

Diverse but concentrated: perceptions of communicators on the pluralism of digital media in Chile¹

Diversos pero concentrados: percepciones de comunicadores sobre el pluralismo de los medios digitales en Chile

Nicolás del Valle

International Institute for Philosophy and Social Studies, Santiago, Chile
ndelvalle@iipss.com
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7083-7928>

Fernando Carreño

International Institute for Philosophy and Social Studies, Santiago, Chile
fcarreno@iipss.com
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1067-491X>

Abstract

This article analyzes the perceptions of communicators of digital media according to their discourses on the situation of media pluralism in Chile. The opinions of the communicators were collected through 19 interviews that reveal the subjective conditions of different digital media in the country. The obtained results indicate that journalists understand media pluralism as a media diversity. Also, they consider their own media as pluralistic internally, even when it is perceived that the pluralism of the media system as a whole is limited by the commercialization of the media and the power of money over editorial lines.

Keywords: journalism, Media Pluralism, Digital Media, Chile.

Resumen

Este artículo analiza las percepciones de los comunicadores de los medios digitales de acuerdo a sus discursos sobre la situación del pluralismo informativo en Chile. Las opiniones de los comunicadores se recopilieron mediante 19 entrevistas que revelan las condiciones subjetivas de profesionales de diferentes medios digitales del país. Los resultados obtenidos indican que los periodistas entienden al pluralismo informativo como una diversidad mediática, considerando a su propio medio de comunicación como pluralista internamente, aun cuando se percibe que el sistema de medios en su conjunto ve limitado su pluralismo por la comercialización de los medios y el poder del dinero sobre las líneas editoriales.

Palabras clave: periodismo, pluralismo informativo, medios digitales, Chile.

1. Introduction

This article, through discourse analysis, analyzes how journalists from digital media perceive the situation regarding media pluralism in Chile. The perspectives of communicators in digital media is a core aspect of research into informational pluralism, despite most studies in Chile focusing on the consumption of information, audiences and public policies (Arriagada, Correa, Scherman & Arbazúa, 2016; Zárate, 2016). A few qualitative studies have highlighted the importance of subjective conditions affecting the understanding of these journalists' perception of pluralism, as well as the phenomena of content production, journalistic practices and internal media dynamics (Sapiezynska, Lagos & Cabalin, 2013). In the latter, it is intended that this article characterize what communicators working in editing, management and direction perceive of written digital media within the landscape of informational pluralism, identifying the discursive consistencies via codes that come up in interviews.

What are the perceptions of communicators in written digital media regarding informational pluralism? In the opinion of those communicators, does digital media participate in a pluralist ecosystem? In short, what is the discourse of men and women that direct, edit and manage media related to informational pluralism in Chile? The evidence seems to indicate that communicators understand pluralism to mean diversity of media, but that diversity is empirically limited due to the concentration of financial resources and communicative ability. In other words, the discourse confirms that pluralism contributes to the exercise of journalism and democracy, but current conditions in the informational system are a real threat to its existence. This perception is reaffirmed in a trend toward precarious job markets for journalists, and their merger with editing rooms for the production of digital content, and the increasing level of polyfunctionality of the communicators behind digital media.

To answer the questions above, this paper provides a semi-structured questionnaire used in in-depth interviews for the purpose of observing and registering the perspectives of these communicators coming from diverse media, media that broadcasts written information on digital platforms, covering

information written on a wide range of sources, from new, self-managed media to traditional communications media dependent on a printed version of the same. Traditional media dedicated to informational pluralism from aggregate quantitative measurements notwithstanding, this article focuses on a reflexive aspect of the actors dedicated to communicating and reporting. This is to say that this article consists of an analysis of their discourse to characterize pluralism in the different components of media in general. With this analysis we hope to collaborate with a research agenda on the perceptions of journalists regarding informational pluralism in Chile. The questions on the survey cover topics such as the situation with pluralism, journalistic ethics, the editorial focus of the medium, the role of digital media in society, plus other aspects of the national informational system.

The itinerary in this article introduces political and academic debate on information pluralism to define the components in the concept, and define the theoretical framework in which this research is developed. Secondly, this paper will go through the set of methodological procedures inherent to semi-structured interviews, covering from the moment they were applied to the media covered in their discourse. Discourse was later analyzed for editors, directors and agents for media content, paying special attention to discourse regularities and consistencies according to components of informational pluralism and the most frequently mentioned elements in their respective interviews (code frequency). Lastly, we propose a few observations regarding opinion and valuation in informational pluralism.

2. Information pluralism, journalism and digital media

When referring to the general use of the concept of pluralism, there is often some confusion between pluralism and plurality of viewpoints, interests, ideas and realities represented in agendas, content and editorial focus in communication media. Opposite in fact to popular opinion that tends to reduce the concept to a mere heterogeneity within informational systems, the theory of democratic pluralism maintains that the concept in itself is im-

possible to reduce to a simple question of diversity (Dahl, 1991; Rawls, 1997, 1993; Sartori, 2001), especially when looking at the relationship between diversity and pluralism.

Pluralism assumes an internally diverse society due to an inextricable structural differentiation in the processes of social modernization. Informational pluralism emerges in complex societies where the individual, organizations and social spheres develop with a certain level of autonomy. In this sense, pluralism is not just a social situation (multiplicity, heterogeneity or plurality of perspectives), but rather a set of regulatory principles that govern the dynamics between social differences. A society of castes or social strata could be considered a heterogenic society, but not pluralist, in the same manner that an informationally diverse system in terms of the offer of information is also not necessarily pluralist.

Kar Karppinen (2013) highlights the regulatory nature of pluralism and describes it as “an ism (that) refers more explicitly to an orientational value that considers multiplicity and diversity a virtue of ideas and institutions” (Karppinen, 2013, p. 4). Continuing with the previous idea, diversity is the existence and acknowledgment of said heterogeneity. For the purposes of our study, we understand diversity as an expression of a plurality of interests, ideas, opinions and realities in the media that forms the general opinion of society at large.

Without delving further into the varying conceptual and empirical implications, which have indeed been looked at and developed on other occasions (Del Valle, 2016a, 2016b), one must point out that information pluralism also spans mediatic freedom, in other words, freedom of expression and the press, as well as media autonomy when communicating with economic or political authorities. Theoretically this is due to diversity in the public sphere being attributed to growing levels of individuation, enabling people in general to participate in public debate, and exercise their civil liberties of expression and association (Habermas, 1998; Honneth, 2014, pp. 255 – 304). The existence of these liberties, be they civil or political, guarantees the manifestation of diversity and subsequent protection of that very same freedom of expression. Bearing in mind the previous it is reasonable to assume that mediatic freedom is as much a component

of pluralism as are guaranteed organized distribution of information, ideas and opinions absent of any arbitrary external restrictions.

Now, guaranteeing the public arenas free access does not mean a pluralist result when assessing informational systems. This requires effective exercise and practice of said freedoms via media participation (Boussaguet, 2016). This approach considers freedom a driver for potential diversity, but requires that citizens launch or partake in new media formats, and form part of the informational production of pre-existing media formats. Voluntary audience participation in content production whilst in a relationship of digital simultaneity is yet another component of our concept (Del Valle, 2016a, p. 13).

For full realization of informational pluralism, there must be the right structural conditions that allow for media development, as well as protect the manifestation of diversity, the exercise of freedom and media participation. The previous is the stance of Nicholas Garnham (1992, 1999), who pits pluralism against the distribution of power. Despite guarantees of freedom of expression, the manifestation of diversity and effective exercise of participation, the asymmetries of communicative power are key to defining how much influence they bare on political agendas, as well as affect an actor’s capacity to participate in public debate.

For example, concentrating property and control decreases competency and pluralism on a global scale (Stühmeier, 2016), looked at through a Latin American lens (Becerra & Mastrini, 2017) and from a Chilean perspective (Breull, 2015), as well as considering on these same lines what Sergio Godoy and Maria Elena Gronemeyer presented on digital media in Chile, and the relevance of private funding (2012). Correlating the discussion of secondary literature and their findings, this tension is also observed in the interviews, where sources of funding are directly affecting the ability to communicate, and the permanence and composition of editorial teams, even to the point of affecting the perception of journalists (Hatcher & Currin-Percival, 2016; Domingues-da-Silva, 2015).

Communicative power is understood to mean “the relational capacity that allows a social actor to asymmetrically influence the decisions of other social actors in ways that favor will, interests and

values of the empowered actor” (Castells, 2009, p. 10). In addition, the same Castells identifies it as the basis of society (2015). Or, in the words of Karppinen, said power to communicate is “the capacity of a social actor to significantly mobilize communication to surpass said influence” (Karppinen, 2013, p. 61). Therefore, informational pluralism would be akin to a distributive policy of power in communications, which means to say, regulatory initiatives that promote equal participation in public debate; minimizing the influence of property owners and media controllers and leaving space for the freer practice of journalism. Therefore, a pluralist informational system comes into conflict with the concentrated economics of the media industry.

With this synoptic vision of our concept, born out of its components (diversity, liberty, participation and distribution), one questions the extent of the empirical scope. Even when the objective of this article is not to apply the concept to measure reality, it is relevant to define it as “a degree of equal and free communication of diverse interests, ideas and realities via the participative transmission of information” (Del Valle, 2016a, p. 14), as this provides a definition that includes all the components to provide an analytical result.

3. Pluralism in digital media

How does informational pluralism and written digital media relate? The emergence of new digital media has raised a set of challenges to regulating communication and information (Duarte, Huertas, Rosa & Caffarena, 2015). According to Castells (2001), the informational era implies a new type of communication characterized by simultaneity. Digital media stands apart from other media formats such as television, radio and printed newspapers due to this inherent simultaneity. Not only has communication between communicators and audiences become immediate thanks to new digital platforms such as websites and social networks (Campos-Freire, Rúas-Araújo, López-García & Martínez-Fernández, 2016; Varas-Alarcón & González-Arias, 2016), the exercise of informational practices has also included simultaneity between the facts and newsworthy content (Klinenberg, 2005).

While some maintain that the use of the internet in communication media has meant a significant increase in social participation in news agendas, guaranteeing freedom of press and expression (Clemens, 2010; Czepek, 2009; Kahne & Middaugh, 2012; McNeal, Mossberger & Tolbert, 2007; Nielsen, 1984); at the same time it has also meant progress for companies moving from traditional formats to new *online* media, implying still greater concentration (Almiron, 2006) and a decrease in diversity in subject matter, stance and formats (Grazian, 2005).

The digitalization of communication broadens opportunities to publicly express opinion, and also diversifies channels of information and audience participation. Citizen participation in communication media is an unavoidable aspect of the process, and, desirable in today’s world. Media that also includes the audience in content production has an assured diversity of sources, subject matter and stances on news agendas, and also provides channels of information independent from economic and political powers, inserting new ways in which to present reality that overcome discursive disposition that may inhibit or shut down informational pluralism.

It is currently possible for “layman journalists” to answer, share and edit media content while publishing a news story. In this context, audiences participate in the editorial process of selecting news stories based on preference, readership and comments; transforming the audience into communicators when covering newsworthy stories and producing content (Coddington, 2012; Welbers, Van Atteveldt, Kleinnijenhuis, Ruigrok & Schaper, 2016).

The changes brought on by new digital media bring with them implied transformations to the dynamics of other types of media. New television channels, and online radio, podcasts, blogs and digital journals can all be included in the new wave of emerging digital communication (Domingo & Heinonen, 2008). Under this last definition, one would be correct in considering all these formats as digital media, independent of the information they transmit and the manner in which they transmit it (written, auditive and visual).

In this article, the findings are centered on a particular family of digital media: written digital media (WDM). This form of digital media is centered on transmitting information via the written word as opposed to television and online radio (Del Valle, 2016a; Domingo & Heinonen, 2008). However, one must separate digital media transmitting written information where that information is processed through an editorial-journalistic process, from those that do not process that information. In effect, the surge in new channels of information include a rise in blogs, digital journals with no journalistic process adhering to editorial standards (Wall, 2005), the verification of facts, contrasting points of view, sources and information intended to be impartial (Dreyfus, Lederman, Bosua & Milton, 2011). This reality is increasingly more pronounced in studies looking at the surge of fake news and its impact on public opinion (Sánchez-Gonzales & Méndez-Muros, 2015). For those reasons, a WDM is perceived as an online channel that transmits written information via an editorial process where communication between audiences and communicators is simultaneous (Del Valle, 2016a, p 9). As indicated in the section on methodology, using this criterion one can delimit the universe of study subjects, leaving out websites that despite transmitting written information, do so under no editorial process.

In the same fashion, when discussing WDM the traditional concept of journalism needs to be expanded to encompass the new phenomenon. With the appearance of new media, journalism has gradually become an activity that covers a set of practices that surpass the professional scope of journalists. In today's world, the emergence of new media managed by non-professional communication organizations has prompted other different concepts on practicing journalism. The "new journalism" (Fenton, 2010) the "citizen journalist" (Wall, 2015) and "digital journalism" (Scott, 2005) are phenomena repeated throughout recent history of digital media, and are characterized by including new agents and practices in the production of journalistic information (Domingo & Heinonen, 2008; Hansen, 2013; Lloyd, 2015). It is in this manner that the activity of communicating through media is moving toward a set of practices that fall outside the framework of traditional and restrictive journalism.

As a result, journalism presents a paradox in the digital era that can be boiled down to two different definitions (Hansen, 2013). The first, a restrictive, formal concept of journalism conceived as a set of practices executed by communication professionals. In the case of Chile and in accordance with current legislation, this coincides with people holding the professional degree of journalist (Martinez-Arias, 2015). The other is a broader concept not limited to set or practices determined by professional status or syndicated membership (Fortunati & Sarrica, 2011). On the contrary, journalism is understood to be any and all practice of public and impartial reporting via communication media (Wall, 2015), democratizing communication media and their business models (Zeng, Dennstedt & Koller, 2016).

4. Methodology

Using the concept of WDM makes it possible to circumscribe the study with methodological criteria that outline the scope of research, and concretely define units of analysis. The criteria considered applicable to the selection were; defined information channels (1), mainly transmit written information (2), produce content native to the medium (3) and maintain relationships that foster simultaneity with their audiences (4). These criteria ensure that the sample is characterized by media where editorial processes are at the center of proliferating informal journalistic projects in the digital era.

Based on the previous criteria, the field as defined had to be cut down due to the large amount of WDM that match the category. In light of informational pluralism and the dynamic traits of the digital sphere, the study also included media at least two years old (5) and publishing content at least daily or weekly (6), as well as having an editorial team (7) and publish political content (8).

This measure was taken with the expectation that all the participating media remain channels of information over time, and that they contribute to political debate from a journalistic perspective.

A second consideration regarding method deals with the division of territory at the national level. Given how the research centers on the digital aspect, the study focused on the three regions with greatest internet penetration, to be precise, Regions V, VIII and the Metropolitan Region. The previous is in the understanding that access to internet is a necessary condition to the proliferation of digital media. As is to be expected, said regions also coincide in that they are the most demographically dense regions in the country (IDC, 2009, 2012). Of these three regions, in following the previously mentioned criteria, the total sample consists of sixty-six different media.

A sample of WDM was put together using non-probabilistic means in the aforementioned regions that comply with the criteria established earlier. Within this framework, members of nineteen different media organizations forming part of the editorial process regarding political content underwent semi-structured interviews. The number of interviews was determined by the level of response as well the aspiration of representing the plurality of WDM, and in this fashion, provide relevant material in order to fully comprehend the phenomenon.

The interview consists of a semi-structured questionnaire with thirty open questions, applied in 2014 and stemming from the elements of informational pluralism described earlier in this article. For every component of the concept there is a series of questions oriented on gathering qualitative information on the opinions, appreciation and valuations of journalists on pluralism in the national informational system. The questions cover topics such as the situation with pluralism, journalistic ethics, editorial lines, among other aspects.

Field work was executed based on a strategy to approach the different media that participated in the study. Applying the questionnaires stopped once the interviews reached a point of discursive saturation, and in accordance, the study put together a balanced sample of types of WDM.

WDM communicators dependents of large independent conglomerates, community media with national coverage, investigative and informative journalism. Each interview was conducted in

person, and lasted approximately twenty-five minutes. The participants in these interviews were mainly directors, editors and heads of department. The media included in the study are presented in **Table 1**.

When selecting the interviewees, profiles that were consistently significantly involved in producing content were the individuals prioritized for the study. Regarding the analysis of the material, the researchers identified consistencies between the discourse on informational pluralism of the interviewed communicators. Subsequently researchers proceeded to register the most frequent mentions (f) based on a previously established code. The code was created based on the discourse itself and

Table 1: The Digital Media Included in the Study

Media	Region	Website
Acuerdos	Metropolitan	acuerdos.cl
Chile B	Metropolitan	chileb.cl
CIPER	Metropolitan	ciperchile.cl
Diario Financiero	Metropolitan	df.cl
Diario U. de Chile	Metropolitan	radio.uchile.cl
Dichato al Día	Biobío	dichatoaldia.cl
El Concecuente	Biobío	elconcecuente.cl
El Dínamo	Metropolitan	eldinamo.cl
El Martutino	Valparaíso	elmartutino.cl
El Periodista	Metropolitan	elperiodista.cl
El Quinto Poder	Metropolitan	elquintopoder.cl
El Resumen	Biobío	elresumen.cl
La Nación	Metropolitan	lanacion.cl
La Pulenta	Metropolitan	lapulenta.cl
La Tercera online	Metropolitan	latercera.com
Publimetro	Metropolitan	publimetro.cl
Putando Informa	Valparaíso	putaendoinforma.com
Soy Chile	Metropolitan	soychile.cl
The Clinic	Metropolitan	theclinic.cl

Source: Own Elaboration.

not the result of a predetermined search, not only demonstrating the coherence of the concept but also how their components relate to each other. The main discursive axes and the most covered topics are discussed in the qualitative analysis of the material.

5. Results

5.1 Pluralism equated to diversity

Almost the entirety of the interviews (eighteen) reveals that informational pluralism is, in the majority, understood to mean a diversity of perspectives represented in the media. The reference confirms the idea of providing a space of different “viewpoints”, “voices”, “stances”, “opinions”, and “realities”. One of the interviewees, the director and editor of a media organization in the Metropolitan Region (media No. 11), mentions this very clearly: “pluralism means giving space to every opinion”.

The understanding of pluralism as diversity is established in the discourse of the communicators, and expressed in the relevance they give the component of “diversity”, where the most frequent code bears relation to: What do you understand by pluralism? (f=37), this being the main aspect within the family of codes identified under the umbrella component of diversity (f=121). In the same way, the value of diversity is rooted in aspects such as positioning topics in the political agenda, going beyond the strictly national context, assessing local realities. The director of a media organization in the region of Valparaíso (media No. 8) mentions the following: “the newspaper’s editorial line recognizes the different realities in the environment we are located in, the municipality of Putaendo”. Pointing to a similar aspect looking at the role of the media as an agent working to draw attention to local issues, different to those covered by large conglomerates, an interviewee from the Region of Biobío (media No. 14) mentions the following: “This issue is incredibly important to us, in contrast to the media that are part of a duopoly in which this type of topic does not exist”. These aspects of the communicators discourse confirm that pluralism understood as diversity considers two relevant aspects: diversity of ideas, and diversity in terms of exposure of local realities.

In conjunction with the previous, it is possible to identify pluralism as a form of diversity that also covers other aspects inherent to the concept, for example, the concentration in media ownership (f=37), which in this study is taken into consideration within the dimension we call “distribution of communicational power”. Dealing specifically with relevance and the effects of this concentration on the media, the words of an editor from a Metropolitan Region (media No. 17) media organization stand out, as they condense the debate around media concentration. Speaking to the previous she says:

Very damaging [in reference to media concentration], I think it is the effect of a widely cast net. The manipulation of communication media affects the decisions people make in the day-to-day lives in regards to consumption, political elections, family relationships, their outlook on public affairs, their interaction with the natural environment because, ultimately, public opinion is based on what they learn from communication media and their familial relationships. When you manipulate communications and the media, or censure certain perspectives on determined issues, decisions as specific as where to shop or whom to vote for, is categorically linked to the lack of diversity and pluralism.

Observation reveals that the relationship between components sheds light on the central topic of this study, as seen from the perspective of the communicators. Therefore, although it is clear that pluralism is largely understood as a form of diversity, not only is it associated with providing a platform for a multitude of different voices, it is also closely tied to the valuation of inherent aspects such as media concentration (at a geographical and financial level), and their relevance to the system and the audience. In Arriagada et al (2015) we can confirm that audiences in regions other than the Metropolitan Region place high value on the local production of information (local or regional), as they consider they have little to no place in media with a national reach, accentuating a high level of concentration (p. 72). This is an important aspect to take into consideration when concentration is also mentioned as a force that in opposition of diversity, even when pluralism as a form of diversity is an essential value for the media system.

5.2 The limits of informational pluralism: economic concentration and communicative power

Generally speaking the interviewees mention that the media concentration of recent decades has had a counterproductive effect on informational pluralism. In regards to this particular point, the aspect that considers both economic concentration and communicative power is “distribution”. In this dimension of the study discursive code families appear less frequently than those regarding diversity (f=95), however, in so far as “concentration” is concerned, the code frequency is the same as for what the media understands as pluralism (f=37). As a result, diversity and concentration are structured into what are considered the most relevant aspects of the analysis.

In regards to the previous aspect, the director of a media organization in the Metropolitan Region (media No. 2) indicates the following:

Concentration has actively harmed the media system, policy, and regular life in this country. That is why I have proposed that a solution could be a better distribution of government funds.

The same interviewee also mentions another point, stating WDM “must take advantage of the space they have, a space that they have earned on the merits of further developing political discussion concentrated in the aspects present by *El Mercurio* o *La Tercera*”.

Looking at the issue from the perspective of diversity, another interviewee mentions that an absence of pluralism is also a matter of commercial dependency, pointing to the manner in which they are funded. The editor of media No. 3 considers “this [commercial] dependency makes the true expression of pluralism impossible in regards to communication media”. The previous reveals that despite acknowledging pluralism as diversity, the considerations that must be taken into account for a person in that role are complex when they jeopardize other aspects inherent to financing.

Yet another aspect to highlight are the threats to effectively implementing pluralism. In that manner, two discursive codes within the larger dimension of distribution: sources of funding (f=20), and

transparency (f=8), are also part of their discourse. Here one must pay special attention to the words of an editor from a well-known WDM (media No. 19) dedicated to investigative journalism:

It is important to delve into concrete aspects of the trade, how it is practiced, how it relates to the more dominant aspects. For example: messengers or manipulators? How do companies that pay for publicity influence the content and focus of the information published by the media accepting payment? In short, does the journalist that directs or edits a media organization accept gifts, awards or invitation? Does that influence content production? One must question these aspects and contrast them with written content.

Concentration, sources of funding and transparency illustrate the landscape surrounding communicator discourse, especially in regard to the current limits of pluralism. In this manner, communicator diagnosis of WDM place the “oligarchy in terms of controlling big media” (media No. 14) as one of the biggest risks to informational pluralism in the country. The inverse relationship between informational pluralism, ownership concentration and media control is confirmed in the entirety of the interviews.

In any case, almost all the communicators (18) affirm that their respective media outlets are pluralistic, stating that despite restrictions and a systemic absence of pluralism, WDM are indeed pluralists, but internally. The latter could bear relation to the potentiality of the internet digital platforms made for a pluralist system. According to some of the interviewees, “there has been greater pluralism thanks to technology and social networks” (media No.5), reflected in that “today we face a surge in alternative, informal media outlets which has facilitated the existence of a variety of media” (media No. 8). However, there being “greater and greater pluralism given the management of social networks [...] and although progress has been made in Chile, there isn’t the same level of pluralism as found in other societies” (media No. 11). The latter leads to a better understanding of the function of social networks in increasing levels of participation, even when the discourse found in the sample on how the media system suffers for pluralism is overwhelming.

6. Conclusions

Informational pluralism has progressed to become a fundamental value in the practice of journalism, and a desirable trait in democratic society. This is further corroborated in specialized literature as well as in the comparison of perspectives on media policy, and also in the opinion of the communicators driving digital media. For the interviewees, information pluralism is equated with a variety of voices within communicative media and the media system as a whole, reducing pluralism to a matter of diversity of content, issues and editorial lines. The previous is one of the main results of the analysis of the collected data.

Concerning the country's current situation, the perception of communicators is pretty clear. According to the findings described above, pluralism is not just a desirable situation, one that should drive public policy in communications and information, but that it is also under threat due to structural values such as financial models, ownership and control of social communication media. In effect, the growing phenomenon commercializing communications and information implies a weakening of informational pluralism as a public asset that consecrates social rights to communication. This is one of the main challenges to strengthening the national informational system that we could take away from this study.

In this same direction, despite communicator perspectives indicating that the conditions revolving around informational pluralism constitute a precarious or limited situation, circumstances created by the power of money in confrontation with editorial lines, the perception of the interviewees affirms the existence of an internal pluralism within the media they work in. It is the interviewees contention that their efforts to provide information from varying viewpoints are pitted against the limitations imposed, the concentration in ownership and media control. And with that, one can conclude that in the eyes of the communicators, practicing journalism in Chile falls between diversity and concentration, adding great pressure to the holistic concept of pluralism in the media as seen from both a structural perspective as well as an internal appreciation of media.

These findings are of particular interest when considering the need to delve deeper in the study of informational pluralism in the national informative system, approaching the issue from the interrogative of digital media. There have been studies into journalist perception of informational pluralism in Chile before, but they have not broached the subject of digital media. Today, digital media have garnered greater relevance by becoming main forms with which one can access public information, meaning the analysis of internal dynamics and the limits in the transmission of news and knowledge through digital platforms has far greater urgency in the current context. In the case of digital media, it is interesting that, unlike other qualitative studies on the perceptions of traditional media that display evident signs of internal restrictions on the practice of journalism, the findings in this study reveal that the perceptions of those that work in digital media identify the threats to pluralism in the structural conditions of the media system. This article contributes to completing a panorama on the perceptions of journalists on informational pluralism when exploring the reality of digital media. Now, the results cannot be considered comparable to those of communicators on digital platforms, rather valuated as an exploratory analysis that sheds some light on the matter at hand, but doesn't seek to elucidate the entire landscape.

Notes

1. This research is sponsored by the PLU1300008 Project "Pluralism in the political agenda of written digital media in the V, VIII and Metropolitan Regions" of the Scientific Information Program of the National Commission on Scientific and Technological Research of Chile (Nicolás Del Valle Orellana, Head Researcher).

References

- Almiron, N. (2006). Pluralismo en Internet: el caso de los diarios digitales españoles de información general sin referente impreso. *Ámbitos* (15), 9-31.
- Arriagada, A., Correa, T., Scherman, A. & Abarzúa, J. (2015). Santiago no es Chile: brechas, prácticas y percepciones de la representación medial en las audiencias chilenas. *Cuadernos. Info* (37), 63-75. <http://dx.doi.org/10.7764/cdi.37.769>
- Becerra, M. & Mastrini, G. (2017). *La concentración infocomunicacional en América Latina*. Bernal: Universidad Nacional de Quilmes.
- Boussaguet, L. (2016). Participatory mechanisms as symbolic policy instruments? *Comparative European Politics*, 14(1), 107-124. doi:10.1057/cep.2015.12
- Breull, L. (2015). Debate: Concentración de medios en la industria televisiva chilena. Recuperado de: <https://www.cntv.cl/debate-concentracion-de-medios-en-la-industria-televisiva-chilena/cntv/2016-11-29/122746.html>
- Campos-Freire, F., Rúas-Araújo, J., López-García, X., & Martínez-Fernández, V.-A. (2016). El impacto de las redes sociales en el periodismo. *El Profesional de la Información*, 25(3), 449. <https://doi.org/10.3145/epi.2016.may.15>
- Castells, M. (2001). *La Galaxia Internet. Reflexiones sobre Internet, empresa y sociedad*. Madrid: Areté.
- Castells, M. (2009). *Communication Power*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Castells, M. (2015). "Enredados para la libertad. Movimientos sociales en la era de internet". En Sandoval, R. (Ed.), *Pensar desde la resistencia anticapitalista y la autonomía* (pp. 51-82), Ciudad de México: CIESAS.
- Clemens, E. S. (2010). Democratization and Discourse: The Public Sphere and Comparative Historical Research. *Social Science History*, 34(3), 373-381. Recuperado de: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4092761>
- Coddington, M. (2012). Building frames link by link: the linking practices of blogs and news sites (Report). *International journal of communication (Online)*, 2007. Recuperado de: <http://ijoc.org/index.php/ijoc/article/view/1476>
- Correa, T., Scherman, A., & Arriagada, A. (2016). Audiences and Disasters: Analyses of Media Diaries Before and After an Earthquake and a Massive Fire. *Journal of Communication*, 66(4), 519-541. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jcom.12245>
- Czepek, A. (2009). "Pluralism and participation as desired results of press freedom: Measuring media system performance". En Czepek, A., Helwig, M & Nowak, E. (eds.), *Press freedom and pluralism in Europe concepts and conditions* (pp. 37-44), Chicago, Estados Unidos: University of Chicago Press. Url: <http://press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/distributed/P/bo6921754.html>
- Dahl, R. (1991). *Los Dilemas del Pluralismo Democrático. Autonomía versus control*. México D.F.: Alianza Editorial.
- Del Valle, N. (2016a). Pluralismo informativo de los medios digitales escritos en Chile: apuntes de investigación. *Serie Política, Gestión y Políticas Públicas* (3), 1-29. Recuperado de: <http://policypapers.cl/2016/pluralismo-informativo-de-los-medios-digitales-escritos-en-chile/>
- Del Valle, N. (2016b). Pluralismo informativo y libertad en los medios en Chile: notas sobre las condiciones estructurales. *Revista de Gestión Pública*, V(2), 219-252.

<http://revistadegestionpublica.cl/index.php/rgp/article/view/73>

- Domingo, D. & Heinonen, A. (2008). Weblogs and Journalism. A Typology to Explore the Blurring Boundaries. *Nordicom Review*, 29(1), 3-15. <https://doi.org/10.1515/nor-2017-0159>
- Domingues-da-Silva, J., Zaverucha, J., Figueireido, D. & Carvalho da Rocha, D. (2015). More concentration of Media ownership means less democracy? Testing association between variables. *Intercom - RBCC*, 38(1), 65-83. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1590/1809-5844201513>
- Dreyfus, S., Lederman, R., Bosua, R. & Milton, S. (2011). Can we handle the truth? Whistleblowing to the media in the digital era. *Global Media Journal*, 5(1), 1, 157-165
Recuperado de: <https://acastilloreporter.files.wordpress.com/2014/01/wiki-leaks-journalism-and-the-21st-century-mediascape1.pdf>
- Duarte, J., Huertas, M., Rosa, R., & Caffarena, V. (2015). El papel de las tecnologías cívicas en la redefinición de la esfera pública/The role of civic technologies in the redefinition of the public sphere. *Historia y Comunicación Social*, 20(2), 483-498. https://doi.org/10.5209/rev_HICS.2015.v20.n2.51396
- Fenton, N. (2010). *New media, old news: journalism & democracy in the digital age*: London: SAGE. <https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/new-media-old-news/book233055#description>
- Fortunati, L., & Sarrica, M. (2011). Insights from journalists on the future of the press. *Communications*, 36(2). <https://doi.org/10.1515/comm.2011.007>
- Hansen, E. (2013). Aporias of digital journalism. *Journalism*, 14(5), 678-694. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884912453283>
- Garnham, N. (1992). "The Media and The Public Sphere". En: C. Calhoun (Ed.), *Habermas and the Public Sphere* (pp. 357-376). Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Garnham, N. (1999). "Amartya Sen's Capabilities Approach to the Evaluation of Welfare: Its Application to Communications". En: A. J.-C. B. Calabrese (Ed.), *Communication, Citizenship, and Social Policy*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Godoy, S. & Gronemeyer, M. A. (2012). Los medios digitales: Chile. Open Society Foundations. Recuperado de: https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/uploads/3ae7ed67-f633-4a81-bd75-7aa1e784bcdb/mapping-digital-media-chile-sp-20140109_1.pdf
- Grazian, D. (2005). A Digital Revolution? A Reassessment of New Media and Cultural Production in the Digital Age. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 597, 209-223. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002716204270286>
- Habermas, J. & Rawls, J. (1998). *Debate Sobre El Liberalismo Político*. Barcelona: Paidós.
- Hatcher, J. A., & Currin-Percival, M. (2016). Does the Structural Pluralism Model Predict Differences in Journalists' Perceptions of Online Comments? *Digital Journalism*, 4(3), 302-320. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2015.1049636>
- Honneth, A. (2014). *Freedom's Right. The Social Foundations of Democratic Life*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- International Data Corporation (IDC) (2009). *Barómetro Cisco de Banda Ancha Chile 2003-2010*. Trabajo preparado para Cisco. Recuperado el 20 de mayo de 2016, de <http://www.subtel.gob.cl/>

- International Data Corporation (IDC) (2012). *Barómetro Cisco de Banda Ancha 2.0*. Trabajo preparado para Cisco. Recuperado el 20 de mayo de 2016, de <http://www.acti.cl/>
- Kahne, J., & Middaugh, E. (2012). Digital Media Shapes Youth Participation in Politics. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 94(3), 52-56. <https://doi.org/10.1177/003172171209400312>
- Karppinen, K. (2013). *Rethinking Media Pluralism*. New York: Fordham University Press.
- Klinenberg, E. (2005). Convergence: News Production in a Digital Age. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 597, 48-64. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002716204270346>
- Lloyd, J. (2015). *Journalism and PR: new media and public relations in the digital age*. London: I.B. Tauris & Co.
- Martinez Arias, S. (2015). Periodismo ciudadano, en los límites de la profesión periodística. *Estudios sobre el Mensaje Periodístico*, 21 SE, 109. https://doi.org/10.5209/rev_ESMP.2015.v21.51132
- McNeal, R., Mossberger, K. & Tolbert, C. (Ed.) (2007). *Digital Citizenship. The Internet, Society, and Participation*. London: MIT Press. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/19331680802290972>
- Nielsen, R. P. (1984). Pluralism in the mass media: Can management participation help? *Journal of Business Ethics*, 3(4), 335-341. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00381758>
- Rawls, J. (1993). *Political Liberalism*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Rawls, J. (1997). The Idea of Public Reason Revisited. *The University of Chicago Law Review*, 64(3), 765-807.
- Sánchez Gonzales, H. M., & Méndez Muros, S. (2015). Las guías de uso de medios sociales: regularización periodística y calidad informativa. *Estudios sobre el Mensaje Periodístico*, 21 SE, 143. doi: https://doi.org/10.5209/rev_ESMP.2015.v21.51136
- Sapiezynska, E., Lagos, C. & Cabalín, C. (2013). Libertad de prensa bajo presión: niveles de restricción percibidos por periodistas chilenos y factores influyentes. *Cuadernos.info*, (32), 11-26. doi: <https://doi.org/10.7764/cdi.32.468>
- Sartori, G. (2001). *La Sociedad Multiétnica. Pluralismo, Multiculturalismo y Extranjeros*. Madrid: Taurus.
- Scott, B. (2005). A Contemporary History of Digital Journalism. *Television & New Media*, 6(1), 89-126. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1527476403255824>
- Stühmeier, T. (2016). Media market concentration and pluralism. *CAWM Discussion Paper*. Recuperado de: <https://www.econstor.eu/handle/10419/146110>
- Varas-Alarcón, M., & González Arias, C. (2016). Interactividad en sitios web de medios: buscando nuevas formas de diálogo con sus usuarios. *Estudios sobre el Mensaje Periodístico*, 22(1), 566. https://doi.org/10.5209/rev_ESMP.2016.v22.n1.52613
- Wall, M. (2005). 'Blogs of war': Weblogs as news. *Journalism*, 6(2), 153-172. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884905051006>
- Wall, M. (2015). Citizen Journalism: A retrospective on what we know, an agenda for what we don't. *Digital Journalism*, 3(6), 797-813. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2014.1002513>
- Welbers, K., van Atteveldt, W., Kleinnijenhuis, J., Ruigrok, N., & Schaper, J. (2016). News selection criteria in the digital age: Professional norms versus online audience me-

trics. *Journalism*, 17(8), 1037-1053. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884915595474>

Zárate, S. (2016). Pluralismo en el sistema informativo. *Temas de la Agenda Pública*, 11(88), 1-14. Recuperado de: <http://politicaspUBLICAS.uc.cl/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/PDF-Temas-de-la-Agenda-88.pdf>

Zeng, M. A., Dennstedt, B., & Koller, H. (2016). Democratizing Journalism – How User Generated Content and User Communities Affect Publishers' Business Models. *Creativity and Innovation Management*, 25(4), 536-551. <https://doi.org/10.1111/caim.12199>

- About the authors:

Nicolás del Valle Orellana is a political scientist and doctor of philosophy at the University of Leiden (the Netherlands); researcher for the International Institute for Philosophy and Social Studies, Santiago, Chile; and adjunct professor at the School of Journalism at the University of Santiago Chile.

Fernando Carreño Donoso is a political scientist and has a Masters in Political Communication from the University of Chile; he is also a researcher at International Institute for Philosophy and Social Studies, Santiago, Chile.

- How to cite this article:

Del Valle, N. & Carreño, F. (2020). Diversos pero concentrados: percepciones de los comunicadores sobre el pluralismo de los medios digitales en Chile. *Comunicación y Medios*, (42), 30-43. <https://doi.org/10.5354/0719-1529.2020.57636>