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# The Values Associated with Toys in YouTube Channel Contents: Case Study

Los valores asociados a juguetes en los contenidos de canales YouTube:  
Estudio de caso

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## ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** YouTube channels aimed at child audiences today have millions of viewers. The fact that the content of these channels is not subject to controls and are frequently created by people who are not experts in communication or early childhood education, besides the fragility of the audience, makes their review and study important. A relevant aspect to consider is the values that are transmitted, especially when the content shows game situations, a moment in which children generate positive emotions and are more easily influenced. Knowing how the brands that sell toys portray themselves in moments of child vulnerability will allow control measures to be taken. **Methodology:** The research focuses on a case study in which the content published by the popular YouTube channel Vlad and Niki has been reviewed over a 24-month period, since its opening until the beginning of 2021. **Results:** The study suggests that the frequent appearance of values such as fun, solidarity and violence, or the reinforcement of gender stereotypes in game situations, finish affecting the general content of the channel. There is also a certain connection between the different values and the categories of toys and brands, especially those that sponsor content. **Discussion and conclusions:** Recommendations are proposed with the aim of making toy companies visible within these channels in a more responsible way.

**Keywords:** YouTube; social media; childhood; toy; moral values.

## RESUMEN

**Introducción:** Los canales de YouTube dirigidos a un público infantil actualmente tienen audiencias millonarias. El que estos contenidos no estén sometidos a control y sean creados frecuentemente por personas no expertas en comunicación o educación infantil además de la vulnerabilidad de la audiencia hace que su revisión y estudio tenga importancia. Un aspecto relevante es el tipo de valores que son transmitidos, en especial, cuando los contenidos muestran situaciones de juego, momento en el que los niños generan emociones positivas y son más influenciables. Conocer cómo se muestran las marcas que comercializan juguetes permitirá tomar medidas de control. **Metodología:** La investigación realizada es un estudio de caso en el que se han revisado los contenidos publicados durante 24 meses del canal de YouTube Vlad y Niki desde su apertura hasta principios de 2021. **Resultados:** El estudio apunta que debido a la frecuencia de aparición de valores como la diversión, la solidaridad, la violencia o el refuerzo de los estereotipos de género en las situaciones de juego estos terminan por incidir en los contenidos generales del canal. También se encuentra una cierta conexión entre los distintos tipos de valores y las categorías de juguetes y las marcas, en especial, aquellas que patrocinan contenidos. **Discusión y conclusiones:** Se proponen recomendaciones con el objetivo de que las compañías jugueteras se visibilicen dentro de estos canales de forma más responsable.

**Palabras clave:** YouTube; medios sociales; infancia; juguete; valores morales.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the study is to find out what values are associated with the play situations where toy brands are identified on Vlad and Niki's YouTube channel in Spanish. Vlad and Niki's channel has a total of 20.4 million subscribers (data collected on 10/05/2023), an audience whose age ranges from three to six years old. The protagonists of this media phenomenon have an audience on YouTube alone of 302.03 million subscribers across their channels as they have translations into many different languages. Given the overwhelming numbers of the channel's audience and the fragility of the audience, it is of general interest to know what values are instilled and the degree of commercial pressure on children.

### 1.1. YouTube and brand relationships

Since its launch in June 2005, the audiovisual content sharing platform YouTube has been analysed in numerous research studies from a wide variety of approaches. The interest it has generated in the audience, especially among young people, is reflected in the millions of users who use its services (Márquez and Ardèvol, 2018). This platform has democratised access to large audiences by eliminating some of the technical barriers imposed by traditional media (Craig and Cunningham, 2017), which has favoured non-professionals to share their content in a space where they can start their activity with little expense, and where they can also make a profit (Márquez and Ardèvol, 2018, 39). These circumstances have brought about a revolution in the structure of the media by eliminating the traditional verticality and hierarchy.

The channels with the highest number of followers belong to youtubers and not to brands (Jorge et al., 2018). These influencers influence the audience who think they

are honest when making recommendations about products or services (Araújo et al., 2017). Children's channels are also constantly introducing products and brands within content that is attractive to their audience and is done in such a way that it is difficult to know whether it is advertising or not. These channels are starred by children who become celebrities whose activity, as their audience grows, is commodified and monetised (Abidin, 2020).

Many brands contact child YouTubers through their parents or guardians to collaborate on audiovisual content. Underage influencers test their products and talk about them in their videos (Martínez, 2019). And, although youtubers who make unboxing videos are not always hired by brands, they are influenced by YouTube's algorithmic pressures (Walczer, 2020).

For Craig and Cunningham (2017), brands should sign a contract in which they ensure that they protect their brand in these interventions and it would be interesting for them to check that the influencer indicates in their videos that they have advertising content. For Feller and Burroughs (2022), in some cases it is the brands that transform these child youtubers into global children's icons. Brand recall in childhood has been studied (Núñez et al., 2015) in the field of advertising strategies such as product placement (Suárez-Álvarez et al., 2021). Montoya (2007) speaks of the vulnerability of this group and Loh's study (2022) states that, in the case of teenage girls, this type of content even affects the way they dress. For Burroughs (2017), although children's audiences are not homogeneous, there are minors who learn from a very young age to identify advertising in the content they watch.

The truth is that the relationship between the brands and the channel is not clearly shown, as it is difficult to know whether it is a paid collaboration, gifts, or simply products that the protagonists like and therefore appear in their videos. It is difficult to distinguish when it is an advertising story or simply the day-to-day life of the kid influencer (Fernández and Ramos, 2022). And in general, few YouTube contents indicate that they are sponsorships or collaborations and this has been studied by numerous authors such as Feijoo and Pávez (2019); Feijoo and Fernández-Gómez (2021); Gómez, et al. (2022), López et al. (2022) or Neira (2023) who have investigated the presence of brands in audiovisual content about games and products aimed at minors.

For this reason, many researchers believe that one solution is to improve the regulation and monitoring of the measures adopted in order to achieve greater transparency in order to facilitate the recognition of advertising by children (Craig and Cunningham, 2017; Coates et al., 2020). Faced with this lack of definition of what is or is not advertising content on social networks, if we look at the regulatory elements in Spain, the General Advertising Law 34/1988 declares as unlawful "advertising aimed at minors that incites them to purchase a good or service, exploiting their inexperience or credulity, or in which they appear to persuade parents or guardians to purchase". Article 85 of the General Law on Audiovisual Communication 13/2022 provides for the right to product placement in audiovisual content in return for payment, but expressly prohibits it in the case of programmes aimed at children.

The new Code of Self-Regulation of Children's Toy Advertising of January 2022 has gone a step further by specifying this type of advertising and announces that "the use of product placements in programs is prohibited" (Asociación Española de Fabricantes de Juguetes, 2022, 7). Likewise, this code expressly prohibits the use of prescribers or opinion leaders in toy advertising. The purpose of this measure is to "prevent the presence or the presence or testimony of certain persons or personalities known and admired by minors in advertisements influence on minors" (Asociación Española de Fabricantes de Juguetes, 2022, 8).

Autocontrol, in its Code of Conduct on the Use of Influencers in Advertising (2020), issues recommendations in which it classifies as consideration "direct payment (or indirect payment through agencies), free delivery of a product, free tickets to events, free provision of a service, gift vouchers, gift bags and travel" (Autocontrol, 2020, 4). And both Autocontrol and the Self-Regulatory Code for Children's Toy Advertising provide clear measures regarding the identification of this type of consideration by influencers. The study by Martínez, Gaona and Nicolás (2017) is striking, stating that, although the regulation may be clear, very few complaints of non-compliance are collected.

For authors such as Coates et al. (2020), regulation by legislators is not enough and they must work together with social media platforms, brands, advertising agencies and influencers to protect minors. The Legal Guide on Child Influencers developed by IAB and researchers at the Universidad Rey Juan Carlos (2010) calls for brands to take responsibility beyond legality: "Brands should evaluate whether it is ethically acceptable to carry out product placement on Internet platforms frequented by minors, even if it is not formally prohibited" (IAB and URJC, 2010, 20). Because, as Burroughs and Feller's research (2020) asserts, what child does not feel the desire to be like those influencers who have access to that amount of toys?

## **1.2. Child youtubers and the presence of values in content aimed at children**

A high number of minors access audiovisual content on the web. Studies from 2018 put this figure at 89% (AIMC Niños, 2018), of which 36% would do so on a daily basis. This situation has generated interest among researchers such that the study of YouTube channels that target children is extensive. While there are numerous studies that analyse consumption by minors, such as those carried out by Gil and Pérez (2012), Vizcaíno-Laorga et al. (2019) and Martínez-Pastor et al. (2020), others focus on the type of content (Jorge et al., 2018; Gómez et al., 2022) and channels (Ramos and Herrero, 2016; Martínez, 2019). Some of this content, moreover, is starred by children, which has led to an analysis of their role as creators (Lange, 2014; Fernández-Gómez et al., 2022), and how parents intervene in this process (Ramos-Serrano and Herrero, 2016).

The values that are transmitted in the content aimed at this child audience are the subject of attention both in research in the field of the web, and in general in the audiovisual field as a whole. Many minors view content alone (Larson, 2003) and parents do not control what content they consume, apart from the channel chosen and

the time of consumption, and they wait until adolescence to talk to their children about the content (Suárez-Álvarez et al., 2022). After being analysed, studies such as the one by Conde and Delgado (2021) show that the contents are not appropriate for their age range; others, such as the one by Renés-Arellano et al. (2020), conclude that the values they are transmitting are sexist and antisocial, so they wonder what educational strategies would allow them to counteract this situation. Also noteworthy is the study by Díaz-Campo and Fernández-Gómez (2017) in which they review previous research and conclude that "people who consume a lot of television form gender stereotypes based on more traditional conceptions than those whose consumption was lower" (Díaz-Campo and Fernández-Gómez, 2017, 3).

Commercial communication is not exempt from inappropriate content for children. Martínez and Nicolás (2015) analyse messages in toy advertisements that incite competition, violence or sexism. In Klinger, Hamilton and Cantrell's (2001) study of children on toy advertising, they found that they found gender-identified toy advertising more attractive. Also, the aggressive content of these advertisements did not make the toy undesirable for any of them. Gil and Pérez (2012) analyse toy advertisements and conclude that, except for cleaning and cooking toys in which girls play a leading role, it is the boys who play the predominant role and the girls play a passive role as observers "or as admirers of their playmate's intelligence or skill" (Gil and Pérez, 2012, 68). The study by Pérez-Ugena et al. (2011) investigates the attitude of parents and concludes that they do not mind their daughters playing with toys that are supposedly aimed at a male child audience (action toys, video games or model vehicles whose protagonists are male, as well as the voice-over), but they are more reluctant for their sons to play with toys focused on beauty or motherhood. The various regulations attempt to correct this situation. The 2015 Code of self-regulation of children's toy advertising and the one presented in January 2022 require avoiding "showing gender bias in their presentation of boys and girls" (Asociación Española de Fabricantes de Juguetes, 2022, 11).

Research by Diaz-Campo and Fernandez-Gomez (2017) reviews "wrestling interactions" in advertising for brands such as Playmobil and Comansi (Diaz-Campo and Fernandez-Gomez, 2017, 35). Larson (2003) when analysing advertisements aired in children's programmes, confirms that 33% of the commercials had "aggressive content". Garrido Lora (2010) and Liceras (2014) also express their concern about how these violent contents affect the education and behaviour of minors. The Code of Self-regulation of Children's Toy Advertising (2022) also addresses this issue: "Children's toy advertising shall not include images or situations that may encourage violence or bullying situations, regardless of their potential jocular nature" (Asociación Española de Fabricantes de Juguetes, 2022, 11).

## **2. OBJETIVES**

The research focuses on both quantitative and qualitative content analysis carried out on a sample of the publications on Vlad and Niki's YouTube channel in Spanish, in order to study the presence of toys in which brands and the values associated with them could be identified. In line with the object of study, a series of research questions were posed:

Q1. How do the values associated with play situations affect the general content of the channel? What values are present in play situations in addition to fun?

Q2. Are there differences in values across toy categories, and are values associated specifically with brands?

Q3. Are toys associated with values linked to other characteristics in the way they appear in the channel (prominence, presence of information, related emotions)?

Q4. Are there differences in the values associated with play situations in videos where sponsorship is noted compared to non-sponsored videos?

Q5. Does the presence of sponsored content and its associated values have an overall impact on the overall content of the channel?

Q6. Does the audience respond differently to content in which values associated with gambling situations appear?

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

This case study analyses quantitatively and qualitatively a sample of the publications on the YouTube channel of Vlad and Niki in Spanish. The channel was chosen because it is one of the most popular series for children between three and six years old on YouTube today, ranking third in the category of most followed children's channels worldwide (Social Blade, 2023). They currently have thirteen channels with translations into ten languages with a combined subscriber base of over 302.03 million. The channel translated into Spanish has 20.4 million subscribers (data obtained on 10/05/2023). Vlad, aged eight, and Niki, aged six, star in the content in which they appear with their mother enjoying games, walks, challenges, sharing everyday life or telling stories through play.

The sample comprises all the videos on Vlad and Niki's Spanish-language channel from its inception in December 2018 until February 2021, a total of 24 months, as no content was published in May and June 2019. During these months, a total of 246 videos and 36 compilations (longer posts made up of several previous broadcasts) were uploaded in which 777 toys were identified. The analysis is supported by a template that allowed the different variables to be referenced and was carried out between two coders, who maintained constant coordination.

The variables taken into account were the following (Table 1 shows which variables correspond to each research question, the categories that include some of the variables and their sources):

- Values transmitted: categorical variable. When analysing the values, at least a double dimension can be appreciated, the more general one referring to the values present in the "story" that is being developed and a lower level that connects with specific situations, such as the interaction with the toys of the protagonists. In this article we have focused on the study of the play values present in each play situation.

- Type of toy: categorical variable.

- Brand: Open-ended question, subsequently coded. Each toy identified can be related to one or more brands.
- Protagonism of the brand: dichotomous variable.
- Presence of information about the toy: dichotomous variable.
- Sentiments towards the brand: dichotomous variable.
- Advertising signage: dichotomous variable assessing the inclusion of elements (text, audio or image) that clearly differentiate that a product is being promoted.
- Date of publication: interval quantitative variable showing the day on which the audiovisual content in which the toy appears was published.
- Video views: discrete quantitative variable. Data collected between 3 and 4 February 2022.
- Video "likes": discrete quantitative variable. Data collected between 3 and 4 February 2022.

Other variables taken into account are:

- Advertising technique: categorical variable.
- Subject matter of the video: categorical variable.
- Environment: categorical variable.
- Presence of other characters: categorical variable.

**Table 1**  
*Description of the variables of analysis.*

PI	Variable	Categories	Source
PI1	Values conveyed	Friendship, Competitiveness, Consumerism, Care, Fun, Gender Stereotypes, Justice, None, Other, Professionalism, Road safety, Solidarity, Violence.	Gómez del Castillo, 2007. Others: coded
PI2	Type of toy	Animals; Constructions; Educational; Electronics; Stage; Action figures; Sports toys; Crafts; Board games; Dolls and accessories; Films; Large vehicles; Scale vehicles; Superheroes; Other figures and accessories; Distributors; Others.	Díaz del Campo and Fernández Gómez, 2017
	Brand	Brand 1, Brand 2, Brand 3...	Coded open question
PI3	Brand prominence	Primary, Secondary	Ramos-Serrano and Herrero-Diz, 2016; Feijoo and Pávez, 2019; Feijoo and García, 2020; Feijoo and Fernández-Gómez, 2021,

			López <i>et al.</i> , 2022; Neira Placer and Visiers Elizaincin, 2023; Neira Placer, 2023.
	Brand information	Dichotomous variable (Yes/No)	Smith et al., 2012; Tur-Viñes et al., 2018; Feijoo and García, 2020; Feijoo and Fernández-Gómez, 2021; López et al., 2022; Neira Placer and Visiers Elizaincin, 2023; Neira Placer, 2023.
	Sentiment towards the brand	Dichotomous variable (Yes/No)	
<b>PI4</b>	Advertising signage	Dichotomous variable (Yes/No)	
<b>PI5</b>	Date of publication	Quantitative interval variable	Data collected between 3 and 4 February 2022.
<b>PI6</b>	Views	Discrete quantitative variable	Data collected between 3 and 4 February 2022.

**Source:** Author's own work.

## 4. RESULTS

### 4.1. The presence of values in the situations in which the toys are used

Vlad and Niki's interaction with the toys is associated or not with a series of values that can intervene in the general content of the video or only appear collaterally. In 52.51% of the occasions in which a toy appears, it is associated with a value (n=777). Of the 369 toys not linked to a specific value, 45.26% are shown using the passive placement technique and all of them play a secondary role. All toys in videos identified as promotional and not shown in passive placement are value-linked.

When we concentrate on the 408 toys to which we can associate some kind of value, the most frequent situation is that they are aimed at having fun (17.65%). Situations where siblings use toys for solidarity purposes are also common (15.69%). More worrying is the fact that interactions linked to violence appear in a channel aimed at a pre-school audience. Violent acts appear in 13.97%. Below ten per cent we can refer to situations linked to care (9.07%), competitiveness (8.09%), gender stereotypes (7.11%), professionalism (6.62%), consumerism (3.43%), justice (3.19%), friendship (1.96%) and road safety (1.23%). There is a final category, "other", which includes values whose frequency is minimal, but which together represent (12.01%). "Other" includes values with positive connotations such as kindness, the need to share, civic-mindedness, empathy, healthy habits; but also with negative implications such as selfishness, gluttony, impulsivity, revenge, or the justification of any means to achieve objectives.

18.14% of the toys associated with values are accompanied by information (n=408). This information refers in 24.32% to the description of use, in 37.84% to the name of the product, in 25.68% to the elements of the product and in 8.11% to the establishments where to buy them and in 4.05% to the variety of the offer (n=74), this information can be complementary, i.e. there can be play situations in which several information is provided. In addition, 40.69% of the toys with values are accompanied by an expression of emotion (n=408). 42.17% with the expression



"wow" (n=166), 10.84% verbalise "good" or "great", 7.23% show disagreement because they are of a different gender and 6.63% shout "yes", these expressions can also be combined. 46.39% of the toys with values that include emotions appear in videos identified as sponsored (n=166).

#### **4.2. Answers to the research questions**

P1. Around half of the toy appearances are associated with values (52.51%). The absence of values in almost half of the toy appearances can be explained, in the first place, by the fact that some of the toys are in passive locations, but there is a significantly important number of toys (202) that appear in active locations. The fact that a toy is not even associated with the value of fun, its main function, could be linked to the fact that its role in the video is one of mere consumption, which would allow us to speak of the stories presenting consumerist values, from a general approach. However, the percentage of play dynamics that include consumerist values is small.

Interaction with the toy may be associated primarily with fun, but it may also include other values. In only 17.65% of the occasions toys linked to values are associated exclusively to fun, but also values such as solidarity, violence, care, competitiveness, reinforcement of gender stereotypes, professionalism, incitement to consumerism, justice, friendship, road safety and others can be seen in the context (n=408).

P2. Differences in values associated with the toy categories can be seen on two levels: firstly, in terms of the total number of occurrences per category, but also in terms of the category-value ratio in terms of the total number of occurrences of that value in each toy category. Due to their constant presence, it is worth mentioning the play situations associated with the category large vehicles (27% of the total number of toys). These are associated with a wide variety of values.

Due to the percentage difference of at least 10% with respect to the following toy category, it is the most common typology in values such as consumerism, solidarity, competitiveness, care, gender stereotypes or fun. If we look at the category value ratio, large vehicles are linked in 20% of the situations with solidarity and 13% with violence.

The scale model vehicle category stands out as the most frequent category in videos with sponsorship warnings (36%). Model vehicles are the toys that are most associated with fun. But if we look at the category value ratio, the value most frequently associated with them is violence, 34% of the time, as are action figures, 62.5% of the time. Electronic toys are also mainly associated with violence (33.33%). Dolls and accessories (35.5%) and handicrafts (33.33%) appear in play situations that reinforce gender stereotypes. Superheroes are shown in solidarity situations (40%), educational games are focused on developing professionalism (50%) and animals require care (40%).

If the analysis focuses on brands, Paw Patrol is the brand that appears most frequently in play situations linked to solidarity (8-88.88% of its appearances), Hot Wheels to violence (20-30% of its appearances) and fun (17-25.75% of its appearances), Mattel

is the one that most reinforces gender stereotypes (8-24.24% of its appearances) and Marvel is the one that is most linked to care (5-21.73% of its appearances).

P3. In the appearances of toys associated with values, the percentages of toys appearing in the main role doubled compared to the overall average from 13.64% to 25.98%, as all toys participating in this role do so by showing some kind of value, while in the case of those appearing in a secondary role, more than half (54%) are not linked to any value.

This increase in attention also encourages an increase in the number of situations where toys appear alongside product information (from 9.5% to 18.14%), and for children to show emotions (26.25% to 40.69%). The percentage of toys appearing in videos identified as sponsored is also significantly higher (from 37.75% to 46.39%).

P4. When reviewing the impact of content with sponsorship signage on the values dimension, it should be noted that there are a total of 20 videos, representing 13.79% (n=145). There is a notable difference with regard to the values present in the videos not identified as such and those that are, both in terms of percentage of presence and in relation to the typology of values. 95.93% of the videos identified as sponsored contain toys with values (n=21), which represents an increase of 42.16% with respect to the videos that are not. The sponsoring companies are as follows: Hot Wheels (8), Mattel (5), Vlad and Niki (2), Spin Master (2), Sharper Image (1), Fisher Price (1) and Merch Source - Discovery #Mindblown (1). There are also important differences with respect to the typology of securities. The contrast with respect to play situations that include violence is particularly striking: while in the case of sponsored videos, the value rises to 35%, in those that are not sponsored, this value represents 7% of the play situations with values. Another important change occurs with regard to care situations, which in the case of non-sponsored videos are shown 12% of the time, in the case of sponsored videos only 1%. Situations in which gender stereotypes are reinforced appear to a greater extent in non-sponsored videos (8% more -9%).

P5. Although a double dimension can be distinguished, differentiating between the more general aspect that refers to the values present in the "story" and the specific game situations, these categories are interconnected with each other. The channel evolves from a content where not only solidarity had a strong presence, but also care. In April 2019, they reach their first million followers and two changes are noticeable: a substantial increase in the presence of toys and the disappearance of content linked to care, which is replaced by values that reinforce gender stereotypes. Despite this significant increase in the presence of toys, videos identified as sponsored do not appear until December 2019. This typology of videos, as has been pointed out, adds quite a few violent situations to the channel.

P6. Videos with toys associated with values have 16.29% fewer views than the average (4,610,392,517). Likewise, "likes" are penalised (-20.41%, 18,730.48). The negative audience response is particularly marked in videos that include violent game situations. The public maintains a neutral attitude or even a certain preference towards videos that include toys associated with solidarity values. It is worth noting that the only category of values that obtains a clear positive response is the one related to the

reaffirmation of gender stereotypes.

**Figure 1**

*Example of a play situation associated with the reinforcement of gender stereotypes.*



**Source:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5WKDcd0KLaU>.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

In the contents analysed in Vlad and Niki's Spanish-language channel, toys seem to play an important role both because of their constant and bulky presence and because of their intervention as triggers of reactions and behaviours in children. This is also reflected in Montoya's research (2007), which also speaks of the vulnerability of this group. Most of the episodes of the channel tell stories about how siblings entertain themselves with toys and hardly show more aspects of their lives.

The presence of toys in play situations with values can show a correlation with the different elements analysed in the study. Values such as fun, solidarity or violence are shown in the play dynamics in an ad hoc way, but end up influencing the general contents of the channel. A certain link is also found between certain types of values and the categories of toys and some brands, especially those that sponsor content.

Moreover, this presence of values could be associated with the appearance of other characteristics such as protagonism, accompanying information and related emotions. In general, audiences react by penalising content with values, especially those that include violence. These results seem to oppose those of the study by Klinger et al. (2001), who noted that there was no rejection of this type of content. The research by Garrido Lora (2010) and Liceras (2014) shows their concern about this type of violent situations. On the other hand, it should be noted that audiences seem to show a preference for videos that include situations related to solidarity or the reinforcement of gender stereotypes. This taste for gender-biased content is worrying if we take into

account the study by Diaz-Campo and Fernández-Gómez (2017), which affirms the influence of this type of content on minors.

Given the results obtained and due to the high vulnerability of the target audience, it is worth recommending that toy companies adhere to one of the codes of conduct on promotional communication in their sector. This need for better regulation and enforcement is also proposed by Craig and Cunningham (2017); Martínez et al. (2017), and Coates et al. (2020). In addition, it is appropriate that the institutions promoting these agreements enable control systems that monitor compliance, as it has been detected that some brands that have signed the Autocontrol Code of Conduct for Influencers in Advertising do not always respect the recommendations contained in this code. In addition, it would be advisable for industry awards to require that all companies that apply for them have committed to respecting one of the different codes. When analysing the toy brands that entered the AEFJ (Spanish Association of Toy Manufacturers) Best Toy Award in 2021, it was found that, of a total of thirty, only fourteen adhered to the aforementioned code of conduct.

A case study implies a series of limitations related to the generalisation of the conclusions to the field of social networks in general and YouTube in particular. However, it allows us to gain in-depth knowledge of the strategies of the managers of a channel (Vlad and Niki) with regard to the creation of content that is particularly sensitive due to the millions of followers they have and the age of their audience. The review of a significant sample of content has made it possible to detect which values are linked to toys, dynamics that represent the majority of the channel's videos. Knowing the values that are being transmitted to children on YouTube, a medium that hardly has any control over content, is fundamental, as both families and public institutions should know what kind of socialisation in values is being carried out through this medium. It would be appropriate to consider future research in which other YouTube channels with similar target audiences both nationally and internationally are analysed, and in which the protagonists are not only boys but also girls or mixed groups, in order to compare the results.

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