



**THE RESEARCHER’S “LIFE-WORLD” (*LEBENSWELT*):
WHAT HAPPENS IN THE RESEARCHER’S LIFE WHEN DOING
RESEARCH?**

“EL-MUNDO-DE-LA-VIDA” (*LEBENSWELT*) DEL INVESTIGADOR:
¿QUÉ PASA EN LA VIDA DEL INVESTIGADOR CUANDO INVESTIGA?

“O MUNDO DA VIDA” (*LEBENSWELT*) DO INVESTIGADOR:
O QUE PASSA NA VIDA DO INVESTIGADOR QUANDO INVESTIGA?

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ABSTRACT

What this research seeks is to know what happens in the researcher’s life when he/she investigates, in other words, what is the researcher’s world-of-life (*Lebenswelt*), how to establish a balance between the world-of-the-life of the researcher and the research itself, in all areas of knowledge, such as theology and religious sciences. The question that guides this

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research is: what is the life experience of the researcher like during the research process itself and how can research influence the researcher's "life-world" (*Lebenswelt*)? What this research intends is to make the researcher the very object of research. In the phenomenology of Husserl, and of other phenomenologists, methodological and theoretical resources were found with the consistency and rigor necessary to carry out a descriptive analysis of the construction of the daily "world-of-life" in the experience of researchers. From a Systematic Review of Literature, the research problem could be constructed, based on the consultation of scientific databases (Scopus and ATLA). In addition, the in-depth interview technique was used, which allowed working on 9 stories of life. Finally, there is a need to train researchers not only in the technical and instrumental aspects of research, but also in those other matters that touch the world-of-life of the researcher looking for a "quality of life", which is the wish of all areas of scientific research, and not only of theology and the sciences of religion.

Key words: Lifeworld, *Lebenswelt*, Phenomenology, Husserl, researcher and research, life stories, quality of life.

RESUMEN

Lo que busca esta investigación es conocer qué pasa en la vida del investigador cuando este investiga, en otras palabras, cuál es el mundo-de-la-vida (*Lebenswelt*) del investigador, cómo establecer un equilibrio entre el mundo-de-la-vida del investigador y el hecho de investigar, en todas las áreas del saber, como de la teología y de las ciencias de la religión. La pregunta que orienta esta investigación es: ¿cómo es la experiencia de vida del investigador durante el proceso mismo de investigar y cómo puede influir el investigar en el "mundo-de-la-vida" (*Lebenswelt*) del investigador? El objetivo principal de esta investigación es hacer del investigador el objeto mismo de investigación. En la fenomenología de Husserl, y de otros fenomenólogos, se encontraron recursos metodológicos y teóricos con la consistencia y la rigurosidad necesaria para realizar un análisis descriptivo de la construcción del "mundo-de-la-vida" cotidiano en la experiencia de los investigadores. A partir de una Revisión Sistemática de Literatura se pudo construir el problema de investigación, partiendo de la consulta de bases de datos científicas (*Scopus* y *ATLA*). Además, se utilizó la técnica de la entrevista en profundidad, lo que permitió trabajar en 9 historias de vida. Finalmente, se plantea la necesidad de formar investigadores no solo en los aspectos técnicos e instrumentales de la investigación, sino también en aquellos otros asuntos que tocan con el mundo-de-la-vida del investigador buscando una "calidad de vida", que es el deseo de todas las áreas de la investigación científica, y no solo de la teología y de las ciencias de la religión.

Palabras clave: Mundo-de-la-vida, *Lebenswelt*, Fenomenología, Husserl, investigador e investigación, historias de vida, calidad de vida.

RESUMO

Esta pesquisa busca saber o que acontece na vida do pesquisador quando ele investiga, ou seja, o que é o "mundo da vida" (*Lebenswelt*) do pesquisador, como estabelecer um equilíbrio entre o mundo-da-vida do pesquisador e o fato de pesquisar, em todas as áreas do saber,

como da teologia e das ciências da religião. A questão que norteia esta pesquisa é: como é a experiência de vida do pesquisador durante o próprio processo de pesquisa e como a pesquisa pode influenciar o “mundo da vida” (Lebenswelt) do pesquisador? O objetivo principal desta investigação é fazer do pesquisador o próprio objeto de investigação. Na fenomenologia de Husserl, e de outros fenomenólogos, foram encontrados recursos metodológicos e teóricos com a consistência e o rigor necessários para realizar uma análise descritiva da construção do “mundo-da-vida” cotidiano na experiência dos pesquisadores. A partir de uma Revisão Sistemática da Literatura, foi possível construir o problema de investigação, com base na consulta de bases de dados científicas (Scopus y ATLA). Ademais, foi utilizada a técnica de entrevista em profundidade, que permitiu trabalhar 9 histórias de vida. Finalmente, coloca-se a necessidade de formar investigadores não apenas nos aspectos técnicos e instrumentais da investigação, mas também naquelas outras questões que tocam o “mundo da vida” do investigador que procura uma “qualidade de vida”, que é o desejo de todas as áreas da investigação científica, e não apenas da teologia e das ciências da religião.

Palavras-chave: Mundo da vida, Lebenswelt, Fenomenologia, Husserl, Pesquisador e Pesquisa, Histórias de vida, Qualidade de vida.

1. INTRODUCTION

When we talk about research, particularly doctoral research, there are two matters that must be addressed: 1. what refers to the **researcher’s training** concerning the *epistemological foundations* of research and its methodology. This matter corresponds to the “*what*” of the research and the research methodology (for example, what is research? What is research methodology? etc.). It is also related to the *formal aspects of research*, which involve technical and instrumental aspects of research and research methodology. That is *how* to research (for example, how is research structured or designed? How to carry out doctoral research? etc.). And 2. The part related to **human capabilities** (for example, the affective, emotional, cognitive, and psychological aspects of the researcher). In other words, to be a researcher, it is not enough to have academic and intellectual training, to know research methodologies and methods, but to have human capacities. Therefore, it is necessary to understand what happens in the researcher’s life when doing research, in other words, what is the researcher’s life-world (*Lebenswelt*)? and how to establish a balance between the researcher’s life-world and the fact of doing research?

We all know that we live in a constantly changing environment with rapid developments in science and full of new technologies and inventions that facilitate daily tasks and help us solve everyday life problems. However, we have not thought much about who

is behind all these changes, all these scientific and technological developments, and inventions. We have not asked who has reached significant findings, sought the cure for diseases such as Covid-19 or Monkeypox and responses for possible future pandemics, or which people have simply improved other people's quality of life through their inventions and discoveries.

We know that there are people who spend their lives doing research in a laboratory, or spend years doing doctoral research, while others prefer to carry it out outdoors, and there are some who spend most of their time at libraries searching for data, documents, and information. However, have we ever wondered: what are these people's lives like? What are their interests? What are their needs? Do they spend time with their families? Were they born as researchers, or did they become researchers? Therefore, the question guiding this research is: what is the researcher's life experience like during the research process itself, and how can research influence the researcher's life-world (*Lebenswelt*)?

Moreover, it is necessary to understand that the researchers' life is influenced by many circumstances, largely by the sociopolitical and economic situation of the moment, among other realities. For example, the investment in research, science, and technology is always affected in times of crisis and difficulties, as could be the case during the pandemic, the war between Russia and Ukraine, or the strong slowdown in the world economy expected for 2023.

For instance, in Colombia, "between the year 2000 and 2011, investment in ACTI (Science, Technology, and Innovation Activities) was always below half a percentage point (0.5%) in relation to the GDP; for its part, the R&D in relation to the GDP barely reached 0.2%. However, as of 2011, investment in ACTI has boosted, reaching figures close to 0.8% of GDP in the 2015 – 2020 period [...]. Such reductions could be named the "pandemic effect." In addition, it should be noted that the country continued far from the goal of the National Development Plan for 2022 of investment in ACTI corresponding to 1.5% established in the GDP" (GUEVARA REY, 2021, p. 22).

At the same time, in regard to the R&D, there is similar behavior to the one described above: "The investment in R&D as a proportion of GDP for the 2015 – 2020 period has fluctuated around 0.3%, also experiencing the "pandemic effect" in 2020 and showing

a decrease of 468,840 COP” (GUEVARA REY, 2021, p. 22). There are other circumstances that may also have influenced and even affected the researcher’s life, such as the conditions under which the researcher had to work as a consequence of confinement/lockdown during the time of the pandemic and the new working conditions that resulted from this situation.

When starting a research study and engaging in research; what do we know about the meaning of doing research? Are we aware of the implications, not just academic but also what it means for the personal life, for the family, and for the social environment to devote some years or life to research? How clear are the reasons or motivations to carry out the research, for example, a doctoral one? Do we know, besides the academic or personal motivations and capabilities, whether the person has the conditions to engage in research? Because before starting the research, the researcher “must have many things solved”; moreover, “everybody does not have to be a researcher” since “one must have a liking for these things [for research]” (Interview 2). “Every doctoral adventure is biographical, complicated, and partly unpredictable” (THOMSON; WALKER, 2010, p. 4),

Very little is known about the researchers’ life, and we are not usually worried about the life of those devote to such activity; what are their experiences and needs? How do they spend their days and what do they do in their spare time? “[...] In the research process there are stages that you go through [...], and there are frustrations; in any research you do, there are many frustrations” (Interview 4). “For two years I was under cancer treatment, of course, I somatized. Also, the two heart attacks two years ago [...], a severe uterine cancer [...] was a consequence of the research, because that [the research] was the only source of stress in my life” (Interview 5). “I am Currently under treatment because I have reached a critical moment; the last thing the therapist, who is treating me, told me was that I am going through a severe depression” (Interview 6). “There have been too many things; obviously, so much pressure is making me sick, I have not been able to lose weight. I am supposed to be 70 kilos maximum right now, but I weigh 90 kilos; I am overweight by thirty kilos. This situation is not good for my spine problem, it rather causes and triggers the pain; I am in pain all day long. Plus the migraines, stomach problems, gastritis, anxiety, plus..., and the list goes on” (Interview 1).

Devoting to research is not a very common job in our environment; it is unusual to find people who devote their lives to research and very rare that research is their source of income. This is because this activity has a reputation of being an “ungrateful task with a relatively low salary and many working hours.”¹ Although in Colombia, as in most countries, research should be a full-time job, i.e., doctoral research, in most cases, Colombian researchers can only dedicate part of their time to research. Therefore, it is possible to find researchers in some Colombian universities who, apart from researching, also carry out other types of activities, such as teaching.

In Colombia and other countries of the Latin American continent, those who dedicate their lives to research continue to be a very limited number. “Of the total of graduates between 2009 and 2019, 4% have high-level education (a master’s degree or a doctorate); 17% of graduates have taken specialization programs, while 31% have attended an apprenticeship or a trade school, and 48% only have an undergraduate training” (ACOSTA; MÉNDEZ, 2021, p. 46). It is striking that the largest number of master’s degrees and doctoral programs in Colombia are related to Social Sciences. Thus, by 2019, “there were 2,517 master’s degree programs and 386 doctoral programs in Colombia” (ACOSTA; MÉNDEZ, 2021, p. 51). The solution to the major problems that our countries will face in the upcoming years relies mainly on science and research and on researchers’ work. Such problems include climate change, job displacement due to artificial intelligence, and future pandemics.

In short, investment is still deficient, which may be the reason why very few people are interested in devoting their lives to research, and why the average citizen does not commonly hear news regarding scientific discoveries. Thus, researchers’ lives remain a mystery for many, continuing with the idea and myths that researchers are lonely people who spend most of their lives locked up in a laboratory or library, and that they care very little about social life. Furthermore, for some researchers, research “requires a lot of time, and the family suffers a lot” (Interview 3).

This is the basis of the research, given that it is important to know the lives of those who reinvent ours and to overcome the paradigms regarding the daily life of

¹ <http://www.elespectador.com/impreso/vivir/articulo-338843-vicisitudes-de-un-investigador-independiente>

researchers. In order to know their habits and ways of living in the present, and in an environment such as the Colombian reality.

Like everyone else in their work, the researcher collects experiences and learning that are possibly relevant for constructing the research problems on which the researcher works. Thus, it is possible that during the research process, a researcher experiences significant changes in different aspects, which are part of him/her as a person, including knowledge, behaviors, teachings, and experiences, among others.

So, “if you start researching but do not experience a personal transformation, it means studying was useless, that is, you got a degree, but you did not acquire anything. There was no real training process” (Interview 1). “[...] my research has definitively transformed me as a subject. It has made me rethink myself and replan myself a lot; and I have had to rethink my life and thinking positions, even the epistemological ones; and that has been very hard for me” (Interview 1). Finally, “My research projects have helped me to transform the way I see the other and how I see the world” (Interview 1).

The aim of this research is to make the researcher the very object of the research and to ask ourselves about what happens in the researcher’s life when doing research. Furthermore, through an in-depth approach to the researchers’ life stories and to their work, the aim is to know how the research process influences them, in order to raise hypotheses about the meaning the researcher gives to this process. To this end, it is necessary to identify the reasons why a person may decide to enter the world of research; the experiences of researchers during the research process; and the behaviors generated on them.

The researcher has always been dedicated to analyze, understand, and build knowledge related to phenomena that occur in various contexts, as well as to interact with various objects of research, such as microorganisms, animals, and society itself, among others. However, research itself has been a subject little explored; therefore, we want to start building knowledge around it.

In a very simple way, research is defined as the process by which the researcher (subject) focuses on the facts or a given problem (object) to obtain knowledge. However, information about this “subject”, the researcher itself, is very little. Most of

the details found are related to the academic training of the researcher (MORENO ANGARITA, 1997; CALDERÓN LÓPEZ, 2002) and to the competencies or skills that the researcher must have from a technical point of view (PIRELA DE FARÍA; PRIETO DE ALIZO, 2006).

In addition, Moreno Angarita (1997) refers to the researcher as an individual who has a life history, a tradition, a formative background, models, interests, a learning and teaching style, and many other things. Since researchers are seen from different points of view and references, we must talk about more than one single type of researcher. In this sense, Moreno Angarita (1997) presents a general definition of a researcher, which is interesting for the purposes of this paper: “Being a researcher is a state of life that can be conditioned by the circumstances, by a life option or by chance” (MORENO ANGARITA, 1997, p. 40).

We are currently experiencing the transition from having “empirical” researchers to “professional” researchers. While the first one was trained by watching others doing research, the second type was trained at the university, learning to become a researcher. However, there is still no training in relation to the researcher’s life itself.

On the other hand, Gutierrez (1997) talks about the right of the researcher to understand his/her work not just from the academic dimension, but from his/her intimate self as a personal event. Hence, scientific findings cannot be alien to the emotional beating. And the instrumental aspect cannot and should not ignore the aesthetic dimension. Meaningful research trains protagonists, that is, beings for whom what they are researching means something in their lives, as a motivation for their growth as human beings. A researcher who does not value his/her emotional and intuitive states is at risk of drying up the most authentic source of inspiration.

At the same time, when reviewing this issue from the social research approach, studies closer to the researcher can be found. For example, a paper published by the Venezuelan journal of information mentions the researcher’s own elements that have an impact on the production of research knowledge. They include, among others: “The uncertainty and the ambiguity that can result from the research practices” and “the attitude and motivation of the researcher” (GARCÍA, 2011, p. 27).

Other authors, such as, have mentioned or explored what the researcher should do during the exploration stage of his/her research work. For instance, the researcher must be willing to maintain an attitude of self-confidence, being convinced that there is always a solution, and that it is necessary to put his/her best effort to achieve what he/she wants. Also, the researcher must expand his/her knowledge, not closing himself/herself to any idea, and follow a method that avoids making premature evaluations or worrying about details and rather allows him/her to use brainstorming techniques.

Similarly, Serrano (1997) and Gutiérrez (1997), have expressed their views on the training of researchers, considering aspects such as individuality, groupings, context, culture, and organizations. There have been studies regarding various aspects to be considered in this training according to the results that a researcher should obtain (study of research problems, publications, production of knowledge). However, the researcher factor is barely explored as a subject, as a human being who goes through experiences and thoughts during the research process, which can cause changes in the researcher himself/herself and in his/her social environment.

In Husserl's phenomenology and that of other phenomenologists, there are methodological and theoretical resources with the necessary consistency and thoroughness to carry out a descriptive analysis of the construction of the daily life-world in the researchers' experience. Therefore, we are addressing the researchers themselves to find out what happens to them during their research process. This is because it is necessary to propose methods or new ways to ensure that such important process for the country and for any other organization represents positive situations not only for knowledge but for society, which might be closer to experience the negative ones.

First, this work presents a theoretical framework, which will develop the key concepts that have helped to construct the research problem. It is based on the contribution made by phenomenology and also on Husserl's perspective in order to understand the concept of life-world (*Lebenswelt*). In addition, the paper describes the methodology (method and techniques) followed for the study. Finally, some conclusions are shared,

which propose ways through which the research should continue in relation to the researcher's life-world.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The lone researcher no longer exists. It is no longer possible to think of researchers locked up in a library or a laboratory in a knowledge society where knowledge, data, and information advance at high speeds.

From all this, the myth of the loneliness of the researcher has emerged, "The loneliness of the researcher is a tough thing when one is doing the thesis because that is very hard, so difficult" (Interview 1). It is a myth we must overcome because it is necessary "to have someone to talk to, and not necessarily the tutor, but someone at one's level. Also, during research crisis, because you realize that you become very supportive of the other doctoral students in those moments. So, you go sit with them and listen to them, to all their crisis. So, [...] having more people by your side is really valuable [...]" (Interview 1). Besides, "in the research you are alone with yourself thinking for a long time [...]. Some people do not like that, some people do not want to give up spending time with friends, and here you need to do so many sacrifices. That is not going to like you, but you will need to do minimal sacrifices [...]" (Interview 3). "As for me, for the last four years I have not gone out on Fridays, I do not even go out on Saturdays. Five years ago, I stopped smoking, drinking, and going to parties, to *rumbas*; I quit my social life" (Interview 6).

Nevertheless, sometimes the researcher is not capable of building relations. One of the biggest failures of some researchers is that research does not lead them to develop knowledge in networks, for example: "I have never been someone who approaches others and asks them for advice, or what do you think, what should I do. Never. I have always been very independent" (Interview 3).

On the contrary, it is necessary to research with others and to be part of academic communities, academic knowledge, and research networks. "Our training as researchers allows us to claim that you learn to do research by doing research together with other researchers" (VILLEGAS; GONZÁLEZ, 2011, p. 42). Along these lines, "it is broadly recognized that collaboration is essential for the development and

dissemination of knowledge [...], scientists benefit from cooperation both in terms of production (number of papers) and impact (quotations of papers)” (ROMERO RIAÑO, 2021, p. 95).

For this reason, in Colombia, “the tendency in the last three years in the number of international co-authorships exceeds the national co-authorship works (2017-2019). In contrast, single authorship of scientific papers has maintained with small increasing variations between the years 2015-2018, but between the years 2018-2019 it shows a decreasing tendency” (ROMERO RIAÑO, 2021, p. 95).

Furthermore, researching with others through networks and research groups can bring more motivation and interest around the research itself, and also decrease tensions and frustrations. Hence, “the decrease from 15% to 9% in the annual percentage of single authorship in the production of science in Colombia between 2009 and 2019. Additionally, the two types of co-authorship, national and international, grew in the same period as follows: 1) National co-authorship has grown from 30% to 38%; and 2) International co-authorship has grown from 33% to 44%” (ROMERO RIAÑO, 2021, p. 97).

In this sense, Robert Merton (1968), quoted by Romero Riaño (2021, p. 97), states that, “the greater the number of authors or collaborators, the greater the production of knowledge.” Accordingly, it is reasonable to argue that a percentage of the growth in science production in Colombia between 2009-2019 can be explained by the decrease in single authorship and the increase in national and international collaborations (ROMERO RIAÑO, 2021).

This should even make us think about changing the existing conditions regarding the doctoral research, for example, which is usually a solitary effort. Such situation should no longer continue because it means going against what research requires and needs today. A researcher could achieve more and better results if he/she works with others who are interested in the same research topics, and they could work in networks and study and research groups. Thus, it makes no sense for a researcher to spend years doing his/her doctoral research alone, in many cases barely accompanied by his/her tutor. Additionally, “the role of academic peers, who together with the researcher make

up his/her community, is vital in the researcher's training" (VILLEGAS; GONZÁLEZ, 2011, p. 43).

Thus, it is necessary to understand and accompany the researcher's life, but also seek to understand and accompany the lives of the subjects under study since "the subjectivities of the researcher and those being studied are part of the research process" (MANSILLA SEPÚLVEDA *et al.*, 2020, p. 10). In particular, "the qualitative researcher needs to pay attention to what the other does, what the other says, and what the other expresses, and thus be able to appreciate the normal and important thing of each aspect of daily life. This may not be perceived at first but rather when the connection is made with its structural background" (VILLEGAS; GONZÁLEZ, 2011, p. 45).

2.1 The contribution of phenomenology

Although there are significant differences among phenomenologists, they all recognize themselves as heirs of Husserl (HERRERA RESTREPO, 2010; SAN MARTÍN, 2008). In phenomenology, and among phenomenologists, we find enough reasons so that we can understand the "life-world" of researchers from a certain philosophical stance.

In 1900-1901 Edmund Husserl published *Logical Investigations*, whose central topic was what he called phenomenology and theory of knowledge. However, "the question of what phenomenology is does not constitute a central issue within the framework of this text" (LAMBERT, 2006, p. 517). Meanwhile, the text *The Idea of Phenomenology: Five Lessons of 1907* stated: "what Husserl has in mind when he claims that phenomenology is the specifically philosophical intellectual attitude" (LAMBERT, 2006, p. 517).

As Husserl was not satisfied with the notion of phenomenology as descriptive psychology, he decided to pursue "a new idea of philosophical science as such in the *Logical Investigations* book. And it is certainly not a minor fact" (LAMBERT, 2006, p. 519). Precisely, "Paul Janssen's introduction to the German edition of *The Idea of Phenomenology* speaks of an existential crisis of Husserl. In this sense, the commentator quotes a passage from a notebook of Husserl, dated September 25, 1906, in which he speaks about a task that he must solve if he wants to be called a

philosopher. Such task is none other than a critique of reason [...] Husserl understands that if he does not undertake a critique of reason, what he has done up to that moment cannot be called, strictly speaking, philosophy. And without philosophy, his idea cannot live because it is precisely a critique of reason, as a philosophical science itself, which has moved his intellectual work from within” (LAMBERT, 2006, p. 519). Hence, the *Logical Investigations* book is an effort to achieve the above.

Nevertheless, Husserl’s work was not in vain because it led to “two central publications: the programmatic text called *Philosophy as a Strict Science* of 1911, and *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy* of 1913” (LAMBERT, 2006, p. 516).

In addition, it should be noted that “the *Husserlian* search for a new idea of philosophical science leads to the notion of critique of reason, which, at the same time, is marked by the specifically philosophical attitude that is the phenomenology attitude. This attitude is characterized by the exercise of reduction, which, for its part, makes it possible to leave the natural thought behind in order to enter the terrain of pure being specific to consciousness. Thus, Husserl reached an idea proper to philosophy; an idea that had implicitly driven his research works. He can therefore consider himself a philosopher” (LAMBERT, 2006, p. 528).

On the other hand, the researcher’s life itself plays a significant role in the training of the researcher. In this sense, from the phenomenological perspective (Vienna Conference, Husserl, May 7 and 10, 1935), training can be understood as “empowerment of the subject” (VARGAS GUILLÉN, 2012, p.1). Therefore, “thinking about training means returning to the subject” (VARGAS GUILLÉN, 2012, p. 8). For this reason, when thinking about the researcher’s training, it is necessary to return to the subject who researches and to the life-world of the researcher.

We must note that “phenomenology, as lived by Husserl, is a descriptive method whose objective is the knowledge about the life-world as the true concrete universal a priori of our experience, on whose ground we are given to build many specialized worlds. For example, the world of science and the university world, as well as the poetic, the religious, and the farmer worlds, etc.” (HERRERA RESTREPO, 2010, p.

263). For this reason, a phenomenological approach to the life-world of the researcher allows us to get to know the researcher better.

Moreover, three stages can be identified in Husserl's thinking, which match three important works: *Logical investigations*, *Ideas*, and *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology: An Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy*, the last Husserl's work. "These works are considered as three different attempts, but complementary to the intellectual project of the *Husserlian* phenomenology: essentialist logicism, transcendental idealism, and historicist vitalism" (MANSILLA SEPÚLVEDA *et al.*, 2020, p. 5).

2.2 *The life-world (Lebenswelt)*

Husserl "presented his phenomenology as a response to practical/ existential problems that he considered essential and urgent in his time" (GUTIÉRREZ POZO, 2018, p. 418). Just as he did, we rely on phenomenology to understand the life-world of the researcher, based on a practical/existential point of view (HERNÁNDEZ CAGUA, 2014). In addition, "the importance that both Plato and Husserl have given to the practical/existential sense of philosophy is expressed in the fact that Patočka, a late disciple of Husserl, has connected this platonic care of the soul to the *Husserlian* phenomenology" (GUTIÉRREZ POZO, 2018, p. 420).

Husserl defined, or perhaps characterized, or described in several ways the concept of "life-world" (*Lebenswelt*). Two of these ways of defining "life-world" are related, on the one hand, to the "universal ground of belief" and the "horizon of the horizons" (VARGAS GUILLÉN, 2012, p.2). Similarly, there is a difference between what "world" and "life-world" means. The first one refers simply to facticity, whereas "life-world" is "the sphere of experience of the subject, the place of the vital operations of the subject and the community (*Lebenswelt*)" (VARGAS GUILLÉN, 2012, p. 3).

Moreover, the "life-world" is "the world of meaning experienced by me and by the others; by us" (VARGAS GUILLÉN, 2012, p. 3). In fact, "the idea of the life-world emerges in *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology: An Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy* (1936) as the attempt to find an answer

for the problem of the lack of grounding of scientific knowledge” (ÁLVAREZ MATEOS, 2019, p. 395).

This ambivalence, as well as the difficulties in defining “life-world” will remain until the last texts written by Husserl (ÁLVAREZ MATEOS, 2019; HERNÁNDEZ CAGUA, 2014; BENLLIURE, 2013). This situation is also shown in the terminological variations through which Husserl refers to the “life-world” (*Umwelt, Welt, Lebensumwelt, wahres Welt, Sonderwelt, etc.*). Furthermore, these variations are not only nominal “rather the question regarding what is the appropriate definition of the life-world, either by highlighting its purely immediate character or, on the contrary, the recognition of it as mediated by the objectification and the intersubjective and historical determinations that constitute the experience of the world” (ÁLVAREZ MATEOS, 2019, p. 406).

This difficulty in understanding what the “life-world” means is not only present when comparing Husserl’s works and manuscripts. In fact, “the volume XXXIX of the *Husserlian* collection itself, which thoroughly gathers the texts devoted to the idea of the life-world and its role in the *Husserlian* phenomenology, constitutes an extensive compendium of the variations experienced by such question. In the texts of this volume, we did not find an answer to the question about which of the two possible understandings of the life-world is the correct one, but rather [...] Husserl confirms the problems that this idea maintains, and he warns about the possibly irresoluble character of these problems” (ÁLVAREZ MATEOS, 2019, p. 406-407).

Thus the “terminological and conceptual variations through which Husserl refers to the *Lebenswelt* as *Umwelt, Lebensumwelt, Sonderwelt, wahres Welt, Welt*, allude to various essential aspects characteristic of the concept of life-world, which is not only defined or described in this way on the basis of the listing of conflicting features [...] Addressing the idea of the life-world or *Lebenswelt* by using the phenomenological method forces us therefore to set aside these other approaches and focus on the idea itself of the life-world as such” (ÁLVAREZ MATEOS, 2019, p. 407-408)).

Husserl, by the end of his life, in a text that remained unpublished until 1954, pointed out the intuition he had. “According to him, in 1898, he had the intuition that between man and the world there is a correlation, which implies that I cannot understand man without his relationship to the world nor the world without its relationship to man”

(HERRERA RESTREPO, 2010, p. 250). This leads us to think that I cannot understand the researcher without a correlation with the life-world. Thus, “[...] an approach to *Husserlian* thought involves judging what was published during his lifetime and the unpublished texts, based on his point of arrival, in this effort to explain his originating intuition about the a priori of the man-world correlation. This point of arrival is found in *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, a work that Husserl could not complete due to his death and that partly remained unpublished until 1954 [...] On the other hand, the *Logical Investigations* did not succeed in clarifying the correlation between man-world, scientific life, and pre-scientific life” (HERRERA RESTREPO, 2010, p. 252).

In addition, Landgrebe, a disciple of Husserl, “connects Husserl’s interest in the life-world with how the embodied person experiences space and time” (MORAN, 2013, p. 108). Moreover, Husserl’s students and followers (from Landgrebe, Shutz, Gurwitsch, Patojka, Fink, and Merleau-Ponty to Gadamer and Habermas) recognize as an innovative characteristic of *The Crisis* book the description of the phenomenological reduction based on the life-world, which contrasts with the scientific world built upon Husserl.

However, we should note that “in contrast to the early appearance of the “natural attitude” concept and its correlative “surrounding world”, the concept of “life-world” took its proper shape only after the publication of *Ideen I*, probably around 1917. In such work, the concept of “world” is expressed mainly through the idea of “surrounding world” (*Umwelt*), for example, in Chapters 27 and 28, or “surrounding worlds” (*Umwelten*) in the plural; there is the “natural surrounding world” and there are “ideal worlds” [...]. Subsequently, Husserl would call the familiar surrounding world the “home world” (*Heimwelt*) or “familiar world” (*Nahwelt*, see *Krisis*, 324; *Hua VI*, 303). And he would expand the concept of “world” until transforming it into the central theme of his last reflections” (MORAN, 2013, p. 112).

Also, Husserl uses *Umwelt* broadly to refer to “my surrounding world” in general, contrary to the *Umgebung*, which he used for “my immediate environment,” “my immediate context.” “However, in *Cartesianische Meditationen* (where it appears four

times, including *Lebensumwelt*) and in *Krisis*, Husserl deliberately uses the new term *Lebenswelt* (MORAN, 2013, p. 113).

Although we associate the term *Lebenswelt* with Husserl, it did not emerge with him. In fact, other contemporary authors also used it (for example, Hugo von Hofmannsthal, Georg Simmel, Rudolf Eucken, among others), and the term is also in the Grimme's German Dictionary of 1885. In addition, "the term *Lebenswelt* first appears in manuscript drafts associated with *Ideen II*, and Martin Heidegger was already using the term in his first series of Freiburg Lectures of 1919" (MORAN, 2013, p. 114).

Certainly in "*Ideen II* (perhaps, in part, under the editorial influence of Edith Stein and, in fact, the challenge of Max Scheler), the personalist attitude emerges with so much strength and originality" (MORAN, 2013, p. 116). In addition, it must be noted that "Husserl constantly questions how the formally constructed world of science has come to replace the ordinary world of experience" (MORAN, 2013, p. 121). For this reason, "the life-world therefore implies an infrastructure of meaning, entailing that what is experienced to be much richer than the content actually present. All this richness of meanings precisely eliminates or forgets the natural sciences in their understanding of the world" (HERRERA RESTREPO, 2010, p. 256).

Moreover, in 1915, in *Ideas II*, Husserl "introduces the radical distinction between what he called the Naturalist Attitude and the Personalistic Attitude. This is the first expression of the distinction he would later make between the world of science and the life-world" (HERRERA RESTREPO, 2010, p. 256). Thus, "we experience the world as essentially linked to man and his history, as a world full of meaning, of meaning sedimented in language and which we appropriate through communication, learning or tradition" (HERRERA, 2010, p. 256).

In other words, we are seeking exactly the same as phenomenology: to understand "the subjectivity from the life-world" of the researcher (MANSILLA SEPÚLVEDA *et al.*, 2020, p. 19). In this way, *Lebenswelt* "becomes a key concept to understand man from the qualitative human sciences since any objective consideration of the world is an approximation that captures only the externalities. Therefore, addressing the radical consideration of the world systematically means to grant validity to the subjectivity that externalizes itself" (MANSILLA SEPÚLVEDA *et al.*, 2020, p. 20).

There are two intimately related *Husserlian* concepts: the “life-world” and the “transcendental subject.” “The lifeworld is the sphere of the primary giving of things and the transcendental subject is the subject for whom those things are given -where therefore they are constituted-, this subject also belongs to that world [...]. The result of this ground of philosophy in the lifeworld is precisely phenomenology” (GUTIÉRREZ POZO, 2018, p. 419).

3. METHODOLOGY

The relationship between the methodologies of Social Sciences and Phenomenology has a background that dates back to Husserl himself. Nevertheless, among his philosophical concerns, “the importance of these topics was secondary for him, and he never became directly involved in research on specific social phenomena where the method, epistemology, and phenomenological philosophy were explicitly linked” (MANSILLA SEPÚLVEDA *et al.*, 2020, p. 9). On the contrary, what Husserl made possible was some kind of “epistemological-methodological camp,” in order to “enable other philosophers and scientists to turn to and enter into the study of man himself, his subjectivity and intersubjectivity, and the essences” (MANSILLA SEPÚLVEDA *et al.*, 2020, p. 19).

Certainly, when carrying out a systematic literature review, which allows the construction of the research problem and method, in this case the life-world of the researcher, one of the main difficulties of research “are usually the criteria for selecting the articles to be analyzed. However, according to the Journal Citation Reports (JCR), in recent times, objective criteria have been imposed, for example, the inclusion of articles published in journals with the highest impact factors” (ÁLVAREZ; URBANO, 2011, p. 19).

Particularly in this research and based on the above criteria, the articles published in high-impact journals were reviewed, which led to certain decisions. The first of these decisions was the selection of the keywords that would lead to building search equations. Thus, the chosen keywords, both in Spanish and English, were: *Lebenswelt* and Husserl, life-world and Phenomenology, researcher’s life-world, and Husserl and Phenomenology in the Scopus and ATLA databases, as well as in other indexes and

search engines. This allowed identifying those journals that met the criteria mentioned above and the papers addressing the research problem.

Secondly, the Systematic Literature Review enabled us to clearly state the research problem, and to identify, analyze, and evaluate each of the categories of analysis found (*Lebenswelt*, life-world, Phenomenology and Husserl, and researcher's life). Thirdly, the research techniques that according to the phenomenology method would help the construction of the research problem were defined.

Methodologically, in this research, "it is of interest to reflect on how phenomenology uses the terms world and life, and how these notions are crucial in the qualitative research tradition in Western society, even though, in the methodological literature, in most of the cases, the recognition of the articulation between episteme and method is absent" (MANSILLA SEPÚLVEDA *et al.*, 2020, p. 8).

In this sense, the methods and techniques of qualitative methodologies are the ones that usually allow an approach to the person and his/her subjectivity (NOGALES-BOCIO, 2020; LÓPEZ; SALAS, 2009; MACÍAS NUÑEZ, 2005). Therefore,

we highlight the autobiographical designs, as they help to move forward and backward from one's own experience in a reflexive and diachronic way. Additionally, they help to understand personal stories as universal stories, and to understand why they exist. For its part, ethnography is a design containing a set of strategies which, analyzed in phenomenological key, allows us to examine the limits of social practices and, at the same time, to support judgments with ethical criteria on the legitimacy of their practices (MANSILLA SEPÚLVEDA *et al.*, 2020, p. 20).

For this purpose, the in-depth interview technique was used, which made it possible to work on nine live stories. Finally, in the fourth step, all the in-depth interviews were transcribed, and the results of the research were analyzed based on the previously established theoretical and methodological criteria.

All these qualitative methods and techniques that address the subjectivity of people "focus on the life-world and the logic of data collection, analysis techniques that allow re-situating the importance of the life-world. Specifically, we highlight designs such as the life stories, micro-life stories, autobiographical stories, and intrinsic case studies" (MANSILLA SEPÚLVEDA *et al.*, 2020, p. 20).

Life stories are useful in the field of social sciences. “In the social sciences, life stories have been used in various disciplines and with different objectives: in research, in interventions, or as a testimonial tool.” (CORNEJO *et al.*, 2020, p. 29-30). Further, these stories can have different approaches, for example, a hermeneutic approach (ontological dimension) or existential (ethical dimension), dialectical and constructivist (epistemological dimension). The choice of a particular approach “corresponds to an option for describing those propositions that have occupied a relevant place at the time of exercising our research practice and reflection on it” (CORNEJO *et al.*, 2020, p. 30). In our study, we are interested in an existential approach.

In addition, “life stories form a phenomenological perspective that displays human behavior, that is, what people say and do, as the result of the definition of their world. Some authors point out that the phenomenological perspective represents a central approach in the framework of qualitative methodology” (CHÁRRIEZ CORDERO, 2012, p. 50). This led us to use “the biographical method, one of the methods used in qualitative research that helps to describe in depth the dynamics of human behavior, and which materializes in the life history” (CHÁRRIEZ CORDERO, 2012, p. 51).

The in-depth interviews conducted with the researchers turn out to be “daily stories about how we feel, how we define ourselves, or our position regarding a certain topic; they are the first level of interpretation of the experience we live, locating it from the “narrator” who is ourselves” (CORNEJO *et al.*, 2020, p. 30).

Also, “when requesting a narrator to tell us his/her life, or part of it, in addition to the explicit request of the contents we are interested in researching, there is an implicit request of taking a stand in regard to what she/he tells us. The story implies an unavoidable decision for the narrator: to opt for assuming or ignore his/her position regarding what he/she is telling” (CORNEJO *et al.*, 2020, p. 31). In this case, we were interested in knowing how the researcher ultimately valued the quality of life of the researcher when doing research. Thus, it is necessary to consider the need to “clearly delimit what is sought with the production of a life story. In the case of research, the intentions are, of course, to obtain certain knowledge” (CORNEJO *et al.*, 2020, p. 31).

However, it is difficult to assess the quality of life of researchers, given the subjective aspects involved. Additionally, “[...] because of the difficulties in its evaluation, the

concept of quality of life was, for a long time, little addressed in the most widely distributed medical journals, and was marginalized to specific journals that addressed ethical, psychological, and social aspects, etc.” (MONÉS, 2004, p. 72). Moreover, it is not a new concept, because as early as 1947, Karnofsky and Burchenal introduced it in studies of chemotherapy in the treatment of neoplastic diseases. However, it was only until 1952, and after the World Health Organization “defined the concept of quality of life, when some clinical researchers thought of considering the quality of life as a measure to be taken into account, since it represents the final result of a medical performance from the important viewpoint of its protagonist, the patient himself” (MONÉS, 2004, p. 72).

Although the definition of quality of life provided by the World Health Organization is broad and complete, it is impractical. “Health and good quality of life” is considered to be the “absence of illness or infirmity and a sense of physical, mental, and social well-being”. Or the simple but very accurate American definition: “the personal feeling of well-being and satisfaction with life” (MONÉS, 2004, p. 72). The matters related to the quality of life have acquired particular importance, which is shown by the development and a large number of publications, the number of existing questionnaires, and the creation of scientific societies specifically interested in this topic (e.g., The International Society for Quality of Life Research) (MONÉS, 2004).

In relation to the quality of life, the researcher’s perception, in this case, is imperative. “In essence, quality of life attempts to characterize and reflect a balance between the good and bad in life regarding health, and the term reflects the subject's feelings of well-being related to his/her perception and goals in life” (MONÉS, 2004, p. 72).

Nowadays, there are many, perhaps too many, measurement instruments to quantify the quality of life. All of them have two crucial facts in common: 1. Questionnaires for patients to fill out, and whose competition is facilitated through different scales and items. And 2. Most of the questionnaires include two health profiles called domains, which correspond to two transcendent aspects - summary, namely the physical and the mental component.

It should be noted that “the instruments for measuring quality of life must have a series of characteristics without which a questionnaire cannot be considered valid. Thus, the

questionary must be: - Comprehensive, incorporating a considerable part of the health aspects. – Secure, in which concepts can be specified, reproducible, and internally consistent so that there are no contradictions in the answers and, if any, that they can be identified. The correlation between the domains can be contrasted through the Cronbach's Alpha. And – Sensitive, capable of identifying variations, even the small ones, in the health status and, therefore, capable of reflecting symptomatic variations after a certain treatment" (MONÉS, 2004, p. 72-73).

4 CONCLUSIONS

It is necessary that the training of researchers occurs comprehensively, that is, that it also needs to consider what the life-world of the researcher means. For Universities, for example, researchers are there to produce research and research papers that translate into indicators for the institution and position them in certain rankings. There, the situation and life of the researchers are not considered.

In addition, research is a necessary asset for the development and progress of societies since, in the future, it will have to solve complex issues. These issues include possible new pandemics, facing the consequences of climate change, offering solutions to the displacement and migration of people, solutions to the severe problems in the countries' economies, and addressing the effects resulting from population growth, and food scarcity, etc. All these issues demand greater investment in Science, Technology, and Innovation Activities (ACTI, for its Spanish acronym) and R&D, and also due concern for the life-world of researchers.

A change in certain paradigms is also required, mainly the one referring to solitary research, typical of postgraduate degrees (master's degrees and doctorates). Researchers must be trained with the ability of researching and managing research in relation to others through networks or research groups. Furthermore, research indicators suggest that working with others improves research results and leads to further achievements.

Thus, training researchers is training subjects immersed in fields of knowledge, which affect social relations and cultural processes of the researcher's contexts of professional development (SERRANO, 1997; CAMPOS, 2003), as well as social and

family. Therefore, researchers are seen as people who, in addition to researching, have dreams, expectations, and feelings that they experience both during the research process itself, and when acting as individuals in any other “dimension”. Hence, as part of the training of researchers, the human dimension must also be considered in all its aspects: psychological, affective, emotional, and sentimental, as a crucial factor in this regard, namely, to consider the subject (researcher), his/her life story, and his/her perspectives.

In this sense, the researcher must be considered a human being and a subject with emotional, affective, and symbolic aspects that are part of his/her experiences. This is important because, when doing research, many times there are not adequate conditions in such dimensions to carry out the research work, so the researcher must look for them or create them. And he/she must be in good health in those personal aspects, considering that, in many cases, research can affect certain states of mental and physical health.

Finally, new research addressing the life-world of researchers regarding the quality of life (based on the concept developed by WHO) are necessary to specify and clarify what the “Quality of life” concept can contribute to researchers. In addition, these works can continue to be carried out based on phenomenology contributions to help to understand the “life-world” of researchers. In this regard, the Husserl’s contributions and those of many phenomenologists are available to continue understanding what training from a phenomenological perspective means.

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