

## A 35-year Journey: The Transformation of the Journal *Comunicación y Sociedad* and the Field of Communication Studies Through a Hemerographic Analysis

*Un recorrido de 35 años: la transformación de la revista*

*Comunicación y Sociedad y del campo de estudios de la comunicación a través de un análisis hemerográfico*

*Uma jornada de 35 anos: a transformação da revista*

*Comunicación y Sociedad e o campo dos estudos de comunicação por meio de uma análise hemerográfica*

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Thirty-five years after the first issue of the journal *Comunicación y Sociedad* was published, a statistical and hemerometric systematization of what has been produced and published during those three and a half decades was carried out with the aim of presenting a revisionist perspective of the changes, challenges and agendas faced by the academic field of communication during that period. As a central part of the results, we report the greater internationalization of CyS, the prominence of Spain, as a pool of collaborators and institutions, which continues to maintain an important place in scientific production, while collaborations from Latin American countries, as well as between authors, institutions and research traditions, increase and are renewed in the new comparative period and the increasing presence of research on digital culture.

**KEYWORDS:** *Comunicación y Sociedad*, hemerographic review, communication field, scientific journals.

*A 35 años de la edición del primer número de la revista Comunicación y Sociedad se llevó a cabo una sistematización documental, de base estadística y hemerométrica, sobre lo producido y publicado a lo largo de esas tres y media décadas, con el objetivo de exponer una perspectiva revisionista de los cambios, retos y agendas a los que se ha enfrentado el campo académico de la comunicación en ese periodo. Como parte central de los resultados se reporta la mayor internacionalización de la revista, el protagonismo de España, en tanto bolsa de colaboradores e instituciones, que sigue manteniendo un lugar prominente en la producción científica, mientras que las colaboraciones procedentes de países latinoamericanos, así como entre autores, instituciones y tradiciones de investigación, aumentan y se renuevan en el nuevo periodo comparado, y la cada vez mayor presencia de investigación sobre cultura digital.*

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** *Comunicación y Sociedad*, *revisión hemerográfica*, *campo de la comunicación*, *revistas científicas*.

*Trinta e cinco anos após a publicação do primeiro número da revista Comunicação y Sociedad, foi realizada uma sistematização estatística e hemerométrica do que foi produzido e publicado nas últimas três décadas e meia, com o objetivo de apresentar uma perspectiva revisionista das mudanças, dos desafios e das agendas enfrentadas pelo campo acadêmico da comunicação durante esse periodo. Como parte central dos resultados, relatamos o aumento da internacionalização da revista, a proeminência da Espanha como fonte de colaboradores e instituições, que continua a manter um lugar de destaque na produção científica, enquanto as colaborações de países latino-americanos, bem como entre autores, instituições e tradições de pesquisa, aumentam e se renovam no novo período comparativo, assim como a presença crescente de pesquisas sobre cultura digital.*

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** *Comunicación y Sociedad*, *revisão hemerográfica*, *campo da comunicação*, *periódicos científicos*.

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## INTRODUCTION

The papers and essays published in the journal *Comunicación y Sociedad* (Universidad de Guadalajara, Mexico) represent a sample of how the field of study of communication has developed and transformed in the Ibero-American region, its objects of analysis, the most recurrent theoretical paradigms, as well as the newest ones, the methodologies that have prevailed, the new ones, the constant themes throughout the decades, the changes and transformations in the uses and appropriations of technologies, the challenges in human communication, the evolution of theories, etcetera.

There is a large number of communication journals in international databases and indexes. Such is the case of Latindex, which contains, since its foundation and until 2021, 320 journals from Latin America, Spain and Portugal, according to Montero and Garrido (2021), but there are few journals in the field of communication and in this territory that have prevailed for more than 35 years.

To give continuity to the analysis applied in 2017 by Gómez-Rodríguez et al. on the occasion of the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary (with the article “30 years of *Comunicación y Sociedad*: changes and permanence in the academic field of communication”), it was decided to analyze from the same methodology, although with some adaptations to current issues, the development of the articles published in this journal from September 2016 to December 2022 and, thus, to study in a more holistic way the historical corpus considering, for this and also, the works carried out by Tovar (1997) and Rodríguez and García (2007).

## CONTEXT

In the last decade, the world of academic hemerography has been radically transformed. Editorial processes are carried out, almost exclusively, through electronic platforms and tools. The consumption of science has also been modified: academics, evaluators, editors and readers have had to learn about new models and instruments of editorial and scientometric management, new languages and, at the same time, there is the challenge of reaching a greater number of audiences and

readers.

In this enormous transformation of publishing processes, moreover, science publishing has become more commercialized than ever: there are powerful publishing houses that monopolize the journal world, mainly in the English language. These publishers charge the user different types of payments to access articles and, for authors, an equivalent fee to carry out the publication process (technically known as *article processing charges* or APC'S).

As Rogel-Salazar et al. (2017) point out, most of the journals in the field of communication indexed in Web of Science (WoS) are published in the United States and England, which together account for 84.1% of them. By 2015, there were three commercial publishers concentrating 68.3% of these journals in JCR-WoS: Routledge Taylor & Francis (32.9%), Sage Publications (27.8%), and Wiley-Blackwell (7.6%) (p. 177). A consequence of the concentration of commercial publishers in communication is that 73 journals (92.4%) are paid access and only 6 (7.6%) are open access (Rogel-Salazar et al., 2017).

In response to the commodification of science, there have appeared, at least since 2002 (Xalabarder, 2006, p. 5), different efforts that promote Open Access to Knowledge (OAK), which means, for the institutions and publishers that join it, that readers access journal papers and books openly without requiring any payment for their consult. The ideal of this proposal implies, from its origin, that the dissemination and diffusion of scientific activity permeate and cross-cut, through the Internet and digitization, in peripheral and satellite countries and demographic segments: something impossible to imagine just a few decades ago.

Although OAK cannot be classified as a movement or a uniform political program, given the large number of proposals, practical guidelines and legal mechanisms for their implementation, it can be affirmed that all the labels assimilated to the concept of “open access to knowledge” subscribe homogeneously to a common political ideology, which is to provide, immediately and historically, mechanisms for access to academic, scientific and technical information free of charge, expeditiously and of high quality to any citizen in the global world.

Among the current initiatives that vigorously join this program are the *Copyleft* projects and, mainly in the publishing and documentary

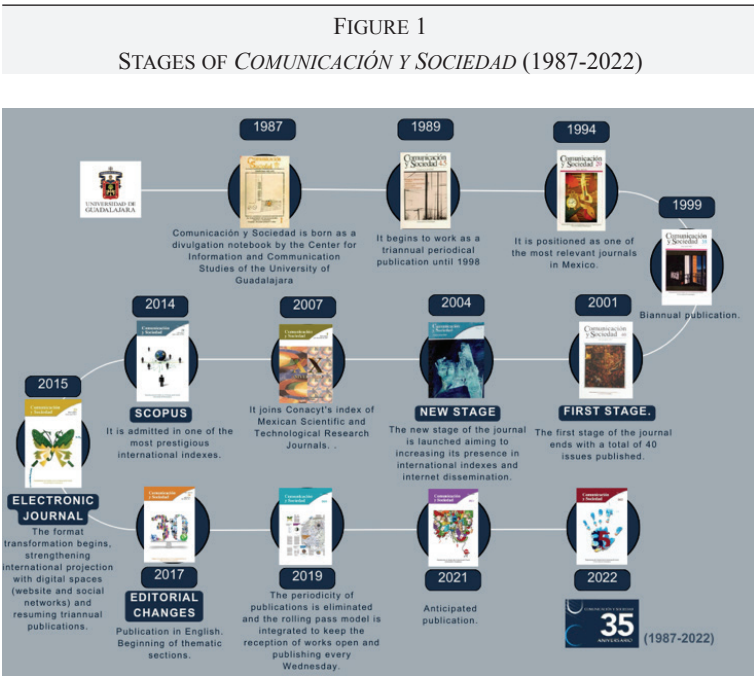
area, Creative Commons, a project that provides legal mechanisms for authors and users to share creative and intellectual products equally and horizontally, safeguarding the moral and patrimonial rights of creators in the transition between generation and consumption.

As part of this historical commitment, *Comunicación y Sociedad* (CyS) has become an Open Access publication by subscribing to Creative Commons licenses and being a signatory of the international agreement DORA (Declaration on Research Assessment). This has implied not only not following the practices of cost shifting to users or authors practiced by many commercial publishers, but seeking ways to disseminate science so that it is “open” and reaches not only academics and students, but also a more general public. Before elaborating on how CyS has ventured into other electronic formats, we will present a brief description of the path followed by the journal 35 years after its foundation.

### *Context of the development of Comunicación y Sociedad*

The journal *Comunicación y Sociedad* first appeared in 1987 and was founded at the then Centro de Estudios de la Información y la Comunicación (CEIC), now the Departamento de Estudios de la Comunicación Social (DECS), at the Universidad de Guadalajara, Mexico. Throughout its existence, the publication has gone through different stages and technologies for its production, periodicities, editors, challenges and growth (Gómez-Rodríguez et al., 2017). The most important change in recent years was to leave behind paper printing and move, in 2015, to the electronic format. In addition, since 2017, texts are also published in English, and the Digital Object Identifier (DOI) is added to the published articles, as well as presentations of thematic sections (see Table 2). As shown in Figure 1, the journal has had different stages that have presented challenges for its editors and staff, as well as for the institution.

There are few journals in the field of communication in Mexico. A study by López-Ornelas et al. (2017) mentions the existence of only 12 journals, both academic and dissemination. Among those that stand out the most are *Culturas Contemporáneas*, *Versión. Estudios de Comunicación y Política*, *Revista Mexicana de Ciencias Políticas*



Source: The authors.

*y Sociales, Revista Mexicana de Comunicación, Revista de Ciencias Sociales, Zócalo,*<sup>5</sup> *Razón y Palabra, and Comunicación y Sociedad.* Some are not entirely focused on the area of communication, but are linked to broader topics, as can be seen in their titles.

It is important to mention that there have been other publications, but they have disappeared. Currently in force are *Global Media Journal México*,<sup>6</sup> published by the Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo León and Texas A&M International University (based in Laredo, Texas); *Virtualis*, published by the Tecnológico de Monterrey, Guadalajara campus; *Balajú, Revista de Cultura y Comunicación*, from Universidad Veracruzana, and *Revista Panamericana de Comunicación*, by Universidad Panamericana.

<sup>5</sup> News and divulgation magazine.

<sup>6</sup> Previously edited by ITESM, campus Monterrey.

### *Dissemination strategies in Comunicación y Sociedad*

In a world in which socio-digital networks and other platforms monopolize the attention of users around the world, *Comunicación y Sociedad* had to be present in them. Although the journal's main audience are academics and students, and since they access the contents of the papers published through the journal's website and other repositories, such as SciELO, we considered that disseminating science in more formats was a major commitment in order to reach broader audiences, perhaps less specialized, and to use a less academic language; for this purpose, we thought of using videos, audios and infographics that translate the research results into a more user-friendly format.

By means of summaries, comments, quotations or retitles, the contents are disseminated more in social media (Guallar, cited in Artigas & Guallar, 2002, p. 15). In technical terms, this practice is known as *content curation* (Guallar, cited in Artigas & Guallar, 2022). This is defined as a:

System carried out by a specialist (the content curator) for an organization or as an individual, consisting of the search, selection, characterization and continuous dissemination of the most relevant content from various sources of information on the web on a specific topic (or topics) and field (or fields), for a given audience, on the web (mainstream) or in other contexts (e.g., in an organization), offering an added value and thereby establishing a link with the audience/users of the same (Guallar & Leiva-Aguilera, cited in Artigas & Guallar, 2022, p. 16).

The first social network profile was set up on Facebook,<sup>7</sup> in November 2013. Two years later, in 2015, a Twitter (now X)<sup>8</sup> account was created. In addition, a monthly newsletter began to be produced and in 2019 it was decided to venture into the edition of podcasts (on the iVoox and Spotify platforms), in which the authors present the results of their research in their own voice. In 2023, a new social network was opened: TikTok.

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<sup>7</sup> Available at <https://www.facebook.com/comysoc>

<sup>8</sup> Available at <https://twitter.com/cysrevista>

Thus, it is important to take into account that the reach of social networks is also measured and this data is part of what is known as *altmetrics* or alternative metrics. These are alternatives to the impact factor and serve to identify the level of influence and social impact of research in sources beyond academia, such as socio-digital networks, journalistic sources, blogs, among others (Alonso-Arévalo et al., 2016).<sup>9</sup>

### *Bilingual publication*

The hypothesis dictates that publishing texts in English helps to achieve greater visibility. We have observed that since CyS made the decision to publish also in English, original texts in this language have been submitted from various countries and not only from Anglo regions, confirming our intuition; although, and this is a debt in this study, a formal analysis of the scope and downloading of papers in that language is lacking.

Nevertheless, according to Google Analytics metrics, during the period from January 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022, the site registered visits from several countries. Although Mexico predominates as the location from which most visits to the portal are received, more than 50 000 of the total of 71 856 of them come from other countries, practically from all continents of the world. Of the 149 that visited the site, the 20 countries with the most visits are displayed in Table 1.

In light of the above, one of the major changes and transformations of CyS has been to adapt to new formats to disseminate science, extend the scope of the journal's contents and broaden the audiences and countries it reaches.

### *Context of hemerographic and bibliometric studies in the communication field*

Within the so-called information sciences, which aim at the study of documentary sources and processes, the hemerographic studies appeared at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, understood as the sub-discipline in

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<sup>9</sup> This data is managed by private companies, such as PlumX. While CyS has item-level monitoring of these data, budget constraints have prevented access to the full service of these metrics.

TABLE 1  
COUNTRIES WITH THE LARGEST NUMBER OF VISITS TO THE WEBSITE

Position	Country	Sessions	Position	Country	Sessions
1	Mexico	21 622	11	Guatemala	687
2	Spain	8 383	12	Indonesia	588
3	Peru	7 526	13	Bolivia	527
4	Colombia	4 455	14	Cuba	385
5	United States	2 618	15	Uruguay	338
6	Argentina	2 514	16	India	319
7	Ecuador	2 220	17	Costa Rica	282
8	Chile	2 102	18	France	262
9	Venezuela	1 042	19	The Netherlands	261
10	Brazil	941	20	Dominican Republic	258

Source: Google Analytics (data as of July 2023).

charge of explaining and describing the role, in terms of information processes, of the different types of periodical documentation such as journals, bulletins and brochures.

For its part, scientometrics, a discipline sometimes located as part of the sociology of science, sometimes as an area of specialization of the information sciences, and other times as a satellite in the orbit of both, has taken on the task –at least since the 1970s with the studies of Dereck de Solla Price (1973) on modern scientometrics– of tracing and systematizing the processes of circulation of scientific knowledge, particularly those dependent on documentary publication and, essentially, on academic periodical production.

Although cooperating and working together on particular projects, both specialized areas had remained as little hybridized fields until well into the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the advance of Web 2.0 and the arrival of the first prototypes of bibliographic index collectors opened the opportunity to formalize their joint participation.

As we shall see, the emergence of the Internet and new computer disciplines made it possible, for the first time in the history of science, to generate “digital metrics”, i.e., clean statistics on the online behavior of the different documentary entities in periodical collections



(whether papers, journals, authors, institutions or readers), thus going beyond the traditional and otherwise very limited computations, such as citation counts or the now classic impact factor; thus, hemerometrics was born: a new field of specialization aimed at taking advantage of the digital metrics of academic production in journals for the advancement of hemerographic and scientometric research.

Since then, scientific and academic journals have been able to use hemerometric tools to develop diagnoses and, above all, to undertake expertise and decision-making processes that would have been unimaginable just a little more than a decade ago. From this trend, during the last decade several historical hemerometric and bibliometric analyses have been run to journals in the area of communication in Ibero-America (Castillo-Esparcia et al., 2012; de-Filippo, 2013; Escribà-Sales & Cortiñas, 2013; López-Ornelas, 2010; Martínez-Nicolás & Carrasco-Campos, 2018; Rogel-Salazar et al., 2017), among which the vast majority refer to analyses of Spanish journals, since Spain is the nation with the most recognized journals in the area of communication in Ibero-America.

Precisely, the *Revista Latina de Comunicación Social* (RLCS) published a metric study of its contents from 1998 to 2009, carried out by López-Ornelas (2010). This author analyzed a total of 64 issues published in RLCS and a total of 878 papers and conducted quantitative-descriptive research, in which she counted the number of authors, gender, co-authors, academic degree, Spanish institutions with the highest incidence, among other points.

In her work, the author found how RLCS was positioning itself in Latin America by publishing authors from countries in that region. An interesting aspect of the study is the measurement of the scope of internal communication processes (bibliometrics, scientometrics, infometrics, which are the classic measurable ones) and external ones (cybermetrics, webmetrics), the latter considering the level of visibility, number of downloads, among other more alternative data. The study found that the vast majority of authors are of Spanish nationality, and that there is a slight majority of male authors (58%) in relation to women (42%). Likewise, in the period analyzed, the journal had a majority of national authors (55%), 43% international and 2% with no record of nationality.

This study was carried out more than 13 years ago and the data have certainly changed, but it reveals characteristics that provide information on a particular period.

The above coincides with some of the findings previously presented in the work done by Escribà-Sales and Cortiñas (2013), who analyzed the seven Spanish journals best positioned in quality indicators in the period from 2007 to 2011. The aim of their study was to find whether the Spanish journals had greater international participation, as well as the type of collaborations between authors at the institutional and geographical level.

The authors found that, in a total of 2 072 authorships in 1 182 papers in the period they analyzed, 58.3% corresponded to the male gender, while 41.7% corresponded to the female gender (p. 38). Among the data obtained, it was found that a large majority of the single authorships (83.8%) came from researchers from Spain. A relevant fact is that, with respect to collaborations between institutions, “the major geographical centers in the field of communication hardly collaborate with each other” (p. 41). Another interesting piece of information is that the Spanish institutions that publish the most in these journals are the Universidad Complutense de Madrid and the Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona.

For its part, the work of this type that has been carried out in Latin America has been that of Gómez-Rodríguez et al. (2017) applied to the journal *Comunicación y Sociedad*, who found that, despite the internationalization of this publication, it remained a space for dissemination of national and local research. As will be read below, this fact has changed significantly in recent years.

## METHODOLOGY

The present research was developed from a quantitative perspective and a comparative-descriptive design. We selected the corpus from the last analysis conducted by Gómez-Rodríguez et al. (2017), who examined articles and essays published from 2004 to issue 26 of 2016. It was decided to use the same variables and systematization sheet, as well as the codebook designed for the 2017 study. In this work, the corpus is composed of 186 publications that were counted from issue

27 (September 2016) to December 2022. For the systematization of the data, Fuentes' (2004) proposal was used regarding the analyzed media (academic field, press and print, cinema, radio, television and video, Internet and digital, media as a whole, other objects) (p. 19), and the approach of Jensen (2014) was included, who makes a classification about media in three levels: 1) human field (oral and written language); 2) institutions and one-to-many communication practices (books, press, photo, cinema, radio, television); 3) digital technologies (see Gómez-Rodríguez et al., 2017). For the analysis of theoretical approaches, we turned to Craig (1999), who classifies the traditions of communication theory into seven: 1) rhetorical, 2) semiotic, 3) phenomenological, 4) cybernetic, 5) socio-psychological, 6) sociocultural, and 7) critical.

As mentioned, the same coding designed for the work carried out in 2017 was used, however, to adapt to this study, some modifications were made: variables related to digital culture were added (participatory culture, transmedia, multiscreen, since no works related to these topics had appeared in the analyses carried out previously). Likewise, the analysis of new communicative phenomena implies the design and application of other methodologies and the use of new tools, therefore methodologies such as big data, social network analysis, as well as a combination of methodologies were included in the systematization base; it was also decided to be more specific when it comes to works that use statistical analysis as a central method.<sup>10</sup>

On the other hand, the Open Journal Systems (OJS) platform, from which the journal is managed, made it possible to extract data to obtain systematizations that have been very useful to organize the periods analyzed by authors, geographical areas and institutional origin, gender, type of collaboration (local, national, international), among others.

To understand the evolution of the journal's publications, not only in the aforementioned period but throughout its history (1987-2022),<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> The analysis material that cannot be included in this paper due to space limitations is available at the following links. The tables can be found at <https://figshare.com/s/104815076907f9aed151> and the figures at <https://figshare.com/s/7be1c5371b13725d6339>.

<sup>11</sup> The 2022 cutoff is considered to be the time reference to consider the 35 years of the journal.

a comparative analytical emphasis was given through time in some of the lines we are interested in comparing, recovering the texts and data obtained by Tovar (1997), Rodríguez and García (2007) and Gómez-Rodríguez et al. (2017), who, at the time, performed both bibliometric and content analyses to the journal. It is important to clarify that it was not possible to work the comparative analysis in all the dimensions covered in the current proposal due to the methodological differences of each study.

A criterion to be contemplated for the construction of the corpus of information was to omit materials such as interviews, book reviews and presentations of the thematic sections written by the coordinators of each edition.

Within the dimensions considered for the recovery of information and subsequent analysis, it is kept in mind that editorial decisions set guidelines in the results obtained, especially for the thematic sections that have been incorporated into the journal since 2017, as they bias the results with respect to the results of the most recurrent themes.

## RESULTS

Although the papers submitted follow the lines oriented by each researcher, it is important to consider that the proposal of the journal in relation to publications in thematic calls may influence certain contents. However, having analyzed a period with different thematic issues, it is possible to minimize the role played by this editorial decision in the reception of papers.

As mentioned above, the totality of texts published between the months of September 2016 and December 2022 was analyzed, having a corpus of 186 documents, of which 85% are empirical papers and the remaining 15% correspond to essays. It should be noted that this is not a mirror sample, i.e., the categories and indicators are not equivalent in both corpora; thus, in this work we seek to compare them, but not to contrast them insofar as the first stage analyzed (2004 to August 2016) is a longer period compared to the second stage (September 2016 to December 2022).

TABLE 2  
TITLES OF THE THEMATIC SECTIONS 2017-2022

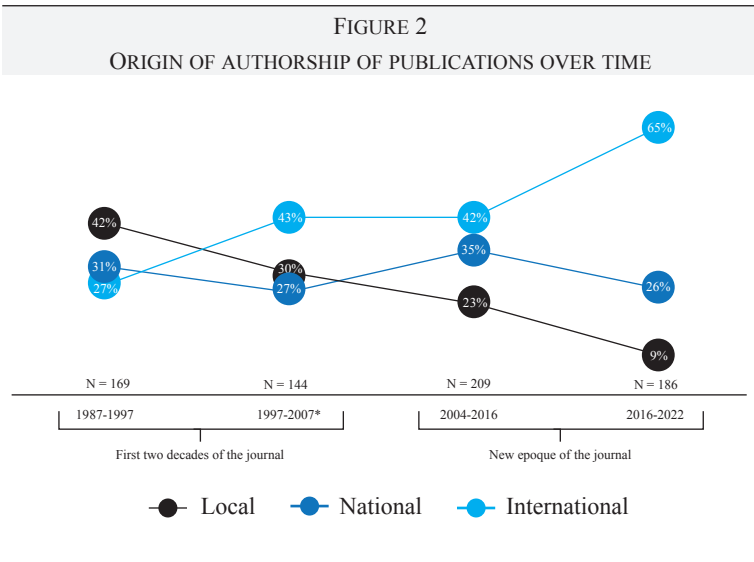
Theme	Guest editors	Year
Communication and Politics	Carlos Muñiz	2017
30 <sup>th</sup> anniversary of <i>Comunicación y Sociedad</i>	Carlos Vidales	2017
Media and memory	Adrien Charlois y Arley Morrell	2018
Latin American and European cinema: production, analysis and reception	Fabiola Alcalá y Patricia Torres San Martín	2018
Transmedia literacy	Carlos Scolari, Rosalía Winocur, Sara Pereira, Carlos Barreneche	2018
Manuel Martín Serrano: Retrospective of communication theory	Raúl Fuentes Navarro	2019
Technopolitics and digital citizenship	Salvador Leetoy, Diego Zavala Scherer, Francisco Sierra Caballero	2019
Working and safety conditions of journalists	Celia del Palacio, Gabriela Gómez, Grisel Salazar	2020
Television, melodrama, globalization	Giuliana Cassano, Juan Piñón, Constanza Mujica	2020
Communication and semiotics	Carlos Vidales, Elizabeth Parra, Richard L. Lanigan	2021
Netflix and the transnationalization of the audiovisual industry	Ma. Trinidad García Leiva, Luis A. Albornoz, Rodrigo Gómez García	2021
Collaborative knowledge practices and social movements: technologies and free and citizen media for the production of common goods	Dafne Calvo, Alejandro Barranquero	2022
Media and political engagement	Carlos Muñiz y Martín Echeverría	2022
Social representations, audiences, and consumption in television fiction	Javier Mateos-Pérez, Charo Lacalle, Simone Rocha	2022

Source: The authors.

The trend in the type of publications submitted shows an increase of 24% of empirical articles (85%) compared to 61% of articles submitted in the 2004-2016 period (Gómez-Rodríguez et al., 2017), thus achieving the desirable 75% of empirical papers requested by various international indexes.

*Authorship provenance (comparative of four periods of analysis)*

When considering authorship provenance –according to the institution of adscription– it can be emphasized that international publications have increased from the birth of the journal to the present, while the opposite trend, i.e., a continuous reduction, has been reflected in local publications. On the other hand, publications of national origin have had an irregular presence, with a downward trend in some periods reviewed and an increase in others (Figure 2).



Source: The authors.

We have observed, since 2017, that Spanish researchers seek to publish more in Latin American journals located in high quartiles in international indexes (Scopus and WoS), given that there are very few

first quartile Spanish-written journals in the discipline's environment, and these are based, basically, in Spain (it is worth mentioning that in Latin America journals are positioned in quartiles 2, 3 and 4, with absence of 1). To a large extent, it is believed, this trend is the natural result of the much earlier historical presence of Spain in the field's development, the consequent primacy in the disciplinarization of research and the natural diversification of its empirical activity.

When the nationality of the authors is taken into account, Spain is the country with the greatest presence, since 31% of them, at all levels of collaboration, belong to institutions in this country. This is closely followed by Mexico, with 27% of affiliations and, from this point, we observe a dilution in the concentration of countries, followed by Chile, with 10%; Argentina, with 8%; Colombia, with 6%, and Brazil, with 5%. The remaining 13% is divided among 13 countries, mostly in Latin America.

Comparing with previous studies we can observe a consistent increase in international participation for individual publications or in the first place of authorship, because while Rodríguez and García (2007) reported 26.6%, and Gómez-Rodríguez et al. (2017), 42%, in the last period analyzed there is 63.4% of international authorship in first position. The above shows that a trend towards internationalization is maintained, however, a significant percentage of contributors (36.6%) are still nationals. We also observed an increasing demand to publish in CyS from Asian researchers, and this is due, we believe, to the publication of texts in English.

In terms of the institutions of origin, it is noteworthy that the Universidad de Guadalajara (UdeG) continues to occupy first place as the institution of affiliation of participating authors in the period 2016-2022. However, unlike the 2004-2016 period, in which other Mexican institutions occupied the first places together with the UdeG, in the last period analyzed the second position is occupied by an institution from Chile, in third and fourth positions are institutions from Spain and, in fifth place, from Argentina. Thus, we can see that national universities have been displaced in the first place by international universities, with a strong presence of Spain (Table 3).

TABLE 3  
INSTITUTION OF AFFILIATION OF AUTHORS

Position	2004-2016		2016-2022	
	Institution	Participations	Institution	Participations
1	Universidad de Guadalajara	49	Universidad de Guadalajara	31
2	Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey	13	Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile	13
3	Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana	9	Universidad Rey Juan Carlos	12
4	Universidad Autónoma de Aguascalientes	6	Universidad Complutense de Madrid	10
	Universidad Complutense de Madrid	6	Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas	9
5	Universidad Veracruzana	5	Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey	8
6	Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Occidente	4	Universidad de Lima	8
	Universidad de Buenos Aires	4	Universidad Carlos III de Madrid	7

Source: The authors.



It should be noted that the participation of the University of Guadalajara is varied, with a total of 25 authors in the 31 collaborations, of which only five have published on more than one occasion and, of these, only in one case there were more than two publications. This shows a high level of participation by researchers from the institution and not an intensive level of publication by few authors.

On the other hand, when analyzing the distribution of institutions by country, we can see that Spain is the country with the highest number of participating institutions in the period reviewed, with a total of 35. It is closely followed by Mexico, with 28 different institutions, next is Argentina (14), Colombia (12) and Chile (11). Thus, it can be seen that the countries with the greatest number of participants are also those with the greatest number of member institutions. In the case of Spain and Mexico, a three to one ratio was found, i.e., for each institution in that country there are three participations in different publications. In the cases of Argentina, Colombia and Portugal, the ratio is two to one, and in the rest, one to one.<sup>12</sup>

In addition, when observing the relationship between the country of origin and the number of articles from each country, we can see that, although Spain is the country with the highest number of authors participating in the period, Mexico is the one with the highest number of papers published (Table 5). This implies that Spanish authors have worked more collaboratively, with an average of two authors per text, while Mexicans mostly publish individually. Chile is the country that reports the highest number of co-authorships, with an average of 2.5 authors per article. It is important to mention, in this sense, that collaborations can be national or international.

The phenomenon of collaborations has appeared in the last period analyzed, which reflects a tendency to carry out academic work and publish it between two or more authors. This is due, in part, to scientific policies in various countries, such as Spain, where the work of collegiate groups is encouraged.

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<sup>12</sup> With the exception of Peru, which has nine authorships by two institutions.

TABLE 4  
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AUTHORS AND INSTITUTIONS

2016-2022							
Country	Number of institutions	Authors	Relation between authors and institutions	Country	Number of institutions	Authors	Relation between authors and institutions
Spain	35	108	3.1	Ecuador	3	4	1.3
Mexico	28	93	3.3	Italy	4	4	1.0
Chile	11	35	3.2	France	2	3	1.5
Argentina	14	26	1.9	Portugal	2	4	2.0
Colombia	12	21	1.8	Belgium	2	2	1.0
Brazil	7	19	2.7	Bolivia	1	2	2.0
Peru	2	9	4.5	Cuba	1	1	1.0
United States	5	7	1.4	Germany	1	1	1.0
Uruguay	3	5	1.7	Pakistan	1	1	1.0

Source: The authors.

TABLE 5  
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COLLABORATORS AND PAPERS

2016-2022							
Country	Authors	Papers	Relation between authors and papers	Country	Authors	Papers	Relation between collaborators and papers
Spain	108	54	2	Ecuador	4	3	1.3
Mexico	93	72	1.3	Italy	4	3	1.3
Chile	35	14	2.5	France	3	3	1
Argentina	26	16	1.6	Portugal	4	3	1.3
Colombia	21	10	2.1	Belgium	2	2	1
Brazil	19	10	1.9	Bolivia	2	1	2
Peru	9	6	1.5	Cuba	1	1	1
United States	7	6	1.2	Germany	1	1	1
Uruguay	5	4	1.3	Pakistan	1	1	1

Source: The authors.

The above coincides with the findings of Martínez-Nicolás and Carrasco-Campos (2018), who found in their analysis that there is a growth in collaborations in published works. They attribute this to the increase and strengthening of multicenter networks of researchers (p. 1372). In CyS we found that, unlike other periods analyzed, in recent years articles signed by researchers from different institutions and countries have been submitted.

### *Gender representation*

With respect to the characteristics of the 345 authors participating in the 186 texts that make up the corpus, there is practically a balance in the presence of women and men as author contributors, since 51% were women and 49% were men. This represents a slight increase in the participation of women with respect to the study conducted in 2017, in which this was 44%.

This trend is maintained when observing the order of participation, since in the positions of first and second authors women have a slight advantage (first author: women, 52%; men, 48%; second author: women, 53%; men, 47%), the third position represents 50% participation by sex, and both the fourth and fifth positions have more male participation (fourth author: women, 33%; men, 67%; fifth author: women, 40%; men, 60%). In other words, women appear as responsible authors on more occasions than men; however, this difference is statistically unrepresentative.

Thus, it can be observed that, throughout the new epoche of the journal (2004 onwards), there has been a practically mirrored contribution between men and women, which has arisen organically, not as a result of specific actions by the journal's editorial team, such as the circulation of calls for papers on gender issues or the design and implementation of selective policies of any kind; this means, in short, that this result has been the product of the organic participation of both male and female authors and of the neutral review processes.

## THEMES

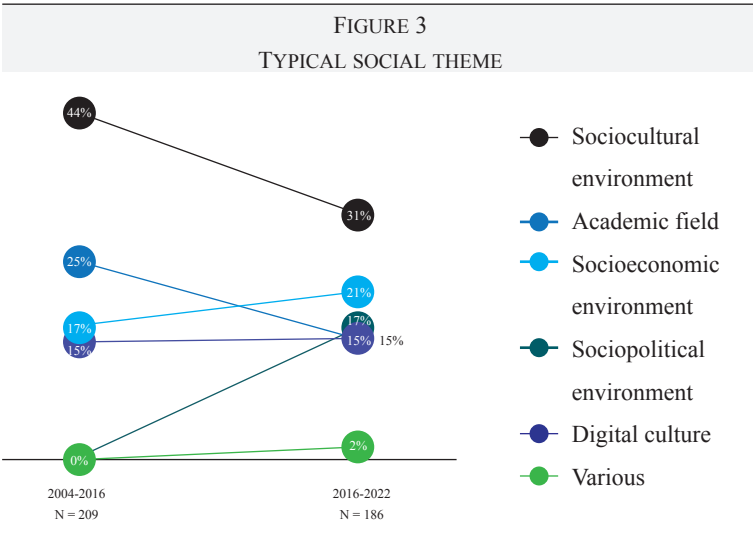
As can be seen in Table 6, 34% of the papers refer to studies from the point of view of broadcasting/production/interactivity. That is, where the elaboration of messages starts from. This is followed by papers that analyze the reception/consumption/circulation of content. Regarding the significance of these, 20% analyze this area and only 8% of studies (essays) analyze the state of research in the field of communication.

TABLE 6  
THEMATIC AXES 2016-2022

2016-2022		
Thematic	Publications	%
Broadcasting /Production/Interactivity	63	34
Reception/ Consumption /Circulation	44	24
Meaning/Content	37	20
History/ Politics/ Regulation	16	9
State of research	15	8
Circulation/Distribution	7	4
Various	4	2

Source: The authors, based on Fuentes (2004, p. 21).

It stands out in this analysis that the articles that address digital culture (participatory, transmedia and multiscreen culture) as a central theme, are those that have increased their presence in recent years, since from having no works on the subject in the period 2004-2016, there was a notorious increase in 2016-2022, reaching 17% of the total number of articles published for this period. The sociocultural environment (covering subjects and social identities, urban culture, daily life, education, ideology and beliefs, discourse and symbolic representations) continues to predominate as a typical social thematic reference. There was also a brief increase in studies on the socioeconomic environment of the media (from 17 to 21%) and a drop in the study of the academic field of communication (from 25% to 15%).



Source: The authors.

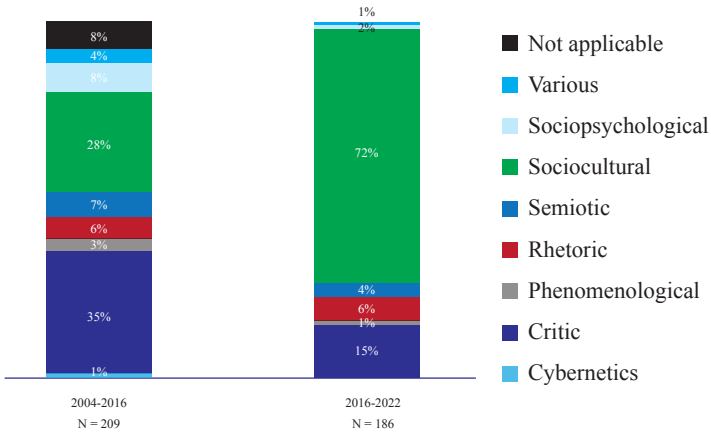
### *Research traditions*

Regarding the research tradition to which the texts are ascribed, in the cut analyzed for 2016-2022, the sociocultural tradition sweeps, with 72% (having an increase from 28 to 72% from one period to another), while the critical tradition has a significant drop from 35 to 15%. This is explained by the increase in digital studies that respond to the current reality and research that seeks to explain the uses and appropriations of digital culture.

On the other hand, it is important to point out that in previous periods the traditions encompassed, particularly, in the critical and socio-psychological schools, were very present, which shows that the questions and general orientations respond to a renewed zeitgeist.

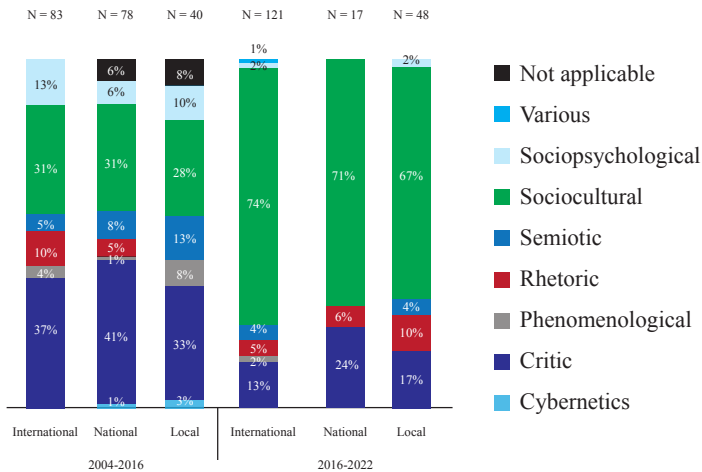
As can be seen in Figure 5, the emphasis on the sociocultural tradition comes from local, national and international collaborations, noting an increase in this tradition in foreign countries. We also observe more critical studies in national research (Mexico).

FIGURE 4  
RESEARCH TRADITIONS



Source: The authors.

FIGURE 5  
RESEARCH TRADITIONS BY REGIONS  
(LOCAL, NATIONAL, INTERNATIONAL)



Source: The authors.

### *Type of methodological designs and methods*

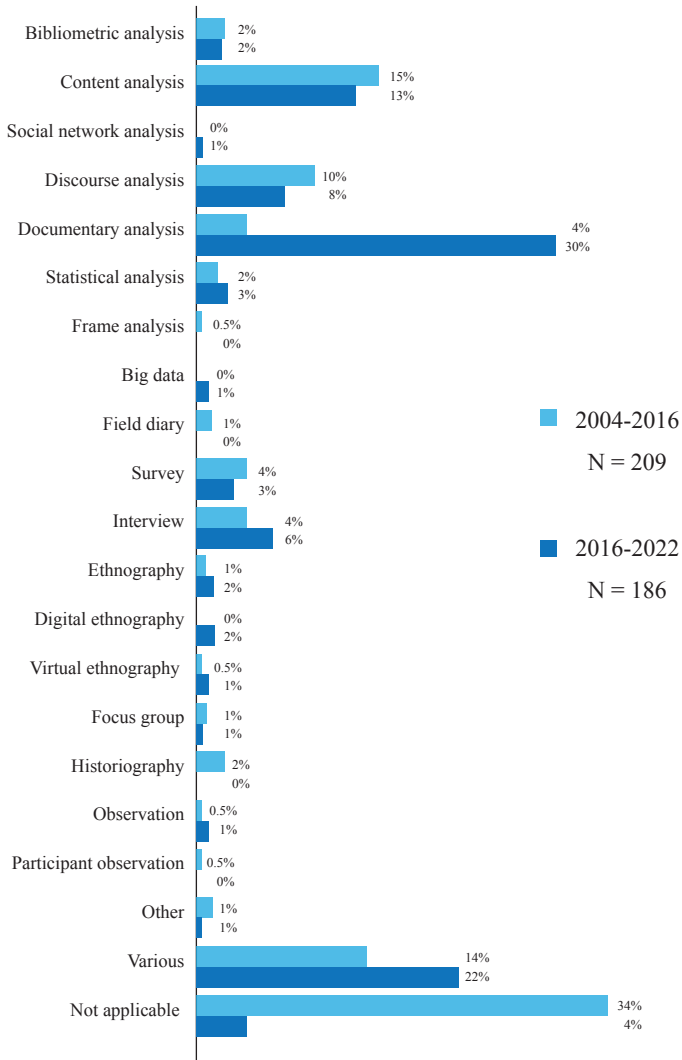
We found that qualitative designs continue to predominate –even with an increase from 55 to 63% with respect to 2004-2016 (August), a slight increase in mixed studies (11 to 14%) and a decrease in quantitative studies (34 to 24%)–. There is a preference for qualitative studies among Mexican collaborators (86%) versus international (60%). Compared to the 2004-2016 period, we find a preference for qualitative studies for the 2016-2022 period. As Arroyave (2023) has suggested, although many novel proposals and unusual methodological approaches circulate naturally in the field, in terms of scientific production, a plethora of factors determine that classical approaches remain at the forefront of global trends and that epistemic innovation is an uncommon scenario.

Regarding the methodologies applied in the research, of the 111 publications where the qualitative perspective was used, documentary analysis predominates with 43%, various methodologies with 17%, discourse analysis with 12%, and interview with 10%, among those that stand out the most (Figure 8). It should be noted that methodologies used for digital culture research appear, such as virtual ethnography, observation, social network analysis and big data, with lower percentages from the qualitative and quantitative. Figures 7 and 8 show the results of the systematization carried out in 2004-2016 and 2016-2022. Content analysis continues to stand out as a method and documentary analysis stands out.

In general, the dimension of methodologies used in the publications, comparing the last two stages, highlights the increase in the use of documentary analysis, a technique that had 4% in the period 2004-2016, and for the period 2016-2022 presents 30% of its implementation, considering the 186 publications analyzed (Figure 6); while the other techniques maintain close percentages within the two periods. For example, content analysis drops from 15% to 13%, but remains as the main technique used within the quantitative perspective. Meanwhile, discourse analysis varies from 10% to 8% within the articles in general. Given the increase in the use of documentary analysis, this technique is positioned as the main one within the qualitative methodology in the last period analyzed, whereas in the previous period discourse analysis was the most used technique for this perspective (Figures 7 and 8).

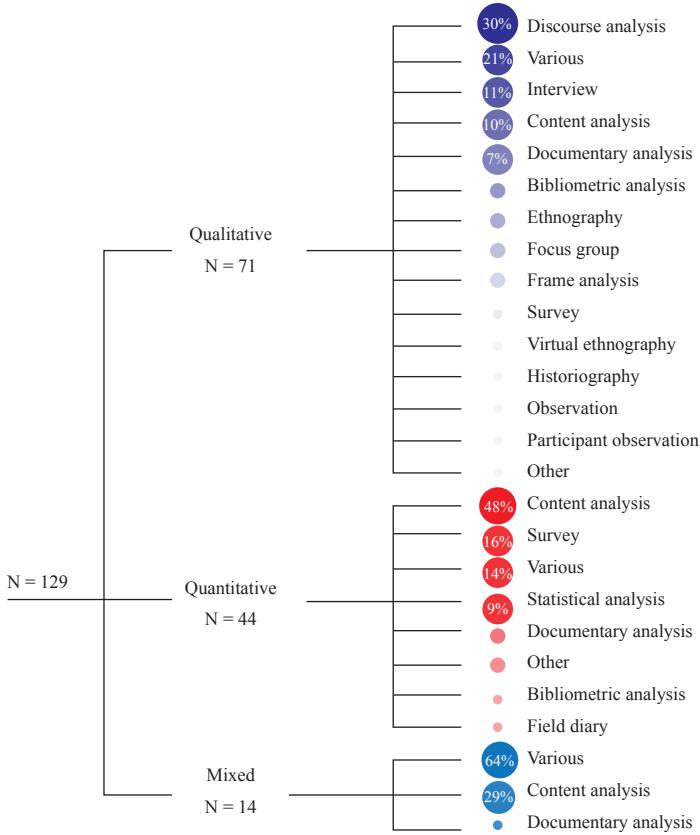


**FIGURE 6**  
**METHODOLOGIES USED**



Source: The authors.

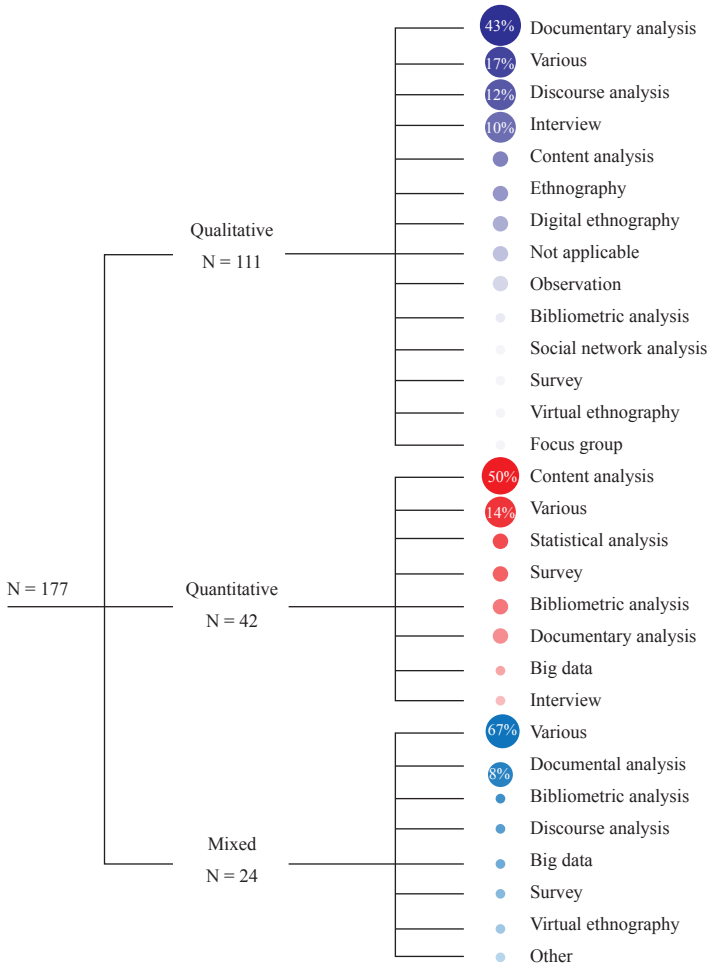
FIGURE 7  
RESEARCH DESIGNS AND METHODOLOGIES (2004-2016)



Source: The authors.

This graph omits essays, therefore the total presented does not coincide with the total of the corpus analyzed in that period (N = 209).

**FIGURE 8**  
**RESEARCH DESIGNS AND METHODOLOGIES (2016-2022)**



Source: The authors.

This graph omits essays, therefore the total presented does not coincide with the corpus analyzed in that period (N = 186).

### *Communicative levels*

The three communicative levels proposed by Jensen (2014) have maintained a constant presence in the journal's publications; this goes hand in hand with the evolution of the field of communication in recent years –emerging, key, niche and basic topics (Scientificomm, 2022).<sup>13</sup> In the 2004-2016 period, Jensen's (2014) second communicative level, referring to communication institutions and practices, concentrated 60% of the publications and the main media/objects that were analyzed in the articles were television and video (21%), press and print (15%) and media as a whole (13%); while for the period 2016-2022 remains this same level as the most present in the articles, but with a reduction, going to 52%, showing a change in the media/objects where press and printed increased to 19% and TV/screens/video<sup>14</sup> drops to 19%. On the other hand, the third level, digital technologies, increases from 13% to 24%, which is consistent with the increase in digital culture topics, since the media/objects involved are digital interactive media and social media.

## DISCUSSION

At the end of the study, it was possible to verify some assumptions or, rather, intuitions that had been on the work table of the journal's editorial team for several months or even years, largely as doubts that drove the decision-making process and the various editorial strategies.

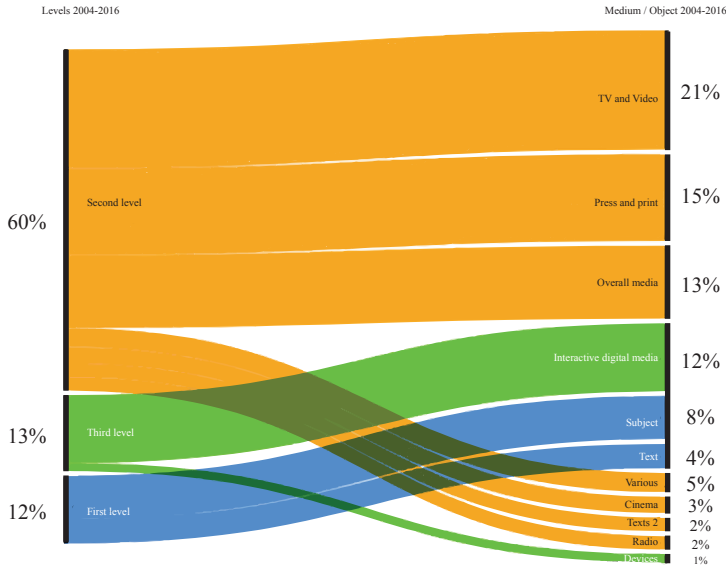
Among them, the fact that a significant part of the production continued to come from Spain but that, at the same time, the sometimes new or renewed presence of South American countries, such as Colombia and Peru, and the constant and long-standing participation

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<sup>13</sup> Report prepared by the consulting firm Scientificomm for the editorial team of CyS in 2022, which shows the presence of topics that appear in communication journals indexed in Web of Science. Among the topics that stand out are: Covid-19, science communication, social media, among others.

<sup>14</sup> The categories for each period were modified due to the presence of different objects of study within the publications, but we sought to maintain the essence of each measurement.

FIGURE 9  
COMMUNICATIVE LEVELS (2004-2016)

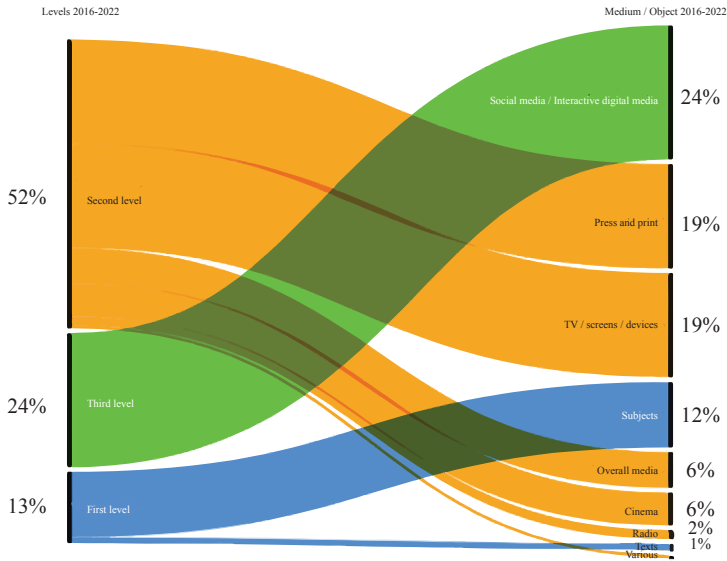


Source: The authors.

of Argentina and Chile was noticeable, in addition to the fact that collaborations between authors and institutions were increasing, partly as a natural result of global policies of funding and promotion of the production of science and technology. There has also been an increased demand to publish in CyS from colleagues from Asian countries, which shows the interest in publishing in Latin American journals, and reaching other audiences, with global issues such as gender violence, among others.

Another aspect to highlight is the fact that several requests have been received from colleagues from Spain to coordinate thematic sections; of the 14 published from 2017 to 2022, Spanish academics participated in six. This undoubtedly affects the scientific tradition from which the thematic sections are prioritized, as well as the promotion of

FIGURE 10  
COMMUNICATIVE LEVELS (2016-2022)



Source: The authors.

collegiate work. This has also had an impact on the high publication of collaborations from that country and the scientific traditions from which they are approached, although a policy in CyS is that the origin of the published texts is balanced. In this line, most of the thematic section coordinators have been Mexican (eight), while colleagues from Chile, Colombia, Argentina, Brazil, the United States and Peru have also participated. The balance leans towards Mexico and Spain, so it is necessary to promote the participation of countries from the Global South and other regions of the world.

At the same time, it was possible to identify that, although the journal shows a growing openness towards internationalization, it continues to be an important platform for its own institution and, therefore, for the country and the surrounding territory, since the Universidad de Guadalajara is precisely the most published institution in the corpus.

Another finding, which was not surprising but satisfactory, was that CyS, in terms of gender, tended to even out and that, according to what was collected, promises to be maintained in the long term. This fact is important, it is believed, because it speaks of a panorama where the voice of women scientists and academics has a place of authority that certainly a few years ago was not easily found, since they were excluded from the citation field of science in general, and CyS is not a space alien to this. As Arroyave (2023) mentions, women have been historically excluded from the field of communication, either because of their race or gender, both in terms of the texts where they appear as authors, as well as the number of citations they receive in comparison with men. As shown in the article presented, there is a balance in CyS in terms of authorship by gender, but it would be necessary to make a finer analysis by cross-referencing by race, subject matter, research traditions, etc.

## CONCLUSIONS

Academic journals, today, face challenges that were unimaginable a decade ago; one of them, of great importance due to its implication in independent publishing, is the massive absorption of university or institutional journals by large international publishing conglomerates.

Given the precarious economic situation of non-commercial journals, dependent on increasingly reduced university budgets (even more so if the institutions are public) and the global pressures involved in digital and scientometric publishing production, many journals end up ceding or licensing their hemerographic products to for-profit consortiums,<sup>15</sup> which entails at least two major problems: on the one hand, the intermediation and privatization of these products and, on the other, the involvement of actors and agendas of interest outside the disciplinary fields and the scientific autonomy of these agendas.

On the other hand, the “metrics race”, quarticizing and indexing (and in this goes the use of journals as bureaucratic tools of expertise to evaluate the academic “quality” of authors and institutions)

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<sup>15</sup> See Pichel (2023).

have brought about an important change in the international hemerographic ecosystem, where the structure of the old offer of editorial proposals has evolved towards a direct and manifest competition between journals to occupy the leading positions.

In this sense, CyS has not been oblivious to the pressures and needs for updating in this area, but has always wanted to maintain its “organic” nature, that is, that the visits, citations and downloads received are maintained based on the natural demand for the papers it offers and the interested search by our audiences, in this case, both for articles and content produced for social networks, like podcasts, infographics and other pieces of communication produced by the joint editorial team.

As for the challenges, this circumstance has acted as an incentive in the updating of the journal at different stages, starting, as briefly mentioned above, with the migration to digital format (definitively leaving the printed paper and mail subscriptions) and assuming the model of continuous publication (rolling pass), that is, where individual articles are published and not by compilation issues, promoting advanced publication and, above all, initiating complex logistical processes of evaluation and cataloging in world-renowned indexes, the most important of which, as a challenge and management, has been the indexing in Scopus.

At this point, it is important to clarify that the entry and permanence in the different quartiles of this index (of which there are four) is the result of the confluence of very different factors, where the entry of more journals to the indexes and the comparison of citation rates and other impact indicators between them make the periodized position of each journal in the quartile map fluctuate.

Thus, there may be the paradoxical case that, although a journal has received more citations in a recent period than in a previous one, due to its relativization in relation to the new journal ecosystem (with a greater number of players in the recent period, for example), the journal changes its position to a lower one. From here, the challenge has been to learn, both from experience and formal training, the complex functioning and structure of current scientometrics and hemerometrics, which, needless to say, changes every year, enriches itself and requires constant and persistent updating by the entire editorial team.



For *Comunicación y Sociedad*, being indexed in Scopus (quartile 3 at present), implies the effort for the journal to maintain or move up a quartile (previously it has been in quartile 2), and to enter other indexes. However, as mentioned above, CyS is at a disadvantage with other journals produced in countries such as the United States or England, which have other financial and human resources and come, for the most part, from private publishers. This makes double or triple the effort on the part of the editorial team. However, we believe that CyS fulfills its function in the field of communication, regardless of this “metrics race”, where the journal defends its identity, rigor and prestige gained over 35 years.

While it would be naïve and untruthful to deny that a degree of competition has always been involved (a fact that is not only true but also desirable), one reality is that this sort of “race to the bottom” is beginning to have undesirable consequences in certain aspects and for various actors, such as young researchers, alternative agendas and peripheral issues.

If we pay attention to the above, we will see that, for some editorial projects, new authors are bypassed in favor of those consolidated and “blockbuster” and that certain themes and agendas, whether emerging or not, may be risky if they attract or cater only to scarce or non-recurrent audiences and readers; in short, situations that potentially report low citation and constant visits by the same readers are avoided.

In this sense, CyS has had as its own concern and as a practical, axiological and deontological axis to maintain itself as an organic publication, which gives space to both new and laureate authors and to agendas and topics that respond to the current problems of the region.

What we present in this article also shows how the field of communication studies is mobilized from the Global South (adding Spain to this region), and we observe that, although more and more countries from other nations (both from Europe and Asia) publish in the journal, it is still a minimal percentage. Large commercial publishers, mainly from English-speaking countries, are the main interest of academics in the field, due, we believe, to the evaluations made to researchers and the requirements to obtain funding, where publication in journals in quartile 1 is privileged.

However, the efforts made in the journals of the Latin American region are enormous, and we cannot compare the working and financing conditions of Latin American journals with those of first world countries. Although it is important to be and maintain indexing (as it reflects, among other aspects, the quality of a publication), on this side of the Global South the field responds to other conditions, topics and realities.

Returning to what has already been worked on for some time by people such as Ford (2005) or Ortiz (2009), we know that it is not a novelty that mainstream science is generated from the Global North and that the lingua franca in the market of scientific ideas and the main intellectual and academic narratives is English, but it is worthwhile to update the debate and ask ourselves about the changes and factors that are renewing day by day the state of this historical contract because, it should also be clear, the mechanisms of exclusion and the dynamics of marginalization of knowledge are endorsed with different elements at each stage of its evolution.

Although somewhat more intuited than proven to venture a statement, what can be glimpsed is that an important part of the thematic axes and object concerns that we have seen appear and change throughout the last period investigated in the journal is due to the offer of thematic issues, where the central factor is not so much the possibility per se of creating and maintaining this type of undertaking, but, particularly, that these thematic collections are proposed directly, as editorial projects by academic colleagues from around the world, to the editorial board of CyS.

While the editorial team and the committees (editorial and scientific) have a general idea of the main agendas of interest to our readers and, based on analytical work on usage metrics and informal dialogue with the academic community in this and other areas, we can provide very positive feedback on intuitions and refine that “instinctive sense of smell” that guides many editorial decisions, the proposals for monographs and thematic dossiers, which after all result from empirical work in the proponents’ areas of expertise, naturally bring to light the epistemic concerns and omissions, the blind spots, so to speak, of the routinized processes of production and visibilization of a field of knowledge.

Thus, themes or thematic axes that individually or discretely could be seen as “mere curiosities” or reverberations on the periphery of what common sense would dictate as part of the general interest, when they have given rise to systematized proposals based on the tracking of very complete states of the matter and mapping of areas of silence, have allowed us to find and offer invaluable catalogs of problems and thematic treatments that, we know, have been very useful for our reading community since download and citation metrics skyrocket.

With this in mind, all that remains is to say that, although the peripheries and gaps continue to exist as a structural landscape in which we must try to thrive, efforts such as those we have reviewed are intended to be the anticipation of a more horizontal and miscellaneous future.

Likewise, and as part of the limited circumstances of science production that have been discussed, the limited focus of this work, although barely initial and necessarily synthetic, at least allows, we believe, to propose future lines of research that include more complex analysis. It would also be very interesting to analyze other publications in the field in the Ibero-American region and even other regions, and contrast with what is produced and published in the journal *Comunicación y Sociedad*. Without a doubt it is pending and necessary work.

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## PROFILES

*Gabriela Gómez-Rodríguez, Universidad de Guadalajara*

PhD in Communication (Concordia University). Co-coordinator of the Ibero-American Observatory on Television Fiction (Mexico chapter). Member of the National System of Researchers, level II. She has worked in the following areas: journalism studies, media and violence, television fiction and SVoD, science communication, TV and reality shows, among others. She directs undergraduate and graduate theses at the Universidad de Guadalajara. She has made academic stays in Spain and Chile, as well as participated in various national and international forums as a speaker. She participates as a teacher in programs at the Universidad de Guadalajara.

*Rodrigo González-Reyes, Universidad de Guadalajara*

PhD in Communication from the Universidad Nacional de La Plata, Argentina. He is a full-time researcher at the Department of Social Communication Studies (Universidad de Guadalajara) and associate editor of the journal *Comunicación y Sociedad*.

*Cristina Gallo-Estrada, Universidad de Guadalajara*

Bachelor in Public Communication from the Universidad de Guadalajara. She works as Technical Editor of the journal *Comunicación y Sociedad*, of the Department of Social Communication Studies, where she has collaborated since 2013. She has been a research assistant within the same department. She is currently pursuing a Master's Degree in Editorial Production at the Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Morelos. She has taught undergraduate classes in the area of communication and given workshops on media education and non-discrimination in primary and secondary schools, as well as workshops on scientific publications. She has also collaborated in semi-national research projects on media consumption and perception of audiovisual content.

*Nora López Mascorro, Universidad de Guadalajara*

She has a degree in Sociology and a master's degree in Communication from the Universidad de Guadalajara, with 11 years of teaching at the Universidad de Guadalajara (UdeG) and at the Instituto Tecnológico de Estudios Superiores de Occidente (ITESO). She has worked as a research and analysis consultant in the public and private sector. Her areas of expertise are: quantitative research, statistical analysis, media monitoring and political communication.