

Liderazgo Identitario de Pedro Sánchez e Isabel Díaz Ayuso en la gestión de la COVID-19: un estudio exploratorio

Resumen

El objetivo de este estudio fue explorar el liderazgo de Pedro Sánchez e Isabel Díaz Ayuso en la gestión del COVID-19 y su relación con algunas características de sus seguidores. Se ha estudiado el *Liderazgo Identitario*, definido como la capacidad de movilizar y de activar el sentimiento de pertenencia (nosotros), porque ha explicado de modo apropiado el comportamiento grupal en situaciones de incertidumbre como la pandemia y se ha relacionado con el convencionalismo, predisposición a perjudicar a quienes se consideran amenazas potenciales, etc. y la percepción del mundo justo de los seguidores dado que favorecían la eficacia de este liderazgo. También se explora el papel de la priorización de políticas de salud o economía. Para ello, se realizó un estudio empírico con un diseño cuantitativo en el que participaron 116 personas (68 mujeres y 50 hombres) mayores de edad, residentes en España. Para la recogida de datos se utilizó un formulario online que contenía la Escala de Autoposicionamiento Político (PI), Escala de Liderazgo Identitario (ILI, version 1.0), la preferencia por la economía o por la salud, la Escala de *Autoritarismo de Derechas* (RWA) y la Escala de la Creencia Global en un Mundo Justo (GBJW). Los resultados de este estudio muestran que los seguidores de ambos líderes los perciben como buenos líderes identitarios, mostrando diferencias en autoritarismo y percepción del mundo justo que podrían explicar el comportamiento de ambos grupos durante la pandemia. No obstante, se precisa de más investigación con una muestra más grande y heterogénea.

Palabras clave: Liderazgo Identitario, COVID-19, Ideología, Autoritarismo, Creencia en un mundo justo.

Summary

The aim of this study was to explore the leadership of Pedro Sánchez and Isabel Díaz Ayuso in the management of COVID-19 and its relationship with some characteristics of their followers. Identity Leadership, defined as the ability to mobilize and activate the feeling of belonging (we), has been studied because it has adequately explained group behavior in situations of uncertainty such as the pandemic and has been related to conventionalism, predisposition to harm those who are considered potential threats, etc. and the perception of the followers' just world since they favored the effectiveness of this leadership. The role of prioritization of health or economic policies is also explored. For this purpose, an empirical study was carried out with a quantitative design in which 116 people (68 women and 50 men) of legal age, residing in Spain, participated. An online form containing the Political Self-Positioning Scale (PI), Identity Leadership Scale (ILI, version 1.0), preference for the economy or health, the Right-Wing Authoritarianism Scale (RWA) and the Global Belief in a Just World Scale (GBJW) was used for data collection. The results of this study show that followers of both leaders perceive them as good identity leaders, showing differences in authoritarianism and just world perception that could explain the behavior of both groups during the pandemic. However, more research with a larger and more heterogeneous sample is needed.

Keywords: Identity Leadership, COVID-19, Ideology, Authoritarianism, Belief in a just world.

Identity Leadership of Pedro Sánchez and Isabel Díaz Ayuso in the management of COVID-19: an exploratory study



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INTRODUCTION

In the management of the COVID-19 health crisis, one of the key factors has been the action of political leaders. In Spain, P. Sánchez and I. Díaz Ayuso represent the left-wing and right-wing political ideology respectively, acting as identity leaders of both ideological groups. For Haslam et al. (2021) Identity Leadership, defined as the ability of leaders to mobilize and activate the feeling of belonging (we) would be a good model to explain leadership in the COVID-19 context. Moreover, in these situations of uncertainty such as the pandemic, a series of variables would favor the effectiveness of this leadership. One of them, "Right-wing Authoritarianism" (conventionalism, personal submission, acceptance of the legitimacy of the authorities to lead and predisposition to harm those who are considered potential threats) would aim to preserve the established order (Cárdenas & Parra, 2010). In the same line would go the "Global Belief in a Just World" that understands that social inequalities exist because in life people get what they deserve (Lerner & Clayton, 2011). In this crisis, a particularity of the Spanish context was the confrontation between the central government and the governments of the autonomous communities over the controversy of prioritizing the economy or health. The pro-economy stance of I. Díaz Ayuso versus the pro-health/mixed health stance of Pedro Sánchez (Alcibar Cuello, 2021) was noteworthy for its public notoriety. Given this scenario, how did Spanish citizens react and how did they perceive both leaders? Seeking some answers, this paper aims to explore the Identity Leadership of P. Sánchez and I. Díaz Ayuso in the management of COVID-19 and its relationship with these variables.

Hypothesis:

- H1. Subjects will perceive the preferred leader with higher Identity Leadership.
- H2. Subjects who prefer Sanchez will have a more left-wing ideology and will score lower on authoritarianism than those who prefer Ayuso who will have a more right-wing ideology.
- H3. When the prioritization between health or economy of the subject coincides with that on the leader, the latter will be perceived as having a higher Identity Leadership.
- H4: Subjects who score higher on Belief in a just world will choose Ayuso as leader and while those who score low will choose Sanchez.

METHOD

Participants: 116 subjects; 67 (56,8%) women, 49 (41,5%) men y 2 (1,7%) binary. Pro-Sánchez(92) and Pro-Ayuso (24)

Variables and Materials:

- **Identity Leadership: ILI (Version 1.0)** de Steffens et al. (2014). Medida del liderazgo Identitario de P. Sánchez y I. Díaz Ayuso. A Likert escale form (1= Not at all to 7=Completely). **Ayuso: $\alpha = .951$; Sánchez= $\alpha = .926$**
- **Political Ideology: Political Self-Positioning Escale (PI)** the Rodríguez et al. (1993). A Likert escale form (1= Far right to 5= Far left).
- **Health/Economy preference:** measured with an item developed for to study.
- **Right-Wing Authoritarianism Altemeyer scale (RWA)** translation by Seoane & Garzón (1993). A Likert escale form (1= disagree to 4= completely agree). **$\alpha = .730$**
- **Global Belief in a Just World Scale (GBJW - Lipkus, 1991)** translation by Barreiro et al. (2014). A Likert escale form (1: Totally disagree to 5: Totally agree). **$\alpha = .877$**

Procedure: a questionnaire was developed with Google Form and distributed through social networks.

Desing: empirical study with a quantitative design, Hypotheses have been tested through Chi-Square and One-Factor Anova test using SPSS Statistics v.21.0



DISCUSSION

As the results show, the participants are 79.3% pro-Sánchez and 24% pro-Ayuso. We see that H1 is not fulfilled, not attributing more Identity Leadership to their leader, being high in both cases. Therefore, the results seem to indicate that the subjects understand that each leader is a good representative of their own group (Haslam et al. (2021). However, there is a tendency to perceive Ayuso as a leader with greater leadership identity than expected and Sanchez the opposite. On the other hand, as expected, H2 is confirmed; the pro-Sánchez group considers itself moderate left-wing and less conventional and submissive to the proposals of its leader, while the pro-Ayuso group considers itself center-right and more conventional and submissive to her. Furthermore, according to Cárdenas & Parra (2010), the greater authoritarianism of the pro-Ayuso would be responsible for the central government's anti-measures demonstrations, as they would consider Sánchez and her followers as threats to her and her group. Regarding H3, the results confirm that when the prioritization between the subject's health or economy coincides with that of the leader, the leader will be perceived as having greater Identity Leadership. As Haslam et al. (2021) point out, when Sanchez or Ayuso represents the interests and values of the group (health/economics), they increase their Identity Leadership, because they are perceived as a good representative of "us". Finally, H4 shows that those who perceive the world to be significantly fairer prefer Ayuso and those who perceive it to be more unfair are pro-Sánchez. As Lerner & Clayton (2011) would say, Ayuso advocated that in life people get what they deserve and that the economy had to be prioritized. In contrast, Sánchez seemed to be aware of the unfairness of the system and tried to equalize it by prioritizing health.

Study limitation: small and left-wing ideology sample

H1. Sánchez: $\bar{X} = 1.53$; $SD = .502$ / Ayuso: $\bar{X} = 1.63$; $SD = .502$ ($\chi^2 = .657$; $df = 1$; $p = .418$).

NO significant relationship between preference among leaders and perceiving them with greater or lesser Identity Leadership.

H2

Table 1

ANOVA (1 Factor). Relationship between the preference for Sánchez/Ayuso, Political Ideology and Authoritarianism

Measures	Pro-Sanchez		Pro-Ayuso		F	η^2
	M	SD	M	SD		
Political Ideology	3.90	.64	2.96	.35	47.05	.292
Authoritarianism	4.15	.49	4.46	.62	6.86	.057

* $p < .05$

Positive relationship between the preference for Sánchez/Ayuso, Political Ideology and Authoritarianism

H3 ($\chi^2 = 9.166$; $df = 1$; $p = .002$)

Positive relationship between the coincidence in Health/Economy of the subject and that of the leader and perceiving it with greater or lesser Identity Leadership

H4 ($\chi^2 = 6.023$; $df = 1$; $p = < .001$)

Positive relationship Subjects who score higher in Belief in a just world choose Ayuso as leader while those who score low choose Sánchez.



RESULTS

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