problem, which is basically keeping its population'. (Focus group. Woman, less than 34 years old. Medium-sized town).

Rural areas often lack basic resources. These shortcomings mean that residents see local issues as a priority over global problems.

> 'I think that people don't really see it as an issue that is close to them. I think that people have many problems of their own and they have other priorities'. (Mayor of medium-sized town).

> 'For there to be cooperation from the rural areas, there has to be cooperation with the rural areas'. (Focus group. Man, 55 years old. Small town).

This last opinion is very significant; the speaker distinguishes between 'cooperation *from* rural areas' and 'cooperation *with* rural areas', insinuating that the State should first address the country's internal problems before trying to help with outside issues. This reveals the rural inhabitants' perception of themselves as demanders of development aid, rather than as donors.

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It is understandable that rural people are less likely to care about the problems of the global human community if they feel abandoned by their own state and public institutions.

However, isolation, lack of resources and youth emigration do not by themselves explain the limited support for international cooperation and global citizenship. The fact that rural citizens perceive international problems to be far away and that many news stories only stimulate negative, passing emotions, are also important factors in dissuading them from potential cosmopolitanism.

Finally, if we take into account the media information, feelings, proximity and isolation of rural people, it is clear that there are both tangible and intangible reasons for interest or disinterest in information on global issues and development policies (Fig. 3). The tangible reasons include the resources available to the donor region. Citizens of rural areas in northern Spain receive limited resources compared to the cities and this prompts them to prioritise their own needs over those of people in other countries.

Figure 3.

Reasons why people become interested in global problems and support development policies

This research identifies a range of tangible and intangible reasons that motivate people to learn about global issues, and boost their concern for the human community and their support for development policies. The intangible reasons include the direct testimonies of the international volunteers (face to face communication), the perception of physical closeness and the values of global citizenship and cosmopolitanism that they pass on. The tangible reasons for supporting these policies centre above all on the availability of resources and investments in rural areas.

These needs, perceptions and values act as predispositions that could be taken into account by the government and other actors in civil society.

The tangible and intangible reasons that disillusion people are the scarcity of resources in their own local areas, the perception of remoteness from global problems and the news programmes

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that reproduce tragedies daily, so turning them into mundane events. There is also a sense of frustration and helplessness to bring about real change.

It is clear therefore that rural citizens could also become global citizens without losing their local identity, although this depends a great deal on the tangible and intangible factors that shape their attitudes.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Our opinions on global issues are a construction resulting from the information we receive and our own internal predispositions. In this article we analyse how people in rural areas obtain information about global problems and examine what leads them to become interested and concerned about these issues and to support policies of international cooperation and global citizenship.

The media most used by the rural population to source information on global citizenship issues are television and the internet. Our results on the importance of television coincide with the findings of Darnton (2009), Henson et al. (2010), and Miller et al. (2012).

However, we also noted that expansion of the Internet over the last decade means that it is now the primary source of information, ahead of traditional sources such as radio and print media. We also found that traditional and new media are compatible, which means we can also talk about hybrid information sources (Perrin 2015; Núñez Ladevéze et al. 2019; Villafañe et al. 2020).

As regards content, we discovered that rural people are much more interested in local news than in international events. The same trend was documented by Miller et. al. (2012). International news only arouses interest and concern when it deals with very serious events such as natural disasters or terrorist attacks, although it does not generate long-term commitment, let alone cosmopolitan identity.

Rural citizens are interested and concerned about news and issues they perceive as close or nearby. The cosmopolitan idea of belonging to a global community is alien and far away. Interest, empathy and commitment are only aroused when information related to global problems includes personal testimonies and human stories, and when the communication channel is face-to-face or through social media and family members.

Our suggestions for public and non-governmental organisations also concur with the recommendations of Henson *et al.* (2010). One way to connect more effectively with the public would be to provide more 'human interest' stories about poor people coming out of social exclusion. It is easier for the public to relate to the improvements they can "see" in the lives of suffering people. Direct testimony, face-to-face, is what works best in raising awareness of global problems. Respondents also gave much more credence to the experiences of friends and family members who had travelled more extensively or had worked in developing countries.

We agree with Rugeley & Gerlach (2012) when they say that with more complex problems, citizens rely on familiar shortcuts such as party identification, ideology and the media. If the information reaches them via a forwarder who is part of the same network, this generates additional confidence and credibility. The hyper-metatextuality of social media reinforces the legitimacy of the information. This mode is perceived as highly credible and responsive if the testimonial information, especially experiential, is shared by 'one of us'.

On the other hand, we found that a widespread feeling of isolation and lack of resources in the villages was related to a lack of interest in global issues and withdrawal of support for international development policies. This is one of the most innovative findings that governments and other stakeholders in civil society should consider. On this question we agree with Boni Aristizábal (2011), who stated that new information technologies can be effective tools for promoting both local and global connection. The poor broadband connections in small towns and villages in northern Spain lead many inhabitants to feel ignored and abandoned. When this happens, they tend to wonder "Why don't they care about us?", and only a small number ask themselves, "Why should I care about others?"

To promote development policies, global citizenship (Monk 2013) and cosmopolitan values (Nussbaum 1994; Beck 2006), government policies and NGO actions should consider the interaction between cognitive information, socio-emotional stimulation, rural context and other tangible and intangible reasons for supporting the search for solutions to global problems as core dimensions for social change, both at home and abroad.

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