



The evolving role of
journalism:
Professional cultures
and journalistic
performance in
advanced and
transitional
democracies.

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+ The evolving role of journalism...



+ The evolving role of journalism...

- Role Conception Studies

- Western-oriented stream of research.
- Designed and conducted in advanced democracies

- Basic assumption of role conception research:

- ***The way in which journalists understand their roles shapes the news content they produce.***

Surveys don't measure actual behavior

+ The evolving role of journalism...

**Journalistic
role
conception**

The journalistic own
formulation of how they
ought to do their work
(Weaver and Wilhoit,
1996; Donsbach, 2008)

GAP

Internal and
external
restrictions,
work, routines,
medium,
characteristics

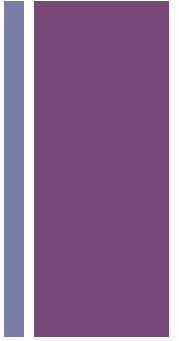
Gatekeeping
Hierarchy-of-influences
studies

**Journalistic
role
performance**

Journalistic collective
outcome (Mellado, 2015)

+ Journalistic role performance

- Connection between journalists' beliefs and the actual practice of producing the news.
- Role performance studies move things a step forward since we are able to see to what extent news professionals have enough autonomy to put in practice the roles they give more importance
- Journalistic role performance appears to be a more autonomous object of study





www.journaliticperformance.org



Journalistic role
performance
around the globe

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Home

Journalistic Role Performance Around the Globe (JRP) is a comparative research project which addresses this disconnection between ideals and practice in journalism, analyzing how different dimensions of professional roles materialize in the news product.

The main objective of the project is to compare journalistic role performance crossnationally, understanding the influence that different media systems have on the practice of journalism, as well as the gap between role conceptions and professional practice. Specifically, this study connects the characteristics of different professional role conceptions that have been theoretically and empirically operationalized and validated in comparative contexts (that is journalists understanding of what role they should play in society), with the study of news production (the visibility of such a role in news content).

Both data and results will be made comprehensively available on this website, becoming an interesting resource for scholars, policymakers, journalists, as well as international institutions.

Funding is provided by the respective national research councils, universities and/or local organizations of

+ Professional Roles as Object of Study

<i>Role concept</i>	Role conception	Role perception	Role enactment	Role performance
<i>Definition</i>	Journalists' own formulation of the journalistic roles that are most important to them	Journalists' or media's role expectations in society	Individual behavior materialized in news decisions and journalistic reporting	Collective outcome of concrete newsroom decisions and the style of reporting
<i>Level of Analysis</i>	Individual level (the locus of role evaluation is not necessarily related to social consensus)	Individual /Organizational level (Does not necessarily have a location in the conceiver, it is related to social consensus and can also be related to the role journalists think is important to the media where they work)	Individual level (needs autonomy and consistency between role conception and behavior)	Result of dynamic negotiations of different reference groups
<i>Method of Study</i>	Mostly surveys and qualitative interviews	Mostly surveys and qualitative interviews	Mostly surveys, interviews, and experimental designs	Mostly content analysis, textual analysis, critical discourse analysis, and ethnography

+ Professional Roles as Object of Study

Functionalist Approach



Roles as set of expectations that a society places on an individual, creating regular rules and patterns of behavior

Role conception studies

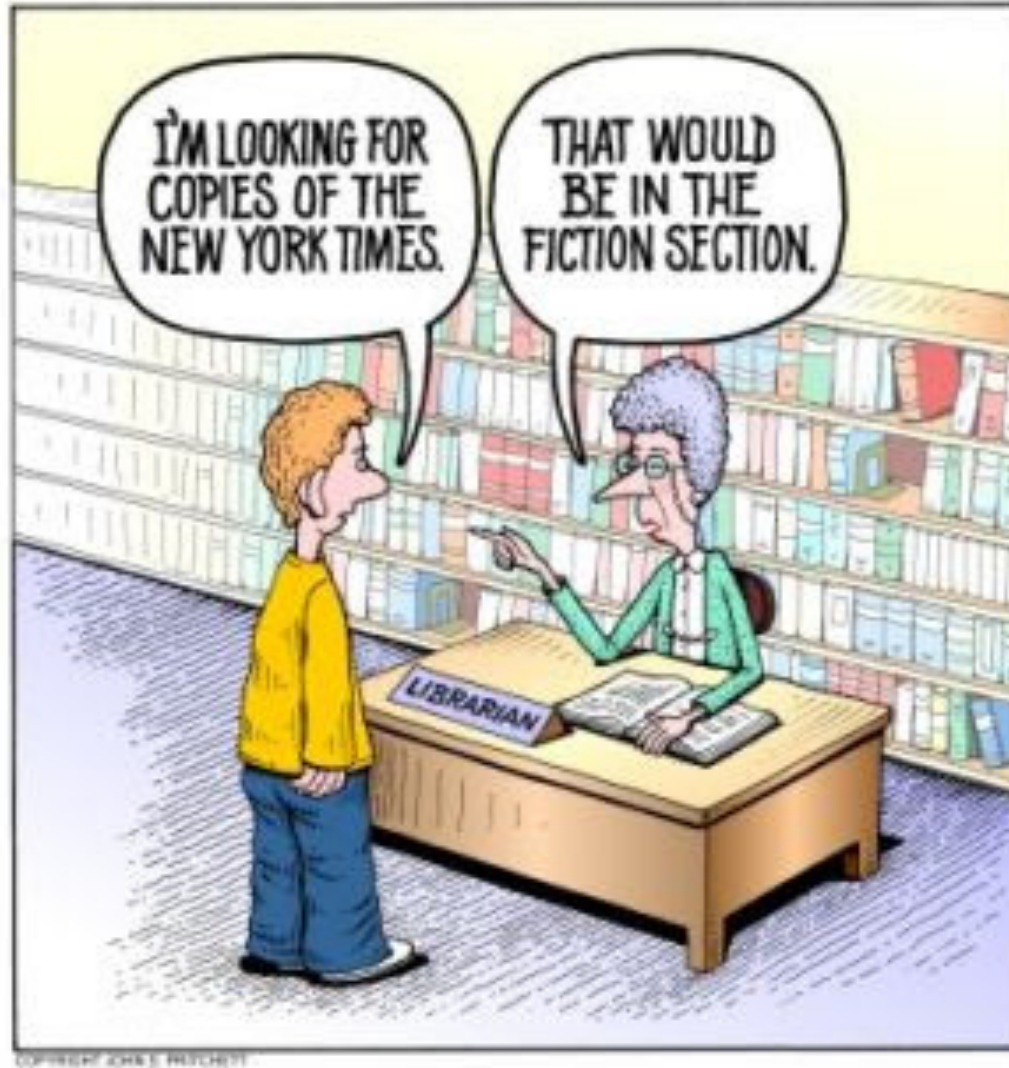
Interactionism Approach



It does not see roles as being fixed, but instead as negotiated and changeable within a particular social process

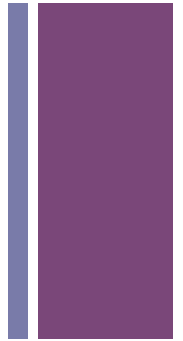
Role performance studies

+ The Gap between Rhetoric and Practice



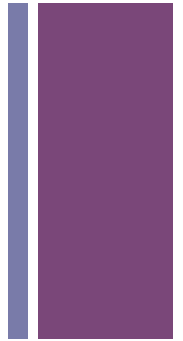
+ The Gap between Professional Ideals and Journalistic Performance

- Degree of congruence or discrepancy between an individual's role conception, role perception or perceived role enactment, and his or her professional performance.
- There are several reasons that could maybe help to explain the distance between professional ideals and journalistic practice.
 - Professional roles are not mutually exclusive. They are historically constructed and sometimes conflicting.
 - The actual manifestation of journalistic roles is more difficult to fit into existing ideal typologies than ideals and values and media system characteristics, since they are constantly changing, being mediated not only by social, organizational, and individual factors, but also by the local context of the news.
 - Another possibility is that the gap is, in part, a methodological artifact that may be due to the fact that previous research has not measured role conceptions correctly.



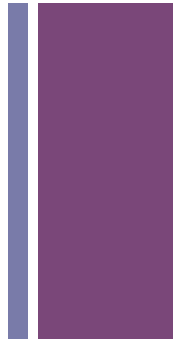
+ Media systems and role performance: How do countries belong together?

- Comparative perspectives trying to explain how political, economic, cultural and media-system characteristics have impacted on the profession around the globe
- Hallin and Mancini's (2004) seminal typology of media systems has prompted fruitful lines of research
 - Testing and corroborating their models in the Western world
 - Analyzing how Western models may not account for the hybrid nature of media systems beyond the West, or even within advanced democracies
 - Analyzing to what extent journalists from different countries differ in the performance of different professional roles
- Underlying concern about the likelihood that media systems and journalistic cultures are displaying contrasting characteristics.

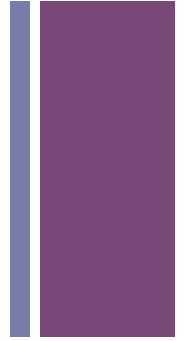


+ Media systems and role performance: How do countries belong together?

- Most comparative research have had a narrow focus on a certain, familiar set of countries, more than in countries with no clear-cut journalistic traditions, such as those in Latin America and other transitional democracies.
- Transitional democracies and non-democratic countries are taken into account to support or refute theoretical models developed elsewhere
- Some scholars have emphasized that the transition paradigm has outlived its usefulness. Several others still find the term transitional democracies adequate while studying countries that have turned away from authoritarian governance



+ Six dimensions of Journalistic Role Performance

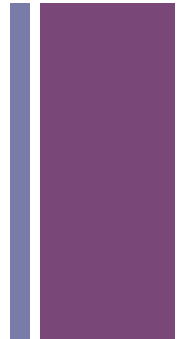


- Operationalization of the performance of six journalistic roles that emerge from the three analyzed domains:
 - interventionism
 - Watchdog
 - loyal-facilitator
 - service,
 - Infotainment
 - civic
- Each role examined through the presence/absence of specific indicators in the news.
- Measures treated as non-mutually exclusive.

Dimensions of Journalistic Role Performance

Presence of the Journalistic Voice	Power Relations		Audience Approach		
	Watchdog	Loyal-Facilitator	Service	Infotainment	Civic
Intervention					
Presenting sides	Questioning	Support institutional activities	Impact on everyday life	Personalization	Citizen perspective
Interpretation	Critiques	Promote national or regional policies	Tips and advice (grievances)	Private life	Citizen demand
Proposals/demands	Denouncing	Positive image political elite	Tips and advice (individual risks)	Sensationalism	Citizen questions
Effectives	Conflict	Positive image economic elite	Consumer Advice	Scandal	Credibility of citizens
Not person	Coverage of trials and processes	Highlight country's progress		Emotion	Support of citizen movements
	Investigative reporting	Comparison of the country/region with the rest		Morbid	Educating on duties and rights
	External research	Highlight national's triumphs			Background information
		Promotion of the country			Information on citizen activities
		Patriotism			Local impact

+ Media systems, role conceptions and role performance studies: Empirical expectations



Assumptions stemming from the literature on media systems and role conception research	Assumptions stemming from role performance research
Journalists from advanced democracies, with more solid media markets and higher levels of journalistic professionalization, would perform the watchdog role more prominently in news than journalists from transitional democracies or non-democratic countries.	Journalistic cultures are increasingly difficult to compartmentalize into ideal media system typologies
Journalists from transitional or non-democratic countries would be closer to the interventionist and loyal-facilitator role.	The differences in the performance of journalistic roles in news across countries do not show clear patterns that resemble either existing ideal media system typologies or political or regional clusters.
The infotainment and the service roles could be expected to prevail in consolidated market economies.	Since media systems are not monolithic, and may even become intermingled regardless of their geographical and cultural affinity, it could be possible to find different elements of hybridization in journalistic cultures

+ Media systems, role conceptions and role performance studies: Empirical expectations

Local contexts of Latin American Media Systems	Assumptions on professional roles
Deep social inequality, decay of political institutions, weak rule of law, human rights violations, wide-spread corruption, rising crime, and violence in many countries, as well as social protests.	<p>The political and social contexts may, for example, prompt ‘watchdog’ and ‘civic’ journalism, while collusive or antagonistic relations between political and media elites, as well as the political instrumentalization of journalists, or the compromised press freedom may curtail both roles.</p> <p>Also, a selective or enforced version of political parallelism and varying formality of state intervention may eventually favor an either ‘loyal’ or a more ‘interventionist’ type of reporting</p> <p>The concentrated nature of some media systems and the private, pro-market orientation in some countries might facilitate the performance of the ‘service’ and ‘infotainment’ roles.</p>
High media concentration, high levels of clientelism, high political parallelism, and equally high levels of instrumentalization of journalists.	
The arrival of radical and populist politics – press-state relations across the region which have become volatile and even antagonistic.	
Contextual factors at the national and cultural level that make them different from others: Brazil has the longest tradition of adopting US values and investigative journalism. Cuba has a state-media system with interventionist-type missions. Ecuador is undergoing extensive media reform and social polarization due to antagonist press-state relations. Mexico has a very concentrated media system and a long tradition of varying forms of authoritarianism. Chile, on the other hand, was the first neoliberal laboratory under dictatorial rule, and has the least diverse print press market.	Hybrid Journalistic cultures

JRP: WHAT HAVE WE FOUND?





ORIGINAL ARTICLE

The Hybridization of Journalistic Cultures: A Comparative Study of Journalistic Role Performance

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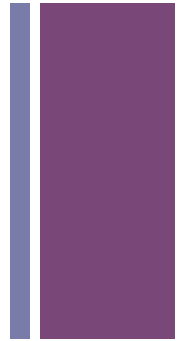
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Influential research on comparative media systems identifies distinctive models according to which certain countries—particularly advanced democracies—share key features in their journalistic cultures. Revisionist literature has not only emphasized the limitations of such models, but also highlighted the hybridization of journalistic cultures elsewhere. This article

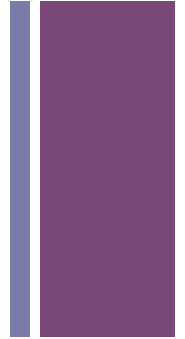
+ JRP: WHAT HAVE WE FOUND?



- Findings question the existence of a clear-cut divide between Western and non-Western, and within Western and non-Western journalistic cultures.
- Findings give evidence to support the existence of hybrid journalistic cultures among geographical, political and cultural regions.
- Hybrid journalistic cultures may simultaneously show contrasting roles to a greater extent than what have been found in media systems and role conception research.
- The variation in role performance across countries might not only be attributed to the media system
 - Other unaccounted variables might better explain the clustering of countries regarding the performance of certain roles.



JRP: WHAT HAVE WE FOUND?



- Regarding transitional democracies and nondemocratic countries, data show twofold support for multilayered hybridization in journalistic cultures.
- Transitional democracies do not form a unified cluster in any role, as they are also scattered across clusters with advanced democracies and nondemocratic regimes
- There is no significant evidence to support the idea that journalists in transitional democracies such as Latin America, are more likely to be interventionist, as previous studies on role conceptions have found
- Although hybridity seems to be a global phenomenon, it manifests itself in different ways



Journalistic performance in Latin America: A comparative study of professional roles in news content

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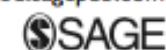
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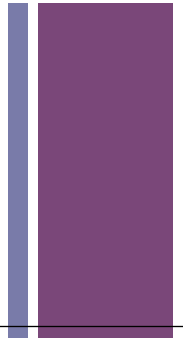
Journalistic Role performance in Latin America

Media /SD	Interventionism	Service	Infotainment	Civic	Watchdog	Loyal
Brazil	.097/.174	.04/.135	.05/.103	.05/.126	.12/.167	.03/.098
Chile	.23/.194	.04/.115	.08/.153	.03/.034	.02/.013	.01/.045
Cuba	.19/.25	.03/.108	.01/.009	.08/.075	.01/.013	.34/.262
Ecuador	.12/.161	.13/.216	.05/.123	.09/.090	.04/.039	.07/.140
Mexico	.14/.214	.03/.132	.04/.109	.08/.081	.09/.088	.04/.113

+ What kind of hybridization can we found in Latin America? Looking at the watchdog role...

	Detached Watchdog	Adversarial Watchdog	Watchdog Global
<i>Systemic Variables</i>			
Political Regime	-.220***	-.146***	-.240***
Press Freedom Rank	.156***	.223***	.220***
<i>Organizational Variables</i>			
<i>Media Political Orientation</i>	-.087**	.113***	-.023**
<i>Media Audience orientation</i>	.086***	.115***	.118***
<i>Content-based Variables</i>			
Politics Topic	.161***	.119***	.181***
Economy and business Topic	--	-.056***	-.100***
Police and crime Topic	.192***	.065***	.183***
Courts Topic	.194***	.060***	.183***
Social Affairs Topic	.033**	.022*	.076***
<i>Reporting Methods</i>			
Story Type	.066***	.048***	.074***
Number of Sources	.094***	.050***	.098***
Balance	.100***	-.033***	.068***
Verifiable Evidence	.051***	.042***	.059***
Argumentation	.079***	.084***	.100***
Interventionism	.066***	.254***	.161***
R ²	43.6	36.7	46.8
Adjusted R ²	18.8	13.3	21.8

+ How big is the gap between ideals and practice?



	Watchdog	Service	Infotainment	Civic oriented	Loyal	Interventionist
Role conception (or importance of practices?)	.70 (.13)	.68 (.17)	.55 (.16)	.80 (.17)	.52 (.17)	.56 (.13)
Perceived Role enactment	.58 (.16)	.62 (.19)	.55 (.17)	.69 (.15)	.52 (.18)	.49 (.13)
Role performance	.02 (.06)	.05 (.13)	.10 (.19)	.06 (.09)	.02 (.05)	.28 (.20)
Gap RC - RP	.68 *** (.15)	.63 *** (.20)	.45 *** (.22)	.74 *** (.19)	.50 *** (.18)	.28 *** (.23)
Gap RE - RP	.55 *** (.17)	.57 *** (.21)	.45 *** (.22)	.64 *** (.18)	.50 *** (.18)	.22 *** (.22)

Changing Times, Changing Journalism: A Content Analysis of Journalistic Role Performances in a Transitional Democracy

The International Journal of Press/Politics

2017, Vol. 22(2) 244–263

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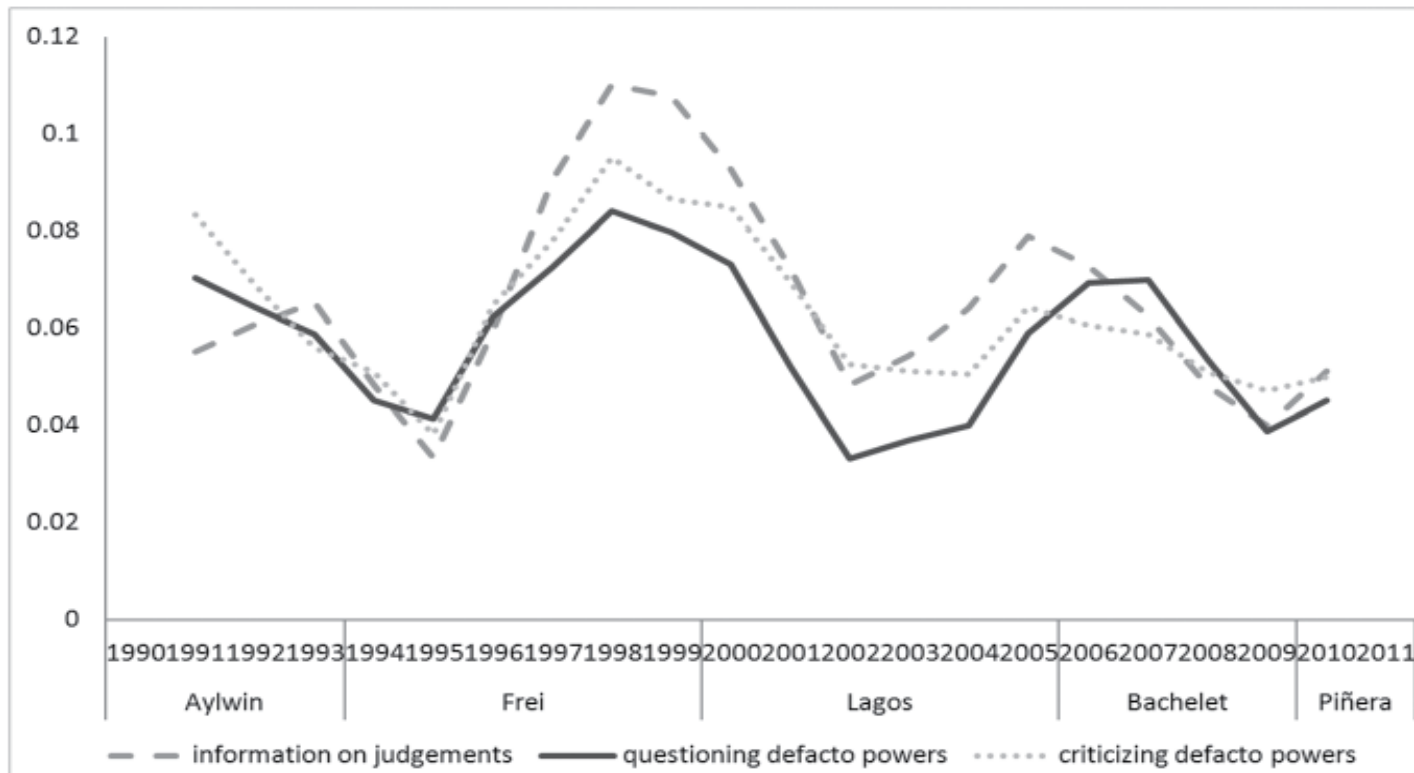


Claudia Mellado¹ and Arjen Van Dalen²

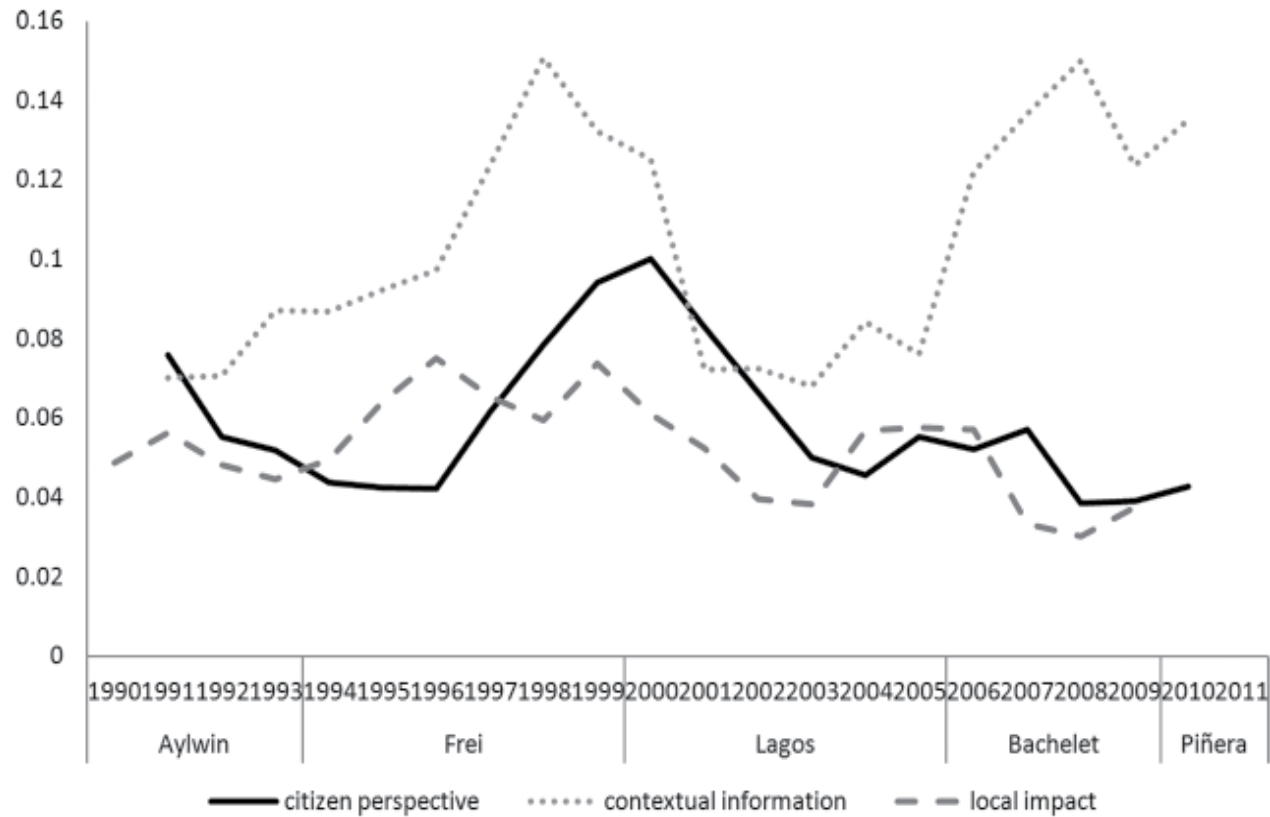
Abstract

Although the democratic role of journalism in new democracies is heavily debated, systematic empirical analysis is scarce. This paper studies how the performance of the watchdog and civic journalism role in Chilean newspapers develops during 22 years of democratic transition. We challenge the homogenization-thesis, which has often characterized thinking about the role of the media in democratic transition, assuming an automatic unidirectional trend toward more critical professionalism, where reporters increasingly act as watchdogs by taking the side of ordinary citizens against the political and economic elite. We argue that a rise in critical professionalism is often limited to a brief honeymoon period after the return to democracy. We furthermore argue that to understand changing role performance during democratic transition, one needs to look at specific developments of the media (press freedom, journalism education, advertisement income, and circulation) and developments in the political

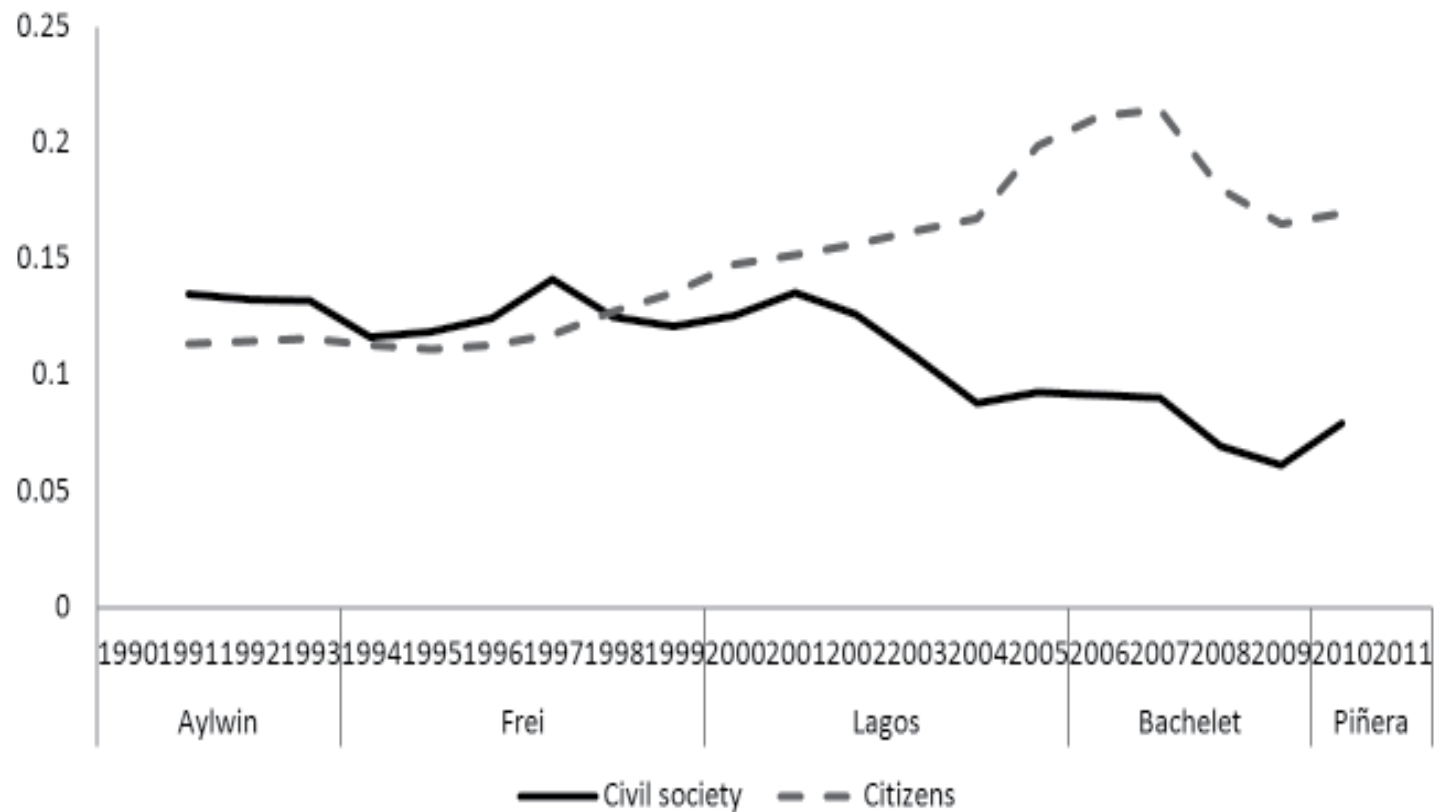
+ Watchdog journalism



+ Civic journalism



+ Civil society and citizens



Serving Consumers, Citizens, or Elites: Democratic Roles of Journalism in Chilean Newspapers and Television News

The International Journal of Press/Politics

2018, Vol. 23(1) 24–43

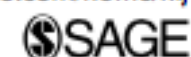
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Daniel C. Hallin¹ and Claudia Mellado²

Abstract

Print journalism has long been seen as a key institution of democratic politics, serving to enhance transparency, provide a forum for debate, and facilitate public participation. Instead, television journalism, particularly in its commercial form, has often been seen more negatively, as a form of infotainment that contributes little to the functions of journalism as an institution of democratic citizenship. Some scholars have questioned the dichotomy between infotainment and democratic roles, however, and the existing research comparing journalistic roles in print and television has produced mixed results. Focusing on the case of Chile and making use of a standardized news content-based index of journalistic roles, this study compares the prevalence of three professional roles by medium—newspapers and television—and also by audience orientation—popular and elite media across both print and



Journalistic roles by media outlet

Media Outlet	Watchdog	Infotainment	Civic
<i>La Tercera</i>	.06	.11	.06
<i>Las Ultimas Noticias</i>	.03	.25	.05
TVN	.06	.29	.12
Chilevisión	.09	.36	.10

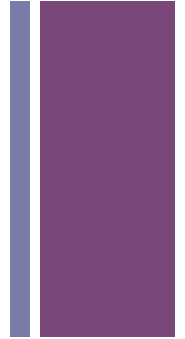
Note. TVN = Televisión Nacional de Chile.

Correlations (Pearson's *r*) of Journalistic Roles

Roles	Infotainment	Civic
Watchdog	.127***	.129***
Infotainment		.130***

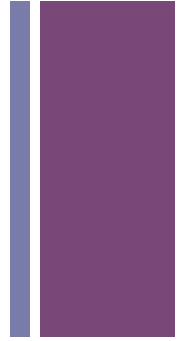
*** $p < .001$ (two-tailed test).

+ Challenges for Journalistic Role Performance and Media Systems Research



- There is a need for theorizing and systematizing media system variables beyond Western countries
 - ...such as political, economic and cultural characteristics that might be considered for the study media systems beyond Western media systems
- Lack of reliable, systematic country-level indexes that can help measure and quantify media system variables
- We need more longitudinal research to ascertain whether or not variation across countries in the performance of some roles are due to the specific conjunctures or are steady trends that are consistent over time
- Future research should also study role performance on different news platforms
- In order to be more specific about the type of hybridization found, it is crucial that future studies could break down the broad findings in greater detail for particular systems

+ The evolving role of journalism



- Although the very idea of hybridity may complicate the aim of comparative analysis, it does not make it less important, quite the opposite
- The concept of hybridity reveals the evolving challenges of conducting comparative research and the need to refine its theoretical and methodological bases.
- Journalistic cultures are not universal and hybridity cannot be expected to be the same for all journalistic cultures, systems, political regimes, or regional boundaries



Thank you very much!



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