

REVISTA
**DIÁLOGO
EDUCACIONAL**


periodicos.pucpr.br/dialogoeducacional





Human rights, social vulnerability and personality in people with high abilities in Spain¹

Direitos humanos, vulnerabilidade social e personalidade em pessoas com altas capacidades no contexto espanhol

Derechos humanos, vulnerabilidad social y personalidad en personas con altas capacidades en el contexto español

Bárbara Amaral Martins [a] 
Três Lagoas, MS, Brasil
Universidade Federal de Mato Grosso do Sul (UFMS)

Amanda Rodrigues de Souza [b] 
Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Canarias, Espanha
Universidad Internacional de Valencia (VIU), Facultad de Educación, Máster en Psicopedagogía

África Borges [c] 
Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Canarias, Espanha
Universidad de La Laguna (ULL)

¹ Research conducted with support from the Federal University of Mato Grosso do Sul - UFMS, the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES), the National Council for Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq), and the Foundation for the Support of the Development of Education, Science, and Technology of the State of Mato Grosso do Sul (Fundect), Brazil. Funding provided by the Ministry of Science and Innovation to the University of La Laguna, Spain.

[a] Doutorado em Educação pela Universidade Estadual Paulista "Júlio de Mesquita Filho", Câmpus de Marília. Pós-doutorado em Psicologia pela Universidad de La Laguna, Espanha, e-mail: barbara.martins@ufms.br

[b] Doutorado em Psicologia pela Universidad de La Laguna; Doutorado em Educação Especial pela Universidade Federal de São Carlos. Pós-doutorado em Psicologia pela Universidad de La Laguna, Espanha, e-mail: amanda.rodriguesdesouza@professor.universidadviu.com

[c] Doutora em Psicologia pela Universidad de La Laguna, e-mail: aborges@ull.edu.es

How to cite: MARTINS, B. A.; SOUZA, A. R. de; BORGES, África. Direitos humanos, vulnerabilidade social e personalidade em pessoas com altas capacidades no contexto espanhol. *Revista Diálogo Educacional*, Curitiba, PUCPRESS, v. 25, n. 86, p. 1173-1185, 2025. <https://doi.org/10.7213/1981-416X.25.086.DS05EN>

Abstract

This research aimed to analyze personality traits and social vulnerability in adults with high abilities in Spain and to reflect on these variables from a human rights perspective. The study included 231 participants with high abilities residing in Spain. Data collection instruments comprised a questionnaire requesting characterization information and situations of social vulnerability, along with the Brief Personality Questionnaire, both administered via Google Forms and analyzed quantitatively. Results indicated that 139 participants (60.17%) had experienced vulnerability situations, most involving some form of violence. Regarding personality, gender-based analysis revealed statistically significant differences, with a higher incidence of vulnerability situations among women with high abilities compared to men. Furthermore, experiencing vulnerability situations had implications for personality, with statistically significant differences in the neuroticism dimension, which was more pronounced in individuals who had experienced vulnerability situations. The relationship between vulnerability and the neuroticism personality trait is discussed, emphasizing the need to guarantee economic, social, and cultural rights to achieve full development as a human right.

Keywords: Special education. High abilities. Human rights. Personality. Social vulnerability.

Resumo

Esta pesquisa objetivou analisar os traços de personalidade e vulnerabilidade social em pessoas adultas com altas capacidades na Espanha e refletir sobre essas variáveis sob a perspectiva dos direitos humanos. Contou com a participação de 231 pessoas com altas capacidades residentes na Espanha. Como instrumentos de coleta de dados, foram utilizados um questionário que solicitava informações de caracterização e sobre situações de vulnerabilidade social e o Questionário Breve de Personalidade, ambos aplicados via Google Forms e analisados quantitativamente. Os resultados apontaram que 139 participantes (60,17%) experienciaram situação de vulnerabilidade, na maioria envolvendo algum tipo de violência. Em relação à personalidade, a análise com base nos gêneros masculino e feminino revelou diferença estatisticamente significativa, com maior incidência de situações de vulnerabilidade sobre as mulheres com altas capacidades em relação aos homens. Por sua vez, a vivência ou não de situações de vulnerabilidade teve implicações sobre a personalidade, havendo diferença estatisticamente significativa em relação à dimensão neuroticismo, cuja presença é mais forte nas pessoas que passaram por situações de vulnerabilidade. Discute-se a relação entre vulnerabilidade e o traço de personalidade neuroticismo, salientando-se a necessidade da garantia dos direitos econômicos, sociais e culturais para a concretização do pleno desenvolvimento enquanto um direito humano.

Palavras-chave: Educação especial. Altas capacidades. Direitos humanos. Personalidade. Vulnerabilidade social.

Resumen

Esta investigación se planteó analizar los rasgos de personalidad y la vulnerabilidad social en personas adultas con altas capacidades en España y reflexionar sobre estas variables desde la perspectiva de los derechos humanos. Participaron 231 personas con altas capacidades residentes en España. Los instrumentos que se utilizaron en la recolección de datos fueron un cuestionario que solicitaba información sobre caracterización y situaciones de vulnerabilidad social y el Cuestionario Breve de Personalidad, ambos aplicados a través de Google Forms y analizados cuantitativamente. Los resultados mostraron que 139 participantes (60,17%) habían experimentado situaciones de vulnerabilidad, la mayoría de ellas relacionadas con algún tipo de violencia. En cuanto a la personalidad, el análisis basado en los géneros masculino y femenino reveló una diferencia estadísticamente significativa, con mayor incidencia de situaciones de vulnerabilidad entre las mujeres de altas capacidades en comparación con los hombres. A su vez, el hecho de haber experimentado o no situaciones de vulnerabilidad tuvo implicaciones en su personalidad, con una diferencia estadísticamente significativa en lo que se refiere a la dimensión neuroticismo, más fuerte en las personas que habían experimentado situaciones de vulnerabilidad. Se discute la relación entre la vulnerabilidad y el rasgo de personalidad neuroticismo y se resalta la necesidad de garantizar los derechos económicos, sociales y culturales para la concretización del pleno desarrollo como derecho humano.

Palabras clave: Educación especial. Altas capacidades. Derechos humanos. Personalidad. Vulnerabilidad social.

Introduction

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights - UDHR (UN, 1948) was adopted on December 10, 1948, by the United Nations General Assembly in response to the atrocities committed during World War II. Its objective was to establish a common standard of fundamental rights and freedoms for all nations, ensuring dignity, equality, and justice for all human beings, regardless of race, gender, religion, or nationality. Comprising 30 articles, the UDHR addresses civil, political, social, and economic rights, serving as a foundation for constitutions and legislation in various countries and influencing international treaties. Its impact transcends borders, representing an essential milestone in the struggle for human rights and the promotion of more just and egalitarian societies. However, Herrera Flores (2009) warns that human rights must be understood in their complexity as contextualized, active, and political practices in the struggle for dignity. Thus, the author proposes a new perspective on human rights that is critical, contextual, and processual—one that understands these rights must be constantly reinterpreted based on concrete needs and realities, involving their different dimensions (legal, social, cultural, economic, etc.), which are seen as interdependent. He also emphasizes the importance of a critical stance toward hegemonic rights discourse, which often conceals inequalities and legitimizes exclusions, while highlighting the need to start from concrete social practices and emancipatory struggles of historically marginalized groups, such as indigenous peoples, women, migrants, and workers.

According to Article 26 of the UDHR, education is a right of every human being and is oriented toward "the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms." From this perspective, the right to education extends far beyond access to schools and higher education institutions, as it is necessary to ensure that learning occurs and maximum possible development is achieved (UN, 1948), as proclaimed in the Constitution of the Federative Republic of Brazil in Article 208, guaranteeing "access to the highest levels of education, research and artistic creation, according to each person's capacity" (Brazil, 1988, art. 208). Obviously, it would be naive to assume that the realization of such a right is unaffected by social inequalities and occurs equally universally. Similarly, the concept of universality should not obscure the individuality manifested in concrete conditions that requires equity.

Therefore, basing education on individual capacities requires first knowing them and then promoting the necessary and appropriate support and challenges so that these capacities can be fully developed. This highlights the importance of respecting diversity and special education as an educational modality that provides Specialized Educational Services (SES) across all levels, stages, and modalities of formal education.

Brazilian legislation includes students with high abilities² within the special education population, ensuring they have access to teachers trained to instruct them in regular classes and specialized teachers to provide SES. In the Spanish context, where each autonomous region has legal autonomy to establish its own laws, Order of July 22, 2005, complemented by Resolution of January 30, 2008 (Orden, 2005), establishes that in the Autonomous Community of the Canary Islands, students with high abilities are classified as students with Specific Educational Support Needs (SESN). This regulation establishes the right of this population to attention to diversity and quality education that is appropriate to individual characteristics and needs, allowing for the articulation of a specific educational response. Thus, the regulation emphasizes the importance of early detection and identification of these students to provide an efficient educational response.

In this sense, guaranteeing the human, subjective, and inalienable right to education for people with high abilities involves encouraging them to surpass the average standards that tend to regulate educational processes, aiming to achieve the greatest growth of revealed capacities. Therefore, encouraging the

² Term used in accordance with the Organic Law for the Improvement of Educational Quality (LOMCE), Law 8/2013 of September 9, 2013, in Spain.

development of high abilities encompasses teaching-learning processes, which in turn need to consider social and psychological aspects (Casino-García; Llopis-Bueno; Llinares-Insa, 2021). According to these authors, potential can influence the well-being of individuals with high abilities and affect full development, just as their emotions play an important role in communication, establishing social contacts, and social interaction with others. However, non-cognitive aspects are not always considered in studies and interventions focusing on high abilities.

Among studies related to high abilities that focus on non-cognitive variables, overexcitability—understood as greater responsiveness and intensified sensitivity to sensory stimuli—is a facet of the Theory of Positive Disintegration (TPD) based on personality that has been the focus of various investigations (Ackerman, 1997; Bouchard, 2004). According to Ackerman (2009), there are five types of overexcitability, which are independent of each other, so that an individual may present any number between one and five or none: emotional, imaginal, intellectual, psychomotor, and sensory.

In general, the greater the number and intensity of overexcitabilities experienced by the individual, the greater their developmental potential. As such, research has proposed integrating them into the process of identifying high abilities (Ackerman, 1997; Bouchard; Falk, 2001; Bouchard, 2004).

Identification and enrichment programs for people with high abilities are highly relevant for guaranteeing the right to education based on promoting learning and development. However, they commonly value intelligence measures and academic performance during the identification process as they tend to produce quick results. Nevertheless, there is an underrepresentation of ethnic-racial minorities, people with disabilities, those living in poverty, among others. In this regard, it is worth mentioning that human rights, from a critical perspective, must consider the hierarchization³ and exclusion to which much of humanity is subjected within the current global order, oriented by neoliberalism (Herrera Flores, 2009). By prioritizing test performance, various other aspects relevant to identifying high abilities are overlooked, one of which is personality (Carman, 2011).

Personality can be understood as a set of stable and consistent psychological characteristics that differentiate people from each other through patterns or styles of thinking, feeling, and behaving. Among the theoretical models that interpret it, the Big Five model has received wide acceptance among scholars of human personality, identifying five essential factors in defining personality: Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism, and Openness (Costa; McCrae, 1992 apud Postigo Gutiérrez, 2021).

In summary, personality dimensions can be described as follows: (i) extraversion is related to the tendency to relate to the outside world, seek external stimuli, with positive emotional experience as a defining characteristic that denotes active and vigorous happiness; (ii) agreeableness involves social adaptability, generosity, cordiality in dealing with others, and scarcity of conflicts in interpersonal relationships; (iii) conscientiousness is associated with organization, punctuality, and ambitious goals in work and studies as well as in other daily activities; (iv) neuroticism is marked by negative emotions and thoughts resulting in worries, insecurity, and vulnerability; (v) openness involves imagination, flexibility, curiosity, creativity, openness to experience, and tendency to solve problems intelligently (Torreblanca Murillo, 2017).

Studies demonstrate that personality influences performance, satisfaction and work (or student) commitment, leadership capacity, and entrepreneurship, among others (Postigo Gutiérrez et al. 2020). In this direction, it is urgent that educators create environments that support students' different strengths (Casino-García; Llopis-Bueno; Llinares-Insa, 2021).

According to Araújo (2010), high abilities⁴ derive from multiple factors, with personality characteristics being one of them, alongside motivational and emotional characteristics, high cognitive aptitude, and favorable contexts. In this direction, it is noteworthy that high capacity alone is not sufficient

³According to the author, hierarchization results from historical and social processes that organize access to the resources necessary for life in an unequal manner, placing some groups in positions of privilege and others in situations of subordination, oppression, or exclusion.

⁴ The term used by the author is “excellence,” which implies exceptional performance in a given context and tends to be associated with giftedness (a term used in Portugal).

to generate great social contributions, considering that the environment, beliefs, and the individual's own personality exert influences on their choices and the circumstances surrounding them (Bandura, 1997). This partially explains why people with similar aptitudes, talents, and opportunities achieve widely different accomplishments, bringing into focus the role of non-cognitive variables in success related to the exercise of capacities (Postigo Gutiérrez et al. 2020). Among such variables, personality has been investigated in different contexts and in relation to distinct aspects regarding high abilities, and the results found do not always converge. Moreover, according to Peperkorn and Wegner (2020), few studies provide comparable and valid data.

On one hand, it is necessary to understand non-cognitive variables in their relationship with high abilities to ensure the right to education for these people, providing them with learning and development opportunities in line with the fourth Sustainable Development Goal of the 2030 Agenda: quality education (UN, 2015). On the other hand, it should be noted that the realization of such a right may be affected by the violation of other human rights, such as "health, well-being, including food, clothing, housing, medical care and necessary social services [...]" (art. 25). It is emphasized that "Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization [...] of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality" (art. 22). According to Herrera Flores (2009, p. 71), "there is no development if human rights are not respected in the development process itself. And likewise, there will be no human rights if comprehensive development policies are not promoted [...]" in a context of profound democracy with expanded popular participation.

In this sense, Bragato (2023) proposes a critique of the hegemonic conception of human rights founded on abstract and Eurocentric universality. In opposition to this approach, the author defends the notion of pluriversal human dignity, which recognizes that human rights cannot be understood as a homogeneous and neutral set of prerogatives, but rather as a field in dispute, constructed from the historical, cultural, and political experiences of diverse subjects and collectivities. Thus, human rights are not a given guarantee but a conquest that requires struggle and recognition of historically silenced voices. The decolonial perspective proposed by Bragato (2023) calls for overcoming the Western paradigm and opening to multiple ways of understanding and practicing dignity, articulated from the resistance and epistemologies of subalternized peoples. It is understood, therefore, that dignity is not universal because it starts from a single reference point, but pluriversal, emerging from the plurality of worlds and existences that coexist and resist the coloniality of power and knowledge.

It is essential to consider the influence of the environment as an important variable in individual formation, as vulnerability factors can negatively affect human development. For Beninca, Hermínio and Camilo (2019), the concept of social vulnerability is not unanimous and encompasses people, groups, and spaces where there is inequality of rights within the same society, causing greater susceptibility to risks. The authors clarify that social vulnerability has been accentuated by technological advancement and globalization, which ends up segregating, excluding, and violating rights that emphasize inequalities, especially in developing countries.

According to Cavalheiri and Tonello (2019), focusing on the early years of life, factors such as socioeconomic conditions, low income, low educational level, poor housing conditions, as well as lack of access to education, health, sports, and leisure can influence child development and expose children to the chance or opportunity of suffering developmental delays and impairments. For Virgolim (2021), each child has unique personality characteristics that influence their social and emotional needs, but children with high abilities may face additional affective challenges due to their cognitive complexity and emotional sensitivity. In environments that do not meet their needs, they may react with inappropriate behaviors, hostility, or even delinquency when directed outward, or develop insecurity, frustration, and negative self-concept when directed inward. However, developing self-awareness, problem-solving, and decision-making skills can help them understand their emotions and make more constructive choices.

Just as the myth of self-sufficiency tends to hinder the provision of educational responses concerning the needs of people with high abilities (Martins, 2020), the stereotypical idea that they are privileged

(economically and/or socially) dismisses the hypothesis of social vulnerability and consequent educational and socioemotional impacts. From this perspective, we ask: what type of social vulnerability are people with high abilities subject to? Is there a relationship between vulnerability and personality in people with high abilities? Are there predominant personality traits in this population?

Given the above, this research aimed to analyze personality traits and social vulnerability in adults with high abilities in Spain and to reflect on these variables from a human rights perspective.

Literature review

When conducting a literature review on the personality of people with high abilities, we selected the Education Resources Information Center (Eric) scientific article database and searched using the descriptors "personality" and "gifted." We established as inclusion criteria: publication between 2020 and 2024 and publication in peer-reviewed journals, which yielded 20 articles. We then applied the following exclusion criteria: not focusing on high abilities; not analyzing the personality of people with high abilities. These criteria supported the exclusion of five articles, leaving 15 productions.

Among the retrieved research, eight had basic education students (children or adolescents) as study participants (Gallagher, 2022; Lee; An; Choe, 2020; Likhanov et al. 2021; Mammadov; Cross; Olszewski-Kubilius, 2021; Mammadov, 2023; Peperkorn; Wegner, 2021; Portešová; Jaburek; Recka; Straka; Parker, 2023; Tanik; Büyük, 2021), one involved participants from national student competitions (Grasiaswaty et al. 2022), one was conducted with undergraduates (Rinn; Soles; Ferguson; Smith, 2020), and another with caregivers of children with high abilities (Guilbault; Eckert; Szymanski, 2024). Two studies were configured as meta-analyses (Ogurlu; Özbey, 2022; Rajic; Šafran; Prtljaga, 2022), one as a systematic literature review (Peperkorn; Wegner, 2020), and one as a theoretical essay (Desmet; Sternberg, 2024). Only four studies established comparisons of variables between people with and without high abilities, and the Big Five Model was predominant, appearing in nine of the articles.

The literature review revealed that few studies on personality have been developed with adults with high abilities and that research using control groups is scarce. It was verified that none of the studies related personality and social vulnerability.

Method

This research presents an analytical, observational, and cross-sectional design (Fontelles et al., 2009). The research project was submitted to and approved by the Research and Animal Welfare Ethics Committee of the University of La Laguna, Spain (CEIBA 2022-3139), the country where the study was conducted.

Two hundred and thirty-one people with high abilities participated. The sample was collected from members of Mensa⁵ and university students from the University of La Laguna participating in the ATENEA-ULL⁶ program. Most participants identified as male (58.44%), while 39.83% of the sample identified as female and four (1.73%) preferred not to report. Ages ranged from 16 to 72 years, with 99 people aged up to 35 years (42.86%) and 132 over 35 years of age (57.14%). The distribution of participants according to occupation is shown in Table 1.

⁵ Mensa International is a high IQ society. The organization is intended for individuals whose intelligence quotient falls within the top 2% of any approved standardized intelligence test.

⁶ ATENEA-ULL is a support program for university students with high abilities, developed at the University of La Laguna (ULL).

Table 1 - Distribution of participants according to professional occupation

Professional occupation	f	%
Private sector employee	93	40.26
Self-employed	31	13.42
Public servant/preparing for civil service exams	34	14.72
Retired	05	2.16
Unemployed	41	17.75
Student	24	10.39
More than one occupation	02	0.87
Not reported	01	0.43
Total	231	100.00

Source: Authors' elaboration (2025).

Instruments

The Brief Personality Questionnaire (Torreblanca Murillo, 2017) consists of 20 items designed to assess the five personality dimensions according to the Big Five model based on two subdimensions for each: Sociability and Salience (Extraversion); Empathy and Cordiality (Agreeableness); Speed and Order (Conscientiousness), Anxiety and Depression (Neuroticism), and Openness and Intellect (Openness).

Regarding social vulnerability data, these were collected through a questionnaire administered via Google Forms. Questions were asked about age, gender, presence or absence of high abilities, experience with vulnerability situations, and, if the answer was affirmative, specification of what type of vulnerability had been experienced.

Data Collection and Analysis Procedures

The research was disseminated among members of Mensa Spain and the ATENEA-ULL Program. The instruments were administered electronically through Google Forms. To ensure data protection, anonymity and confidentiality of information were assured, informing participants that the data would be used exclusively for academic and research purposes, as stipulated by Organic Law 3/2018, of December 5, on Personal Data Protection and guarantee of digital rights (Spain, 2018).

Data collected through the instruments answered virtually were systematized in an Excel spreadsheet and analyzed quantitatively through descriptive statistics, Cramer's V correlation coefficient, and Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA), after verifying the normality of distribution, with the help of IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), version 28. The results will be presented and discussed below.

Results and Discussion

Among the 231 research participants, 139 reported having experienced vulnerability situations (60.17%), which were characterized as: (i) violence vulnerability (51.07%), (ii) economic vulnerability (24.46%), and (iii) psychological or health vulnerability (9.35%). The first encompasses parental neglect, maltreatment, physical or mental abuse, aggression, and school bullying; the second refers to economic

deprivation; and the third involves disorders and disabilities, psychological problems, health problems, and social maladjustment. Analyzing these data by male and female genders, we tested Cramer's V correlation coefficient, obtaining a statistically significant difference (0.254; $p = 0.001$) that points to a higher incidence of vulnerability situations among women with high abilities compared to men.

Valdés Gázquez (2021) clarifies that the concept of vulnerability is broad and can affect anyone, relating to both external factors (everyday life situations) and internal factors (reactions or coping with situations). For Ayres (2003), the concept of vulnerability can be divided into three main axes: a) individual, consisting of characteristics of the individual that predispose them to vulnerability; b) programmatic, related to access to services such as health, education, sports, leisure, and resources in general offered to serve the population; c) social, referring to the economic and environmental conditions to which the individual is subject.

Regarding people with high abilities and internal factors specifically, Mofield and Parker Peters (2015) investigated overexcitability and perfectionism in these people and found a significant relationship between such traits, as well as between perfectionism and psychological vulnerabilities such as high sensitivity and intensity.

Regarding external factors, the social, political, and cultural dimensions of economic vulnerability and their effects on the integral development of the person stand out (Salmón, 2007). When analyzing statements from the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme, the author reaffirms that poverty exceeds the direct relationship between income and consumption by encompassing health, food, education, clothing, housing, and work conditions, "[...] whose consequence is the violation of the most basic right of all: the right to life" (Salmón, 2007, p. 156). The violation of human rights implied in economic vulnerability negatively impacts the development of superior potentialities, whose biological basis cannot be sustained without social support (Martins; Alves; Almeida, 2015).

When reflecting on human development, Salmón (2007) clarifies that poverty has two dimensions: "income," referring to insufficiency in satisfying fundamental needs, and "human," associated with the lack of basic capabilities such as malnutrition and illness, which aligns with psychological or health vulnerability. In this direction, it is worth mentioning the possibility of connection between violence vulnerability and psychological or health vulnerability, exemplified by bullying, which is characterized by intentionality, repetitiveness, and verbal and/or physical aggression (Maciel, 2012).

The literature points to the incidence of bullying practices on the population with high abilities and highlights the harmful effects of this practice of violence on development (Maciel, 2012; Martins; Ogeda, 2020). Its consequences can manifest both in the short and long term and affect victims and aggressors. Regarding victims, there may be influence on the emergence of depressive conditions, suicidal tendencies, phobias, etc.; while aggressors may present relationship difficulties derived from authoritarian and aggressive postures, making the attention of education and health professionals indispensable (Chaves; Souza, 2018).

From the perspective of human rights, it is the responsibility of the State and society as a whole to ensure the promotion of universal rights and freedoms (UN, 1948), which requires overcoming social vulnerability.

[...] since the individual's human rights are protected and ensured by a range of documents, the social vulnerability to which certain individuals and groups have been subjected throughout development can be identified as a violation of rights, and only with the state fulfilling its role as provider, through effective public policies, can one think, in the long term, of a developed society capable of facing the modern social ills that contribute to the marginalization and miserable conditions of so many individuals (Beninca; Hermínio; Camilo, 2019, p. 167).

A noteworthy finding was that half of the sample reported having experienced vulnerability situations related to violence. For Valdés Gázquez (2021), different forms of violence, although not directly

related to studies on high abilities, lead to reflection on social risk vulnerability. This vulnerability can occur at both individual and collective levels, with some groups being more prone to facing certain risk situations than others. According to Virgolim (2021), physical, psychological, and emotional characteristics of people with high abilities may make them more susceptible, increasing the probability of experiencing different forms of vulnerability, including violence.

The results regarding the personality of people with high abilities participating in the research considered the following independent variables: gender, experience of vulnerability, occupation, and career.

Multivariate analysis of variance based on male and female genders revealed statistically significant differences ($F_{(5, 221)} = 5.842$; $p < 0.001$), such that women showed higher agreeableness ($M = 11.51$; $F_{(1, 225)} = 4.381$; $p = 0.037$) and neuroticism ($M = 8.01$; $F_{(1, 225)} = 17.185$; $p < 0.001$) than men ($M = 10.54$; $M = 6.10$, respectively).

When comparing means according to whether or not they had experienced vulnerability situations, a statistically significant difference was found ($F_{(5, 225)} = 2.607$; $p = 0.026$), which was due to the neuroticism dimension ($F_{(1, 229)} = 10.653$; $p = 0.001$) since people who had experienced vulnerability situations showed a higher mean ($M = 7.80$) than those who had not ($M = 6.29$).

These results reinforce the gender inequality that is present globally (to a greater or lesser extent), which equally affects the population with high abilities and whose reversal is among the Sustainable Development Goals (UN, 2015). The women in our sample were those who suffered most from vulnerability situations compared to men. Such experiences are related to neuroticism. Therefore, we can infer that it is not by chance that women are the ones who present the most neuroticism.

Nunes (2000) clarifies that neuroticism refers to individual differences in the tendency to experience emotions associated with psychological discomfort, such as distress, anguish, and suffering, in addition to the cognitive and behavioral styles that accompany this predisposition. Individuals with high levels of neuroticism are more prone to intensely experiencing these negative emotional experiences. This trait is also related to unrealistic thoughts, excessive anxiety, difficulty dealing with frustration caused by the dissatisfaction of desires, and ineffective coping strategies.

Regarding gender inequality, Monteiro and Zaluar (2013) draw attention to violence against women as a generalized experience on the planet that impacts public health and increases rates of mental disorders such as depression, anxiety, sleep, and eating disorders, compared to women not victimized by violence.

Gender inequality is also perceived in the identification and care of people with high abilities. According to a study by García Perales, Canuto González and Cebrián Martínez (2019), girls represented 44.61% of non-university education students identified with high abilities in Spain in the 2016/2017⁷ school year. This data, according to the authors, is not justified by biological or cognitive aspects but is due to gender behavior instituted socially and accentuated in the transition from childhood to adult life. Agreeableness is another personality dimension that was prevalent among women with high abilities in our sample and is consistent with the socially expected behavior for the female gender.

Considering that research participants who had experienced vulnerability situations showed greater neuroticism compared to those who had not experienced such situations, a search was conducted in the Eric database to verify whether such a result could be contrasted with other research, and no comparable study was found. However, in the research by Silva et al. (2021) on indecision and vocational maturity, self-efficacy, and personality with 31 adolescents with and without high abilities, the authors concluded, regarding personality aspects, that adolescents without high abilities showed higher levels of neuroticism, that is, they had a greater propensity for psychological vulnerability, namely, emotional instability, passivity, lack of energy, and depression, compared to those with high abilities. From this perspective, high abilities can be considered a protective factor.

Research participants were divided among eight types of occupation, as explained in Table 1. When analyzing personality according to this distribution, the existence of a statistically significant difference was

⁷ The school year begins in September in Spain.

verified ($F_{(30, 1115)} = 1.763$; $p = 0.007$), such that self-employed workers ($M = 13.62$) show greater Openness than students ($M = 11.67$), with $p = 0.038$. Considering that Openness has creativity as a strong component, the predominance of this dimension among those who chose to be entrepreneurs seems logical.

Finally, considering the area of activity/study of the participants, we divided them into three careers: Arts and humanities (69), exact sciences and technology (91), and biological sciences (46). The analyses showed an absence of statistically significant difference ($F_{(10, 400)} = 1.486$; $p = 0.142$) between the groups.

When relating personality characteristics of scientists with high abilities based on literature review, Araújo (2010) points out that, in general, at the cognitive level, such scientists present conscientiousness and openness to experience, with a tendency toward organization, discipline, convention, self-control, confidence, curiosity, flexibility, imagination, and creativity. Socially, dominance and assertiveness predominate; in terms of motivation, curiosity, ambition, orientation and focus on performance, individual initiative, and autonomy stand out. Emotionally, hostility, impulsivity, and emotional stability are revealed. The research found differences in traits presented by those in exact and social sciences, regarding emotional sensitivity, conventionality, and extroversion/introversion, such that the former tend to be colder, less emotional, rebellious, and sociable than the latter. Among more creative scientists, openness to experience stands out, allowing them greater willingness and reception to stimuli and external influences, resulting in unexpected associations.

The author also surveyed personality characteristics of artists with high abilities and found the following traits: openness to experiences and imagination (cognitive level), ambition, impulsivity, and orientation (motivational level), questioning of norms, low conventionality, hostility, independence, introversion, and coldness (social level), emotional instability, sensitivity, and anxiety (emotional level).

Finally, it is emphasized that the lack of guarantee of human rights exposes individuals to vulnerability situations of different aspects and magnitudes with impact on their personalities, potentially exerting negative effects on the development of high abilities. In this direction, ensuring the right to education for people with high abilities implies considering their peculiarities; however, such a right cannot be fully realized when disconnected from others (health, security, food, etc.). This requires understanding that human rights are incompatible with the exclusion of large contingents, social inequality, and global injustices sustained by neoliberal logic.

Final Considerations

This research aimed to analyze social vulnerability and personality traits in adults with high abilities and reflect from a human rights perspective. Thus, it is highlighted that social vulnerability is a complex social construct that can be influenced by internal and external issues to the individual. In the present sample, the presence of vulnerability was found, mainly related to violence issues, followed by economic vulnerability and psychological or health vulnerability. Anyone can experience vulnerability situations, as they are often situations beyond the individual's control, potentially influenced by responsible adults, situations of financial stability loss, social pressures, various psychological aspects, and even the illness of a family member, among others. However, some people may be more prone to experiencing such experiences, such as women, people from disadvantaged socioeconomic environments, and people who have specific characteristics, such as neuroticism. It is precisely in this aspect where the connection between personality and social vulnerability analyzed here resides, as observed in the results, from the relationship between neuroticism and experiencing vulnerability situations. From this perspective, internal aspects such as high abilities and personality influence and are influenced by external aspects, such as social vulnerability.

The importance of this discussion was also highlighted from the basic principle emphasized in the UDHR, which is the right to the full development of the person, respecting the right to education, health, and security at all stages of life. At the same time, the abstract universalist perspective that distances itself from concrete reality, marked by social exclusion and demanding a shift toward a critical perspective, was

challenged. This understanding recognizes that rights are social and political constructions that need to be rooted in the real struggles of populations for dignity, guided by a transformative, democratic, and pluralist ethics.

All human beings have the right to feel fulfilled and enjoy healthy and adequate development. However, unfortunately, for many people this right is not fully met, as the presence of social vulnerability in more than half of the sample demonstrates disrespect for certain basic rights. It is worth reflecting on the consequences of non-compliance with these rights in the life and development of people with high abilities, on their self-esteem, self-perception, emotional fragility, and often on their own professional development, since emotional aspects (as well as material ones) can positively or negatively influence various aspects of a person's life.

We conclude that research like this should be constant in the educational and political sphere, not only with the high abilities population but for all populations, analyzing how public policies, social aspects, and vulnerability are emotionally and/or materially influencing the full development of people in different cultures. Specifically regarding the population with high abilities, the reviews presented in the research demonstrate the gap that exists regarding deeper analysis of non-cognitive variables and their influence on how high abilities are presented.

Although more information is needed about vulnerability contexts and the intensity with which participants experienced them, it is possible to affirm that, in the present sample, there was a high incidence of violence, followed by socioeconomic deprivation, contradicting the UDHR. A relationship was observed between vulnerability and the predominance of the neuroticism personality trait as a possible consequence of exposure to vulnerability situations. As implications for future research, we suggest deepening the analyses through interviews, seeking to understand in rich detail the vulnerability cases highlighted by participants and verifying their relationship with more negative thoughts or emotions present in neuroticism. Thus, new research is necessary to compile more information and contrast the data found in the present investigation.

References

- ACKERMAN, C. M. Identifying gifted adolescents using personality characteristics: Dabrowski's overexcitabilities. *Roepers Review*, v. 19, p. 229–236, 1997. Available at: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/02783199709553835>. Accessed on: May 2, 2025.
- ACKERMAN, C. M. The essential elements of Dabrowski's theory of positive disintegration and how they are connected. *Roepers Review*, 31, 81–95, 2009. Available at: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/02783190902737657>. Accessed on: 02 maio de 2025.
- ARAÚJO, L. G. S. *Excelência em contextos de realização*: Na busca da convergência de factores cognitivos, motivacionais e de personalidade. 2010. 358f. Dissertation (Ph.D. in Psicologia) – Escola de Psicologia, Universidade do Minho, Portugal, 2010.
- AYRES, J. R. C. M. et al. O conceito de vulnerabilidade e as práticas de saúde: novas perspectivas e desafios. In: CZERESNIA, D.; FREITAS, C. M. *Promoção da saúde*: conceitos, reflexões, tendências. Rio de Janeiro: Fiocruz, 2003, p. 117–139.
- BOUCHARD, L. L. An instrument for the measure of Dabrowskian overexcitabilities to identify gifted elementary students. *Gifted Child Quarterly*, v. 48, p. 339–350, 2004. Available at: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/001698620404800407>. Accessed on: May 02, 2025.
- BOUCHET, N.; FALK, R. F. The relationship among giftedness, gender, and overexcitability. *Gifted Child Quarterly*, 45, 260–267, 2001. Available at: <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ635068>. Accessed on: May 02, 2025.

BRAGATO, F. F.. *Dignidade humana pluriversal: uma leitura descolonial na Constituição de 1988*. Rio de Janeiro: Lumen Juris, 2023.

CHAVES, D. R. L.; SOUZA, M. R. Bullying e preconceito: a atualidade da barbárie. *Revista Brasileira de Educação*, v. 23, p. 1413-2478, 2018. Available at: http://educa.fcc.org.br/scielo.php?script=sci_abstract&pid=S1413-24782018000100114&lng=pt. Accessed on: May 02, 2025.

CANARIAS. Orden de 22 de julio. Disposiciones Generales – Consejería de Educación, Cultura y Deportes. *Boletín Oficial de Canarias*, Canarias, n. 149, v. 1, p. 14340-14350, 1 ago. 2005. Available at: <http://www.gobiernodecanarias.org/boc/2005/149/001.html>. Accessed on: March 2, 2025.

CARMAN, C. A. Adding Personality to Gifted Identification: Relationships Among Traditional and Personality-Based Constructs. *Journal of Advanced Academics*, v. 22, p. 412–446, 2011. Available at: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1932202X1102200303>. Accessed on: March 2, 2025.

CASINO-GARCÍA, A. M.; LLOPIS-BUENO, M. J.; LLINARES-INSÁ, I. I. Emotional Intelligence Profiles and Self-Esteem/Self-Concept: An Analysis of Relationships in Gifted Students. *Int. J. Environ. Res. Public Health*, v. 18, n. 03, p. 1006, jan. 2021. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph18031006>. Accessed on: March 2, 2025.

CAVALHEIRI, J. C.; TONELLO, A. A vulnerabilidade social e a influência no desenvolvimento infantil. *Revista Paranaense De Desenvolvimento*, v. 40, n. 137, 2019. Available at: <https://ipardes.emnuvens.com.br/revistaparanaense/article/view/1021>. Accessed on: February 19, 2025.

SPAIN. Ley Orgánica 8/2013 de 9 de diciembre de 2013. Para la mejora de la calidad educativa. *Boletín Oficial del Estado*, 295 de 10 de diciembre de 2013. Available at: <https://www.boe.es/buscar/pdf/2013/BOE-A-2013-12886-consolidado.pdf>. Accessed on Nov 10, 2024.

SPAIN. Ley Orgánica 3/2018, de 5 de diciembre de 2018. Protección de Datos Personales y garantía de los derechos digitales. *Boletín Oficial del Estado*, 294 de 6 de diciembre de 2018. Available at: <https://www.boe.es/eli/es/lo/2018/12/05/3>. Accessed on: December 27, 2024.

FONTELLES, M. J.; SIMÕES, M. G.; FARIAS, S. H.; FONTELLES, R. G. S. Metodologia da pesquisa científica: diretrizes para a elaboração de um protocolo de pesquisa/ Scientific research methodology: guidelines for elaboration of a research protocol. *Rev. Para. Med.*, [S. l.], v. 23, n. 3, jul./set. 2009. Available at: <files.bvs.br/upload/S/01015907/2009/v23n3/a1967.pdf>. Accessed on: 10 jun. 2023.

GARCÍA PERALES, R.; CANUTO GONZÁLEZ, I.; CEBRIÁN MARTÍNEZ, A. Alta capacidad y género: La autoestima como factor influyente en las diferencias entre sexos. *Contextos educativos*, La Rioja, v. 24, p. 77-93, 2019. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.18172/con.3934>. Accessed on: September 15, 2024.

HERRERA FLORES. *A reinvenção dos direitos humanos*. Transation by: Carlos Roberto Diogo Garcia; Antônio Henrique Graciano Suxberger; Jefferson Aparecido Dias. Florianópolis: Fundação Boiteux, 2009.

MACIEL, M. O. *Alunos com altas habilidades/superdotação e o fenômeno bullying*. 2012. 188 pages. Dissertação (M.Sc. em Educação) – Programa de Pós-Graduação, Faculdade de Educação, Universidade Federal de Santa Maria, Santa Maria, 2012.

MARTINS, A. A.; ALVES, A. F.; ALMEIDA, S. L. A estrutura da inteligência na infância: desenvolvimento e diferenciação cognitiva. *Internacional Journal of Developmental and Educational Psychology*, v. 01, n. 01, p. 57-66, 2015. Available at: <http://repositorium.sdum.uminho.pt/handle/1822/35754>. Accessed on: December 13, 2024.

MARTINS, B. A.; OGEDA, C. M. M. O “nerd” da sala: um estudo descritivo sobre crianças precoces com indicadores de altas habilidades/superdotação e as práticas de bullying. *Revista Re-Criação*, v. 01, p. 01, 2020. Available at: <https://creia.ufms.br/revista-rec/>. Accessed on: April 2, 2025.

MONTEIRO, M. F. G.; ZALUAR, A. Violência contra a mulher e a violação dos direitos humanos. *Reprodução & Climatério*, v. 27, n. 03, p. 91-97, sep./dec. 2012.

NUNES, C. S. *A construção de um instrumento de medida para o fator neuroticismo/estabilidade emocional dentro do modelo de personalidade dos Cinco Grandes Fatores*. 2000. 72 pages. Dissertation (Msc. In Psychology) – Instituto de Psicologia, Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul, Porto Alegre, 2000. Available at: <http://www.lume.ufrgs.br/bitstream/handle/10183/1774/000308049.pdf?sequence=1>. Accessed on: April 9, 2024.

SALMÓN, E. G. O longo caminho da luta contra a pobreza e seu alentador encontro com os Direitos Humanos. *Revista Internacional de Direitos Humanos*, v. 04, n. 07, 2007. Available at: <https://www.scielo.br/j/sur/a/5VrXwBQjwWJphTFMfR6VLQC/>. Accessed on: April 2, 2025.

SILVA, V. A. P. et al. Indecisão e Maturidade Vocacional, Autoeficácia e Personalidade em Adolescentes Com e Sem Superdotação. *Avaliação psicológica*, Campinas, v. 20, n. 04, p. 475-485, out./dez. 2021. Available at: http://pepsic.bvsalud.org/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1677-04712021000400010&lng=pt&nrm=iso. Accessed on: February 19, 2025.

VALDÉS GÁZQUEZ, M. Vulnerabilidad social, genealogía del concepto. *Gazeta de Antropología*. Jaén, v. 37, n. 01, s/p, 2021. Available at: <http://hdl.handle.net/10481/68424>. Accessed on: September 06, 2022.

VIRGOLIM, A. As vulnerabilidades das altas habilidades e superdotação: questões sociocognitivas e afetivas. *Educar em Revista*, Curitiba, v. 37, e81543, 2021. Available at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1590/0104-4060.81543>. Accessed on: September 06, 2022.

RECEBIDO: 26/05/2025

RECEIVED: 05/26/2025

APROVADO: 21/07/2025

APPROVED: 07/21/2025

Editor responsável: Alboni Marisa Dudeque Pianovski Vieira