

INTRAGENDER VIOLENCE, A NEW CHALLENGE FOR CORRECT NEWS COVERAGE

VIOLÊNCIA INTRAGENDER, UM NOVO DESAFIO PARA A COBERTURA DE NOTÍCIAS CORRETA

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ABSTRACT:

Sexist violence is the first cause of death amongst women aged between 14 and 45 years in Europe. However, maltreatment and violence in the setting of affective and sexual relations are not exclusive to heterosexual relationships. Real situations of violence, both physical and psychological, are found in relationships formed by two people of the same sex. This is called intragender violence. It remains anonymous, far from statistics and numbers. This is either because the people who suffer from it do not make it known, or because society itself finds it hard to believe that violence can be found in lesbian and homosexual relationships. This article presents an analysis of the treatment given by the main Spanish and Basque newspapers to the first murder due to intragender violence that occurred in Spain.

KEYWORDS: Gender violence; Intragender violence; Journalism; News treatment; Mass media.

RESUMO:

Violência sexista é a primeira causa de morte entre as mulheres com idade entre 14 e 45 anos na Europa. No entanto, maus-tratos e violência no ambiente das relações afetivas e sexuais não são exclusivos para as relações heterossexuais. Situações reais de violência, tanto física como psicológica, são encontrados em relações formadas por duas pessoas do mesmo sexo. Isso é chamado de violência intragender. Ela permanece anônima, longe de estatísticas e números. Isto é porque as pessoas que sofrem com isso

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não o tornam conhecido, ou porque na sociedade em que se encontra é difícil acreditar que a violência pode ser encontrada em relações lésbicas e homossexuais. Este artigo apresenta uma análise do tratamento dado pelos principais jornais espanhóis e bascos para o primeiro assassinato devido a intragender violência que ocorreu na Espanha.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Violência de gênero; violência intragender; Jornalismo, Tratamento mediático; Mass media.

INTRODUCTION

On 17 December 1997, the day on which Ana Orantes was murdered by her husband José Parejo in Cúllar Vega (Granada), after denouncing on a peak audience program on Canal Sur that she had suffered maltreatment for forty years, a qualitative change took place in the way gender violence was dealt with in the Spanish mass media.

The broad and detailed information given by the media about this murder had an enormous social impact and marked a before and an after in news on gender violence in the country. As Altés (1998) observes, similar events had occurred previously, but the endogamous and mimetic character of the media favored media publicity of this concrete case. This case not only brought an increase in the number of news stories that were published or broadcast from then onwards, but also resulted in a qualitative increase, as there was a rise in the number of front pages the Spanish press dedicated to this issue.

For Gutiérrez et al (2009) this fact altered the criteria of journalistic selection, causing an increase in media coverage of this social problem and consolidating a new form of organizing news that has determined the public perception of the problem. The death of Ana Orantes generated a new type of news, as this concept is understood by Kepplinger and Habermeier (1995). The event not only altered the criteria of journalistic selection, bringing an increase in the coverage of gender violence, but also meant the consolidation of a different news treatment of this question, as we noted. The event caused the creation a new informative approach, a new frame of reference in the narration of episodes of domestic violence: these ceased to be treated as chance occurrences appearing in the current events section, and were now explained as a social problem (Berganza, 2003).

The mass media have an incalculable power of social influence which, united to their intrinsic essence as a public service, has led the public and the institutions to demand

that they behave responsibly and exercise special care. From then onwards, the majority of the media ceased to report such events as occasional and isolated occurrences, as crimes of passion to be covered in current events or in programs exploiting the human interest angle and their emotional content. This type of news stories entered the Society and National News spaces of the media and began to be a subject of debate in public life.

CHANGES IN THE MODEL OF NEWS SELECTION

It is not only on the political level that the mass media are considered to be major organizations of socialization and knowledge. Following the murder of Ana Orantes, the diffusion of news stories on maltreatment in the domestic sphere multiplied. When the Center for Sociological Research (*Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas* - CIS) published a report in March 2001 on the importance of these news stories, 92% of those interviewed stated that they had seen, heard or read news referring to the maltreatment of women in the preceding six months.

In two later surveys, conducted in 2009 and 2010 by the Government Delegation for Gender Violence, 95% of those interviewed stated that they knew about the phenomenon of gender violence through the social mass media. That is, this modality of violence is what the media describe as gender violence. As Celia Amorós argues, “to conceptualize is to politicize”: “critical concepts enable the visualization of particular phenomena that are not made visible from other angles of attention, and in its turn this visualization feeds and enables new critical concepts” (Amorós, 2008: 17).

The evolution of the framing of news on domestic violence by the mass media can be explained through Framing Theory. This term was used for the first time in the field of cognitive psychology by Gregory Bateson (1991), who referred to the way in which people, in their awareness of something, concentrate on some aspects of reality and ignore others. This theory introduced the subjective element as a fundamental part of the communication process, rejecting the objectivist current that dominated both academic research and journalistic practice during the 1960s. From then onwards, news would no longer be a reflection of reality but its representation (Giménez, 2006).

Analyzed from this new perspective, news stories on domestic violence against women published from 1997 onwards are the result of a subjective reconstruction of reality. A change has occurred in how media professionals perceive the question as a result of

the different variables that intervene in the news process. That is, there has been a shift from a model in which the newsworthiness of events took priority to a model of instrumental actualization. According to this model, events are selected because certain goals are pursued whose existence is highlighted through a particular journalistic treatment. In the case of domestic violence against women, the aim is to give visibility to the social problem of this type of violence and contribute to raising public awareness.

Thanks to this new approach, news content on violence against women has gradually moved away from the section chronicling current events, emerging from the private sphere to occupy a place in the social sphere. As Alberdi and Matas (2002) rightly observe, there are many forms of violence that bear no relation to the fact of being a man or a woman, while what we are talking of here is a type of violence exercised by men to maintain their control and superiority over women.

And it is at this precise point that there is debate and a division of opinions. As the World Health Organization (2013) notes, the prevalence of violence by men against women in North America and Europe has been demonstrated in recent years. According to the estimates of the European Union Agency of Fundamental Rights published in 2014, one in three European women had experienced physical or sexual aggressions, but only 34% denounced the most serious occurrences. At the same time, 12% were victims of sexual aggressions during childhood, 43% had experienced psychological violence from their partner and 55% had been sexually harassed. The figures are indisputable and the nature of this violence is due to the fact that “the logic of gender is a logic of power and discrimination” (Lamas, 1999: 161), but it is also true that heterosexuality has been naturalized through gender, and homosexuality has been excluded.

Historically the issue of domestic violence was approached as if it were exclusively the affair of heterosexual couples, with the result that expressions of this type of violence in same-sex couples were ignored (Hamberger, 1996). Analysis of violence between partners as a phenomenon strictly related to gender and heterosexual relationships excludes discussion of the issue of relationships involving same-sex couples, which is relegated to a marginal position (López and Ayala, 2011).

It was only recently that members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transsexual (LGBT) community incorporated study of domestic violence in same-sex couples into their agenda (NCAVP, 1997; Renzetti, 1997, 1998; Shernoff, 1995). Lobel (1986) and Island & Letellier

(1991) were the first to identify that close to half a million gay men in the United States had been victims of domestic violence and a similar number were aggressors.

The purpose of this study is not to consider the legislative field that should regulate these new forms of violence in same-sex couples, but the representation they are given in the mass media instead. It must be borne in mind that relations of gender and sexuality are nowadays more complex and less stereotyped than in the past (Gauntlett, 2002). Queer Theory, which results from a miscellany of theories on social identity construction, holds that since identities can be molded, gender construction can be molded as well. This is because learning about what is masculine and feminine can be broken, and the mass media can help in the propagation and acceptance of these new models.

From this point of view it is the social duty of the media to inform, rigorously and without trivialization, about questions as sensitive and little known as intragender violence, since it has remained anonymous to this day, far from statistics and numbers. In some cases this is because the people who suffer from it do not make it known. And in others because society itself, and specifically the social agents, find it hard to believe that gender violence can exist in lesbian and homosexual relationships. So, if we accept that systematic violence in the intimate sphere is a violation of human rights, as posited by Meyersfeld (2010: 151), the question that a journalist must immediately ask is: what can be done to prevent it?

The answer is provided by Gabriel Sánchez (2008), for whom education to prevent and raise awareness about this grave problem must be imparted in the information that society receives through the mass media. “If the mass media are used to raise awareness about, denounce, condemn and repudiate such practices, their influence will leave a mark on the consciences of those who on some occasion have thought of using coercion before reason to resolve conjugal conflicts” (Sánchez, 2008: 5).

Enrique López, spokesperson of the General Council of Judicial Power, declared in 2008 during the II Seminar on New Technologies and Gender Violence that society was demanding more effectiveness from the administration. He called on the mass media to show more responsibility and to become involved in the struggle to prevent violence.

News treatment of stories related to gender violence, to which intragender violence should be added, is a new social challenge, comparable to the treatment of news related to terrorism, immigration, the environment or the courts (Sánchez, 2008).

When the majority of the Spanish mass media drew up their Ethical Codes back in the 1980s, all these concerns had not acquired the social dimension that they have today. For this reason, suitable treatment is not included in texts that in most cases have not been changed since they were first drawn up. Rigor is called for and there are even general observations on treatment and respect for victims. But such advice, which serves equally to report on a terrorist attack or a murder, is not always followed.

METHODOLOGY

This study sets out to analyze the news coverage that the main Spanish and Basque newspapers gave to the first murder due to intragender violence in Spain, which took place in November 2014. The analysis was carried out from the day after the newsworthy event, 20 November 2014, until the day when the victim's colleagues and friends organized a tribute to him on 10 December 2014.

In the analysis, the main Basque press refers the following newspapers: *El Correo*, *Deia*, *Diario Vasco*, *Gara* and *Berria*. With respect to the main Spanish newspapers, we selected the three with the highest number of readers according to the first wave of the General Media Study (EGM) of 2015: *El País*, *El Mundo* and *La Razón*.

Content Analysis (CA) was used as the research instrument, with this understood as “the set of techniques of communication analysis for obtaining indicators (whether quantitative or not) by systematic and objective procedures of describing the content of messages, enabling the inference of knowledge relating to the conditions of production/reception (inferred variables) of these messages” (Bardin, 1986: 32).

In order to obtain information a data extraction file was elaborated that was faithful to the goals pursued, as well as making it possible to systematize the data. For this purpose, three content blocks were taken into consideration: identification of the news story; the concept of violence; and the type of news.

In elaborating the file, the categorization rules for qualitative CA, set out by J. I. Ruiz (1996), were taken into consideration.

1. Existence of a single criterion in the definition of categories.
2. Exhaustiveness of the categories.
3. Mutual exclusion.
4. Significance.
5. Clarity.
6. Replicability.
7. Differentiation on the basis of language.

It should be emphasized that the revision of press archives was done manually, analyzing the content published in each of the media throughout the whole period of study in all sections.

Figure 1. Data extraction file.

A) Identification of the document
1. Medium 1 El Correo 2 Gara 3 Deia 4 Diario Vasco 5 Berria 6. El País 7. El Mundo 8. ABC
2. Day _____
3. Headline
Fields of news 1. International 2. National 3. Regional-local 4. Society 5. Economy 6. Sports 7. Communication 8. Culture 9. Others
B) Concept of violence
5. Nominal identification of explicit reference 1. Without reference terminology 2. Gender violence 3. Sexist violence 4. Maltreatment 5. Domestic violence 6. Intragender violence 7. Other relevant expressions of reference not included in the categorization _murder and murderer 8. Several terms on the same level or a great profusion of terms used as synonyms

<p>6. Sphere of violence referred to</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Domestic 2. Affective 3. Social-community 4. No reference made to any specific sphere _ _ _ _ _
<p>C) News treatment</p>
<p>7. Treatment of the subjects' privacy</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No reference made 2. Victim and aggressor perfectly identifiable 3. Identification of the victim 4. Identification of the aggressor 5. Partial data on the victim 6. Partial data on the aggressor 7. Partial data on the victim and aggressor
<p>8. Concept used to denominate the subjects' civil status</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No reference made 2. Homosexual couple 3. Couple 4. Married couple 5. Partners
<p>9. Focus of the news story</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Neutral narration of events 2. Details about the murder 3. Details about the subjects' personal life 4. Statements by the subjects' acquaintances
<p>10. Use of images</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Without images <p>Of context Of the murder Of the victim Of the aggressor</p>

RESULTS

One of the first works on the suitable coverage of violent events in which men play a leading role and that give rise to news stories on gender violence is the Urgent Manual on the News Treatment of Violence Against Women (*Manual de Urgencia sobre el tratamiento informativo de la violencia contra las mujeres*) of RTVE (Spanish Radio and Television). This was written in 2002 and was adopted by Telecinco, Antena 3, Canal +, ABC and the majority of the regional televisions. It began with a basic recommendation to avoid using stereotyped images of women in the mass media, that is, to avoid reducing their representation to the roles of sex object, carers and housewives. The recommendation it made was “to widen the field of representation of women.”

In 2004 the RTVE Institute focused on another of the foundations of the training of those who will be practicing journalism in future: the university faculties. For this purpose it

elaborated the Manual of News on Gender (*Manual de información en género*), which consists of seven chapters or basic lessons that review the basic themes to be borne in mind when preparing quality news from the standpoint of equality.

In 2005 it once again took stock of audiovisual news stories in the second report on Gender Representation in Radio and Television News Programs (*Representación de género en los informativos de radio y televisión*), which compared the results on the images of women and men with those obtained four years previously. The following year, in 2006, as part of the fifth collaboration agreement between the Women's Institute and the RTVE Institute, the first specific report prepared in our country on the treatment of gender violence in news stories was published. The report highlighted the positive aspects of journalistic practice and also pointed to the shortcomings observed in news reports on gender violence.

In 2008 the document Television and Equality Policies (*Televisión y políticas de igualdad*) was added to these pioneering initiatives. All these documents show the commitment of the public corporation to denouncing gender violence. Its Deontological Code states that the organization's professionals will pay "special attention to news stories related to gender violence, avoiding the transmission of messages that might contribute to creating in society a sensation of impunity facing these crimes."

Also in 2008, the newspaper *Público* adopted a Decalogue for Reporting on Gender Violence that the newspaper staff were obliged to observe. It also encouraged the audience to act as a watchdog: "From now onwards, the newsroom at *Público* commits itself to the compulsory fulfilment of our Decalogue and we ask our readers to demand this of us." To this day, *Público's* Decalogue on reporting on gender has been a reference because of its real commitment and the precision of its journalistic regulations when tackling news stories on gender violence. Hence, once the results derived from this research have been presented, we will check the extent to which those recommendations were met in the way the main Basque and Spanish press covered the first case of intragender violence in the country.

As can be seen in the analytical file, three categories are differentiated: identification of the document - medium, day, headline and field of news; concept of violence - nominal identification and sphere of the violence; and news treatment - privacy, description of

civil status, focus and use of images. This categorization makes it possible to determine the media treatment given to the news story from three differentiated levels.

IDENTIFICATION OF THE DOCUMENT

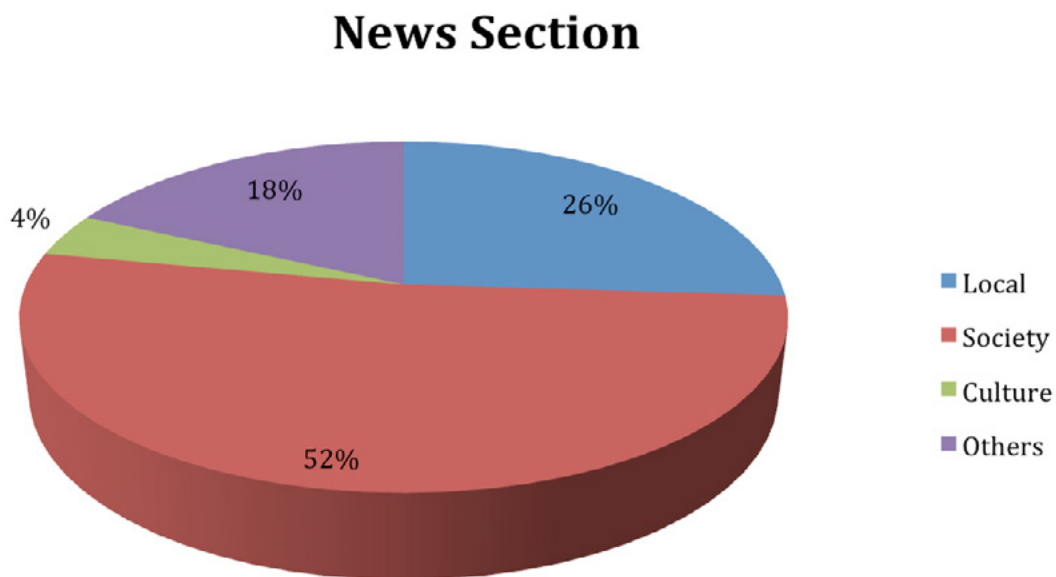
Thanks to the identification of the medium and the day of publication it was possible to determine the coverage given by each medium to the news story during the period studied, from 20 November to 10 December 2014. Thus we find that the newspaper that gave the greatest coverage is *El Correo*, where the first news story about the murder of Koldo Losada was published on 20 November and the last on 10 December. This is probably due to the geographical proximity of the newsworthy event, which took place in Bilbao. To a lesser extent, but occupying second place, we find the newspaper *Deia*, which is also a regional newspaper located in the province where the murder took place. The third position falls to *El Diario Vasco*, a leading newspaper in the neighboring province. In this case, the broad coverage is partly due to its belonging to Vocento, the same publishing group as *El Correo*, a fact that contributes to the news stories being the same in both media. As the geographical proximity of the media with respect to the event lessens, interest in the news story also falls. In the case of the regional newspapers - *Berria* and *Gara* - coverage of this news story was limited to the days immediately following the murder. The national newspapers - *El País* and *El Mundo* - barely reported on this question for one or two days and *ABC* did not even include it in its agenda setting. Now, we should bear in mind that “at times amplification of news stories responds more to a sensationalist goal than to a true interest in raising society’s awareness of this blight” (Marín, Armentia and Caminos, 2011, 463).

With respect to headlines, the first aspect to bear in mind concerning the suitability of their treatment is that they form the principal news referent for the majority of the audience. In the case of the murder of Koldo Losada at the hands of his husband we find that, except in the opinion articles, the majority of headlines are informative. Now, as they deal with a news story about intragender violence many of the norms commonly accepted in the profession for treating gender violence are not met. For example, in all cases the victim appears identified with name and surname, details are given on how the death occurred and the statements that appear in the headlines mention that the murderer was a very friendly person who behaved normally. In the scant cases where the media analyzed make use of an interpretative headline, the victim’s profession

- actor - centers their attention: “Koldo Losada’s Final Scene” or “The Theatre Loses Its Last Childish Smile.”

Finally, in this first part of the analysis we wanted to find out in which newspaper sections news stories about the first case of murder due to intragender violence in Spain were placed.

Graph 1. News section of the report



Source: elaborated by the authors

A study on the treatment given to news on gender violence in the Basque press made by professors Marín, Armentia and Caminos (2011) concludes that all the media place such news stories in the society section. As can be seen in the graph, in the case of intragender violence the greater part of the news stories - 52% - are placed in the society pages. The second most used location - 26% - for this news story is the regional/local section, which shows that for these newspapers this story’s main dimension is the factor of proximity and not so much the social aspect. In 18% it is placed in the category of “others,” more precisely these are opinion articles on the event, as well as front page stories. Finally, 4% of the news stories on the Losada crime occupy the cultural pages due to the victim’s being an actor, as mentioned previously. The placement of a news story on intragender violence based on the criterion of the victim’s profession shows its novelty and a lack of suitable notions on how to tackle violence between homosexual partners in the media.

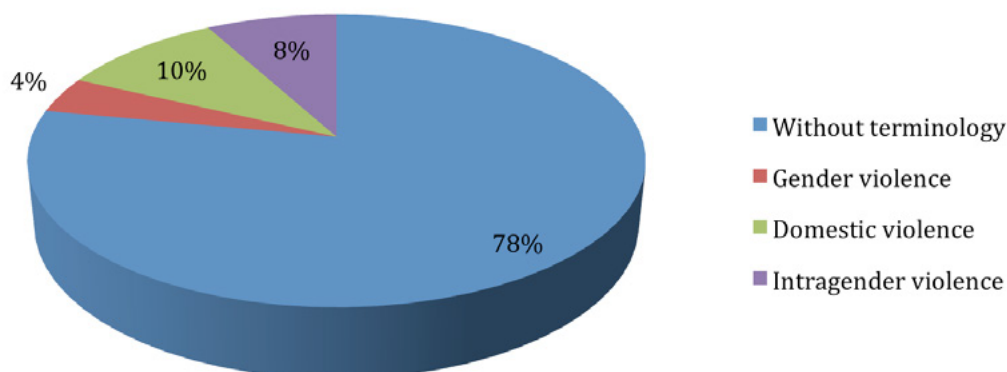
In the words of Arán and Medina (2006) domestic violence, together with other issues like terrorism and public security, has become one of the signifiers of the political scene, with campaigns, news stories and public statements in this sense. However, none of the news stories analyzed in this research are placed in the politics section. According to these authors, the recognition of gender violence is due to the mass media, which have made the problem public and helped it to emerge from the strictly private and family sphere, in spite of the fact that “the treatment received by gender violence in those media has not always been the most suitable” (Arán and Medina, 2006: 10).

CONCEPT OF VIOLENCE

In this second block of the analysis, we wanted to find out how the mass media refer to the concept of violence exercised between homosexual partners. To this end, we conceptualized violence in four categories: “Without referential terminology”; “Intragender violence,” the most suitable because it refers to “that violence which in its different forms occurs within the affective and sexual relations between persons of the same sex” (Galache, 2014); “Gender violence,” which according to the same author refers to “violence exercised against women as a result of expectations of social roles in the framework of a patriarchal and androcentric relationship”; and “Domestic violence,” which is “those aggressions that occur in the private sphere in which the aggressor, generally male, has a relationship with the victim,” according to the definition of the Spanish Ministry of Health.

Graph II. Nominal identification of the violence exercised

Nominal identification



Source: elaborated by the authors

A little over three-quarters of the graph is occupied by the percentage corresponding to “Without terminology”; that is, on three out of every four occasions when the media included in the study referred to the type of violence exercised, this was not specified. “Domestic violence” was spoken of in 10% of the cases, and in barely 8% the suitable concept - “Intragender violence” - was used to refer to this crime. On the other hand, it is positive that on only 4% of occasions was the conceptual error made of referring to “Gender violence” in a case like this, where violence was exercised by one man against another man.

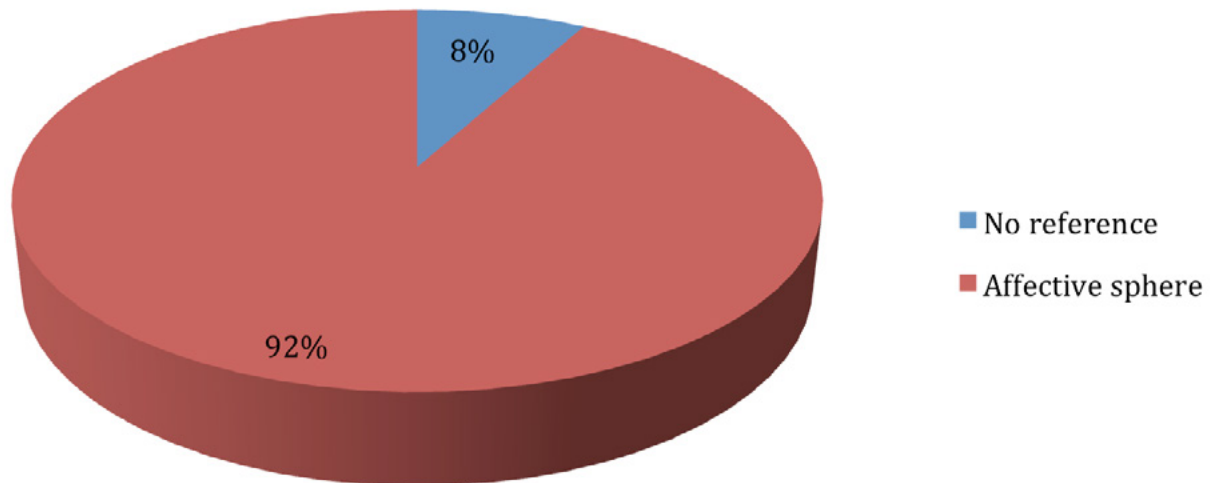
In the memorandum of the Law of Measures for Integral Protection against Gender Violence (*Ley de Medidas de Protección Integral contra la Violencia de Género*), it states that “gender violence is not a problem that affects the private sphere. On the contrary, it occurs as the most brutal symbol of the inequality existing in our society. It is a violence that is directed against women due to the very fact of their being women, due to their aggressors considering them as lacking the minimum rights of freedom, respect and decision-making capacity.”

In this sense, the first article of the law establishes that its goal is “to act against the violence that, as an expression of discrimination, the situation of inequality and the relations of power of men over women, is exercised over the latter by those who are or have been their spouses or those who are or have been linked to them by similar relationships of affection, even without cohabitation.” It includes every act of physical and psychological violence, including aggressions against sexual freedom, threats, coercion or the arbitrary privation of freedom.

And it is at precisely this point where there is debate over whether intragender violence should be considered in the same terms as gender violence with respect to the affective sphere.

Graph III. Sphere of violence

Sphere of violence



Source: elaborated by the authors

As the graph shows, 92% of the news stories published in the main Spanish and Basque press on the murder of Koldo Losada framed the crime within the affective sphere. Gender violence refers to the result of a situation of domination of men over women that is expressed on different levels: family, affective, domestic, social, community and the state. It is true that such a wide categorization cannot be extrapolated to same-sex couples, but it can be extrapolated to cases of violence in the affective sphere of such a couple, in which the roles of supremacy, power and coercion can be adopted by one of the members, unleashing forms of behavior comparable to gender violence.

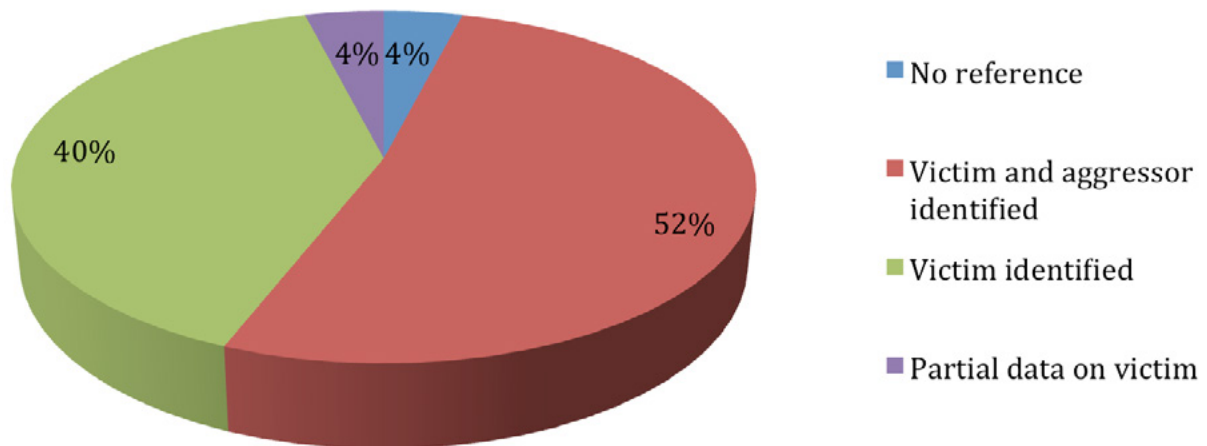
NEWS TREATMENT

In this third and final block of analysis we wanted to find out whether journalistic practice in this case was based on the profession's ethical and deontological codes, in which rigor and respect for basic rights, like honor and intimacy, should be taken into account when tackling news stories.

To this end, we observed in the first place whether there was respect for the anonymity of the victim and the aggressor.

Graph IV. Treatment of the privacy of the subjects involved

News treatment



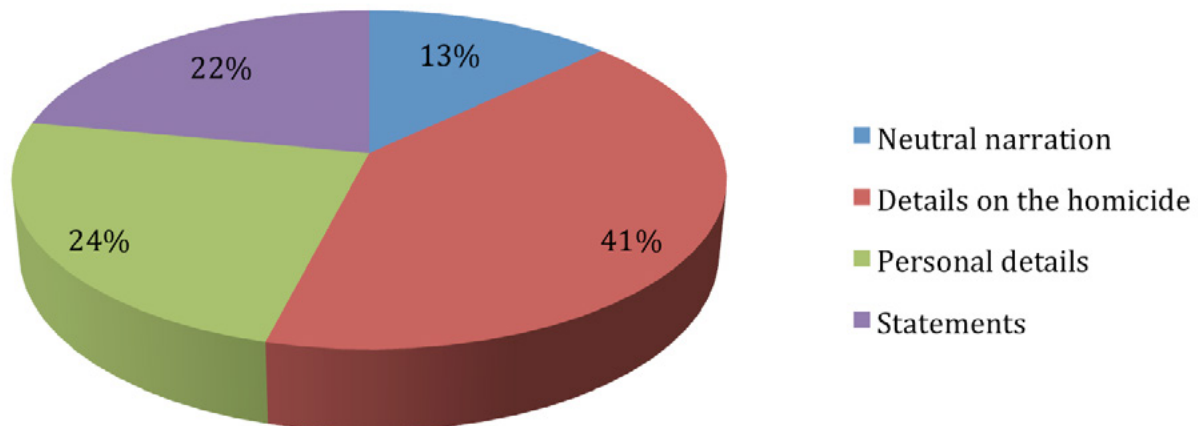
Source: elaborated by the authors

Only 4% of the news stories dealing with the murder of Koldo Losada did not provide data of any type enabling identification of the victim. Also, only 4% of the cases provided partial data on the murder, which made it difficult to discover his identity. On the contrary, the victim could be identified without difficulty in 52% of the news stories, since the medium provided his name and surname, as well as other private data on his home, family, friendships and work. In the remaining 40% of the cases, besides abundant details about the victim, it was also possible to read the full name and numerous details about the private life of the aggressor. In total, Koldo Losada was identified in a little over nine out of ten news stories and data were provided on his private life that did not add any newsworthy value to the story. In short, in the majority of cases this news story was treated with sensationalism and scant journalistic rigor.

Similarly, we wanted to know the term used by the media analyzed to refer to the married couple.

Graph V. Reference to the civil status of the subjects involved

Journalistic focus



Source: elaborated by the authors

In this case, we found that only 4% of the news stories made no reference to the type of relationship between the subjects involved, certainly due to lack of knowledge. Another 4% referred to the couple as a “homosexual couple,” a suitable term although it was unnecessary to qualify the sexual nature every time reference was made to the relationship between the two subjects. Nor was the term couple (*pareja*) - used on 28% of occasions - the most suitable in this case if we bear in mind that precision of language is one of the basic rules of journalism. The term was unsuitable since the Spanish Royal Academy (*Real Academia Española* - RAE) uses it to designate the “combination of two people, animals or things that have some correlation or similarity between them, and especially that formed by a man and a woman.”

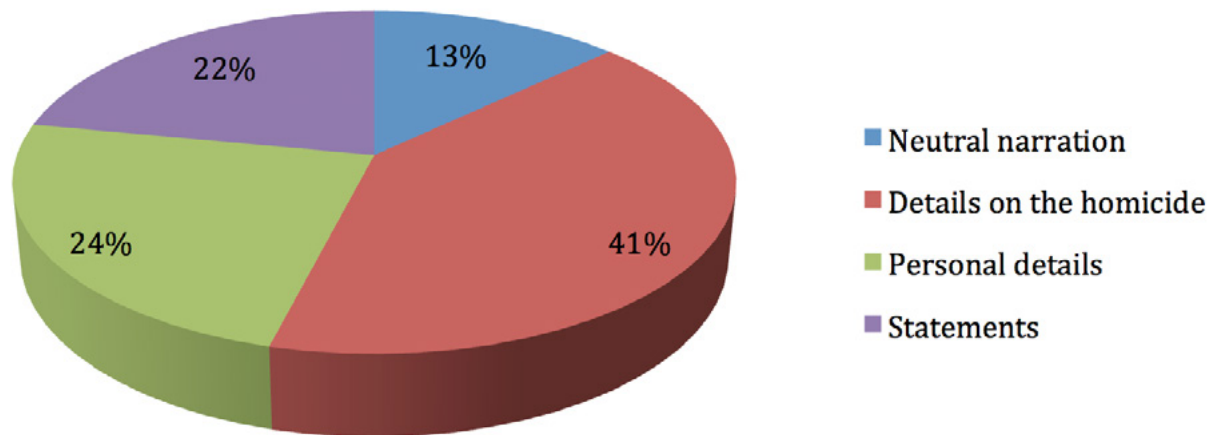
In spite of the fact that “married couple” was the most used term - 58% - to denominate the civil status of the two subjects, it is striking that the figure is not higher, since it is the simplest and most precise way to refer to their affective and legal relationship. Similarly, the use of partners (*compañeros*) is correct, as the RAE defines partner as a “person with whom one lives in a marital way.”

In short, six out of ten news stories used language correctly when referring to the civil status of the two subjects.

On the other hand, we were greatly interested in discovering the journalistic focus given to the issue and to contrast this with the focus given to new stories on gender violence.

Graph VI. Journalistic focus

Journalistic focus



Source: elaborated by the authors

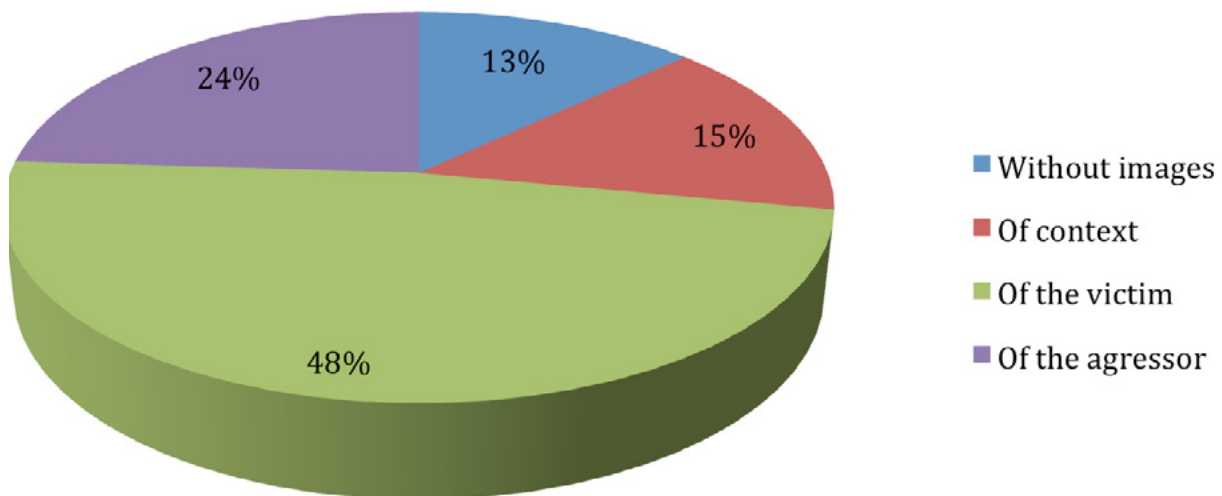
A little over one news story in every ten was limited to narrating the events in an objective and neutral way, without providing intimate or morbid data on the occurrence and its protagonists. In 22% of the news stories statements are the main source. In none of the cases is recourse taken to sources from the police investigation or experts. All the statements reproduce the opinions of friends, acquaintances and neighbors. The same results were shown by the research on the treatment of news stories on gender violence carried out by Marín, Armentia and Caminos (2011, 461), in which they concluded that “the use of expert sources, although it is one of the recommendations that is most emphasized, is almost completely ignored.” On the contrary, the study by Gutierrez, Notario and Martínez (2009) on the treatment given by the Spanish press to news on gender violence indicated that news stories on violence against women were based on direct and official sources: the Administration and the Police. The same study also revealed that the content of news stories basically provided information about where and how the aggression occurred, providing a sensationalist and partial view of the problem. In this first case of intragender violence, six out of ten news stories deal with personal details and/or details about the homicide. This shows an inclination towards

sensationalism and morbidity in the printed press when it comes to tackling this type of issues.

Not only in the textual content is it possible to appreciate a lack of professional diligence and a penchant for yellow journalism. In this sense, the use made of the images that accompany the information is equally revealing. Organic Law 1/2004, which in some of its articles defends the need for involvement by the social mass media as part of the dynamic of necessary change, states: “The diffusion of news stories relating to violence against women shall guarantee, with the corresponding news objectivity, the defense of the human rights, freedom and dignity of the women who are victims of violence and their children. In particular, special care will be taken in the graphic treatment of the news stories” (Chapter II, article 14.)

Graph VII. Use of images

Use of images



Source: elaborated by the authors

As can be seen in the graph, 13% of the news stories are not accompanied by photographs, which gives an idea of the importance given to this news by the mass media. Only 15% of the images are of context. Nearly all of them show the rubbish container where the remains of the victim's body and his dog were found. In a quarter of the photographs the aggressor can be identified, which is an ethically undesirable practice because it violates the presumption of the subject's innocence. But what is most striking is the fact that practically half of the news stories have photographs of the victim. If we

compare these data with those obtained in the report News Treatment of the Victims of Gender Violence in the Basque Country (*El tratamiento informativo de las víctimas de violencia de género en Euskadi*), we find that in the coverage of gender violence the subjects of the photographs are: locations, 37%; neighbors and relatives, 33%; official removal of the body, 20%; and arrest of the aggressor, 10%; but in no case do they focus on the victims.

Having used this triple categorization to analyze the treatment given by the main Spanish and Basque press to the first murder involving intragender violence in Spain, we will compare the results with the Decalogue for Reporting on Gender Violence of the newspaper *Público*.

Of the ten recommendations contained in the Decalogue, we will only cite those that are susceptible of comparison with the case studied here:

- *Gender violence is not an occurrence, but a social problem. For that reason, we will not treat it as such. Nor will we publish photos or morbid details.*
- This premise was not fulfilled in any of the news stories, as they gave details of how the murder took place.
- *We will never identify the victims or include information that might be harmful to them or their milieu.*
- The victim's name, his home address and his professional, company and family details were given. A great many photographs of the victim were also provided.
- *We will always respect the presumption of innocence of the aggressors. Once they have been found guilty, we will duly identify them, highlighting the punishment and we will try to include it in the headlines.*
- In spite of the use of the accompanying term "presumed" in all the new stories, the aggressor was identified with personal details and in photographs.
- *We will never seek justifications or "motives" (alcohol, drugs, arguments...). The cause of gender violence is the control and domination that certain men exercise against their partners.*
- All the statements coincide in describing the aggressor as "normal" and blaming alcohol, depression and economic problems for his behavior.
- *We will avoid the opinions of neighbors or relatives that were not direct witnesses to the events. In any case, we will never collect positive opinions about the aggressor or the couple.*
- All of the statements are by friends, neighbors and acquaintances.
- *We will try to provide the opinions of experts in the matter. We will give priority to police sources and sources from the investigation. Reporting will not be hurried.*

- None of the news stories, in spite of 22% of them being centered on statements, have recourse to expert or police sources to report on what had happened.
- *We will always include in the news story the free telephone number for aiding victims (016) and any other information that might be useful them.*
- None of the news stories on the murder of Koldo Losada published the telephone number for attending to victims or other sites of interest.

CONCLUSIONS

As happened in the case of Ana Orantes, the media treatment of the first case of intra-gender violence in Spain served to remove violence between same-sex couples from the ostracism to which it had been subjected.

From the positive point of view, the news coverage of this case placed intragender violence on the front page of the media and also involved the establishment of a novel news focus, a novel reference framework in the narration of episodes of violence involving people of the same sex.

However, we have also drawn some general conclusions from the analysis that make it possible to suspect there is still a long way to go. The first case of intragender violence has made it possible to conjecture that not even the media agree when it comes to referring to violence between people of the same sex, with a very high percentage opting not to specify the type of violence exercised.

The study also shows that such information was treated with a large measure of sensationalism and scant journalistic rigor on the majority of occasions by the addition of data that in no case contributed newsworthy value to the story. Going more deeply into this aspect, all the media repeatedly failed to meet the Decalogue for Reporting on Gender Violence published by the newspaper *Público*. Only a very small percentage of the news stories analyzed were limited to narrating the events in an objective and neutral way, without providing intimate or morbid data on the occurrence and its protagonists.

The justification for these shortcomings seems to lie in the fact that to date very few cases of intragender violence have come to light in Spain. But there is no doubt that there is still a lot of work to be done in newsrooms to ensure that the treatment of news stories tackling intragender violence resembles the increasingly correct treatment of other modalities of violence.

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NOTES

1. This article is a result of the project titled "Audiencias activas y periodismo: análisis de la calidad y la regulación de los contenidos elaborados por los usuarios" (2012), reference CSO2012-39518-C04-03, directed by professor

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2. Translation made by the authors. Couple/Pareja: “conjunto de dos personas, animales o cosas que tienen entre sí alguna correlación o semejanza, y especialmente el formado por hombre y mujer”.
3. Translation made by the authors. Partner/Compañero: “persona con la que se convive maritalmente”.

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