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Iara Amaro do Espírito Santo

PATERNITIES AND TELEWORKING DURING THE EXTENDED LOCKDOWN IN PORTUGAL
A QUALITATIVE STUDY

Master's thesis in Clinical and Health Psychology, sub-specialization in Systemic and Family Psychotherapy, supervised by Professor Maria Madalena de Carvalho, PhD, and presented at the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences of the University of Coimbra.

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Faculdade de Psicologia e de Ciências da Educação
da Universidade de Coimbra

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Abstract

The concept of parenting has evolved under the influence of several cultural and socioeconomic transformations, having an effect on the way maternity and paternity have been experienced. Facing the COVID-19 pandemic, workers with children had to ensure, simultaneously, their professional and parental responsibilities, often in a co-parenting way. The overall objective of this study is to analyse the impact of the possible physical proximity and paternal involvement in parenting and co-parenting, given the perspective and experience of fathers who have teleworked in the first or in both lockdown situations in Portugal, and the perception of mothers regarding this situation experienced by the father of their children.

This research was supported by a qualitative methodology and had the participation of twelve Portuguese subjects: six females (mothers) and six males (fathers), being parental and conjugal peers. The data was collected through semi-structured interviews, which took place via Zoom. The Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis Technique is applied for the statistical analysis using the MaxQDA Software.

The obtained results showed that, in the first lockdown, the fathers demonstrated greater paternal involvement, having worked with their children at their side and performed more domestic tasks, which negatively affected their personal well-being and their productivity and concentration at work. In the second lockdown situation, individuals experienced greater balance and work-family arrangement, which was shown into increased levels of their productivity and concentration at work.

Concerning the second lockdown and the mothers' perceptions that were presented, theoretical saturation was not reached. Nevertheless, it is expected that this study will enable us to obtain new readings and a better understanding on the impact of paternal involvement on parenting and co-parenting and that it will provide interesting starting points for future studies.

Keywords: Telework, lockdown, families with children, paternal involvement, co--parenting

Resumo

O conceito de parentalidade tem evoluído, sob influência de diversas transformações culturais e socioeconómicas, influenciando a forma como a maternidade e a paternidade têm sido experienciadas. Perante a situação pandémica, causada pela COVID-19, os trabalhadores com filhos tiveram de assegurar, simultaneamente, as suas responsabilidades profissionais e parentais, muitas vezes, num registo de coparentalidade. O objetivo geral deste estudo é analisar o impacto da eventual proximidade física e do envolvimento paterno, na parentalidade e coparentalidade, atendendo à perspetiva e experiência de pais-homens que realizaram teletrabalho, na primeira ou em ambas as situações de confinamento em Portugal, e à perceção de mães, relativamente a tal situação experienciada pelo pai dos seus filhos.

A presente investigação foi sustentada por uma metodologia qualitativa e contou com a participação de doze sujeitos portugueses: seis do sexo feminino (mães); e seis do sexo masculino (pais-homens), sendo estes os seus pares parentais e conjugais. Os dados foram recolhidos através de entrevistas semiestruturadas, que decorreram, via Zoom. Quanto à análise estatística, foi utilizada a técnica de análise fenomenológica interpretativa, com recurso ao Software MaxQDA.

Os resultados obtidos mostraram que, na primeira situação de confinamento, os pais-homens demonstraram um maior envolvimento paterno, tendo trabalhado com os filhos ao seu lado e desempenhado mais tarefas domésticas, o que afetou negativamente o seu bem-estar pessoal e a sua produtividade e concentração no trabalho. Na segunda situação de confinamento, os sujeitos vivenciaram um maior equilíbrio e uma maior conciliação trabalho-família, o que se traduziu no aumento dos seus níveis de produtividade e concentração no trabalho.

No que diz respeito à segunda situação de confinamento e às perceções das mães que foram apresentadas, não foi alcançada uma saturação teórica. Não obstante, espera-se que o presente estudo permita obter novas leituras e uma melhor compreensão acerca do impacto do envolvimento paterno na parentalidade e coparentalidade, e que apresente pontos de partida interessantes para estudos futuros.

Palavras-chave: *Teletrabalho, confinamento, famílias com filhos, envolvimento paterno, coparentalidade*

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Introduction

Scientific literature has shown that telework - associated with work activities performed remotely - has been expanding over the past few years (Rocha & Amador, 2018). Some authors characterise this flexible work practice as a potential promotor of harmony between the employers' professional and personal/family lives (Beauregard et al., 2019). Others explain that it is becoming intrusive and challenging for employers, making work-family management difficult, especially when there are children (Russell et al., 2009; Thulin et al., 2019). In this sense, flexibility at work seems to allow individuals to reconcile professional and personal responsibilities (Russell et al., 2009), but, on the other hand, it seems to enhance the establishment of blurred boundaries and the consequent imbalance between work and family systems (Williams & Alliger, 1994).

Given the situation caused by the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic, Portugal, as well as the other countries, declared a state of emergency, dictating that all Portuguese citizens who could work from home would have to adopt a telework regime and be confined at home (*Resolução n.º 15-A/2020 da Assembleia da República*, 2020; *Decreto n.º 14-A/2020, do Presidente da República*, 2020). Consequently, workers with children had to carry out their work and simultaneously perform their parental responsibilities, often in a record of co-parenting (Tavares et al., 2020), which entails that father and mother - as caregivers – support and coordinate each other, and make decisions, regarding the education and life of their children (Feinberg, 2003; Madden-Derdich & Leonard, 2000). Although the concept of paternity is associated with co-parenting, it often seems to be undervalued in society, as a result of the internalisation of intensive maternity on the part of mothers, which ends up interfering with the involvement of fathers in their parental roles (Johnston & Swanson, 2006; Mora et al., 2005). However, several studies highlight that with the active participation of women (mothers) in the labour market, fathers have been encouraged to participate more actively in raising their children, interacting in their care and activities, making themselves physically and emotionally available, and taking responsibility for planning tasks and roles related to the care of their children (Alarcão, 2000). Thus, scientific literature presents the concept of participatory paternity, which refers to the father's care and involvement in the children's daily lives (Sutter & Bucher-Maluschke, 2008).

Based on this concept, which alerts to the importance of looking at fathers as active and participatory subjects in family life from the beginning of their children's lives (Piccinini et al., 2009; Sutter & Bucher-Maluschke, 2008), and given the situation created by the pandemic, the subject of this study is considered of the utmost importance. Therefore, this analysis proposes to study Paternity and Telework in Portugal's lockdown. In this sense, the main objective is to analyse the impact of the possible physical proximity and paternal involvement in parenting and co-parenting, given the perspective and experience of fathers who have teleworked in the first or in

both lockdown situations in Portugal, and the perception of mothers regarding this situation experienced by the father of their children.

Six specific objectives will be studied to achieve this objective: (a) to infer whether the possible presence of children in a father's working space affected their well-being, productivity, or other aspects of their work; (b) to demonstrate whether there were differences in the attention/availability that, eventually, the father devoted to their children; (c) to identify the possible challenges that fathers have faced in the exercise and articulation of their parental role with the parental role of the mother of their children; (d) to ascertain how the working fathers promoted the telework-family conciliation; (e) to verify if it was easier to adapt to telework, in a lockdown situation, in the second experience; and (g) to list the possible fears of the working fathers regarding their professional circumstances and their relationship with their children in case this pandemic situation continues.

Thereby, based on the scientific literature, an increase in gender inequalities between fathers and mothers is expected (Gornick & Meyers, 2004). According to several studies, mothers who have teleworked after the emergence of the pandemic have performed more household chores and worked more often with their children by their side, which has affected their emotional stability and productivity (Lyttelton et al., 2020; Maume et al., 2010). For this reason, as proposed by some authors, it is expected that children will be less present in their father's work space and hours, allowing the establishment of clear boundaries between their work and family and, consequently, enhancing the maintenance of their levels of productivity and concentration at work as well as the investment in their leisure time (Leite et al., 2019; Tavares, 2017; Thulin et al., 2019). In addition, it is expected that fathers can promote a work-life balance and experience greater satisfaction and personal fulfilment in the exercise of paternity, while devoting higher quality attention to their children (Golden, 2009; Hilbrecht et al., 2008; Hill et al., 1996; Kossek et al., 2006). We also aim to find - as proposed by Beauregard et al. (2019) - that the adaptation to the second lockdown was easier since subjects would have gone through an experiential period of adjustment, which will ultimately foster the development of their ability to work remotely.

Finally, it is expected that this research will enable the achievement of new comprehensive readings about the impact that the possible physical proximity and paternal involvement may have on parenting and co-parenting, and will contribute towards the acquisition of fundamental knowledge for the research in psychology and the development of future studies.

I – Conceptual Framework

Teleworking

Period before the emergence of COVID-19 (pandemic situation)

Telework has been presented, in recent years, as an expanding practice, demonstrating technological and geographical advantages (Rocha & Amador, 2018) because it covers a multiplicity of schedules, spaces, and forms of remote work (Thulin et al., 2019). The concept of telework is associated with work activities, carried out remotely, through Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), "making it possible to obtain work results" without the worker having to go to their workplace (Rocha & Amador, 2018, p. 153). Traditionally, this flexible working practice is characterised as an agreement between the employer and the employee regarding the schedule and place of work in order to establish a work-life balance (Beauregard et al., 2019).

In this sense, before the situation caused by the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic, it was considered a "voluntary choice" for qualified employees with high socioeconomic status, these being mainly men, inhabitants of urban areas (Thulin et al., 2019, p. 13). However, it had already begun to expand to less qualified employees, in which case it was a less voluntary choice, meeting the employer's interests and demands (Thulin et al., 2019). According to Leite et al. (2019), companies and employers benefit, above all, by the fact that they can make better use of the physical space of the company and manage, more easily, the tasks and relationships between their employees, which ultimately increase their levels of performance and productivity. It has been seen that people have teleworked, essentially, to avoid travelling and to reconcile, more efficiently, their working time and their family time (Thulin et al., 2019). Thus, they reported experiencing higher levels of concentration and overall satisfaction as well as a decrease in work-related stress, anxiety, and the possibility of burnout (Tavares, 2017; Thulin et al., 2019). Besides, they have presented greater efficiency and flexibility in performing tasks and managing their personal lives, which are key factors for their quality of life and social sustainability (Tavares, 2017; Thulin et al., 2019). In addition, some authors show that variables such as workers' gender and the presence of children in their lives are considered when choosing a flexible working practice, such as the one mentioned above, as it generally promotes work-life balance for families with children (Hilbrecht et al., 2008). This work practice has become increasingly regular, not only in public spaces but mainly at home (Thulin et al., 2019). Some studies stated that some rules should be followed, which would allow telework to occur in a positive and structured way. According to Beauregard et al. (2019), employees should: have a space that meets health and safety standards; carry out their tasks without harming the company; have skills for communication, organisation, and execution of work,

autonomously; have an experiential period, in order to develop their ability to work remotely; fit into the employment contract, making sure there are means of internet connection and the necessary ICT; be guided, by their immediate superiors, and be in contact with colleagues, managing their time the best possible way.

Nevertheless, other authors argue that this interaction between telework and private life starts to present some disadvantages for the worker since this is, to some extent, an intrusive practice in their personal life (Thulin et al., 2019). Thus, instead of a benefit for them, it may become a "burden" bringing them several difficulties (Thulin et al., 2019, p. 2). Firstly, these authors indicate that they tend to fall into an excessive individualisation of work, a loss of its collective dimension, and a consequent professional and social isolation because they neither contact with other people nor with their colleagues (Rocha & Amador, 2018). In addition, they report that, due to the distance from their workplace, they are fearful about career development. They feel this way, firstly because of the high probability of a reduction in available training - which would enhance their professional growth (Felippe, 2018) - as well as a decrease in new professional opportunities, such as the promotion of employees (Charalampous et al., 2019). Moreover, they are fearful about the reduced contact with their boss and consequent reduction in the personal and professional support provided by him/her (Redman et al., 2009). They also explain that, although telework is, for some people, a way to reduce time pressure (Peters & van der Lippe, 2007), for others, it causes a more significant time pressure in their daily lives (Wajcman, 2015, quoted by Thulin et al., 2019). That is due to their difficulty in separating the space and time of work from their personal and family life (Rocha & Amador, 2018). According to some authors, such difficulty may arise, on the one hand, because of digital and mobile devices (Felippe, 2018; Rocha & Amador, 2018). That happens because it makes these employees feel obliged to be connected and available, permanently, and anywhere (Felippe, 2018), as well as being interrupted during their rest and leisure (Rocha & Amador, 2018). On the other hand, it may be because, at home, work is more often disturbed by several distracting factors, such as household chores, social networks, family members - especially children, when they exist - among others (Russell et al., 2009). Noonan et al. (2007) add that telework can affect how domestic work is shared between spouses and emphasise gender inequality. They explain that when women are longer at home (e.g., because they have reduced hours), they do more domestic chores and take care of the children (when they exist) more than men do.

Period after the emergence of COVID-19 (pandemic situation)

On 18 March 2020, seven days after the announcement of the World Health Organisation classifying the public health emergency caused by COVID-19 as an international pandemic (World Health Organisation, 2020) the still current President of the Portuguese Republic, Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, declared the state of emergency in Portugal (*Decreto n.º 14-A/2020, do Presidente da República*, 2020). Given the measures decreed, all shops were closed, with the exception to supermarkets, pharmacies, petrol stations, and restaurants with takeaway service; all entities were obliged to adopt a telework regime whenever possible (*Resolução n.º 15-A/2020 da Assembleia da*

República, 2020). Crèches, kindergartens, and schools were closed, therefore a Distance Learning modality came into force (*Despacho n.º 3427-B/2020 da Administração Interna*, 2020). For this reason, in a short period, many Portuguese-employed citizens were forced to be confined at home and into telework (Tavares et al., 2020). In addition, some workers were faced with the reality that, during their working hours, they had to take care of their children, who were also confined at home and, in the case of workers with children at school, they also had to help them with their school tasks (Tavares et al., 2020).

According to Baert et al. (2020), some workers reported that teleworking had a positive impact on their professional career, contributing to the: increase in their concentration, performance, and general satisfaction with work; the balance between their professional and private life; the decrease in their levels of stress and the probability of burnout, related to work; and their efficiency in performing tasks. These positive aspects are mainly expressed by women, who had to reconcile their work with their traditional roles, including performing household chores and taking care of their children (Baert et al., 2020). On the other hand, several workers pointed out some disadvantages that are related to: (a) their career development, such as the decreased possibility of being promoted and the difficulty to grow professionally (Tavares et al., 2020); (b) the reduced personal and professional support received, due to the lack of proximity with the boss/immediate superior (Baert et al., 2020; Redman et al., 2009); (c) the lack of professional interaction and communication with co-workers (Tavares et al., 2020), which may negatively affect interpersonal relationships (Charalampous et al., 2019); (d) the lack of support resources, such as internet and printer (Tavares et al., 2020); and (e) the reconciliation between productivity/concentration at work, and domestic chores, social networks and dedication to children, especially the youngest (Tavares et al., 2020). It should be noted that, according to Baert et al. (2020), workers with young children have shown more dissatisfied with the further extension of telework because they had to reconcile childcare with their work. Parents who have spent more time teleworking were also dissatisfied, reporting higher levels of *stress*, fatigue, and sadness than those who continued to work at their workplace (Baert et al., 2020; Lyttelton et al., 2020; Tavares et al., 2020).

Telework and family

Telework-family (non)conciliation

The work-family balance may be, according to some authors, either harmed or benefited by telework (Solís, 2016). On the one hand, they indicate that flexibility and autonomy at work may allow individuals to integrate and/or overlap, work responsibilities and family responsibilities in time and space (Galinsky et al., 1993). On the other hand, they consider that research is still limited, and that little is known about such flexibility, which may or may not allow individuals to find a balance between those responsibilities (Hill et al., 1996). In this sense, they characterise telework as a "cyberspace sweatshop" (Hill et al., 1996, p. 294), enhancing the establishment of blurred boundaries between work and family systems (Williams & Alliger, 1994). Those lead individuals to lose control over their time and work space and to fail to achieve a balance between

these two systems (Williams & Alliger, 1994), which brings negative repercussions for their lives, for example, at the level of health (physical and psychological), time management and family balance (Galinsky et al., 1993).

According to Sullivan (2012, quoted by Solís, 2016), to understand whether telework is avoiding or promoting work-family conflict, it is necessary to consider factors such as: (1) the space one uses to work at home; (2) the presence of people at home while one is working; (3) the number of working days; (4) the flexibility to establish a work schedule; (5) the responsibilities outside the work environment; and (6) the time spent working.

Regarding the (1) space that is used to work at home, some authors mention it must resemble the existing space in the workplace; in order to allow the establishment of clear boundaries between family and professional matters and promote teleworking effectiveness (Kossek et al., 2006; Tietze, 2002; Wapshott & Mallett, 2012). Research has shown that, on the one hand, some individuals find it beneficial to have this space at home, as they have started working fewer additional hours per week, with fewer distractions and interference from family members, who began to recognize this space as a work area (Peters et al., 2001). On the other hand, several workers state that "having a home office with a door" makes them have less time for family life, interacting less and being more distant from their relatives, as they no longer have "external cues" about "when it is time for work to stop" (Hill et al., 1996, p. 298). As for (2) the presence of people at home while working, several workers indicate that this allows higher interaction with their family members, especially during breaks from their work (Tietze, 2002). In contrast, some individuals reported that the presence of other family members during the working time was a stressful and distracting factor, affecting their productivity (Mello, 2007). Regarding the (3) number of working days, research shows that, for some people, working more days and hours at home, but with pre-defined schedules, allows them to "reduce family and work interference" and experience lower levels of stress (Solís, 2016, p. 451). However, other workers report that, by teleworking, they work more days and hours than supposed, extending their working hours sometimes to the weekend and interfering with the time for the family (Hill et al., 1996). As for the (4) flexibility to set a schedule for telework, some studies show that several people can organize their time better and devote more attention to their families; by doing that, they achieve better results at work and, consequently, a greater family balance and stability (Golden, 2009; Hill et al., 1996; Kossek et al., 2006). However, some authors warn that such flexibility can be harmful when excessively used because it may make some individuals work longer hours, leading to the emergence of family conflicts (Hill et al., 1996). Concerning the (5) responsibilities outside the work environment, such as household chores, childcare, and leisure activities, research shows that when telework provides autonomy and flexibility to individuals, these are managed more positively and satisfactorily (Hill et al., 2003). Several authors point out that people with young children often rate the telework experience as positive because it allows them to face the constant challenge of reconciling their professional and family responsibilities, mainly childcare and domestic chores (Hill et al., 1996). On the other hand, several workers state that the overlapping of family duties with work may trigger the emergence of

conflicts between these two systems, especially if the amount of tasks is very high and individuals are not free to set a working schedule more comfortable for them, making it challenging to manage their time (Hill et al., 1996). Finally, when considering the (6) time spent teleworking, several authors explain that, after a few months, the stress levels of some individuals start to decrease because they begin to develop a healthy working routine and get used to this new reality (Madsen, 2003). Nevertheless, several people indicate that, because they were always at home and apparently always available, they started to be constantly interrupted by their relatives (Solís, 2016), which caused their work performance to be negatively affected; thus, family conflicts started to arise (Jensen, 2007).

In this sense, research indicates that, for some individuals, telework can be a trap, leading them to have an "all-the-time-everywhere-office" and to transmit, especially to their children, that they are never emotionally available to establish affectionate family relationships (Hill et al., 1996, p. 300). However, for others, it "may open the door to a warm and caring electronic cottage" as they now enjoy the flexibility of their work to devote more time to their family (Hill et al., 1996, p. 300).

Gender Differences

Some authors indicate that telework may accentuate gender inequality between fathers and mothers, especially in childcare and domestic chores, due to the fact that some more traditionalist beliefs are still very much rooted in our society (Gornick & Meyers, 2004). Research indicates that, when teleworking, fathers experience positive effects on their work performance (Hilbrecht et al., 2008), doing little domestic work, compared to mothers (Lyttelton et al., 2020). On the other hand, it shows us that many mothers, especially those with young children, rate this experience as negative, as it triggers conflicts at family level (Bianchi et al., 2012; Hilbrecht et al., 2008), negatively affects their productivity and progression - at professional level - and their remuneration (Musick et al., 2016) and, therefore, leads to higher levels of *stress* and fatigue (Lyttelton et al., 2020). This seems to be due to the fact that a mother devotes her time to multiple tasks, being interrupted and more likely to divide her attention between work and family, having to involuntarily give up her leisure time and being more often disturbed by her children during her sleep (Musick et al., 2016); while the father invests more in his work and leisure time (Noonan & Glass, 2012). In contrast, several studies explain that some mothers have strong motivations to telework because, having a more flexible schedule, they can more easily deal with family responsibilities and have more time for themselves, thus feeling lower levels of stress (Goldin, 2014; Mokhtarian et al., 1998). In this way, they are more willing than the fathers to accept lower salaries, since the latter usually telework in order to "do more work" (Mas & Pallais, 2017; Mokhtarian et al., 1998, p. 1121).

Several studies have shown that teleworking mothers after the onset of COVID-19 performed more household chores and worked more often with the child by their side than teleworking fathers (Lyttelton et al., 2020; Maume et al., 2010). This, according to research, appears

to have considerably affected their emotional stability, the number of hours they worked and their productivity (Lyttelton et al., 2020; Maume et al., 2010). However, there is evidence that fathers in telework took more care of their children and spent more time doing household chores than their colleagues who continued to work at their workplace (Lyttelton et al., 2020). Furthermore, in cases where mothers worked full-time at their workplace, fathers in telework also appeared to have spent more time caring for their children (Lyttelton et al., 2020). Collins et al. (2020) indicate, however, that the extension of teleworking in result of COVID-19, may further increase gender inequalities at the occupational level (labour market) and family level (in the division of household tasks), mainly due to the closure of crèches, kindergartens and schools.

Families with Children

A family "is a complex network of relationships and emotions within which feelings and behaviours take place", so the simple description of its elements "does not serve to convey the richness and relational complexity of this structure" (Gameiro, 1992, p. 187). In other words, "family development refers to the change of the family as a group, as well as to the changes in its individual members" (Relvas, 1996, p. 16), who, in interaction with other systems, acquire and bring to their own system "new information which can imply its organisation", determining its idiosyncratic character (Gameiro, 1992, p. 195). Each family is, then, a system in constant interaction with other systems which inevitably affect its organisation (Gameiro, 1992). In this sense, all families evolve, going through a life cycle characterised by moments of stability and moments when they must undergo "important modifications in their structure and rules" (Gameiro, 1992, p. 199). So that they do not go into dysfunction, in these phases, they should remain open to new stimuli and information that allow them to develop and adapt to the new rules that emerge, as a result of their evolution (Gameiro, 1992).

According to Alarcão (2000), at the first stage of the life cycle of a family - the *formation of the couple* - a pivotal stage for the development of conjugal and family life, a new stage may emerge for the family - *family with young children* - marked by the birth of the first child. This stage determines the emergence of a (new) parental subsystem and, consequently, the establishment of new functions, tasks, and relational reorganisations (Alarcão, 2000). As a result of the sociocultural and family evolution, which allowed the integration of women in the labour market, the man and the woman seem to have started to move "towards a new complementarity of the maternal and parental functions" - more egalitarian - having the father started to assume a "relevant role since the birth of the child" (Alarcão, 2000; Relvas, 1996, p. 84). The woman-mother allowed herself to start establishing more easily a "separation-individuation", regarding her child, and on the other hand, she ended up promoting the establishment of a father-child relationship, at an earlier stage (Alarcão, 2000, p. 134). Therefore, at this stage, "the dyad extends to a triad" (Relvas, 1996, p. 77) and, so that this triangulation does not become rigid, it might be important that, besides the children, also the parents learn "to relate to each other dyadicaly in the presence of a third party" (Alarcão, 2000, p. 133). In addition, some authors highlight the fact that the birth of the first child

has an impact for both parents (a) at a professional level, since they depend on a source of income to manage their financial and psychological balance; and (b) at a parental and conjugal level, since both spouses end up being challenged to reconcile conjugality with parenting, i.e, to "nurture the 'we' of the couple and the 'self' of each of them", while articulating their functions - as parents - which are different, but, for Alarcão (2000), should complement each other (p. 131). Only this way will they allow their children to create an attachment model, which makes them feel integrated in the system and, consequently, more secure, developing their own identity and gradually becoming more autonomous (Alarcão, 2000). According to Relvas (1996), later on, with the birth of the second child and therefore the creation of a (new) fraternal subsystem, children learn to establish their interpersonal relationships and socialise with their peers, this being an opportunity for "the development of complicity, companionship and support" that children need (Alarcão, 2000, p. 148). In sum, it is fundamental to highlight the importance of the support of the family of origin and/or the extended family, mainly the grandparents (when possible), as they can be a great source of support - for the parental subsystem - "temporarily relieving it of some of its responsibilities and making it more flexible and creative", because it will be "less saturated and tense" (Alarcão, 2000, p. 139). Furthermore, they will possibly be promoting agents of the children's development, at an educational and relational/social level (Alarcão, 2000), being fundamental that their "educational models" are not incompatible with those of the parental subsystem, otherwise, they become a source of *stress* and conflict for the latter (Relvas, 1996, p. 109).

When children start school (primary school level), a new and challenging stage appears for the family - *family with children at school* - which will originate some changes regarding its organisation and the relationships it will establish with other systems, such as the school system (Alarcão, 2000). It should be highlighted that the family continues, at this stage, to have the important function of *providing care and protection to its members* - internal function - as well as *allowing their socialisation* - external function (Relvas, 1996). Therefore, it is expected that there is a greater opening of the system to the outside, being fundamental the establishment of a positive family-school relationship, i.e., a relationship that balances between symmetry and complementarity, since both systems have, on the one hand, the common objective of educating the child - enhancing its growth and the development of its autonomy - but, on the other hand, a distinct status, functions and specific objectives (Alarcão, 2000). At this stage, the family goes through new experiences, more or less significant, such as the emergence of a school timetable and additional study tasks to be done at home, which implies the creation of a space that allows children to respond adequately to this new reality (Alarcão, 2000). As a consequence, parents, in the exercise of their parental functions, have to articulate the management of the various activities and the care to be provided to their children with the management of their autonomy, being their main source of support and protection, while imposing on them an "increasingly complex set of rules and norms of action" (Alarcão, 2000, p. 157). Thus, this phase will allow the child to acquire new skills, knowledge and potentialities, and to get to know new relational models, which enhance the development of his/her identity and the need to emancipate him/herself "from his/her identification

models" (Alarcão, 2000, p. 158; Relvas, 1996). This shows that both the child and his/her parents are progressively "separating and autonomising" (Alarcão, 2000, p. 158).

Once the adolescence phase is reached, the family once again enters a new stage - *family with adolescent children* - a phase of "great changes", being considered the "longest and most difficult of the life cycle" (Alarcão, 2000, p. 165). According to Alarcão (2000), this is a stage that requires a constant balance between the goals and impositions of the family system and the wishes of each of its members, being important the establishment of a greater relational symmetry between parents and children and the provision of support and understanding by parents regarding their children's need for autonomy and individualisation. It is therefore important that parents impose "clear, precise and coherent rules", but, at the same time try to be flexible, respecting "the feelings, values, attitudes and behaviours of adolescents", with the purpose of developing an environment of greater balance, security, cooperation and mutual understanding (Alarcão, 2000, p. 164 and p. 168). In this sense, on the one hand, in their daily life, children request less and less the presence of their parents, who "become reserve figures of attachment" and re-focus on conjugality (Weiss, 1982 quoted by Alarcão, 2000, p. 172; Relvas, 1996). On the other hand, they still need their encouragement, help and approval for certain situations and daily events, so that both parents continue to play a fundamental role in their cognitive and emotional development, promoting their differentiation as future adults (Alarcão, 2000). The parental subsystem is therefore challenged to become more flexible "in terms of limits", due to the adolescent's "coming and going" outside and inside the system (Relvas, 1996, p. 154). Thus, in this phase, parents relearn how to be parents, not giving up their power, but practicing an "articulation of complementarities" with their children, where there is room for a metacommunication about the difficulties and feelings of all, and for the sharing of ideas and experiences (Alarcão, 2000, p. 174). It is in this exchange of experiences that the various elements of the system attain new knowledge and know-how and establish new relationships that will allow them to grow in a healthy way (Alarcão, 2000). Therefore, the school - promoter of new contacts and stimuli - is fundamental, since it contributes to the relational diversity of the adolescent (who gets to know a "group of equals" where he can assert himself) and to the development and (re)organisation of the family system (Alarcão, 2000; Relvas, 1996, p. 180).

Parenting and Co-parenting

A family consists of a group of elements in constant interaction with each other and with their context, so that the behaviour of one element affects all the others (Minuchin, 1982). In this sense, according to Relvas (1996), after the birth of a child, the identity, the functions, and the relationships between family members change and have to be redefined, mainly between the parents. Some authors point out that the concept of parenting, influenced by cultural and socioeconomic transformations, has progressively evolved (Martins, 2009), since the Middle Ages until now, when the family's primary role was only to procreate and provide for the new members' property and name, and then, from the 18th century on, it began to value the sensitivity and intimacy of the relationships established (Ariès, 1981). Additionally, they state that this evolution, occurred

at the level of the family, can be distinguished in three phases. The first, the traditional family, was seen as the one which, through marriages arranged by the parents, transmitted their heritage and was characterised by submission - to patriarchal authority - and by the absence of bonds and affection in the constitution of the couple (Roudinesco, 2003). The second, the modern family, was governed by values such as love and union between spouses, the valuing of maternity and the education of children, as well as the establishment of hierarchical relations between men and women (Ariès, 1981; Roudinesco, 2003). Cúnico and Arpini (2013) explain that this phase had a strong impact on the lives of men and women, mainly "in the organisation of the roles of father and mother to be played by the couple" (p.30), defining who would have the function of "caring for" or "caring with" (Tronto, 1997). In this way, men were linked to public life – as providers, holders of moral example and role models of professional achievement (caring with) - and women to private and domestic life - responsible for educating, caring and meeting the needs of children (caring for) (Crepaldi et al., 2006; Vieira & Souza, 2010). Finally, the third phase, contemporary family, began to consider the union of two people who seek an intimate relationship, believing that, when affection and/or common goals cease to exist, they have the freedom to end the relationship (Cúnico & Arpini, 2013; Pereira, 2016). This family configuration, combined with the fact that women-mothers were inserted into the labour market, allowed the division and sharing of tasks and responsibilities to begin to be done in a more equal way, thus emerging different types of relationships in the family (Borsa & Nunes, 2008; Petrini, 2005). In this sense, some authors argue that the social and cultural structure of a couple will be pivotal in the process of transition to parenting, determining the meanings and representations of parenting and the parental experience of both spouses (Martins et al., 2014). Thus, according to Nudler and Romaniuk (2005), parenting cannot be defined without considering the relational context in which it develops and, therefore, it can be defined as a "complex relational system of practices and subjective modes through which men and women raise their children" (p. 270).

Although some research shows that, in many settings, both parents claim to be more equal in the establishment of parental roles and in the division of tasks than their parents were, there is a contradiction between their discourse and practice (Miller, 2011). In other words, many families still consider that: the mother should take care of and be available for her children and the house, being in charge of domestic and emotional tasks (Pinquart & Teubert, 2010); and the father should have a less affective attitude, being the main source of support for the family (Martins et al., 2014), and perform more playful, intellectual and physical tasks related to learning, intellectual growth and the development of children's autonomy, confidence and safety (Dumont & Paquette, 2013; Paquette, 2004). For some authors, this seems to occur due to the fact that: (a) mothers have internalised attitudes of an intensive maternity, as a result of the overvaluation of their role in society; and (b) sometimes, they end up limiting the fathers' involvement in their parental roles, which prevents these functions from being assumed in co-parenting (Johnston & Swanson, 2006; Mora et al., 2005). In this sense, the literature indicates that the way in which the couple members conceive and organise themselves in the transition to parenting, based on their cultural and social

foundations, will project their individual values, beliefs and expectations, influencing the way they will experience co-parenting (Martins et al., 2014). However, it should be noted that, according to Margolin et al. (2001), although co-parenting and conjugality are significantly related, they should be understood as conceptually distinct, since co-parenting continues to exist even if the parental couple is separated, i.e., its exercise is motivated by the concern with the children's well-being and not by the well-being of the partner or the marital relationship (Gable et al., 1992).

Thus, the concept of co-parenting refers to the "level of interaction" that the father and mother maintain with each other, i.e., how they support and coordinate each other and how they make decisions regarding the education and life of their children, as caregivers (Feinberg, 2003; Madden-Derdich & Leonard, 2000, p. 313). There is, therefore, co-parenting whenever a negotiation of roles and responsibilities arises aiming to meet the needs of children (Margolin et al., 2001). The term co-parenting thus does not seem to imply that parents' roles "are or should be equal in authority or responsibility"(Feinberg, 2003, p. 96). On the other hand, they may be overlapping or shared, with "the degree of equality in the co-parenting relationship being determined in each case" by the parental pair (Feinberg, 2003, p. 96-97). Deutsch et al. (2001) state that when there is a sharing and redistribution of tasks, between the father and the mother, allowing the performance of specific complementary roles, the family seems to develop more harmoniously. In this sense, studies explain that when the division of tasks and roles corresponds to the expectations and beliefs of both parents, the latter feel satisfied and fulfilled (Hackel & Ruble, 1992; MacDermid et al., 1990).

For this reason, according to Feinberg (2003), some authors characterise co-parenting considering four interrelated components: (1) *childrearing agreement*, i.e., the degree to which parental figures agree on child-related issues (e.g., values, rules, emotional needs); (2) the division of labour, i.e., the division of tasks, roles and responsibilities associated with the child's routine and care, or with household chores (Feinberg, 2003); (3) the support in the exercise of parental functions, i.e., the recognition of the other, as father/mother, respecting his/her contributions, decisions and authority (McHale, 1995); and (4) the joint management of family interactions, that is to say, the way in which parents control behaviours and communication and contribute to the interaction and establishment of relational boundaries between the members of the system (Feinberg, 2003). Additionally, they indicate that there are some factors which influence the patterns of interaction and the degree of harmony in the exercise of co-parenting at an individual level, for example, the attitudes, beliefs, expectations and mental health of the parents and the temperament of the children (Feinberg, 2003); at a family level, mainly the relationship between father and mother (e.g., in managing the care and monitoring of children) (Kitzmann, 2000); and extrafamilial, such as economic stress*,* work stress, tensions and conflicts related to work-family reconciliation (e.g., managing time for work vs. time for family) (Conger et al., 1994; Guelzow et al., 1991).

Thus, just like families, co-parenting is not static, changing due to the individuals' developmental processes (Martins et al., 2014). Such processes, influenced by the social and

cultural context of these individuals, seem to determine the differences that exist between them and between each family, distinguishing how each one views and exercises co-parenting (Kreppner, 1988).

Paternity and paternal involvement

Over the years, the father's role and place within the system has undergone important changes which, according to Cúnico and Arpini (2013), should be understood in a historical and social context. Research indicates that the hierarchical roles of breadwinner father and domestic mother gave way to greater democratization and equality within the family system, which consequently gave rise to a new configuration for the exercise of paternity (Kehl, 2003; Petrini, 2005). In this way, several authors lead us to observe that, although characteristics of the "old father" still persist, associated with the traditional definition of paternity, the "new father" (Campeol & Crepaldi, 2019, p. 503), began to emerge as an affective, empathetic figure responsible for caring for his children, a "nurturing father" (Crepaldi et al., 2006; Lamb & Tamis-Lemonda, 2010, p. 3; Staudt & Wagner, 2008). Thereby, even though he is getting closer to this concept of nurturing father, he still does not provide all the care to his children independently and resists participating and performing the daily household chores (Benczik, 2011; Boris, 2000). In other words, this paternal involvement in caring for the children does not necessarily determine that this new father also appropriates "domestic life itself, since there remains a distinction between being a father and being a homemaker" (Sutter & Bucher-Maluschke, 2008, p. 81). As some authors explain, this may be due to the fact that our society still encourages and values the image of strength, superiority and masculinity of the man-father (Freitas et al., 2009), who seems to suffer greater discrimination when he seeks to exercise a more responsible, sensitive and participatory paternity, as well as to perform functions traditionally imposed on the woman-mother (Cúnico & Arpini, 2013; Staudt & Wagner, 2008).

Nevertheless, several authors warn us that there is no single paternal model (Cúnico & Arpini, 2013), as the performance of paternity is "interrelated with the different ecological systems in which the family is embedded" (Bronfenbrenner, 2005, quoted by Campeol & Crepaldi, 2019, p. 516). For this reason, in the exercise of paternity, conditions internal and external to the system (e.g., nationality, social class, age) make such an experience to be felt and experienced in very different and particular ways from father to father (Bustamante, 2005; Campeol & Crepaldi, 2019). In addition, they add that, for each man to experience paternity in a more present way, it will be necessary for him to desire it, but, mainly, to feel valued by the mother of his children, his family and society in general, in the exercise of his duties (Cúnico & Arpini, 2013). According to Bustamante (2005), paternity is not only built at the sociocultural level, where the definition of father as a provider of resources and a figure of respect and authority is still not forgotten, but also at the relational level, considering his relationship with the mother of his children. In this sense, when the mother allows him to take care of his children, encouraging and supporting him to perform tasks socially assigned to women, she ends up providing the establishment of a closer and more

participatory relationship between fathers and their children (Deutsch, 2001). In this sense, some authors put forward the concept of participatory paternity, "which implies the father's care and involvement" in the children's daily lives, "in areas such as feeding, hygiene and education" (Sutter & Bucher-Maluschke, 2008, p. 75). In addition, several studies show that, as a result of the "effective presence of women in the labour market", the new father has started to be removed from the "place of sole provider" (Crepaldi et al., 2006, p. 585) and encouraged to participate actively in the upbringing of children, expressing feelings of attachment and emotion towards them and prioritising paternity over other areas of life, such as work (Sutter & Bucher-Maluschke, 2008). According to Lamb et al. (1985), this notion of paternal involvement is characterised along three dimensions: interaction, which includes the care and activities that fathers share with their children; availability, which refers to the father's physical and/or psychological accessibility to his children; and responsibility, which refers to the fathers' concerns, task planning, roles and worries related to the care of their children.

Sutter and Bucher-Maluschke (2008) characterise this "caregiving father" as the one who seems to recover, within him, "the ability to love, welcome and care, repressed by a patriarchal past, which denied men this dimension of their own human and psychobiological development", the dimension of care and intimacy (p.81). They also lead us to reflect that they are in a process of "transition between old, pre-established identity models" and the search for "a lifestyle", which allows for greater proximity and daily coexistence with their children, participating in their care (Sutter & Bucher-Maluschke, 2008, p. 81). According to some authors, this configuration of paternity allows us to understand that child care and education are no longer seen as exclusive functions of the mother (Goetz & Vieira, 2009; Piccinini et al., 2009), reflecting a gradual reassignment of male roles in relation to paternity (Genesoni & Tallandini, 2009). According to Campeol and Crepaldi (2019), exploring "the feelings that fathers have towards paternity, the satisfaction and closeness towards their children, both emotionally and physically, stand out" (p. 518), and this willingness and emotional openness of fathers to engage in paternity are the main reasons for a greater participation in their children's lives (Krob et al., 2009). However, several authors warn us that this father-child relationship is indirectly influenced by the father's working conditions (Cia & Barham, 2006), which, in turn, directly affect his satisfaction with his family performance (Campeol & Crepaldi, 2019). For this reason, the importance of children attending institutions such as crèches, kindergartens and schools has been reinforced in order to allow fathers to establish a stable and secure bond with their work, resume their personal activities and (re)invest in their marital relationship, which are key factors for the social construction of paternity (Campeol & Crepaldi, 2019; Gabriel & Lopes, 2016).

Several authors also emphasised the need to look at the father not as a mere "coadjuvant in the mother's care and support" (Crepaldi et al., 2006, p. 581), but as a participant and active subject in family life, since the period of pregnancy of the mother of their children, loving, suffering, being sensitive and feeling pleasure in the exercise of paternity (Piccinini et al., 2009; Sutter & Bucher-Maluschke, 2008). According to Sutter and Bucher-Maluschke (2008), "if we admit that men can

be tender and nurturing, capable of deep bonds with their children, then these will also be masculine attributes" (p. 81).

II - Objectives

Based on the literature review, it was possible to outline the general objective of this study, which aims to analyse the impact of the possible physical proximity and paternal involvement in parenting and co-parenting, considering the perspective and experience of fathers who have teleworked in the first or in both lockdown situations in Portugal, and the perception of mothers regarding this situation experienced by the father of their children.

In function of this general objective, the following specific objectives are presented:

a. To infer whether the possible presence of children in a father's working space affected their well-being, productivity, or other aspects of their work;

b. To demonstrate whether there were differences in the attention/availability that, eventually, the father devoted to their children;

c. To identify the possible challenges that fathers have faced in the exercise and articulation of their parental role with the parental role of the mother of their children;

d. To ascertain the way in which fathers promoted the reconciliation telework-family;

e. To verify if it was easier to adapt to telework, in a lockdown situation, in the second experience;

f. To list the possible fears of the working fathers regarding their professional circumstances and their relationship with their children in case this pandemic situation continues.

III - Methodology

Research Design

This study was based on a qualitative methodology, using a semi-structured interview script about the Paternities and Teleworking in the lockdown situation in Portugal, based on "certain basic questions, supported by theories" and previously collected information about the phenomenon under study (Triviños, 1987, p. 146). This type of (qualitative) research is characterised by understanding the perspective, experience, and meanings of the interviewees, in different contexts, regarding a "perceived situation" (Bengtsson, 2016, p. 8). In this sense, through the abovementioned research method, we intended to allow the interviewee to develop new hypotheses and research contents, based on his/her experiences, perceptions, feelings, and meanings, which are difficult to achieve through direct observation (Nogueira-Martins & Bógus, 2004; Triviños, 1987).

In order to reach and interpret the meanings contained in the participants' reports, it was used the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis Technique (Smith, 1997). Thereby, as this is a phenomenological analysis, i.e., representative of the participant's personal perspective and experiences, and interpretive, i.e., dependent on the researcher's "conceptions and standpoint" (Willig, 2013, p. 289), in an "interpretive engagement with the texts and transcripts" (Smith, 1997, p. 189), it was sought to develop a reflexive and non-directive posture in order to enter "the world of the research participant" (Willig, 2013, p. 261).

During the data analysis process, carried out using the MaxQDA Software, some steps were followed: (a) reading, re-reading, and vertical clipping of each interview, i.e., the fragmentation of the text into paragraphs to which were assigned a word or expression that translated the general meaning of this clipping; (b) regrouping or horizontal comparison of these clippings, that is, a comparison between the expressions with the same or similar meaning between transcripts, in order to understand their connections; (c) elaboration of a categorical tree, to organise "hierarchically (in a tree) the clippings" made in the two previous phases, to outline a system of categories, themes and sub-themes; (d) construction of a matrix - summary table - of the elaborated themes and sub-themes, and respective registration units (Amado, 2017, p. 328-329; Willig, 2013). It should be noted that the system of categories was built in an open procedure, "purely induced from the analysis, although subordinated to the researcher's theoretical background" (Amado, 2017, p. 315-316). So, to ascertain its accuracy and understand whether it would meet the analysis objectives, the interviews were successively reviewed and re-read. Finally, the results were presented and interpreted, by articulating and comparing the data and themes obtained from the analysis of the interviews and the existing scientific literature on the phenomenon under study (Willig, 2013).

Sample

The study sample, collected at the moment of the interview, was composed of a total of twelve subjects, of Portuguese nationality: (a) six females (mothers); and (b) six males (father-men), these being each other's parental and, also, conjugal peers. As shown in Table 1, the mothers' ages vary between 39 and 52 years old (M=44.67). All mothers have completed the university degree and, concerning their professional situation, they are all employed and practice the following professions: banker (*n*=1), editorial coordinator (*n*=1), nurse (*n*=1), English teacher (elementary/middle school) (*n*=1), music teacher (*n*=1) and clinical psychologist (*n*=1). The ages of the male parents vary between 38 and 48 years old (M=43.33). Most of them are graduated from university and, regarding their professional situation, all parents are employed and their professions are: commercial sales representative from the pharmaceutical industry (*n*=1), electrical engineer (*n*=1), manager (*n*=1), legal department senior clerk (*n*=1), swimming teacher (*n*=1) and university teacher (*n*=1).

Regarding the number of children, from the six parental pairs mentioned above, five have two children, and one only has one child; four of these children are female, and seven are male. Their ages range from eight months to nineteen years (M=10.97), and they are: under parental care at home (*n*=1); at kindergarten (*n*=2); in the 4th grade (*n*=1); in the 5th grade (*n*=1); in the 8th grade (*n*=4); in the 12th grade (*n*=1); and freshman and sophomore at university (*n*=2). It is highlighted that, from the first to the second lockdown, there were some changes at the sample characterisation (e.g., regarding the number of children of the parental pairs and the schooling level of their children).

Table 1

Sociodemographic data of the participants

Father	Age	Schooling	Occupation	Marital status	Nº of children	Age (children)	Schooling (children)	Occupation (mother)	Age (mother)
P1F	42	University Degree	Teacher (Swimming)	Married	2	9/13	4th and 8th grade	Clinical psychologist	42
P2F	38	University Degree	Manager	Married	2	8m/3	(not applied) / kindergarten	Editorial coordinator	39
P3F	40	University Degree	Electrical engineer	Married	2	6/11	kindergarten/ 5th grade	Teacher (Music)	40
P4F	45	PhD	University Teacher	Married	2	14/19	8th grade/ sophomore university	Banker	46
P5F	47	University Degree	Legal department senior clerk	Married	1	13	8th grade	Nurse	49
P6F	48	Bachelor's degree	Commercial sales represent. from the pharmac. industry	Married	2	14/18	8th /freshman university	Teacher (English)	52
$\varkappa$	43.33				2	10.97			44.67

Data Collection

The interviews took place over a month, according to the ethical procedures recommended for their conduct (American Psychological Association, 2002). Thus, subjects had access to two documents: (a) an informed consent, which stated that they had agreed to participate in the interview, and which guaranteed the anonymity and confidentiality of the personal data and information they would provide (see Annex A); and (b) a survey which requested some of their sociodemographic and familiar data, and informed them about the scope, purpose and the way information from the interviews would be collected, as well as the voluntary nature of their participation (see Annexes B and C). Both documents were filled in by each participant at the time of the interviews, which took place, via Zoom, due to the pandemic situation originated by COVID-19. The subjects were reached in person or by telephone - providing a convenience sampling (Marotti et al., 2008) - and allowed the interviews to be audio recorded for later transcription and interpretative phenomenological analysis.

In order to accomplish these interviews, some inclusion criteria had to be considered. Regarding the fathers, they should have teleworked, at least, in the first lockdown situation (from March 2020) for a month or more. For the mothers to be interviewed, the fathers of their children should present the criteria previously described. In addition, only fathers and mothers of children and/or adolescents (from 0 to 16 years old, inclusive) from intact nuclear families were chosen as interview subjects. It should be noted that two parental pairs with children aged over 16 were interviewed, as they also had children aged under 16.

The interviews varied considerably in length (between 16 and 120 minutes), depending on the characteristics of the subjects or the frequency with which the father was in a telework situation (in only one or in both situations of confinement).

Instruments used

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, which were prepared in order to collect information regarding the first or both lockdown situations that took place in Portugal (the first, starting in March 2020; and the second, starting in January 2021), in cases where the father has also teleworked in the second lockdown situation. Therefore, regarding the subjects who only teleworked in the first lockdown situation, the questions asked merely addressed to that reality. Thus, based on the scientific literature review, an interview script was developed: an instrument which, throughout its composition, underwent "successive modifications" resulting from the application of "preliminary interviews" (Nogueira-Martins & Bógus, 2004, p. 50). The script applied to the fathers was divided into the following discussion topics: (a) telework; (b) paternal involvement; (c) co-parenting; (d) telework-family conciliation; (e) future situations; and (f) session closing questions (see Appendix A). The script aimed at the mothers covered the same topics of discussion but focused on their perception regarding the experience of the father of their children (see Appendix B). These scripts included questions such as: "Did you notice any difference in the attention/availability you have provided to your children compared to what was usual?"; "Do you

notice any difference in the attention/availability you have given to your children, concerning what happened in the first lockdown?"; "During the first telework experience, in lockdown, do you consider that the father of your children worked more than when he was at his workplace?".

IV - Results

Firstly, this study's interviews were transcribed, read, and cut by themes, i.e., words or expressions that reflected the experiential dimension of each clipping. These themes were analysed and compared in order to verify their meanings, their similarities and differences, and, thus, allow for their grouping into categories, i.e., "clusters of themes", which capture the "essence" of what is described in the text (Willig, 2013, p. 264), namely "the participants' experiences" and the "attempt to make sense of them" (Smith et al., 2009, p. 79). The described analysis gave rise to a Category Based-Tree about Paternities and Teleworking during the extended lockdown in Portugal (see Appendix C), which presents: (a) the categories and respective themes/subthemes that emerged from the analysis of the interviews about the first lockdown (experience of six fathers and - in grey - perceptions of six mothers); and (b) the categories and respective themes/subthemes where changes occurred (in green), in the second lockdown (experience of the three fathers who have teleworked, in the second lockdown).

The results of the qualitative analysis, using the MaxQDA software, will be organised around the five elaborated categories - (1) work management, (2) paternal involvement, (3) co-parenting, (4) telework-family conciliation and (5) future perspectives - which allowed the grouping of the verbalizations (register units) of the subjects in a Matrix (see Appendix D).

1. Work Management

1.1. Changes at work

Concerning the changes at work, some fathers (n=5) reported that, in the first lockdown, differences emerged in their schedules (see Figure 1), which extended beyond their usual end time, since they were always online and did not disconnect in the same way (n=2) - "(...) I felt that I was working longer (...) I had to be permanently attentive to my email inbox (...) I had a feeling that I was not disconnecting in the same way as on a normal working day (...)" (P6F) - and because they felt the need to compensate the time when they stopped working to help their children or perform tasks at home (n=3):

> "(...) sometimes, yes, I overworked, but I was also aware that, for example, in the middle of the afternoon, my oldest son had come to ask me a question about his homework, so, at the end of the day, I ended up making up for that little bit that I "had lost" with him, because I felt obliged to do something else" (P3F).

In addition, they reported the emergence of changes in the workload which, depending on their professional area, decreased (n=2) - "(...) I worked less (...) as I work in the city swimming pool (...) the workload was much lower (...)" (P1F) - or increased (n=2) - "(...) everything had to be

adapted (...) there was also a phase of learning how to adapt to new technologies (...), new ways of working which, naturally, led to much more work, without a doubt" (P4F).

1.2. Professional performance

At the level of professional performance, some subjects reported that, in the first lockdown, their productivity and concentration decreased. Two subjects - with children aged between two and ten years old - justified this decrease with the fact that they had to attend to their children's needs ["(...) The fact that we are with the kid at home (...) it is more or less undeniable to say that this affected productivity at work" (P2F)]. In addition, three subjects indicated that this occurred as their employers were not properly prepared, on a technical and practical level, to take on a telework practice ["(...) being at the workplace is easier, both for the contact with colleagues and for the work itself" (P3F); "(...) the institution did not have, at that time, the right conditions, on a technical level, to allow so many people to stay in telework - so there were some system failures (...)" (P5F)]. In the second lockdown, productivity and concentration increased since subjects were able to a better management and division (with the mother) of the tasks related to their children (*n*=2), and reconcile them with their work ["(...) things are already coordinated a little better, there is no longer so much stress due to the fact that he is in classes and, at the same time, I am working" (P5F)].

Mentioning not only the changes at the professional performance but also the overlapping of responsibilities (work-family), three subjects highlighted the occurrence of changes at the level of their emotional state in the first lockdown, namely: (a) stress ["(...) stresses emerged (...) because at the same time that I was trying to work (...) I was trying to control a 13-year-old (...)" (P5F)]; (b) irritability and lack of concentration ["(...) the conciliation between telework and family life was really affecting me, not only from the point of view of the profitability, but also the ability to concentrate, as well as irritability (...)" (P2F)]; and (c) worry ["(...) I was worried about doing the work, but also ... in knowing if everything was okay with them (...) while, if I were at the company, I would not be thinking about home" (P3F)]. About the second lockdown, some fathers (*n*=2) reported an increase in their well-being, namely increased tranquillity and increased control over their routine - "(...) there is not so much stress anymore as there was in the beginning (...) I noticed greater tranquillity (...) (P5F). However, two of them indicated the emergence of some "losses in personal well-being" (P2F), such as "a greater fatigue, also intellectual, due to the lockdown", i.e., an "accumulated fatigue" (P4F).

Figure 1

First Category – "Work Management"
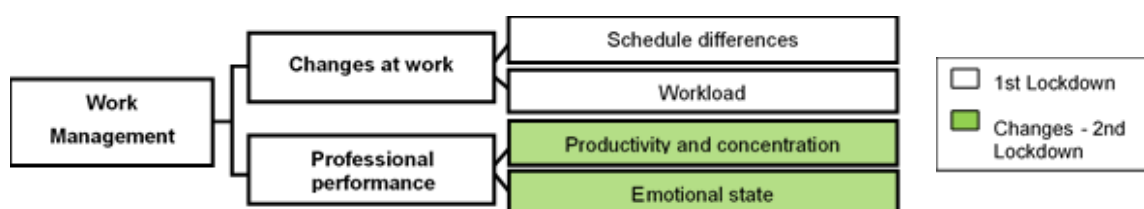
2. Paternal Involvement

2.1. Attention/availability

Regarding the fathers interviewed, four reported greater paternal involvement in the first lockdown (see Figure 2) because they had spent more time at home, with their children, and, therefore, closer and more attentive: "(...) I paid more attention, because, as I was at home longer and so were they ... I even managed to give them some more attention" (P4F). In the second lockdown situation, according to two of the fathers, the attention and intervention were lower, but the time was "a quality time", because they were able to "disconnect and be alone with them" (P2F).

Concerning how they felt (emotional state) while dedicating that attention/availability to their children, in the first lockdown, three fathers mentioned that "it was exhausting", that "a person would get tired to the end of the day" (P1F), and that, although "the involvement ... was greater ... the saturation was also higher", since the "longevity of this situation ends up, in a certain way, making the person more irritated, the fatigue increasingly burdens" (P3F). On the other hand, in the second lockdown, by dedicating quality attention to their children, two of the subjects experienced greater serenity and tranquillity, ending up "feeling that, emotionally" it was "more positive for both parts" (P2F).

2.2. Maintenance of involvement in basic care (home)

This theme refers to the fathers' involvement in the basic care or cares provided at home, so as to meet their children's needs. In this sense, according to four of the fathers, in the first lockdown, there was a maintenance of their involvement in this type of care - "(...) I think it was the same as what I used to do before (...)" (P2F) - since "(...) some routines ceased to exist, such as dropping the kids off at school, taking them to some activities... but, they were replaced by others, such as the initial monitoring with the equipment to access distance learning (...)" (P4F).

2.3. Involvement in school tasks and children's age

Concerning the subjects' involvement in school tasks, in the first lockdown, this was higher for the three fathers with young children or with children in the primary school, i.e., children aged between 2 and 9 years. The fathers with young children ($n=2$) had to monitor and ensure the activities that started to be sent by their children's kindergarten teachers:

"(...) before the lockdown period, he did not bring work home... he did his activities at the kindergarten (...). But, during the lockdown period, he started to have homework. So, before, I did not monitor them, I did not do that many activities, like drawing or painting... and, in the lockdown, I ended up watching and monitoring them (...)" (P3F).

The father with children in the primary school ($n=1$), in turn, had to follow attentively and presently their homework and the new subjects that were taught, due to their low autonomy:

"With the younger one, it was different (...) I always had to accompany her in her homework and teach her things because it was new material. The older one was more autonomous (...) and only asked us for help (...) in the tasks in which she felt more difficulty (...)" (P1F).

As for the fathers with children in the 4th grade (primary school), with adolescent children and/or adult children (*n*=3) - aged between 10 and 19 years - they stated that there were no changes at the level of their involvement in their children's school tasks, concerning what was usual ["(...) I already used to help him before with his homework, whenever he needed it (...) I noticed that it was the same, in terms of helping him with his tasks" (P5F)].

In the second lockdown, the involvement of two of the fathers in school tasks was lower. The father with young children ended up paying them less attention, "from the point of view of the demand of the activities" (P2F), and the father with an adolescent son reported that he was less attentive and concerned ["(...) the thing is a little more 'loose' (...)" (P5F)], since his son was more used to this reality.

Figure 2

Second Category – "Paternal Involvement"
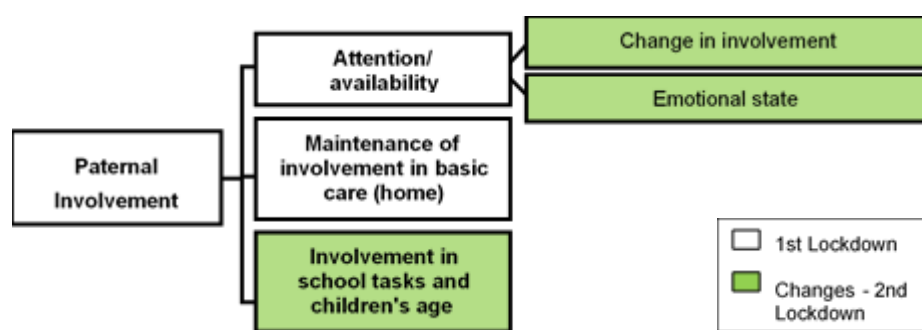
3. Co-parenting

3.1. Challenges

This theme concerns the challenges fathers mentioned having experienced in the exercise and articulation of their parental role, with the parental role of the mother of their children. Three of the interviewees found it challenging to manage schedules/time at home (see Figure 3), namely: (a) managing the wife's schedule and "dealing with her absence... for having so much work" (*n*=1), because "she ended up being working at home, but it was as if she weren't and ... it was difficult sometimes for a person wanting to talk to her and not be able to (...)" (P1F); (b) reconciling his schedule with his wife's (*n*=1) - a nurse - so that, on the days he needed to go to his workplace, the son "never stayed home alone ... so that nothing went wrong" (P5F); and (c) reconciling the schedules, among the four family members, with the daily tasks at home (*n*=1):

"(...) there are normal tasks, like organising lunch, organising dinner... and, to reconcile schedules (...) with day-to-day tasks (...) we have to listen to each other, talk and coordinate very well (...). The biggest challenge was to articulate these tasks and these schedules of the four people who were in telework/teleschool" (P6F).

Two of the fathers mentioned that it was difficult to manage the parental responsibilities and stress, i.e., ensuring simultaneous responsibilities (*n*=1) - "(...) the hardest demand was really ... managing the professional activity with the availability to ... dedicate ourselves to his activities;

activities that, sometimes, are just playing, naturally (...)" (P2F) - and finding strategies to deal with the day-to-day stress (*n*=1), since the family started being together uninterruptedly:

"(...) you end up being 24 hours dealing with three other people and ... you have to ... be more resilient (...) the biggest challenge was that ... having to count to three, to breathe, not to react right away, when everything was tense (...)" (P3F).

3.2. Changes in sharing

Some fathers (*n*=3) reported that there were changes in sharing (with the mother) the routine and education of their children in the first lockdown. Two of these fathers reported that these changes arose in terms of controlling the time of use of digital media and the internet, being that such control was greater by the father with a teenage son - "(...) I had to always 'keep an eye on him', because now kids get distracted with mobile phones(...)" (P5F)] - and lesser by the father with a young child and a child at school:

"(...) one rule we had ... was for the television ... the PlayStation ... those were controlled (...) and faced with the lockdown situation, that rule was expanded to the maximum ... we had almost no other solution! We were busy with our tasks, they did their little job ... and what would they do the rest of the day? (…)" (P3F).

The third subject also explained that these changes arose because his wife had a higher workload and, consequently, lower availability, so he started to intervene and take on more parental responsibilities - "(...) unlike me, she worked a lot by telecommuting, so I ended up monitoring more... (...) naturally and with the concerns that she had, I ended up accompanying more (...)" (P1F). On the other hand, three of the fathers indicated that there were no changes in this sharing, which occurred as it did before the pandemic situation ["(...) everything happened as usual, within normality" (P6F)].

In the second lockdown, all the fathers (*n*=3) stated that there was greater lightness and higher control and management - between the parental pair - of their parental responsibilities since the children also "already knew the routines" (P4F).

Figure 3

Third Category – "Co-parenting"
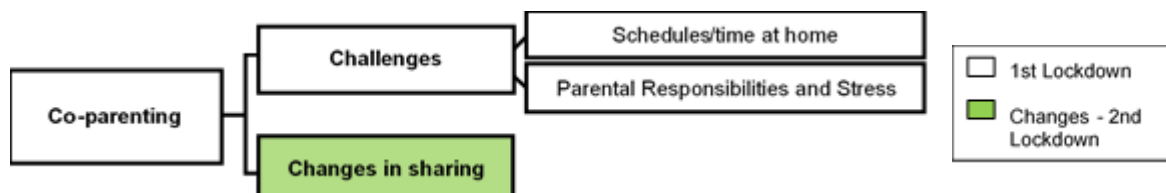
4. Telework – family conciliation

4.1. Limits

About the (physical) working space (see Figure 4), in the first lockdown situation, most fathers (*n*=5) settled in a specific space of the house: three of the parents worked in an isolated space - "(...) I was usually ... upstairs (...) My wife was in one room, my older son was in another, I was isolated upstairs (...) (P3F)" - and two of the parents shared the space (with the son and/or the wife):

> "(...) I had to move my workplace to the living room so that we could work and, at the same time, he could have his space to play and the outside space to go in and out (...) in the first lockdown... at the same time I would leave the play table and go to the work table, to continue working" (P2F).

Turning to how they promoted the work-family separation, in the first lockdown, two of the parents indicated having established clear boundaries, i.e., "a clear division between these two worlds" (P6F). On the other hand, four of the parents mentioned that they had experienced blurred boundaries between work and family, i.e., the absence of a work-home transition (a) because they had to simultaneously attend to parental/family responsibilities and professional responsibilities (*n*=2) ["(...) at home, some setback always ends up happening, either at lunch or doing the dishes afterward (...) I had to intertwine/unfold between the two things (...)" (P5F)]; (b) because they had the computer at home, which did not allow them to disconnect from work (*n*=1) ["Having the computer at home, we aren't disconnected from work, we don't have a limit … when I returned to the company, when 7pm/7:15pm arrived, I thought: 'Great! Now, I turn off the computer, turn off the light, and... goodbye!'" (P3F)]; and (c) "given, also, the workload that occurred" (P4F) (*n*=1). Concerning the second lockdown, all parents (*n*=3) stated that "the separation is happening a little more" (P5F) - the limits are clearer - since "the routine was already established" (P4F).

Two of the interviewed mothers reported that, in the first lockdown, when the father of their children needed to concentrate or to make some important call, he would resort to some signs. One mother stated that he would sit, "in a specific place, at a specific table and with headphones" (P1M) and the other one explained that:

> "(...) he would go to his room ... when he really felt that need to isolate himself more ... And, sometimes, if he received a phone call ... he would say 'okay, now I'm going to answer the phone, keep quiet!', because either the little one was jumping around or we were talking, and he would move away ..." (P3M).

4.2. Children

Some fathers (*n*=4) indicated that, in the first lockdown, the age of their children had an influence on their level of autonomy. The subjects with children aged between 2 and 13 years old (*n*=3) reported that their children had little autonomy and needed more attention ["(...) a child aged 3 years old, at the time he wasn't even 3, doesn't have the skills to entertain himself all day long, obviously (...)" (P2F)]. The father with a 14-year-old daughter stated that she "was more autonomous" and that "she ended up doing her own thing normally" (P1F), asking for help only

when she needed it. As for the second lockdown, participants with children aged between 3 and 14 years old(n=2) indicated that, after one year, they were more autonomous ["(...) It's only been one year, but he is showing much more autonomy now than in the first confinement! (...)" (P2F)].

According to four of the fathers, in the first lockdown, their children, for being at home, were present in their work space and time more often (n=1) - "(...) it happened a little more often, naturally, because they were also confined at home (...)" (P4F) - or uninterruptedly (n=3) - "(...) I was always in contact with them, yes... from time to time, they would ask me 'oh dad this and that, and now this and now that', it's normal (...)" (P3F). With regard to the second lockdown, two fathers explained that their children were less frequently present in their space and working hours ["(...) in this second lockdown, I can be isolated in one room, and I don't even hear what's going on in the rest of the house (...)" (P2F)].

Additionally, subjects with children aged between 9 and 19 years old (n=3) mentioned that, in the first lockdown, it was not difficult to manage the presence of their children during their working hours ["(...) the two things never coincided, because I always managed to separate them (...)" (P1F)].

4.3. Involvement in domestic chores

In the first lockdown, all the subjects were more involved in household chores, not because it was something new, which they hadn't done before, but because: (a) the wife was less available (n=1) ["(...) as a result of my wife's increased work and concerns, I ended up being more involved and more responsible for that part" (P1F)]; (b) they spent more time at home and had to make, for example, more meals (n=4) ["As for household chores, I think that ... you end up doing a lot more because you spend more time at home, you have more meals at home, the house needs more maintenance (...)" (P2F)]; and (c) they felt the need to abstract from the pandemic situation (n=1) ["(...) because of the need for distraction" (P6F)]. In the second lockdown, some subjects (n=2) were slightly less involved: one subject shared more tasks with his wife ["(...) things ended up being a little more balanced since my wife could already do certain tasks which, in the first situation, she could not, due to pregnancy limitations (...)" (P2F)]; and the other subject started - every other day - to work in person, feeling that household chores" started to be more disperse, but not too much" (P5F).

In the first lockdown, half the fathers (n=3) assumed more domestic tasks alone, due to the professional situation of their children's mothers, who had a greater workload and concerns:

"(...) some lunches ended up being made by me... and dinner ... three or four days a week, when my wife was teaching until late, I was the one who had that responsibility. In addition, I also tidied up the kitchen (...)" (P3F).

Two of the interviewed mothers ended up highlighting, in relation to the first lockdown, the absence of third party help, namely family members, neighbours, and/or a cleaning lady ["(...) In a normal situation, we would resort to a cleaning lady, someone who would come to help..., but we couldn't, because of the pandemic" (P2M)].

4.4. Family leisure time

Regarding family leisure time, in the first lockdown, some subjects (*n*=3) reported that there were changes concerning what was usual before the pandemic. Two of the fathers stated that they were able to have more leisure time:

"(...) I think I could even have more leisure moments (...) we played some games at home (...) sometimes we exercised at the balcony... some crazy things! They ended up cooking with me, too (...) and, despite everything, everyone ended up participating!" (P1F).

In contrast, one father mentioned that he had less leisure time:

"(...) there is no leisure time... and, as I usually say, we end up valuing things as simple as the time we spent travelling which we so often criticize (...) They were almost non-existent. The lockdown affected this immensely (...) since... although we were all together, that didn't mean that it was of higher quality, from the family point of view or from the point of view of the attention that you can give to the child (...)" (P2F).

4.5. Changes

In the second lockdown, according to two fathers, there was a greater organisation of the routine, i.e., the tasks were planned - "(...) we made a chart (...) (P3F)" - and distributed them between the parental pair.

In addition, all subjects (*n*=3) mentioned that there was adjustment to the telework and lockdown situation - "(...) Now we already knew everything, we already knew what we had to do (...)" (P4F) - and, for two of these subjects, "it was always a continuation" because they haven't stopped teleworking since the first lockdown. The two parents with adolescent and/or adult children reported that "it was much easier" (P4F) and that "things already coordinate a little better, there is no longer so much stress" since their children are in classes and, at the same time, they are working (P5F). However, the father with young children stated that teleworking continued to require "learning, method, organisation " because "the situation got worse with the arrival of another" child (P2F).

Figure 4

Fourth Category – "Telework-family Conciliation"
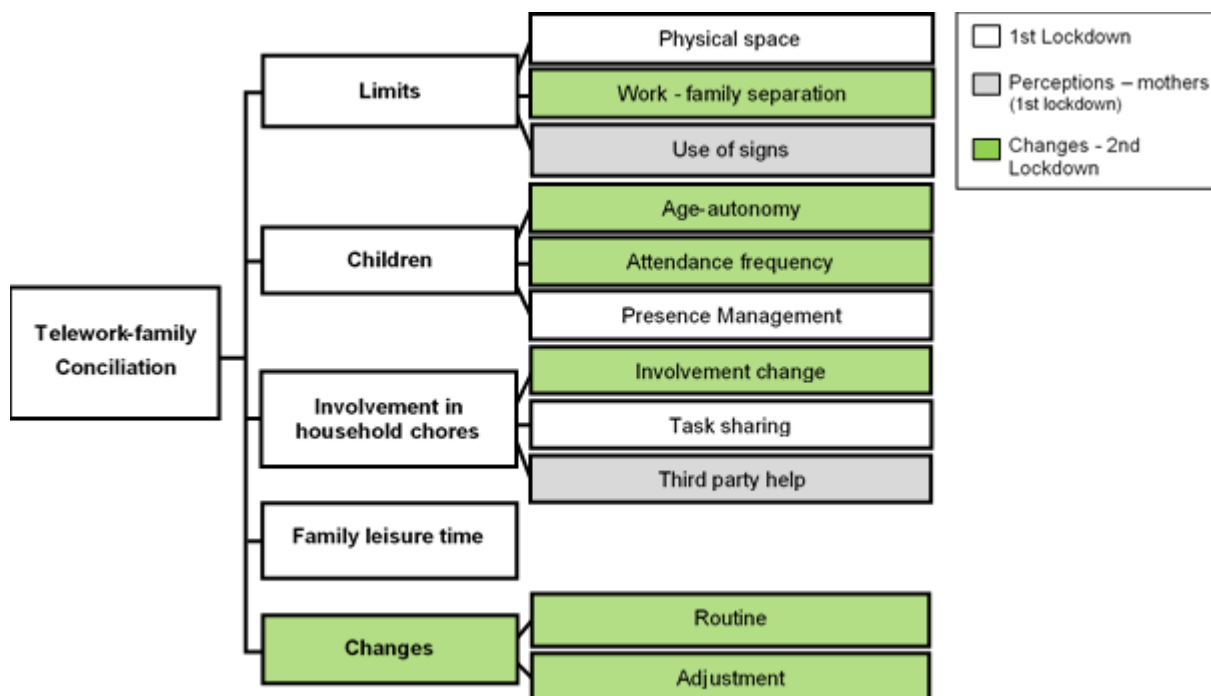
5. Future Perspectives

5.1. Fears about the professional situation (of the father)

This theme concerns the fears and insecurities that the fathers might feel regarding their professional situation (see Figure 5), if the pandemic situation is extended or repeated. Four of the subjects stated that they did not feel any fear, professionally ["(...) No, no! (...) I'm not in the same situation as some people who, in fact, no longer have a job (...) in this aspect, we - my wife and I - feel lucky" (P5F)]. On the other hand, there were subjects (*n*=2) who reported to feel apprehension, at a professional level, were it the case the situation happens again, because they consider that they don't do their work the same way from home (*n*=1) - "(...) it has nothing to do with anything else, with the fear of losing my job or not doing my work well (...) being at home, I don't do my work the same way" (P3F) - and for knowing that their professional area could be at risk (*n*=1):

"(...) Just today I was talking to a colleague who was fired this week! And I ... am connected to the health area ... and, obviously, if my profession was already a bit of a risk, in terms of job security, then now it is worse" (P6F).

5.2. Relationship with children

Most of the fathers (*n*=5) indicated that they felt no fear, regarding the relationship with their children ["(...) I think our relationship wouldn´t be affected!" (P3F); "(...) not that... no, not that, I don't have any fear!" (P4F)]. On the other hand, a parent (with young children) feels that fear, be it the case the kindergartens close again:

"(...) If we are talking about a lockdown that even forces schools to close ... it is almost undeniable that it affects the relationship you have with your child... because ... you are there longer, but you're not with as much quality or availability (...) imagine this happening again..., my wife is going back to work, so there'll be two of us working and with two children to look after! (...) it will inevitably affect... and I think that, amidst all this, the children are the main ones affected (...)" (P2F).

Still, about the relationship with the children, a mother reflected that the lockdown situation, along with the possibility of the father teleworking, turned out to be beneficial since it allowed him to witness the first months of his daughter's life, who was born in the middle of the pandemic:

"(...) the telework situation turns out to be beneficial ... I think that, now, being able to be with her (...) being able to see her, knowing how she is, how she spends her day... it's very beneficial! (...) now he has much more contact; he has been able to follow her growth, her funny little things, when something different happens. In this case, I think that working at home is very positive" (P2M)

5.3. Concern with children

Some subjects (*n*=3) were concerned about the impact that the pandemic situation and the consequent lockdown might have on their children's future. Two of the fathers mentioned being apprehensive about the quality of distance teaching and their children's learning ["(...) I fear for their future, due to this system of education, which ... is what you can have ... But ... clearly, it's not the ideal (...)" (P4F); "(...) it's been almost two years in which the feeling is that ... they progress in school year the same way, but something has failed in their learning" (P5F)]. Additionally, one father is afraid of the "parents' professional emotions" impact on the child at an emotional and social level, stating that:

"(...) The children are the main ones penalized by this, because ... they don't understand why the father or the mother react differently (...)"; and he feels that "(...) it is preferable to assume the risk of the child getting Covid-19 than the risk of having a child who is extremely conditioned, in his evolution and emotionally (...)" (P2F).

Figure 5

Fifth Category – "Future Perspectives"
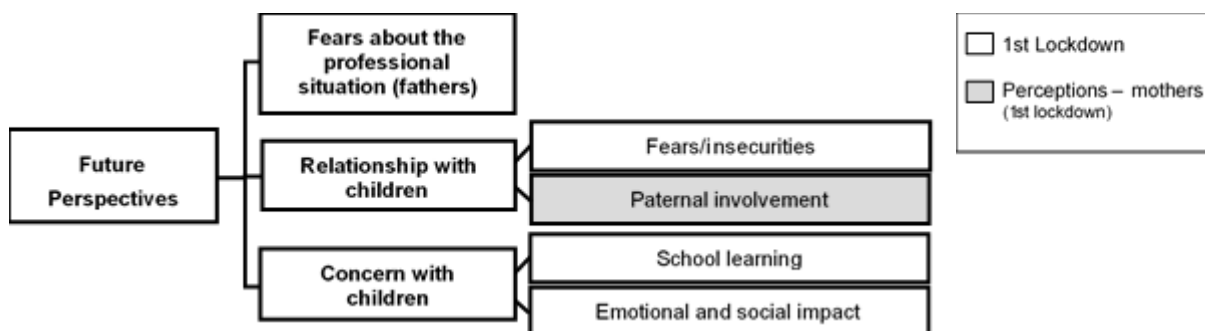
V - Discussion

The concept of parenting has evolved over the centuries, thus influencing how maternity and paternity have been experienced. Based on the scientific literature, for many years, the father was considered the figure of authority in the family, which enhanced the internalisation of a hierarchy between the man – the breadwinner and the moral example of the house - and the woman, the affective figure, responsible for domestic chores and the education and care of children (Ariès, 1981; Crepaldi et al., 2006; Roudinesco, 2003; Tronto, 1997; Vieira & Souza, 2010). Currently, although many families claim to have a different configuration - supported by greater equality and complementarity of roles and responsibilities between the parental pair - this does not always seem to be the case (Deutsch et al., 2001; Miller, 2011). According to several studies, this situation occurs since the parental pair is organised based on their cultural and social extraction, which will influence the experience of co-parenting (Martins et al., 2014) and, consequently, will cause paternity to be felt and experienced in different ways by each father (Bustamante, 2005; Campeol & Crepaldi, 2019).

With the primary objective of analysing the impact of possible physical proximity and paternal involvement on parenting and co-parenting, this empirical study aimed to explore and understand the experience, perceptions and feelings of fathers who teleworked in the first or both lockdown situations in Portugal, based on their narratives. It should be noted that with regard to the second lockdown, based on the study inclusion criteria - which indicated that subjects only needed to have teleworked in the first situation - narratives were only collected from three fathers (*n*=3), the only ones who have teleworked in the second lockdown.

As mentioned above, families have been presenting different configurations, which has inevitably changed the way paternity has been experienced. We are gradually beginning to witness more participatory paternity by some fathers who are getting involved in the daily lives of their children, although subordinated to more traditionalist conceptions of paternity. With the emergence of the pandemic, caused by COVID-19, and the consequent declaration of a state of emergency in Portugal, many Portuguese citizens who were employed had to be confined to their homes, introducing a practice of teleworking. In the case of workers with children - the focus of this study - they also had to assume parental care and responsibilities since their children were also confined at home.

In this sense, and considering the first specific objective of the research, we tried to infer whether the presence of children in the working space of fathers affected their personal well-being, their productivity, or other aspects of their work. Traditionally, the telework practice was used voluntarily by workers, who - with pre-defined timetables - sought to reconcile their work and family time better and, thus, experience higher levels of concentration at work and satisfaction

(Solís, 2016; Thulin et al., 2019). In contrast, the participants in this empirical study, besides having this work practice imposed on them, indicated that their schedules changed, extending beyond their usual end time, not only because they felt obliged to remain online and connected (Felippe, 2018) but also because they considered that they should compensate for the time they stopped to assist their children or perform tasks at home (Russell et al., 2009). Regarding the subjects' workload, it changed - increasing or decreasing - depending on their professional area (e.g., the university teacher reported that it increased, but the swimming teacher stated that it decreased). In addition, as proposed by Tavares et al. (2020), the fathers reported that, in the first lockdown, their productivity and concentration decreased because they had to meet their children's needs - in the case of parents with young children and/or at school - and because employers were not prepared, both at a technical (e.g., internet and work platforms) and practical level (e.g., low professional interaction with colleagues and difficulties in performing the work from home). For this reason, and also mentioning the overlapping of work-family responsibilities, subjects highlighted the increase of their levels of stress and irritability, as well as concerns and lack of concentration (Baert et al., 2020; Lyttelton et al., 2020; Tavares et al., 2020). Thus, in line with other studies, it was found that the presence of children in the fathers' work space not only led to an excessive expansion of their schedules but also had a negative impact on their personal well-being and their concentration on work, affecting productivity and enhancing the emergence of some conflicts at the family level (Hill et al., 1996; Mello, 2007). Regarding the second lockdown, the fathers reported that, despite having started to feel some accumulated fatigue due to the length of the lockdown situation, they experienced, as suggested by more traditionalist conceptions of telework, an increase in their well-being, namely greater tranquillity and greater control over their routine, which contributed to increased productivity and concentration at work (Tavares, 2017; Thulin et al., 2019).

Then, we intended to understand if there were differences in the attention/availability that, eventually, the subjects dedicated to their children. Scientific research indicates that being in telework, fathers - unlike mothers - invest more in their work and leisure time, experiencing higher levels of productivity and lower levels of stress and fatigue since they do not have to dedicate their time to multiple tasks or divide their attention between work and family, especially their children (Hilbrecht et al., 2008; Musick et al., 2016; Noonan & Glass, 2012). Nevertheless, the participants in the present study came to claim the opposite, reporting a greater paternal involvement, as they had spent more time at home in the first lockdown. In addition, by dedicating that attention to their children for a very long time, they reported feeling exhaustion, fatigue, saturation, and irritability. Contrary to what was suggested by Lyttelton et al. (2020) - who stated that fathers, in telework, took more care of their children - the subjects of this study declared having maintained their involvement in their children's basic care. However, regarding school tasks, in the case of parents with young children or with children in primary school, they were more involved, since, as highlighted by Relvas (1996) and Alarcão (2000), the family has the important role of, in these stages, providing care and protecting its members, being their main source of support and

protection; and, for those with children at school, also promoting their autonomy. About the second lockdown, subjects showed lesser attention and intervention in their children's basic care (and school tasks), but those were of higher quality, providing more positive and satisfactory emotions, namely greater serenity and tranquillity, as argued by Hill et al. (2003).

Concerning the challenges that fathers faced in exercising and articulating their parental role with the parental role of their children's mother, they mentioned, firstly, that it was challenging to manage schedules/time at home, i.e., to reconcile the schedules of all family members with the daily tasks, and to manage and reconcile the wives' schedules who - contrary to what Baert et al. (2020) claim - were more absent due to their workload. Second, they reported that it was difficult to simultaneously ensure parental and professional responsibilities and come up with strategies to manage daily stress. In this sense, corroborating the study by Williams and Alliger (1994), the flexibility that characterises the practice of telework led individuals to overlap professional and family responsibilities, losing control over their working time and their time for the family, which caused an imbalance between these two systems and had negative repercussions on their lives (e.g., at an emotional level). In addition, some subjects stated that there were changes in the sharing of routine and education of their children, such as (a) a control of the screen time and Internet use (or an absence of such control), which was more significant with adolescent children - who, even being more autonomous, needed the imposition of clear rules (Alarcão, 2000) and limits in the use of these devices - and less so with small children or children at school who, having less autonomy and requiring greater attention and protection from their parents (Relvas, 1996), ended up being occupied and "distracted" with this type of devices; and (b) a greater intervention and assumption of more parental responsibilities by the father, since the mother started to have a greater amount of work. On the other hand, in the second lockdown, since they were already familiar with the routines, the fathers claimed to have experienced greater lightness and higher control and management of parental responsibilities, together with the mothers.

Turning to how fathers promoted the telework-family conciliation, according to the scientific literature, it was expected that, in the first lockdown, they would have a space that resembled their workplace, so that clear boundaries would be established between work and family and, thus, work would take place effectively, with fewer distractions and interferences, and within the normal schedule (Beauregard et al., 2019; Kossek et al., 2006; Tietze, 2002; Wapshott & Mallett, 2012). Contrary to expectations, in this study, although most fathers settled into a specific space in the house - isolated or shared with their child and/or spouse - only two reported being able to establish clear boundaries between work and family. The remaining subjects reported having experienced blurred boundaries, which led them to extend their working hours. That happened since they had to simultaneously attend to professional and parental/family responsibilities because there was a computer at home that did not allow them to disconnect, and due to their workload.

Additionally, based on other studies (Hill et al., 1996; Peters et al., 2001), it was believed that family members would, over time, begin to recognize the father's work space as a workplace interrupting him less and interacting less frequently with him. It was also expected that teleworking

would have an influence on the way household chores and childcare were shared between spouses, as fathers - compared to mothers - were expected to do little housework and work less frequently with their child by their side, investing more in their work and leisure time (Lyttelton et al., 2020; Maume et al., 2010; Noonan et al., 2007; Noonan & Glass, 2012). Nevertheless, in the present study, subjects mentioned that their children were present in their work space and hours more often or uninterruptedly, especially those aged between 2 and 13 years old , who showed a lower level of autonomy than children aged 14 years old and older. Mothers stated that fathers, in order to concentrate and/or not be interrupted, sometimes felt the need to resort to some signs, such as: sitting in a specific place and with headphones on; going to the bedroom; and/or asking for silence. In addition, all subjects reported bigger involvement in domestic tasks, mainly because they stayed longer at home, and half of the fathers took on more tasks by themselves due to their wives' professional situation, who experienced an increase in their workload. Mothers with young children (aged between 2 and 10 years old) mentioned that the parental couple did not have the possibility of resorting to third party help, such as cleaning ladies, neighbours and/or relatives who, as pointed by Alarcão (2000), would have been a great source of support, relieving the parental couple of some of their responsibilities, regarding both domestic chores and child care. The fathers with children aged between 9 and 19 mentioned that, in the first lockdown, it was not difficult to manage the presence of their children during their working hours. Finally, regarding leisure time, two of the fathers with children aged between 9 and 13 years old reported having experienced more leisure time, contrarily to the father with a 2-year-old-child who reported having less leisure time.

Regarding the second lockdown, parents reported that the boundaries of work-home became clearer and that, after only one year gone by, their children were a little more autonomous, being present in their work space less often. They also mentioned that they were slightly less involved in domestic chores and that there was a greater organisation of the routine since these tasks started to be planned - they made a chore chart - and distributed them between the parental pair; and, in one case, they started to appear in a smaller quantity, because the father had started to work, in person, every other day. In this way, and in line with the scientific literature, with the sharing and redistribution of tasks between the parental pair, the family seems to have had a more harmonious development (Deutsch, 2001). In addition, all subjects reported that people gradually grew accustomed to telework (and to the lockdown) situation, i.e., the past year ended up corresponding to an experimental period that allowed them to develop the ability to work at a distance and get used to this reality, as suggested by several authors (Beauregard et al., 2019; Madsen, 2003). In short, the parents with adolescent and/or adult children considered that it was easier and less stressful to manage the whole situation in the second lockdown, but the father with young children reported that it was necessary to continue developing a great capacity for organisation and planning to reconcile telework with the family, and particularly with the parental responsibilities.

Finally, in order to achieve the last objective, the possible fears/apprehension of fathers were explored, regarding their professional situation and their relationship with their children, if

the pandemic situation continues. Most of the subjects stated that they did not feel any fear, either at a professional level or in their relationship with their children. Regarding the two subjects who stated that they felt fear, at a professional level, they explained that: (1) they would not perform their work with such efficiency and quality, from home, contrary to what is proposed by some authors (Tavares, 2017; Thulin et al., 2019); and that (2) their professional area may be at risk – the father could eventually be fired - as suggested by Felippe (2018). As for the father who reported feeling fear in his relationship with his children, he emphasised that this fear only arises when he considers the possibility of kindergartens closing again because, as suggested by the scientific literature, these types of institutions are essential for fathers to establish a stable bond with their work and resume their personal activities and relationships - mainly his conjugal relationship - thus enhancing the social construction of the paternity (Campeol & Crepaldi, 2019; Gabriel & Lopes, 2016). In this regard, one mother also mentioned that teleworking and the lockdown ended up being beneficial, as it allowed the father to keep up with the first months of life of his daughter, who was born in the middle of the pandemic. This reflection, made by the mother, showed that she considers the father to be a participant in the family life, from the time of pregnancy, being sensitive, affectionate, and taking pleasure in the exercise of paternity (Piccinini et al., 2009; Sutter & Bucher-Maluschke, 2008). In short, half of the parents showed concern about their children's future: (a) some feel fear about their school learning since the quality of education is compromised by the fact that classes take place in a distance learning modality and (b) a father, with young children, feels apprehensive about the emotional and social impact that his and his co-parent's "professional emotions" may have on their children, since the parent-child relationship may be indirectly influenced by their working conditions - as suggested by Cia and Barham (2006) - which reinforces, as mentioned above, the importance of institutions such as crèches, kindergartens and schools.

Limitations and future studies

As previously mentioned, with regard to the second lockdown, based on the inclusion criteria of the study, only narratives from three fathers were collected (*n*=3), the only ones who have teleworked in the second lockdown. Similarly, since there were only considered the perceptions of mothers whose information was relevant for this study, the narratives collected were supported by a sample of only one or two mothers (variable number, depending on the subtheme). This way, although theoretical saturation was not reached - a "moment when little of anything substantially new appears" (Fontanella et al., 2008, p. 20) - it was considered that, due to the "quality of the information obtained" from the interviews with the fathers and mothers, they should be presented (Fontanella et al., 2008, p. 20). Thus, we warn that more interviews should be conducted until theoretical saturation is reached, i.e., it will be essential to replicate this study - with a larger sample - to deepen some of the contributions and information presented here about the second lockdown (or about any of the issues addressed by the mothers).

In addition, it should be noted that when the inclusion criteria for this study were established, it was only clarified that fathers and mothers with children between the ages of 0 and

16 years old should be interviewed, notwithstanding whether they composed parental or conjugal pairs. However, in the end, only parental pairs (and simultaneously conjugal pairs) were interviewed, who, sometimes and spontaneously, provided some interesting contributions on the subject of conjugality. In this sense, we consider that this empirical study widens the possibility, in future studies, of studying Conjugality and Telework in an extended lockdown situation in Portugal, for parents with children between the ages of 0 and 16.

VI - Conclusion

Over the past few years, telework has been expanding (Rocha & Amador, 2018), presenting itself to some as a flexible practice which promotes well-being in the balance between the workers' professional and family lives and, for others, as something that challenges the reconciliation between these two systems and which may accentuate gender inequality (Beauregard et al., 2019; Galinsky et al., 1993; Gornick & Meyers, 2004; Thulin et al., 2019). In the face of the pandemic, workers with children had to reconcile their professional and family responsibilities, especially parental responsibilities, often in a record of co-parenting (Tavares et al., 2020). Thereby, the overall objective of this study was to analyse the impact of the possible physical proximity and paternal involvement in parenting and co-parenting, considering the perspective and experience of fathers who teleworked in the first or in both lockdown situations in Portugal and the perception of mothers regarding this situation experienced by the father of their children.

On the basis of the obtained results, it was found that in the first lockdown, the levels of productivity and concentration of the fathers decreased and, consequently, more negative feelings were experienced. In the second lockdown, the opposite was observed. The subjects' accounts also showed that, in the first lockdown, greater paternal involvement was reported, although subordinated to negative feelings. Moreover, despite having maintained their involvement in the basic care of their children, the subjects were more involved in their school tasks. With regard to the second lockdown, they have devoted less attention to their basic care, but this was of higher quality. Additionally, the results indicate that some challenges were experienced while exercising co-parenting, namely: (1) managing schedules/time at home; and (2) managing daily stress and parental and professional responsibilities simultaneously. There were also changes in the sharing of the routine and education of the interviewed subjects' children, such as the control – or absence of it - of the screen time and the internet use and the father taking more parental responsibilities. In the second lockdown, a greater tranquillity and greater control and management - with the mothers - of parental responsibilities was experienced.

With regard to how subjects promoted telework-family balance, the results support that more than half of the fathers experienced diffuse boundaries (which led them to extend their working hours) and that their children were often present in their working space and hours. The results also show that all the fathers were more involved in domestic tasks and half of them took on more tasks by themselves. The results showed that, for some parents, it was not difficult to manage the presence of their children during their working hours in the first lockdown. On the contrary, in the second lockdown, the participants experienced clearer work-family boundaries and indicated that their children were less often present in their work space. There was also less involvement on their part in domestic chores since the routine was redistributed between the

parental pair. To sum it up, the study shows that, a year gone by, all the subjects became used to telework (and to the lockdown).

Finally, the gathered statements report that a large part of the subjects do not feel fear, neither professionally nor in their relationship with their children, be it the case the pandemic is extended or repeated. However, the results indicated that half of the subjects are worried about their children's future, about their school learning and the impact that the "professional emotions" of both parents will have, at an emotional and social level, on the youngest children.

We consider, in view of the results obtained, that the objectives of this research were met. Yet, we warn about the need for further studies on Paternity and Telework, in the second lockdown in Portugal, as new contributions and perspectives about this experience may arise. Thus, this study presents contributions to research on these issues, including paternal involvement and telework in lockdown, and provides interesting clues for future research.

As previously mentioned, with the global pandemic, we expected to see an intensification of gender inequalities, resulting from the predominant belief that the father is the main source of family sustenance and, therefore, a figure less affective than the mother. On the other hand, it was concluded that in the first lockdown, the father was more alert/available to his children, carrying out more domestic chores than usual and working more often with the child by his side. Thus, it was possible to verify that the fathers and mothers in this study presented themselves, in the same way, as affective figures and participants in their children's lives, as well as sources of family sustenance. With regard to the second lockdown, as the routine was mainly better organised and shared between the parental pair, the subjects experienced a greater equilibrium and work-family balance, which translated into a more harmonious development of the family system.

In this sense, and even though it is essential to continue to investigate the second lockdown, we have ascertained that, when there was greater sharing and complementarity of roles and responsibilities between the parental pair, the family experienced greater harmony, and the fathers showed that they felt more emotionally available to their children and more fulfilled in the exercise of paternity. Therefore, this study allows us to reflect on the importance of seeing father not as a mere adjunct to the mother, but as an active, intervening and participating subject in family life, being equally sensitive, tender, welcoming and close to their children and, therefore, able to establish emotional bonds with them.

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