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RESEARCH

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SPANISH-SPEAKER WELLNESS INFLUENCERS IN THE ERA OF CARE: TRENDS AND TOPICS IN 2023

Influencers hispanohablantes del bienestar en la era de los cuidados: corrientes y temas durante el año 2023

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: This study addresses the role of well-being influencers in the post-pandemic context of mental health crises and within the framework of contemporary capitalism. In this setting, individuals are compelled to take on the role of "entrepreneurs of themselves," autonomously tackling their psychological and emotional challenges. **Methodology:** The research employs a qualitative and inductive content approach coupled with a deductive quantitative perspective. An exhaustive analysis of Hispanic-American influencers on Instagram is conducted throughout the year 2023. The sample comprises 50 accounts, categorized into three main streams: influencers from academic backgrounds, those rooted in wisdom and religions, and pseudoscientific and new age influencers. Additionally, engagement levels are measured, and 150 posts from 15 selected influencers are analyzed, considering 10 posts prior to October 18, 2023. **Results**: The findings reveal high levels of engagement across all examined influencers. Posts predominantly focus on personal emotional well-being, love, and the promotion of commercial products or services. The three identified streams exhibit different approaches to well-being promotion, highlighting the diversity of perspectives in the realms of mental and emotional health. **Discussion**: The discussion centers on the implications of these results in the context of post-pandemic mental health and the role of well-being influencers. Various strategies employed by influencers to address the emotional and psychological needs of their followers are explored, along with the influence of academic currents, religious wisdom, and pseudoscientific beliefs in shaping well-being narratives. Additionally, ethical implications are considered, emphasizing the need for a critical understanding of the impact of these influencers on societal mental health.

Keywords: Influencer, mental health, content analysis, wellness, social networks

RESUMEN

Introducción: Este estudio aborda el papel de los *influencers* del bienestar en el contexto postpandémico de crisis de salud mental y el marco del capitalismo contemporáneo. En este contexto, los individuos son impulsados a asumir el rol de "empresarios de sí mismos", encargándose de resolver de manera autónoma sus problemas psicológicos y emocionales. **Metodología:** La investigación combina un enfoque cualitativo e inductivo de contenido con una perspectiva cuantitativa deductiva. Se lleva a cabo un análisis exhaustivo de *influencers* hispanoamericanos en Instagram durante el año 2023. La muestra consiste en 50 cuentas, categorizadas en tres corrientes principales: *influencers* de corrientes académicas, de sabidurías y religiones, y pseudocientíficos y newages. Además, se mide el nivel de *engagement* y se

analizan 150 publicaciones de 15 *influencers* seleccionados, considerando 10 publicaciones previas al 18 de octubre de 2023. **Resultados:** Los resultados revelan altos niveles de *engagement* en todos los *influencers* examinados. Predominan las publicaciones relacionadas con el bienestar emocional personal, el amor y la promoción de productos o servicios comerciales. Las tres corrientes identificadas presentan diferentes enfoques en la promoción del bienestar, destacando la diversidad de perspectivas en el ámbito de la salud mental y emocional. **Discusión:** La discusión se centra en las implicaciones de estos resultados en el contexto de la salud mental postpandémica y el papel de los *influencers* del bienestar. Se abordan las diferentes estrategias utilizadas por los *influencers* para abordar las necesidades emocionales y psicológicas de sus seguidores, así como la influencia de corrientes académicas, sabidurías religiosas y pseudocientíficas en la configuración de las narrativas de bienestar. Además, se exploran posibles implicaciones éticas y la necesidad de una mayor comprensión crítica del impacto de estos *influencers* en la salud mental de la sociedad.

Palabras clave: *Influencer*, salud mental, análisis de contenido, bienestar, redes sociales.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. "You are in charge": capitalism, the crisis of the wellness state and the multiplication of discomfort

"When someone influences you, they are teaching you"

Harold Bloom

The success of emotional and/or spiritual wellness influencers is due, to a large extent, to the paradigm shift in the conditions of production of subjectivity in the framework of post-industrial capitalism (Illouz, 2007). The *homo sentimentalis* emerges from the rise of postmodern individualisms (Lipovetsky, 2000) characterized -among other attributes- by an intimate and affected assumption of personal destinies to the detriment of collective hopes placed in macro projects, diminished by the successive economic and political crises of globalism. Since the end of the 20th century, the tasks of caring for the body, but above all, emotional, psychological and spiritual life, have been left to the subjects, who have no choice but to take charge of their lives because they are either aware of the Welfare State crisis or disappointed by political projects, even more so in Latin America.

This historical shift from the State to the individual is characterized by the use of self-help books or interactive digital communication technologies that offer vast on-demand information on health and wellness issues in a world where discomfort is on the rise. World Mental Health Day was established on October 10th, 2023 in response to rising rates of depression, addiction and suicide, as well as being considered key to the development (OMS, 2022, 2023). As a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic and the violence, economic, political and environmental crises, both depression and anxiety have increased between 25% and 27%, while there is a treatment deficit of almost 90%; in Latin America and the Caribbean it is approximately almost 80% (OPS,

2023). Furthermore, the States dedicate less than 2% of their annual health budget to solving this problem (Kestel, 2022). A global panorama marked by poor access to health services lead people to turn everywhere for help, including cell phone screens, where they find ways to deal with their mental and emotional discomfort. One example is the consumption of the content made by the already-mentioned "wellness influencers".

Influencers have become extremely relevant figures in social networks. That is why they can still persuade and move peoples' opinions in times of post-truth and generalized disbelief. They are ambassadors of knowledge that no longer comes exclusively from the expert system, nor from formal academia, but has been forged, in many cases, from experience, and in others, from self-education.

The rise of wellness influencers can be considered as a symbol of discomfort in an era presented as a "factory of unhappiness" (Berardi, 2003). Current capitalism presents and imposes us lifestyles sustained in consumerism, labor instability, (self-) exploitation, tiredness and indebtedness (Aleman, 2016; Berardi, 2003, 2017; Han, 2012; Lazzarato, 2013; Pelbart, 2009) with their respective emotional and subjective effects. These authors posit that contemporary capitalism causes the individuals to be depressed and frustrated (Berardi, 2003), but first and foremost "self-entrepreneurs" (Foucault, 2007). Contemporary subjects must be resilient, capable of reinventing themselves in crises and know how to manage their emotions within a society of risk and uncertainty (Beck, 1998). The influencer is a response to these self-management needs.

Several meta-analysis studies identify social networks as media used for informational, conversational, prevention and engagement purposes related to health issues: public health, psychiatric conditions and wellness (Sinnenberg et al., 2016; FECYT, 2022; Díaz-Campo et al., 2023). In addition, they contributed to the management of the mental health crisis during the pandemic. Authors also acknowledge social networks can generate and monitor feelings of support, although they also warn of dangers due to the absence of information filters (Cambronero-Saiz et al., 2023).

Some studies describe processes of identification and impact of influencers in networks (Harrigan et al., 2020), but others also highlight the risks of influencing body perceptions (Marks et al., 2020) or promoting fake news, conspiracy theories or extremism (Baker, 2022; FECYT, 2022). Influencers personify the contents, bring them down to an intimate territory, share confidences, know their audiences, know what they need, anticipates what they want to know. Influencers are credible because they show themselves as people who live what they teach, embody what they suggest, experience what they sell or communicate beforehand. They are advisors, almost our friends, longed-for behavior coaches, compasses in the turbulent environment of opinions in these seas of unhappiness. However, some of the aforementioned meta-analysis studies suggest that there is little research in Latin America on the effects of networks on mental health (Carbonero-Saiz et al., 2023). Influencers are here to stay, so understanding them as a phenomenon is essential in the contemporary world since,

in a context of deficient mental health services and emotional crisis, they have become a force to confront this new pandemic.

1.2. The desire for self-care and the care of others

The topic of care and its implicit ethics has become more important in recent years and it has spread to all areas and dimensions of life. Caring now means knowing how to live, knowing how to face reasonably the difficulties of material and affective life, training oneself in skills or techniques that support the subject on a path of continuous improvement and even personal transformation against everyday life's neuroses: "After insisting on material wellness, money and physical security, our era would give priority to the quality of life, to personal expression, to spirituality, to concerns linked to the meaning of life (...)" (Lipovetsky, 2020. p. 20).

Wellness refers to an overall state of health and satisfaction that encompasses several interconnected dimensions. Following the definition provided by the National Wellness Institute (2023), wellness is a multidimensional state involving physical, intellectual, occupational, spiritual, social and emotional dimensions. Taking this perspective into consideration, this research focuses on psychological, emotional and spiritual wellness, the first two related to the recognition and management of emotions and the last one to transcendence (NWI, 2023):

> it is a category (...) that has acquired a renewed contemporary presence, that it exists as an in-action, that is, that it exists to the extent to which it is put into action, with great capacity for circulation and implementation in the most diverse scenarios. (Viotti, 2018, p. 247)

The authors are interested in these "new" relations with the current world, a world loaded with problems and difficulties ranging from the economic to the moral, as they point to an emerging subjectivity articulated in networks of hypermedia exchange on different platforms.

1.3. Influencers in the capitalism of platforms

Rather than posing the concept of social networks, this study assumes the notion of platform, considering the political nature of technology and not understanding it as a simple medium or intermediary. Instagram, for example, is part of a corporation with profit interests such as Meta. Corporate social networks, are sustained by algorithms of attention and business models that generate visibility regimes (Bucher, 2018; Gillespie, 2017) that affect both the ways in which people consume and influencers generate content. There is an essential part in the concept of platform that speaks about connections: human dynamics-machine-flows of capital. We understand platforms as "pages and services that host public content, store it in clouds, and organize access to it through search or recommendations" (Gillespie, 2017, p. 254). They harvest both attention and data to transform users into future markets. That is why some authors speak about data capitalism or platforms (Srnicek, 2018) According to this notions, influencers and users "work" for these platforms, and the resulting data allow

predicting future attention to promote content and products (Fuchs, 2019). The influencer is one of these data and content workers.

Influencers can be defined as "(...) someone who can build a community around him or her, through the creation or curation of content. They have a certain knowledge about a topic and, from a certain place, they begin to relate to peers with whom they build communities of affinity and a sense of belonging" (Laufer, 2017, p. 62) with the purpose of generating changes in opinions or behaviors. The influencer however is also currently considered as part of communication strategies, promoting products and services. While there are studies that propose definitions of influencers related to the number of followers, others highlight the role of microcelebrities (Khamis et al., 2017), for their bonding capabilities. In turn, influencers are influenced by the visibility regimes of the platforms: contents must have a duration, use certain languages, trends, challenges, words, formats, hashtags, be published on certain days, times and frequency in order to maintain engagement with users. From what therapeutic views do influencers approach wellness and how do they invite us to "take care of ourselves"? What engagement do they generate? What topics do their contents address?

2. OBJECTIVES

To identify the therapeutic trends related to emotional or spiritual wellness of Hispanic American influencers on Instagram until 2023, as well as to describe the characteristics of their profiles, levels of participation and engagement and to explore wellness topics in the content they post.

The specific objectives are:

1. SO1: Identify the type of therapeutic trend of emotional and spiritual wellness in Hispanic American influencers' accounts.
2. SO3: To describe indicators that account for their level of engagement.
3. SO4: To explore the main wellness topic of their posts.

3. METHODOLOGY

Content analysis is a tool of considerable tradition in the communication discipline. Its initial applications to mass media have been adapted to digital media. This study is a content analysis understood as "the set of techniques for the analysis of communicative messages (...) and the expression of this content with the help of quantifiable or unquantifiable indications" (Andréu, 2000, p. 3). This is an exploratory-descriptive analysis (Piñuel, 2022).

The methodology the authors used focused on two approaches: a qualitative approach of an inductive nature (Andréu, 2000) that allowed the authors to map emerging trends by identifying and analyzing influencers' profiles; and a quantitative one of a deductive nature (Andréu, 2000) to describe and measure their levels of engagement and presence of topics. Content analysis can work on manifest or latent variables and categories in the content (Igartua, 2006). In this case, stage 1 focused on identifying the categories of latent wellness trends in their profiles and stages 2 and 3 focused on measuring manifest variables in their content production, interaction levels and topics.

The authors analyzed mainly two text corpora. In stage 1, the authors analyzed 1) information from the "bios" of the accounts that were sometimes complemented with information from the influencers' trajectory or resumes in other hypertexts to better classify their secondary trend; in stage 2) their metrics produced by Social Blade and HypeAuditor; and in stage 3) the contents corresponding to the last 10 publications visible in the feed prior to October 18th, 2023. The authors selected a date so it did not correspond to a specific holiday that could homogenize the content of the posts. The study focused on Instagram because it is one of the five social networks with the largest number of users, currently around 2 billion (Statista, 2023), in addition to being considered by several studies as the fastest growing social network with the widest age range of users compared to others, as well as the second with the highest traffic (We are social, 2023).

During the qualitative stage, the authors used an intentional sampling (Andréu, 2000, Igartua, 2006), given the fact that there is no census of this category of influencers and the lists were mediated by broad criteria of what is understood as "wellness" that included psychological, emotional and spiritual dimensions. As a limitation to the present study, there are geolocation and algorithmic bubbles, both of which have an impact in the searches. In a second stage, after the selection of the influencers, the authors carried out a non-probabilistic sampling by quotas (Igartua, 2006) of publications of influencers from different trends and sub-trends of wellness for representation reasons (Serbia, 2007).

The elaboration of the files and codebook included piloting processes that, on the one hand, provided the researchers with training and, on the other, the opportunity of calibrating both the categories and subcategories of the files and the codebook. The authors worked under criteria of thoroughness and exclusion (Bardin, 2002; Ynoub, 2014) to evaluate the categories and to reach consensus.

Stage 1: Identification of wellness trends

The process of searching for accounts begins on Instagram on the one hand, with the search for words such as "emotional wellness", "spiritual wellness "or "psychological wellness " and on the other hand, with the request to users for recommendations of Spanish-speaking influencers' accounts "that dealt with wellness topics". This wellness category was intentional broad and allowed the identification of a list of influencers. The authors selected influencers regardless of their number of followers - some accounts could be even considered as micro celebrities (Khamis and Welling 2017). The list allowed for, by analysing the bios in their accounts, the list of influencers allowed for the identification of general and specific trends that emerged qualitatively and that the authors built after consulting trained experts in psychology, psychoanalysis, wisdoms and philosophies.

The authors created a list of 50 influencers to be analysed. They defined the main trends as: 1) academic disciplines, 2) religions and wisdoms and 3) neopaganism and pseudo-sciences. The authors also proposed a map of secondary trends to cover the totality of accounts. They categorized influencers as:

1. Top influencer: more than 1 million followers
2. Macro influencer: from 250k to 1MM followers
3. Medium influencer: from 50K to 250 K followers
4. Micro influencer: from 10K to 50K followers
5. Nano influencer: up to 10K followers

Stage 2: Engagement analysis

The authors applied an analysis of indicators to these 50 accounts on Social Blade and HypeAuditor, which are a platform for analyzing metrics of different social networks validated in global professional markets. They obtained indicators related to the engagement rate from each account, to check the engagement between followers and influencers. The engagement indicator has become key to describe the level of interaction between a brand (or influencer in this case) and the audience. However, there are multiple definitions and types, but the most commonly used variables in the formulas, regardless of the networks that involve small variations, are the numbers of "likes", "times shared", "comments", "posts", "followers" or both (Ballesteros, 2018; López-Navarrete et al. (2021), in addition these numbers are considered in relation to the number of followers of the account. Social Blade and HypeAuditor do not describe their calculation formula, but since account engagement was necessary, only large Big Data metrics can be used without individual calculation. In general, the authors used Social Blade, however, they employed HypeAuditor for those influencers that the former did not measure. There were a few cases that had no engagement rate and authors did not considered those in the average calculations.

Stage 3: Analysis of post topics

For content analysis, the authors selected 15 influencer accounts representative of all trends, 5 from each one. Hierarchically, the authors considered the following criteria: 1) the number of followers with preference for top and macro influencers; and 2) the representation of specific trends to have diversity of wellness visions, beyond followers, for example, in the case of wisdoms.

Chart 1
Sample of wellness influencers selected to analyze post topics.

General trends	Specific trend	Amount of influencers	Type of influencer
Academic	3 Psychology, 1 Clinical philosophy, 1 Other academics	5	1 Top Influencer (over 1MM), 2 Macro Influencer (250K to 1MM)
Wisdoms and religions	2 Eastern, 2 Western, 1 Ancestral peoples	5	1 Top Influencer (over 1MM), 1 Macro Influencer (250K to 1MM), 3 Medium Influencers (50 to 250K)
Pseudo-sciences	4 Coaches, 1 neo-paganism: magic	5	5 Top Influencer (over 1MM)
Total		**15**	

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on the influencers' sample list from stage 2.

The authors analyzed the last 10 publications posted as of October 18th, 2023. The total amount resulted in 150. The authors operationally determined as a post or record unit (Bardin, 2002) any within the date range in the feed, regardless of whether they were fixed, a reel, or a post, discarding stories and live videos. Thus, they generated a file with the following categories and subcategories:

Chart 2

Categories and subcategories of the content analysis file.

General categories of posts topics	Subcategories
Mental health	Anxiety or compulsion, depression, attention, aggressiveness, personality types and disorders, addiction, gender, emotional intelligence or emotion management, other
Love	Grief and breakup, attachment, situationship, toxic relationships, betrayal or infidelity, conquest or search for love, life as a couple, sexuality, other
Personal and emotional wellness	Self-knowledge; empowerment; self-love and acceptance, suffering, trauma or abuse; resilience; inner peace, gratitude, other
Comprehensive wellness	Physical exercises, mental exercises, meditation, relation with nature, relation with God or a higher force, natural therapies, other
Family and other relations	Bond with the mother, bond with the father, parenting and children, family ties in general and other relationships, other
Social life	Household chores, family or couple life, travel, urban tours, cultural or academic life, events, work, leisure, not applicable
Current Events	Politics, social, environment, entertainment, religion, astrology, other.
Commercial	Personal consultation, event, training, book, application, (web-based) content, products and accessories

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on the content analysis file.

4. RESULTS

4.1. Emerging wellness trends

When conceptualizing the different currents of mental, emotional and spiritual well-being present in the busy world of influencers and their audiences, it is necessary to consider a criterion in order to make a proper distinction among them, either by their known definitions, their historical origins, or their applications, techniques and therapeutic methods.

To this end, the authors have classified wellness influencers into three major groups or categories: a) Academic disciplines; b) Wisdoms and religions; c) Neopaganism and pseudo sciences. The authors described these disciplines in academic terms, for informative purposes.

4.1.1. Academic disciplines

Academic disciplines include influencers related to sciences such as psychiatry, psychologies, psychoanalysis and clinical philosophy. On the one hand, psychiatry is characterized by a biological-organicist approach to the explanation and treatment of psychopathologies (Rose, 2020), while psychologies have diverse schools and approaches that share an object of research focused on consciousness and human behavior (Santamaría, 2018). On the other hand, psychoanalysis (Lacan, 1987) studies the unconscious mind by listening to the symptom of subjects by using the language. Therapeutically oriented philosophy, i.e., clinical, proposes that psychic and emotional discomforts can be faced from a sapiential perspective (Cavallé, 2011; Marinoff, 2017).

4.1.2. Wisdoms and religions

In the list of suggested influencers, a coexistence of trends emerges and encompasses from the monotheistic religions of the Book (Christianity, Judaism, Islam) to the misnamed "Eastern religions", categorized as wisdoms, such as Buddhism and Taoism. There is a difference in the conception of spirituality among these traditions: in the former, we could say that wellness is achieved through the communion with a higher being that allows people to transcend (Corominas, 2023; Eliade, 2017), while the latter traditions point towards an awakening to a more "luminous" condition of being (Capriles, 2018; De Wit, 2018). The ancestral wisdoms (Arnau, 2021; Prat, 2017), whether of Eastern or Latin American origin, studied by anthropological and decolonial approaches, are based on shamanistic experiences of ecstasy achieved with "sacred medicine" that generate a penetrating gnosis of the human condition through spiritual visions, which allows reaching both an intuitive communion with nature and healing processes accompanied by herbs (Arnau, 2021).

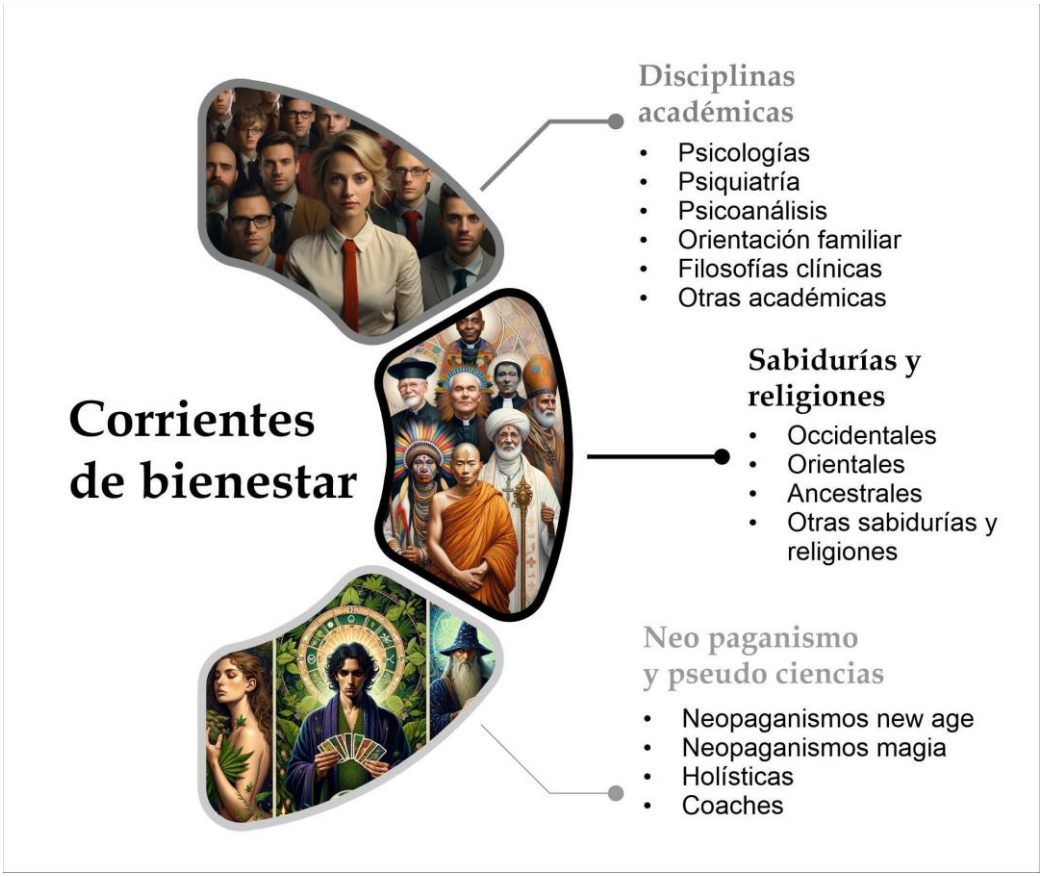
4.1.3. New age, neo-paganism and pseudo-sciences

Among the suggested influencers, the number of those who belong to trends related to New Age and pseudo sciences stands out. The New Age phenomenon dates back to the cultural revolutions of the 60's and 70's, the so-called "Age of Aquarius", characterized by experimenting with the body and mind (Guattari, 2015) commercially spread worldwide in postmodernity. It is founded on an eclectic approach and a desacralized appropriation of esoteric traditions (Albert and Hernández 2014). In neopaganism, magic prevails as a conjuring power, subjugator of spirits, or healer of physical or mental illnesses. It is also appealed to in the search for money, success, a partner, or happiness.

Finally, there were pseudo sciences trends, with an eclectic and sophistic character. It is necessary to make a distinction between pseudo sciences that lack demonstrable empirical foundations and those whose practices, although debatable from the epistemological point of view, can show efficacy at the therapeutic level. Holistic-natural therapies are mentioned as an example of pseudo sciences that, although still lacking solid theoretical foundations, have demonstrated empirical efficacy at the therapeutic level. In this category there are also coaches, who cannot be considered as academics.

Figure 1

Map of wellness trends.



Source: Elaborated by the authors based on qualitative content analysis of account profiles. Images generated with artificial intelligence in Midjourney and ChatGPT 4.

4.2. Engagement and wellness influencers

This chart synthesizes the averages of influencers by stream, for subsequent qualitative evaluation.

Chart 3

Engagement and wellness influencers.

Trends	Number of accounts	Average engagement rate from Socialblade and HypeAuditor	Average number of likes	Average number of comments	Followers	Standard deviation
New age: neo-paganism and pseudo-sciences	21	1.07	11431.72	193.72	807945.96	0.67
Academic and theoretical	17	1.64	15702.93	200.79	929905.82	1.10
Wisdoms and religions	8	6.07	11231.25	183.75	357668.67	9.06

Overall average or total	50	2.20	12701.88	190.88	775322.898

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on the database of indicators of 50 wellness influencers.

The existing differences between the average engagement rates are due to the standard deviation that exists between the influencers of wisdoms and religions, among which there are some with few followers, but high interaction rates that impact the overall average.

There are no agreements regarding low or high engagement on Instagram, but the following must be taking into account:

Chart 4

Quality of engagement according to professional digital communication platforms.

		Level			
	Source	**good or bad**	**good or average**	**very good or high**	**excellent or very high**
Type of engagement	Scrunch	-1%	1%-3.5%	3.5%-6%	6%
	Hootsuite	-1%	1%-4.6%	4.7%-5%	5%

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on professional engagement-analyzing websites

Iconos (2023) states that the average engagement rate in the case of public figures is 5.77%, however, there are also measures by type of publication or number of followers (Hootsuite, 2023). From this perspective, the authors propose the following results of engagement rates:

Chart 5

Engagement levels of wellness influencers

Trends	**Average engagement rate Socialblade and HypeAuditor**	**Evaluation**
Wisdoms and religions	6.07	Excellent
Academic and theoretical	1.64	Good
New age: neo-paganism and pseudo-sciences	1.04	Good
Overall average or total	**2.20**	**Good**

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on the average engagement of 50 wellness influencers

The authors conclude that, regardless of their particular trends, these influencers have high engagement rates or levels with and from their audiences.

4.3. Content analysis of wellness influencers' posts

Chart 6

Content analysis of the posts' main topics.

Topic	Number of posts	Percentage of presence of topics in analyzed posts
Personal and emotional wellness	38	25.33%
Love as a couple	30	20.00%
Commercial recommendation	22	14.67%
Social and personal life	14	9.33%
Family and other relations	13	8.67%
Non-commercial recommendation	11	7.33%
Current Events	10	6.67%
Mental health	7	4.67%
Comprehensive wellness	3	2.00%
Other	2	1.33%
Total	150	100%

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on data from 150 posts analyzed from the sample of selected wellness influencers.

Despite the mental health crisis, there is little content on this approach, even considering that one third of the sample included "academic" influencers from the line of psychology, psychoanalysis or psychiatry and there is more content related to the notion of wellness, as presented in more specific topics of posts. The authors also found a predominant presence of wellness content in its mental-spiritual dimensions vs. the comprehensive ones that consider the body. The topic of love has a relevant presence, while other forms of bonding, such as family, do not. The authors identified sales as one of the main trends in the content: influencers use their accounts to promote commercial products of their brands or authorship.

Chart 7

Content analysis of the posts' specific topics.

General topic in the post	Number of posts	Specific topic in the post	Percentage of posts related to the topic
Personal and emotional wellness	12	Self-love	31.58%
	7	Inner peace	18.45%
	7	Other	18.45%
	5	Self-knowledge	13.16%

	3	Empowerment	7.89%
	2	Resilience	5.26%
	1	Gratitude	2.63%
	1	Suffering	2.63%
Love as a couple	10	Life as a couple	33.33%
	6	Search or conquest	20%
	6	Grief or breakup	20%
	3	Situationship	10%
	3	Toxic relationships	10%
	1	Sexuality	3.33%
	1	Betrayal or infidelity	3.33%
Commercial recommendation	10	Events or shows	45.45%
	7	Trainings	31.82%
	3	Books	13.64%
	2	Products	9.09%
Mental health	3	Personality and mental disorders	42.86%
	2	Management of emotions	28.57%
	2	Other	28.57%
Social and personal life	9	Events	64.29%
	5	Other	35.71%
Family and other relations	13	Family and other relations	100%
Non-commercial recommendation	6	Content	54.55%
	4	Books	36.36%
	1	Event or show	9.09%
Current Events	5	Astrology	50%
	2	Social	20%
	2	Politics	20%
	1	Other	10%
Comprehensive wellness	2	Physical exercises	66.67%

	1	Mental exercises	33.33%
Other	2	Other	100.00%
Total	150		

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on data from 150 posts analyzed from the sample of selected wellness

In relation to the topics of the most important categories (Personal and emotional wellness, love and commercial recommendation), the authors found an emphasis on some specific contents. In the case of emotional and personal wellness, there is an emphasis on "self-love" narratives. In the case of love, those related to recommendations for life as a couple prevail, followed by content related to the search for love and breakups. Regarding commercial recommendations, the authors identified that influencers capitalize on their place in networks to promote the sale of specific products such as events, shows, retreats, training, seminars or courses.

In the case of topics with lower percentage, for example, those related to the social life presence of influencers, there are posts about personal events. Regarding non-commercial recommendations, the authors found posts that recommend content from other influencers. In the dimensions of common life, related to current events, the authors found that this is neither social nor political, but astrological, related to the impact of planetary transits on behaviors or life situations. In the subject of mental health, there is a greater amount of content related to personality types and their disorders, which match other studies that highlight issues related to anxiety, depression and stress (Carbonero-Saiz et al., 2023).

5. DISCUSSION

Hypermodern times are characterized by the relentless search for welfare and comfort. Although the wellness state is coming to an end (Sadin, 2022), or at least, it goes through a structural crisis due to political and economic reasons of neoliberal globalization, the individual, and at times, hedonistic search for personal fulfillment, physical wellness and emotional health is not (Sadin, 2022). It would seem that the only viable, credible and sustainable project is the one built with oneself, and at most, within small groups.

A new self-gratifying individualism has settled in the current cultural stage, yet accompanied by a different symptomatology; loneliness, addictions, the breaking of social ties, emotional tendencies to look for individual solutions, uncertainty, and the lack of a promising future, are some of the forms that the new cultural discomforts are acquiring today. The weak belief in collective liberation projects is compensated by personal micro-projects of low scale and budget.

In social networks, contemporary subjects exhibit their individualistic splendor and their existential agony at the same time. A careful look is enough to observe the contrast between the increase in virtual consumption of wellness and peace of mind

content and the harsh daily life reality: people live surrounded by stress, anxieties, loneliness, daily antagonisms and psychosomatic illnesses.

While the pandemic generated the question, even the "illusion", -in many authors- (Agamben et al., 2020; Nancy 2021) that this virus had reminded us and brought us back to the global consciousness of our wounded and fragile humanity, the post-pandemic period has shown, instead, -and as other authors also predicted- that humanity found no better solution than to accelerate capitalist consumption and the hyper productivity that it implies.

The lack of future perspectives keeps people focused on a perpetual present (Berardi, 2017), in a society of disappointment (Lipovetsky and Richard, 2008), for the sake of individualism and the emotional triggers of such a breakdown.

Wellness influencers sense what is happening, weigh the unspoken demands of people in situations of emotional distress and assume this new psychic ethos and this contextual crisis as an opportunity to generate multiple content offers. They come in the form of seminars, short courses, self-help audiobooks, tutorials, trainings, among others, consumed and paid for with attention and persistence.

Despite the issues with the concept of engagement, in the analysis of averages the authors concluded that all influencers of wellness trends achieve "engagement" with their followers.

At the same time, the society of disappointment (Lipovetsky and Richard, 2008) advances on the basis of extreme, even tyrannical, individualism (Sadin, 2022). The authors of this study have confirmed the search for solutions to the different sources of discomfort. This is evident in the broad understanding of the notion of wellness of the subjects (Viotti, 2018) who were asked for names of wellness content-producing influencers. There is also a kind of "return" of religious wisdoms and feelings in the prevalence of influencers of new age trends and pseudo sciences. However, beyond their epistemic validation, the authors believe that they respond to individuals' search for wellness. On the other hand, this emergence of non-academic trends, from esotericism to shamanism, from new age to pseudo sciences, shows that scientific paradigms and official religions share the hypermedia scenario with the sciences and official religions, and in some cases, moving them from the spotlight and focus of attention.

This is also evident in the content production statistics. Although these influencers come from different trends, certain tendencies in their speech may obey the logic of the "discomfort" market. For example, the permanent use of the concept of emotional wellness over other more medical concepts such as mental health. This could also be also evidence of a crisis in the scientific or academic meta-narrative (Lipovetsky, 2022), which motivates subjects to look for answers elsewhere.

However, the high levels of engagement and the variables used for its calculation, hide the role of the platform and its algorithms as a condition for the generation of this engagement, so it would seem that influencers and users meet "freely", or that this

encounter depends exclusively on the communication strategies designed by the influencers.

It should be noted that these engagement levels are framed in a programmed visibility regime (Bucher, 2018; Gillespie, 2017) because, on the one hand, the contents adapt to the formats promoted by the platform, or to the fact that if they are paid, they are "rewarded" with more visibility. On the other hand, the statistical analysis of the interactions or reach of the posts on the platform probably will also impact the discursive and communication strategies of the influencers, who will promote or stop talking about certain topics depending on the results of the indicators. Some questions then remain: can the reach of wellness content be at the mercy of the tyranny of corporate algorithms and the interests of (wellness) markets? To what extent do platforms impact the discursive and communication strategies of influencers? Is it a combination of algorithms, platforms, influencers' narratives and the demands of wellness consumers that establishes engagement?

Social networks not only serve to provide health content (valid or not), but also to identify concerns and information needs related to this topic (Díaz-Campo et al., 2023). In relation to the topics of the content, it is necessary to analyze both the trends and the gaps. It is worth reflecting on the fact that, even among influencers from academic disciplines, topics more related to emotional or spiritual wellness prevail over those related to mental health. While mental health focuses on the notions of disorder and wellness, as illustrated in the disaggregated chart, it places the "solution in the subject", evident in the prominence of specific topics like "self-love". It is also interesting that the trend of contents focuses on emotional wellness, rather than on comprehensive one: this implies that Western perspectives, that separate mind and body, prevail (Lipovetsky 2010) as opposed to what the wisdoms promote. The high amount of love-linked topics in different trends, as well as the low presence of topics associated with family relations, show the crisis of the family as an institution, and at the same time, the difficulties related to establishing bonds (Bauman, 2004; Illouz, 2007) amidst the current sources of discomfort. Finally, the absence of topics linked to current affairs, especially those related to politics, shows wellness isolated from the notion of the common (Sadin, 2022). All these contents are packaged in concrete products and services, from consultations to shows.

6. CONCLUSIONS

This is an exploratory research, focused on Instagram accounts as content issuers, whose objective is to account for the main therapeutic trends linked to emotional or spiritual wellness of Hispanic American influencers in 2023, the characteristics of the profiles, the levels of participation and engagement and the wellness topics in their posted content.

This study describes that both influencers and users have a broad and very heterogeneous vision of therapeutic or assistance trends for the achievement of psychic wellness. It is somewhat unsettling, however, that some of them are related to new age and/or pseudo-scientific content, which could deepen an already serious mental crisis

in the users, either by making them responsible for their psychic situation or placing the cure in magical or esoteric dimensions without the necessary knowledge and care. It is advisable to have a trained therapist present if the case demands it, or a teacher, equally qualified, if it is a matter of recognized sapiential or spiritual matters. Although self-help, as its name suggests, is disseminated as a set of tools and knowledge to face the difficulties of emotional life in a personal way, in delicate cases, the professional or experiential presence is essential. This situation is aggravated when wellness is in the hands of non-professional health influencers, who also provide consultation services without a scientific diagnosis or sufficient experience. These cases should be warned about and can be a red flag influencers and users should take into account.

Influencers can be considered as content generation "machines" whose strategic objective is focused on increasing their audiences by means of carefully constructed persuasion devices. Their knowledge can cover a wide spectrum, from the most serious and certified to the most dubious and unreliable ones. On the other hand, meta-analysis studies point out that although real health professionals highlight the value of social networks to promote adequate self-management of chronic diseases and promote a conversation about psychiatric diseases, they also point out that those professionals' lack of time and certain insufficiency in digital competencies hinder an appropriate approach to the issues under discussion (De Angelis et al., 2018). These difficulties are confirmed and amplified in other studies dealing with health communication: those generated by insurance companies, drug manufacturers and, very scarcely, hospital professionals prevail as sources of information (Busto-Salinas, 2019).

The increase and expansion of information on physical, emotional, and even spiritual health began even before the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2019, the Second National Survey on Religious Beliefs and Attitudes in Argentina, conducted by the Center for Labor Studies and Research (CEIL, for its Spanish acronym), showed that the belief in "energy" (an ambiguous and central concept in the spiritual market) presented a 76% of acceptance, marking more than 10 points of growth in relation to the survey conducted in 2008. Another survey conducted in Spain in 2022 by the Spanish Foundation for Science and Technology (FECYT) on scientific misinformation also identifies that 30.5% of users believe that they have received false information on nutrition and wellness and 60% believe that this false information has negative effects on its target audience. While the same FECYT survey (2022) indicates that 45.2% of users have little trust in networks, 42.4% of them however, trust friends or acquaintances who are often transmitters of the same information.

The authors suggest the following hypothesis: the rise of "alternative" non-academic trends for the achievement of emotional and spiritual wellness reflect a crisis of legitimacy of the rational-scientific paradigms in postmodern mindsets. Since the end of the last century, this phenomenon has been accompanied by a liquid return of official religions (Derrida and Vattimo, 1996) and of the so-called spiritual ones, which should be seriously considered in subsequent studies on the treatment of psychic health in contemporary subjectivity.

Currently, this panorama is further complicated by the emergence of other communicational phenomena over the last decade, such as of fake news and conspiracy theories, both characterized by not taking responsibility for the information, or rather misinformation, they spread. Finally, the authors point out how consultancies or advisors from the field of Artificial Intelligence are investing in a new post-human influencer for the remainder of the 21st century. The latter would deserve a separate and exclusive study.

Future studies should consider influencers, the narrative strategies of messages, and the ways in which users consume such publications. Whether these studies are focused on the user or the issuer, it is necessary to consider capitalism as the mediating matrix of this encounter, to the extent that platform capitalism (Srnicek, 2018) impacts the narrative strategies generated by influencers and the emotions they convey are treated by the same system and its logics of appropriation and consumption. These questions remain open: From where do influencers acquire the knowledge that they use to produce their content? and under what concepts of wellness do they operate? What communication strategies have the greatest impact on users? What meanings do they give to this content and why do they establish engagement with it? What "lessons" are they establishing on how to deal with their individual discomforts? Do they strengthen the notion of the self-entrepreneurs and, therefore, only contribute to deepen mental health problems by making the subjects responsible for their own cure? Do they strengthen or articulate the society of disappointment and extreme individualism (Lipovetsky and Richard, 2008; Sadin, 2022) with notions such as those of "self-love"? In short, in the context of the mental health crisis, influencers have become referents of possible changes in a world of psychic, emotional and amorous discomfort.

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