

ANALYSIS OF EXCLUSION FROM JUVENILE CRIME IN THE CITY OF VALENCIA. THE TERRITORY AS A BASIS FOR ACTION

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Insecurity in the so-called risk society results in a demand for security against crime. The ambivalence and plurality of the postmodern society is torn between the idea of rigid intervention and penalizing, focused on the individual as being solely responsible for their action or, conversely, articulating a model where society seizes conflicts and considers responsibility as a social good to deal with. In this case, responsibility is not individual but collective, and in this sense, territory is the key.

This paper is part of the latter assumption: the territory where the criminal career develops; it is the social setting (public facilities, schools, programs and workshops for youth, social services, etc.); it is key to the socio-intervention itinerary education, and it is where political proximity favors coexistence and the integration of people.

The economic dynamics of today's world are generating job insecurity and a growing social divide, which is clearly reflected in the inner cities. However, geography studies on the division of neighborhoods according to their social characteristics are not as abundant as it would seem. This task has been left to other disciplines such as sociology, which have not deepened their reflection on the issue of inequality and social exclusion to and from the territory.

It is, therefore, necessary to approach the problem of social exclusion from a geographical standpoint, since the territories, or in the case of cities, the perceived neighborhoods, have the ability to generate a collective image of their inhabitants. In some cases, this has resulted in a hard stigma of the same, particularly in neighborhoods where the population has been the same configuration over the years, regardless of economic, political and cultural development of the city. In such cases, the stigma is on the basis of their own identity, providing feedback processes and limiting the possibilities of social improvement.

The territory has to be key in the process of social intervention by the public authorities. The case of the city of Valencia is paradigmatic. The methodology and the multidisciplinary approach used can provide the basis for subsequent studies.

Social vulnerability has been one of the deepest concerns of social geography, linked to issues such as inequality, social identity, public service delivery and poverty. In the postmodern society, the risks have expanded and diversified making us more vulnerable in extent and intensity, as the economic dynamics associated with globalization means a change in the evolution of the relationship between capital and labor that could lead to job insecurity and weakening of the protection of public systems.

The process of globalization, intensified since late last century, has paradoxically led to a strengthening of the local response of citizens to the feeling of loss of control of their own lives: local versus global, although currently, both terms complement and reinforce each other, as there is a global sense of the local, and vice-versa.

The concept of social vulnerability is taking a growing importance because, among other things, it takes into account the dynamics that have been emerging in the most advanced societies in recent years. Various studies reveal that vulnerability factors in adolescents are more related to the causes of the risk (living in a neighborhood with high unemployment and idleness), than to the risk itself (unemployment / idleness). From this perspective, exposure time will set the degree of vulnerability to which an individual is affected and this determines the design of a particular plan of intervention.

The latest studies on young offenders exposed the need to facilitate reintegration processes through the application, by the courts, of measures preferably based on community integration better than those based on the internment, as it clearly reduces criminal risk and recidivism rates. Thus, we start from the premise that ensuring the interests of the child not only depends on the type of measure and individualized therapeutic treatments that apply, but to a large extent, it is related to the accessibility of the intervention, i.e., the proximity of team reference or rehabilitation centers where professional intervention is developed. This proximity of the intervention is especially important for ACL (Teenagers in Conflict with Law), whose vulnerability and social exclusion is greater.

The methodological approach of this study revolves around two fundamental concepts: trajectories (teenagers) and scenarios (area), to articulate the diversity and complexity of today's society with the phenomenon of juvenile delinquency. This research has been conducted in the city of Valencia, which by size and activity is considered to be adequate for addressing the phenomenon from the local dimension. Given the complexity of the research, it has been preferred to use a complementary methodological strategy, using different quantitative and qualitative techniques: analysis of secondary sources (socio-economic statistics about the city of Valencia), primary (juvenile court records and survey the population), whose results have been analyzed with SPSS16; targeted interviews with MAXQDA2007 and the use of a GIS to calculate the accessibility to service center intervention (Intervention Team Open Measures and rehabilitation centers of reference) via the public transport network. The year 2006 in the city of Valencia has been taken as a reference. In 2006, a total of 422 measures were developed by the legal action program of the City of Valencia, including interim and final measures; of these, 192 were awarded to the old ACL programs, while the remaining 230 are for new ACL action (although there were measures involving the same ACL). Thus, a database was created with 286 ACL (100 % in 2006).

The impact of juvenile delinquency in the city of Valencia is lower than the national average. In Spain, according to the Ministry of Interior, there are 4 young offenders per 10,000 inhabitants, namely, in 2008, 6.5% of crimes were committed by children between 14 and 17. In Valencia, it is noted that only two of the nineteen districts of the city account for 30% of the ACL—seven districts 60%. There are districts in which, in the year concerned, there is no case (Pobles del Nord) and districts with high rates, such as Quatre Carreres, where 16% of all cases are concentrated.

In this territory, the location of the Open Environment Team and rehabilitation centers is critical from two perspectives: on one hand, the ACL accessibility to the center and, on the other hand, the real possibility of reaching a technical territory and its people to work effectively. It is necessary to intervene through proximity and take into account the logic of inclusion and participation of the community and referral (district of origin).

Effective use of GIS software has been crucial to obtain accessibility maps to the Team Open Measures and to the Rehabilitation Center. There are five such centers located in the periphery of the metropolitan area; only the Team Open Measures and a detention center are in the city. All of them serve practically the whole province, and therefore welcome the ACL of the city of Valencia, regardless of their district of residence. We computed the accessibility of the population to each of these centers separately, as well as all the same, i.e., the place where the service is offered. Such availability in specific areas of influence has been calculated considering the distance on foot or by public transport. To measure this, the ISE index (Spatial Separation Index) has been used. It is well known and proven in other studies using accessibility.

With respect to the city of Valencia, there are particularly sensitive districts and neighborhoods, such as Quatre Carreres, L'Olivereta or Rascanya, which are worse. It takes more than two hours on foot and, in the case of the more peripheral, Rascanya, it takes more than one hour by public transport. Since open measures, in most cases, mean the requirement that the ACL come to the center, these distances are not acceptable, or at least do not facilitate compliance with the measures or monitoring by professionals. It is true that the most central neighborhoods, due to more and better opportunities for access to the public urban transport network (subway, bus and tram) are in a better location, more equitable, with respect to other neighborhoods on the northern and southern outskirts. However, the allocation to the detention center is not always subject to the proximity to the user, but to the possibilities of service or the number of available seats. In most cases, therefore, the distance is increased with respect to the predictable.

The case of legal action in the open measures center should be noted. This must serve the entire city of Valencia. The distance, in this case, is a major barrier for both the user and the professional who occasionally performs the service in the environment of the adolescent. The distance by the increase in the ratio of ACL educators and social workers logically prevented the necessary time to join in the process and facilitate their integration into the programs and resources of the territory that are able to ensure the abandonment of criminal behavior in the medium-term.

From interviews with qualified informants, all professionals involved in intervention measures with youth and adolescents can complete the quantitative information hitherto reflected. It should begin with the concern that all informants indicated by the structure of

attention to the ACL in the city of Valencia. Factors such as the functional dependence from various administrations, the location in the territory of the executing program and intervention centers, the high ratios of attention, etc. mean the lack of physical proximity and it hampers the development of effective interventions.

The ACL, depending on their vulnerability, require more intensive intervention, and next turn educators and social workers need to accompany the teen's social inclusion process to increase their opportunities, training, etc., which enable abandonment of criminal activity. In this sense, the open measures require the cooperation of other community institutions for the development and monitoring of adolescent intervention programs (school, employment resources, units of addictive behaviors, social services area, etc.). The new postulates indicate that it is in the community where you have to work to prevent and to insert, since the adolescent or young will always return to their place of residence – to their neighborhood or municipality.

Qualitative results show a great complexity of factors involved, but appearing with unusual force are the words environment, proximity, community resources in the neighborhood or district, networking, all issues related to territory which are contributing to the failure of action policies with ACL. It is necessary to work in the environment but from the prevention and also the reintegration point of view because the intervention centers are artificial living spaces that do not work without the real environment, which is the district or neighborhood. The integration or reintegration of the ACL in the community (at home) is definitely the way to abandon criminal activity.

It seems clear that the urban phenomenon (construction, distribution of population, housing affordability, equipment, etc.) influences vulnerability and social exclusion and consequently, in the development of criminal careers, although it is obviously not the fundamental factor. Differences in access to housing -involving the distribution of the population according to their economic capacity, and the existence of urban and social segregation- are problems which are difficult to solve. Recall that in the city of Valencia the housing boom of the 90s and the first decade of this century, has led some urban transformation from the filtrate population (abandonment of the population to better housing and neighborhoods, and arrival of a new population with lower capabilities, reorganization of the housing market), and the consolidation of slums, for not being chosen for the new urban operations, as in the cases of Poblat Marítims, Russafa, Orriols, Torrefiel, Benicalap, Tendetes, L'Olivereta and Quatre Carreres, which coincide with the historic districts or consequential higher concentration of ACL.

The relationship between the location of the structures of intervention with ACL (either open or closed centers) and the location of the residence are essential for adequate reintegration of young people, as it starts from the premise that the path of the ACL is performed in an area (neighborhood), which in turn is the social space of professional intervention.