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Miscellaneous

Citation patterns, the Matilda effect and gender bias in communication & media studies scientific output in Ibero-America (1980-2022)

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Abstract

This article analyses diachronically the role of women in the field of communication & media studies in Ibero-America by studying the presence or absence of women in the bibliography of a selection of articles taken from 60 communication academic journals in 9 countries (Spain, Portugal, Brazil, Argentina, Mexico, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru) between 1980 and 2022. This study measures the degree of visibility of female scientists and their contribution and compares it statistically to that of their male counterparts by quantifying from a gender perspective the citation patterns of authors of the 484 scientific articles included in the study. The findings showed that the visibility of the female researchers-authors increased over time. Furthermore, an over-citation of publications by male researchers was also found. Last, in one of the periods analysed, in the years between 1996-2010, gender homophily was found, i.e., female researchers tended to cite more women than men during this period.

Keywords

Gender, Ibero-America, communication, citation patterns, the Matilda effect.

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1. Introduction

> [...] nowadays, the bibliography of studies in communication and culture is taken over by a greater percentage of white men of the so-called 'first world' than women, particularly Latin-American women. This current status operates unswervingly from the invisibility of the work carried out by women for decades, considering that us women also theorise, study and research within and for our field in this part of the world (Chiesa, 2022, p. 2).

From its inception, the communication field has been constructed with masculine stories, pushing back female narratives (García-Jiménez & Herrero, 2022a; García-Jiménez & Herrero, 2022b; Herrero & García-Jiménez, 2023). This is because despite gender being a "crucial constituent" for the analysis of science (Jansen, 1993, p. 142), women as a scientific subject have been denied historically (Tuana, 2017), and the communication field is no exception. Since Nelly de Camargo's 1972 PhD reception study (*A TV e o quadro de referência sócio-cultural: o público dos telepostos de São Luis do Maranhão* is considered the first PhD submitted by a woman in the field in Ibero-America), the high number of female scholars have played a role in configurating the communication field, despite being non-hegemonic scientific subjects in a "completely masculinized" field (Dorsten, 2012, p. 42).

Since 2010 there has been an increase in epistemological studies in communication from a gender perspective (Simonson & Archer, 2011; Simonson, 2012; Vera-Balanza, 2012; Dorsten, 2012, 2016; Rowland & Simonson, 2014; García-Jiménez, 2019; García-Jiménez, 2021; García-Jiménez & Simonson, 2021; Heram & Gándara, 2021). However, there has not been any comparative work analysing this phenomenon simultaneously in different contexts, both geographical and temporal. In this vein, this study aims to contribute to fill the gap by providing an analysis of the presence of women as authoritative sources in the field of communication in Ibero-America, Spain and Portugal, from 1980 to the present day.

Although scientific publications authored by women –as sole or first authors– have risen exponentially in the field of communication (Knobloch-Westerwick & Glynn, 2013), this increase is not reflected in the number of citations (Mayer *et al.*, 2018). It has been shown that in sciences generally, when measuring citation patterns, women are under-cited by both genders (Llorens *et al*., 2021). Female scholars have published more in the last decades, but they are not cited in the same proportion as male scholars.

This study aims to measure the degree of visibility of female scientists in the field of communication sciences in Ibero-America and their contribution and compares it statistically to that of their male counterparts by quantifying from a gender perspective the citation patterns of authors of the 484 scientific articles included in the study.

To this end, their presence or absence in the bibliography of a sample of articles from a list of 60 communication academic journals in nine countries (Spain, Portugal, Brazil, Argentina, Mexico, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru) between 1980 and 2022 has been examined. This analysis will enable us to determine to what extent female authors are portrayed as authoritative sources and the correlation with the gender of the authors of the articles. This article is part of the Grant PID2021-123143NB-I00 funded by MICIU/AEI/ 10.13039/501100011033 and by ERDF, EU. All the information is available at www.femicom.es.

2. Theoretical framework

In the last ten years, interest in the study of the functions of and contributions by female scholars to research in communication has increased in North American academia, with the works of, for example, Hristova (2022), Fleck (2021), Klaus and Seethaler (2016), Rowland and Simonson (2014), Varão (2021) and Hristova, Dorsten and Stabile (2024). This trend focusing on meta-research in communication from a gendered perspective, started by Signorielli's pioneering work (1996), has also moved to Ibero-America.

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Among those studies centred on the contributions of female researchers to the field of communication in Ibero-America are other Latin American communication studies publications from a more global perspective (Fuentes Navarro, 2020; Rodríguez *et al.*, 2020; Corona Berkin, 2018; Heram & Gándara, 2021; Segado-Boj, Prieto-Gutiérrez & Quevedo-Redondo, 2021); studies related to Spain (Caffarel, Izquierdo & Núñez, 2017; Martín-Algarra, Serrano-Puche & Rebolledo, 2018; Cáceres & Díaz, 2022), Chile (Caldevilla & Del Valle, 2011; Del Valle, Caldevilla & Soledad, 2012) and those related to communication theories (García-Jiménez, 2021).

In Ibero-American countries, the interest in this topic cannot be disentangled from the growing presence of women in the universities' communication departments. The gender gap in universities has decreased since the '90s and the presence of lecturers in higher education has gone from being very low to surpassing 50% in countries such as Spain and Portugal. In the case of Portugal, according to data of the General Directorate of Statistics in Education and Science, participation of women in higher education amounts to 58% of the total number of graduates in 2022, and figures are still higher in the subcategory of graduates in social sciences, commerce and law, where they reach 65%. In terms of doctoral studies, 51.5% of the students who completed their degrees in 2022 were women, a percentage that rose to 62% in the specific case of communication sciences[1]. In the context of Ibero-America, according to 2023 data of the Ibero-American Observatory for Science, Technology and Society, which gathers data from 20 Ibero-American countries, 58% of students who finished their undergraduate or master's degrees were women (over 60% in the case of Argentina and Spain); in terms of students who finished their doctorates, the percentage decreased to 52%[2].

These figures, more or less equal for men and women in some countries, are not replicated when positions of authority are analysed. At the universities of these countries, vertical segregation still persists. In Latin America, according to the figures of a survey carried out by the UNESCO IESALC in 2020 in 9 Latin American countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico, Panama, Peru and Venezuela), only 18% of public universities had *rectoras* [female vice chancellors or 'rectors']. The same occurs in Portugal, where, in 2023, only 8 out of 31 public universities and polytechnic institutes are headed by female rectors (as per the data of the General Directorate of Statistics in Education and Science). In the report entitled "Científicas en cifras 2023" [Female scientists in numbers 2023] published by the Spanish Ministerio de Ciencia e Innovación [Ministry of Science and Innovation], only 1 out of 4 university professorships was filled by women (25.6% vs 74.4%) during the 2020-2021 academic year. This number was even lower in the field of communication where, as pointed out by Repiso *et al.* (2020), between 2000 and 2019, there were only 18 female professors in the areas of audiovisual journalism and communication and advertising (19.14%) out of the 94 professorships recorded.

This gender disparity in the top academic positions is also observed when analysing the presence of female researchers as authoritative sources. As a source of reference and authority, women are often denied from the first stages of university education (García-Jiménez, Torrado-Morales & Díaz, 2022). As stated by Corona Berkin, "The exclusion of women in research and the construction of knowledge is also carried out from the bottom up: women research, women publish, but their contributions remain in the background without being visible" (2018, p. 128).

2.1. *Gender inequality in terms of visibility: the Matilda effect*

Several studies point out that the history of science has been characterised by a systematically insufficient appreciation of women in science, as well as by little recognition of their academic contributions (Saborit-Rodríguez *et al.*, 2022). This phenomenon, referred to by historian

[1] Direção-Geral de Estatísticas de Educação e Ciência. Retrieved from : .https://www.dgeec.medu.pt/art/64ad21cb8e5ca5b1c8676270/64ad2dfe8e5ca5b1c867627e/652fb788bd5c2b00958292b9/657061b5602a6e14599d3922.

[2] Observatorio Iberoamericano de la Ciencia, la Tecnología y la Sociedad (2023). *Informe de Coyuntura, n.º 14. Mujer y Ciencia en Iberoamérica*. Retrieved from: https://oei.int/publicaciones/informe-de-coyuntura-n-14.

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Margaret W. Rossiter as the Matilda effect, refers to the historical discrimination suffered by female scientists, whose contributions and discoveries have been ignored in favour of their male colleagues (Rossiter, 1993). That is, numerous discoveries attributed to male scientists were actually made by female scientists, who were erased from the history of science.

A key factor in making their contributions visible is that women are cited by other members of academia. A review of the existing literature allows us to identify some previous work that demonstrates variations in the Matilda effect according to geographical area or a specific situation. Larivière *et al.* (2013) showed that papers with women as sole authors, first authors and last authors attract fewer citations than papers with men in some of these positions. Chan and Torgler (2020), in their study on citation networks, revealed that inequality in research performance was stronger in Eastern European countries than in Western Europe, with the United States being the most balanced region. In addition, they noted how societies more committed to gender equality and with less discriminatory attitudes towards women show a higher proportion of women among their leading scientists.

In communication, a study by Knobloch-Westerwick and Glynn (2013) showed how the Matilda effect persists: these authors demonstrated that after examining citation practices of authors in two prestigious communication journals between 1991 and 2005, articles written by women as main authors (around 40%) were cited less (approximately two thirds less) than male scholars. The study by Mayer *et al.* (2018) focussed in the 2016 seminal work *The International Encyclopedia of Communication Theory and Philosophy*, showed that out of the 272 bibliographical references, women were named as authors or co-authors in fewer than 20% of cases. Under the entry "Audiences," only 2 women out of 30 specialists were named, even when historiographical studies revealed that women were at the forefront of reception studies (Rowland & Simonson, 2014; Herrero, 2024). Expanding on these 2 studies, Wang *et al*. (2021) analysed citation practices in 14 communication journals between 1995 and 2018 and found that more bibliographical references were included with men as first and/or last author, and fewer articles with women as first and/or last author. Rajkó *et al.* (2023) pointed to a double Matilda effect, where gender inequalities affect both the level of visibility of the production and the impact of what is published (citation). The regional factor was also taken into account to compare countries with a great cultural diversity, which included both the United States and a significant number of European countries with a considerable scientific output. They showed that the articles of female scholars are more viewed than those of male scholars, but less cited. More recently, Goyanes *et al.* (2023) showed that there was a significant increase in the proportion of women as top cited authors in 2019 compared to 2009; however, amongst the most cited authors in 2019, male first authors were still prevalent over female first authors.

Taking these previous studies as background, our research has also looked at how the regional criterion affects gender inequality on production and scientific impact. It must be taken into account that our sample of countries enjoy a cultural and historical affinity, as well as, importantly, a shared language as is the case with Spain and Latin America except Brazil. Furthermore, we have included in this case a sample that spans over a much longer period of time, nearing forty years, which allowed us to carry out a wider analysis than previously to compare the Matilda effect with some historical facts which justify each of the periods into which this research has been divided. We aim to answer the following research questions:

RQ1.a) Is there an equal proportion between male and female researchers in terms of visibility both in the articles and the references examined?

RQ1.b) Are there any significant differences between the periods analysed?

RQ1.c) Are there any significant differences between the countries included in the study?

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2.2. *Gender inequality in terms of citation: gender homophily*

Another key aspect which needs to be tackled with more empirical research is the question of homophily, which affects the absence of diversity representation in research. The homophily principle dictates that similarity breeds connection (Kwiek & Roszka, 2021). Consequently, personal networks are homogeneous as regards many social-demographic and personal characteristics, such as age, ethnic origin, social class, level of education and, of course, gender. The dominant vision in the existing literature to date corroborates the existence of gender homophily with regard to academic collaboration between men and women. In other words, on average, men collaborate more often with men and women collaborate more often with women (Jadidi *et al.*, 2018; Lerchenmueller, Hoisl & Schmallenbach, 2019; Wang *et al.*, 2023; Holman & Morandin, 2019; Boschini & Sjögren, 2007).

In the field of communication studies, specifically in the area of film studies, the work of Torrado-Morales and García-Jiménez (2023) also revealed the existence of gender homophily in their analysis of the presence of women in scientific and editorial boards of 6 academic journals specialised in film studies as well as their examination of the citation patterns in those journals. The results of their study showed that, although the field of European film is less masculinised than other research areas in communication, in this specific realm, female authors cited more women than men. Another recent piece of research which aimed to analyse large-scale gender homophily by looking at collaboration practices between male and female university lecturers in Poland (considered to be internationally visible from their indexed publications) also disclosed the existence of gender homophily. However, in this case, it appeared to be stronger for men than for women (Kwiek & Roszka, 2021).

Taking into account the results obtained in this previous research, this work attempts to test empirically this phenomenon by using a larger sample for analysis, which will also allow us to identify the evolution of gender homophily over time. Also, the regional variable will underpin this analysis. To this end, the following research questions will be included:

RQ2.a) In the various countries analysed, is there a global trend by which female researchers cite more women and male researchers cite more men in their published work?

RQ2.b) Are there any significant differences in the citation patterns in terms of the time periods included in the study?

RQ2.c) Are there any significant differences in the citation patterns in terms of the countries included in the study?

3. Methods

From a methodological point of view, the literature review shows that research analysing journals have used various research methods, bibliometric analysis and content analysis being the most relevant. Although both techniques have been used in a complementary way (Arbeláez & Onrubia, 2016), this study will focus exclusively on a bibliometric analysis of the citation patterns with a quantitative approach. This type of analysis seeks to statistically find the over-citation of studies by male researchers, the under-citation of studies by female scientists and the existence of same-gendered homophilic citation networks (García-Jiménez, Torrado-Morales & Díaz, 2022).

3.1. *Sample selection criteria*

The sample analysed is made up of the bibliographical references from a selection of $N = 484$ articles extracted from 60 academic journals in the field of communication in 9 countries (Spain, Portugal, Brazil, Argentina, Mexico, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru) between 1980 and 2022. Choosing a long period of analysis (1980-2022) is justified, first, by the need to offer a critical and diachronic evaluation of the presence or absence of women. Secondly, we decided to start from the decade in which the epistemological identity of communication sciences in Ibero-America was consolidated. Postgraduate study in communication and journalism was

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established in the mid-1980s in Latin America, Spain and Portugal. Additionally, the associations which are still articulating the communications field such as ALAIC (1978), INTERCOM (1978), FELAFACS (1981) and, in Spain, AIC (1982), currently AEIC, were founded from the late 1970s onwards. The period analysed has been divided into three time periods: a) Period 1 (1980-1995): institutionalisation, development and/or take-off of research in communication; b) Period 2 (1996-2010): the emergence of research in communication; c) Period 3 (2011-2022): internationalisation and culture of quality/standardisation/impact of communications studies.

The specific selection process of the 60 journals that finally constituted our analysis sample responded to a set of criteria that were established *a priori* by the research team. This process consisted of several stages in which decisions were taken by consensus among all the members of the project. Firstly, the sample selection criteria correspond to the general objective of analysing the role of female researchers in Ibero-America, specifically in Spain, Portugal and in the selection of the Latin American countries with the greatest scientific weight in the continent under consideration, based on the measurement made in this regard by Scopus (Colombia, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Peru and Mexico).

Initially, we aimed to select only those journals that, in December 2021, were in the 1st and 2nd quartiles of the Communication section of the SCImago Journal Rank Indicator (2020 ed.). Thus, the initial sample consisted of 9 journals (5 from Spain, 1 from Portugal, 1 from Chile, 1 from Mexico and 1 from Peru). We decided to extend the sample to the 3rd and 4th quartiles. However, by selecting journals that were only part of the SJR, we had a very limited presence of journals from the southern hemisphere, and we did not want to limit ourselves solely to the visibility and impact indicators, which count the number of citations received by a scientific article over a given period of time. If we had only included journals listed in the most prestigious impact indices, we would have left out a great deal of research that is part of the academic heritage of Ibero-America, Portugal and Spain. As researchers, we believe that the dissemination of knowledge and the advancement of science should be more important than indexes or journal impact factors (Lee, 2014). Furthermore, the SJR is produced in the northern hemisphere, specifically in Anglo-Saxon countries, and largely corresponds to the characteristics of European and North American scientific systems. The under-representation of Latin American journals in SSCI-ISI led to the creation of Latindex and other platforms such as Scielo or Redalyc. For this reason, in April 2023, a third list was drawn up, which included the journals that were part of the Latindex 2.0 Catalogue (2018), with the highest number of criteria fulfilled per country and with longer trajectories over time (in this list we added a ninth country to the study, Ecuador, with its journal *Chasqui. Revista Latinoamericana de Comunicación*). At the last meeting before the start of the exhaustive survey of periodicals, we noted that there were journals that the researchers of the project felt should be included in the sample because they had been important platforms for the dissemination of research in their respective countries (*Revista argentina de comunicación* in Argentina) or because they had been among the first in this field of study (*Revista de Comunicação e Linguagens* in Portugal).

In this last meeting, the final inclusion criteria were defined: 1) journals in SJR Scopus 2020 edition) Q1, Q2, Q3 and Q4, in the field of communication; 2) reference journals in Latindex 2.0 Catalogue (2018), with the highest number of criteria fulfilled per country and with a longer development over time; 3) reference journals that, according to the researchers, were in one of the three selected research phases and that were neither in the SJR nor in the Latindex in December 2021; and 4) journals that would still be active in 2022. The two exclusion criteria were: 1) journals whose specialisation or technical/applied nature distorts the general trends, and 2) journals that are in SJR in Q4 but in Latindex not in the field of communication sciences. Finally, we decided that none of the countries taking part in the study should contribute more than 33% of journals to the sample. From this final list of 60 journals, and following our own previous research (Torrado-Morales & García-Jiménez, 2023) and the work of Arroyave-

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Cabrera and González-Pardo (2022), we randomly selected two articles for each of the following years: 1981, 1986, 1991, 1996, 2001, 2006, 2011, 2016 and 2022.

The appendix[3] includes the final list of the selected journals, distributed by countries (N=60), the database in which they are included (or not), as well as the number of articles selected from the nine years representing the different periods up to the final sample of our study (*N*=484). Furthermore, the number of bibliographical references recorded for each of the journals of the sample is shown (N=9.174).

3.2. *Coding and selection of variables*

From the sample selection criteria mentioned above, the gender of the author(s) of the final sample of articles (*N*=484) and those included in the references (*N*=9.174) was manually coded. During this process, reports, lessons, PhD theses and undergraduate dissertations were disregarded, as were dictionary and encyclopaedia entries, and conference proceedings, as they were considered to be outside the scope of this study.

Following the two previous pieces of research carried out by the research team (García-Jiménez, Torrado-Morales & Díaz, 2022; Torrado-Morales & García-Jiménez, 2023), two coding cards were used: in the first one, the unit of analysis was the article and in the second, bibliographical references. In total, the coding protocol looked at 17 variables: nine for the analysis of articles and eight for the analysis of references. Within the variables which were taken into account to analyse the articles, there was identification data such as the name of the journal, the country of publication, the database the journal was in, the period or year of the article publication, as well as more specific information connected to the aims of our research, such as the gender of the first author, the number of authors, the gender code of the participating author(s) (in order to analyse the gender of the collaborators) and the number of bibliographical references included in each article. Concerning the variables used for the analysis of the references, the type of publication of the reference (e.g., book, article or book chapter), the reference title and year, the number of authors of the reference, the name and gender of the first author of the reference, as well as the name(s) and gender code of the author(s) of the reference were recorded.

3.3. *Types of analysis carried out*

When analysing the data collected, statistical analysis was carried out with R software package, version 4.3.1 (R Core Team, 2023). Specifically, a univariate analysis was carried out by means of a descriptive analysis of simple and distribution frequencies. In order to proceed to cross the variables, contingency tables were used. When looking at whether the percentage of male to female authors varied depending on the period analysed, without taking into account the countries, a Chi-square test was used, and a Fisher exact test was used when there were fewer than five observations in any entry of the table. For all the other analysis a logistical regression model using the Likelihood ratio criterion was used in order to calculate the significance of the variables. In all cases, the Benjamini-Hochberg fdr method was used to correct the p-value in the case of multiple comparisons. The acceptance level used was Alpha = 0.05.

4. Results

Generally speaking, an initial descriptive analysis of the number of articles meeting the requirements above mentioned showed a striking presence of articles published in Spanish journals (36.78%) out of all countries overall. However, given that the sample of this study has articles from the 9 countries included, we consider that this data must be understood as a result of the research following the selected criteria of the sample. The majority of articles had been published in journals which were also listed in Latindex and Scopus (50%) or Latindex only (46.69%). In addition, a progressive increase in the number of articles over time was detected, so that the third period of our study (2011-2022) concentrated the biggest number of articles (66.74%)

[3] You will be able to consult the appendix on Figshare: https://doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.27815718.v1.

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compared to the second period (1996-2010), with 29.13%, and the first period (1980-1995), with only 4.13%. When looking at the references included in the articles, the presence of references was more evident in the Spanish journals (44.11%) compared to the rest of the countries. In addition, three out of every four bibliographical references (76%) were also concentrated in the third period of the study (see Appendix 1).

4.1. *The visibility of female researchers-authors improves over time*

In order to confirm whether there is a similar percentage of male and female researchers in terms of visibility (RQ1.a), the analysis focussed first on the frequency of the presence of women compared to men. The results showed that there was a similar percentage in terms of the presence of female authors (51.47%) and male authors (48.53%) in the articles analysed. This parity was maintained when comparing articles with a woman as a first author and those with a man in the same position. There was a greater percentage of sole-author articles (36.78% in the case of men and 30.37% in the case of women), compared to co-authored with a second author, either of a different gender (8.26%) or the same gender (3.51% for men and 7.85% for women).

However, in contraposition to the parity found in the articles sample, it is important to highlight the high percentage of men who were the first author in the bibliographical references (72.64%) compared to women as first author (26.9%). Moreover, men tended to appear as sole authors in a high percentage (54.52%), in contrast with women (16.75%). The percentage of co-authorship between men and women in this case was rather residual (only 6.57%).

If we consider the visibility and under-citation of female researchers in the bibliographic references, according to the quartiles of the SJR where 28 of the 60 publications in the sample are located (Table 1); among the current Q1 journals, the two youngest journals, the Portuguese journal *Media and Communication* and the Spanish *Review of Communication Research*, we find more similar data. When analysing the Q1 and Q2 quartiles, we find that, in 10 of the 16 journals, the number of references whose first author is a woman exceeds the aforementioned average of 26.9%. This percentage is not reached in 8 of the 12 journals in the third and fourth quartiles (the lowest percentage is for the Portuguese journal *Media & Jornalismo*, with less than 16% of references signed by women).

Table 1. Percentage of first authors cited in bibliographic references of the Scopus-SJR 2020 and Scopus-SJR 2023 sample journals, in quartile order.

Title	SJR-Scopus 2023 Quartile	SJR 2020 Quartile	Ref.	Female author	%	Male author	%	Other	%
Comunicar	Q1	Q1	230	52	22.61	174	75.65	4	1.74
Profesional de la Información	Q1	Q1	121	45	37.20	74	61.15	2	1.65
Media and Communication	Q1	Q1	97	41	42.27	55	56.70	1	1.03
Review of Communication Research	Q1	Q1	271	133	49.08	136	50.18	2	0.74
Revista Latina de Comunicación Social	Q1	Q2	236	59	25	172	72.89	5	2.11
Comunicación y Sociedad/ Communication and Society	Q1	Q2	299	82	27.42	217	72.58	0	0

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Cuadernos.info	Q2	Q2	157	57	36.30	100	63.70	0	0
Estudios sobre el Mensaje Periodístico	Q2	Q3	254	94	37	160	63	0	0
Historia y Comunicación Social	Q2	Q3	309	122	39.48	186	60.20	1	0.32
Icono 14	Q2	Q3	171	53	31	116	67.83	2	1.17
Palabra Clave	Q2	Q3	291	56	19.24	235	80.76	0	0
Revista de Comunicación	Q2	Q2	151	31	20.53	119	78.81	1	0.66
Revista Mediterránea de Comunicación	Q2	No	207	60	28.98	145	70.05	2	0.97
Anàlisi. Quaderns de comunicació i cultura	Q2	Q3	404	83	20.54	319	78.96	2	0.5
Comunicación y Sociedad	Q2	Q2	348	73	20.98	274	78.73	1	0.29
I/C Revista Científica de Información y Comunicación	Q2	Q3	287	83	28.92	203	70.73	1	0.35
Transinformação	Q3	Q3	224	49	21.88	172	76.78	3	1.34
Brazilian Journalism Research	Q3	Q3	153	35	22.88	118	77.12	0	0
Doxa Comunicación	Q3	No	157	53	33.76	103	65.60	1	0.64
Observatorio (OBS)	Q3	Q3	95	18	19	77	81	0	0
Perspectivas em Ciência da Informação	Q3	Q3	199	59	29.65	140	70.35	0	0
Texto Livre: Linguagem e Tecnologia	Q3	Q3	72	20	27.78	52	72.22	0	0
Trípodos	Q3	Q3	225	40	17.78	185	82.22	0	0
Comunicação e Sociedade	Q3	Q3	171	37	21.64	132	77.19	2	1,17
Estudos em Comunicação	Q3	Q4	143	26	18.18	116	81.12	1	0.7
Media & Jornalismo	Q3	Q4	102	16	15.69	85	83.33	1	0.98
Signo y pensamiento	Q4	Q3	220	68	30.91	150	68.18	2	0.91
Comunicación y Medios	Q4	No	158	32	20.25	126	79.75	0	0

Source: Own elaboration.

Aiming to detect possible differences between the periods analysed (RQ1.b), a contingency table was designed for the authors' gender variable and the article publication period variable. The Chi-square test (χ^2=14.354 and p-value 0.0007) allows us to state that there was a statistically significant relationship between the article publication period and the authors' genders, so that the presence of women increases over time and narrows the gap with respect to the presence of men (from 14% in the first stage to 54% in the last period). The multiple comparison test allows

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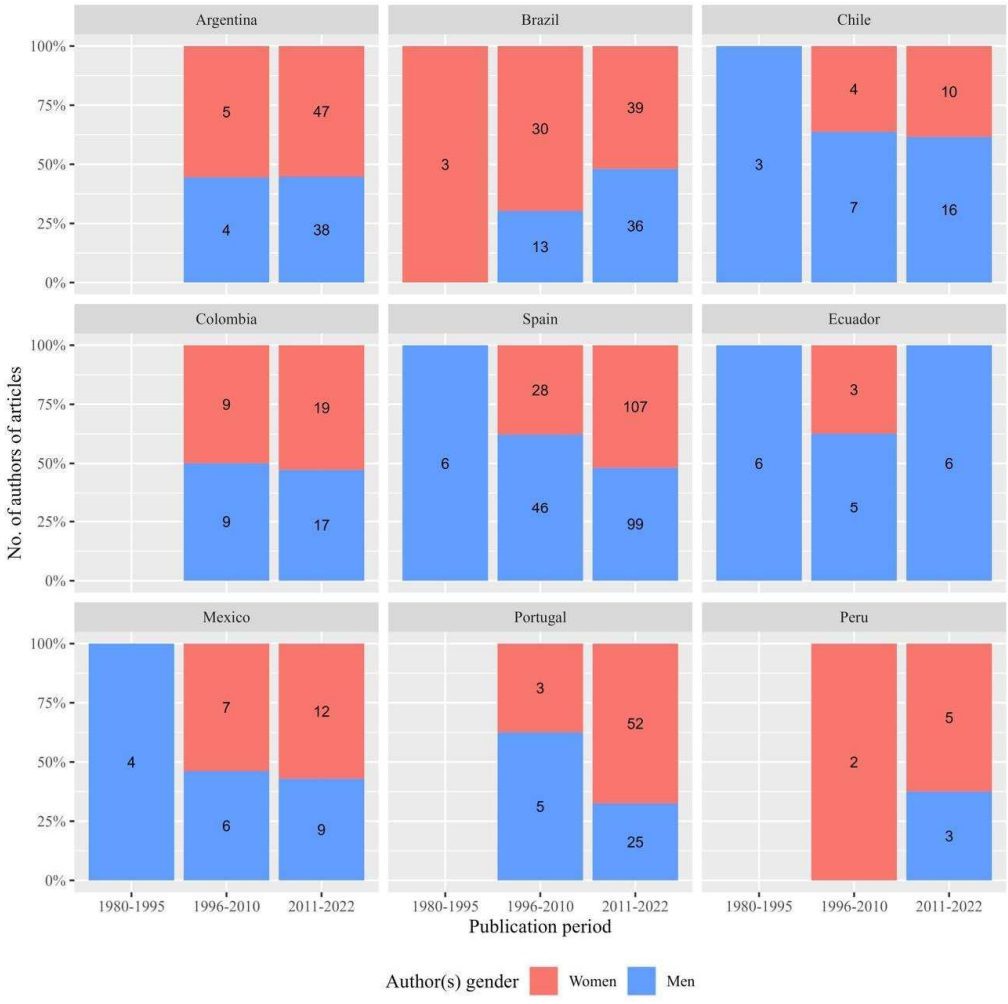
us to detect the most significant differences between the periods 1980-1995 and 2011-2022. The acceptance threshold was reached between periods 1980-1995 and 1996-2010.

When replicating the same cross in the case of bibliographical references, a statistically significant association between the period of publication and the authors' genders was found, according to the Fisher test (*p*-value 0.0004). As above, as time passed, the presence of women increased in the bibliographical references (from 12% in the first period to 33% in the last period). In this case, the multiple comparison test, using the *p-values fdr* correction method showed that there were differences between men and women in all periods analysed of the study.

Finally, we proceeded to examine whether the differences in the visibility of female researchers happened in all the countries included in the study (RQ1.c) or whether there were countries in which this progress was not that obvious. As shown in Figure 1, the results from a logistic regression generalised linear model with a significance level *Alpha* = 0.05, revealed that there was a significant relationship between the authors' variable and the article publication period and country variables. In some of the countries analysed the increase of women's presence was more obvious as time went on (for example, Spain and Portugal) in contrast to other countries where there did not seem to be too much variation (Argentina and Colombia). In some countries there was still a greater visibility of male researchers (as is the case of Ecuador and Chile).

Figure 1. Gender of the author(s) of articles per period and per country.



Source: Own elaboration.

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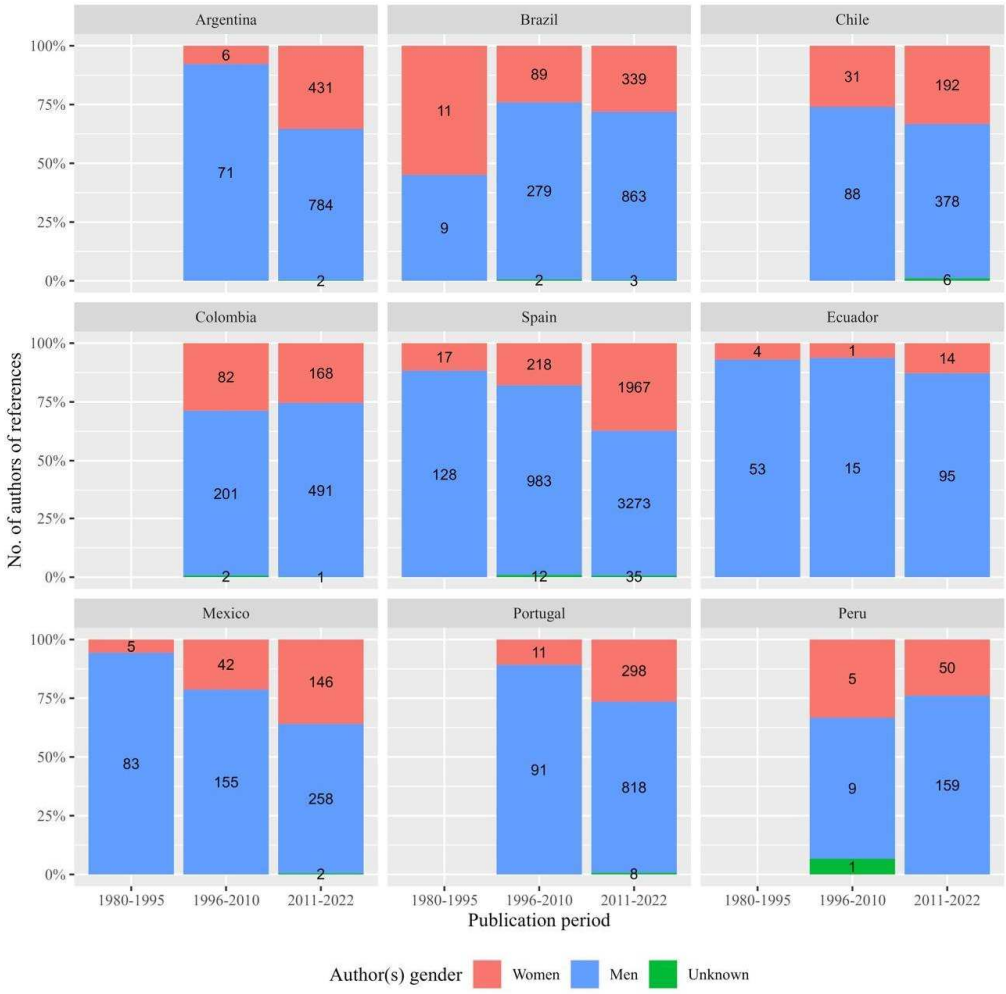
When the same generalised linear model for logistic regression was used to analyse the references, the results also revealed a statistical significance between the authors' gender and the period and country variables. As Figure 2 shows, there was an increase in visibility of women's presence in the references over time in the majority of countries (i.e., Spain, Mexico, Argentina and Portugal), whereas others kept to a pattern with few variations (i.e., Colombia and Ecuador). A clear trend could not be appreciated in other countries (i.e., Brazil and Peru).

Figure 2. Gender of the author(s) of references per period and country.



Source: Own elaboration.

4.2. *Citation patterns continue to prioritise male researchers*

The second premise of our research was to examine the citation patterns of journals from a gender perspective. In this sense, we queried whether there was a global trend by which when female authors became more prominent, they cited more women than men. Conversely, male researchers cited more men than women in their published work (RQ2.a). To answer this question, we crossed the article's first author variable with the variable referring to the gender of bibliographical references.

The results pointed to a clear dominance of male gender because when a woman was the article's first author, she cited men in 63% of cases and women in 37%. However, when a man appeared as first author, he cited men in 76% of cases and women in 24% of cases. If we differentiate according to the index or database in which the journals are found, the data is very

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similar: in Latindex, when the first author of the article is a woman, on average 36% of the authors are cited by women and 64% by men; when the first author is a man, 22% of the authors are cited by women and 78% by men. The joint data, i.e. for journals in both SJR and Latindex, does not differ: when the first author is a woman, on average 36% of women are cited and when the first author is a man, 25% of women are cited. More specifically, the descriptive statistics analysis corroborated the fact that main female authors included an average of 18.65 male references and 10.73 female references per article. When it comes to male authors, the average was 20.40 male references and as few as 6.52 female references on average.

Beyond these global results, we have also tried to verify whether there were significant differences in the citation patterns depending on the publication period (RQ2.b). With this in mind, we did the same crosses as before, but this time we differentiated each of the three periods examined in the study. In this specific case, as shown in Table 2, when female researchers were the main authors in their articles, from the second period up to now, the citation pattern pointed to a greater visibility of men over women (between 1996-2010, 30% of cited women vs 70% or cited men were recorded; between 2011-2022, 37% of cited women vs 63% cited men were recorded). The only exception was found in the first period (1980-1995), where interestingly the differences were reduced (55% cited women vs 45% cited men). In any case, despite the fact that the distance was reduced between both genders over time, the dominance of the masculine gender in these references was still very obvious.

In the opposite case, that is when male researchers appeared as the main author of their articles, as shown on the same table, it is rather striking that men tended to overwhelmingly cite men. Although the citation percentage of women in articles where men are the first authors increased over time (going from 9% of women vs 91% of men in the first period, to 14% of women vs 86% of men in the second period, until reaching 28% of women vs 72% of men in the third period), this data appeared to point out to a tendency to increasingly closing the gender gap over time.

Table 2. Percentage of women and men cited in bibliographical references per first author's gender per period.

Period	First author's gender	No. of female authors	% of female authors	No. of male authors	% of male authors	Total
1980-1995	Women	11	**0.55**	9	**0.45**	20
	Men	26	**0.09**	264	**0.91**	290
	Total	37		273		310
1996-2010	Women	296	**0.3**	686	**0.7**	982
	Men	189	**0.14**	1206	**0.86**	1395
	Total	485		1892		2377
2011-2022	Women	2301	**0.37**	3836	**0.63**	6137
	Men	1304	**0.28**	3283	**0.72**	4587
	Total	3605		7119		10824

Source: Own elaboration.

For each period, the differences between the number of men cited in the references according to the gender of the first author of the article were examined and for multiple comparisons, the *p*-value was adjusted with the fdr correction method. With a significance level set at *Alpha* = 0.05, no significant differences were found in the number of men cited in articles' references as per the gender of the first author in any of the periods. When analysing the number of women cited in the references, and after checking the normal distribution of data using Saphiro-Wilk and Fligner-Killen tests, Welch's ANOVA was used, as homogeneity of variances do not have to be met. With a significant level set at *Alpha* = 0.05, significant differences were found in the number of women cited in the articles' references in terms of the gender of the first author of the article in the period 1996-2010. This data is shown in Figure 3 below.

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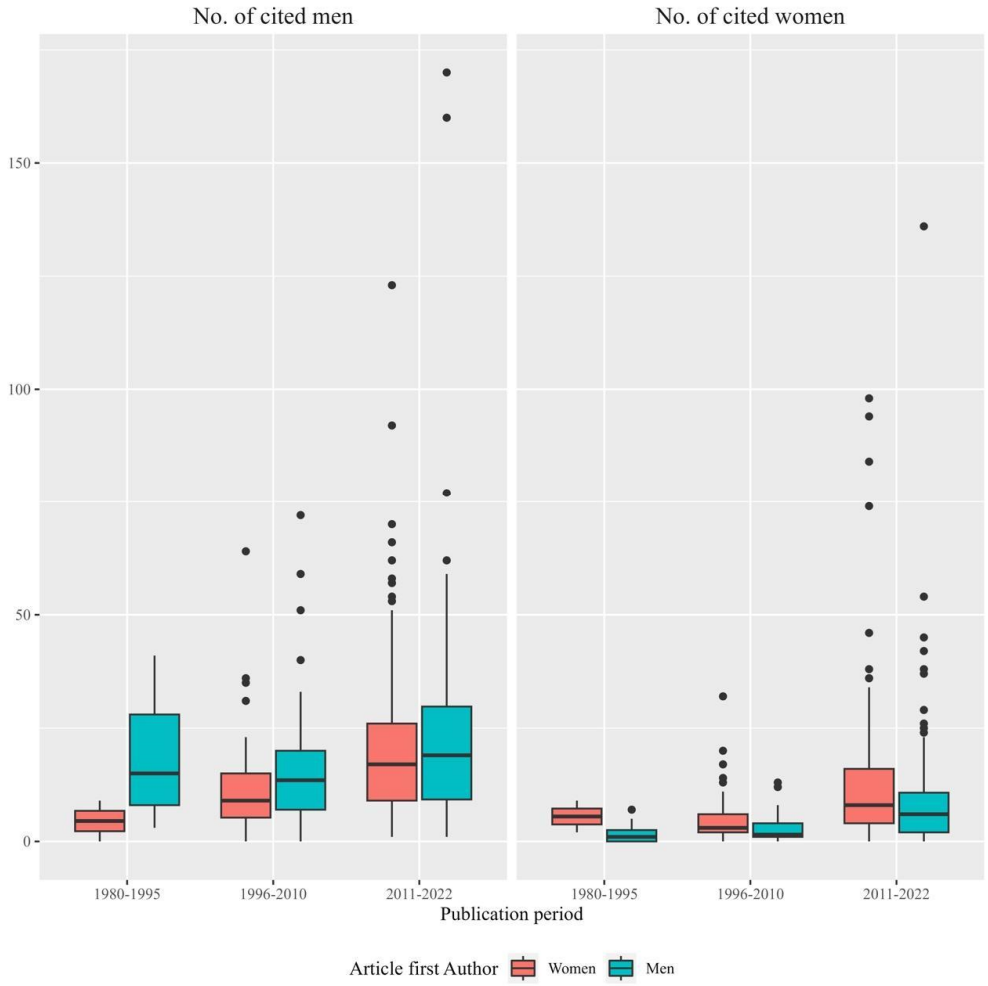
Figure 3. Men and women cited in the references per first author's gender and per period.



Source: Own elaboration.

Finally, in order to complete the citation patterns analysis, some possible differences between the countries analysed in our study sample were found (RQ2.c). Table 3 shows similar results in nearly all countries. Thus, when female researchers are the articles' first authors there was a generalised dominance of men citations. In some countries, the gender gap in the citation patterns was more obvious (e.g., Portugal, with a 72% male dominance; and Peru, with 71%) whereas in other countries it was less striking (e.g., Spain, with 61%; Chile, with 62%; Mexico and Argentina, both showed 63%). When male researchers occupy the first author's position something similar happened, with a clear dominance of citation patterns where men were more visible than women. Specifically, the highest percentages were found in Colombia (82% of men) followed by Mexico, Portugal and Peru (81%), while the gender gap was somewhat narrower in the case of Argentina (70%), Spain (73%) and Chile (72%).

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Table 3. Percentage of men and women cited in bibliographical references per first author's gender and country.

Country	First author's gender	No. of female authors	% of female authors	No. of male authors	% of male authors	Total
Argentina	Women	266	**0.37**	449	**0.63**	715
	Men	171	**0.3**	406	**0.7**	577
	Total	437		855		1292
Brazil	Women	298	**0.34**	569	**0.66**	867
	Men	141	**0.2**	582	**0.8**	723
	Total	439		1151		1590
Chile	Women	113	**0.38**	186	**0.62**	299
	Men	110	**0.28**	280	**0.72**	390
	Total	223		466		689
Colombia	Women	166	**0.34**	318	**0.66**	484
	Men	84	**0.18**	374	**0.82**	458
	Total	250		692		942
Spain	Women	1368	**0.39**	2100	**0.61**	3468
	Men	834	**0.27**	2284	**0.73**	3118
	Total	2202		4384		6586
Ecuador	Women	0	**0**	8	**1**	8
	Men	19	**0.11**	155	**0.89**	174
	Total	19		163		182
Mexico	Women	126	**0.37**	212	**0.63**	338
	Men	67	**0.19**	284	**0.81**	351
	Total	193		496		689
Portugal	Women	234	**0.28**	599	**0.72**	833
	Men	75	**0.19**	310	**0.81**	385
	Total	309		909		1218
Peru	Women	37	**0.29**	90	**0.71**	127
	Men	18	**0.19**	78	**0.81**	96
	Total	55		168		223

Source: Own elaboration.

5. Discussion and conclusions

The increased presence of women in academia, either as university students or as lecturers and/or researchers, is a global trend. However, as this work shows, these recent important achievements have not been matched in terms of scientific authority. The quantitative analysis carried out in this research offers noteworthy contributions to communication studies from a gender perspective.

The so-called Matilda effect persists in relation to the visibility of female researchers in communication in Ibero-America. We have shown that from 1980 to 2022 women have been establishing their position as authors of articles in academic journals, but this has not been matched when considering authoritative sources: they are not cited as often as male scholars. Our study shows that gender inequalities in the citation patterns are more obvious in some countries than in others (Colombia, Mexico, Portugal and Peru) and they are similar in the three periods analysed in our study. As stated by Corona Berkin (2018), the contribution from women who research and publish are in the background, not visible.

After detecting gender homophily by women scholars in the second period analysed (women scholars tended to cite more women during the 1996-2010 period), we queried what the possible causes for this were, taking into account that this period saw the consolidation of research in communication. One of the reasons could be the exponential increase of the number of journals: the higher the number of published journals, the higher the number of articles, citations and, statistically, of women cited; another reason might be the consequences of the so-called 'Aneca effect' (named after Aneca, the Spanish Agency for Assessment and Accreditation), which has meant an increase in the number of specialised journals in communication and in articles written by more than one author, including more women with more possibilities of being cited especially in Spain (Masip, 2011), one of the countries with more articles and references in our study.

Within the limitations of this research, we must highlight the dominance of the two countries with a greater number of articles and references –Spain and Portugal– which might skew the results globally. Similarly, the differences between the journals according to the

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countries, in terms of periodicity, regularity of publication and the fact that three out of four bibliographical references (76%) are concentrated in the third period examined in the study (2011-2022). These possible skews in the research will be resolved in the future, by differentiating per country and time period.

The ultimate aim of the research project that supports this work, FEMICOMI –Analysis of women's roles in communication research in Ibero-America– is to make visible those "most cited women" and to value the work of female researchers in the communication field in Ibero-America, Spain and Portugal. This would give them and their contributions the visibility that has been denied to them for decades. Therefore, another future line of research is a qualitative analysis to explore who are the authoritative sources in each period and in each country analysed. It will be necessary to answer questions such as: Who are the most cited female scholars? Which countries are they from? How many citations do they have? Which generation do they belong to? And it will be necessary to compare the results exponentially with their male peers in the field. The time has come for women's contributions to come to the forefront so that we can promote greater epistemic justice.

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