APPROACHING TO THE FIGURE OF THE AGROINFLUENCER IN SPAIN
Definition, Typology and Identities

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KEYWORDS	ABSTRACT
Influencer Instagram Social media Rural environment Rural identities	Depopulation, new political formations and farmers' protests have brought rural issues into the public debate. In this context, the agroinfluencer emerges as an actor that has captured the attention of the media. This research explores the concept of agroinfluencers in Spain, outlines a typology and analyses the new rural identities they project. A representative sample was analysed using a mixed quantitative and qualitative methodology. The results show a differentiated profile as well as different approaches and themes. This study opens the door to further research on rural communication and its emerging identities in the digital age.

1. Introduction

At the beginning of the 20th century, 67% of Spain's population lived in rural areas. By 2023, however, the figures will be reversed and 71% of the country's 47.4 million inhabitants will live in urban areas. The population has become so concentrated in cities that 80 per cent of the population will live in 15 per cent of the territory. The most significant change occurred between 1951 and 1975, when about 10 million people left their village homes for the city (Zoido and Arroyo, 2003, p. 26).

In the last decade, three out of four municipalities have lost population, almost all of them rural, according to the National Strategy for the Demographic Challenge (2018). Thus, according to the National Statistics Institute, Spain has 3,000 completely uninhabited villages for every 8,108 inhabited ones. Moreover, according to the 2016 report of the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces (FEMP, 2017), almost half of these are at risk of disappearing in the short and medium term.

Paradoxically, or perhaps because of this trend towards urban concentration, the rural world is becoming increasingly important in public discourse. On the one hand, the problem of depopulation is at a crucial moment in the European context, and particularly in Spain. Depopulation as an issue has definitely entered the public agenda and social consciousness, while the most depopulated territory is approaching a point of difficult return.

On the other hand, the rural question has erupted all over Europe, bringing its demands through initiatives, the most obvious manifestation of which has been the succession of mobilisations that have taken place periodically in recent years. The most recent outstanding episode was the permanent roadblocks in Spain in February 2024 and the mobilisations of all kinds that took place in the heart of the country's main administrative capitals, in the image and likeness of what had happened a few weeks earlier in countries such as Germany and France.

But the outbreak of rural discontent is nothing new. In 2019, Spain saw the so-called "Empty Spain" revolt, and the 2019-2023 elections also saw the entry into regional and national parliaments of parties representing the most depopulated areas of the country, such as Teruel Existe (Teruel Exists) or Soria Ya (Soria Now).

In the academic field, the interest in this subject has a long history of research on the situation of the rural environment and the consequences of all kinds that its abandonment has or could have for Spain as a whole. Thus, it is possible to find works on the lack of opportunities in rural areas, economic decline, the lack of infrastructure, the educational situation, demographic analysis, etc. The contributions of Abellán and Beneyto (2020), Reig et al. (2016), Franco (2015), Camarero (2009) and Collantes et al. (2010), to name some of the most outstanding, are noteworthy in this regard.

However, there is no consolidated tradition in the study of cultural components that can help explain such a profound phenomenon, an area in which the present research is framed.

It is possible to find some works that examine how the media establish certain categorisations of rural life. These contributions explain that the media have been and still are configured around the rural environment, identifying its inhabitants as "uncultured, poorly educated or illiterate, 'rural', crude and old-fashioned" (González, 2017).

These stigmas are "cultural constructs from which no one is spared, because our brains are very comfortable with these mental maps to describe the world around us" and are mainly responsible for assigning characteristics to people that describe how they are or how they should be (González, 2017).

In this context, the media play a fundamental role in reproducing such generalisations. González (2018) highlights the problems of identity or self-esteem, the homogenisation of all rural areas, the disconnection between rural and urban populations, the undervaluing of those who have lived in the village and the slowing down of repopulation as negative consequences for those who live in the villages and for the rural environment.

Traditionally, this type of issue has been studied in relation to the public discourse generated by the media. Since the emergence and spread of social networks, part of this analysis has been transferred to the content created and consumed in these environments, according to the predominance of each at different times. Thus, in the last decade, the majority of studies were on Twitter (later called X) and Facebook, and now those on Instagram and TikTok stand out. On the other hand, some studies, such as those carried out by The Social Media Family (2023, p. 19), show that users of social networks, and

especially Instagram, have a predominantly urban profile, which makes their study particularly relevant in this context.

As depopulation and the urban-rural divide are currently concerns shared by political institutions and society as a whole, it seems relevant to analyse the image of the rural environment and the people who inhabit it projected on social networks. However, since virtually all the work published to date has focused on the image projected by the media or by social networks, our research focuses on analysing the self-projection of the rural environment itself, through an emerging figure that is still little studied in the academic sphere: the agroinfluencers.

In order to address the issue of agroinfluencers and their possible capacity to represent new rural identities, it is worth starting by contextualising the figure of the influencer. Influencers are a figure indigenous to social networks that emerged in the context of advertising, but soon made the leap into the social sphere, as their ability to influence goes beyond the purely commercial (Borau et al., 2022, p. 481). Influencers are prominent users of social networks who accumulate a large number of followers and create their own online personality (Lou et al., 2019, p. 169). They share as a characteristic their ability to influence the public from their subjectivity through "a connection at a personal and emotional level" (Fernández-de-Córdova, 2017, p. 102).

In this sense, they are figures comparable to traditional opinion leaders (Casaló et al., 2018, p. 510), as they have credibility and aspirational power (Castelló-Martínez and del Pino, 2015, p. 23).

These are people who create a strong bond with their followers, with whom they share personal content about their daily lives or some specific elements of interest, and whom they influence through their lifestyle, values or beliefs (Pretel-Jiménez et al, 2024, p. 306). Unlike major public figures, social network users consider them to be similar to themselves and give them greater authenticity in their messages and behaviour (Schouten et al., 2020, p. 260). This explains the effectiveness of their communication. They are not only people with many followers but are also defined by the high level of interaction with them. This is what Pérez-Curiel and Luque-Ortíz (2017, p. 262) call "authenticity in engagement".

These studies on influencers define them as ordinary people who document things in their daily lives, but in some cases, they observe that they gradually acquire a commercial interest that causes them to lose their naturalness, so that a forced search for their original motivations is observed. Thus, "this need to appear authentic ultimately leads to a standardisation of the content they share" (Figuereo-Benítez et al., 2021, pp. 14-15).

The general figure of the influencer is well defined, established and studied. However, there is a certain lack of knowledge about the figure of the agroinfluencer, especially in terms of academic creation and for the Spanish territory. On the other hand, the concept has been reported in various media, highlighting its relevance and potential. For these reasons, this research proposes an approach to this new profile of influence that allows us to define it, understand its characteristics and categorise it. In addition, it is particularly interesting to evaluate this figure from the perspective of identity and to consider the possibility that agroinfluencers contribute to changing the messages that have traditionally been sent to society about life in the countryside.

The content of agroinfluencers could thus serve to counteract the stereotype associated with the countryside and the rural identities that live and work there. This stereotype would be negative and associated with the idea that young people are fleeing the countryside, leaving only the elderly (Morales-Romo, 2017, p. 414 and López-Fernández et al., 2019, p. 792) or the "rednecks, hustlers and illiterates" (Lozano, 2020, p. 69). Likewise, according to this stereotypical view, a toxic or negative tradition prevails in the countryside (Pavón-Benítez et al., 2022, p. 1823) and there is no room for modernity. It would therefore be an environment completely and radically opposed to the urban one (Gómez-Carrasco and García-González, 2018, p. 131) and disconnected from global society (Vidal and Llopis, 2004, p. 58).

Preconceived and stereotypical ideas such as these may contain some truth, although they oversimplify reality in ways that can be problematic. Stereotypes are ideas shared by populations whose main function is to assign different social roles to individuals and which are created through processes of influence developed by powerful entities such as the media (Moscovici, 1981, p. 22). However, this process of creating identities and assigning roles may be different on new platforms such as social networks. Works such as those developed by Zhao (2005), Boyd (2007), Gómez (2009) or Del Prete and

Redón (2020) suggest that this type of environment allows its users to define their own identity. This would serve to counteract and reject dominant discourses by proposing an alternative narrative.

It is therefore interesting to look at the content of agroinfluencers to see if they are using social platforms as a means of constructing contemporary rural identities.

The research proposal is thus in line with the National Strategy to Address the Demographic Challenge, specifically one of its seven cross-cutting objectives: "Eliminating stereotypes and improving the image and reputation of the territories most affected by demographic risks" (Ministry of Territorial Policy and Public Function, 2018, p. 37).

2. Objectives

The general objective (GO) of the research is to explore the figure of the agroinfluencer in Spain and to make an approximation of this figure. Thus, the aim of this work is to provide a first approach to the concept of the agroinfluencer in Spain. The study of this area of reality involves working on three specific objectives:

- -Specific objective 1 (SO-1): To define the concept of agroinfluencer based on an analysis of the content disseminated by the main representatives of this category in Spain. The definition will be based on the concept underlying the publications of the agroinfluencers themselves and the definition they give of themselves in their Instagram 'bio'. The idea is to let them tell what their lives are like and thus complete the definition.
- -Specific objective 2 (SO-2): Establish a typology of agroinfluencers based on the information gathered from their profiles, taking into account both the specific types of content they publish, and the information provided in their 'bio'.
- -Specific objective 3 (SO-3): To outline the new identities of rural areas that are projected through their content and whether they fit with the stereotypes associated with this environment. It will examine whether these identities reinforce or challenge pre-existing stereotypes, thus contributing to the redefinition of the collective narrative of rural life. It will explore whether their content tends to present an objective view of their everyday reality, or whether it contributes to feeding stereotypes.

Finally, the relevance of addressing the issue of agroinfluencers in the Spanish context is underlined by the current situation of depopulation and the consequent abandonment of agricultural professions in the country. Their presence in social networks could serve as a vehicle to influence the representation and self-esteem of rural communities, redefining narratives. In other words, it is interesting to explore whether this environment, seemingly isolated from the modern world and technology, has found an ally in social networks.

3. Methodology

Given the scarcity of academic work that relates the field to the figure of the influencer, this research is proposed as a first approach to the relationship between the two. It is therefore an exploratory type of research, whose main objective is to delimit the concept of the agroinfluencer in Spain, to propose a definition of it and to make an initial assessment of its contribution to the projection of a certain image of the Spanish countryside on Instagram, as can be deduced from the objectives set out in the previous section.

The methodology used to achieve these objectives is explained below, based on a combination of quantitative and qualitative techniques applied to the textual and visual content published on the Instagram profiles of a representative sample of agroinfluencers in Spain.

In recent years, influencers have concentrated their activity on two main social networks: Instagram and TikTok. However, it has been observed that most of the so-called agroinfluencers are present on Instagram, but very few on TikTok, so it was decided to study only the first social network.

Instagram had 2,000 million monthly active users in 2023, of which 23.8 million were in Spain, making its penetration over 85% of Spanish internet users, according to a report by The Social Media Family (2023).

Regarding the selection of the sample, it is first necessary to address how the concept of agroinfluencer was defined and, subsequently, how a list of those who could be considered the main agroinfluencers in the Spanish market was found.

Reference research on micro-influencers in other sectors has shown the difficulty of selecting the sample in this type of exploratory work. In fact, the use of techniques such as snowball sampling has revealed some limitations, such as the lack of control over the composition of the sample or the lack of guarantee of the representativeness of the sample (Agulleiro-Prats et al., 2020, p. 11).

In the case of this research, we started with an exploratory search for influencers who publish content about the countryside and its working disciplines, such as agriculture and livestock farming. This search was carried out using the social network's own search engine. This work enabled us to identify 60 influencers who specialise in creating content about the rural and agricultural environment.

Once the initial list was established, we worked with the information collected on these profiles in the media, following the methodology used to sample influencers in other scientific fields (González et al., 2020). Thus, an in-depth consultation was carried out of the news and reports on agroinfluencers published in different Spanish media, both generalist and specialised, including, among others, El País (Otazu, 2023), ABC (Pérez-Barco, 2023), Agencia EFE (Ríos, 2023) and Diario de Noticias de Navarra (Zabaleta, 2023). In other words, to determine what an agroinfluencer is, we start from those who are recognised as such by society through the media.

This type of journalistic content often consists of a short introduction followed by a list of agroinfluencers. These lists were compared with the list obtained from the previous search. Thus, 32 of the 60 influencers found in this search were mentioned as influencers in the media. This list of 32 included profiles of users who regularly publish about life and work in the field and whose followers ranged from 200 to 429,000.

Next, a follow-up criterion was applied. For this part, we worked with the categorisation of influencers according to the number of followers provided by Iab Spain (2022, p. 25) and Sanmiguel (2020, pp. 71-73). Both agree that the smallest category of content creators in terms of audience size is the nanoinfluencer. This category includes those users whose community is starting to grow, who have high engagement, but who are not yet recognised as influencers. They would have between 1,000 and 10,000 followers. Then there are the categories of micro, medium, macro and mega influencers, which include more professional users with more recognition, with a range of followers from 10,000 (micro influencers) to more than five million (mega influencers).

Taking this categorisation into account, the sample was limited to agroinfluencers with more than 10,000 followers on Instagram. It should be noted that the reason for applying the monitoring criteria to Instagram profiles in particular is that this is the only social network that all the influencers on the list had in common. Some of the influencers used TikTok or X (formerly Twitter) as their main social network, but all of them used Instagram.

During the process, profiles that were initially selected for reasons such as a change in activity or because the account corresponded to a company rather than a specific person were eliminated.

Once the profiles were selected, it was decided that the last 10 publications of each account would be analysed. During the development of this research, there was an important mobilisation of the agricultural world (February-March 2024), the consequences of which dominated the media agenda for several days. It was considered that this fact could distort the analysis, as the subject monopolised the content of these agroinfluencers during this period, and this was confirmed after a tasting. Since what was of interest for this research was not the analysis of the coverage that the agroinfluencers gave to the mobilisation, but the vision that they gave of rural life, it was decided to collect the content published before 31 January 2024, so that the sample would be representative of their activity.

After applying these criteria in combination, a final sample of 18 agroinfluencers and 180 Instagram posts was obtained. The selected accounts are the following:

- -@montoromiquel (441K)
- -@lauritavallejo   (126K)
- -@anita_la_cortijera   (88,4K)
- -@angelocromatto (47,2K)
- -@jovenes_agricultoras (46,1K)

- -@lucia_velasco_rodriguez_   (38K)
- -@fincalamaye_   (37,6K)
- -@agricola_lorew   (35,6K)
- -@agripilar (33,2K)
- -@agrijoven   (29K)
- -@agricbv   (26,2K)
- -@doydasdavid   (17,8K)
- -@valdelmazo   (16,3K)
- -@repoblando   (16,2K)
- -@alex130493   (14K)
- -@ganaderia_cambureru   (10,8K)
- -@tomy_rohde   (10,1K)
- -@agrodiosle   (10K)

Influencer profiles and posts are subjected to quantitative and qualitative analysis. The main part, however, consists of a quantitative and qualitative content analysis of the posts. This content analysis examines the activities that agroinfluencers carry out on a daily basis, the topics they deal with and the focus they give to them. It also includes qualitative variables that capture the ways in which their publications reproduce or refute the stereotype of rural life. The code is thus made up of a total of 17 variables: 15 quantitative and 2 qualitative.

In addition, in order to address the identity variable and to provide a definition of the concept of agroinfluencer that corresponds to the discourse that these actors have about themselves, a qualitative analysis of their Instagram 'bio' is carried out. The Instagram 'bio' is the text, usually made up of short sentences and emoticons, that appears on a user's profile, under their personal details and on their publications. This space is used by each user to define themselves in a synthetic way, focusing on what best represents them (profession, origin or other characteristics) in the space provided by Instagram for this purpose.

In this step of the research, a simple questionnaire is used with 8 basic variables: gender, language, self-definition, references to networks, contact information, presence of commercial elements, appeal to rurality and appeal to the specific territory of origin.

Thus, the research methodology includes the development of a quantitative and qualitative content analysis of 180 Instagram posts and a qualitative analysis of the Instagram 'bios' of the 18 most recognised and followed Spanish agroinfluencers. This methodology will allow us to approach the concept of agroinfluencer and achieve the objectives of the research. With the content analysis we work towards the achievement of the three specific objectives SO-1, SO-2 and SO-3, and with the qualitative analysis of the profiles we contribute to the achievement of SO-1 and SO-3.

4. Results

This section presents the main results of this research. In the case of the descriptions of the profiles, half of them (9) correspond to women, a little less (7) to men and some (2) do not specify or do not identify a case that cannot be attributed because it is a joint profile of a couple. The vast majority use Spanish (14), two are bilingual, one in English and one in Catalan.

When defining themselves, most of them (14) include rural-related occupations, mainly farmer/raiser (10), but also 'chainsaw operator' or 'contractor'. Some of them also define themselves as digital creators (4). There are two cases where they describe themselves as 'artist' or 'public figure', and two cases where they give other types of information. Of these, only nine mention their geographical origin, and all of them are local. On the other hand, all 18 profiles studied make explicit reference to the countryside in one way or another.

In addition to Instagram, only 11 of them mention their presence on other social networks: five include a link to their YouTube profile, one to X, one to TikTok and four to a Linktree with several of them. Of all the sites studied, only five offer the possibility of direct contact and in six cases they include commercial information, ranging from the promotion of their own book to a shop selling agri-food products.

With regard to the analysis of the content published by these accounts, the main results are presented below.

As can be seen in Table 1, the most common topic addressed by the analysed influencers is 'work in the field', with about 30% of the references. This is followed by 'machinery' for field work (20.6%). The topics 'personal' (10.6%) and 'daily life in the countryside' (8.3%) also have a significant presence.

Secondarily, 'machinery' and 'work in the field' remain important (20% and 16.8% respectively). This is explained by the frequent combination of the binomial work in the field - machinery or machinery - work in the field in the contents of the units analysed. The importance of 'nature' as a background to other main themes increases to 11.6%, as does that of 'daily life in the countryside' (9.5%).

It is noticeable that themes such as 'depopulation' (0.6% as the main theme) or 'business initiatives' (1.1% and 2.1% respectively) are hardly present, although these themes are very high on the political and media agenda in relation to rural areas.

Content is mainly presented with an 'emotional' and 'informative/descriptive' approach (both 28.3%), but not far behind is 'aesthetic' (22.2%). The presence of all three is somewhat balanced. In fact, in many units of analysis, the emotional and the aesthetic went hand in hand, making it difficult to separate them, as one led to the other and vice versa. The 'commercial' perspective is also present in 11.7% of cases and humour in 4.4%.

In terms of the activity shown in the entries analysed, the vast majority (76.7%) show rural life, regardless of the subject or the approach taken. A large part of the content analysed shows some aspect of rural life (agricultural tasks, animal husbandry, etc.). The centrality of this theme is clear. Furthermore, in 27.8% of the cases, the units of analysis talk about the personal life of the authors of the posts and, to a lesser extent (15%), the activity is the promotion of a product or service.

Table 1. Primary and secondary themes (in percentages)

Theme	Main	Secondary
Day-to-day rural life	8,3	9,5
Difficulties of rural life	0,6	4,2
Work in the field	28,3	16,8
Neo-rural	1,7	2,1
Rural beauty	1,7	6,3
Rural values	2,2	4,2
Technical aspects	1,7	8,4
Business initiatives	1,1	2,1
Staff	10,6	8,4
Nature	5	11,6
Fashion	3,3	0
Health	0	1,1
Depopulation	0,6	0
Machinery	20,6	20
Other	14,4	4,2
TOTAL	100	100

Source: own elaboration, 2024.

Paying attention to the theme according to the range of followers of the Instagram accounts analysed, some trends can be observed (Table 2). On the one hand, among those considered micro-influencers (83.3% of the units of analysis), the theme of 'rural work' (29.3%) is very present, followed by 'machinery' (18.73%). Some attention is also paid to 'daily life in the countryside' (8.7%) and 'personal' issues (7.3%).

Among the medium influencers (11.1% of the sample), the trend towards the importance of 'working in the countryside' (30%) and 'machinery' (35%) is maintained, with a slight increase in 'daily life in the

countryside' (10%). Among the macro-influencers (5.6% of the units analysed), 'personal' clearly predominates over other themes such as 'work in the fields' (10%) and 'machinery' (20%).

The cross-cutting theme that is present in all of them is work in the fields and the machines they use. However, as the number of people following an account increases, these topics become less frequent in favour of more personal issues.

Table 2. Main topic according to the range of followers (in percentages)

Theme	10K to 50K (micro)	50 K to 250K (medium)	250K to 1M (macro)
Day-to-day rural life	8,7	10	0
Difficulties of rural life	0,7	0	0
Work in the field	29,3	30	10
Neo-rural	2	0	0
Rural beauty	2	0	0
Rural values	2,7	0	0
Technical aspects	1,3	5	0
Business initiatives	0,7	5	0
Staff	7,3	5	70
Nature	6	0	0
Fashion	4	0	0
Depopulation	0,7	0	0
Machinery	18,7	35	20
Other	16	10	0
TOTAL	100	100	100

Source: own elaboration, 2024.

Some trends can also be observed in the approach to content when the range of followers is taken into account, as shown in Table 3. The presence of the 'informative/descriptive', 'emotional' and 'aesthetic' approaches is predominant among micro-influencers, with percentages close to each other (28%, 31.3% and 22.7% respectively).

At the medium influencer level, the 'informative/descriptive' and 'aesthetic' perspectives remain the most common (35% and 30% respectively), although they are becoming more common. The 'emotional' approach (most common among micro-influencers) is halved here (15%) in favour of the commercial approach, which rises from 8.6% among micro-influencers to 20% among mid-influencers.

This trend is even more pronounced in the case of macro-influencers, where the 'commercial' approach accounts for 50%, while the 'emotional' (10%), 'informative/descriptive' (20%) and 'aesthetic' approaches disappear.

In other words, the higher the number of followers, the more weight the commercial prism gains and the more weight the predominant approaches lose among influencers with a smaller following.

Table 3. Approach by range of followers (in percentages)

Approach	10K to 50K (micro)	50 K to 250K (medium)	250K to 1M (macro)
Informative/ descriptive	28	35	20
Emotional	31,3	15	10
Humorous	4,7	0	10
Commercial	8	20	50
Aesthetics	22,7	30	0
Other	5,3	0	10
TOTAL	100	100	100

Source: own elaboration, 2024.

Table 4 shows that the activity shown in the posts corresponds to the trend identified in terms of focus: the more followers there are, the more products or services are promoted (50%). The content creator also talks more about his personal life when he has more followers (70%) and less about rural life (40%). At the 'micro' and 'medium' levels, the most common activities are talking about personal life and showing rural life, with similar percentages. The proximity between 'micro' and 'medium' is much greater than between these two and 'macro'.

Table 4. Activity according to the range of followers (in percentages)[1]

Activity	10K to 50K (micro)	50 K to 250K (medium)	250K to 1M (macro)
Teaches rural life	78,7	80	40
He talks about his personal life	25,3	25	70
Promote a product or service	10	35	50

Source: own elaboration, 2024.

Looking at the approach given to each topic (Table 5), it is clear how rural influencers approach the topics when talking about them. For example, 'daily life in the countryside' is approached from a very 'emotional' (46.7%), but also 'aesthetic' (20%) point of view. In other words, it is not approached from a neutral or descriptive point of view, but from a place that involves the creator, who constructs a story about it through the prism of his or her experience, vision or interpretation.

The same is true for 'personal', where 'emotional' (31.6%) and 'aesthetic' (26.3%) approaches abound, or for 'nature', where these perspectives are also prominent (55.6% and 11.1% respectively). It is here that agroinfluencers take a stand and show a particular view on these issues.

When the analysed units refer to 'field work', the 'informative/descriptive' approach prevails (41.2%), with an equal presence of 'aesthetic' and 'emotional' approaches (27.5%).

The 'emotional' approach predominates not only for 'everyday rural life', 'personal' and 'nature', but also for 'rural values' (75%) and 'depopulation' (100%). On the other hand, the 'aesthetic' view dominates when it comes to the 'beauty of rural life' (100%) or 'fashion' (50%).

The 'informative/descriptive' approach is in the majority not only when it comes to 'work in the countryside', but also when it comes to 'technical aspects' of these tasks and 'work initiatives' in the rural world (100% in both cases), 'machinery' (35.1%) and 'daily life in the countryside' (20%). It is understood here that the nature of these topics leads content creators to approach them in a more technical or professional way, far from the nuances that imply a more personal involvement.

When it comes to 'fashion', the main focus is commercial (33.3%), also very present in 'machinery' (21.6%) and 'personal' (15.8%). These are three themes that sometimes include collaborations with brands or the promotion of products or services.

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[1] Activity is a cumulative category, not exclusive, so that several activities can be found simultaneously in the same post.

Table 5. Approach by range of followers (in percentages)

Approach	Day-to-day rural life	Difficulties of rural life	Work in the field	Neo-rural	Rural beauty	Defending rural values	Technical aspects	Business initiatives	Staff	Nature	Fashion	Depopulation	Machinery	Other
Informative/ descriptive	20	0	41,2	33,3	0	25	100	100	5,3	11,1	0	0	35,1	19,2
Emotional	46,7	0	27,5	66,7	0	75	0	0	31,6	55,6	16,7	100	10,8	30,8
Humorous	6,7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5,3	22,2	0	0	2,7	11,5
Commercial	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	15,8	0	33,3	0	21,6	26,9
Aesthetics	20	0	27,5	0	100	0	0	0	26,3	11,1	50	0	24,3	7,7
Other	6,7	100	2	0	0	0	0	0	15,8	0	0	0	5,4	3,8
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: own elaboration, 2024.

As far as the presence of rural stereotypes is concerned, it can be said that they are a minority, since only 11.1% of the posts (33.3% of the accounts analysed) contain an explicit reference to these stereotypes. Moreover, in none of the cases does the stereotype appear as the backbone of the content, but rather the mentions are derived from the subject matter of the post and are a consequence of the approach given to it by the content creator.

These stereotypes appear on Instagram accounts with very different profiles: some are from neo-rural content creators, others from young women farmers or ranchers, or about rural ethnography. In other words, their presence is not linked to or a consequence of a specific type of account.

The stereotypes encountered are also varied. One of the most common is that of depopulation, i.e. the emptying of the rural environment. Although in some cases it is presented in a positive way, with examples of people who are committed to living in the villages, in most cases the reference is negative. In other words, the sense of loss prevails.

Closely related to the previous point, the stereotype of the ageing population is also very present, but curiously from a positive point of view: it is not all old people in the rural world. In fact, most of the agroinfluencers whose accounts were studied are young people who live and work in these environments. Their content naturally reflects a very different reality from that which feeds and shapes this stereotype. In this context, it is worth highlighting the positive presence of women (half of the accounts analysed feature women) and their work in the rural environment as a factor in dismantling this stereotype.

In relation to stereotypes about people living in rural areas, the stereotype of being somewhat rude or crude also appears, although this is usually done with humour or exaggeration. In other words, their presence disrupts the stereotype rather than reinforcing it.

Rural is also sometimes associated with the stereotype of being a world of traditions, but not as something negative, rather as something to be emphasised and valued. Similarly, the idea of community is also present as a stereotype describing the kind of relationships that are formed between people living in rural areas. Again, it is mainly a positive presence, as when it appears in a negative form, it is overlaid with humour.

The rural/urban dichotomy is also present in the contributions analysed, always in a negative way, highlighting the confrontation between the rural and urban worlds, sometimes with humour, sometimes with sadness for what the rural has lost to the urban, sometimes with protest or justification of the unequal treatment or conditions between one or the other. In this context, it is important to qualify the slight presence of the stereotype that associates the countryside with a boring environment where there are few opportunities for leisure and fun, as opposed to the wide variety of options offered by cities. However, the aim of this reference is precisely to dismantle this stereotype and to show the opposite, i.e. all the entertainment possibilities offered by the rural world.

Beyond the explicit references to these stereotypes, which, as has been pointed out, are more or less frequent, it can be affirmed that the mere presence of these agroifluencers and the type of content they offer on their Instagram social network accounts contribute, in a general way, to the dismantling of several stereotypes that exist around rural life.

On the one hand, they do not present an idealised image of rural life or work, but a realistic one, highlighting its positive aspects, but also its difficulties, always from the prism of the normality of those who narrate their own life, their routine, their daily life. In this sense, there are no fireworks in his discourse, no bucolic or romantic visions of the rural world.

They project an image of youth and generational renewal, in stark contrast to the negative image usually associated with the emptying of rural areas and the phenomenon of depopulation. Moreover, some of the agroinfluencers studied have university degrees, breaking the stereotype of rural people as uneducated.

They also convey an image of modernity, the future and economic growth, thus countering the stereotype of rural areas as an environment in social and economic decline, condemned to isolation, failure and disappearance. In fact, the content related to rural work and the machinery and tools used in it demolish the stereotype of a lack of modernity, since in all cases they point in the direction of technological innovation, the high professionalisation of tasks and the sophistication of the technology used.

5. Conclusions

The general objective of this research was to study and approximate the figure of the agroinfluencer in Spain. To this end, a representative sample of agroinfluencers was analysed according to criteria of relevance that allowed the specific objectives to be achieved.

To conclude on specific objective 1 (SO-1), which is to define what an agroinfluencer is, it is necessary to outline the main findings of the analysis. On the one hand, the predominant content of these influencers, both in their 'bio' and in their publications, is related to work traditionally associated with the rural environment. On the other hand, their themes are largely related to these activities, whether in the form of techniques, tools or everyday moments in their development. To a much lesser extent, they are also related to their personal lives and the natural environment in which they live. Furthermore, it has been found that when the beads are smaller (micro or medium), the emotional and aesthetic approach predominates. However, as the number of followers increases, the commercial prism becomes more important.

Thus, the proposal made in this research to define the figure of the agroinfluencer is that of a content creator who lives and works in the rural environment, in activities traditionally associated with this context, and whose content is linked to this lifestyle. The predominant profile is that of a micro-influencer (less than 50,000 followers) and this implies a reduced contamination by commercial aspects. This is a unique characteristic of the agroinfluencer, which distinguishes him/her from the generic figure of the influencer, as he/she is less commercial in nature.

In the case of macro-influencers, this confirms what Figuereo-Benítez et al. (2021) found, that the more followers an influencer has, "the more it leads to a standardisation of content" (p. 15) and a loss of its original essence in favour of an increase in commercial aspects.

In relation to specific objective 2 (SO-2), to establish a typology of agroinfluencers, the results of the analysis identify the following types of accounts on Instagram:

1. Realistic: accounts whose content focuses on capturing everyday rural life and work in the countryside. This type captures what rural life is like from an everyday perspective, without frills or artifice. Most of the accounts analysed would fall into this category.
2. Neo-rural: accounts of people moving from the city to live and work in the countryside, describing their experiences of adjustment and gradual familiarisation with a new environment. The focus of

the content is different from the previous category, with a strong emphasis on discovery, first times or first experiences.

3. Reflective: Stories that focus on telling the story of rural life with a hint of nostalgia for the past, highlighting the value of tradition and heritage of rural environments. They reflect on rural life, often in comparison to urban life.
4. Aesthetic: Beads that have a strong desire to visually highlight the beauty of nature and rural life and work. They may even have a lifestyle component linked to the enjoyment of small moments.

It should be clarified that this typology is not the result of finding a balance in the number of accounts in each category, but rather of identifying a difference in focus or approach.

Finally, specific objective 3 (SO-3) was to outline the new identities of 'the rural' that are projected in the content of agroinfluencers in relation to the stereotypes traditionally associated with the rural world.

Firstly, it is noted that stereotypes are hardly explicit in the content analysed. It is observed that agroinfluencers are not concerned about them. There is a predominantly 'de-stereotyped' narrative of what life in the rural world entails. Agroinfluencers are not found to be proactively seeking to challenge the stereotype.

It is assumed that there is no explicit presence of stereotypes because rural content creators do not see their lives as stereotypical. None of them believe that their reality corresponds to preconceived ideas. On the contrary, one's own life is seen as normal, so when content about the rural world is told from the perspective of those who live in it, there is little stereotyping.

On the rare occasions when stereotypes are present, they are challenged as these contents project an idea that is contrary to these archetypes. They are most likely to be found in accounts that propose a reflection on the past, present and future of rural life, or in those with a purely neo-rural content. In the latter case, the presence of stereotypes can be understood because neo-rural agroinfluencers are people who come from outside the rural sphere and are incorporated into it with this new perspective. They go through all the first moments of living and/or working in a rural environment and report it on their Instagram accounts with the amazement, excitement, frustration or surprise of someone who is dismantling preconceived notions or discovering this new rural life.

Finally, the very existence of agroinfluencers represents a break with the stereotypes traditionally associated with rural life. This leads to the presence of a variety of identities that break with these patterns of the countryside being inhabited and worked by an ageing population, poorly educated and anchored in the past. In the accounts analysed, we found most young content creators and women, educated people with high levels of technical skills, as well as accounts in which technological innovation stands out.

The results of this research contribute to the understanding of the concept of agroinfluencers and the content with which they participate in the public space, providing a proposed definition and typology of this phenomenon. In this way, it contributes to opening up a new avenue for this type of work, which has already been developed in the sporting, commercial or political spheres. Therefore, this research represents a step forward in approaching the rural world from social networks and opens a new path in the study of the cultural and social representation of the rural question and other related phenomena such as depopulation, the ethnographic component or the diffusion of work in the primary sector.

However, the research has limitations that must be taken into account when interpreting its results and scope. On the one hand, we are working with a reduced sample of typological representation, since there is no database of influencers from which to configure a statistically representative sample. On the other hand, the exploratory nature of the study prevents us from delving deeper into certain aspects, such as the more formal characteristics of the publications or the possible existence of a content planning strategy, which could be considered of interest for future work.

6. Acknowledgements

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