Leadership of the native digital press versus the mainstream press in Spain. The Cifuentes case in *Eldiario.es*, *El Confidencial*, *El País* and *El Mundo*

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Abstract
Introduction. This paper analyses the Spanish media coverage of Cifuentes' case. **Methodology**. The sample included *Eldiario.es*, a newspaper that led the case by publishing the scoop, and *El Confidencial*, that adhered to the coverage and the progress of the research. *El País* and *El Mundo* were selected for the comparative analysis with the mainstream media, two newspapers of different political stance and national circulation. **Results**. As main findings, we stress the leadership of the native digital press in the coverage of the Cifuente's case. The mainstream media reacted to the latest developments, by providing special coverage to the statements of the main political leaders. **Conclusions**. This research clearly denotes the change that is taking place in the 21st century journalism: the native digital media with a more agile business model, adapt more easily to the new demands of the public.

Keywords
Cyberjournalism; investigative journalism; political journalism; Journalism in Spain.

Contents
1. Introduction. 2. Methodology. 2.1 Informational contents and journalistic research in the digital era. 2.2 Methodological strategies. 2.3 Sample, procedure and tools. 3. Results. 4. Discussion. 5. Conclusions. 6. Notes. 7. List of References.

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1. Introduction

In a context of crisis of journalism (Reig, 2015), economic crisis (Palacio, 2018) and also a credibility crisis (Grossi & Soares, 2018) the Cifuentes case comes up, representing one of the mediatic milestones of 2018 in Spain. The case initiated with the scoop of the native digital medium *Eldiario.es* where it was made known that the president of the Community of Madrid for that time, Cristina Cifuentes, obtained a Master's degree in *Universidad Rey Juan Carlos* using fake scores. The relevance of the case was significant due to the coverage of media and because the president finally resigned. *El Confidencial*, another native digital medium, summed up to the investigation. The mainstream media, like *El País* and *El Mundo* reacted and covered the case, mainly by providing statements of political protagonists. Between the scoop of *Eldiario.es* (21 March 2018) and the announcement of the resignation of Cristina Cifuentes (25 April 2018) there elapsed 36 days where this subject occupied a great part of the Spanish media agenda. Considering the political scandal, a "process of accusation and reaction of the accused, where communication performs a role of capital relevance" (Canel and Sanders, 2005), undoubtedly the case of Cifuentes is a political scandal.

Using the case of Cifuentes as a paradigmatic example, this article is produced with the aim to delve into the new formulas of the practice of the journalistic profession (Palacio, 2018) and the strategies of native digital media compared to the mainstream press. The aim is to demonstrate the leadership achieved by the native digital press in the setting of the mediatic agenda.

The main purpose of this research is to determine the role of native digital media as promoters of journalistic research cases in the Spanish landscape of media in the 21st century. To do so, it will be tested how different media have led the journalistic agenda, first *Eldiario.es*, with the scoop publication of the first pieces of information and later, *El Confidencial*, that demonstrated that the signatures in the thesis defence certificate (TFM in Spanish) were fake.

To do this, there is a journey through the journalistic task of *Eldiario.es, El Confidencial, El País* and *El Mundo* in the period elapsed from the day the news about the alleged fraud of Cifuentes master's degree are published and the day she announced her resignation. The study consists of a content analysis where, on the one hand, quantitative techniques are used to determine the number of journalistic texts generated about the subject and, subsequently, some features of the contents published were identified, as well as journalistic genres, research sources, the role of leaks to press and the level of investigation characteristic of the medium.

Some findings are extremely interesting to understand the new dynamics of journalism. The first data to consider is the number of texts published: the search showed an overwhelming difference on native digital media, however, by using the content analysis it is demonstrated that many of these texts are directly obtained from agencies, they are not produced directly by the medium. This fact, does not discredit their task carried out around the Cifuentes case whatsoever, but it does raises questions about that need to increase the number of texts published, despite their quality. In the middle of that informative hyper-abundance (Ramonet, 2001) there are very elaborated texts, that involve an underlying journalistic research task and that provides new data, as shown in the results section and which will be explained further during the discussion.

The case of Cifuentes has already been object of study in recent academic researches about the use of social networks and the non-verbal communication used by Cifuentes, which is something this article aims to complement by using an analysis of the journalistic coverage.

In first place, an analysis about the presence of the case on social networks (Quintana-Pujalte, Sosa-Valcarcel & Castillo-Esparcia, 2018) regarding the main political parties and media indicates that native digital newspapers led the coverage of the case on Twitter and Facebook during the complete process. The study shows that the online presence of this subject of mainstream traditional newspapers was very limited. In general, the use of social networks in terms of Cifuentes' case represented "a communication based on unidirectional models reproduced across strong actors of the political arena, to grant meaning and create interpretative frameworks on audiences, based on the interests they represent" (Quintana-Pujalte, Sosa-Valcarcel & Castillo-Esparcia, 2018: 264).

Another recent study (Paz-Méndez, 2018) analyses the non-verbal communication of Cristina Cifuentes in seven appearances after the publication of *Eldiario.es* reporting supposed irregularities in her master's degree. The analysis shows a defensive character in most of Cifuentes discourses, as well as the intention to discredit those who accused her. Paz-Méndez (2018, 65) evidences that Cifuentes tried to keep "an image of great confidence that dilutes at some points through muscle tensions and movements that indicate discomfort and nervousness, especially during the session of questions formulated by journalists."

The two studies mentioned (Quintana-Pujalte, Sosa-Valcarcel & Castillo-Esparcia, 2018; Paz-Méndez, 2018) are a sample of the relevance of the Cifuentes case, whereas only a year later has elapsed and it is already the object of several academic studies.

2. Methodology
2.1 Informational contents and journalistic research in the digital era

As explained in the introduction, the study object in this case are the informational contents about the Cifuentes case published in the native digital newspapers *Eldiario.es* and *El Confidencial*, and in the online version of the newspapers *El País* and *El Mundo*. The main goal was not to study the distinctive features of digital media (Salaverría, 2018) in terms of formats, journalistic genres or visual resources; neither it is about delving into the threats of digital journalism that represent phenomena such as fake news or hooking headlines, nor prescribing the digital journalism as a solution to the crisis in the journalistic profession (Serrano, 2014).

We understand technology as a tool for the practice of journalism, a profession that maintains its essence of public commitment in the mythicised context of the digital revolution (Jarque-Muñoz and Almiron-Roig, 2008). The media are positioned in an environment that hinders the critique tasks of the journalist due to different pressures (Reig, 2015), and our goal is to understand how the investigative journalism is performed in this panorama of professional crisis where many interests non-related to journalism come to play. Therefore, the study of the Cifuentes case is suitable considering its repercussion, since it produced the resign of the former president of the Community of Madrid, and due to its singularities, since it came to see the light in a native digital newspaper with a particular funding model (Palacio, 2018).

To compare the coverage of this case in the medium promoter of information, *Eldiario.es*, with another native digital newspaper, *El Confidencial*, and with two of the most read traditional mainstream newspapers, *El País* and *El Mundo*, allow us to better understand the journalistic transformations in Spain in the digital era (Palacio, 2018). Thus, the objectives of this research were the following:

O1. To compare the informational coverage about the Cifuentes case in *Eldiario.es*, *El Confidencial*, *El País* and *El Mundo*.
O2. To identify leaderships in the journalistic research and the distinctive features about the case management in every medium.
O3. To identify the peculiarities of the informational treatment by native digital media compared to traditional press.

2.2. Methodological strategies

This study consists of a case study (the media coverage about the master's degree studies of Cristina Cifuentes) through the contents analysis, a quantitative method that allows to identify specific traits in the text and obtain conclusions (Hansen and Machin 2013). There is a certain criticism about this method, because the quantification of characteristics of text does not provide all the information needed to interpret the meaning or its social impact (Hansen and Machin, 2013). However, considering the needs of this research project, it is a suitable method to achieve the objectives established. To do so, a table of analysis that included different items was elaborated:

Figure 1: Table of analysis used to code the sample

Date	Newspaper	Section	Headline	Link	Authorship	Subject
Genre	Research/ statements/ announcement/ analysis/ others	Source or origin	Political party	Citation of other media?	Which one?	Observations

Source: Authors' own creation.

The different sections of this analysis template have been agreed after an exploration of the sample obtained and considering the research objectives: to identify the authorship and the journalistic genres used allow us to discover the differences in the mediatic treatment of the selected media; through the subject and its source, the procedure used to obtain information and how the case was covered by each masthead; the citations from leaders or political parties provide information about the plurality reflected by each newspaper, and the citations about other media establish the leaderships when obtaining relevant information.

2.3 Sample, procedure and methodological tools

The media analysed in this study have been chosen considering the following criteria: *Eldiario.es*, since it published the first scoop about the case; *El Confidencial*, because it is the most read native digital media in Spain (Economía Digital, 2018) and provided significant contributions to the journalistic research; *El País* and *El Mundo* since the they are the two general-interest non-sports most read newspapers in Spain (EGM, 2018) and constitute the references in terms journalistic research of the last decades. Both *El País* and *El Mundo*, have been analysed in their online version only to perform

a valid comparison.

Two samples have been selected in this study. A first one, that ranges from the day *Eldiario.es* published the first information about the case, 21 March 2018, until the day Cristina Cifuentes resigns from her position as president, on 25 April 2018. Using the newspaper library platform *My News,* a total of 1,875 texts were collected: 599 from *Eldiario.es*, 711 from *El Confidencial*, 281 from *El País* and 284 from *El Mundo*. The publication of these texts throughout the period analysed is shown in the following graphic.

Figure 2. Coverage of the Cifuentes case in *Eldiario.es*, *El Confidencial*, *El País* and *El Mundo*
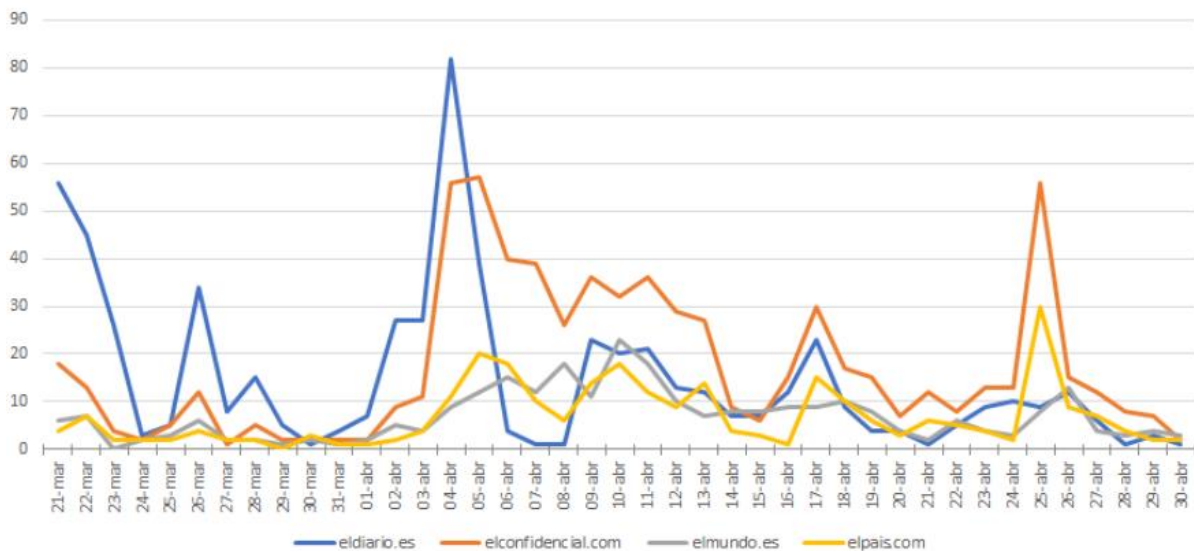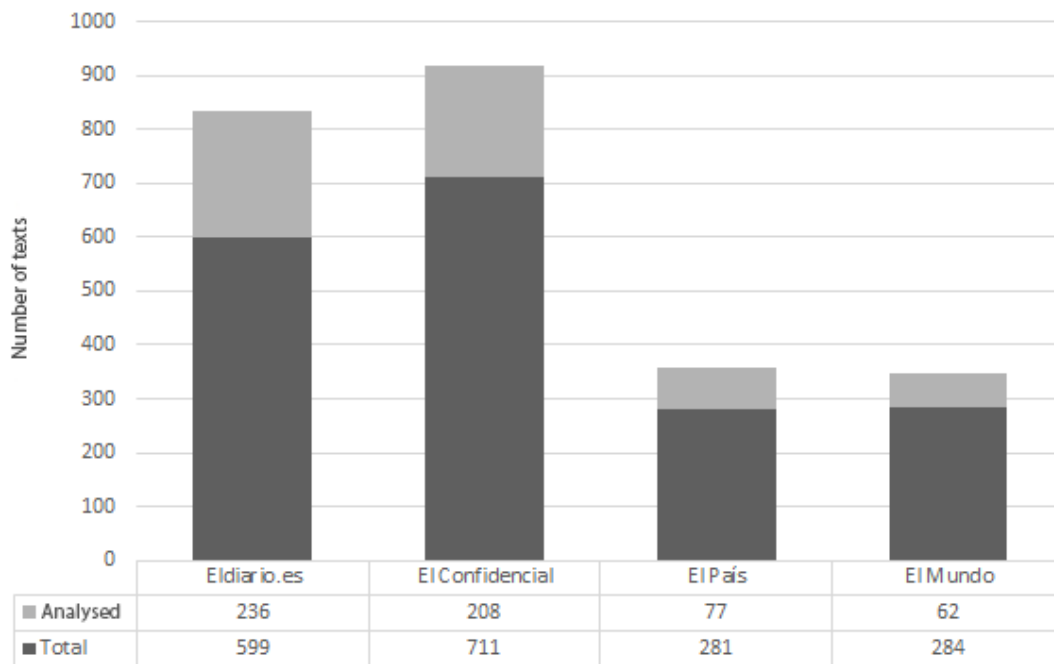

Source: authors' own creation.

A qualitative comparison of the evolution of the case across the different media was elaborated using this first sample, which allows to observe the days of more informational activity, as well as the moments where every masthead has published more about the subject. As observed, *Eldiario.es* led the coverage of the case, especially in the beginning, with outstanding moments like the onset, the accusation against her and the appearance of Cifuentes in the Assembly of Madrid. Later, in the results section, this media coverage will be explained more thoroughly. It is also possible to observe an intense coverage by *El Confidencial* and behind it, the general-interest newspapers *El País* and *El Mundo*. This first analysis is quantitative. Later, qualitative aspects will be analysed.

As mentioned earlier, due to the considerable *corpus* of information obtained in this first analysis, a second sample was selected for a detailed analysis. In this second stage, there were selected dates whereas key events for the development of the case took place and where, in general, further information have been published: 21 March (the case comes to light), 26 March (accusation to *Eldiario.es*), 28 March (CRUE assigns an observer), 4 April (Cifuentes appears before the Assembly of Madrid), 10 April (the counterfeit of the thesis defence certificate is discovered), 17 April (Cifuentes resigns the master's degree) and 25 April (Cifuentes resigns).

Thus, the sample undergoing a contents analysis includes a total of 583 pieces, of which 236 belong to *Eldiario.es*, 208 to *El Confidencial*, 77 to *El País* and 62 to *El Mundo*.

Figure 3. Published and analysed texts of *Eldiario.es*, *El Confidencial*, *El País* and *El Mundo*

	Eldiario.es	El Confidencial	El País	El Mundo
■ Analysed	236	208	77	62
■ Total	599	711	281	284

Source: Authors' own creation.

The analysis procedure started with a pilot study about information published in *Eldiario.es*. The results of this first stage allowed to point out different comparison axes with the rest of media like the use of agency news or the use of Twitter as political source. A reduced version of this research (Mancinas-Chávez, Moreno-Cabezudo and Ruiz-Alba, 2019), focused only on the coverage of the case in *Eldiario.es* and its distinctive features as a native digital medium, was presented in the VI International Conference on Cyberjournalism in *Universidad de Oporto* in November 2018, and a more advanced version was presented in the *X Congreso Internacional Latina de Comunicación Social* (San Cristóbal de la Laguna, Tenerife, in December 2018).

3. Results
3.1. Authorship

The first result was advanced in the methodology, within the 36 days between the first publication about the case in *Eldiario.es* and Cifuentes resignation, there were found 1,875 texts. From these, 32% have been published in *Eldiario.es* (599), 38% in *El Confidencial* (711), 15% in *El País* (281) and 15% in *El Mundo* (284). In figure 3, there is observed the leadership of the two native digital media in terms of the research and follow-up of the Cifuentes case, at least in the number of texts published, because *Eldiario.es* and *El Confidencial* gather 70% of publications during the development of the case in press. This leadership represented on graphic 2 is quantitative, without assessing the texts qualitatively.

Regarding the authorship of the pieces, it is confirmed that the native digital newspapers coincide in the extensive use of texts coming from communication agencies as seen on figure 4. On the other hand, the mainstream press shows a lower volume of news coming exclusively from teletypes. Generally, *Eldiario.es* and *El Confidencial* tend to reproduce in a complete manner most of the news coming from the agency about the subject, while *El País* and *El Mundo* use the information to elaborate texts as a sort of summary of events, or to collect the most relevant aspects of a specific fact.

Figure 4. Authors in the analysed sample (total information)

% authors in the analysed sample

Eldiario.es		El Confidencial		El País		El Mundo	
EP	28,63%	EFE	67,76%	Redacción	28,89%	Marta Belver	18,84%
EFE	17,34%	Redacción	9,35%	Elisa Silió	8,89%	Redacción	11,59%
Redacción	13,31%	David Fernández	3,74%	Pilar Álvarez	8,89%	Marisol Hernández	10,14%
Sofía Pérez Mendoza	7,66%	Agencias	3,27%	Esther Sánchez	7,78%	Raúl Piña	8,70%
Raúl Rejón	3,63%	Ángel Collado	2,34%	José Marcos	5,56%	Roberto Bécares	8,70%
Irene Castro	3,23%	Paloma Esteban	2,34%	J.J. Gálvez	3,33%	EFE	5,80%
Aitor Riveiro	2,82%	Sara de Diego	1,40%	Mónica Ceberio Bela..	2,22%	Álvaro Carvajal	4,35%
Raquel Ejerique	3,23%	Iván Gil	0,93%	Agencia	2,22%	Berta G. De Vega	2,90%
Ignacio Escolar	2,82%	Fernando Garea	0,93%	EFE	2,22%	Marisa Cruz	2,90%
Gonzalo Cortizo	2,02%	Isidoro Tapia	0,93%	Elsa García de Blas	2,22%	Olga R. Sanmartín	2,90%
Fátima Caballero	2,42%	José María Olmo	0,93%	Iñigo Domínguez	2,22%	Agencias	1,45%
José Precedo	2,02%	Juanma Romero	0,93%	Juan José Mateo	2,22%	Arcadi Espada	1,45%
Carmen Moraga	1,21%	Alberto Pérez Gimén..	0,47%	Rubén Amón	2,22%	Belén Ferreras	1,45%
Matías De Diego	0,81%	Antonio Villarreal	0,47%	Teodoro León Gross	2,22%	C.V.	1,45%
Laura Galaup	1,21%	Borja Rodrigo	0,47%	A. Iríbar	1,11%	Clara Eugenia Núñez	1,45%
Daniel Sánchez Caba..	0,81%	Guillermo Cid	0,47%	Berna González Har..	1,11%	Enrique Domínguez	1,45%
Susana Galera Rodri..	0,40%	Juan Soto Ivars	0,47%	Carmen Pérez-Lanzac	1,11%	Europa Press	1,45%
Pedro Águeda	0,40%	Juanma Moreno	0,47%	E.G. Sevillano	1,11%	Fcinco	1,45%
Míriam Salgado	0,40%	P.Izquierdo	0,47%	Jordi Pérez Colomé	1,11%	Jorge Del Palacio	1,45%
Marta Borraz	0,40%	Pablo Pombo	0,47%	Jorge Martín Frías	1,11%	Lucía Méndez	1,45%
M. Méndez	0,40%	Rafael Méndez	0,47%	José Ignacio Torrebl..	1,11%	Luis Ángel Sanz	1,45%
Laura Martínez	0,40%	Rubén Rodríguez	0,47%	Juan Cruz	1,11%	Maxi Vega	1,45%
José A. Alemán	0,40%	T.F.	0,47%	Laura Íñigo Álvarez	1,11%	Pablo Herraiz	1,45%
Iker Rioja Andueza	0,40%			Luis Ibáñez Garzarán	1,11%	Quico Alsedo	1,45%
David Benavides	0,40%			Manuel Jabois	1,11%	Santiago González	1,45%
Carlos Sosa	0,40%			Mariola Urrea Corres	1,11%	Vicente Lozano	1,45%
Belén Remacha	0,40%			Noelia Ramírez	1,11%		
Andrés Gil	0,40%			Óscar López-Fonseca	1,11%		
Álvaro Medina	0,40%			Sandra León	1,11%		
Aitor Guenaga	0,40%			Varios	1,11%		
Adolf Beltran	0,40%			Yolanda Cancho Gra..	1,11%		
David Conde	0,40%						
Raúl González	0,40%						

Source: authors' own creation.

Analysing by media, in *Eldiario.es,* 28.63% of information is attributed to Europa Press and 17.34% to EFE. Together, they sum 45.97%, namely, almost half of their texts come from agencies. Additionally, it should be mentioned that 13.31% of texts are attributed to the generic term "editorial office", that usually also involves the use of information from agencies. On the other hand, 40.73% of texts are attributed to editorial office journalists, where there outstand Sofía Pérez Mendoza, Raúl Rejón, Irene Castro, the Chief of Social Policy, Raquel Ejerique and the director, Ignacio Escolar.

The other native digital newspaper, *El Confidencial*, has used communications from EFE in 67.76% of times and, in addition, the "agencies" authored 3.27% of pieces. Almost 10% of information is authored by "editorial offices". This leaves a percentage of 22.90% of texts analysed attributed to journalists, being the most usual David Fernández, Paloma Esteban and Ángel Collado.

Unlike the trend of native digital media where most of information is not elaborated by a writer, in the mainstream media most of pieces are authored by journalists. Specifically, *El País* attributes 28.89% of pieces to "editorial offices" and 5.55% to EFE, "miscellaneous" and "agency". In this newspaper, we find particular names authoring 65.56% of analysed texts, outstanding the role of the writers Pilar Álvarez, Elisa Silió and Esther Sánchez, who are the ones publishing most about the case.

Regarding *El Mundo*, it is the only one of the analysed newspapers where the author that has published

most often about the case is a journalist (and not an agency or the generic term "editorial office"). Marta Belver has authored 18.84% of texts of the sample analysed. Among the journalists that have published more information about the case there are Marisol Hernández, Roberto Bécares and Raúl Piña. In short, in *El Mundo,* 21.74% of texts correspond to generic authors or agencies, while the journalists of the medium are attributed 78.26% of analysed pieces.

Figure 5. Percentages of journalist or generic authorship in the analysed sample
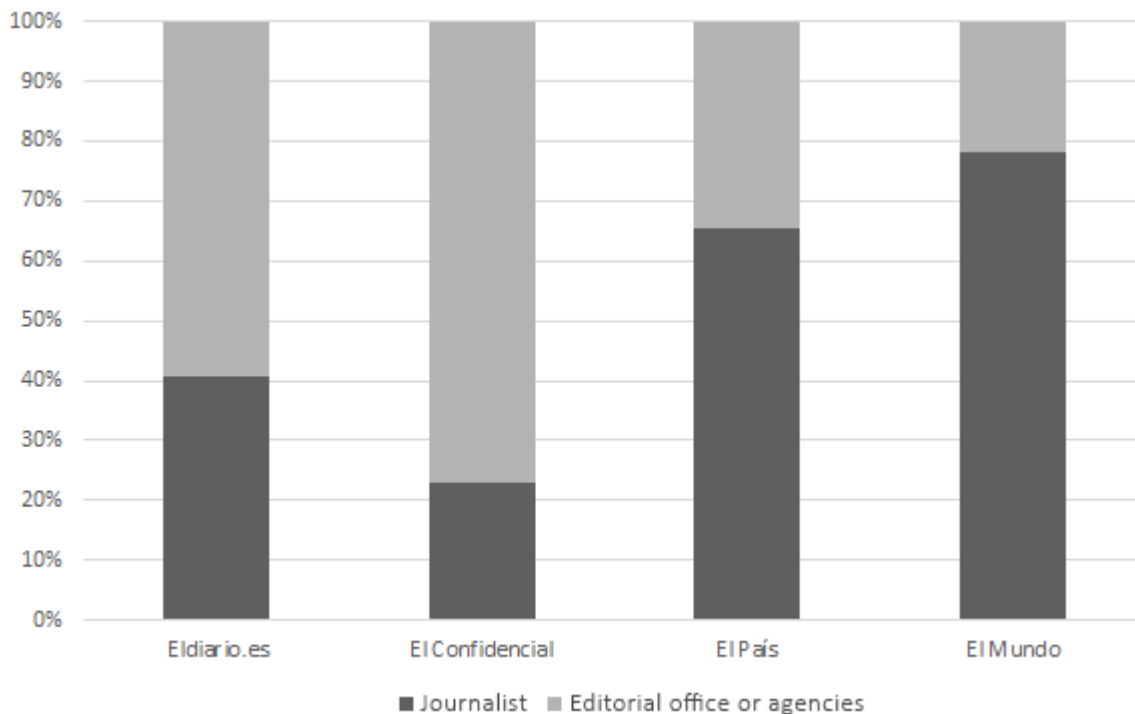
Source: authors' own creation.

Eldiario.es is the medium that most human resources has destined to the coverage of this case in the sample analysed, with 30 journalists publishing about the subject out of a headcount of about 80 employees. On the other hand, *El Confidencial* includes 120 collaborators in their payroll and only 20 individuals have taken part in the coverage of this case in the analysed sample [1]. As mentioned earlier, in this newspaper only two out of 10 pieces have been authored by writers. In the newspapers *El País* and *El Mundo,* 27 and 21 journalists respectively have published about the case. Although none of them was the newspaper that most resources dedicated to this coverage, both outstand for publishing more texts authored by writers than agencies.

These results show an evident change in the dynamic of journalism: the digital version allows to publish a great amount of information, despite a high percentage comes from agencies. A sample of this is that *El Confidencial*, that publishes numerous teletypes, many of them without editing and where there are included notes of EFE to media (indicating it is an extension or an advance, for instance), as observed on figure 6. A greater number of journalistic texts related to the same subject is useful to optimize the SEO and therefore, appear on search engines when the reader is interested about the case or to convey the feeling of relevance and continuity of the subject. The native digital media breach the barrier of time and space, which obliges to re-think the strategy and use techniques such as these.

Figure 6. Screenshot of a text authored by *EFE* in *El Confidencial*

This practice produces that, in some cases, the same news can be found up to three times, authored by two different agencies and the editorial office. This way to proceed contributes to the maintenance of a context marked by infoxication (Cornellá, 2004), where the challenge lies in distinguishing the relevant across enormous amounts of information. In this analysis, it is confirmed that mainstream traditional media (in their online version) are not immersed in this dynamic, unlike native digital media.

3.2. Journalistic genres

The news is, by far, the most used journalistic genre in the four newspapers analysed. In the native digital media, more than 80% of texts are news, a number that lowers to 40% in the case of mainstream newspapers. On the other hand, *El País* and *El Mundo* publish opinion texts in 12.99% and 19.35%, respectively, while in digital native media opinion does not reach 4%.

Eldiario.es dedicates 12.76% of their pieces to analyses and reports and from these, most include research tasks, since the medium uses these resources in one out of ten texts. *El País* also publishes an elevated number of chronicles, two out of ten texts correspond to this journalistic genre.

Regarding *El Mundo,* it outstands because it is the newspaper that uses more chronicles and opinion, 20.97% and 19.35%, respectively. News and reports represent 43.55% of texts published and analyses coincide with 3.23% of the total of information.

In *El Confidencial* eight out of ten pieces of information correspond to the journalistic genre of news. This medium uses chronicles in 4.43% of pieces, analysis in 3.45% and 2.96% of texts are summaries.

Figure 7. Journalistic genres used in the coverage of this case

Source: authors' own creation.

## 3.3. Political representation

The contents analysis indicates that the media have dedicated most of their texts to gather statements about this case: 64.73% in *Eldiario.es*; 82.22% in *El Confidencial*; 84,85% in *El País* and 77.78% in *El Mundo*. The fact that a broad majority of these comes from politicians, drives the detailed observation of the representation of political statements. Even so, it should be considered that not all statements analysed correspond to political leaders, but also to staff of URJC, institutions and members of social collectives.

The most represented political party is *Partido Popular*, whereas in the four newspapers there were dedicated more than four out of ten pieces containing political reactions. This is logical if we consider that Cristina Cifuentes, protagonist of the case analysed, belongs to this political ideology, and in addition, it is the governing political party. Statements of leaders from minoritarian political parties barely appear in the selected sample, although there were found citations from *PNV, IU, PDeCat* or *Compromís* on native digital media and *El Mundo*.

In summary, political statements play a very outstanding role in the coverage of this case. However, this practice does not only outstand in the case analysed, but instead journalism is immersed in a dynamic that some experts call "the era of statement journalism" (Munive, 2016; Reig, R. and Domínguez Lázaro, R., 2010) where even a coverage like this, that starts by showing proof against Cifuentes, turns into a case where political statements hoard the journalistic protagonism.

**Figure 8. Representation of every political party in political statements**

% of representation of each political party in the statements of politicians analysed in the sample
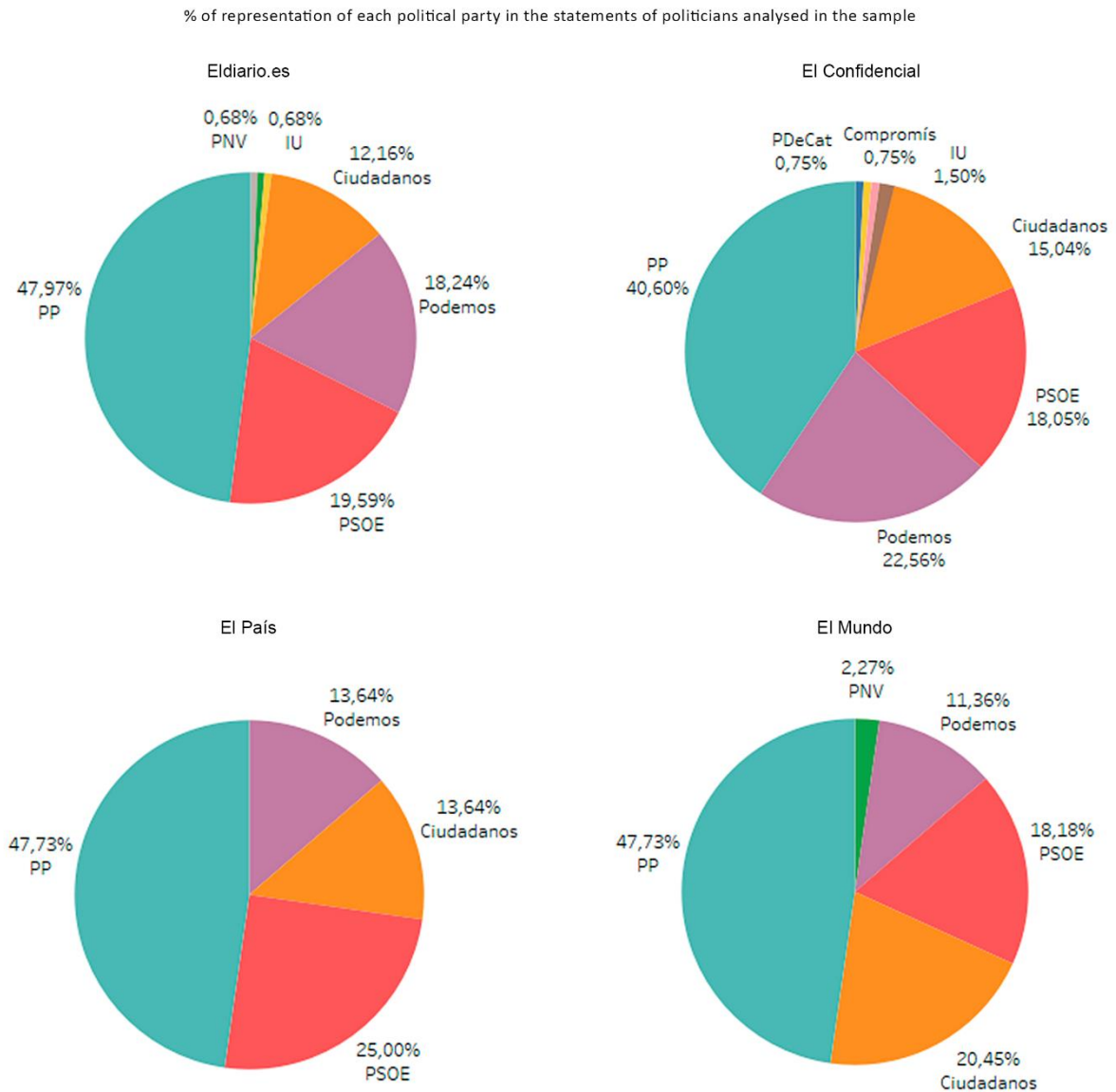
Source: authors' own creation.

3.4. Citations across media

In this kind of complex journalistic investigations, even though a medium publishes the exclusive, there are still many issues to keep delving into. Therefore, a journalistic investigation case can be initiated in a medium, but continue in another one, or provide relevant explanations in other mastheads that are worth reproducing. In our sample of analysis, the medium that cites others the most is *El País* (52% of texts cite other media), followed by *El Mundo* (43%), *El Confidencial* (41%) and *Eldiario.es* (25%). To analyse these leaderships, it is interesting to assess between what media these citations took place, in order to confirm which have published the most relevant information about the case, as shown on figure 9.

Figure 9. Citation to other media as sources of information
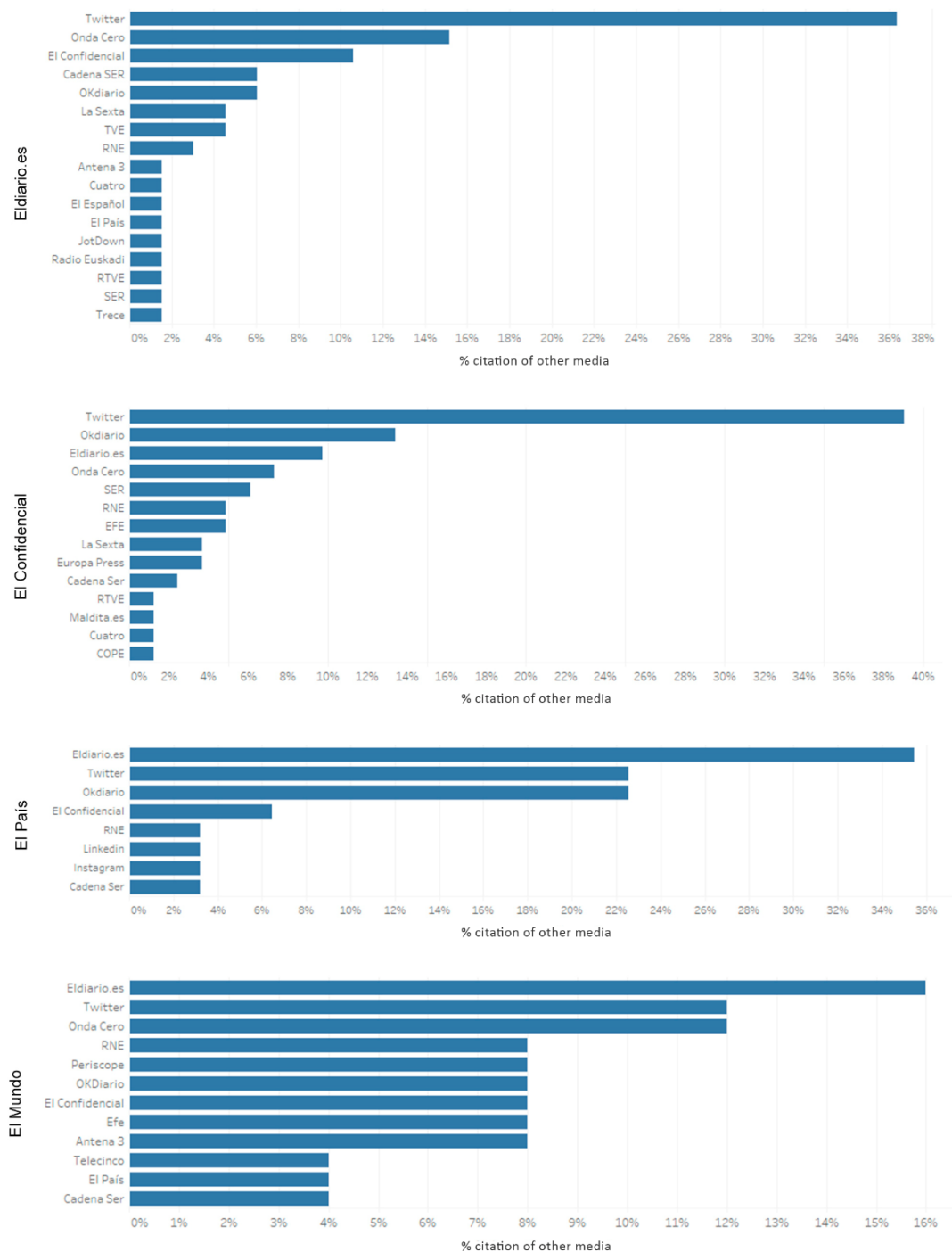
Source: authors' own creation.

A predominant trend is observed, the citations of the social network Twitter. This platform is the most cited medium by *Eldiario.es* (37%) and *El Confidencial* (39%). In the mainstream traditional newspapers, Twitter is the second most cited medium, with 22% of citations in *El País* and 12% in *El Mundo*.

In *El Mundo*, there outstands the presence of information from *Onda Cero* and *RNE*, usually regarding interviews, as well as Periscope, a platform Cifuentes used to provide explanations about the case. On the other hand, in *El País* information coming from *OKDiario* and *El Confidencial* is relevant and tend to refer to investigations about the case such as the creams scandal or the fake signatures in the master's degree thesis defence certificate. Lastly, in the native digital media analysed, there were citations to *OKDiario*, *Onda Cero* and *Cadena SER* among the first positions.

Undoubtedly, social networks play a noticeable role in this case, mainly Twitter, that tends to be used to gather statements from political leaders of the different stances. Based on these statements, with a maximum of 240 characters, media elaborate information that only gather a couple of lines of innovative content and that broaden with previous information.

The relevance of Twitter was such in this case, that the first reaction of Cifuentes to the accusations of *Eldiario.es* were collected in a video of Periscope disseminated through this social network. Cifuentes did not go to media at first, but instead published her version through social networks. Likewise, *Eldiario.es* and its journalists made an intensive use of Twitter during the case. For instance, it is noteworthy a tweet of Ignacio Escolar (2018) during a press conference of representatives from *Universidad Rey Juan Carlos*, that said: "*Universidad Rey Juan Carlos* is lying, and we can demonstrate it. Soon in *Eldiario.es*". This use of Twitter allows the monitoring of the press conference by the audience, which is only possible with the boom of social networks, and this tweet, specifically, was collected by other media. It is not only in the question and answer session where the journalists show their opinion, but also, they expose said opinion in their personal accounts on social networks.

Lastly, the presence of information from *El Confidencial* in other media is noteworthy, because this newspaper did not have the advantage of being the one publishing the scoop. However, it did contribute to a great extent to the progress of research, with the publication of the text "The thesis defence certificate that Cifuentes presented, has at least two fake signatures" on 4 April 2018. The repercussion of this finding was such, that the director of *Eldiario.es* congratulated the journalists of *El Confidencial*: "Congratulations to the colleagues of @elconfidencial for this exclusive. In @eldiarioes we knew the thesis defence certificate was fake and have been investigating for several days, trying to get the real signatures, but they were the first ones to achieve it. Good job!" (Escolar, 2018).

The case onset with a journalistic leak [2], therefore the medium that receives it, *Eldiario.es*, has the advantage of setting the agenda from the start. In fact, journalists reserved information to dose it. However, after the first moment, the rest of media have the capacity to sum their work to the clarifying of the scandal, and the newspaper that most efforts performs on it is *El Confidencial*, while the mainstream press (*El País* and *El Mundo*) does not appear among the cited media. It is worth mentioning that another native digital media, *OKDiario*, was the one that released the video of Cifuentes in the supermarket that, together the case of the master studies, hastened her resignation.

4. Discussion

The results derived from the research allow to analyse some fundamental issues in the current journalism.

In first place, the amount of information published by the different media invites to think about the way the conception of journalism changes. The traditional limitation of time and space breaches to

present new formulas that remind about the informative hyper-abundance Ignacio Ramonet (2001) talked about in the early 21st century. An excess of information where quantity, besides quality, is also relevant. In addition, it can be deduced that native digital media adapt more and better to this informative hyper-abundance strategy to feed the search engines and allure readers.

In the native digital newspapers, there was observed a greater presence of journalistic genres like the agency teletype or the news, briefer and faster to elaborate. Meanwhile, the mainstream press (despite its online version), has a greater presence of genres such as news, but with a higher level of elaboration compared to native digital media. In addition, it is in mainstream media where we find a higher proportion of genres like the chronicle or the opinion compared to news.

About the aforesaid, the use of agency teletypes to keep the subject active can represent a practical strategy. The fact of dedicating human resources to the journalistic investigation while the immediate political situation covers with a flow of agency news can be a solution to the speed demanded by the digital era. However, as mentioned earlier, this means contributing to the infoxication of the mediatic context.

In the analysis of the authorship of texts, there were also found agency teletypes without any sort of editing. This is quite noteworthy in cases where pieces include notes for internal use such as comments to the medium, or sometimes where the teletype repeats the subject already commented in another news or it is simply duplicated.

Through the analysis of citations between media, we confirm that mainstream media used, to a good extent, the native digital newspapers as a source of information. On their part, Twitter was the most recurrent medium from which digital media obtained information. From this phenomenon, we can conclude that native digital media bore the informational leadership of the case.

In addition, the social network Twitter, has turned into an indispensable source (Cobos, 2010; Marta-Lazo & García-Idiakez, 2014; Cabrales, 2017). Native digital media use it as main reference and mainstream traditional media do so as well. The statements of protagonists of information have a relevant route to provide information to the public, in general, and to the journalistic sector, in particular. The political leaders, the political leaders use Twitter as a means to access to public opinion in a direct manner. They also do so, knowing these statements will have a mediatic impact and even the same impact of a press notice, but with a faster circulation. Thus, Twitter can be considered a tool for political information, that sometimes sets the mediatic agenda. This research confirms the analysis performed by Quintana-Pujalte, Sosa-Valcarcel and Castillo-Esparcia (2018), where it was indicated that Twitter was used as a dissemination medium by political leaders. Even though in that analysis the official nature and endogamy of the Twitter messages is confirmed to achieve mediatic impact, in this research we confirm that impact is effective and takes place on analysed media.

No significant differences were found in the spaces occupied by the different political parties. It seems logical to discover a majoritarian presence of *Partido Popular* (PP) because it is the political party to which the accused individual is affiliated to, as well as the governing party. There is also identified that mainstream media dedicated their attention to the four most relevant political parties, without very significant differences between one and the others. The native digital media made room (although little) to other political forces.

Lastly, the fact that this case originated from a press leak is a matter to think about. From the three

ways to access a secret information as explained by Caminos-Marcet (1997), the Cifuentes case corresponds to the leak that the journalist investigates later. The leak consisted of confidential documents that pointed out to irregularities about a master's degree of the *Instituto de Derecho Público* of *Universidad Rey Juan Carlos*. However, the journalists corroborated information and tried to extend it as much as possible, looking for the versions of all parties involved, as well as affected parties and dedicating nearly a month to these tasks before publishing the first pieces of information (Ejerique, 2018). This research procedure is also reflected in the contribution of other media such as *El Confidencial*, which without receiving a leak, it dedicated research resources until a scoop was achieved.

5. Conclusions

In short, it can be said that in this journalistic case, native digital media were the ones establishing the pace of research by providing evidence. On the contrary, the mainstream press has not published information of their own and relevant against Cifuentes. Therefore, the leadership of this journalistic case clearly corresponds to native digital media, while mainstream media limited to perform statement journalism.

Due to this change in the leadership to set the mediatic agenda and because, for the first time, the online media caused the fall of a Spanish politician, it is possible to confirm that the Cifuentes case has been a mediatic milestone in the Spanish journalism in 2018.

It is relevant to consider this case as a small sample of the change of paradigm in the practice of journalism. Along with this research, new questions are formulated more than resolved. The findings of duplicated information, abusive use of agencies, excess of statement journalism encourage us to continue in the research line to investigate the present and future of journalism.

The economic crisis is directly linked to the credibility crisis, the mainstream media (*El País* and *El Mundo*, in this case) have a broad experience and decades of work supporting them. In addition, they have a great relevance in firms of opinion leaders. The native digital media have the opposite as advantage, being free of that tradition and suggest a fresher journalism, closer to the public opinion.

In both cases, journalism is not undergoing its best time and the need to keep searching for funding methods and formulas that allow the economic survival to perform an engaged journalism is one of the priorities.

6. Notes

[1] The number of employees was obtained by the authors of this paper through an email in the case of *Eldiario.es* and by phone in *El Confidencial. El Mundo* and *El País* did not respond to the information request.
[2] *Eldiario.es* has confirmed the authors of this paper that the origin of the case was a leak to the press.

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