Article

ICT AND MIGRATION IN LATIN AMERICAN PACIFIC. PATHS AND TRAJECTORIES OF PACIFIC COLOMBIAN MIGRANTS

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Abstract

This text presents the results of a research on migration in Latin America's Pacific focused on the national and transnational migrants' trajectories and their use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). Using a qualitative approach, this study addresses the following research questions: **(1)** "What is the migration process phenomenon of Latin American Pacific, particularly in the Colombian Pacific?" and **(2)** "What is the role played by ICT in the current migration process of Colombian Pacific?". In order to reply to them 105 detailed interviews with migrants from the Colombian Pacific were collected within more than three years. Results describe national and transnational migration of Colombian Pacific and show differences in terms of migrants' ICT usage: on one side, it plays a role in respondents' trajectories; on the other side, it represents a survival and integration tool. In

addition, after the integration, it also helps them to stay 'connected' with their families and their places of their origin (in a state of 'in-betweenness').

TIC Y MIGRACIÓN EN EL PACÍFICO LATINOAMERICANO. CAMINOS Y TRAYECTORIAS DE LOS MIGRANTES COLOMBIANOS DEL PACÍFICO

Resumen

Este texto presenta los resultados de una investigación sobre la migración en el Pacífico latinoamericano centrada en las trayectorias de migrantes nacionales y transnacionales, así como en el uso que hacen de las Tecnologías de la Información y la Comunicación (TIC). Mediante un enfoque cualitativo este estudio enfrenta a las siguientes preguntas de investigación: **(1)** "¿Cuáles son las características del fenómeno migratorio en el Pacífico latinoamericano, particularmente en el Pacífico colombiano?" y **(2)** "¿Cuál es el papel que juegan las TIC en el proceso migratorio del Pacífico colombiano?". Para responderlas se recogieron 105 entrevistas estructuradas a migrantes del Pacífico colombiano durante más de tres años. Los resultados describen la migración nacional y transnacional del Pacífico colombiano y muestran diferencias en los usos de las TIC por parte de los migrantes: por un lado, juega un papel en las trayectorias de los entrevistados; por otro lado, representa una herramienta de supervivencia e integración. Además, las TIC también les ayudan a mantenerse 'conectados' con sus familias, así como con sus lugares de origen (en un estado de 'liminalidad').

Palabras clave: marginación, TIC, investigación cualitativa, entrevista, comunidad.

1. Introduction

Migration and communication are fundamental phenomena in human history, and both have been strongly linked with cultural, political, and socio-technical dynamics. Communication and migration also represent two interdisciplinary fields of study that have consolidated in recent decades. However, only since the beginning of the XXI century their relations have become a central issue of social, journalistic, and academic agendas. Similarly, although the ICT have become vital components of the experiences of many migrants, only recently it has begun to attract attention in the academic world. This article aims to investigate the importance of ICT in the migration of the Colombian Pacific, and it will discuss the implications of this technology during the whole process, therefore before the departure, during and after the integration. In the following sections the migration phenomenon in the Colombian Pacific is described, then the relevance of the ICT in the global context and the theoretical framework are given to the reader. Then the importance of adopted methodology focused on the development of extensive interviews, carried out to generate chronicles and trajectories of migration, to present later the quantitative and qualitative discoveries of this initiative is presented. Next, the results are given and explained. Finally, analysis and conclusions. The next section is a presentation of some prominent characteristics of the Colombian Pacific, which is followed by an exposition of the data of migration processes in Latin America, paying special attention to the countries of the Pacific Alliance, the migration in Colombia and Colombian Pacific. In the final part the results of the work are discussed and analyzed.

1.1. The Colombian Pacific

Colombian Pacific consists of the departments of Choco, Valle del Cauca, Cauca y Nariño. Even though Putumayo does not have access to the sea, this department is deeply connected to the processes and events of the Pacific region of the country. After numerous decades of marginalization, the Colombian Pacific gained significant relevance for the country in the past 30 years, taking into consideration its strategic importance for Colombia, especially in terms of biodiversity and economic activity. In this regard the World Bank in 2011 showed that the Basin of the Pacific was inhabited by 2.700 million people, its economy accounted for 55 % of the world's GDP and for demand of products worth approximately 7 billion dollars. The economic history of this area has also been linked to the development of Buenaventura, the most important port of the Colombian Pacific that manages approximately 46 % of Colombian port operations and generates fiscal revenue which exceeds 2 billion dollars. The activities that compose the primary sector of the regional

economy significantly decreased owing to the global economic crisis between 2001 and 2008. The region also repeated negative results in the GDP rate of the secondary sector of the economy in the last 15 years mainly due to the processes of outsourcing of the companies, deindustrialization, and growth of the tertiary sector. The characteristic feature of the region is a significant mobilization and political and social participation of ethnic groups and organizations. Long-term fighting of the indigenous and Afro-Colombians for land, territory and recognition is widely recognized as an action of political actors based on affirmation of their ethnicity and despite the abundance of resources and economic potential, for the last ten years the Colombian Pacific has been one of the regions which were affected the most by the armed conflict. But it was not until 1990's that due to the guerilla expansion in the region the Colombian military forces reinforced their presence in the strategic cities, such as ports of Tumaco, Guapi and Buenaventura. In these cities the number of troops was increased, and naval units were created with the US assistance. However, it was the arrival of paramilitary forces in the region at the beginning of this century that became the key reason for escalation of armed conflict and violence against civil population in the area. Between 2005 and 2013 the spectrum of illegal military (GAI) groups in the region was diversified as well as the kinds of practices of terror, which were exercised by these groups owing to the violent disputes on ownership of trade routes of arms and illicit drugs. According to the sources in the police, between 2006 and 2012 the overall number of homicides in Buenaventura was more than 1.400. Similarly, the reports on disappearances in 2011 are rampantly on the rise. The population of the region considers it a systematic strategy of terrorism. The north of Cauca has been an area which suffered a lot because of political, ethnic and economic conflicts: since 1970's guerilla groups such as FARC, ELN, extinct M-19 and indigenous movement Quintin Lame have settled there; in late 1990's the paramilitary groups entered the region and in 2000 upon the arrival of the paramilitary groups the armed conflict affected a significant part of the municipalities of Cauca, especially in the northern region where acted FARC, leading to a surge of selective assassinations, massacres, clashes, forced recruitment of youngsters and attacks on municipal authorities. In the next paragraphs the migration phenomenon is described, respectively, in the Americas, in Colombia and in the Colombian Pacific.

1.2. *Migrations in the Americas*
Over the last decade in Latin America the governmental institutions and organizations have intensified their efforts to investigate and theorize the phenomena related to the migration processes both in the countries of origin and in the countries of destination. This can be

explained by the increase in migration processes triggered by imbalances of the economic growth that occurred in the 90's in the regions of the globe, with its impact on quality of life in debt levels, coupled with loss of capital caused by the high interest rates that the United States were maintaining. This affected the level of inflation, employment, and dynamics of Latin American economies. These situations not only increased migration in Latin America, but generated significant impacts in destination countries, leading to greater demand for workers, and important cultural and political changes. According to Haas, Castles, and Miller (2020, p. 147) in 2017, "there were 64.5 million international migrants in the Americas. This is equal to 26 percent of the world's migrant population, while the region represents only 14 percent of the world's population." The search for better job opportunities and a better life are the reasons that are presented as more prevalent in the accelerated growth rates of migration in Latin America that are reflected in migration flows to countries like Canada and the United States. The highest percentage of this migrant population corresponds to the economically active population (Clark *et al.*, 2004). According to the Migration Policy Institute (MPI for its acronym in English), in 2014 the number of foreign-born populations in the United States totaled 42.4 million people. More than 11.7 million immigrants living in this country are of Mexican origin, making Mexico the country from which most migrants recently come to the US (Israel & Batalova, 2020). In 2013 MPI also showed that about 3.2 million immigrants living in the United States came from Central America (7 percent of that year) and that the number of South Americans in the United States grew from 90,000 in 1960 to 2.9 million in 2014. Colombia, Peru, Ecuador Brazil, and Guyana account for over 77 % of all migrants from South America in recent decades, while Colombia alone accounts for 25 % (Lorenzi & Batalova, 2022) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) has also shown that Europe is following the United States as one of the main destinations of the South Americans. Haas, Castles, and Miller (2020) show the trends and directions of migrations in South America are complex. For example, since 1990 the fall of military regimes, as well as the rise of democratic governments, attracted new intraregional migrants from Andean and Caribbean countries to others such as Argentina, Brazil, and Chile. On the contrary, the economic crisis during the late 1990s and early 2000s encouraged emigration from Argentina to Spain, Italy, and the US, while in 2010 Chile became Latin America's first OECD member – became attractive for immigrants from Bolivia, Ecuador, Peru and even Argentina." (Haas, Castles & Miller, 2020, p. 163). Moreover, sustained political and economic crises in Colombia increased emigration, mainly to the US, Venezuela, and Europe, and later, political, and economic crisis in Venezuela

triggered a massive emigration process that has a reference in the caravans of men, women, youth, and children walking on the roads from Venezuela to the south of the continent.

1.2.1. *Migration in the countries of the Pacific Alliance*

The data recorded by the Department of Immigration and Migration of Chile (Doña-Reveco & Mullan, 2014) show tendency of the increasing number of foreign migrants in all the regions of the country. However, census of 2012 revealed the growth of the migrant population in Chile, and, for the date, Colombians make up for 16.3 % of their total foreign population. As for the Chilean emigration, recent estimates indicate that the main destinations are Argentina (850,000), United States (110,000) and Sweden (42,000) (Doña-Reveco & Mullan, 2014). Peru, meanwhile, became a country of migrants in the 90's, more precisely, during the Fujimori regime (1990-2001), a period when there was considerable emigration of the middle class (Takenaka *et al.*, 2010), as migration flows in this country responded to the political and economic cycles, intensifying during the periods of crisis (Durand, 2010). Destinations of Peruvian migrants have been diversified, excelling United States, Spain and Japan, the country where Peruvian immigrants enjoy legal status, have stable living conditions and well-paid jobs; in fact, the remittances from Japan to Peru outnumber remittances from other destinations (Takenaka & Paerregaard, 2015). For its part, Argentina and Chile stand out as major destinations within the region, particularly for those migrants who fail to enter Spanish or Japanese labor market (Takenaka *et al.*, 2010). In the case of Mexico as noted above migration flows are strongly determined by the proximity of this country to the United States. In 2008, approximately 12 million Mexicans resided in the United States; some studies have estimated that there are approximately 6 million illegal Mexican immigrants in this country (Hall & Stringfield, 2014). However, between 2007 and 2010 migration flows from Mexico to the United States decreased by 50 % because of the financial crisis (Levine, 2015) which was reflected in the consistent decline of remittances between 2007 and 2010 (Figueroa *et al.*, 2015). In relation to this it is important to note that after oil revenues, remittances are the main source of foreign exchange for Mexico (Germano, 2013).

1.2.2. *Migrations in Colombia*

In Colombia there are recent research developments on migration. Several authors argue that this is because the international migration flows have accelerated significantly since the mid-90s, mainly due to the economic crisis, the escalation of the armed conflict and high levels of violence in the country (Cardenas & Mejia, 2006). Cardenas and Mejia (2006) also

show that the migration of Colombians is in most cases a family migration, and although the population by sex is very similar, most are female, repeating the pattern regardless of the source of the data. Most of the migrant population is between 25 and 45 years (particularly between 35-44 years). The educational level of migrants on average equals 12.3 years of schooling (equivalent to completed high school education), and 30 % of the population over 25 years has tertiary education (technical education, university, and graduate). Unlike countries such as Mexico, Colombia until recently had not experienced massive migration flows. However, in recent decades this country has the highest number of emigrants in South America, as shown by the figures presented above. The information collected during the last population census of 2005 conducted by the National Administrative Department of Statistics (DANE), shows that the number of Colombians abroad is 3,378,345. The census also found that the main destinations of Colombians are as follows: 34.6% in the US; 23.1 % in Spain; 20 % in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela; 3.1 % in Ecuador, 2 % in Canada and the remaining 1 % of the migrant Colombian population reside in Panama, Mexico, Costa Rica, Australia, Peru and Bolivia. According to the World Bank the most frequent destinations of Colombian migrants are the United States with 28.8 %, followed by the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela with 28.4 %; thirdly, Spain with 17.6 %; then Ecuador (8 %), Canada (2.1 %), Panama (1.4 %), France and Italy (1.1 %), United Kingdom (0.7 %) and Germany (0.6 %) (World Bank, 2011). Statistical data collected by the Migration Unit of Colombia and IOM showed an increasing rate of migration in recent years, a phenomenon which got to the point that had the highest number of emigrants in South America. Regarding the reasons of the migration process, according to IOM (2015) it has been motivated by economic factors, the search for better employment, higher income, better quality of life, or it was considered an option to escape the armed conflict. Since 2008 returns of Colombians living in countries of Europe and the United States have begun, framed by two phenomena: on the one hand, the global economic crisis that has affected the main countries of destination of Colombian migrants and, secondly, the restrictive approach on migration that traditional recipient countries have adopted (Mejía-Ochoa & Castro, 2012). Colombia has also recently been listed as a country-receptor of migrants, as it has become a transit country and a platform for interconnection between North, Central and South America, and between these places and the rest of the world.

1.2.3. *Migration in the Colombian Pacific*

Migration in the Colombian Pacific has been increasing over the past two decades. According to Barbary, Ramírez and Urrea (2004) among the causes of this phenomenon are the

integration of the region into new economic and production processes regional, national, and international (such as development of African palm plantations, the presence of shrimp companies as well as the legal and illegal extraction of minerals and timber). The violence and armed conflict since the mid-90's and mainly at the beginning of this century are equally important; they have turned the Colombian Pacific into a territory of dispute between different armed groups: guerrillas, drug traffickers, paramilitary groups and, most recently, so-called Criminal gangs (BACRIM), - which increased forced displacement in the region. According to 2005 Census data of the National Administrative Department of Statistics (DANE, 2005), it is possible to claim that among all the departments of the Pacific region, including Putumayo, the latter is the one that has greater internal immigration (with 48.7 %) and its most common reason is attributed to 'family reasons', while 'Job finding difficulties' stands for 15-20 % of residence changes in all the region, with Putumayo leading among them (19.5 %) which is also leading among the departments which people flee because of 'life threat' (16.5 %), followed by Chocó (14.8 %), Cauca (8.1 %), Nariño (7.8 %) and Valle (3.6 %). 'The need for education' is the most important reason for change of residence in Choco (13.0 %), followed by Putumayo (11.5 %), Cauca (7.5 %), Nariño (7.4 %) and Valle (3,1 %). Data shows Putumayo is characterized by a high migration index. Historically it was considered as a recipient region, for in the twentieth century it was receiving migrants who arrived searching for gold and oil. Recently, it has been known to be a department ejector due to forced displacement brought about by illegal armed groups present in the region, especially FARC. The level of migration and displacement has exacerbated since 1997, when the conflict intensified in Putumayo. These migration patterns explain the growing number of displaced families who have arrived in Pasto, Ipiales, Taminango and other municipalities, following the intensification of conflict and fumigation in Putumayo. The main cause of displacement and migration is the armed conflict. The geographical and environmental location of Nariño fostered that much of its territory has been dedicated to illicit crops and therefore to the presence of illegal armed groups. By 2010, according to the report by CODHES, Nariño reached the total of 56 % of the displaced by massive events nationwide, following Chocó, one of the most affected by indigenous exodus departments (Pinto, 2010). Census of 2005 states that dispute over control of the land, the search for better living conditions and forced displacement account for migrations in the department. Cali is the most common destination, given family connections and friends who live in the city. Bogota is another significant destination due to the diversity of its inhabitants. There is also a migration flow between Choco and Antioquia, however, while most migrants from Chocó who move to Antioquia find themselves in the lower strata of the Antioquian society,

those who move from Antioquia to Choco are merchants, capitalists, and some poor farmers, who generally occupy the middle and upper strata in Choco. According to the DANE, between 2001 and 2005 most young people from Choco moved to Antioquia, meanwhile migrations in the department of Cauca have had different nuances depending on the destination of the population, i.e., interdepartmental migration prevails on international migration. According to DANE Census of 2005, the rate of international migration to the department of Cauca was significantly lower than the national average, making it one of the six departments with the lowest emigration rate in the country. By contrast, interdepartmental emigration rates are high; since the early 2000's, a significant proportion of its population was living outside the Cauca, making it the department of the Pacific region with the highest proportion of native emigrant population (330,000 people), residing mainly in Valle del Cauca (58.7 %), Bogota (12.4 %) and Quindio (10.8 %) (Murad, 2003). Human mobility between rural and urban areas within the department also deserves special attention. According to Macuacé-Otero and Gómez-Sánchez (2014) in Popayan such factors as security provided by the city, access to health services, housing and better conditions of public order have driven migration to the urban center of the department, especially from rural areas. Historically, Valle del Cauca has been the largest recipient of migrants in the Pacific and South-Western region. In recent years this department has become one of those which receive the most internal population and is the area with higher rates of international migration. Valle del Cauca is the recipient of migrants, who fled because of political violence of the 50s, due to the processes of urbanization and development of business and trade in the 60s and the general development of the industry of sugar cane and imaginary prosperity in the department. According to the DANE Census of 2005, the households with migrant experience point out the fact that the department of higher concentration corresponds to Valle del Cauca (23.14 %), followed by Bogota with 17.59 % and Antioquia with 17.73 %. The migration experience of Valle del Cauca is worth noting, because about 66,684 families have one or more members outside of Colombia (approximately 50 % of the emigrants from Valle del Cauca live in Spain and a quarter resides in the United States). The proportion of the migrants from Valle del Cauca is reflected in their contribution to remittances received in Colombia from nationals living abroad. On average, departments that receive the most remittances are the Valley (27.5 %), Antioquia (14.7 %) and Cundinamarca (13.4 %). The countries from which most remittances come are the United States, Spain, Venezuela, United Kingdom, and Chile. According to the econometric analysis carried out by Khoudour-Castéras (2007), the department of Valle del Cauca is among those which have higher rates of migration. This situation occurs, according to this study, due to less poor and better

prepared people from the departments with bigger socio-economic difficulties, who are most likely to emigrate. In the case of Valle, the deterioration of living conditions and increased protection costs would stimulate the immigration growth in recent years as immigration also becomes a way of protection against violence. Traditional and contemporary means of communication are important in creating images of the world that mobilize and encourage migration as well as on centrality of social networks (of families and friends) in the processes of migration and a liminal state of the migratory experiences, i.e., transitional, cyclic. In the next paragraph, the role played by ICT is described.

1.2.4. *ICT and migration*
Globalization affects many social phenomena and migration is surely one of them. The globalized world in which we live needs networked computer systems and ICT infrastructure, together with fast transportation systems for people, goods, and services, and the necessary information processing capacity to function (Carnoy & Castells, 2002, p. 3). Castells widely studied this new social-economical context through the concept of reticularity which is, now, so extensively used by scholars (both for the 'hard' and 'soft' sciences) that has become the dominant cultural logic of the last decade (Comunello, 2010, p. 53). He represents society in the 'information age' as a network, namely a series of interconnected nodes (Castells, 2010, p. 501) which affect everything: technology and communication, production and culture, even politics and work, all seem to fold along the same curve (Miconi, 2011, p. 58) in the new information paradigm (Castells, 2010, p. 73); a new social structure, a new economy, and a new culture shaped around networks arise (Van-Dijk, 1999, p. 129). According to Wellman there is also a shift regarding sociality from groups to networks of connected individuals, as well as a new social operating system which he names 'networked individualism' (Rainie & Wellman, 2012). Social networks have always existed (Wellman, 2001a, p. 228), but thanks to the 'Triple Revolution' — social networks, internet, mobile connectedness — today individuals are able to act independently with great power to shape their lives (Rainie & Wellman, 2012, p. 302). Within this framework, 'community' changes into: "(...) networks of interpersonal ties that provide sociability, support, information, a sense of belonging, and social identity" (Wellman, 2001a, p. 228), and thanks to the personalization and portability of communication it is now able to transcend the group and locality toward 'person-to-person' and 'role-to-role' interactions (Wellman, 2001a, p. 231). Consequently, people can switch among multiple networks to increase their social capital (Wellman, 2001b, p. 15) in the meaning of Bourdieu (1986, p. 248). In summary, due to the resources of their networks (which are much more extended

than in the past), as well as the transports and the ICT infrastructures, people nowadays can move faster and more efficiently, as well as to plan their trajectories and adapt them to unexpected events. This of course also affects migration. The field of studies examining the relationship between communication, information and migration shows very different theoretical and methodological approaches, in which stand out by far the case studies. The research in communication, linguistics, anthropology, sociology and more recently in the information science has most contributed to this field. Moreover, there is evidence that the communication and the information that circulate in social networks of relatives and friends are the things that most affect decision-making processes and transit to other places and countries. Similarly, it shows that ICT not only helps migrants to define the routes and destinations, but they are also playing a role of a fundamental tool for survival and integration (co-construction) in the places where they arrive temporarily or for a longer while. These technologies are converted into an emotional and cultural support that allows migrants to remain 'connected' with their families, their neighborhoods, and the country, as well as stay aware of the socio-political situation and cultural traditions and practices at different times. This research includes more than 100 stories of migration developed from in-depth interviews with migrants. Most of the communication studies have a certain preceding investigative tradition of the mass media studies that emphasize the effects of the speeches and the functions and use of mass media among migrants. On their part, cultural studies, which have a very important trajectory in this field, have analyzed matters related to race, gender, and power. Moreover, some important contribution was made to the topics related to globalization and identity. In a pioneer work that analyzed the relation between modernity and globalization, Appadurai (1996) studied the relation between migration, communication, and information dynamics. This author pays special attention to the relation between the electronic media and the promotion of new ideals in the world as well as to the contemporary tensions created by imagination, that suggest as a constituent feature of modern subjectivity. Appadurai affirms that imagination represents a peculiar force in social life, since now, as never before, many people in more parts of the world have the ability to consider a more comprehensive range of possibilities for themselves and for others. Appadurai also supports the idea that electronic media changed the field of the media as well as mass and traditional forms of communication, given that they offer new resources and disciplines (orders) to create illusion about themselves and other possible spheres. The electronic media contribute to the change of day-to-day life of the migrants because of the simplicity of access to these technologies, possibilities to receive information and communicate live, that these technologies provide, and the transformation of the limits

between public and private life. Moreover, in the same manner, Apparduai also introduces the concept of sentiment community, referring to a group that starts feeling and imagining things jointly, switching from collective imagination to collective action (Appadurai, 1996). The authors as Navarrete and Huerta (2006) used the terms such as transnational community of immigrants, referring to the communities that appear owing to intercommunication by means of virtual media. A transnational community of immigrants is defined as a disperse group of individuals of the same nationality who, despite of meeting abroad, maintain a sense of belonging to the country of origin and possess a corresponding identity. The basic idea of transnational community is "(…) the appropriation of the global by the local" (Delanty, 2003, p. 158). The concept of transnationalism implies, therefore, a permanent link between the immigrants and their countries of origin, which can be demonstrated through the nets of communities consolidated abroad. These communities make an effort to maintain relations with their families and friends in the country of origin, and the relations are based on the common cultural and linguistic identity. This kind of notions provide a possibility for the Internet to be seen not only as an instrument that allows to shorten distances or spare money and time, but as a social space, where the relationships appear (Rheingold, 1993; Cruz, 2007). In a global world technology such as new transport and communication and information have made easier mobility that enables migrants to remain in almost constant touch with family and friends in their origin countries and to travel back and forth more often and facilitate temporary, circular, and repeated movements. Furthermore, transnational citizens that become more mobile between different countries foster social and economic relationships in two or more societies at once (Haas, Castles & Miller, 2020, p. 12). Other authors state that the development of different types of media and global distribution of technology transformed migration. King and Wood (2001), for instance, suggest that dynamics may intervene in individual and collective experience of the immigrants in three major forms: **(1)** The images transmitted from the countries of destination or via global media may be an important source of information for potential migrants; **(2)** creation of perception toward migrants in the countries of destination, which is fundamental tool influencing the reception that they receive and **(3)** the media in the countries of origin of the migrants, such as movies, videos, satellite TV as well as technologies of the global distribution, such as World Wide Web, that play a dynamic role in cultural and political identity of diaspora communities. Studies carried out by the United Nations suggest that the ICT did not replace the old forms of communication, but considerably increased the variety of available options to stay informed and communicate. These studies show that migrants make use of ICT mainly to maintain family relations;

preserve cultural identities and support their families from abroad (Hamel, 2009). The main challenges that migrants and their communities face while integrating and participating in the life of new societies are the search of the educational, economic, legal, healthcare, and informational opportunities. Other investigations also show that social media are transforming networks of migrants and their links with people and institutions of the countries of origin and reception. These studies suggest moreover that use of social media on the part of migrants is changing the process of integration as well as their opportunities to exchange information, stay informed, and participate in the exchange of knowledge as well as in the processes of economic, political, and social inclusion (Dekker & Engbersen, 2012; Baron *et al.*, 2013). Furthermore, the availability and use of new media not only contribute to the creation of different forms of social capital, but also help to transform the perception of physical distance, social isolation and increase the sense of belonging (Fortunati *et al.*, 2012; Komito & Bates, 2009). In this aspect the authors such as Oiarzabal, Artexabala, Maiztegui and Riezu (2014) see that ICT offer magnificent tools to empower migrants and construct an intercultural society. The dynamics of communication and collaboration that ICT promote, consist in widening of the social capital that people and immigrant communities need to handle diverse aspects such as identity, access to basic resources, employability or even socialization itself. Authors like Albrow (1996) affirm that global cities are recipients of countless immigrants and are established as such due to the access to ICT that they possess. The author argues that the global cities are. For these reasons, this text is attempting to provide understanding of the relation between migration and communication. For this end it presents the results of an investigation on migration in Latin American Pacific, especially in Colombian Pacific, toward other countries, and emphasizes the importance of ICT trajectories that experience national and international migrants of the region. The focus of this investigation is the recollection and analysis of more than 100 stories of migration based on the detailed interviews with migrants from the Colombian Pacific. The results of this study show that the destination of the migrants, who participated in the study, are or have been the USA and Spain. Moreover, the USA is the country which is widely used by migrants from the Pacific as place which they try to flee for other places such as Canada or European countries, while Mexico represents as transition point, especially for undocumented migrants. Nevertheless, an increase in migration processes is observed in Latin America, especially in Chile. The communication and information, and in a particular way ICT, help the migrants not only to make decisions to migrate and define their destinations, but also function as a fundamental tool of survival and integration in the places of arrival. In the same manner they are definitive means to get to

know space, time, cycles, and experiences between the places of origin and destinations, making a liminal experience, i.e., permanent transition and connection of different worlds. These technologies are converted in emotional, cultural, and socio-technological support that allows the migrants to stay 'connected' with their families, their neighborhoods and their countries as well as be aware of socio-political situation of the nation, traditions, and cultural practices in the places of their origin, while they enrich their daily life in other places of the world.

2. Methodology: over 100 trajectories of migrants

This research aims to reply to the RQs by a qualitative research methodology and uses the power of stories created from the information received from in-depth interviews with migrants going from and to the Colombian Pacific. In-depth interviews were seen as a technique designed to produce sharper images of paths of the participants of migration. Following Spradley (1979), in-depth interviews seek to establish a relationship of human to human with the interviewed and to understand rather than explain, letting the respondent "(...) to delve into the nuances and particulars of topics of interest as they arise in the conversation" (Boellstorff *et al.*, 2012, p. 96); moreover, in-depth semi-structured interviews are suitable with this kind of topics (Das *et al.*, 2020). A guide containing queries or concerns that clarify and illuminate the importance of information and communication practices within the migration paths of the participants was used during the interviews.

The interviews were used as a basis in the process of drafting the trajectories (chronic type) that provide both qualitative and quantitative information, that are aimed at generating input and data, that help to understand better different individual perspectives, such as collective matters of the phenomenon of migration in relation to communication, technologies, and social change. The interviews are converted into a chronicle for observing the peculiarities and differences in the migration experiences, and the sum of them is analyzed collectively and helps to identify patterns and oddities of recent practices of Colombian migrants. The matrix presented in the table 1 shows the dimensions worked out in the interviews. After collecting the information and stories this study employs the method of content analysis, which includes the following steps: **a)** the transcription of the material collected from audio and visual sources; **b)** dividing the textual material in units for further analysis; **c)** classification, in which were developed and revised the data categories corresponding to the questions of research through an interactive process of analysis; and **d)** codification, in which the units were assigned to categories related to the questions of

research (Nastase *et al.*, 2007). The interest in the narratives as social acts and forms of constructing identity, as well as in tools of explanation of socio-political and cultural phenomena has raised again in social sciences, particularly in sociology, anthropology, communication, and information studies: storytelling is seen as a social process, and the stories and trajectories of life shape social objects of research (Davis, 2002). Davis argue that the current narrative turn is a part of a renewed emphasis on human agency, in contexts and in the intertwining of these two dimensions of human experience. Similarly, it stems from the importance of language for the negotiation of meanings and construction of identities in everyday life. In this sense, the concept of narrative helps to shed light on the relationship between agency, social structures, and storytelling. However, it is important to note that the stories not only shape the past in the light of the present and the future, but also create experiences that require certain reactions of those who listen, read, and observe them. The stories are primarily transactional (or better say interactive), and in addition to the organizational operations that produce social phenomena, they are also valuable for their discursive power.

> The process of storytelling as a social transaction involves people in a communicative relationship. Through the identification and co-creating a story, the storyteller and the reader/listener create a unity that implies building a certain degree of emotional bound and a sense of solidarity. (Davis, 2002, p. 19)

**Table 1.** Matrix of the dimensions investigated in the interviews.

	Before	**During**	**After**
ICT	Incidence/utility of the media when making a decision	Importance of the media during the process	Importance of the media during installation
Migration	Principal motives, reasons, motivation to migrate (leave the place of origin) What or who influenced (helped-prevented) the decision Objectives, expectations, hopes	Cycle-path of migration (travel) What or who helped-prevented in the process	Installation, adaptation What or who helped-prevented the process of arrival
Social Change	Situation, socio-economic, cultural, political context of the interviewed and community, city, country. Your vision of what you thought you would be doing in the country or how you would be contributing to it. Initial capabilities Sense of belonging; identity with the city, region, country	Situation, socio-economic cultural, political context of the city and the country of arrival What do you do (social, economic, cultural contribution to the community, city, country)? Sense of belonging; identity with the city, region, country	Situation, socio-economic cultural, political context of the city and the country of arrival What do you do (social, economic, cultural contribution to the community, city, country)? Gained capabilities Sense of belonging; identity with the city, region, country

Source: Own elaboration

The emergent research design, which does not establish all the necessary steps at the beginning of the investigation (Gianturco, 2004, p. 33), in combination with 'sensitizing concepts', which: "(...) can be tested, improved, and refined" (Blumer, 1969, p. 147-150), gave a useful flexibility to study this complex phenomenon. Less than Ten percent of the interviews were performed by 'Skype' and 'Whatsapp' and were used for the background research. The kind of technique used, in-depth semi-structured interview, was chosen also to better perform in-depth interviews thanks to their flexibility (Gianturco, 2004, p. 70-71; Boellstorff *et al.*, 2012, p. 92) given also from the use of truly open-ended questions which let respondents using their own words (Patton, 2002, p. 353). This let unexpected information arise (Corbetta, 2007, p. 350) which happened especially regarding two recurring causes of migration: the armed political conflict as well as the lack of freedom to live their own gender identity far from the traditional schemes. Another emerging theme was the important role played by the ICT during the emigration process, not only for the planning phase.

This research was conducted also by the students of the 'ICT and Migration' course at «ICESI» University of Cali - Colombia. The access to the field was done by the students, who found the respondents looking for them in their social circles - by snowball sampling (Pescosolido, 2006, p. 215) -, and they also took part in the interviews - most of the time with the support of professors at the university itself. The in-depth semi-structured interviews, on average 90 minutes length, were in total 105 and were collected from July 2014 to November 2017. The respondents were migrants who finished their migratory route or that still were into it at the time of the interviews, they moved to other parts of the country of origin or abroad and 85 % of them came back to their starting point. The recorded interviews were transcribed by a word processor - Microsoft Word - and then data were rearranged by the cut-up-and-put-in-folders approach (Gianturco, 2004, p. 123) by Microsoft Excel -, next, analyzed by a qualitative data analysis software - Atlas.ti. The basic quantitative information collected from 105 respondents are resumed as follows: 70 % of the respondents were between the age 20 and 50 at the time of the interview (figure 1); 44 % were single and 39 % were married with a slight prevalence of women (51 %). More than a half of them traveled on their own (55 %) and 42 % traveled with their families. Almost half of them completed undergraduate programs and 11% received a technical degree, and about a quarter of them (26 %) graduated from high school (figure 2).

Figure 1. Age range of respondents.
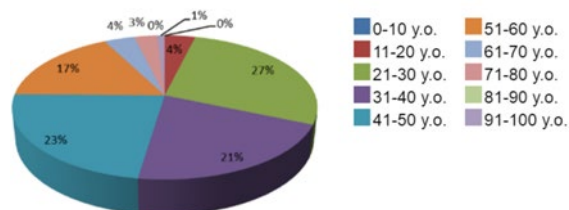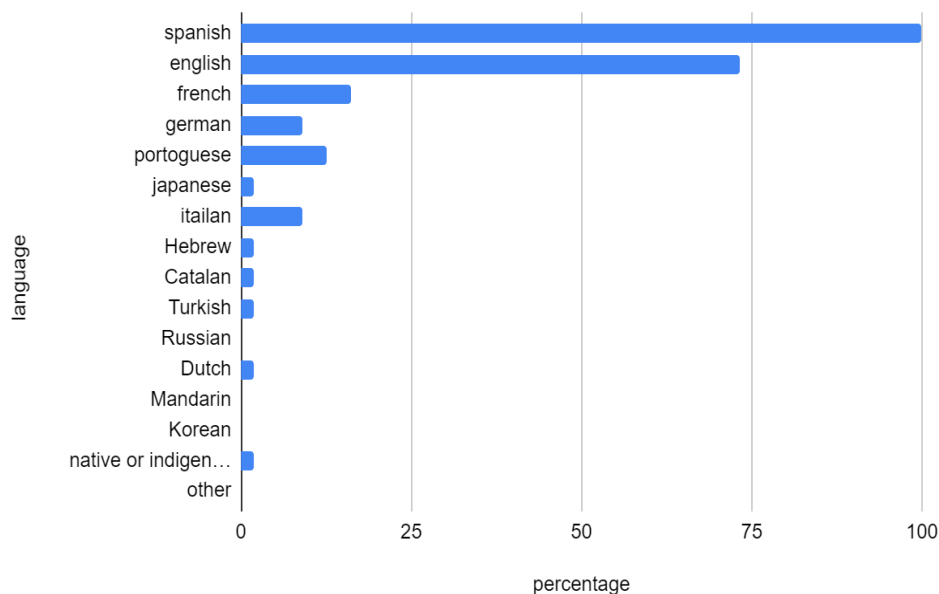

Source: Own elaboration

Figure 2. Educational level of respondents.
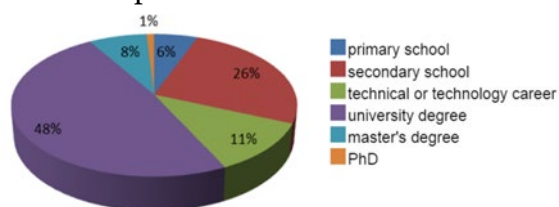
Source: Own elaboration

The main destination of this group of migrants was the United States, followed by Spain, then by Chile (growing) and countries like France and Germany. The United States is also the country where several of them had a temporary stopover before going to Canada or European countries. The participation of migrants in social, cultural, and political organizations is quite scarce highlighting its links with religious, political, cooperative groups and professional associations. A small percentage, 6 %, have a master's degree and only one person has a PhD. Almost half (41 %) of respondents is involved in wage labor and a quarter are self-employed. A low percentage of them work in the field (8 %) or perform manual (4 %) jobs. Three-quarters of respondents have higher incomes now or after the migration and 46 % speak English and a significant number of respondents speak more than two languages (figure 3). In the next paragraph, the migrants' trajectories collected are described.

Figure 3. Language of respondents (percentage).

Source: Own elaboration

3. Results: the 'transhumance' of transnational migrants

3.1. The migration phenomenon

The testimonies of international migrants highlight cross-cutting issues. Firstly, without the interest in establishing causal relationships, it is possible to prove that there are very few, almost non-existent, migrations that are carried out by a migrant without any prior knowledge of the destination. Before undertaking a journey migrants receive information (such as economic situation, cost of living, culture of the population) on the destination through networks of family and friends via different means of communication: radio, Internet, television, or newspapers. The information received through social networks is crucial now of making the decision to leave for the country of destination. It happens because these people are already there and not only seeming to understand better the situation from the perspective of day-to-day life, but they are the ones who encourage people to travel by making testimonies or demonstrating 'economic prosperity' or 'better opportunities'.

> Watching the news and watching people who get a lot of money by doing simple jobs and send remittances to their countries of origin, does influence the decision. But half the things they say are far from reality, people do not dimension how hard it is to get what you have, because here in the U.S.A.

the work is different, the Latino immigrants undervalue what they do. (Testimony of Transnational Female Migrant)

Secondly, we found out that the processes of adaptation and integration of new migrants in the places of destinations are mediated by their social networks. Such issues as obtaining food and housing, finding work or place to study, or a school for the children, are determinant in the experiences of immigrants. The collected information shows that regular communication with family, friends and relatives in their hometowns is crucial for adaptation and integration of migrants. The use of ICT, especially mobile phones, text messages (like WhatsApp) and Skype, stand out in the daily life of migrants, which set well-defined communication and information routine with their countries.

Thirdly, their stories also allow us to observe that a significant number of migrants moved from the city to which initially arrived at another city within the same country. These trips contributed to achieving better employment and economic opportunities or opportunities for better quality of life.

Transnational migrants with higher levels of education, bilingualism, and income tend to favor the migration to the United States, Canada, and other European countries other than Spain, while those with lower levels of education, bilingualism, and lower income tend to travel within the continent to the countries such as Venezuela (mainly in past decades), Ecuador, Peru and more often to Chile. Most transnational migrants affirm having or having had a better income and living conditions in destination countries, emphasizing access to education or health services.

Consequently, we could divide respondents in two main groups:
- the youngest, the most educated and childless migrants travel in search of better education and better working conditions and occupation in order to ensure a good life: quiet, with good income and facilities to stay and enjoy the levels of development of countries, cities or regions to which they go. The majority of them are trying to settle in other countries or use their migration experience as a springboard to another country, mainly in North America or Europe;
- less young, less educated and with children migrate seeking to secure a better present and a better future for their families, particularly their children, whom they usually leave in their hometowns (with grandparents, uncles, or cousins), or gradually bring

to the countries of destination. Most transnational migrants in this group do not see their future in countries where they go, and usually expect that once they accomplish the purpose of moving their families forward, they will be able to return. Those who go through the return from other countries or other regions of the country experience strong cultural and emotional shocks, especially regarding the quality of life, order, cleanliness, food, and respect for differences.

For almost half of the respondents (46 %) the main reason for migration was work, 23 % migrated in search of better education, 18% in search of a better life and 7% were motivated by an affectionate or romantic relationship (figure 4). Unlike what happens with national and regional information, there are few (5 %) who migrated because of violence and risks for life. However, there are very distressing cases like that of a woman of indigenous origin who had to migrate at first because of domestic violence and then because of politics. The latter was because of her son, who was carrying out the military service at the police and was kidnapped and killed by FARC.

> I was granted political asylum in Canada, but I stay here because this is my country, here are the bones of my son and this is where I must tell the truth about his abduction; and if this will be the reason why they kill me, let it be so, because I will not stop protesting. (Testimony of National Female Migrant)

Figure 4. Reason of the emigration.
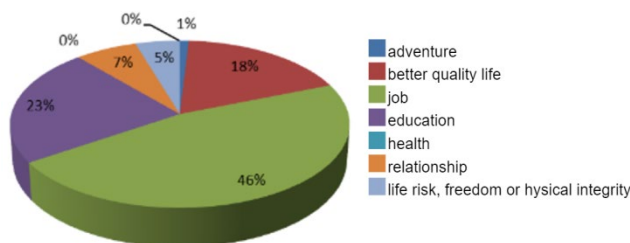
Source: Own elaboration

3.1.1. *Migration of Colombians in 'their own land'*

The testimonies of national migration experiences have various peculiarities. One of them is that the paths of people who decided to leave their places of origin are relatively short; these people migrate to cities that are geographically close to their homes, but the journeys seemed to be long and difficult, because required going to a different place with a new culture and lifestyle. Although cities and towns to which people migrate are situated relatively close from

home, between two to five hours on public transport, in most cases, migrants describe them as places far from their homes. In some cases, mainly in the municipalities located on the coast of the Pacific Ocean or its tributaries, the costs of return, temporary or permanent, are very high because there are places that can be reached only by boat or plane. This of course increases the sense of remoteness. These national migrants also maintain constant communication with family and friends, but not as constant and 'ritual' as in the case of the transnationals. The gadgets preferred by migrants to communicate with their hometowns are as follows: mobile phones and computers with applications like Facebook, WhatsApp, and Skype. But in everyday life they do not use them as much as transnational migrants. Since many national migrants come from rural areas or municipalities with high rurality, they talk about greater challenges and difficulties of adaptation and integration in destination cities, mainly in Cali. However, they also noted the existence of larger networks and colonies of relatives and friends in these locations. Most respondents migrated alone, and the main causes of migration mentioned in the collected stories are abuse and domestic violence (especially against women), political violence, search for educational opportunities, new job opportunities, survival and adventure. Some respondents spoke about the connection between new job opportunities and chances to survive and legal and illegal armed organizations. The majority of those who came searching for better job opportunities and quality of life declare that they didn't succeed or didn't find these opportunities, except for those who managed to pursue university degree. However, everyone recognized that despite the poverty and marginalization of various places of origin, these people appreciate peace, solidarity, and good quality of life in these places, which mainly means good nutrition. The stories of women with low levels of education and income are the hardest. Most of them started working early (10-13 years), confronted by serious difficulties to continue their studies and even to 'live their childhood.' They also faced urban life at an early age, sometimes coming across the technologies that they were not used to, such as refrigerators, ovens and electric stoves or same televisions and telephones. One of the respondents did not know about money, because in their community the trade was based on barter. Those are the stories of humble and struggling women with a very clear purpose in life: to bring up their families. Most of them went to Cali as domestic service providers, with rather precarious income and social security. The stories of migrants heading for Chile show low levels of education, prevalence of manual labor, such as construction or services (domestic, restaurants, cleaning), people traveling alone and leaving their families and children in Colombia. In case of Mexico the migrations are temporary, carried out by people who failed to obtain legal visa and try to enter the United States with the help of 'coyotes'. Recently their

conditions have become more complicated and even cruel. For those who migrated a few years ago, despite the difficulties and hardships, it was less arduous. Most trajectories are motivated by the search of a better life. For most young people (men and women) this means training and experience to obtain a good job, which would provide them a comfortable and quiet life. The stories suggest that for men over 40 with families, this means ensuring better income to sustain their families, including the education of their children. For women over 40 with family this also means having more freedom (fewer social sanctions) and being able to work and develop professionally.

### 3.1.2. *'Old' and 'new' media of communication*

In connection with the daily use of ICT the highest percentage is taken by instant messages and chats with 84 % (mainly via mobile phones - figure 5 and 6), followed by email (61 % with a higher percentage of the computer use, figure 7 and 8) and social media like Facebook (60 %, figure 9), predominantly used via mobile phones (figure 10). Reading news online, visiting websites and blogs, listening to music, and downloading it online play a secondary, but important role in the daily lives of a significant group of respondents (figure 11, 12 and 13), while online games and Twitter are insignificant in the daily activities of migrants, with minor use and consistency. For example, Twitter is used by 49 % of respondents, but 15 % of them use it daily, while 42 % of them play online games and only 5 % do so daily.

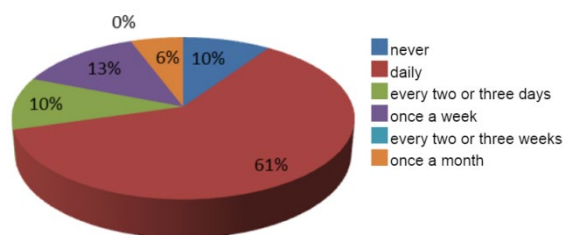**Figure 5.** Instant messaging and chat usage.
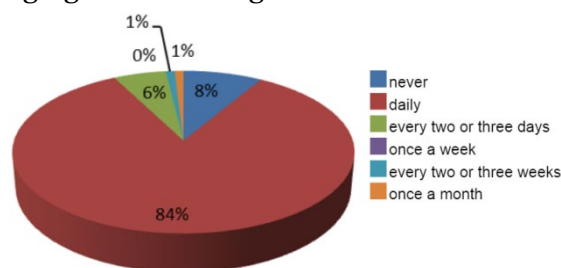
Source: Own elaboration

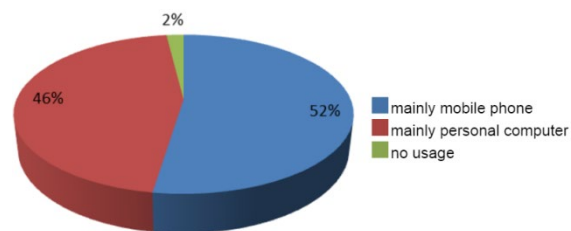**Figure 6.** Medium used for instant messaging and chat.
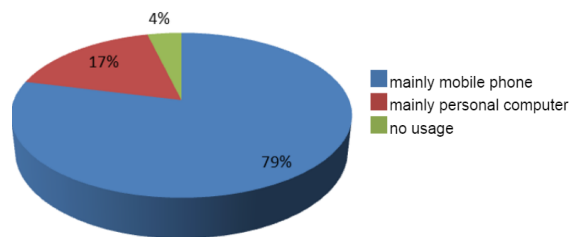
Source: Own elaboration
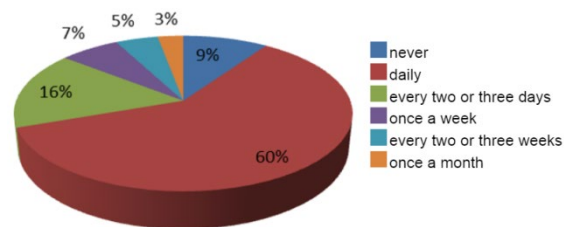
Figure 7. E-mail usage.

Source: Own elaboration
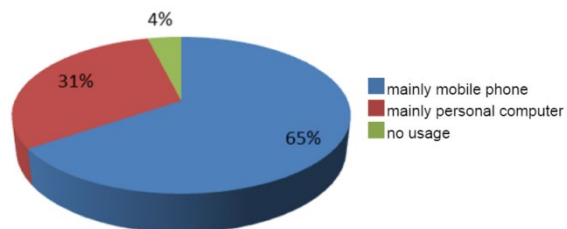
Figure 8. Medium used for E-mail.

Source: Own elaboration

Figure 9. Facebook, MySpace and other social media.
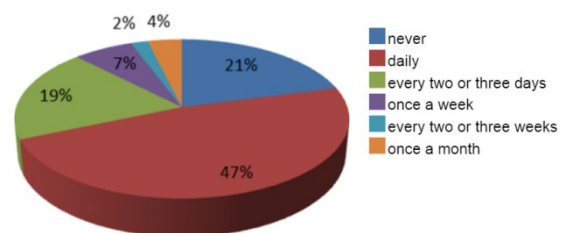

Source: Own elaboration

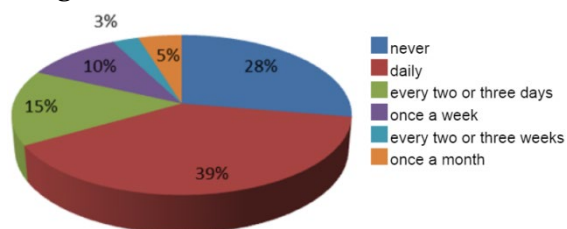**Figure 10.** Medium used for Facebook, MySpace and other social media.

Source: Own elaboration

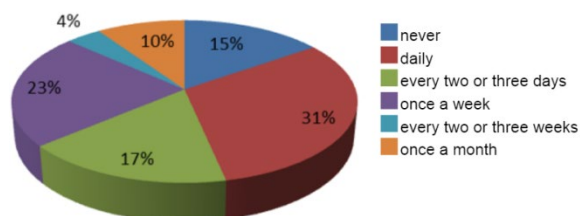**Figure 11.** Reading news online.

Source: Own elaboration

Figure 12. Websites or Blogs.

Source: Own elaboration

Figure 13. Listening or downloading music.

Source: Own elaboration

Economic, cultural and information capitals are seen as determinants of the routes and destinations chosen by migrants. Those with smaller capital tend to stay in the country or

decide to go to South American countries. Among the migration contexts identified by these migrants they pointed out poverty, unemployment, and violence (both political and domestic) in their places of origin. Importantly, this kind of perceptions about situations (local) is encouraged by reports by the national and local media, mainly television and radio. In a complementary way, films, television, and the Internet appear to be the means of information that most evoke the impressions of potential or current migrants about the countries and cities of destination, which are confronted by information and stories that the migrants receive from their family members and friends. Among the youngest the information is circulating within ICT and is produced by ICT, among which the leading positions are occupied by social media (like Facebook, Instagram, or WhatsApp), and for older people phones, and more recently Skype, are the most important sources of information and communication. These media have not only helped migrants to make decisions to migrate and to define their hometowns but also became a fundamental tool for both survival and integration in the places where they arrive. They also represent an emotional and cultural support that allows them to stay 'connected' with their families, neighborhoods, and countries in everyday life. In general, it is important to note that individual or collective decision to migrate usually is a result of analysis and discussions within a family. In most of the cases the decisions are presented as rational, in which different types of issues such as language, work and study opportunities, social networks, climate and location are taken into consideration. So, families play a key role, and participate in different ways both in making initial decisions and in all the events and in the processes of migration. However, the stories also show that women in most cases are the ones who lead the initiatives and decisions to migrate. It is important to underline that mass media and ICT appear to have no direct influence on decisions to migrate. However, they are seen as important social spaces in the construction of images and portrayals of the places where the migrants go to as well as of the conditions and characteristics of life elsewhere in the country or in the world. The information and stories told by relatives, friends, and other close people seem to be one of the primary sources in making decisions to migrate and choosing the destinations. 25 % of the stories recognize the importance of the information provided by different institutions and countries, Internet media, which is used in search for alternatives and means that facilitate migration paths. However, traditional media (press, radio, and television) as well as more contemporary and interactive ones (ranging from the Internet to Facebook, Instagram, and Skype), prove to have a strong impact on development models, democracy, advance or progress that migrants have achieved. Nevertheless, mass media and ICT, appear to have a great centrality during migration, except for some cases,

especially in processes of illegal migration, where they become essential tools needed either to survive or to maintain support and communication with families during the journey. For example, cell phones were essential for monitoring and locating the migrants by their families or in some cases being able to call family and friends for financial or emotional support was crucial for migrants.

In accordance with Haas, Castles, and Miller (2020) most of our interviewee's migration experiences are not driven by poverty, or ethnic exclusion. It implies that numerous of them had cultural, social, and economic capitals that allowed them not only to afford their journeys but specially to imagine and portray their lives in other places. Data and qualitative information show that many of them have secondary and university studies and they are bilingual and almost all of them have abilities and nourished networks to move among different cultures and social fields (economic, academic, artistic). However, most of them have experienced direct but, mainly, indirect violence produced by the armed conflict that affects their daily life engendering an insecure and distressed environment and confronting them with economic lacking and restrictions. Some of them have also experienced both limitations and marginalization because of their gender and sexual choices, all of them in the middle of a very conservative and intolerant society. Nevertheless, it is important to keep in mind as Haas, Castles, and Miller (2020) have sustained, class plays an important role in the migration process. For example, less formal education, economical resources and cultural and informational capitals and networks, in addition to more exposition to violence, determine migration experiences. As it was presented previously, people with those profiles tend to move to the south of the continent, and the others tend to go to the north.

One of the main issues of contemporary migrant analysts are related to the changes on the characteristics of nation-states as well as the internal political process produced by immigration dynamics (Haas, Castles & Miller, 2020). In our study most interviewees do not express interest in participating or getting involved in both social and political issues. They mainly wanted to get a good job, or in few cases setting a business or an enterprise initiative. They also aspire to build community ties within neighborhoods they live in, without having troubles with migration authorities and police. Political or social engagement for them requires in most stances a contact with social, welfare or political organizations. Moreover, it takes several years for most of them to get involved in activities that surpass their family and economic activities.

Even though many of our respondents expressed political interest in Colombian issues and some of them had been part of social and cultural organizations, their involvement with political affairs and their social participation within the recipient society is almost null. The same happened with their experience as citizens within the recipient nation estates where they not only have a poor sense of their own citizenship, but also scarce forms of social and political participation.

4. Analysis and conclusions

Based on the experiences of national and transnational migrants of the Latin American Pacific who were interviewed, this article provides an interpretive framework of the phenomenon responding to the initial research questions. By the data collected, this research mainly shows, on one hand, a new shape of migrants' path, and, on the other hand, it confirms their liminal experience in worlds of "in-betweenness" through new media and social networks; this is particularly significant because it was done by giving voice to the migrants' narratives and reconstructing their trajectories and technological usage by and extensive study.

More specifically, regarding RQ1, our study of the migration stories and their contexts confirms that the variety of migrants from the Colombian Pacific tends to go to the United States and Spain as the most important transnational destinations, just the way it happens in the case of national trends. Most of them are young or middle-aged with high levels of technical and higher education, as well as high rates of bilingualism. In the stories of these migrants from urban areas dominated the wishes of welfare and educational and professional training and interest in staying in other countries, whereas among the perceptions they had toward Colombia and its local territories prevailed little possibilities of employment and professional development, poverty, insecurity, and violence. Similarly, with reference to South American migration, the analyzed data show a significant increase in human mobility from Colombian Pacific toward Ecuador, Peru, and Chile, with a predominance of the latter. The main reasons for these migrations are the combination of, on the one hand, the search for better living conditions (better jobs, higher incomes, better quality of life, including peacefulness) for migrants and their families and, on the other hand, the impacts of armed conflict and the actions of criminal groups in the region, to which many of the migrants used to live closely. Most of these migrants show low levels of education and bilingualism and higher levels of poverty and social and labor marginalization. Those in worse economic, cultural, and educational conditions choose to migrate to other parts of the

country or from departments where cities like Cali, Bogota, and Buenaventura stand out. By the experiences of national and transnational migrants collected, this research shows that their paths are neither linear nor go through stages or phases, as sometimes are presented by some social theories or news reports. Migration and migrants are in permanent cycles of transition and connection between social worlds, political and economic differentials. This implies a different daily experience of different times, places, and languages (codes), as well as practices and cultural norms, different and mixed institutional and technological standards.

Regarding RQ2, in this perspective, communications and in particular ICT play a role of connectedness that links the speeches of the media, information, and stories of their own making; they connect social networks with technologies such as text messaging platforms (mainly WhatsApp), and social media like Facebook and Instagram, and connect rural and urban practices as well as local and regional images with other images of global character. ICT and migration are important elements of contemporary world development, and the role played by new technologies as support for their communities (imagined) and 'connectivity power' is evident for scholars, who see the flow of information as the basis of the migration process (Borkert *et al.*, 2009, pp. 7-11). In this sense, this study confirms that media and ICT do impact the *work of imagination* of migrants and potential migrants as it understands Appadurai, and of course the access not only to communication and information, but to production and action of information and communication, generates a cluster of stories that expand the notions of possible lives for these people and for others. Including amid the struggles for the construction of symbolic hegemonies and collective representations, many of the images produced and circulated by these means help to settle notions and deep personal values among people about what means quality of life and a good life, liberty, politics, and democracy, increasing the desire and interest to leave or stay in a certain place. But it is also important to keep in mind that the media and communication and information technologies have a huge impact on the paths of migrants by allowing them not only to build social spaces for meeting, disputes and exchanges with people and very dissimilar communities, but also by providing physical, emotional, and mental possibility to move and connect to multiple places and times. Besides, these means, and technological spaces have opened to migrants the opportunity to experience and participate in various experiences in different places and times, as well as to undergo, simultaneously, different forms of territoriality and community. In this perspective, migrants 'exist' in worlds of 'in-betweenness', negotiating cultural forms and identities at the crossroads between nation

states and global diasporas (Srinivasan & Pyati, 2007). However, this liminal experience helps to create or dissolve the orders (institutional and cultural) which create fluid and changing situations that make possible the establishment of new institutions and customs (Szakolczai, 2007), and can transform the very notions of nation states and identities, as well as the notions of justice, freedom, and diversity in the worlds in which the migrants travel. Following the considerations of Albrow (1996) on global cities and the importance of ICT, it is necessary to recognize the encounters between multiple spaces or social spheres, which are shared by migrants and physically are not necessarily at the site of reception or destination, but they can be virtually, through contact with others, or through other residents at the site, or through experiences narrated by socio-technological platform. Even a person who is physically present in one place may be in different places simultaneously taking in consideration sharing dialogues, stories, and experiences with other people from other places and spaces to the point that Diminescu coined the concept 'connected migrants', because:

> (…) it is more and more common for migrants to maintain remote relations typical of relations of proximity and to activate them on a daily basis. This 'virtual' bond – via telephone or email – makes it easier than before to stay close to one's family, to others, to what is happening to them, at home or elsewhere, and even allows one to do this better. (Diminescu, 2008, p. 567)

Like Mazzucato, Kabki, and Smith (2006) showed, new technologies can even support transnational management of family events. After all, we live in a world where 'real virtuality' takes place (Castells, 2010).

The stories collected in this study show that the practices, mobilizations, and movements of migrants have long been challenging the concepts and forms of contemporary states and forms of collective and community life as well as different ways to experience and live the citizenships. And communication and information technologies have not only been catalysts of these processes but have become the space, time, and fundamental codes of the processes of transition and transformation of a world with greater interaction and communication, in which however remain important connections, territorial and community ties, although diverse, flexible, mixed, fast, and complex. The outcome of the investigation shows the articulation of the internal and external migration processes related to the search of better living conditions as in the case of a political armed conflict, which was interlinked to the transnational processes of construction of social networks, provided by ICT, that stimulate

and make more effective and accurate the migration experiences of Colombians in the Pacific.

> Every day my mom spends two hours on the phone with her sister, and every day I talk to my grandparents and my uncles on Skype. Besides my aunt posts everything on Facebook, so I see everything and communicate with them. (Testimony of young transnational migrant)

The emphasis was made on the importance of traditional and contemporary means of communication in creating images of the world that mobilize and encourage migration as well as on centrality of social networks (of families and friends) in the processes of migration and a liminal state of the migratory experiences, i.e., transitional, cyclic, and the role of ICT in this kind of experiences.

Our paper sustains that migrant have more mobility and have more possibilities to be simultaneously in different places and times. Furthermore, it shows the influence of migrants within recipient countries and how they challenge local culture, social norms, public policies, and institutions. However social and institutional change within states and nations of migrants mainly happens because of the local and national arrangements within recipient countries, than as product of a conscious and collective action developed by migrants in the short, mid, or long time. In our case, most interviewees expressed very timid attitudes and a dearth sense of citizenship and participation as well as very conservative cultural and political perspectives. Their perspective tends to fit and replicate traditional structures, customs and rules that support neoliberal and capitalist models that have imposed in the global world and the ways they deal with critical issues such as justice, freedom, ethnic inclusion, the use of natural resources and environmental care. This means, in our case, that the adjustment of state nations produced by migration are more the result of an institutional respond that look for adjust social order, than a series of actions produced by the knowledge, culture or political practices by migrants.

Regarding the topic of this research and what the future holds, Kymlicka (2015) has recently reminded us that such category as 'migrant' or 'foreigner' is not a raw fact, but it is socially constructed, and these concepts are also a reflection of the societies that formulate them and of how *otherness* is understood. Some scholars only focus on the first generations of the population born abroad, others assume that the second generation also should be taken into consideration; some include migrants from all foreign countries, others only count people

who are not European or North American, believing that they are not really 'other'; and so on (Kymlicka, 2015). This author also points out that migration policies and multiculturalism confront contemporary nations with a dilemma between solidarity and diversity. However, considering that immigrants contribute to different backgrounds, civic behavior, reciprocity, and solidarity, it appears a need to develop policies of multiculturalism that would allow immigrants to express their cultures and identities as ways to participate and contribute to nations and societies to which they belong. Even more, considering the impacts that the exponential growth of ICT and migration have produced within new forms of nation state, social movements, and political participation.

Declaración de Autoría

Luis Fernando Barón: conceptualización, curación de datos, análisis formal, adquisición de fondos, investigación, metodología, administración del proyecto, recursos, software, supervisión, validación, visualización, redacción – borrador original, redacción – revisión y edición.

Stefano Agostini: conceptualización, análisis formal, metodología, validación, visualización, redacción – borrador original, redacción – revisión y edición.

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