Political Polarization and Intergroup Relations: a study on Social Representations in Brazil
Polarización Política y Relaciones Intergrupales: un estudio sobre las Representaciones Sociales en Brasil

Andréia Isabel Giacomozzi
Anderson Silveira
Amanda Christine Albuquerque Tavares
Ana Maria Justo
Federal University of Santa Catarina

Abstract
This research aimed to study left-wing and right-wing groups' political polarization and their Social Representations (SR) of each other, as well as to investigate the experience of political violence and the belief in a just world (BJW). An online survey was conducted. The left-wing groups used the terms equality, empathy, and justice to describe themselves, while the right-wing groups used freedom, conservatism, and justice. Both groups used negative terms to describe their opponents; left-wingers described right-wingers as selfish, ignorant, and intolerant and right-wingers described left-wingers as corrupt, intolerant, and extremist. Regarding violence, 72% stated that they knew someone who had suffered political violence in the last two years, especially through social media. As for the means on the BJW scale, left-wingers had a lower mean than right-wingers. There are significant differences in SRs and positions between the groups, which may be at the core of violence.

Keywords: **Social Psychology; Violence; Social representation; Political polarization**

Resumen
El objetivo de este trabajo es estudiar la polarización política y las Representaciones Sociales (RS) de los grupos de derecha e izquierda entre sí, además de verificar la experiencia de la violencia política y la creencia en un mundo justo (CMJ). Se realizó una encuesta en línea. Los grupos de izquierda usaron los términos igualdad, empatía y justicia para describirse a sí mismos, mientras que los grupos de derecha usaron libertad, conservadurismo y justicia. Los dos grupos usaron términos negativos para describir los opuestos; los de izquierda describieron a la derecha como egoísta, ignorante e intolerante, y los de derecha describieron a la izquierda como corrupta, intolerante y extremista. Sobre la violencia, 72 % dijo conocer a alguien que sufrió violencia política en los últimos 2 años, principalmente en las redes sociales. Y sobre a las medias en la escala CMJ, los de la izquierda tuvieron un promedio más bajo que los de la derecha. Hay diferencias importantes en RS y posiciones entre grupos, que pueden estar en el centro de la violencia.

*Palabras clave: **Psicología Social**; **Violencia**; **Representación Social**; **Polarización política***

INTRODUCTION

Following a worldwide trend, a great political polarization has been observed among Brazilians (Giacomozzi et al., in press). Such polarized context is of interest for a social psychology analysis of how argumentative realities progressively validate social realities, which may favor the emergence of political discourses that close the possibility of wide democratic participation. We intend to analyze political polarization and how it is associated with the social representations of its group (ingroup) and of the group with an opposing political position (outgroup), considering that such tensions can generate violence.

In Latin America, studies on polarization were conducted by Ignacio Martín-Baró (1988, 2000), who defines polarization as a psychosocial process in which different positions concerning a problem tend to be progressively reduced to two opposing and excluding positions within a social space. It happens when a group's position presupposes a negative reference to that of another, considered to be a rival. It is a dynamic process of social forces, where classifying the other becomes a necessity to guide one's own behavior, which can generate violence. This type of violence takes over interpersonal relationships, including the most intimate ones.

Although the myth of non-violence exists in Brazil (Chauí, 2019), the country was forged with the massacre of native peoples and marked by periods of authoritarian domination with strong militarism and violence (Gomes et al., 2019). Violence is present in various social spaces and is mainly manifested against certain marginalized, poor and black populations (Giacomozzi et al., 2021, 2022; Vitali et al., 2021, 2022).

Social Representations and Intergroup Relations

From Social Representations (SR), it is possible to know how individuals understand and position themselves in relation to phenomena (Camargo et al., 2018; Rouquette, 1998). And the way people see the world is a contribution of their belonging to certain social groups (Tajfel, 1981), since such belonging implies relatively common experiences and, consequently, shared opinions, beliefs and norms, which lead to a similar way of acting on the world. Thus, some ideas/representations only make sense when assessed from specific knowledge and values of certain social groups (Doise, 1992). SRs, as a form of socially constructed and shared knowledge, vary according to the context of social relations in which individuals are placed, giving meaning to the reality of groups and influencing their worldviews (Jodelet, 2001).

SRs can be a means for groups to assert their particularities, which demarcates their importance in the analysis of intergroup dynamics (Deschamps & Moliner,

2009). The sharing of SRs gives a status to different groups in society <u>and</u> supports the criteria that underlie hierarchies and social comparison (Moscovici, 2011). In the present study, we use the approach proposed by Jean-Claude Abric (2003), which considers SRs to be organized and structured sets of information, beliefs, opinions and attitudes, composed of two subsystems, central and peripheral, each of which has a specific and complementary role. More specifically, we intend to learn about the SRs of right-wing and left-wing groups, one of the other, by understanding that they interfere in intra- and inter-group relations in the context of political polarization in the country addressed in this study.

Political Polarization and the Social Media

The number of people accessing the news via social media has increased on a global scale (Newman et al., 2019). Regarding political polarization on the social media, the SR theory can help in understanding selectivity in the search for information. Serge Moscovici (1981), when conceptualizing the changes caused by communication in societies in previous centuries, stated that while organization transforms spontaneous masses into organized masses, communication transforms the latter into publics, which, for him, would be true masses at home. Virtual communications are crafted through specific mechanisms of operation because, by being configured from anonymous and distance communication, they put in check the discursive and expressive capacity for another communication based on linguistic affirmation and modes of systematic mass operationalization (Camino et al., 2019).

Political Positioning

The meanings of right and left have acquired different shades throughout history and have served as fuel for the most diverse political regimes in the world. According to Norberto Bobbio (2017), for more than two centuries, the concepts of right and left have existed, and being antagonistic, they are intended to diverge conceptions, ideologies, and political practices. The representation of the terms right and left is linked to the way of thinking by dyads in the sphere of knowledge.

These elements have undergone changes in meaning, and, in some cases, they are crossed by the phenomenon of prejudice, used by individuals to describe social groups that are different from their own (Rodrigues et al., 2015). It is noteworthy that, in a simplified manner, historically, the leftist group has been represented by fighting for the rights of working people and lower social classes, with the aim of promoting collective welfare and popular participation in social movements. Economically, it would seek to promote a more egalitarian

society, with greater income distribution and interference by the State. On the other hand, being right-wing would represent a more conservative vision, tied to tradition, with the intention of keeping power centralized in oneself and in individual prosperity. In the economic sphere it defends market initiative with a free economy, without State intervention (Barros, 2019).

In recent years, a negative evaluation of left-wing parties has been perceived in Brazil, probably due to the corruption scandals in which the Workers' Party (PT) was involved, in addition to Dilma Rousseff's impeachment and the imprisonment of former president Lula, which led to the party's tarred image and an increase in the derogatory tone of the left-wing parties (Mariano, 2019). In contrast, the right wing has also been unfavorably stereotyped since the military regime. This perception, however, has undergone changes since right-wing representatives were elected in the 2018 elections, with Jair Bolsonaro, who used an anti-party and conservative discourse in the field of customs in his electoral campaign. Moreover, the political growth of the "anti-PT sentiment" accompanied the rise of religious conservatism (Costa, 2019). Therefore, it is inferred that stereotypes (Rodrigues et al., 2015) regarding being "right-wing" or "left-wing" have become popularized in Brazil and have become stronger since the 2018 elections, potentiating political polarization in the country. This distinction of sides also results in conflicts of interests and values associated with social groups, as well as can reverberate in how social justice is conceived.

Belief in a Just World

The belief in a just world (BJW) is a construct that is utilized to think about justice from a psychosocial perspective, and it can help in understanding the polarization process. Geared towards understanding a range of social phenomena, research has focused on investigating the phenomena and psychological processes that enable an understanding of how people judge issues related to justice. The basis of this theory is that individuals are motivated to perceive the world as fair, where people have what they deserve and deserve what they have (Lerner, 1998; Maes, 1998). There would be a tendency in individuals to resort to strategies in order to eliminate any kind of threat to BJW, such as injustice and the victim's suffering. Thus, injustice would not be a congruent concept with this theory, since the misfortunes that occasionally happen to people are ascribed to their own responsibility, through the thought that bad things happen to bad people (Lerner, 1998).

This study intends to understand how the SRs of one group regarding the other (left-wing and right-wing individuals) may be influencing the relationships be-

tween those groups and the conflicts between them, as well as to understand how the political polarization phenomenon being experienced in Brazil may be affecting the daily relationships between groups of people, friends, and family members, considering the psychosocial aspects associated with the phenomenon, such as BJW.

METHOD

This was a cross-sectional, descriptive and comparative study. The sample consisted of participants over 18 years old, through an online self-administered questionnaire, with an approximate response time of 20 minutes. The online questionnaire was available for 130 days. A total of 1.241 people participated, of whom 52% were males and 48% were females. Regarding their political positions, 36.3% considered themselves center-left, 29.7% left, 13.7% center-right, 13.5% right, 4.3% extreme left, and 2.5% extreme right. The mean age was 35 years and 6 months (SD=13.18). Of the total of 1,241 participants, a paired sample of 736 people was used, 52.6% males and 47% females, with a mean age of 35 years and 6 months (SD = 13.18), grouped into two categories: 368 left-wing individuals (grouping those who reported being extreme left, left and center-left), and 368 right-wing individuals (extreme right, right and center-right). All the data in the present study will refer to this sample consisting of 736 people.

Instruments

An online survey was developed, consisting of both open- and closed-ended items, based on previous research (Gerber et al., 2017; Iyengar et al., 2019; Pimentel et al., 2010; Wisneski & Skitka, 2017). The questionnaire comprised 54 questions divided into 8 sections, addressing the following topics:

a) the Global Scale of Beliefs in a Just World, composed of seven items to evaluate BJW (Pimentel et al., 2010); b) a question on the perception of the country's situation regarding political polarization; c) a close-ended question concerning political positions, and two open-ended questions on intergroup relations, in which the participants were asked, after stating their political position, to describe their own group (ingroup) using three words, and then to describe the opposing group (outgroup) using three more words; d) questions on the conflicts arising from the political theme and, in case of affirmative answers, with which groups of people, in what situations/locations they occurred, and how the situation developed with certain groups of people (12 closed questions); e) Questions on feelings associated with political polarization and violence (15 questions, of which 14 were closed- and one was open-ended); f)

Questions on which means of communication were used to obtain information on politics (5 questions); g) Questions on trust in the means of communication and on the current Brazilian political system (4 questions); h) at the end of the questionnaire, six socio-demographic questions were included, such as those concerning gender, region of the Brazilian state where the participants lived, their age, income, socioeconomic level, religion, and schooling for further analysis.

Data Collection Procedures

The free-consent form was presented in the first section of the questionnaire. The study was approved by CEPSH – Ethics Committee for Research Involving Human Beings, according to Report no. 3.590.056. Participants were contacted through social media, WhatsApp and Snowball Sampling, in which each individual participating in the social medium creates connections from it with other members of his/her circle and disseminates the access to the questionnaire (Baltar & Brunet, 2012).

Data Analysis

Descriptive and relational statistical analysis was performed on the closed-ended questions using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS-17.0) software. The answers to the word evocation questions were analyzed using the IRaMuTeQ software for textual data analysis (Ratinaud & Marchand, 2015). Prototypical analysis was performed, so that the material collected in the evocation test was analyzed considering the individual (frequency) and collective (mean evocation order) realms, thus identifying the centrality of the elements in the representations (Wachelke et al., 2016).

RESULTS

Regarding their region of residence, 6% of the participants reported living in the Mid-Western Region, 10.1% in the Northeast, 3.4% in the North, 31.7% in the Southeast, and 48.9% in the South of Brazil. Regarding their monthly family income, it was observed that most interviewees had an income between 5 and 10 minimum wages (MW) (26.4%) and between 3 and 5 MW (19.4%). Other data showed that 2.4% reported not having any kind of income, 0.4% earned up to half a minimum wage, 2.9% between 0.5 and 1 minimum wage, 12.6% more than 1 to 2 minimum wages, 13.7% more than 2 to 3 minimum wages, 17.1% more than 10 to 20 minimum wages, and 5% earned more than 20 minimum wages.

As for education, it was observed that 0.7% of the interviewees reported not having finished elementary school, 0.5% having completed elementary school, 1.9% not having completed high school, and 9.1% having finished high school, that is, a percentage of 12.2% of the sample concluded only a certain level of basic education. In contrast, a higher percentage of the sample (87.8%) had access to higher education, with 26.4% of the interviewees reporting incomplete higher education, 23.8% complete higher education, 6.5% incomplete post-graduation, and 31.1% complete post-graduation.

When cross-referencing schooling with political belonging, it was observed that people who claimed to be left-wingers were concentrated in the complete post-graduation (37.8%), incomplete higher education (28.3%), and complete higher education (19.3%) categories, while right-wingers were concentrated in the complete higher education (28.3%), incomplete higher education (24.5%), and complete post-graduation (24.5%) categories. There was a statistically significant association showing that left-wingers were slightly more educated than right-wingers [x^2 = 43.82; gl = 7; p < 001]. It was also observed that women were concentrated in leftist political belonging (62%), while men were in the rightist (67.9%). There was a statistically significant association between the variables [x^2 = 70.96; gl = 2; p < 001].

Regarding the agreement with the statement that Brazil is divided politically, an overall mean of 5.1 (SD = 1.25) on a six-point scale was obtained, with the left-wing group showing a slightly higher mean (M = 5.29, SD = 1.17) than the right-wing group (M = 5.04, SD = 1.30) [t(726) = 2.76; p < 0.01).

Ingroup and Outgroup Social Representations

In the prototypical analysis, the constitution of the SR structure in the ingroup and outgroup descriptions appear through elements with a higher frequency, and those evoked first were more likely to belong to the central core, while those with a lower frequency and evoked later represented the representation periphery (Wachelke et al., 2016). In Tables 1 and 2, the elements that the left-wing and right-wing groups used to describe themselves (ingroup) can be observed. For this analysis, 2019 evocations were obtained, of which 658 were different words, and those with a higher frequency than 1 were considered in the analyses. In the right-wing group, we obtained an intermediate word frequency *(f)* of 7.31, and a mean evocation order (MEO) of 1.92. The left-wing group showed *f* = 6.25 and MEO = 1.89.

In the upper left quadrant of each of the diagrams, the elements that constituted the possible central core of the left-wing and right-wing groups' SRs of themselves are listed. In the sample of individuals who claimed to be leftists, the words that were prominent to describe the ingroup and had a higher evocation frequency were: "equality" (62), "empathetic" (47) and "justice" (40). The latter element obtained higher activation as compared to the first two mentioned, with MEO = 1.5. Other elements such as "freedom", "just", "democracy", "social justice" and "human rights" were also important for the group, showing an SR linked to the leftist ideological model. The word "conscious" was the one that obtained the highest activation (MEO = 1.2), despite its lower frequency of evocation (15).

		MEO ≤ 1.92		MEO > 1.92		
	Element	F*	MEO**	Element	F*	MEO**
	Equality	62	1.9	Equity	24	2
	Empaty	47	1.9	Rights	19	2.2
	Justice	40	1.5	Humanist	19	2.2
	Freedom	29	1.8	Struggle	16	2
f ≥ 7.31	Just	29	1.9	Education	15	2
	Democracy	24	1.7	Community	14	2.2
	Social Justice	23	1.6	Respect	14	2.4
	Social	17	1.8	Tolerant	11	2.1
	Human rights	15	1.7	Progressive	9	2
	Conscientious	15	1.2			
	Solidarity	15	1.9			
	Balanced	7	1.7	Diversity	7	2
	Rational	7	1.9	Health	7	2.1
	Militant	5	1.8	Justice	6	3
	Community	4	1.5	Realist	5	2.4
f < 7.31	Moderate	4	1	Enlightened	5	2
	Thoughtful	4	1	Resistance	5	2.4
	Revolutionary	4	1.8	Inclusion	5	2.2
	Liberal	4	1.8	Sensitive	4	2.2
	Concerned	4	1.8	Revolution	4	2.5
	Inequality	3	1.7	Fraternity	4	3
	Figthers	3	1.7	Honest	3	2.3

Note: *F = evocation frequency **MEO = Mean Evocation Order

Table 1. Quadrant diagram of the left-wing participants ingroup description

	MEO ≤ 1.89			MEO > 1.89		
	Element	F*	MEO**	Element	F*	MEO**
f ≥ 6.25	Freedom	49	1.6	Honest	32	1.9
	Conservative	34	1.5	Family	25	1.9
	Justice	25	1.4	Just	21	1.9
	Intelligent	23	1.8	Workers	17	2.1
	Liberal	23	1.6	Patriot	16	2.2
	Liberalism	13	1.6	Justice	14	2.9
	Realist	12	1.8	Progress	12	2.1
	Balanced	11	1.5	Coherent	12	2.2
	Rational	11	1.5	Respect	10	2.1
	Sensible	10	1.4	Equality	9	2.1
	Capitalist	10	1.5	Meritocracy	9	2.1
f < 6.25	Dialogue	6	1.7	Rights	6	2
	Ethics	6	1.8	Values	5	2
	Free market	5	1.4	Future	5	2
	Moderate	5	1.4	Studios	5	2
	Order	5	1.4	Growth	5	3
	Skeptical	5	1.6	Christian	5	2
	Libertarian	5	1.4	Development	5	2.6
	Prosperity	4	1.5	Empathetic	4	2.5
	Correct	4	1.8	Hope	4	2.2
	Informed	4	1.2	Discipline	4	2.2
	Nationalism	4	1.8	God	4	2

Note: *F = evocation frequency **MEO = Mean Evocation Order

Table 2. Quadrant diagram of the right-wing participants ingroup description

In comparison, in the right-wing group, the words with higher evocation frequency had a higher activation rate than those in the left-wing group, despite having a lower frequency when compared to the same group: "freedom" (*f* = 49, MEO = 1.6); "conservative" (*f* = 34, MEO = 1.5); and "justice" (*f* = 25, MEO = 1.4). It is noteworthy, that, in both groups, the element "justice" obtained a prominent place, as it remained among the words with the highest frequency and highest activation rate to describe themselves. Other core elements for the right wing were: "intelligent", "liberal", "liberalism" and "realist". The elements "freedom", "liberal" and "liberalism", occupying this first quadrant, also showed the SR linked to the right-wing group's conception of an economic model.

Still regarding the contrast-zone quadrant, in the right-wing group, the elements that were more frequent and that also similarly converged to a more stabilized behavior representation were: "dialogue" (6), "ethical" (6) and "moderate" (5). Despite its low frequency, the latter word was the most readily evoked in relation to the former, with MEO = 1.4. Other elements such as "free market", "order" and "libertarian" showed prompt evocation (1.4) and expressed a representation of a political model based on patriotism/conservatism as well as the neoliberal market model.

In the upper right quadrant, the left-wing group described themselves with: "equity" (24), "right" (19), "humanist" (19), and "struggle" (16), which again expressed political ideals permeated by social and economic movements in the socialist realm. The right-wing group, on the other hand, used the words "honest" (f = 32), "just" (f = 21) and "workers" (f = 17) with high frequencies of evocations, and reiterated upright and correct behavior. Still in the same group, the elements "family", "patriot" and "progress" showed representations permeated by conservative ideals in which they favored the same group, both in family and nation.

In the second periphery, or lower right quadrant, the most highlighted element used by the left-wing group to describe themselves was "diversity" (f = 7 and MEO = 2), which pointed to the primacy of freedom and the plurality of ways of existing. Other elements that converged with this idea also appeared: "resistance", "inclusion" and "sensitive". Likewise, the elements "health" and "justice" were also highlighted. In the right-wing group, elements involving concern with the future appeared, such as: "right", "values", "future", "studious", and "growth". Finally, other elements such as "Christians" and "God" signaled importance to the religious realm.

Tables 3 and 4 shows the elements listed for the outgroups of the left-wing and right-wing groups. For this analysis, 1985 evocations were obtained and, of these, 760 were different words, and those with a frequency higher than 1 were analyzed. In the left-wing group, we obtained f = 6.57, and MEO = 1.89. The right-wing group showed f = .97 and MEO = 1.85.

In the upper left quadrant, the left-wing groups' possibly central elements concerning right-wingers were "selfish", "ignorant", "individualistic", "intolerant", "conservative", "extremist", "conservatism", "fascist" and "unfair". Despite their somewhat lower evocation frequency, the elements "extremist" (24) and "fascist" (17) had both higher activation (MEO = 1.5) in comparison to the other words. They refer to ideological and political stereotypes. The right-wing group showed elements that also referred to stereotypes. The most evoked words to describe the outgroup were: "corruption" (32) and "intoler-

ant" (22). The element "extremist" had high frequency and activation (*f* = 21, MEO = 1.3). Other elements like "utopian", "communist", "authoritarian", "deluded" also gained importance. The words "socialism" and "socialist" came next. In the lower left quadrant, or contrast zone, it was observed that the leftist group listed the item "uninformation" (*f* = 6, MEO = 1.3) as the best description for the other group, achieving a good frequency and better activation compared to the following others: "arrogant", "backwardness", "rigid", "aggressive". The elements "capitalist" (*f* = 5, MEO = 1) and "racist" (*f* = 5, MEO = 1.4) appeared next as the most readily evoked items and indicated importance for describing the outgroup, as the former revealed a stereotype of an economic model, and the latter one of prejudice. Regarding the right-wing group, the words that were highlighted were "aggressive" and "unfair". The words "welfarism", "innocent", "dependent", "communism", "revolutionary", and "idolater" dialogued in stereotyped ideologies of the left-wing group.

	MEO ≤ 1.89			MEO > 1.89		
	Element	F*	MEO**	Element	F*	MEO**
f ≥ 6.57	Selfish	52	1.7	Meritocracy	30	2
	Ignorant	44	1.8	Prejudiced	27	2.1
	Individualist	37	1.8	Prejudice	20	2.5
	Intolerant	30	1.8	Inequality	18	2.2
	Conservative	24	1.8	Alienated	14	1.9
	Extremist	24	1.5	Capitalism	13	2.2
	Conservatism	19	1.7	Money	11	2
	Fascist	17	1.5	Elitist	10	2.2
	Unfair	15	1.8	Violence	9	2.1
	Radical	14	1.7	Egocentric	9	2
	Hate	11	1.8	Hypocritical	8	2.1
f < 6.57	Uninformed	6	1.3	Fanatic	6	2
	Arrogant	6	1.7	Utopian	5	2.2
	Backwardness	5	1.6	Religion	5	2.8
	Rigidity	5	1.6	Uninformed	5	2.6
	Aggressive	5	1.6	Indifferent	5	2.6
	Rightist	5	1.6	Homophobic	4	2.8
	Liberal	5	1.8	Dumb	4	2.2
	Capitalist	5	1	Racism	4	2.5
	Priveleged	5	1.8	Power	4	2.5
	Racist	5	1.4	Disrespect	4	2.5
	Reactionary	5	1.6	Manipulation	3	2.3

Note: *F = evocation frequency **MEO = Mean Evocation Order

Table 3. Quadrant diagram of the left-wing participants outgroup description

	MEO ≤ 1.85			MEO > 1.85		
	Element	F*	MEO**	Element	F*	MEO**
f ≥ 4.97	Corrupion	32	1.8	Radical	19	1.9
	Intolerant	22	1.7	Hypocritical	18	1.9
	Extremist	21	1.3	Alienated	17	2.1
	Utopian	12	1.5	Ignorant	16	2.2
	Communist	10	1.5	Selfish	14	2.2
	Authoritarian	10	1.5	Naive	11	2
	Deluded	8	1.6	Dumb	11	2.4
	Socialism	8	1.5	Dishonest	11	1.9
	Socialist	8	1.6	Fanatic	10	2
	Respect	7	1	Disrespect	9	2.2
	Manipulated	7	1.1	Democracy	7	2.1
f < 4.97	Aggressive	4	1.8	Uninformed	4	2.5
	Unfair	4	1.5	Envious	4	3
	Welfarism	4	1.5	Cattle	4	2
	Innocent	4	1.8	Hunger	4	2.5
	Dependent	4	1	Inequality	3	2.3
	Communism	4	1.8	Indoctrination	3	2
	Revolutionary	4	1.2	Lula	3	2.3
	Idolater	4	1.5	Egocentric	3	2
	Bum	4	1.5	Collectivity	3	2.3
	Misinformation	4	1.5	Victmism	3	2.3
	Left	4	1.5	Socialist	3	3

Note: *F = evocation frequency **MEO = Mean Evocation Order

Table 4. Quadrant diagram of the right-wing participants outgroup description

In the upper right quadrant, the left-wing group listed the item "meritocracy" (*f* = 30, MEO = 2) to describe the outgroup, which shows a group's representative conception that has the "belief in a just world" as its foundation. The words "prejudiced" and "prejudice" appeared frequently, and by being synonymous, they also showed importance for the group. Other elements, such as "inequality", "alienated", "capitalism", "money" and "elitist" were highlighted as well and reaffirmed the opposing group's conception of representation ideas that were primarily economic. Regarding the right-wing group, elements such as "radical" (19), "hypocritical" (18) and "alienated" (17), "ignorant" (16), "selfish" (14), "naïve" (11), "dumb" (11), "dishonest" (11), and "fanatic" (10) frequently gained strength in elements, showing the outgroup's negative conceptions.

Finally, in the second periphery, or lower right quadrant, the left-wing group listed the element "fanatic" as the best description for the outgroup (*f* = 6, MEO = 2), and then: "utopian", "religion", "uninformed" and "indifferent", which indicates a representative idea of alienation about the world. There were also elements linked to prejudice: "homophobic" and again "racism". Finally, still regarding affections, the right-wing group also elected elements that were close to alienation to describe the outgroup, such as: "uninformed", "envious", and "cattle". This group also made use of elements such as "hunger", "inequality", and "indoctrination" to designate a representation of the left-wing group's lack of economic support and alienation from the social realm.

Perceptions of the political system, the media, and the belief in a just world

As for the belief in the Brazilian political system, the statement: "In general, the Brazilian political system works as it should" had a very low general mean (M = 1.72, SD = 1.06) on the six-point scale, with right-wing groups showing a higher mean (M = 1.92, SD = 1.23) than left-wing groups (M = 1.52, SD = .8). The difference between the means was 0.40 [t(629.45)= 5.27; p<0.001]. And regarding the assertion: "The functioning of most public policies serves the population's general interest", the overall mean was also quite low (M=2.0; SD = 1.06), with no difference between the groups, according to Table 5.

From the question: "Would you change your political position if a government with a different position from yours brought improvements to the country?", we obtained an overall mean of 3.60 with SD = 1.81, with the left-wing groups showing a lower mean (M = 3.46; SD = 1.67) than the right-wing groups (M = 3.75; SD = 1.93). The difference between the means was 0.28 [t(719.35) 2.12; p < 0.05].

Regarding the participants' trust in the Brazilian communication media, the sample's overall mean was slightly below the scale's midpoint (3.0) (M = 2.53; SD = 1.34). Left-wing groups had slightly higher means (M = 2.82, SD = 1.28) than did the right-wing groups (M = 2.24, SD = 1.35), with a statistically significant difference [t(734) = 5.96; p < 0.001].

And regarding the means for the BJW scale, there were differences between the groups' means, with the left-wing group showing a lower mean (M = 2.15; SD = .8) than the right-wing group (M = 3.37; SD = 1.0). The difference between the means was 1.22 [t(704.22) = 17.81; p < 0.001].

Evaluated items	Political position	n	Mean	Standard Deviation	Difference between the means
Mean of the just-world scale	Right-wing	368	3.37	1.0	[t(734) = 5.96; p < 0.001].
	Left-wing	368	2.15	.8	
The functioning of most public policies serves the population's general interest	Right-wing	368	2.08	1.14	[t(718.37)= 1.76; p > 0.05]
	Left-wing	368	1.94	1.00	
In general, the Brazilian political system works as it should	Right-wing	368	1.92	1.23	[t(629.45)= 5,27; p<0.001]
	Left-wing	368	1.52	.8	

Table 5. Belief in a just world and the political system

Experiences of political violence and associated feelings

In terms of having suffered any forms of political violence, 48% of the participants reported having suffered verbal violence in person, and 5% reported having suffered some form of physical violence. It is noteworthy that 77% of the participants reported having suffered violence through social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, and 68% exclusively through WhatsApp. Moreover, 72% reported knowing someone who had suffered political violence in the last two years, most frequently through the social media.

On a six-point scale, where one corresponds to not once and six corresponds to many times, when comparing the means of the groups with different political orientations about having suffered violence for political issues, it was observed that the means were similar for both groups through Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram (M = 3.05; SD = 1.9). The means for WhatsApp, on the other hand, were 1.97 SD = 1.66, for the right-wing and 2.37 (SD = 1.55) for the left-wing groups, showing that the right-wing groups reported having suffered less violence through WhatsApp [t(730) = 3.34; p < 0.01], according to Table 6. On having experienced verbal violence in person, there was a marginally significant difference between right-wingers (M = 1.96; SD = 1.42) and left-wingers (M = 2.16; SD = 1.44) [t(734) = 1.96; p < 0.001]).

If such conflicts have occurred, where and how often have they occurred?					
	Political position	**n**	**Mean**	**Standard Deviation**	**Standard error of the mean**
Place: WhatsApp	Right-wing	368	2.17	1.272	.066
	Left-wing	368	2.64	1.436	.075
Place: Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and/or Instagram	Right-wing	368	2.93	1.606	.084
	Left-wing	368	3.08	1.697	.088
Place: at work/school	Right-wing	368	2.27	1.328	.069
	Left-wing	368	2.47	1.265	.066
Place: at home	Right-wing	368	1.95	1.234	.064
	Left-wing	368	2.61	1.487	.078
Place: in the street	Right-wing	368	1.63	1.047	.055
	Left-wing	368	1.83	1.130	.059
Place: at events or parties	Right-wing	368	1.61	.931	.049
	Left-wing	368	1.96	1.159	.060

Table 6. Conflicts due to politics

As for having caused violence in opposing groups, 42% reported having caused it on social media (Twitter/YouTube/Instagram); 30% via WhatsApp; 24% reported having caused verbal violence in person, and 2% physical violence. Regarding the differences between the groups, on a six-point scale, the left-wing group showed a slightly higher mean (M = 1.71, SD = 1.21) for having caused it through WhatsApp than the right-wing group (M = 1.50, SD = 1.13) [t(730) = 2.45; p < 0.05]. The scenario reverses regarding having caused physical violence, where the right-wing participants' mean (M = 1.09, SD = 0.54) was slightly higher than that of left-wingers (M = 1.01, SD = 0.09) [t (3870 = 2.95; p < 0.005].

Concerning conflicts arising from political disagreements, measured on a six-point scale (where 1 = never and 6 = always), family and friends had the highest value (M = 3.13; SD = 1.42); acquaintances (M = 2.99; SD = 1.44), and strangers (M = 2.58; SD = 1.53). Regarding relatives/friends [t (730) = 6.27; p <

0.001] and acquaintances [t (731) = 3.17; p<0.005], the mean for the frequency of conflict occurrence was significantly higher in the left-wing group.

As for having experienced conflicts and disagreements with friends and family about politics, the feelings accessed by the participant at the time of the experience were questioned. The most accessed feeling was Disappointment sometimes felt by 27.9%, and often or always felt by 50% of the participants. Sadness was sometimes felt by 27.7%, often or always by 37.6%, while Anger was felt by 31.8% in some political discussions, often or always by 34.2% of the participants. Comparing the frequency of occurrence, from the political belonging, it was observed that left-wing individuals reported feeling more anger [t(608.9) = 6.37; p < 001]; more sadness [t(632) = 6.34; p < 001] and more disappointment [t(606.78) = 4.86; p < 001].

Discussion

This study sought to investigate how the SRs of a group concerning another (individuals with an opposing political position) may be influencing the relationships between such groups and their conflicts, as well as to understand how political polarization is affecting the daily relationships between groups of people, friends and relatives. It was observed that females identified with the left-wing group more often. This fact was also noticed in the last presidential elections (2018), when males and females divided their votes in an unprecedented fashion in the country's history. As an example, the popular *#EleNão* (*#NotHim)* movement, which was organized against the election of Jair Bolsonaro, was led by women, and he was the most rejected candidate by females, given that surveys by *Datafolha* showed, at the time, that 52% of women would not vote for that candidate (Rossi et al., 2018). Another aspect regarding the participants' profile was the slightly higher schooling among left-wing individuals, although this may have been due to sex, since women have higher schooling than do men in Brazil (PNAD/IBGE, 2019).

It was also observed that most participants considered Brazil to be divided politically. This denotes the idea of a strong political polarization, which is shown in the ingroup and intergroup SRs identified. The structural analysis of the leftist groups' SRs regarding the ingroup showed that the possible central elements were "equality, empathetic, justice, and freedom". The hierarchical importance of the element "equality", when added to the other following elements, highlights the prominence of the representational aspects that permeate the political, social, and economic realms of the so-called leftist group. Moreover, the element "justice", the third in hierarchy, was one of the most readily evoked elements. As for the right-wing group, the elements that consti-

tuted the possible central core for the ingroup were: "freedom, conservative and justice". It is noteworthy that, in both groups, the element "justice" was prominent because it remained among the words with the highest frequency and best activation rate. The elements "equality", evoked by the left-wing group, and "freedom", by the right-wingers, to define the ingroup raise important questions to analyze the SRs involved in the political polarization sphere. In history, the right wing is more associated with the defense of tradition, guarantee of order, and protection of individual rights, which excludes paternalism by the State (Bobbio, 2017). Thus, the right wing would be more linked to the valorization of individual freedom. In turn, equality would be an ideal usually associated with the left wing, that is, promoting a more egalitarian society with greater income distribution. In this regard, equality is an element that seems to divide right-wing and left-wing groups, since those who advocate it believe that inequalities can be abolished or minimized, while those who are against it would tend to naturalize inequalities. According to Norberto Bobbio (2020), freedom and equality are contradictory and binary: those who favor equality or not; and those who favor a larger State over individual freedom. Such results found in the prototypical analysis of evocations concerning one's own group are reiterated by the differences in the means between the groups on the BJW scale.

It is also noteworthy that the elements "freedom" and "justice" appear in the SRs regarding the ingroup of both groups. However, when considering the relations between the elements that compose the SR, organized into central and peripheral systems (Abric, 2003), it can be stated that they have different meanings for the groups. For the right-wing group, "freedom" would denote a conception that is more associated with individual economic freedom, while for the left-wing group, it could refer to the fundamental freedoms guaranteed by the 1988 Constitution (Costa, 2019). This inference is supported by the analysis of the peripheral elements identified in the prototypical analysis.

For the left-wing group, the elements in the first periphery, that is, "equity, rights, humanist, collectivity and respect", and in the second periphery, namely, "diversity, justice, resistance and inclusion", have a complementary and specific role in relation to the central core (Abric, 2003). The elements in the peripheries confirm the interrelationship with the core elements of the representation. When the elements "equality" and "freedom" gain prominence in the central core, the periphery specifies how participants understand these elements, from conceptions of (social/economic) equity, rights, and social diversity.

In the right-wing group, the elements in the first periphery, "family, workers, patriots, progress and meritocracy", and in the second periphery, "values, growth, Christian and discipline", are related to the central core. Thus, the words "freedom" and "conservative", highlighted in the central core, can be understood from the more pragmatic elements shown in the peripheries. Thus, "freedom" can be associated with the economy through the words "workers, progress, growth, and meritocracy" and "conservatism" is materialized in the elements "family, patriots, values, Christian, and discipline".

The term "justice" seems to be central to both groups, it can also be understood in the interaction with the peripheries. For the left wing: "equity, rights, respect, tolerant, enlightened, inclusion, and honest", and for the right wing: "honest, fair, workers, coherent, respect, rights, and studious". These elements presented in the peripheral ingroup systems highlight converging functions, denoting that the feeling of "justice" is an important component in their self-affirmation.

Identity processes are marked by the identity/difference dyad involved in social groups' perceptions (Tajfel, 1981), which refers to the importance of considering the ingroup/outgroup relation when addressing the SRs associated with the political polarization phenomenon. Regarding the left-wing groups' SRs concerning the outgroup, the possible central elements were: "selfish, ignorant, individualistic, intolerant, conservative, extremist, conservatism, fascist and unfair". Despite their lower frequency of evocation, the elements "extremists and fascists" were readily evoked in comparison to the others. These elements refer to an SR that is related to aspects associated with political ideological stereotypes. On the other hand, when describing the outgroup, the right-wing group highlighted "corruption and intolerant". The word "extremist" as well as the elements "utopian, communist, authoritarian and deluded" were also highlighted.

By analyzing the elements in the SRs of the outgroup, we can broaden the understanding of the terms "justice" and "freedom", attributed to the group itself, since the representation of the ingroup may be grounded on the opposite group's difference (Tajfel, 1981). The elements used to describe the outgroup by the left-wing group, namely, "individualism, prejudice, and inequality", go against the notions of "justice" and "equality" used to describe the ingroup. And to analyze the right-wing group, the elements that, by opposition, corroborate the understanding of the terms "justice" and "equality" are "corruption, intolerant, extremist, utopian, and communist", and "radical, hypocritical, alienated, ignorant, and uninformed". Thus, for right wingers, "justice" and

"freedom" are elements that support a vision of a less corrupt, intolerant, radical, and hypocritical community.

The role that stereotypes play in the articulation of ideas constructed through intergroup relations is highlighted, as they are produced from motivational and identity factors connected to the social dynamics of groups and ideologies. Marcos Emanoel Pereira et al. (2003) point out that stereotyping arises when individuals initially imagine and define the world, and then observe it. This thinking mechanism is obtained from categorization, which makes it possible to simplify reality in order to select elements of the stimulus and group them into a unified category. Thus, opinions concerning the outgroup are usually constructed by categorical thinking and are manifested through stereotyped beliefs shared by group members. This is intergroup bias, where there is willingness to classify the outgroup members as more homogeneous than those in the ingroup, as well as a related tendency to benefit the ingroup members to the detriment of those in the outgroup (Tajfel, 1981; Pereira et al., 2003).

SRs are characterized as structured knowledge with an important function in how individuals act in the face of reality (Rouquette, 1998). For the participants in this study, the representation of their group and the opposing group is related to political group stereotypes in the social and economic realms. The central elements refer to an evaluative dimension of SR, while the peripheral elements are more dynamic, refer to specificities and to a more objective dimension of representation (Abric, 2003). The identified SRs show the political polarization in Brazil and refer to the system of forces described by Ignacio Martín-Baró (1988) in which the position of a group presupposes the negative reference to the position of another, considered a rival. Political polarization is a phenomenon that pervades several instances; it is not only in philosophical reasoning, but also in political theories as well as in SRs and public policies, which are concrete issues in people's daily political life. In this way, the representational analysis of political polarization can help to understand the context in which individuals live and relate to each other. Such rivalry, highlighted by political polarization, causes intolerance for both sides, generates dissatisfaction and reduces the level of political representation, eroding democratic precepts and the legitimacy of representatives (Costa, 2019).

Deep dissatisfaction with the Brazilian political system was observed among respondents, and this feeling is more pronounced among left-wingers, probably because we are currently living under a right-wing government. The participants' trust in the Brazilian media was slightly below the midpoint of the scale, with left-wing groups averaging slightly higher than right-wing groups. In this regard, in the face of information overload on the internet, times are tough for

the news industry considering the distrust in journalism and the digital medium in general (Newman et al., 2019). Studies have observed that, among 38 countries, Brazil was the country with the highest expressed concern about the accuracy of news, as 85% of respondents reported having such fear (Newman et al., 2019). These data arouse attention, since the relationship between the circulation of fake news and the implications that this reverberates on democracy is analyzed, given that they are capable of both promoting misinformation and limiting interpretations that diverge from those predominantly accepted in relation to a certain political fact. Thus, the Internet and its information vehicles become components of paramount importance to be analyzed when it comes to understanding the political realm and its relationship with democracy.

It was also noticed that the right-wing groups seemed to be more willing to change their political position if a government with a different position from theirs brought improvements to the country. In addition, it was found that the left-wing group showed a significantly higher mean frequency of conflict occurrence among family/friends and acquaintances. In addition, the fact that the left-wing groups reported feeling more anger, sadness, and disappointment when faced with conflicts with friends and family members over political issues seems to signal that the left-wing groups are more attached to their core values than the right-wing groups. However, studies on electoral volatility show some questioning of the idea of strong allegiance to a party system, since voter behavior will be unstable and volatile over the years, that is, conversations with friends and relatives and the political environment are important components in the voting decision in Brazil (Costa, 2019).

As for the mean scores on the BJW scale, the right-wing group achieved higher mean scores. This finding has been corroborated by studies observing that tendencies to justify the system are associated with politically conservative beliefs and values (Jost, 2017). In addition, a study by Adrian Furnham (2003) showed that in contexts of social vulnerability, such as in Brazil, in which social and economic inequalities exist, BJW makes people believe that those who live on the margins of society have less because they deserve less. In this way, class differences are considered "legitimate", which makes BJW a way to justify injustice and naturalize experiences such as poverty and racism (Furnham, 2003; Gouveia et al., 2010).

The social media, namely, Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter and YouTube, proved to be the means through which most of the violence and conflicts about politics occurred. In this regard, Nelya Koteyko et al. (2013) highlight the digital-interaction medium as a favorable context for the expression of social and political contestation to emerge. Being anonymous, expressions of violence are

identified in comments and message exchanges, in which users prodigiously comment and issue their opinions, often laden with hate and prejudice, instigating not only violent practices but also making their posts an exercise of violence.

In this study, the phenomenon of political polarization was approached from two dimensions. First, the intergroup relation was considered under the theoretical contribution of SRs. It was found that the left-wing and right-wing groups perceive each other differently, with some common elements, whose meanings are distinguished when considering the relations between the different evoked elements. In turn, the representation of the outgroup exacerbates the difference, bringing the prevalence of stereotyped negative elements, which corroborates the polarization phenomenon described by Ignacio Martín-Baró (1988). Moreover, the characterization of the groups, in terms of positions and beliefs, shows important differences between the right wing and the left wing, highlighting that we live with different ways of thinking and conceiving society, which ultimately generates conflicts and suffering that also seem to operate in different ways between the groups. It seems to us that the intergroup bias, by exacerbating the difference between the groups, would be contributing to the maintenance of polarized representations and actions, since the identity of a group is built from the opposition to the other. Consequently, intolerance and violence against difference are experienced.

We consider it important to add that political polarization can be quite harmful, as can be seen in the recent Covid-19 pandemic, in which polarized and false information influenced individuals and groups in disbelief about the lethality of the disease and non-adherence to measures of hygiene and isolation recommended by health authorities worldwide (de Rosa et al., 2021) and also in Brazil (Giacomozzi et al., 2022; Justo et al., 2020).

CONCLUDING REMARKS

This study provided visibility to the political polarization currently experienced in Brazil and to the profound dissatisfaction with the Brazilian political system experienced by the participants. Moreover, we observed significantly different SRs of the ingroup and outgroup, beliefs and positions by the right-wing and left-wing groups in Brazil. Such differences and conceptions regarding the stereotyping of rival groups may be at the core of the violence that has occurred between them.

Both in the social media and in direct interpersonal relationships, political polarization has been fueled by different worldviews and distinct ways of inter-

preting historical, social, and political phenomena. This is based on groups of belonging and has consequently been the backdrop for conflicts of various magnitudes. Minor arguments to extreme cases of violence have been based on group antagonisms. Studies in the field of social psychology help to understand the underlying processes, enabling the analysis of such phenomena that have had an important impact on the current Brazilian social context.

As a limitation to the study, we highlight that, although the study sample included several Brazilian regions, it was not a representative sample. Thus, if on the one hand, the online data collection strategy allowed us to access participants with distinct political positions (our main variable of interest), at the same time, it also limited them to a restricted public in terms of family income and education. New studies can further investigate the topic studied, especially considering the less economically favored population.

REFERENCES

Abric, Jean-Claude (2003). Abordagem estrutural das representações sociais: desenvolvimentos recentes. In Pedro H. F. Campos & Marcos C. Loureiro (Orgs.), *Representações sociais e práticas educativas* (pp. 37-57). UCG.

Baltar, Fabiola & Brunet, Ignasi (2012). Social research 2.0: Virtual snowball sampling method using Facebook. *Internet Research, 22*(1), 57-74. https://doi.org/10.1108/10662241211199960

Barros, Paulo S. D. A. (2019). *Ações e discursos dos governos de esquerda e de direita no Brasil:" O simbolismo dos cem primeiros dias"* (Trabalho de Conclusão de Curso inédito). Universidade Federal de Campina Grande. http://dspace.sti.ufcg.edu.br:8080/jspui/handle/riufcg/10904

Bobbio, Norberto (2017). *Liberalismo e democracia* (1a ed., Trad. Marco Aurélio Nogueira). Edipro.

Bobbio, Norberto (2020). Izquierda y derecha. *Bajo el volcán, 1*(7). http://www.apps.buap.mx/ojs3/index.php/bevol/article/view/1695/1280

Camargo, Brigido V.; Scholösser, Adriano & Giacomozzi, Andréia I. (2018). Aspectos epistemológicos do Paradigma das Representações Sociais. In: Emerson D. Medeiros, Ludgleydson F. Araújo, Maria P. L. Coutinho & Lidiane S. Araújo (Orgs.), *Representações Sociais e práticas psicossociais* (pp. 47-60). CRV.

Camino, Leôncio F.; Leal, Tatiana. C. A; Silva, Lawerton B. & Silva, Taciana (2019). A Psicologia Política e a conjuntura atual. In Frederico A. Costa & Marcos R. Mesquista (Orgs.), *Psicologia Política no Brasil e Enfrentamentos a Processos antidemocráticos* (pp. 35-56.) Edufal.

Chauí, Marilena (2019). O que é democracia? In Maria L. G. Lopedote, Daniela S. Mayorca, Dario Negreiros, Macerla A. Gomes & Tadeu Breda (Eds.), *Corpos que sofrem: Como lidar com os efeitos psicossociais da violência?* (pp 82-101). Elefante.

Costa, André B. S. R. (2019). *Origem, causas e consequências da polarização política* (Tese de doutorado inédita). Universidade de Brasília. Recuperado de: https://repositorio.unb.br/handle/10482/37008

de Rosa, Annamaria S.; Mannarini, Terri; Gil de Montes, Lorena; Holman, Andrei; Lauri, Mary A.; Negura, Lilian; Giacomozzi, Andréia I.; da Silva Bousfield, Andrea B.; Justo, Ana M.; de Alba, Martha; Seidmann, Susana; Permanadeli, Risa; Sitto, Karabo & Lubinga, Elisabeth (2021). Sense making processes and social representations of covid-19 in multi-voiced public discourse: Illustrative examples of institutional and media communication in ten countries. *CPGP, Comm. Psych. Glob. Persp. 7*(1), 13-53. https://doi.org/10.1285/I24212113V7I1P13

Deschamps, Jean-Claude & Moliner, Pascal (Eds.) (2009) *A identidade em psicologia social: dos processos identitários às representações sociais* (Lúcia M. E. Orth, Trad.). Vozes.

Doise, Willem (1992). L'ancrage dans les études sur les représentations sociales. *Bulletin de Psychologie, 45*(405), 189-195. https://www.persee.fr/doc/bupsy_0007-4403_1992_num_45_405_14126

Furnham, Adrian (2003). Belief in a just world: Research progress over the past decade. *Personality and individual differences*, *34*(5), 795-817. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0191-8869(02)00072-7

Gerber, Alan S.; Huber, Gregory A.; Biggers, Daniel R. & Hendry, David J. (2017). Why don't people vote in US primary elections? Assessing theoretical explanations for reduced participation. *Electoral Studies*, *45*, 119-129. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.electstud.2016.11.003

Giacomozzi, Andréia I.; Fiorott, Juliana; Bertoldo, Raquel B. & Contarello, A. (in press). Social Representations of political polarization through tradicional media: a study of the Brazilian case between 2015 and 2019. *Postdisciplinary Humanities & Social Sciences Quarterly*.

Giacomozzi, Andréia I.; Bousfield, Andrea B. S.; Fiorott, Juliana G.; Leandro, Maiara & Silveira, Anderson (2020). Social representations of traffic violence and related psychosocial aspects. *Saúde e Pesquisa, 3*(1), 193-204. https://doi.org/10.17765/2176-9206.2020v13n1p193-204

Giacomozzi, Andreia I.; Castro, Amanda; Barbará, Andrea B. S.; Nunes, Priscila P. & Xavier, Marlon (2021). Social Representations of Violence among Public School Students. In Clarilza P. Sousa & Serena E. S. Oswald (Eds.), *Social Representations for the Anthropocene: Latin American Perspectives* (pp. 325-337). Springer, Cham.

Giacomozzi, Andreia I.; Rozendo, Adriano; Bousfield, Andrea B. S.; Leandro, Maiara; Fiorott, Juliana G. & Silveira, Anderson (2022). COVID-19 and Elderly Females - a Study of Social Representations in Brazil. *Trends in Psychology, 2022,* 1-17. https://doi.org/10.1007/s43076-021-00089-9

Gomes, Marcela A.; Lima, Alessandra; Guerra, Ana S.; Corrêa, Bruna; Nascimento, Vitória N. & Favaretto, Valésia (2019). Como lidar com os efeitos psicossociais da violência? O curso de capacitação como um dispositivo clínico e político. In Maria L. Lopedote, Daniela S. Mayorca, Dario Negreiros, Marcela A. Gomes, Tompas Tancredi & Tadeu Breda (Eds.), *Corpos que sofrem: Como lidar com os efeitos psicossociais da violência?* (pp. 54-68). Elefante.

Gouveia, Valdiney V.; Pimentel, Carlos E. P; Miranda Coelho, Jorge A. P.; Maynart, Viviane A. P. & dos Santos Mendonça, Tamara (2010). Validade fatorial confirmatória e consistência interna da Escala Global de Crenças no Mundo Justo–GJWS. *Interação em Psicologia*, *14*(1). http://dx.doi.org/10.5380/psi.v14i1.12687

Iyengar, Shanto; Lelkes, Yphtach; Levendusky, Matthew; Malhotra, Neil & Westwood, Sean J. (2019). The origins and consequences of affective polarization in the United States. *Annual Review of Political Science,* 22(1), 129-146. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-polisci-051117-073034

Jodelet, Denise. (2001). Representações sociais: um domínio em expansão. In D. Jodelet (Org.), *As representações sociais* (pp. 17-41). UDUERJ.

Jost, John T. (2017). Asymmetries abound: Ideological differences in emotion, partisanship, motivated reasoning, social network structure, and political trust. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, *27*(4), 546-553. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcps.2017.08.004

Justo, Ana M.; Bousfield, Andrea B. S; Giacomozzi, Andreia I. & Camargo, Brigido V. (2020). Communication, social representations and prevention-information polarization on COVID-19 in Brazil. *Papers on Social Representations, 29(*2), 4-1. https://psr.iscte-iul.pt/index.php/PSR/article/view/533

Koteyko, Nelya; Jaspal, Rusi & Nerlich, Brigitte (2013). Climate change and 'climategate' in online reader comments: A mixed methods study: Climate change and 'climategate' in online reader comments. *The Geographical Journal, 179*(1), 74-86. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-4959.2012.00479.x

Lerner, Melvin J. (1998). The two forms of belief in a just world. In Leo Montada & Melvin J. Lerner (Orgs.), *Responses to victimizations and belief in a just world* (pp. 247-269). Springer US. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4757-6418-5_13

Maes, Jürgen (1998). Immanent justice and ultimate justice. In Leo Montada & Melvin J. Lerner (Orgs), *Responses to victimizations and belief in a just world* (pp. 9-40). Springer US. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4757-6418-5_13

Mariano, Matheus B. A. (2019). A relação entre perfil de liderança política e governabilidade: um estudo do caso dos ex-presidentes dos governos do PT. *Caderno Virtual*, *2*(43). https://www.portaldeperiodicos.idp.edu.br/cadernovirtual/article/view/3454/1612

Martín-Baró, Ignacio (1988). La violência politica y la guerra como causas del trauma psicosocial en El Salvador. *Revista de Psicología de El Salvador, 7*(28),123-141. http://www.uca.edu.sv/coleccion-digital-IMB/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/1988-La-violencia-pol%C3%ADtica-y-la-guerra-como-causas-del-trauma-RP1988-7-28-123_141.pdf

Martín-Baró, Ignacio (2000). Guerra y trauma psicosocial del niño salvadoreño. In Ignacio Martín-Baró (Org.), *Psicología social de la guerra* (pp. 234-247). UCA Editores.

Moscovici, Serge (1981). *L'Age des Foules* [The Age of the Crowds]. Librairie Arthème Fayard.

Moscovici, Serge (2011). An essay on social representations and ethnic minorities. *Social Science Information*, *50*(3-4), 442-461. https://doi.org/10.1177/0539018411411027

Newman, Nic; Fletcher, Richard; Kalogeropoulos, Antonis & Nielsen, Rasmus K. (2019). *Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2019*. Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism. https://ora.ox.ac.uk/objects/uuid:18c8f2eb-f616-481a-9dff-2a479b2801d0/download_file?file_format=pdf&safe_filename=reuters_institute_digital_news_report_2019.pdf&type_of_work=Report

Pereira, Marcos E.; Fagundes, Ana L. M.; da Silva, Joice F. & Takei, Roberta (2003). Os estereótipos e o viés lingüístico intergrupal. *Interação em Psicologia*, 7(1). https://doi.org/10.5380/psi.v7i1.3215

Pimentel, Carlos E.; Gouveia, Valdiney V.; Diniz, Pollyane K.; Saenz, Daniele P.; Santos, Alessandra M. V. & Vieira, Igor S. (2010). Evidências de validade de construto e precisão da Escala Geral do Mundo Justo. *Boletim de Psicologia*, *60*(133), 167-180. http://pepsic.bvsalud.org/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S0006-59432010000200004&lng=pt&tlng=pt

PNAD/IBGE. Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística, Pesquisa Anual por Amostra de Domicílios Contínua (PNAD-Contínua) (2019). *PNAD Contínua 2018: educação avança no país, mas desigualdades raciais e por região persistem*. Autor. https://agenciadenoticias.ibge.gov.br/agencia-sala-de-imprensa/2013-agencia-de-noticias/releases/24857-pnad-continua-2018-educacao-avanca-no-pais-mas-desigualdades-raciais-e-por-regiao-persistem

Ratinaud, Pierre & Marchand, Pascal (2015). Des mondes lexicaux aux représentations sociales. Une première approche des thématiques dans les débats à l'Assemblée nationale (1998-2014). *Mots. Les langages du politique*, *108*, 57-77. https://doi.org/10.4000/mots.22006

Rodrigues, Aroldo; Assmar, Eveline M. L. & Jablonski, Bernado (2015). *Psicologia Social*. Vozes.

Rossi, Amanda; Carneiro, Julia D. & Gragnani, Juliana (2018, September 30). EleNão: A manifestação histórica liderada por mulheres no Brasil vista por quatro ângulos. *BBC News Brasil*. https://www.bbc.com/portuguese/brasil-45700013

Rouquette, Michel-Louis (1998). Representações e práticas sociais: alguns elementos teóricos. In Antônia S. P. Moreira & Denize C. de Oliveira (Orgs.), *Estudos interdisciplinares de representação social* (pp. 39-46). AB Editora.

Tajfel, Henry (1981). *Human groups and social categories: Studies in social psychology*. Cup Archive.

Vitali, Marieli; Presotto, Gabrielle; Gizzi, Flávia; Gomes, Marcela A. & Giacomozzi, Andréia I. (2021). #BlackLivesMatter: A study of social representations from Twitter. *Community Psychology In Global Perspective, 8*(1), 1-19. https://doi.org/10.1285/I24212113V8I1P1

Vitali, Marieli; Giacomozzi, Andréia I.; Bousfield, Andrea B. S. & Vidal, Gabriela (2022). "Attacked me in several ways, just didn't hit me": Social representations of violence among people in psychological distress. *Community Psychology In Global Perspective, 8*(2), 37-58. https://doi.org/10.1285/I24212113V8I2P37

Wachelke, João; Wolter, Rafael & Rodrigues, Fabíola M. (2016). Efeito do tamanho da amostra na análise de evocações para representações sociais. *Liberabit*, *22*(2), 153-160. http://www.scielo.org.pe/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1729-48272016000200003&lng=es&tlng=pt

Wisneski, Daniel C. & Skitka, Linda J. (2017). Moralization through moral shock: Exploring emotional antecedents to moral conviction. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *43*(2), 139-150. https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167216676479

ANDRÉIA ISABEL GIACOMOZZI

Ph.D. Professor at the Postgraduate Program of Psychology (PPGP) and at the Department of Psychology of the Federal University of Santa Catarina, member of the Laboratory of Social Psychology of Communication and Cognition (LACCOS), Brazil.
agiacomozzi@hotmail.com
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3172-5800

AMANDA CHRISTINE ALBUQUERQUE TAVARES

Psychologist by Federal University of Santa Catarina, Brazil.
amandacatavares@gmail.com
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2756-1065

ANDERSON SILVEIRA

Master in Psychology by the Postgraduate Program of Psychology (PPGP) and member of the Laboratory of Social Psychology of Communication and Cognition (LACCOS), Brazil.
andersonsilveirapessoal@gmail.com
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6231-2574

ANA MARIA JUSTO

Ph.D. Professor at the Postgraduate Program of Psychology (PPGP) and at the Department of Psychology of the Federal University of Santa Catarina, member of the Laboratory of Social Psychology of Communication and Cognition (LACCOS), Brazil.
justoanamaria@gmail.com
http://orcid.org/0000-0003-2056-3575