

**Dr. Marta REDONDO-GARCÍA**

Universidad de Valladolid. Spain. marta.redondo@hmca.uva.es. <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-8143-465X>

**Dr. Carmen CAFFAREL-SERRA**

Universidad Rey Juan Carlos. Spain. carmen.caffarel@urjc.es. <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-9804-5164>

## Research on Journalism Ethics in Spain (2007-2018). Evolution and prospects

### *Investigación de la Ética periodística en España (2007-2018). Evolución y prospectiva*

**Deadlines** | Received: 26/07/2021 - Reviewed: 07/09/2021 - Preprinted: 20/09/2021 - Published: 01/07/2022

#### **Abstract**

This paper studies the state of research on journalism ethics in Spain through the analysis of doctoral theses, scientific papers, R&D projects and research groups on ethics from 2007 to 2018. The methodology used was content analysis of the corpus registered by the Mapcom project, comprising 3,518 units. The results reveal that ethics, despite its central position in the journalistic profession, represents only 1.4% of scientific activity. Production is centred around a very few universities and a limited number of professors with great experience in deontology research. Furthermore, in this field, academic cooperation between universities and internationalisation is residual. Regarding the object of the study, it is observed that the digital environment lacks a sufficient volume of scientific production to address the ethical dilemmas that journalists face in this dominant field in present-day communication. In addition, research into ethics raises some specificities in use of the methodology with respect to Communication studies, favouring discursive methods (mainly, interviews with professionals) over content analysis.

#### **Keywords**

deontology; journalism ethics; meta-research; research groups; R&D projects; doctoral thesis

#### **Resumen**

*Este trabajo realiza una radiografía del estado de la investigación sobre Ética periodística en España mediante el análisis de las tesis doctorales, artículos científicos, proyectos I+D y grupos dedicados a la materia desde 2007 a 2018. Se recurre al análisis de contenido del corpus registrado por el proyecto Mapcom y compuesto por 3.518 unidades para encontrar que la Ética, a pesar de la posición central que ocupa en la profesión periodística, representa tan solo un 1,4% de la actividad científica. Una producción que está atomizada en torno a muy pocas universidades y a un número limitado de profesores con gran experiencia en investigación de la deontología periodística. Además, la cooperación académica entre universidades y la internacionalización resultan residuales. Respecto al objeto de estudio se observa que el entorno digital está falto de un volumen suficiente de producción científica que encare los dilemas y problemas éticos a los que se enfrentan los periodistas en este ámbito protagonista en la comunicación actual. Entre los hallazgos destaca también que la investigación en Ética plantea algunas especificidades en el uso de la metodología privilegiando el empleo de métodos discursivos (fundamentalmente entrevistas a profesionales), frente al análisis de contenido que resulta el método dominante en los estudios de Comunicación.*

#### **Palabras clave**

deontología; ética periodística; metainvestigación; grupos de investigación; proyectos I+D; tesis doctorales

## 1. Introduction: Meta-research into Communication in Spain

The intense level of scientific output which has been witnessed in recent decades has led to a rise in the number of bibliometric studies which provide valuable quantitative information about the state of research into a subject.

The volume of data produced by meta-research reveals not only the scientific performance in any given discipline but also how the diachronic evolution has been built up, revealing thematic lines, main study subjects, most-used methodologies, and also identifies researchers, groups and universities of reference, in addition to the levels of collaboration and its inter-disciplinary nature (De Filippo and Fernández, 2002). However, the function of these pieces of work goes beyond a mere description of scientific output in a period which "transcends a simple diagnosis; they enable us to observe the discipline critically, comparing it with, and relating it to others and identifying the intrinsic features of its research" (Giménez-Toledo and Jiménez-Contreras, 2013). In that critical work, the radiography which bibliometrics provides, helps to assess what has been carried out and, at the same time, to detect what is missing and what fields could be developed. In addition, as Giménez-Toledo and Jiménez-Contreras (2013) point out, it is helpful for the scientific community which works in an area, to "become aware of itself" (p. 10).

Meta-research into Communication in Spain is more recent than in a fair number of other European countries (France, UK or Italy), Latin-America (Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, Columbia, Venezuela) or the USA (Gómez-Mompart, 2008) due to the fact that it is a young discipline in our country where academic research only became significant after the consolidation of Information Science faculties in the 80s and 90s (Jones, 1998). It began with Beneyto, the first "organizer and theorist of the studies of Communication in Spain" (Equiza, 2015) who, in 1969, published a report as an inventory of centers and specialists dedicated to the analysis of the media, noting, at that time, only eight institutions and 24 researchers (two of whom were women). It was not until ten years later that Moragas was to dedicate a chapter of his work, "*Teorías de la comunicación*" (1981) to the evolution of teaching and research in Communication over the four decades from 1940 to 1980.

The exploration into the state of research was boosted by the celebration of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the creation of the first information science faculties in Spain with the works of Caffarel, Domínguez and Romano (1989), Caffarel and Cáceres (1993), Urabayen (1994), Jones (1997 and 1998), Moragas (1988, 1990) or Aguilera (1998). Alongside these academics, the Center for Communication Research of Catalonia carried out noteworthy work through its documentation service (COMCAT) which was responsible for the Data Bank for Communication, fruit of which was such works as, *The Spanish directory of communication research* (1995), which compiled a total of 1,760 researchers and 250 institutions or the *Ibero-American Directory of research into communication* (1996), both of which were coordinated by Jones.

Meta-research has intensified with the consolidation of Communication as an academic subject thanks to the increase in the number of researchers as a consequence of the growth both in the number of universities offering those subjects (currently, 55), and the number of scientific journals specializing in that area of knowledge (Fernández-Quijada and Masip, 2013). They reflect favorably on the work of gathering and recapitulating the studies by Jones, Baró, Landa and Ontalba-Ruipérez (2000), Martínez Nicolás (2006), García Jiménez (2007), Lozano and Gaitán (2011), Piñuel, Lozano and García (2011), Arcila, Piñuel and Calderín (2013), Fernández-Quijada and Masip (2013), Martínez and Saperas (2011), Caffarel, Ortega and Gaitán (2017 and 2018), Caffarel (2018), Gómez-Escalonilla (2020 and 2021), Lozano-Ascencio, Gaitán, Caffarel and Piñuel (2020) or Lozano-Ascencio, Gaitán, Piñuel and Caffarel (2021).

## 2. Meta-research into ethics in journalism - an under-developed field

The work of Jones (1998) on research into Communication in Spain has already identified Ethics as one of the main areas of study. However, as Díaz-Campo and Segado-Boj (2017) have shown, it is one of the disciplines in which meta-research is scarce.

The most important efforts have focused on the gathering, categorizing and comparative analysis of documents of self-regulation and deontological texts: ethical codes, behavioral norms, style manuals, recommendations drawn up by different bodies. The pioneering work was that of Porfirio Barroso (1979) who, gathering the findings of his doctoral thesis, published an analysis of different international and Spanish deontological codes. In that area the work of Alsius (2011) is also work highlighting. It contains a comparative inventory of the predominant norms and ethical values in Spanish codes, creating a thematic thesaurus on ethics, or the set of codes and self-regulation documents by Aznar (1999a, 1999b), Pérez Fuentes (2004), Villanueva (2001), Barroso Asenjo (2011), Barroso and López Talavera (2011) and Suárez-Villegas (2015), among others.

However, the bibliometric works which reflect on the state of research into the Ethics and Deontology of Journalism in Spain are still few in number. In this field, it is worth pointing out the study by Maciá Barber (2013) which compiles doctoral theses, R+D+I projects and research groups focusing on the Ethics of Journalism to conclude that the number is veritably "insufficient" (2013: 157), even though one decade ago a considerable increase could be observed when compared to previous years.

Díaz-Campo (2015) analyzed the output of doctoral theses on Ethics as defended between 1979 and 2013, finding 75 theses read during that period, and a growing trend. Articles about Ethics in Communication in scientific journals have been the focus of the research of Díaz-Campo and Segado-Boj (2017) who examined the 321 articles published by journals from the field over 25 years (1980-2015). Articles have also been the subject of study of Alende, Carballa and Urchaga (2017) who carried out an analysis of Spanish research into Ethics and Communication through 50 scientific journals dedicated to the subject, published in Spain between 2000 and 2015, using the database of the CSIC. Both studies revealed an irregular evolution of scientific output about Ethics. However, the longest study in terms of duration by Díaz-Campo and Segado Boj leads the authors to suggest an increasing tendency which made it possible to observe "the beginning of a period of emerging maturity in this field of knowledge" (2017, p. 768).

We also found some bibliometric studies dedicated to specific aspects of research into the Ethics of journalism, such as that of Redondo, Sánchez-García and Etura (2017) which analyses the scientific articles about the teaching of Ethics and Deontology in Journalism with a view to establishing a doctrinal basis in the design of teaching syllabuses of the subject. The article concludes that the interest in the ethical training of the student of Journalism is limited among Spanish researchers "with a scarce number of authors and universities involved" (2017, p. 235).

Given the above-mentioned precedents, this piece of work appears with the aim of giving a radiography of the state of research into Ethics and Deontology in Journalism in Spain, by analyzing doctoral theses, scientific papers, R+D projects and research groups dedicated to the subject through the decade from 2007 to 2018 - a period of time which is considered appropriate for assessing the evolution of this discipline, determining the routes which it has followed and analyzing possible future paths.

The study brings together the data obtained from two complementary research projects: the excellent R+D project "The system of research in Spain into social practices in Communication: Map of projects, groups, study lines, study subjects and methods" (MapCom) (CSO2013-48933-C4) carried out in the period 2007-2013, and the R+D project "Research Map into Communication in Spanish Universities from 2007 to 2018" (MapCom2) (PGC2018-093358-B-100) which is being produced at the present time and is due to finish in September, 2022.

### 3. Methodology

This research applied the methodology used in Mapcom which mapped and drew up databases of 4,290 pieces of work and scientific practice about Communication in Spain. For this piece of work, the following databases have been chosen:

- R+D projects funded by national and autonomous bodies and registered, from the information supplied by the Ministry of Science and Innovation in addition to the those supplied by universities themselves, numbering 315 R+D projects altogether.
- Doctoral Theses ("DT") in Communication appearing on the TESEO database of the Ministry of Education, with a total of 2,577 DT registered.
- Papers published in the best scientific journals specializing in Communication (based on the Google Scholar h index [1]). Only those articles obtained from R+D projects which were referenced in the text, the whole text of which was fully available, were admitted, totally 413 articles altogether.
- Official Communication Research groups in universities with undergraduate or postgraduate degree courses in Communication, with a result of 213 groups operating in 45 universities.

From the 3,518 pieces of work recorded of the four scientific practices included in the study, specific databases for Journalistic Ethics were created, using a search of the following keywords: ethics, deontology, self-regulation, responsibility and morality (in any of the categories) and their equivalent in the other official languages and English. Those works which were omitted were ones focusing on advertising, marketing and the corporate social responsibility of those companies which are not media companies, since they are not of interest for this piece of research. Consequently, a corpus was created, comprising 55 units for analysis: 17 doctoral theses, 16 scientific articles and 5 winning research projects from calls.

Once the corpus was established, the following guidelines for analysis were drawn up for each of the categories:

- The number of studies and what percentage centred on Ethics in Journalism over the period covering 2007-2018.
- Which researchers and universities proved to be most prolific in the study of this area. From that variable we obtained the gender of the researchers and also whether the universities in question were public or private.
- The extent to which research into Ethics is multi-disciplinary, of a joint nature between universities and how international it is.
- The specific topics tackled in greater depth in the study of Ethics in journalism. In order to classify the works by topic, the following five general categories were established:
  - Self-regulation and the norms of the media
  - Analysis of the ethical principles of journalism
  - Responsibility and professionalism of the journalist
  - Teaching of the ethics of journalism
  - Others
- The media which have been the object of attention of researchers.
- The methodologies applied to research into ethics in journalism.

#### 4. Results. Doctoral theses on the Ethics of Journalism

Doctoral theses are original, specialized and well-documented pieces of work on a specific subject which makes it possible to assess the research maturity of the author. The writing up and defence of the PhD trains the candidate for autonomous work in the area of R+D+i (BOE-A-2011-2541) and is the prerequisite to begin an academic career. As a subject for study, the PhD is a very useful field for analyzing the research in any given area given that "it is one of the best mirrors in which to reflect the lines, trends and future possibilities for research at universities" (Repiso, Torres and Delgado, 2011, p. 152).

For the period studied (2007-2018) Mapcom found, using the Teseo database, 2,577 doctoral theses about Communication, defended at 48 universities of the 55 which have undergraduate or postgraduate degrees in Communication in Spain (Lozano-Ascencio *et al.* 2020). Of those, only 17 PhDs dealt with Ethics in Journalism, making up a meagre 0.69%. That figure confirms the conclusions of the study by Maciá Barber (2013) which describes the output of PhDs on the Ethics of Journalism as "poor" (2013: 856).

The distribution by year of publication does not reveal noteworthy trends. The year 2011 saw three theses defended whereas in both 2010 and 2018 there were none (Table 1). There is no boom effect noted in 2016 as a consequence of the change in the ruling of 2011 which set a deadline of five years for the presentation of the doctoral thesis by PhD candidates who had begun their studies when different legislation was in place, leading to almost a quarter (23.6%) of all theses on Communication from the period 2007-2018 being defended in 2016 (Lozano-Ascencio *et al.* 2020).

**Table 1. Doctoral theses on Ethics in Journalism defended in Spain (2007-2018)**

AUTHOR	UNIVERSITY	TITLE	YEAR
Iroz Rymer, Milagros	UNAV	Uruguayan journalists. Roles and attitudes of communication professionals	2008
Figueroa Ramírez, María Verónica	UCM	The repercussion of the work of José María Desantes in Chile	2008
Vásquez Ríos, Aldo Alejandro	UCM	The ethics of journalism and the mechanisms of self-control of the press in Peru	2009

González Portela, María Luján	UCM	Freedom and responsibility of the press and the self-control and teaching of ethics in five countries of the Andes	2009
Tello Díaz, Lucía	UCM	The image and ethics of the journalist in Spanish cinema (1896-2010)	2011
Jivkova Semova, Dimitrina	UCM	Times of change in TVE (2003-2009): from the Iraq War and the Anti-Manipulation Committee to the new legal and deontological framework	2011
Redondo García, Marta	UVA	Sensationalism and its penetration of the Spanish media system	2011
Grynko, Anastasiia	UAB	Media transparency through journalists interpretations: research in Ukraine	2012
Andrade Ruiz, Fernando	UCM	Communication as a human right and its spread, as a citizens' right, to political communication in democracy	2013
Irisarri Núñez, José Antonio	CEU San Pablo	The corporate responsibility of private television channels - the protocol of categories of indicators for measuring content of risk	2013
Bondía Raga, Ami	URJC	The journalist's social responsibility from the perspective of emotional intelligence. Case study: the evolution of the ethical aspect of communicators throughout their training and professional career	2014
Galván Arias, María Ángeles	CEU San Pablo	The image of minors in press photography: informative treatment and journalistic deontology	2015
Fernández Lombao, Tania	USC	Social responsibility in the public radio and television companies of the European Union	2015
Jiménez Gómez, Eva	URL	How universities teach Ethics and Deontology in journalism and the moral challenges faced by informers. The coming together and falling out of the academic and professional worlds in the transition to the European Higher Education Area	2016
Pampín Quian, Luis Alberto	UC3M	The media impact of the political activism of the hacker in the network society. Case study: wikileaks	2016
Montero Ramos, Francisco Javier	UC	The deontology of sports journalism. Fundamental principles and treatment in the press	2017
Martorell, María Josefa	UJI	Communication in crisis or emergency situations and its impact on the Internet in the context of moral dilemma.	2017

Source: Author's material. MAPCOM Data

Regarding the universities, there are 10 centers which register the defence of theses on the ethics of journalism, most of which (76%) were defended in public institutions. The most prolific is the Universidad Complutense de Madrid, with 7 PhDs (41,1%), followed, a considerable way off, by the Universidad CEU San Pablo, with two. The other universities: Autónoma de Barcelona, Carlos III, Jaume I, Navarra, Ramón Llull, Rey Juan Carlos, Santiago de Compostela and Valladolid, record only one thesis each. As such, the involvement of the Universidad Complutense in the study of ethics in journalism is much higher than the general level found by Mapcom, which concluded that one out of every five theses in Communication defended in Spain in the last 11 years had been from that university (Lozano Ascensio *et al.*, 2021). In terms of the regional spread, the Community of Madrid accounts for 64.7% (12 PhDs) of the output of theses on ethics in the period analyzed, followed by Catalonia, with 11.7% (2 PhDs).

Focusing on the gender of the doctors who have defended their PhD on ethics in journalism, we can state that the majority are female: 12 (70.5%) as opposed to 5 (29.4%) males. This proportion is reversed

if we consider PhD supervisors: 14 are men (82.3%) whereas, only 3 are women (17.6%). These figures reveal the "glass ceiling" which limits women's promotion at work and indicates the existence of gender inequality at Spanish universities which has already been manifest by the Economic and Social Council: "The slow rate of increasing the number of women in highest professional categories in teaching and research does not reflect the speed and numbers of female undergraduates and doctors, thus damaging their position in decision-making in those fields and the very competitiveness of Spain in the area of international research, given that it amounts to a squandering of valuable human resources" (CES, 2011).

Of the professors supervising theses on ethics, three names are worth highlighting: Alberto Pena, Head Professor at the Universidad de Vigo (3 PhDs), (curiously, none of the theses defended was at that university), Porfirio Barroso, Professor at the Universidad Complutense de Madrid and author of the first doctoral thesis on ethics in the media in Spain in 1979 (Díaz-Campo, 2015) (2 PhDs) and, Carlos Elías Pérez, Professor at the Universidad Carlos III (2 PhDs).

When it comes to analyzing the level of collaboration between universities and the degree of internationalization, we can observe a low result in both regards. In the decade studied, five jointly-supervised theses were found, making up 27.7%, however, in three of those, the two supervisors belonged to the same academic institution. Supervision was shared by two Spanish institutions (URJC and UCM) in only one thesis, and in another case, there was international joint-supervision in which the UAB and the Ukrainian Kyiv-Mohyla were involved.

As regards the media being studied, it can be observed - in agreement with the findings of Díaz-Campo - that most pieces of research (70.5%, 12 theses) tackled the question of ethics as it affects the media as a whole, without choosing any one in particular. Three theses (17.6%) focused on television, one (5.8%) on the press and another on internet. In this section, it is surprising to witness the scarce research of new doctors into digital journalism, despite the existing need for a distinctive study of the deontological issues which it throws up: the use of social networks, fake news, clickbait, moderating communities, the right to be forgotten, among others.

An analysis of doctoral theses by topic shows a tendency towards the study of self-regulation and rules with 9 theses (52.9%) considering such issues as: the legal framework governing TVE, deontology in sports journalism, the mechanisms of self-control in the press in Peru, corporate responsibility of European television companies or the influence of the thought of Professor José María Desantes in the wording of the Law of Information and the Press in Chile. Four theses (23.5%) centered their analysis on one of the ethical principles of journalism such as: media transparency, the ethics of the use of images of minors or the violation of different deontological principles by the sensationalist press. The responsibility and professionalism of journalists accounted for 2 doctoral theses (11.7%), focusing on issues such as the roles and attitudes of journalists in Uruguay or the analysis of the evolution of the ethical levels of journalists over the course of their career. Only one paper dealt specifically with the teaching of ethics and another shared the analysis of teaching and self-regulation, carrying out a comparative study of codes in five countries of the Andes and establishing a link with the evolution of the subject of Ethics in the university education of journalists. In the category, "Others", we find one PhD which studies the image of the ethics of the journalist through their portrayal in Spanish cinema. (For more detail, see Table 1, with the chronological list of authors and doctoral theses on journalistic ethics in the period studied).

Regarding methodology, although most theses (76.4%) used methodological triangulation, the most popular method is content analysis, being the main one in more than half of the pieces of research (10 PhDs, 58.8%), followed by surveys and observation, each with 3 theses (17.6%) and interviews, with 1 thesis (5.8%). It should be pointed out that the experimental method was not used in any of the theses analyzed.

## 5. Scientific papers

Scientific papers are, currently, "the best instrument for the transfer of knowledge" (Lozano-Ascencio *et al.*, 2020, p.3). By means of their publication in academic journals, research results are spread and, consequently, "receive publicity and social existence, making possible the preservation and archiving of knowledge" (Ardanuy, 2012, p. 6). The model imposed by the agencies for the assessment of teaching staff activity favors the publication of articles over monographs (the so-called "ANECA effect") thereby steering the activity of researchers who set their aim on influential journals, turning papers into the maximum exponent of scientific literature. Consequently, they are one of the most relevant indicators for the study of the research into any area of knowledge.

Of the 413 articles registered in the Mapcom database, only 16 (3.8%) refer to journalistic ethics (Table 2) [2], centered on 5 journals: *El Profesional de la Información* (EPI) (7), *Estudios sobre el Mensaje Periodístico* (EMP) (5), *Revista Latina de Comunicación Social* (RLCS) (2), *TELOS* (1) and *Communication*

& Society (C&S) (1). By year, 2017 is the year with more articles published (6), a number which can be explained by the fact that that year the journal *El Profesional de la Información* (EPI) dedicated its issue number 26 to *Ethics, research and communication*. Leaving out that exception, the general trend is one article (years: 2009, 2011, 2012 and 2018) or none (2008, 2010, 2013 and 2014). Exceptionally, 2015 and 2016 register three articles each. These data do not allow us to perceive any progression in the interest of academics for ethics as a subject for study - the results are highly irregular.

**Table 2. Papers on ethics in journalism from called projects (2007-2018)**

AUTHORS	YEAR	UNIVERSITY	TITLE	JOURNAL	ASSOCIATED R+D PROJECT
Suárez Villegas, Juan Carlos	2009	US	The journalist's identity crisis and professional ethics	EMP	SEJ2006-05631-C
Suárez Villegas, Juan Carlos	2015	US	Ethical and deontological aspects of online journalism. How professionals perceive it	RLCS	CSO2011-26620
Suárez Villegas, Juan Carlos	2015	US	Self-regulation of offline and online journalism in Spain in the experience of the Arbitration, Complaints and Ethics Commission	Comunicación & Sociedad	CSO2011-26620
Suárez Villegas, Juan Carlos	2016	US	A comparative analysis between Spain, Belgium and Italy. Ethics and new technologies in journalism	TELOS	CSO-2011-26620
Suárez Villegas, Juan Carlos	2016	US	Deontological challenges of digital journalism in Belgium	EMP	CSO2011-26620
Suárez Villegas, Juan Carlos y Cruz Álvarez, Jesús	2016	US	The deontological dilemmas in the use of social networks as a source of information. Analysis of the opinion of journalists from three countries	RLCS	CSO2011-26620
Cruz-Álvarez, Jesús y Suárez-Villegas, Juan-Carlos	2017	US	Deontological guidelines for digital journalism	EPI	CSO2011-26620
Zalbidea Bengoa, Begoña, Pérez Fuentes, Juan Carlos; Urrutia Izaguirre, Santiago; López Pérez, Susana4	2011	UPV	Spanish journalists in the face of how the news treats minority and disadvantaged groups	EMP	SEJ 2006-05631-C05

Figueras-Maz, Mónica; Mauri-Ríos, Marcel; Alsius, Salvador y Salgado de Dios, Francesc 4	2012	UPF	Precariousness makes you docile. The problems which affect the journalistic profession	EPI	SEJ 2006-05631-C05-01
García-de-Torres, Elvira y Farmer, Yanick	2017	CEU Cardenal Herrera; UQAM*	Ethics in the media: challenges and opportunities for research	EPI	CSO2016-80703-R
Carratalá, Adolfo y Palau-Sampio, Dolors	2017	UV	Sensationalism or public service in the information regarding missing minors	EPI	CSO2015-66667-R,
Oleaque-Moreno, Joan M.	2017	VIU	Migrant minorities in Europe: the expulsion of gypsies in Italy and France (2008 and 2010) in the Spanish press	EPI	FFI2015-67668-R
García-Marzá, Domingo	2017	UJI	From codes to ethical auditing; an ethical infrastructure for the communication of social responsibility	EPI	FFI2016-76753-C2-2-P
Rodríguez-Martínez, Ruth; López-Merí, Amparo; Merino-Arribas, Adoración y Mauri-Ríos, Marcel	2017	UPF, UJI, UNIR	Instruments for accountability in Spain. A comparative analysis in Catalonia, Galicia, Madrid and Valencia	EPI	CSO2015-66404-P
Armentia, José Ignacio; Marín Murillo, Flora y Caminos Marcet, José María 3	2015	UPV	Murders in the Basque press (20022012): treatment in the news and deontological codes	EMP	CSO2010-1985
Herrera Damas, Susana; Maciá-Barber, Carlos y Luengo Cruz, María	2018	UC3M	When one is not enough. The professional perception of the efficiency of traditional mechanisms of self-regulation in journalism in the new context of journalism	EMP	CSO2010-15575/COMU

Source: Author's own material. MAPCOM data

(\*) Université du Québec à Montréal, Canada

The analysis of researchers who published work on ethics gave a result of 26, although 23 of them (88.4%), published only one article in the analyzed period, leading us to deduce that it was a one-off piece of work rather than an on-going commitment. From the list of academics, it is worth pointing out the individual effort of the professor from the area of Philosophy, Morality and Politics from the Universidad de Sevilla Juan Carlos Suárez Villegas who produced 7 articles (5 of them individual and 2 as joint studies with Jesús Cruz-Álvarez). His activity is likewise reflected in the spread of articles by university.

The output of articles on ethics in journalism is concentrated in just 10 universities. The most productive centre is the Universidad de Sevilla (with 7 articles, all of them with the authorship of Professor Suárez Villegas), followed by the universities of the Basque Country, Pompeu Fabra, Jaume I with two articles each, and CEU Cardenal Herrera, Valencia, Internacional de Valencia, Carlos III, Internacional de la Rioja and Universidad de Quebec in Montreal with one article each. Consequently, on 16 occasions (84.2%) the author of the articles is from a public university whereas only 3 (15.7%) are from private universities. The analysis by gender reveals that most of the authors are male 14 (61%) as opposed to 11 women (38.8%). Male authors tend to work individually (7 articles bear the signature of a male researcher working alone) whereas female authors work in a group (all female authors do so as part of a group). By autonomous community, Andalusia heads the list (7), followed by Valencia (5), Catalonia and the Basque Country (2) and, finally, Madrid and La Rioja (1).

Collaboration between universities is low and so too is the degree of internationalization. Only two articles (12.5%) were carried out with professors from different centers working together. Joint authorship is more common: 9 articles (56.2%) were signed by various authors as opposed to 7 which were individual (43.7%). We have only found one case of joint authorship between a Spanish university and a foreign one - University of Quebec in Montreal, Canada.

In order to classify the subject being studied and the theme of the articles, we have taken into account the whole content of the articles being analyzed. As regards the media as the subject of study, the vast majority do not distinguish between different media but, rather, they refer to all media in general (10 articles), with 3 referring explicitly to digital media, and 3 focusing on the printed press. As far as the topic is concerned, based on the proposed classification, 6 articles deal with the responsibility and professionalism of journalists, 6 focus on self-regulation and/or the rules of the media and 4 analyse different ethical principles of journalism (applied or broken in specific circumstances).

In terms of the research method used, the authors of articles on the ethics of journalism favour triangulation (used in 7 articles - 43.7%), 4 studies use content analysis exclusively and in 2 (12.5%), the in-depth interview is the only method used. It is also significant that three studies (18.7%) use no research method. Rather, they are theoretical reflections related to ethics with no corresponding empirical work.

The articles which use triangulation carry out an initial content analysis of different self-regulating norms (ethical codes, style guides, writing statutes), going on to contrast the principles with the opinion of professionals from the area of information as gathered in surveys, interviews or discussion groups. This triangulation is useful, among other things, for identifying the principles which really guide their work, how they have been influenced by them, which ones they consider most important or the most difficult to put into practice. However, we encountered only one piece of work which truly put the codes to the test, i.e., which checked whether or not journalistic output respected the different ethical principles. Therefore, research, to a large extent, depends upon the (subjective) opinion of information professional, but it does not hold itself up for a comparison with reality by means of an analysis of the journalistic output which these informers produce.

## **6. Research projects**

Given the scarce research resources available to universities, academic must regularly present their projects to public calls as a means of funding the research carried out in their centers.

In order to obtain this funding, the projects must be relevant, well-founded and incorporate a sound team of researchers, and, once granted, account must be given periodically, since they are monitored in order to check the development and results of the project. However, obtaining this funding is no easy task, especially because Spain invests considerably fewer resources in research than many of its peer countries [3].

The MAPCOM project has, for the period 2007-2018, mapped a total of 249 accepted projects which have, as their focus of study, communication-based phenomena, leading Gómez-Escalonilla to highlight "the good health of research in this discipline" (2020, p. 75). However, of the 249 accepted projects, only five were about ethics in journalism, a meagre 2% (Table 3). Given the low volume of R+D+I projects, a diachronic evolution cannot be perceived. It is noticeable, however, that since 2014 no project which focuses on news-casting ethics has been developed.

**Table 3. List of R+D projects focusing on ethics in journalism (2007-2018)**

PROJECT NAME	UNIVERSITY	IP	DESCRIPTION	YEAR PASSED
The social function of television: a model applied to the fulfillment of a public service in RTVE and corporate responsibility in nationwide commercial television channels  CSO2009-13306-C03-01	CEU San Pablo	Núñez Ladevéze, Luis	Public television, private television, corporate social responsibility	2009
Ethics and news-casting excellence. How deontological principles are observed in the praxis of media in the Basque Country. Professional introspection and social projection  CSO2009-13802	UPV	Zalbidea Bengoa, María Begoña	Deontology, ethics, the media, the violation of principles comparative deontology	2010
Deontology and excellence in news-casting: Introducing and consolidating ethical practices in journalism companies  CSO2010-15575	UC3M	Maciá Barber, Carlos	Deontology, ethics, journalism, quality	2011
Ethical challenges in digital journalism. A comparative analysis of 5 European countries  CSO2011-26620	US	Juan Carlos Suárez Villegas	Ethics, deontology, journalism, digital journalism, self-regulation	2011
Reactions from citizen ethics on the social network "Menéame", as opposed to the content of conventional and social media in Spain  CSO2014-59077-R	UPV	Zalbidea Bengoa, María Begoña	Citizen ethics	2014

Source: Author's own work. MAPCOM data

By university, the Universidad del País Vasco is the center with most projects on the ethics of journalism in the period analyzed (2007-2018) with two successful projects from calls (in 2010 y 2014) both led by the lecturer Begoña Zalbidea. The Universidad Carlos III, CEU San Pablo and Universidad de Sevilla produced one project each. Comparing Autonomous Communities, Madrid and the Basque Country tied with two R+D projects, followed by Andalusia, with one. If we consider the nature of the universities, 4 are public and 1 private.

Regarding the main researcher (IP), all the academics in the projects boast a solid trajectory in the study of ethics in journalism - examples of these are the above-mentioned Begoña Zalbidea, Juan Carlos Suárez Villegas, Carlos Maciá Barber and Luis Núñez Ladevéze. By gender, of the four IPs recorded all except Professor Zalbidea are male - curiously, she is the only professor to have produced two projects on the ethics of journalism.

If we consider the media which are studied in the research projects, it is worth highlighting the increasing interest in digital journalism, with two of the five projects centering on that field - one studies the perception which professionals of digital journalism from five European countries have of the deontological challenges being faced and the other analyzes the news aggregator, "Menéame" centering on the reactions of users to different news stories. A further two projects do not study any media in particular, but, rather, they take on issues which refer to the journalistic profession in general: one studies the introduction of ethical practices in media companies and another deals with the

fulfillment of deontological principles in the praxis of different media in the Basque Country. Finally, we find one project featuring television to analyse the fulfillment of its obligations as a public service of TVE, as well as the corporate responsibility of private channels. By areas of content, three projects focus on the analysis of the ethical and professional behaviour of journalists, one on self-regulation and rules and another corresponds to the "others" category with a focus on citizen ethics.

As regards the research techniques used in the called projects on ethics in journalism, the most used methodologies are of a conversational nature: interviews are the fundamental method in three of the projects, surveys are used in one as the main method and, in another, content analysis.

Both in the case of interviews and the case of the survey, they have been carried out with journalists in order to discover what they know, how they assess and to what extent they follow deontological norms. In this way, the field of ethics in journalism is methodologically removed from most research projects in communication which, as Gómez-Escalonilla (2020), showed, use mostly document-based techniques (content analysis, discourse analysis or document analysis, which make up 54% of the total number of projects). It is logical for interviews and surveys to be used in projects about ethics in journalism given that, as applied ethic, it is necessary to know the attitudes and behaviors which determine the ethical sensitivity of the professional group that is news providers.

## 7. Research groups

Research groups identify, in the area of the university, "the group of people who interact in order to research and generate products of knowledge in one or several topics, in accordance with a plan of work" (Colciencias, 2010). Consequently, their output must be reflected in "verifiable results which are derived from projects and other activities coming from their plan of work" (Colciencias, 2010).

Given that no significant resources are available from universities or public administration, and incentives derived from research are individual and not group, output depends, to a large extent, on the leadership skills of the supervisors and group cohesion. For that reason, performance is irregular. Some groups, which good cohesion and motivation, produce a great volume of research and publications whereas others simply tick over with barely any activity.

The radiography of research groups focusing on gaining an insight into the ethics of journalism (either as a main line of research or as one of the areas of interest of the research) produces a total of 17 groups, which represents 7.9% of the 213 groups identified by MAPCOM (Table 4). It must be said that that figure, considerably greater than the one recorded for other research output, is obtained because the search by keywords related to ethics in journalism have been carried out not only in the name of the group but also in their lines of investigation and in the projects developed (in fact, only three groups include some of the search terms in their wording).

**Table 4. Research groups studying ethics in journalism (2007-2018)**

GROUP NAME	UNIVERSITY	DIRECTOR	LINES OF RESEARCH IN ETHICS
Comunicación y Sociedad Digital (COYSODI)	UNIR	Jesús Díaz del Campo	The ethics of communication
Desarrollo Social y Paz (Filosofía, Comunicación, Educación y Ciudadanía).	UJI	Vicente José Benet Ferrando	The ethics of communication applied to Philosophy for Peace
EIDOS: Estudios de cultura y comunicación.	URL	Jordi Busquet Duran	The ethics of journalism and the media coverage of conflict
Grupo de Investigación en Comunicación y Responsabilidad Social, Comress-Incom	UAB	Carme Ferré	Journalism ethics and citizen participation
Innovation on Digital Media.	UC3M	Susana Herrera Damas	Fact-checking and digital verification of information  (Project: Deontology and excellence in news-casting)

Narrativas Audiovisuales y Estudios Socioculturales (NAES)	USAL	Begoña Gutiérrez San Miguel	Ethics
Periodismo, Comunicación y Poder	UJI	Andreu Casero Ripollés	Ethics in journalism
Regulación, Ética y Sistema Internacional de la Información Periodística. (RESIIP)	UC	Elena Real y María del Pinar Agudiez Calvo	Professionalism and the Professionalization of journalism. Professional and communicative Co-regulation and self-regulation in journalism and social communication. Ethics and deontology in journalism and social communication
STREAM: Society, Technology, Religion and Media.	URL	Josep María Carbonell Abelló	Ethics
Análisis de la Divulgación Cultural y Científica en los Medios De Comunicación Social	UC	Manuel Ángel Fernández Sande	The deontology of journalism
FAHRENHEIT: Grupo de investigación sobre control y límites de las representaciones mediáticas.	URL	Lluís Anyó	Forms of regulation and self-regulation
Centro de Estudios e Investigación sobre Comunicación e Infancia. (CEICIN)	CEU SAN PABLO	Luis Núñez Ladeveze	Corporate responsibility in nationwide commercial television companies (Project)
Comunicación Responsable y Públicos vulnerables	UC	Alfonso Javier Fernández del Moral y José Antonio Ruiz San Román	The Social Responsibility of Communication Companies
Comunicación y públicos específicos	UA	Victoria Tur Viñes	Communication and corporate responsibility
Grupo de Investigación en Comunicación y Cultura. CIBERIMAGINARIO	URJC	Manuel Gertrudix Barrio	Effective, efficient and responsible communication for research projects
Grupo de Investigación en Periodismo	UPF	Ruth Rodríguez Martínez	The ethics of journalism and the accountability of the media
Grupo de Investigación Ética e Información. (GEI)	UPV	Begoña Zalbidea	The deontology and ethics of journalism and the media. Ethics, information and citizens. Journalism and social responsibility

Source: Author's own material. MAPCOM data

The ascription of these group is very varied: 6 belong to Faculties, 5 to Departments, 1 to a Research Institute, 1 to the Vice-Chancellorship of Research and 7 have no ascription on websites. By university, the Complutense and Ramón Llull are the ones which show most interest in the ethics of journalism

(three in each), followed by the Universidad Jaume I with 2 groups. The remaining universities (Alicante, Autónoma de Barcelona, CEU San Pablo, Rey Juan Carlos, Internacional de La Rioja, País Vasco, Pompeu Fabra, Carlos III, Salamanca) record one group each. Consequently, 12 are linked to public universities (70.5%) and 5 to private centers (29.4%). By autonomous community, Madrid, with 6 and Catalonia, with 5, are the ones which concentrate the creation of research groups that have as their aim the study of ethics in journalism. Comunidad Valenciana has 3 and, finally, La Rioja, the Basque Country and Castilla-León, have one each.

As regards the directors of the projects, we have some of the most highly-committed professors in the study of ethics in Spain, such as, Jesús Díaz del Campo, Begoña Zalbidea, Elena Real, Ruth Rodríguez, Luis Núñez Ladevéze and Susana Herrera Damas, among others.

In the supervisors of the groups we see a male prevalence - 11 directors are male whereas 8 are female. This imbalance by gender, which intensifies if we take into account not only directors but also the members of the groups: parity only exists in one group whereas in 9 "all or almost all of the members are men" or "the majority are men". In 5, women are the majority and in 2 the composition was not registered. Once again, this imbalance should lead us to reflect on the need for equality policies which promote more balanced groups in terms of their make-up.

Turning to the size of groups working on the ethics of journalism, most are large: 12 have more than 10 members (70%), as opposed to 4 with fewer than 10 (23.5%) (in one, no record was given of the composition). Therefore, it can be seen that groups dealing with ethics are larger than the average size of groups researching communication as identified by Mapcom (in this case 60% were medium or small with 10 members or fewer). The analysis of the origin of group members once again reveals a very low level of internationalization. Of the groups which register the origin of their members on the website, in 12 they are all Spanish and only 1 includes foreign members (in the case of four, this information is not given).

As regards the media being analyzed, most groups seek to study all media without focusing on any one in particular: 13 analyse all media, 2 focus on digital media and 2 on audiovisual media.

Considering the topics covered, there is an enormous variety of lines of research within the groups themselves. Some accumulate more than 10 lines of research which, on occasions, are convergent but on many others there is no apparent connection implying that they bring together diverse interests and project several fields of study which are developed simultaneously. This finding confirms the observation of Tur Viñes and Núñez Gómez in their study of research groups in the field of communication which were active in 2018: "The data reveal a prolific field with a rich interest in research but, at the same time, they are extremely disorganized due to the significant divergence of topics present in the lines of research and the descriptions of the groups. This makes it difficult to define the research, align the terms and, consequently, analyze the efficacy of the groups" (2018: 188).

## 8. Conclusions

Ethics is an essential element of journalism the principles of which define the identity of the profession (Kovach y Rosenstiel, 2012). However, this area represents a very low volume of scientific activity in Communication. Of the 3,518 studies registered by Mapcom in the four categories which were researched (PhDs, R+D projects, papers and groups), only 1.5% had, as their subject of interest, the ethics of journalism. Percentage-wise, the output of PhDs is particularly scarce (0.69%), the highest figure being registered in research groups (7.9%). This can be explained by the fact that most groups integrate highly varied areas of study. If the total is reduced to the groups which focus on ethics as a favoured subject, this percentage falls to a meagre 1.4%.

In addition, the output on the ethics of journalism is concentrated in very few universities of the total of 55 which offer courses in communication. This makes it possible to identify nodes of research in the Universidad Complutense which contributes 10 studies and heads the ranking both for PhDs and research groups, in the Universidad de Sevilla with 8 studies, leading the ranking of articles, and the Universidad del País Vasco which contributes 5 and is the centre with more R+D projects on ethics. In the overall statistics, it is worth highlighting the Universidad Jaume I with 5 studies and the CEU San Pablo and Carlos III universities with 4 each. In the centers mentioned, we can observe the relevance of researchers with a long career in the study of ethics in journalism: Juan Carlos Suárez Villegas (US), Begoña Zalbidea (UPV), Porfirio Barroso (UC) or Luis Núñez Ladevéze (CEU San Pablo), among others, indicating a prominence of atomized and personal work in contrast to that of well-developed groups with a commitment to research in this field.

Most research into ethics in journalism is carried out in public institutions (78%), albeit with a significant participation of some private centers, especially, the Universidad CEU San Pablo. This result is to be expected since private universities in Spain focus on teaching, leading them, very often, to neglect

research (Fundación Conocimiento y Democracia). However, paradoxically, ethics is much more present in their syllabus. Vázquez Fernández concluded in 2002 that 100% of private universities included Ethics as a subject, whereas the percentage was considerably lower in public universities (only 73% had this subject in their programs).

If one thing is missing in the research into ethics it is academic cooperation. Collaboration between universities is very low (occurring with only 2 PhDs and 2 papers) [4] and internationalization is practically non-existent (there was co-authorship on only one thesis, one article signed by a foreign author and only one group which included members from another country). This confirms the conclusion of Lozano Ascencio *et al.* who identify among the “shortcomings” of the Spanish university system, the lack of an international projection as well as the disconnection between companies and institutions (2021: 130).

Regarding the subject of study, academics reveal their preference for the self-regulation of the media and the responsibility and professionalism of journalists - topics which are the subject of attention in 36.8% and 36.4% of the output, respectively. Some distance behind, we find the analysis of the ethical principles of journalism (16.1%) and, finally, the teaching of ethics which barely receives any attention, accounting for only 2.9% of output, despite the period of the study included a moment of great challenges for teaching such as the adaptation of the European Higher Education Area.

A considerable amount of the output on ethics analyses all media without centering on any one in particular. It is surprising to find such little attention directed to the digital sphere with only 19% of scientific output focusing on specific issues of the internet and the ethical dilemmas which journalists face in that field.

The study of ethics also reveals peculiarities in the use of research methodology. Discourse-based methods, interview and surveys are favoured, being used in more than half of the output analyzed (53.2%). This is especially true in research projects where they account for 80%. In second place comes content analysis (49.1%) which features regularly in methodological triangulation alongside surveys or interviews.

The final conclusion of this piece of work is a call to list some of the shortcomings which have been detected and which serve as a guide for steering future research guidelines in journalism ethics. Taking as given the importance of deontology in the work of journalism, it is necessary to intensify the research thereof and to prioritize the aspects such as the new ethical challenges in the digital field or the ethical training of future journalists as well as creating larger, more cohesive groups which favour work between universities and also seeking the enrichment which springs from internationalization. In addition, together with the methods of discourse which give us an insight into the attitudes and values of journalists, it is necessary to check that in the output of journalism, deontological norms are applied, thus submitting the opinion of informers to the test of the truth of their work.

As far as meta-research in communication is concerned, there is a need to complement the generic studies with detailed work in each area in order to determine the academic tendencies in the different areas. Even though that effort is being carried out in fields such as: Political economy (Almirón and Reig, 2007; Gómez Escalonilla, 2020), Radio (Piñeiro Otero, 2015 y 2017; Piñeiro Otero and Pena, 2018), Environmental Communication (Barranquero and Marín, 2013; Teso Alonso, 2020) or Political communication (Piñeiro-Naval and Morais, 2020), many others are lacking in bibliometric analysis. This is a task in which the Mapcom project seeks to help by making the full databases, which gather a decade of research productivity in communication at Spanish universities, available to academics. They can be accessed freely at the website [www.mapcom.es](http://www.mapcom.es).

## 9. Specific contributions of each author

Contributions	Author
Research design	Autora 2
Documentary search	Autoras 1 y 2
Data collection	Autoras 1 y 2
Critical data analysis and interpretation	Autoras 1 y 2
Review and approval of versions	Autoras 1 y 2

## 10. Acknowledgement

Translator: Chris Neill.

## 11. References

- [1] Aguilera, M. (1998). La investigación sobre comunicación en España: una visión panorámica, *Comunicación & Cultura*, 2(2), 5-11.
- [2] Alende, S.; Carballa, N. M. y Urchaga, J. D. (2017). Producción científica sobre ética y comunicación en España (2000-2015). *Ámbitos. Revista Internacional de Comunicación*, 36.
- [3] Almirón, N. y Reig, R. (2007). The communications research in Spain: the Political Economy epistemological approach. *American Communication Journal*, 9(2).
- [4] Alsius, S. (2011). Cap a una gran base de dades per a l'estudi de l'ètica periodística. *Periodística*, 13, 27-57.
- [5] Arcila, C.; Piñuel, J. L. y Calderín, M. (2013). The e-Research on Media & Communications: Attitudes, Tools and Practices in Latin America Researchers. *Comunicar*, 40, 111-118. <https://doi.org/gv3k>
- [6] Ardanuy, J. (2012) *Breve introducción a la bibliometría*. Barcelona: Universidad de Barcelona.
- [7] Aznar, H. (1999a). Ética y periodismo: autorregulación, códigos, estatutos de redacción y otros documentos. Barcelona: Paidós.
- [8] Aznar, H. (1999b). *Comunicación responsable. Deontología y autorregulación de los medios*. Barcelona: Ariel.
- [9] Barranquero, A. y Marín, B. (2014). La investigación en comunicación y periodismo ambiental en España. Estado de la cuestión y revisión bibliométrica de las principales revistas académicas en comunicación (2005-2013). *Prisma Social*, 12, 474-505.
- [10] Barroso Asenjo, P. (1979). *Códigos éticos de la profesión periodística: análisis comparativo*. Madrid: Universidad Complutense.
- [11] Barroso Asenjo, P. (2011). Códigos de deontología periodística: análisis comparativo, *Universitas. Revista de Ciencias Sociales y Humanas*, 15, 141-176.
- [12] Barroso Asenjo, P. y López Talavera, M. M. (2011). La ética periodística en los 27 países de la Unión Europea. En J. C. Suárez Villegas (Coord.). *La ética de la comunicación a comienzos del siglo XXI. I Congreso Internacional de Ética de la Comunicación* (pp. 447-459). Sevilla: Universidad de Sevilla.
- [13] Caffarel, C. (2018). La metainvestigación en comunicación, una necesidad y una oportunidad. *adComunica. Revista Científica de Estrategias, Tendencias e Innovación en Comunicación*, 15, 293-295.
- [14] Caffarel, C. y Cáceres, D. (1993). La comunicación en España: planteamientos temáticos y metodológicos entre 1987 y 1990. La investigación en España. *Cuadernos de investigación en comunicación* (Cinco), 29, 23-30.
- [15] Caffarel, C.; Domínguez, M. y Romano, V. (1989). El estado de la investigación en comunicación en España (1978-1987). *Cuadernos de investigación en comunicación* (Cinco), 3, 45-57.
- [16] Caffarel, C.; Ortega, F. y Gaitán, J. A. (2017). Investigación en Comunicación en la Universidad Española en el periodo 2007-2014. *El profesional de la información*, 26(2), 218-227.
- [17] Caffarel, C.; Ortega, F.; Gaitán, J. A. (2018). La Investigación en Comunicación en España: Debilidades, Amenazas, Fortalezas y Oportunidades, *Comunicar*, 56(26), 61-70. Disponible en <https://bit.ly/3y86FwT>
- [18] De Filippo, D. y Fernández, M.T. (2002). Bibliometría: importancia de los indicadores bibliométricos. En M. Albornoz (Coord.). *El estado de la ciencia: principales indicadores de ciencia y tecnología iberoamericanos/interamericanos*. Argentina: UNESCO.
- [19] Díaz-Campo, J. (2015). Análisis bibliométrico de las tesis doctorales sobre Ética de los Medios de Comunicación presentadas en España (1979-2013). *Doxa Comunicación*, 20, 65-88.
- [20] Díaz-Campo, J. y Segado-Boj, F. (2017). Análisis de la investigación sobre ética de la comunicación en España (1980-2015). *Estudios sobre el Mensaje Periodístico* 23(2), 759-772.
- [21] Equiza Escudero, P. (2015). *Juan Beneyto: organizador y teórico de los estudios de comunicación en España*, Tesis doctoral inédita. Universidad Complutense de Madrid.

- [22] Fernández-Quijada, D. y Masip, P. (2013). Tres décadas de investigación española en comunicación: hacia la mayoría de edad, *Comunicar*, 41, 15-24. <https://doi.org/xzc>
- [23] Fundación Conocimiento y Democracia (2021). Ranking universidades. <https://www.rankingcyd.org>
- [24] García Jiménez, L. (2007): *Las teorías de la comunicación en España. Un Mapa sobre el territorio de nuestra investigación (1980-2006)*. Madrid: Tecnos.
- [25] Giménez-Toledo, E. y Jiménez-Contreras, E. (2013). Los agujeros negros de la investigación, *Comunicar*, 41 (XXI), 10-13. <https://doi.org/bkjs>
- [26] Gómez-Escalonilla, G. (2020). La investigación en comunicación en las universidades españolas, *Communication & Methods*, 2(2). <https://doi.org/gv3m>
- [27] Gómez-Escalonilla, G. (2021). Métodos y técnicas de investigación utilizados en los estudios sobre comunicación en España. *Revista Mediterránea de Comunicación*, 12(1), 115-127. <https://doi.org/gc5z>
- [28] Gómez-Mompart, J. L. (2008). La investigación en comunicación en España. Balance y sugerencias, En *Actas III Congreso Ibérico de Comunicación*. Sevilla: Universidad de Sevilla, pp. 113-124.
- [29] Jones, D. E. (1995) (Coord.) *Directorio español de investigación en comunicación*. Barcelona: CEDIC.
- [30] Jones, D. E. (1996) (Coord.) *Directorio iberoamericano de investigación en comunicación*. Barcelona: CEDIC.
- [31] Jones, D. E. (1997). Investigación sobre comunicación social en la España de las autonomías. *Anàlisi: quaderns de comunicació i cultura*, 21, 101-120.
- [32] Jones, D. E. (1998). Investigación sobre comunicación en España. Evolución y perspectivas. *Zer. Revista de Estudios de Comunicación*, 3, 13-51.
- [33] Jones, D. E.; Baró, J.; Landa, C. y Ontalba-Ruipérez, J. A. (2000). *Investigación sobre comunicación en España: aproximación bibliométrica a las tesis doctorales (1926-1998)*. Barcelona: ComCat.
- [34] Kovach y Ronsenstiel (2012). *Los elementos del periodismo*. Madrid: Aguilar.
- [35] Lozano, C., y Gaitán, J. A. (2011). Dedicación a la investigación y a la docencia universitaria en comunicación: compatibilidad y perfiles en España, Europa y América Latina. En J. L. Piñuel, C. Lozano y García, A. (Eds.). *Investigar la Comunicación en España*. Fuenlabrada: Facultad de Ciencias de la Comunicación. Universidad Rey Juan Carlos (pp. 585-595).
- [36] Lozano-Ascencio, C.; Gaitán-Moya, J. A.; Caffarel-Serra, C.; Piñuel-Raigada, J. L. (2020). Una década de investigación universitaria sobre Comunicación en España, 2007-2018. *Profesional de la información*, 29 (4). <https://doi.org/gj8c96>
- [37] Lozano Ascencio, C., Gaitán Moya, J. A., Piñuel Raigada, J. L. y Caffarel Serra, C. (2021). Los grupos de investigación consolidados en la praxeología de la Comunicación. *RAE-IC, Revista de la Asociación Española de Investigación de la Comunicación*, 8(15), 119-142.
- [38] Maciá Barber, C. (2013). Ética periodística, I+D+i y transferencia de conocimiento. *Estudios sobre el mensaje periodístico*, 19, 853-862. <https://doi.org/gv3n>
- [39] Martínez Nicolás, M. (2006). Masa (en situación) crítica. La investigación sobre periodismo en España: comunidad científica e intereses de conocimiento. *Anàlisi*, 33, 135-170.
- [40] Martínez Nicolás, M. y Saperas, E. (2011). La investigación sobre Comunicación en España (1998-2007). Análisis de los artículos publicados en revistas científicas. *Revista Latina de Comunicación Social*, 66, 101-129.
- [41] s, M. (1981): *Teorías de la comunicación: estudios sobre medios en América y Europa*. Barcelona: Gustavo Gili.
- [42] Moragas, M. (1988). Los estudios sobre comunicación y nuevas tecnologías en España: indicaciones sobre sus antecedentes y estado actual. *Cuadernos de investigación en comunicación (Cinco)*, 1, 11-19.
- [43] Moragas, M. (1990). Delante de los negocios, detrás de los acontecimientos: nuevos problemas de la sociología de la comunicación de masas en España, 1986-1990, *Telos*, 22.

[44] Pérez Fuentes, J. C. (2004). Ética periodística: principios, códigos deontológicos y normas complementarias. Bilbao: Universidad del País Vasco.

[45] Piñeiro-Naval, V. y Morais, R. (2020). La política como temática de estudio en las revistas hispánicas de comunicación. *Convergencia*, 27. <https://doi.org/gv3p>

[46] Piñeiro Otero, T. (2015). Los 'Radio Studies' en España. Tres décadas de investigación en las revistas académicas de Comunicación. *Estudios sobre el Mensaje Periodístico*, 21 (2), 1169-1188. <https://doi.org/bmpt>

[47] Piñeiro Otero, T. (2017). La investigación radiofónica española desde la perspectiva de su comunidad científica. Características, percepciones y valoraciones. *Revista española de documentación científica*, 40(4).

[48] Piñeiro Otero, T. y Martín Pena, D. (2018). Los estudios sobre radio: Un balance desde la academia iberoamericana, *Comunicar*, 57, pp. 101-111.

[49] Piñuel, J.L.; Lozano, C. y García, A. (2011). *Investigar la Comunicación en España*. Fuenlabrada: Facultad de Ciencias de la Comunicación. Universidad Rey Juan Carlos.

[50] Redondo, M.; Sánchez-García, P. y Etura, D. (2017). Investigación de la enseñanza ética de los periodistas en España. Análisis bibliométrico y prescripciones formativas aplicadas (2005-2015). *Revista Latina de Comunicación Social*, 72, 235-252. <https://doi.org/gv3q>

[51] Repiso, R.; Torres, D. y Delgado, E. (2011). Análisis bibliométrico y de redes sociales en tesis doctorales españolas sobre televisión (1976/2007). *Comunicar*, 37, 151-159. <https://doi.org/dwt6vd>

[52] Suárez-Villegas, J. C. (2015). La Comisión de Deontología como referente de la autorregulación del periodismo: apuntes doctrinales sobre el periodismo digital. *Communication & Society*, 28(3), 135-150.

[53] Teso Alonso, G. (2020). La actividad investigadora realizada en España en torno a la comunicación del medio ambiente, el cambio climático y la sostenibilidad (2007-2018). *Revista mexicana de investigación educativa*, 25(97), 901-931.

[54] Tur-Viñes, V. y Núñez-Gómez, P. (2018). Spanish Academic Research Groups in Communication. *Communication & Society*, 31(4), 173-192.

[55] Urabayen, M. (1994). La investigación sobre comunicación social en España: panorama general. En VVAA. *Cultura y comunicación social: América Latina y Europa ibérica* (pp. 81-86). Barcelona: Centre d'Investigació de la Comunicació (CEDIC).

[56] Vázquez Fernández, F. (dir.) (2002). *Análisis de la enseñanza de la ética y la deontología profesional en las facultades de Ciencias de la Información de España*. Madrid: Helsinki España Dimensión Humana y Universidad Complutense de Madrid.

[57] Villanueva, E. (2001). *Autorregulación informativa y consejos de prensa alrededor del mundo. Una aproximación comparativa*. Pamplona: Universidad de Navarra.

**Funding:** This paper takes its data from the R+D Project for Knowledge Output, "Maps of communication research in Spanish universities from 2007 to 2018". State Scheme for Scientific Research. Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities PGC2018-093358-B-I00

## Notes

1. The journals analyzed are: *Comunicar*, *El profesional de la información*, *Revista Latina de Comunicación Social*, *Estudios sobre el Mensaje Periodístico*, *Telos*, *Zer*, *Trípodos*, *Comunicación y Sociedad* and, *Historia y Comunicación Social*.

2. As explained in the Methodology section, the MAPCOM database has been developed using only R+D+I projects in which there is an explicit mention in the text, leading to a considerable number of published papers being omitted

3. Spain spends only 1.14% of its GDP on Research and Development, compared to 2.19% as the EU average (Eurostat 2020)

4. It must be pointed out that this data was not obtained for R+D projects

