Comunicación y Sociedad
Departamento de Estudios de la Comunicación Social
Universidad de Guadalajara

Overt and covert resistances in Tijuana's journalism

Resistencias abiertas y encubiertas en el periodismo de Tijuana

Resistências abertas e encobertas no jornalismo de Tijuana

DOI: https://doi.org/10.32870/cys.v2023.8519

Diana Denisse Merchant Ley[1]
https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6795-4659
Víctor Hugo Reyna[2]
https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8870-7067

The objective of this article is to analyze journalists' overt and covert resistances. Drawing on the typology of resistance of Hollander and Einwohner (2004), as well as fieldwork in one Mexican journalism's capitals, Tijuana, four types of resistance are examined: 1) to relations of deference, 2) to information blocking, 3) to workloads and 4) to editorial censorship. These strategies are intermingled and allow what organizational structures often prevent: a socially relevant investigative journalism.
Keywords: Journalism, journalists, power, resistance, Tijuana.

El objetivo de este artículo es analizar las resistencias abiertas y encubiertas de las y los periodistas. A partir de la tipología de la resistencia de Hollander y Einwohner (2004), así como trabajo de campo en una de las capitales del periodismo mexicano, Tijuana, se examinan cuatro tipos de resistencias: 1) a las relaciones de deferencia, 2) al bloqueo de información, 3) a las cargas de trabajo, y 4) a la censura editorial. Estas estrategias se intercalan y permiten lo que las estructuras organizacionales con frecuencia impiden: un periodismo de investigación e impacto social.
Palabras clave: Periodismo, periodistas, poder, resistencia, Tijuana.

O objetivo deste artigo é analisar a resistência aberta e encoberta dos jornalistas. Com base na tipologia de resistência de Hollander e Einwohner (2004), bem como no trabalho de campo em uma das capitais do jornalismo mexicano, Tijuana, são examinados quatro tipos de resistência: 1) às relações de deferência, 2) ao bloqueio de informações, 3) às cargas de trabalho, e 4) censura editorial. Essas estratégias se intercalam e permitem o que muitas vezes as estruturas organizacionais impedem: jornalismo investigativo e de impacto social.

Palavras-chave: Jornalismo, jornalistas, poder, resistência, Tijuana.

How to cite:
Merchant Ley, D. D. & Reyna, V. H. (2023). Overt and covert resistances in Tijuana's journalism. *Comunicación y Sociedad*, e8519. https://doi.org/10.32870/cys.v2023.8519

[1] Universidad Autónoma de Baja California, Mexico.
diana.merchant@uabc.edu.mx
[2] Universidad La Salle Bajío, Mexico.
vreyna@lasallebajio.edu.mx
Submitted: 06/01/22. Accepted: 02/17/23. Published: 06/14/23.

Introduction

During the latest administrations, Mexican journalism studies have focused their attention on the violence perceived, experienced, and reported by this country's journalists (Del Palacio, 2018; González de Bustamante & Relly, 2021; Reyna, 2014). One finding that these studies tend to share is that censorship and self-censorship have emerged as the mechanisms commonly resorted to by this field's professionals to protect themselves and to continue producing news (González, 2021; Hughes & Márquez-Ramírez, 2017; Salazar, 2012).

There is also evidence that the journalistic community usually interprets the murders of their colleagues as a call to continue in journalism to avoid the triumph of silence; that is, although there are professionals who move away from journalism to try to reduce their risk, there are also those who do not (González & Reyna, 2019). To explain this phenomenon, Mexican journalism scholars have opened a line of research on resistance and resilience (Del Palacio, 2020; González de Bustamante & Relly, 2021; Hughes et al., 2021).

This article intends to contribute to this line of research through an analysis focused on the daily resistance that this field's professionals carry out, not in response to risk, but to the obstacles they encounter when trying to practice the journalism that they idealize. Based on Hollander and Einwohner's (2004) typology of resistance and fieldwork in one of the capitals of Mexican journalism, Tijuana,[3] we study how a group of journalists uses overt and covert resistances to develop a socially relevant investigative journalism.

---

[3] Tijuana, Baja California is a city located on the northern border of Mexico. Beginning in the 1980s, with the founding of the political weekly *Zeta*, it became one of Mexican journalism capitals through the development of an investigative journalism culture focused on exposure of the links between organized crime and the political class. It ratified this position when, in the 1990s, it became the laboratory for the expansion of Grupo Reforma's liberal model of journalism through Grupo Healy (Reyna et al., 2020). The combination of these processes has led to the development of an avant-garde and resilient journalism culture in Tijuana. This makes its journalists the ideal subjects of study for researching resistance in news production.

Resistance and resilience in Mexican journalism studies

Academic interest in the resistance and resilience of Mexican journalists is recent. Our literature review locates it in the mid-2010s. On the one hand, Castillo (2015) presents a paper on how women resist in managerial positions in Chihuahua's newspapers. While González de Bustamante and Relly (2016) and Choice (2016) define as *community resilience* the networks of collaboration and support that allow journalism professionals on the Mexican northern border to persevere despite trauma.

This body of work is dominated by the research technique of the interview, since it assumes that the violence perceived, experienced, and reported by Mexican journalists can be better understood from the point of view of its protagonists. There are studies that emphasize resistance tactics such as collaborative journalism (Díaz-Cerveró & Barredo, 2020) or the defiance of legal norms (Díaz-Cerveró et al., 2021), as well as the role of professional identities in the resistance to quit journalism (Hughes et al., 2021).

In the same sense, beyond the violence originally linked to the coverage of organized crime, the interview is the preponderant research technique in the studies on the symbolic resistance to organizational norms (Meza & Enríquez, 2018) and even in those focused on female journalists' resistance to mobbing and sexual harassment (Manjarrez Peñúñuri & Zúñiga Elizalde, 2018; Puente, 2021). In other words, the notion of resistance and interviews have been widely employed to examine both resistance to change and resistance to such resistance.

Textual analysis on the resistance and resilience of Mexican journalists innovate by presenting objects of study that transcend the testimonial to focus on their written materialization. In the case of Alonso (2018), she studies how Anabel Hernández, Marcela Turati and Lydia Cacho appeal to narrative resources centered on the victims of violence to resist its normalization, while Del Palacio (2020) observes how reporters in Veracruz develop a symbolic resistance through their stories to contend the revictimization of their murdered colleagues.

Despite the relevance of these studies and their contribution to shed light on aspects once overshadowed by the emphasis on censorship

and self-censorship, one of their limitations is that they have not yet explored how resistance is expressed in everyday journalistic practices, beyond violence or mobbing and sexual harassment. This may suggest that professionals in this field only put-up resistance to the obstacles presented by different forms of violence. As Meza and Enriquez (2018) expose, this can also be exhibited at the organizational level and deserves more attention.

In view of this gap, this article proposes to identify which and how are the strategies of daily resistance that journalists tend to enact in response to the societal, institutional, and organizational obstacles that they usually encounter when trying to carry out the journalism they idealize. To this end, the following section presents a conceptual framework that establishes a link between the concepts of resistance and power. It is our interest not only to analyze resistance in Tijuana's journalism, but also to recast its theorization.

Resistance and power in news production

In sociology, the concept of resistance is inalienable to that of power. However, this relationship is complex, as both notions have been ambiguously defined to be both antonyms and synonyms. In its classical conceptualization, power is antonymous to resistance because it means: "the probability of imposing one's will, within a social relation, even against all resistance" (Weber, 2014, p. 159). In contrast, in its contemporary definition, it is a sort of synonym: a "capacity to intervene in a given state of affairs to alter it at one's convenience" (Bruce & Yearley, 2006, p. 241).

Thinking of power as "the capacity possessed by individuals or groups to achieve their goals or to advance their interests, even in the face of opposition or resistance" (Giddens & Sutton, 2015, p. 317), rather than the Weberian conception of coercive power or the Foucauldian one that relativizes inequality, allows us to examine its accumulation and enactment. This is relevant because it encompasses both coercive power –that which is exercised from the top down–, and subversive power –that which is executed from the bottom up– while interrogating how they are possible and consummated.

This article focuses on the subversive power that journalists put into practice as a form of resistance to the coercive power of external and internal actors in journalism. Resistance is understood as a dependent variable of power, not only because it is articulated in opposition to some individual, group or dominant culture, but also because it requires a certain accumulation of power to be materialized. In other words, power is a precondition for resistance: without it, however minimal it may be, resistance is not possible.

That subversive power, which runs from the bottom up, has been the object of study of Scott (1985). For him, the acts of revolt of those who try to alleviate their oppression by taking advantage of the interstices left by the system are as important as their reiterative and daily character. For this reason, he calls this type of opposition as *everyday resistance*, establishing a clear distinction from macro-social and intermittent forms of resistance. This idea is complemented by Vinthagen and Johansson (2013), who argue that everyday resistances are, above all, hidden and disguised.

To refine the conceptualization of resistance, Hollander and Einwohner (2004) have generated a typology that classifies opposition to coercive power according to the intentions of those who exercise it and its recognition by its targets or observers. In this sense, they describe overt, covert, involuntary, target-defined, externally defined, lost, attempted, and unresisted resistance. For the purposes of this article, we are interested in analyzing the first two: overt and covert (Table 1).

TABLE 1
OVERT AND COVERT RESISTANCES

Type of resistance	Is the act conceived as resistance by its actors?	Is the act recognized as resistance by its target?	Is the act recognized as resistance by outside observers?
Overt resistance	Yes	Yes	Yes
Covert resistance	Yes	No	Yes

Source: Hollander and Einwohner (2004, p. 544).

Overt resistances are intentional and visible to their targets. They can be articulated in various ways, from demonstrations in the public space to taking positions through mass media and social media. In contrast, covert resistances are also intentional, but are distinguished by being subtle and often unrecognizable to their targets, although they are recognizable to external observers. While both are intentional, they are differentiated in terms of strategy with respect to their targets due to institutional, organizational, and individual factors.

This division between overt and covert resistances provides a new way of conceptualizing opposition to power in Mexican journalism studies. Its objective is not only to identify how journalists resist, but also to analyze why they do so, as well as to describe their scope and limitations. This conceptual framework allows us to better understand how these actors intervene in their professional environment in an attempt to alter it according to their ideals. In particular, it is our interest to examine how these resistances are internalized and integrated into the news production process.

In contrast to previous studies, we propose to transcend the characterization of resistance in Mexican journalism as a mechanism to maintain the current state of affairs, to "tolerate" or "endure" oppression, and theorize it as a device oriented to social, institutional and organizational change. That is why this article is not content with examining how journalists, in this case from Tijuana, put up resistance to cover their workloads, but how they exercise this power to produce socially relevant and long-form journalism in spite of the obstacles.

With the intention of delving into its analysis, overt and covert resistances are classified according to the form of coercive power to which they respond: 1) relations of deference, 2) information blocking, 3) workloads, and 4) editorial censorship. These forms of coercive power present themselves as obstacles in the enactment of professional ideals and must be resisted in order to achieve the goal of producing substantive journalism. This article will show how these strategies intersect to enable what institutional and organizational structures seek to prevent.

RESEARCH DESIGN

This article aims to answer the following research question: What are the overt and covert resistances that journalists put into practice in response to the institutional and organizational obstacles that they encounter when trying to practice the journalism that they idealize?

The analysis is based on empirical evidence collected through fieldwork in which participant observation, in-depth interviews and a focus group were conducted in Tijuana between April 2018 and January 2019. The corpus includes information collected independently by both authors in the same city since 2010.

The article has been conceived as a case study on an emerging phenomenon that we observed in our respective approaches to Tijuana's journalism during the last decade. As Gerring (2017) argues, a case study is characterized not by seeking to generalize, but by particularizing on specific individuals or groups. This makes random sampling meaningless, as it seeks to emphasize those who live the phenomenon that researchers are interested in exploring, precisely to acquire new perspectives on a subject that has been scarcely studied.

We followed the typical case study strategy by focusing on the workday of two journalism professionals employed as reporters, one male and one female, working in different news organizations. The news production process of a third organization was also observed in a focused manner. This selection is not intended to be representative of Tijuana's journalism, but rather to examine in detail how certain journalists employed as daily reporters resist by generating a journalism that approximates their ideals.

Participant observation was focused on the interactions inside and outside the newsrooms of our subjects of study, emphasizing their daily resistance. At the end of this phase of the fieldwork, we decided to conduct two types of interviews to provide more empirical support to our case study: 1) a group interview using the focus group technique with four professionals who publish investigative features despite being hired as daily reporters; and 2) in-depth individual interviews with four other journalists. Testimonies from ten journalists were collected.

In the first phase, we used a convenience samplingbecause the two journalists selected allowed us to accompany and observe them from the beginning to the end of their workday. In the second phase, we chose chain sampling, better known as snowball sampling, so that our subjects of study would lead us to other colleagues who might be interested in reflecting on power and resistance in the news production process. We considered that we reached information saturation when the testimonies began to be reiterative.

Since the 1980s, when the political weekly *Zeta* decided to print its copies in the United States to challenge the monopoly of the state-owned Productora e Importadora de Papel, S. A. (PIPSA for its Spanish acronym), Tijuana's journalism has been characterized by its resistances to coercive power. This imprint makes its journalists the ideal subjects of study for an investigation on overt and covert resistance in the production of news. In addition, to test Hollander and Einwohner's (2004) typology, we are interested in characterizing specific forms of resistance in journalism.

All the testimonies presented here appear anonymously to avoid exposing our subjects of study. Broadly speaking, they are young journalists, but with more than a decade of work experience, who have worked in audiovisual, multimedia and print media in Tijuana. Some of them collaborate or have collaborated with news organizations in other cities, states, or countries as freelancers, as a salary supplement and professional challenge. The news organizations that employ them are of a corporate nature.

Resistance to deferential relationships

The interactions between journalists and their information sources are marked by what Foucault (1999) defines as *power relations*; that is, by "strategic games among freedoms" in which "some try to determine the conduct of others, to which the latter respond by trying not to let their conduct be determined or by trying to determine the conduct of the former in turn" (p. 414). In these interactions, reporters influence their sources from the moment they observe or interview them, but they are also influenced by them when they are instrumentalized to transmit a certain message to society.

In interactions with government sources of information and representatives of political parties, courtesy relations predominate, and they frequently derive in relations of dependence, friendship, and deference (Merchant, 2021). Aware that the political class exercises this coercive power in a subtle way over journalism to set its agenda, since the 1970s, Mexican news organizations have regulated press-power relations through different narratives of modernization (Reyna et al., 2020).

Although the modernizing project is in crisis, some of its norms persist. Our subjects of study impose its norms on themselves daily to resist deference to power groups. From the reporter who did not get up from his chair to take a picture with an athlete who "seemed like a cocky guy" (Journalist 1, personal communication), to the reporter who ate breakfast around noon because "I do not eat [what] they give at conferences, because it lends itself to misunderstandings" (Journalist 2, personal communication), there are overt and covert resistances.

The acts of not standing up to pay homage to an athlete or not eating at press conferences are covert resistances that are only perceptible to outside observers (Hollander & Einwohner, 2004). It is not that Journalist 1 can tell the athlete that he dislikes him, nor that Journalist 2 arrives at press conferences saying that she will not eat even if she is very hungry, but these are small acts of resistance that they perform to alleviate their oppression (Scott, 1985), to be congruent with their professional ideals and to empower themselves by distinguishing from the rest.

These daily resistances are not always expressed only in a covert manner. Sometimes they have to be open so that they fulfill their objective: to make it clear that they will not be part of the collusion between officials and journalists. Journalist 2 tells us that, on one occasion, she was forced to return a turkey and a bottle of wine that arrived at her newsroom as a Christmas gift from a source of information, excusing herself by saying: "What happens is that we are not allowed to accept gifts; do not worry... we are not going to say anything" (Journalist 2, personal communication).

As part of the culture of corruption instituted by the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI in Spanish), Mexico's political class has

normalized overt and covert bribery strategies. These range from the aforementioned courtesy relations (Merchant, 2021) to more explicit tactics through cash, gifts or advantages with some business (Márquez-Ramírez, 2014). Since the 1980s, with the founding of *Zeta*, this has characterized press-power relations in Tijuana because it has been necessary to redraw the line of journalism with each change of government.

According to Journalist 3, who maintains that she "prefers not to accept even a coffee" to prevent them from bringing it up in the future, it is still common for public officials to shake hands with reporters with a wad of bills, something they always find surprising and uncomfortable. However, this journalist states that when sources get used to a journalist repeatedly rejecting their offers –which in Tijuana range from a coffee to a house– "you make a name for yourself [and] they no longer offer anything to you because they know that you [are] not that way, and you no longer have to deal with that" (Journalist 3, personal communication).

The latter shows that overt and covert resistances to deferential relations are not only reproduced among journalists, but are also socialized in the political class, which understands that not all professionals have a price. Far from being the end of the attempt to control the news production process from the political power, when this happens, the information blocking begins. As analyzed in the following section, in this sense, our subjects of study also reflect on their resistance before putting it into action.

Resistance to information blocking

As part of the end of PRI's hegemony and the beginning of political alternation, in 2003, the Federal Institute for Access to Public Information (IFAI for its Spanish acronym), currently the National Institute for Transparency, Access to Information and Protection of Personal Data (INAI for its Spanish acronym), was created as an autonomous body to guarantee access to public information in Mexico. This transformed the practice of journalism in the country radically –especially investigative journalism– as it marked a before and after in

terms of accountability: for the first time, the government had to make its information transparent.

However, our subjects of study state that one thing is what the law says, and another is its implementation: "They fill their mouths when they talk about transparency, [but] it is easier said than done; [they] always have their lawyers reviewing the law to find a way to block you" (Journalist 1, personal communication). In this sense, the transparency mechanism becomes a new space of resistance for this field's professionals, as it encourages them to oppose the authorities' resistance to abide by the law.

In our fieldwork we were able to observe these power relations. On the one hand, the Weberian conception of coercive power was manifested when the transparency mechanism was instrumentalized to obstruct access to public information and to try to avoid exposing acts of governmental corruption and incompetence. On the other hand, the journalists' "capacity to intervene in a given state of affairs to alter it at will" (Bruce & Yearley, 2006, p. 241) allowed them to resist and introduce one appeal for review after another until they achieved their goal:

> We were struggling a lot with the Department... to ask for the data... We were constantly requesting, calling, pressuring. We went to the people from Communication... I had to talk to the director of Social Communication...; I told him: "hey, we are requesting this data; I ask you to support us...". And yes, we struggled a lot. I think we were insisting for about three weeks until they finally gave in (Journalist 4, personal communication).

In addition to the transparency mechanism, the political class in Tijuana uses other less sophisticated resources to block access to information. From lawsuits to intimidate (Journalist 5, personal communication), to sending former journalists who have become emissaries of power to try to stop special features with cash (Journalist 1, personal communication), without forgetting veiled threats such as "Girl, why are you misbehaving?" (Official in Journalist 2, personal communication) or directly by not answering their phone calls (Journalist 6, personal communication).

If the review recourse is the means of resistance to opacity, in the daily reporting routines, other techniques are resorted to. In one feature, Journalist 2 was not allowed access to the case file or to interview the victims, as is required by law. To get around these inconveniences, she established a relationship of trust (rapport) with the victims' families, getting them to send her videos in which they explained their cases and then communicating with them by telephone. Such resistance was covert rather than overt because her targets did not perceive it (Hollander & Einwohner, 2004).

Like resistance to deferential relationships, resistance to blocking information works when journalists are "insistent, inquisitive" and are not satisfied with "halfway-information" (Journalist 5, personal communication). In contrast, it is not enough to be reiterative because the objective of blocking is to delay as long as possible a potentially disruptive publication, as well as to dissuade its authors from continuing with it. In other words, even if they have created a reputation for being insistent, the sources will still try to block the information.

Resistance to workloads

Although they produce investigative journalism and often identify themselves as investigative journalists, the job description of our subjects of study tends not to be that of investigative journalists. This means that, in addition to trying to generate long-form reporting, they must adapt to the quotas and rhythms of news production in their organizations. Those working in dailies may have quotas of up to six stories a day, while those working in weekly newspapers must produce at least one well-documented story a week.

In this context, with a saturated workload, it is not easy to find time to carry out the features they idealize. In order to do so, they must resort to a series of resistances to what they call the role of "news manufacturer" (Journalist 1, personal communication). In the field diaries, we recorded that this induced an intensification of work, as when they wrote one news item after another, or sacrificed personal care, as when they are fasting until noon in order to meet their news quota without abandoning their professional ethics.

One of the workload resistance strategies that most caught our attention was the exchange of information among colleagues from different news organizations. The objective of this practice, which is covert for editors and managers because it goes against the news criterion of exclusivity institutionalized during the modernization process (Reyna et al., 2020), is to reduce the time dedicated to covering the news quota. If used strategically, it can even serve to gain time and delve into a special feature:

> See all this [WhatsApp group of Tijuana journalists]. Communications, photos, photos... My competition sending me photos and locations... From *La Jornada*, *El Sol de Tijuana*, *Uniradio*, *El Mexicano*, *Telemundo*, all sending photos that I can perfectly use. The reporters, after all this, we are going through the same thing. There is no boss, no editor [in this group]. This makes life easier for us. We all bring almost the same information; we all share it... Everything that is uploaded here is public. Because there is a huge workload, and I cannot go around like crazy [covering everything]. What we had before, that rivalry, has disappeared (Journalist 7, personal communication).

This collaborative journalism is not the traditional collaborative journalism in which journalists from different organizations collaborate openly to develop a common work, but a covert collaborative journalism that uses the complicity between colleagues to free each other from routine tasks. When this allows those who intend to generate a long-form story to have the time they need, it is understood that there is a collective effort behind it.

During our fieldwork we observed an example of the relevance of these everyday resistances. Journalist 2 was conducting an investigation on human trafficking. Every day she spent eight hours in front of a hotel where human trafficking took place. She would sit at a taco stand while watching people come in and out of the hotel. To do this while still meeting her news quota she used the WhatsApp group of Tijuana journalists. It was not what she idealized, but it was the only resource she could use if she wanted to have time to develop her story.

As Scott (1985) argues, these are everyday practices performed by those in positions of subordination in an attempt to alleviate –even if only partially– their oppression by taking advantage of the interstices left by the system. What is being sought is not individual self-aggrandizement, but the common good by investigating matters of public interest that otherwise would not be published. Thus, this opposition to coercive power is also a form of collective resilience (González de Bustamante & Relly, 2016), only focused on persevering despite labor exploitation.

Resisting editorial censorship

In an ideal world, after overcoming attempts at co-opting, information blockage and finding loopholes in the daily routine to develop long-form stories, journalists would not have to face another obstacle. After all, by that point, they would have done everything within their resources and capabilities. However, that ideal world does not exist in most of the news organizations that employ our subjects of study. That is why they must articulate a new resistance, but now against editorial censorship.

In Tijuana newsrooms, the expression "protection of information" is commonly heard. Reporters and editors seek to protect the information they have produced –sometimes under adverse conditions– from the influence of actors outside the professional field of journalism, especially the owners of the organizations. By conceiving themselves as economic and political actors rather than journalistic actors, these businessmen put these interests before the social function of journalism.

This means that reporters have to exercise their power to pressure their editors to convince senior management to publish certain contents. Journalist 8 comments that this happens frequently in his organization, and that what he and his colleagues do is: "pressure the editors [by] telling them: 'well, everyone is bringing the story...; if we do not publish it, we will be left behind, we will get a bad rep...'" (Journalist 8, personal communication). In these circumstances, blackmail based on competition can make top management give in so long as they are not repressed by the public.

In this context, another resistance to censorship is when different news organizations coordinate to publish a story simultaneously. During

our fieldwork, this happened when two organizations combined to produce and publish a feature on the shell companies of the then mayor. As they feared an attack through the official advertising agreements, what the responsible editors chose to do was to simultaneously publish the feature in order to bypass the organizational control mechanisms.

But these strategies are not always enough. There are times when, as Journalist 1 reported, a journalist ends his or her workday with the certainty that what has been delivered will be published as agreed with the team of editors, only to find that the content has been deleted from the digital edition during the night and does not appear in the print, television, or radio edition of the following day. This is where they realize the scope and limitations of their exercise of power in the organizational environment.

In cases where pressures from within and outside the organization do not work, a third way that the journalists we have observed and interviewed resort to is to send their work to other publications, in the same city, other states of the country or abroad, in order to have it published in any way they can. To avoid organizational sanctions, they may even concede their work for other colleagues to sign. In such cases, this strategy resembles that of covert collaborative journalism, in that it privileges the common good over individual spotlight.

Journalist 9 has resorted to this practice when the news organization that employs him –without a formal contract, by word of mouth– does not publish his work without informing him of the reasons. He has had problems when he has published in other local organizations but has reached an agreement –also by word of mouth– to be able to publish in other states or countries as a freelancer. In this sense, the objective of this resistance is to provide an outlet for content that was not going to complete the editorial process. It is, in short, the last thing they can do to defend their work.

Conclusions

The objective of this article has been to study overt and covert resistances in Tijuana's journalism. Moreover, in order to deepen its analysis, such resistances have been classified according to the form of coercive power

to which they respond: 1) deferential relations, 2) information blocking, 3) workloads, and 4) editorial censorship. This has made it possible to test Hollander and Einwohner's (2004) typology of resistance and to emphasize forms of resistance specific to journalism in order to better understand how power relations operate in this professional field.

Our fieldwork based on the research techniques of participant observation, in-depth interviews and focus groups has been key to enter the world of journalists' daily resistances. Observing from beginning to end the workday of two reporters, a man and a woman, as well as a third newsroom, has allowed us to witness forms of opposition to coercive power that journalists do not commonly express in surveys or other types of polls in which a relationship of trust is not generated.

In contrast to the previous studies on the resistance and resilience of Mexican journalism professionals, this article has shown that resistance is not only to different forms of violence, but also to external and internal forces that try to control what and how journalism is. As news organizations tend to present themselves as allies of threatened, assaulted, or murdered journalists, it is necessary to characterize their decision-makers as part of the coercive power that reporters and editors must resist in order to defend their professional ideals.

This case study does not intend to be representative of Tijuana's journalism, but rather to give an account of the experiences and perceptions of a group of journalists employed as daily reporters who resist deferential relationships, information blocking, workloads, and editorial censorship in order to produce the stories that they idealize. Our studies on Tijuana's journalism allow us to note that resistance is not generalizable in this city's journalism, but that it is one of the characteristics of the journalism that sets the agenda and challenges power.

Compared to other Mexican cities, Tijuana's location on the northern border of the country, as well as the sociocultural profile of its population, endows its journalists with a transnational personality (Ángeles & Solís, 2019). This, in turn, gives them the opportunity to resist local coercive power by printing or publishing abroad, especially in San Diego, United States. Journalism professionals in other Mexican cities may not have the possibility of printing or publishing in another

country, but there is evidence that they also resist by migrating or publishing under pseudonyms.

Future studies on resistance in Mexican journalism could take up what is proposed in this article to explore how resistance to coercive power is opposed in other states and cities, either extending or challenging our conceptual and methodological proposal. Emphasizing this phenomenon may contribute to transcend the idea that journalists only reproduce an organizational culture to understand them on their own terms, as professionals with the capacity to intervene in the current state of affairs to alter it according to their convictions.

Bibliographic references

Alonso, M. (2018). Infrarealist journalism of Mexican female authors: Information meets literature in *The Sorrows of Mexico*. *Hispanic Research Journal*, *19*(4), 382-398. https://doi.org/10.1080/14682737.2018.1492671

Ángeles, S. & Solís, M. (2019). Periodismo transfronterizo: Trayectorias y procesos de identificación laboral en Tijuana, México, y San Diego, Estados Unidos. *Frontera Norte*, *31*(18), 1-21. http://dx.doi.org/10.3367/rfm.v1i1.2035

Bruce, S. & Yearley, S. (2006). *The SAGE dictionary of sociology*. SAGE Publications.

Castillo, L. (2015). Los techos de cristal en el periodismo: la experiencia de una directora. *XXVII Encuentro Nacional de la Asociación Mexicana de Investigadores de la Comunicación* (pp. 1605-1617). Asociación Mexicana de Investigadores de la Comunicación.

Choice, S. (2016). *"Love and courage": Resilience strategies of journalists facing trauma in northern Mexico* [Unpublished master's thesis]. University of Arizona.

Del Palacio, C. (2018). *Callar o morir en Veracruz: violencia y medios de comunicación en el sexenio de Javier Duarte*. Juan Pablos Editor.

Del Palacio, C. (2020). Resistencia, resiliencia y luchas por la memoria de la violencia: los periodistas en Veracruz, México. *Chasqui, Revista Latinoamericana de Comunicación*, (143), 199-214.

Díaz-Cerveró, E. & Barredo, D. (2020). Journalistic coverage of organized crime in Mexico: Reporting on the facts, security protocols

and recurrent subthemes. *International Journal of Communication*, *14*, 2500-2518. https://ijoc.org/index.php/ijoc/article/view/11937

Díaz-Cerveró, E., Barredo, D. & González, R. A. (2021). How do journalists in Mexico report on organised crime: Representing the facts, interpretation and self-critique. *Medijska istraživanja: znanstveno-stručni* časopis *za novinarstvo i medije*, *27*(1), 49-73. https://doi.org/10.22572/mi.27.1.3

Foucault, M. (1999). *Estética, ética y hermenéutica*. Paidós.

Gerring, J. (2017). *Case study research: Principles and practices*. Cambridge University Press.

Giddens, A. & Sutton, P. W. (2015). *Conceptos esenciales de la sociología*. Alianza Editorial.

González, R. A. (2021). Mexican journalism under siege: The impact of anti-press violence on reporters, newsrooms and society. *Journalism Practice*, *15*(3), 308-328. https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2020.1729225

González, R. A. & Reyna, V. H. (2019). "They don't trust us; they don't care if we're attacked": Trust and risk perception in Mexican journalism. *Communication & Society*, *32*(1), 146-160. https://doi.org/10.15581/003.32.37820

González de Bustamante, C. & Relly, J. E. (2016). The practice and study of journalism in zones of violence in Latin America: Mexico as a case study. *Journal of Applied Journalism & Media Studies*, *5*(1), 51-69. https://doi.org/10.1386/ajms.5.1.51_1

González de Bustamante, C. & Relly, J. E. (2021). *Surviving Mexico: resistance and resilience among journalists in the twenty-first century*. University of Texas Press.

Hollander, J. A. & Einwohner, R. L. (2004). Conceptualizing resistance. *Sociological Forum*, *19*, 533-554. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11206-004-0694-5

Hughes, S., Iesue, L., Fernández de Ortega, H., Cruz, J. & Lozano, J. C. (2021). Coping with occupational stress in journalism: Professional identities and advocacy as resources. *Journalism Studies*, *22*(8), 971-991. https://doi.org/10.1080/1461670X.2021.1910543

Hughes, S. & Márquez-Ramírez, M. (2017). Examining the practices that Mexican journalists employ to reduce risk in a context of

violence. *International Journal of Communication*, *11*, 499-521. https://ijoc.org/index.php/ijoc/article/view/5934

Manjarrez Peñúñuri, A. B. & Zúñiga Elizalde, M. (2018). Periodistas sonorenses en resistencia ante el acoso sexual. *Revista de Estudios de Género, La Ventana*, *6*(48), 327-357. https://doi.org/10.32870/lv.v6i48.6758

Márquez-Ramírez, M. (2014). Professionalism and journalism ethics in post-authoritarian Mexico: Perceptions of news for cash, gifts and perks. In W. N. Wyatt (Ed.), *The ethics of journalism: Individual, institutional and cultural influences* (pp. 55-63). Palgrave Macmillan.

Merchant, D. D. (2021). *Una negociación sutil: relaciones de cortesía entre actores del campo periodístico de Baja California*. Universidad Autónoma de Baja California.

Meza, A. & Enríquez, J. (2018). Violencia simbólica en el campo periodístico de Sonora, México. *Global Media Journal* México, *15*(28), 49-65. https://doi.org/10.29105/gmjmx15.28-4

Puente, M. I. (2021). Mujeres periodistas en México: formas de resistencia para garantizar el derecho a la información de las audiencias. *Derecom*, (30), 57-76. https://bit.ly/3LP65xq

Reyna, V. H. (2014). *Nuevos riesgos, viejos encuadres: la escenificación de la inseguridad pública en Sonora*. El Colegio de Sonora.

Reyna, V. H., Echeverría, M. & González, R. A. (2020). Beyond exogenous models: Mexican journalism's modernization in its own terms. *Journalism Studies*, *21*(13), 1815-1835. https://doi.org/10.1080/1461670X.2020.1796765

Salazar, S. (2012). Periodismo y violencia: la producción de subjetividad del riesgo. *Global Media Journal* México, *9*(17), 63-80. https://gmjmexico.uanl.mx/index.php/GMJ_EI/article/view/44

Scott, J. C. (1985). *Las armas de los débiles: formas cotidianas de resistencia campesina*. Yale University Press.

Vinthagen, S. & Johansson, A. (2013). "Everyday resistance": Exploration of a concept and its theories. *Resistance Studies Magazine*, (1), 1-46.

Weber, M. (2014). *Economía y sociedad*. Fondo de Cultura Económica.

PROFILES

Diana Denisse Merchant Ley
Is a full-time professor at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at the Universidad Autónoma de Baja California. She holds a PhD in Social Sciences from the Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social, Western branch, and is a member of the National System of Researchers, level 1. Her main line of research is the anthropological analysis of press-power relations.

Víctor Hugo Reyna
Is a full-time research professor at the Faculty of Communication and Marketing at the Universidad La Salle Bajío. He holds a PhD in Social Sciences from El Colegio de Sonora and is a member of the National System of Researchers, level 1. He specializes in the sociological study of journalism and political communication's emerging phenomena.