

Immigration news in the Global South: A comparative analysis of media content and
journalistic decisions and practices in Latin America

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We came to the U.S. with my wife initially for two years, and here we are after eight years and two kids. This work also goes for all the people trying to move across borders (real and imaginaries) despite all the challenges.

Abstract

This dissertation analyzes the news media representation of intraregional immigration in Latin America in connection with the journalistic decisions that partially shape this content.

Based on an analysis of 1,690 news articles from 16 print and web outlets in Chile, Colombia, and Mexico (sampled from a database created uniquely for this dissertation), this project examines frames, word choices, sources, and other elements of news stories from 2014-2018. It also uses twenty interviews with journalists in these countries —working for the news outlets analyzed here— to establish relationships between the coverage produced in these newsrooms and the approach reporters take to write about immigration.

Overall, the findings show a predominant presence of two frames in the way news media decides to tell the story about immigration: A victim – humanitarian/human rights frame and a political responsibility–policy solutions and debates frame. These frames are heavily influenced by governmental voices and official messages that are the sources most used by reporters. News articles about the benefits of immigrants and immigration are minimal. The lack of specialization in newsrooms about reporting immigration, limited resources, and the context of violence negatively impact the presence of counternarratives to the official discourse. However, there is an agreement among journalists on writing about immigration in ways that avoid promoting xenophobia and stereotyping. Thus, the storytelling does not use charged labels about the newcomers, and concepts such as "illegality" are virtually absent.

From a theoretical perspective, this dissertation provides arguments about the role of professional journalism and journalists in developing countries as a crucial institution for democracy. From a more practical perspective, this project's results could benefit the work of reporters writing about immigration across newsrooms in the Global South.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

This dissertation is about the representation of intraregional immigration and immigrants in the news in Latin America and how certain journalistic practices might help shape the coverage we consume. This research project is inspired, in part, by my own experience as an immigrant in the United States and also heavily influenced by the context where I conducted my doctorate program. I started my studies right before the 2016 presidential election in the United States. There is a noticeable “Trump” effect on my research because his administration made immigration a very salient matter around the globe. There is also a strong “Syrian refugee crisis – European reaction” effect because it put a face (s) to an immigration crisis in a hyper-connected and globalized world. However, the relevance of immigration as a political issue in many developed countries (i.e., Global North) was also a motivation to start looking outside the United States or the “Western” world to contribute to the discussion about the role of journalism in reporting immigration and immigrants in general.

Only around 3.5% of the world's population are international migrants (IOM, 2020). Despite this relatively small percentage, immigration is a highly controversial issue, creating political polarization, particularly when places experience a rapid demographic change due to movement of people. Although the focus has been on the Global North, in recent years, the Global South (i.e., developing countries) has experienced massive movements of people. The majority (87%) of the migrants residing in developing nations are citizens of other developing countries, and in 2015, the South-South migration surpassed South-North migration by 5% (UN, 2017; IOM, 2015a).

Therefore, this dissertation does not examine the news representation of immigration and immigrants in the United States or Western European nations, as is the case in most academic literature about media and immigration; instead, this research takes a comparative approach by examining an underexplored topic with theoretical implications: *how news media represents immigrants, in developing nations, specifically in Latin America, by looking at three specific countries (Chile, Colombia, and Mexico) facing a change in their demographics due to intraregional migratory movements*. These three cases from Latin America allow us to compare the reality within this region to have stronger arguments to contrast them with the academic work about this topic in the Global North. This is not only an academic study comparing the way news media creates public discourse about immigration, but it is also a novel approach to understand the journalistic dynamics that influence news production on an issue, such as intraregional migration, that countries (and the press) have little experience dealing with, at least in their contemporary history.

In Latin America, the combination of recent political and social instability, natural disasters, and more restrictive immigration policies in developed countries triggered an unprecedented intraregional migration transforming traditionally migrants-sender countries into immigrants-refugees receivers' nations¹ (Bolter, 2017). Despite this demographic shift, we know little about the role of mass media in representing and disseminating information of this immigration phenomenon.

¹ The period analyzed for this project is 2014-2018, but this dissertation was published during 2020 in the midst of the Global Public Health emergency caused by COVID -19. The COVID-19 Global Pandemic most certainly affects mobility of people and it is a topic that requires further research.

News media is one dominant force that creates a collective experience and makes salient what is essential and real. The metaphors, frames, narratives, and discourses used by news media to depict immigrants are crucial to understanding the policies and public opinion about this issue (e.g., Dell' Orto & Birchfield, 2013; Schudson, 2011). For instance, surveys show that nearly all countries overestimate the proportion of immigrants. In Latin American nations, people estimate that the percentage of immigrants in their countries' population is more than 25%, while the actual numbers of immigrants are less than 1% (Ipsos, 2018). This relates to media coverage because citizens can be exposed to immigration either by direct contact or through media content. Therefore, the overestimation of the number of migrants is potentially influenced by the news stories about migration.

Research on immigration news in relationship with journalistic practices (e.g., Benson, 2014; Mancini et al. 2019; Suro, 2008) has been conducted mostly in the context of developed countries or under the notion of South-North immigration patterns. However, there is a gap in the academic research about comparing how news is reported when the dynamic of migration is from South-South, particularly with unprecedented influxes. Complex social phenomena, such as immigration, require research that explores distinctive realities in specific countries to understand the nuances and differences that could enrich theory (e.g., Hallin & Mancini, 2004).

Additionally, most studies on immigration news focus only on exploring the effects media has on the public's perception and attitudes. The underlying assumption of such inquiry is that news acts only as a conduit of messages crafted by the elites (e.g., Baum and Potter, 2008:2019). This notion assumes news coverage as a product of a

“black box” called news organization. My project aims to contribute also by partially opening this “box” and listening to the insights that people reporting about immigration have to share and make sense of these reflections, and the potential influence of professional routines on writing about immigration.

The evidence from Latin America has broader implications for social theory and journalistic practices. These newer movements of persons are testing receiving societies’ institutions at different levels. One of these institutions is the press and the role of journalism in representing these demographic transformations. Journalism and the press still are powerful and relevant social institutions to a sustainable democracy, and they provide a space for the *representation of shared beliefs* aimed at maintaining societies over time (Schudson, 2011; Carey, 2008;1992, p.18). Even in a changing technological environment, news organizations are still important in delivering original reporting about a current event, and as sources of diverse content circulating online, influencing what people think about social issues (Iyengar & Kinder, 2010; McCombs & Shaw, 1972).

To answer my overarching research questions: *How has news media in Latin America covered intraregional immigration issues during 2014-2018?*² and *How do journalists and reporters in Latin America describe their news making practices in covering immigration?* I conducted three case studies³: Chile, Colombia, and Mexico. Each of these countries represents a specific immigration trend in the Global South. Mexico has recently faced a sudden increase of Central American unaccompanied minors and family units. Colombia is facing a crisis immigration (refugee) influx from

² This period encompasses the timeframe where demographic transformations happened or started to happen more abruptly in each country.

³ See Creswell & Poth (2016, p.74-76).

Venezuela caused by the latter country's political and social turmoil. Chile is a case of a steady and rapid upsurge of immigrants from non-border countries in the Americas, bringing a transformation in the racial composition of this nation.

This study is based on an inductive and exploratory research design. I triangulate two primary sources of data:

1) A content analysis of a sample of stories from a database created uniquely for this project (using computational techniques)⁴. The data includes 16 news outlets and encompasses five years (2014 -2018) of news articles that correlate with the current demographic changes in each country. The database contains more than 20,000 news potentially relevant for this project's objective. Out of this universe the manual analysis was conducted from a random sample of 3,165 stories. One of the limitations for doing mass communication comparative research in the Global South is the lack of comprehensive databanks to access news media coverage. Therefore, creating a database from scratch tailored to answer the research questions is also an innovative methodological step with potential uses beyond this specific dissertation. Moreover, the content examination of the news articles is informed by the tradition of framing analysis –which focuses on identifying how narratives are constructed to make specific aspects of the problem more salient than others (Entman, 1993).

2) I conducted semi-structured interviews with twenty journalists with experience on immigration in the region to have a first-hand account of the constraints, challenges, and practices that shape the stories journalists publish. These reporters work (or have worked) for the same newspapers and websites as the news stories in the content analysis.

⁴ [Dataset and other materials are accessible here](#)

Additionally, I had ten contextual conversations with local experts to inform better my methodological decisions.

In general, the results of this dissertation show a predominant presence of two main news frames in the coverage of intraregional migration in Chile, Mexico and Colombia:

1) A *victim* frame focusing on a humanitarian approach and highlighting the abuses and violations of human rights immigrants suffer. This humanitarian approach makes the story emotionally appealing and puts a face to the issue, which is a common journalism practice in the Global North as well as in the Global South (e.g. Benson, 2014). Also, in the cases analyzed here, and based on the interviews, this humanitarian decision to tell the stories is not motivated by a sensationalistic strategy, rather by a desire on the part of journalists to sensitize the public and make the abuses visible to keep authorities accountable for them.

2) A *political responsibility* frame that emphasizes solutions and containment policies implemented to deal with the sudden inflow of foreigners. Also, this frame describes the political debates around immigration.

Interestingly, these two frames are influenced by official and governmental voices that are the most prevalent in the sample for this project. Moreover, across the three nations, frames portraying immigrants as a threat or a benefit are relatively low compared to the victim and political responsibility ones.

Besides these regional trends, country-specific patterns appear. In Colombia, news media depicts Venezuelan immigration as problematic but with a sense of “*reciprocity*” and “*solidarity*” grounded in the history of these two neighboring

countries (Colombia was a sender of migrants to Venezuela in the past). This feature of the news coverage is also driven by the Colombian government strategy of “*open arms*” with Venezuelans.

In the case of Mexico, media centers the attention on the “*in-transit*” condition of Central Americans (as migrants whose goal is to arrive in the United States). This attention on the “*in-transit*” concept makes the news coverage beneficial for Mexican authorities. The news reporting does not allocate the responsibility to solve the many issues emerging from this new movement of unaccompanied minors in the Mexican government. In Mexico also, the Caravan of Migrants, particularly the one in 2018, was a specific event garnering much of the media reporting. Moreover, realizing the importance of Mexican’s southern border emerges as a novel discussion in the coverage. Generally, the historical focus of Mexican news about immigration has concentrated on the U.S. Southern border, but with the current events, a narrative of the “*two borders*” appears.

Regarding Chile, race plays a critical role. News media in Chile focuses substantially on the Haitian migrants, who are not the largest group moving into the country but constitute the most “*different*” population because of their skin color.

In addition to specific frames, word choices were also analyzed. Concepts such as “*illegality*” are less prevalent in the case of media representation of intraregional migration in Latin America than in the Global North. The role of language, common history, and shared cultural roots are factors that diminish potential uses of charged labels and concepts to describe immigration and immigrant in general.

Furthermore, reporters in these three countries recognize the crucial responsibility they have in shaping the coverage to avoid stereotyping and promoting xenophobia.

However, a challenge arises when immigrants are involved in criminality and violence. Ethical considerations surface in the decision-making process to prevent unfair generalizations and foster negative attitudes toward the migrants.

Journalists admit a lack of specialization in how to report complex issues such as immigration. This and limited resources prevent the presence of more in-depth reporting about this topic. Also, the inadequate specialization creates disparity within newsrooms regarding the sensibility needed to write about immigration. This uneven sensibility across the newsroom translates into different coverage of the same topic depending on the section of the newspapers. For example, according to the content analysis and interviews, reporters on the police beat have a more punitive approach (and use charged labels) than reporters writing stories about human rights.

Besides, journalists acknowledge high levels of independence and autonomy *within* their newsroom when covering immigration. Contrary to analyses about the multiple constraints of media in Latin America (e.g., clientelism, ownership concentration or censorship) (Waisbord, 2012), journalists perceived themselves as *professionals doing their jobs*, following ethical expectations of their occupation shared in other parts of the worlds such as: telling the truth, verifying facts, maintaining independence, monitoring power, and providing the information for a healthy public debate (Kovach, & Rosenstiel, 2014; Hallin, 1992; Schudson, 2011).

However, the autonomy and independence *outside* the newsrooms are constrained in the cases of Colombia and Mexico. Violence from organized crime in some areas of these countries poses a challenge to tell stories about immigration because immigrants are victims of drug-related criminal groups. Therefore, digging into those cases is a

dangerous task. This is a distinction between covering immigration in the Global South and the Global North. In Latin America, violence affects journalists' performance and freedom to report, particularly among local reporters working in the most violent "*hot spots*" (Hughes, Garcés, Márquez-Ramírez, & Arroyave, 2017).

Finally, reporters recognize the lack of a strong editorial stance or crystallization of a partisan or polarized coverage about immigration from the newspapers analyzed here. As they perceive it, this is a unique case because they observe more polarized coverage in other social topics in their newspapers and the countries' broader media environment. In general, journalists identify the coverage of immigration as predominantly approached from a human rights lens that contributes to the prevalence of the humanitarian frame in the news.

In summary, this research seeks to contribute in three different ways: 1) Build initial empirical knowledge about news media representation of intraregional immigration in the Global South (i.e. Latin America); 2) Add a comparative perspective about journalism practices beyond the developed world, helping to expand understanding of the ways reporters reflect and cover these issues taking into consideration the challenges they face; 3) Provide initial comparative theoretical evidence that bridges what journalists do and the end product the audience receives about immigration. By understanding what happens in the process of covering immigration, we can also better grasp the importance of context-specific variables that may influence the news production about migratory phenomena.

Overall, this dissertation's fundamental theoretical assumption is that professional journalism is a key social force for a democratic society to function and survive. This

type of journalism is the one where political bias and influences are less important than the commitment to professional values and norms (e.g., Schudson 2018, Hallin, 1992). Professional journalists face many constraints, but at the same time, reporters are autonomous actors that base their decisions on routines and journalistic values. My conception of journalistic works departs from a more structuralist perspective centered on the political economy of news (e.g., Herman & Chomsky, 2010). Commonly this approach understands the content crafted in media organizations just as a reproduction of how ruling capitalist elites conceived society. Therefore, a news organization acts merely as a conduit of the elite's messages. (see Schudson, 1989; Baum, & Potter, 2019:2008 for revision). This is not what this dissertation claims. My work is informed by the ideas of *the social organization of newswork* and also a *culturologicals* concepts. This means news is socially constructed and occurs in the daily interactions between journalists, sources, and audiences (Carey, 1992; Schudson, 1989:2002; Tuchman, 2002).

Additionally, Bourdieu's journalistic field as a sphere of relations and interactions based on power dynamics shapes the theoretical ground of this project (Benson & Neveu, 2005). Although a delimited and relatively autonomous place, the journalistic field can influence other spheres that compete for the society's cultural production (Benson, 1999). In a way, newsrooms also represent a network of interaction in which actors such as journalists and editors negotiate the creation of content.

Moreover, as Tuchman claims (2002), "News cannot be accounted for in terms of either liberal-leftists bias or establishment propaganda. Indeed, it is necessary to examine

⁵ Schudson (1989) uses the term "Culturological" as a broad concept to explain the role of a symbolic system (*cultural givens*) in which interactions occur. Therefore, the term culturological refers to different cultural approaches to explain news production (see Schudson, 1989, p.275).

empirically the several moments of its production" (p. 88). To a certain extent, this dissertation explores precisely this, focusing on immigration news in Latin America as an example of the role of journalists in determining the end product of media organizations.

In the remainder of this chapter, I will unpack an additional theoretical framework to justify this dissertation's decisions. First, I will make an argument about the need for more international communication research on immigration. Then, I will provide the main theoretical ideas regarding the role of the media system for my research, to finish with a concise conceptualization of the journalistic practices and routines.

The value and need for more comparative approach in communication research and immigration

One way to address the value of more comparative communication research on immigration is by saying that very little has been done in academic settings to examine the relationship between migration and media in developing countries. Of course, this is part of a more general imbalance of the development of mass communication research. Media studies started more systematically as an academic field in the United States after World War I, mostly with the interest of understanding the effect of propaganda. Therefore, many of the theories, approaches, case studies, and academic training have been focused and located in the United States and Western European countries. However, as Thussu (2009) argues, although the notion of place, space, and time have been reconfigured with the massification of technology, nation-states and idiosyncratic variables are increasingly relevant for theory-building in media and communication studies. This idea of internationalization of media studies is coupled with what some

observers call as the need for *de-westernization* of communication research. This means not just examining different realities but doing it with cultural sensibility and to avoid, as much as possible, evaluating other media cultures and systems under the lens of a different value-system (Hanitzsch, 2009: 422). Also, Park and Curran (2000) posit that the way media works in a particular geography is “*not merely by national regulatory regimes and national audience preferences, but by a complex ensemble of social relations that have taken shape in a national context*” (p.12). Therefore, the dominance of Western-centric research on mass communication has created a disparity in exploring issues happening in different media realities such as those in the Global South, or in developing country settings. This imbalance is dangerous because it could lead to the generalization of research paradigms that obstructs the development of theory further. Even within the Western world, it is problematic to think about a “*unique*” way media works. Although when people talk about media studies, they may have a series of preconceived notions about what this means in the context of the Global North, there is no such a thing as a unitary media or a “*Western media system*” (Hallin & Mancini, 2004). Therefore, the call for contextualized research has been stronger lately across the world and also within country studies (e.g., Rojas & Valenzuela, 2019, Mancini & Hallin 2012).

Media studies about realities in the Global South are lagging in comparison with the research of issues emerging in the Global North. This has created a lack of real tradition, theoretical approaches, and experience in comparative media studies, particularly in journalism studies, despite notable exceptions on cross country approaches in the past decade (e.g., Hanitzch et al., 2011; Shoemaker & Cohen, 2012). The problem

is even more severe because other fields with a long tradition of comparative research (e.g., Political Science and Sociology) have remained relatively silent about studying journalism as an object of research, and they have focused more on potential effects of media messages (Mancini, & Hallin 2012).

The lack of research in mass media in the Global South is one thing, but another question that arises is what is the value of comparative analysis in media and *why* go comparative in communication studies? In general, comparative research methods are based on the relationship of variables, based on empirical data, with the critical importance of the place and conditions where these interactions among variables happen. One common methodology is conducting case studies. As Creswell & Poth (2016) argue, cross-cases-studies can provide meaningful information on complex phenomena.

In the specific case of media studies, following Carey's (2008) conception of "*communication as culture*," every time we study a communication phenomenon, we are considering the cultural context where interactions between different factors are occurring and impacting the way shared cultural values are maintained through communicative processes. Thus, mass media is not just meaningful for the content transmitted, but where and how the messages are transmitted.

Furthermore, comparative research in mass communication allows us to analyze similarities and differences that appear when comparing media realities. The differences that arise help to prevent false generalization about a media phenomenon, but also make us scrutinize issues that sometimes are taken for granted if they are not contrasted with a different experience. Conversely, similarities in international media studies illuminate general trends occurring, which permits more robust generalizations of research results

regardless of contextual differences (Waisbord, 2012; Hallin & Mancini, 2004). This is one of the reasons why in recent years, more journalism studies are conducted by multi-country research teams, which has become a relatively productive method of producing comparative research to avoid de-contextualization (e.g., Mancini & Hallin, 2012; Hanitzsch et al., 2011, Shoemaker & Cohen, 2012). This is also why this dissertation decides to take a comparative approach centered in the Global South; to offer contextualized empirical results about immigration news representation in the case of Latin America.

Why study immigration news in the Global South and in Latin America?

Massive intraregional movement of people in different Latin American countries is a relatively new phenomenon and offers potential novel insights into the role of news media in portraying this topic. The research in this area of international or comparative communication (i.e., immigration news) is very much needed, especially today in a world where social phenomena are increasingly complex to understand, and idiosyncratic variations are relevant to analyze. Benson (2014) describes immigration news as a unit of analysis that offers different ingredients and angles -- such as economic, political, human stories, class conflict, human rights -- that makes it a unique case for research. Also, immigration news is an excellent case study to explore how journalism deals with a foreign reality that becomes domestic, forcing societies and (journalists by extension) to contrast cultural viewpoints with the migrants' value systems. This encounter with a different reality in "*our own land*" opens the door for self-reflection on how the

receiving society “sees” itself, in contrast with the immigrants’ view of the hosting nation. Paraphrasing one of the Colombian journalists interviewed for this project: Venezuelan immigration has made Colombians look inwards, forcing the people to see into this mirror that migration represents and ponder the things the nation has done well and the things that Colombia needs to improve.

Additionally, Latin America offers an interesting setting to research immigration news. The region shares pre and post-colonial history, and the majority of Latin American countries have a common main language and religion. Also, many nations in Latin America have common political processes, such as experience with military and authoritarian regimes, fractured political party system, wealth disparity, social inequalities, weakness of the rule of law, and close ties between economic elites and media industry (Power & Jamison, 2005; Waisbord, 2012). All these shared characteristics are a different *"baseline"* compared to most of the research on immigration news. Commonly, immigration news is examined in developed countries receiving migrants from developing nations. Therefore, the gap between nationals and newcomers is potentially wider than in case of intraregional migration in Latin America.

Besides, Latin America is an intriguing setting to research immigration news because the phenomenon is recent, and it has not yet profoundly permeated as deep as in other latitudes. In a way, by looking at the reality in this particular region, we can *"go back in time"* and witness the adaptation process of journalism to a new reality, and then compare it with places like the Global North, where newsrooms have already *"adapted"* to reporting on migration issues.

Moreover, comparative political scholars have claimed that focusing on a specific region to do research is productive because there is a likelihood that political developments in one country influence the politics and policies of neighboring nations, producing a set of specific dynamics that are shared within a particular region (e.g., Mainwaring, & Pérez-Liñán, 2007). Intraregional migration among Latin American countries is exactly that case, because political and economic decisions from governments in the region have fostered the movement of people across borders (Cerruti & Parrado, 2015). Although, to a certain extent, there is this “*common Latin American experience*,” the region also offers country-based differences allowing the examination of variations regarding media system and news environment under an umbrella of common regional characteristics (Guerrero & Marquez-Ramirez, 2014; Lawrence, 2011). As Waisbord (2012) clarifies, regions are by no means homogenous entities, rather heterogenous, therefore, “*they comprise significant similarities and differences that need to be considered not only descriptively, but analytically, too*” (p.2). Also, Mellado et al. (2017) argue that there is no homogenous or clear journalistic model in Latin America, and particular country contexts offer a more precise approach to understanding the differences that emerge in the region.

The relevance of comparative research in Latin America, by looking at the specific case of immigration news, emerges then as significant and it is one of the main objectives of this dissertation: to offer the first multi-country comparative research about the news representation of intraregional immigration in the region.

Furthermore, researchers on comparative media and journalism studies (e.g. Hanitzsch et al., 2011; Mancini & Hallin, 2012; Shoemaker, & Cohen, 2012; Waisbord,

2012) explain that most of the recent multi-nation research about journalistic practices and journalism, in general, is based on survey methodology (e.g., Hanitzsch, Hanusch, Ramaprasad, & de Beer, 2019). Surveys represent an efficient technique to capture general trends about journalists' habits and perceptions using the same questionnaire to make cross-country comparison easier. However, this method has proven to be challenging to implement for response ratio and attrition, which limits the in-depth knowledge of journalists' values and the perception of their role. Also, Mancini & Hallin (2012) push for the need of more content analysis in different countries "*because ultimately, we are interested not just in what journalists – or other actors involved in political communication – say about themselves, but in what they actually do and the messages they produce*" (p.4).

This dissertation tries to contribute to this emerging field of studies by combining content analysis and interviews with reporters that write or have worked on immigration news in Latin America. The objective is to contrast and connect this empirical data to offer comparative information about also the role of the media system where news production and journalists work happen.

Comparative media system approach and journalism

As I have concisely argued earlier, the tradition of research on comparative media systems in the current technological environment has also influenced my research project (Chadwick, 2007; Guerrero & Marquez-Ramirez, 2014; Hallin & Mancini, 2012; William & Delli Carpini, 2011; Starr 2004). This dissertation takes into account

traditional newspapers and digital-online news website in each country (i.e., non-traditional) with a total of sixteen sources. The objective is to have a broader perspective of the aggregate representation of immigrants and immigration in a news environment where most information circulates online, but also when traditional media organizations still hold agenda-setting power in the case of substantive and hard-news coverage (Granka, 2010; Leskovec, Backstrom, & Kleinberg, 2009). There is a practical and theoretical reason for focusing on newspaper content (traditional and non-traditional) instead of broadcasting in the case of Latin America. From a practical perspective, accessing the broadcasting material from several sources, such as the sixteen this project uses, is very difficult unless you are in each country to retrieve it directly from the news stations. From a theoretical perspective, arguably, newspapers in Latin America still hold strong agenda-setting power for other media, including broadcasting, especially regarding political news (e.g. Arroyave, & Barrios 2012; Gronemeyer, del Pino, & Porath, 2019).

Besides the circulation, digital-only news outlets in Latin America have disrupted the news flow and political communication with different perspectives about political issues. Also, they are contributing to form a transnational audience taking advantage of the region's common language and shared cultural roots (Higgins, & Harlow, 2020; García-Perdomo, & Magaña, 2020). At the core of this phenomenon, as is the case in many regions around the world, is the manifestation of a media system where the control of the political communication is no longer under the monopoly of traditional media institutions.

There are many labels to this transformation: a *hybrid media system* (Chadwick, 2017), *information interdependence* (Jacob & Shapiro, 2011) or a *post-broadcasting*

media regime (Williams & Delli Carpini, 2011), but they all dissect similarly the changes in media systems and who has control of the political information. Likewise, these concepts try to explain how the authoritative figure of journalists has changed and how the symbiosis between elites, media, and the public tends to be more horizontal than vertical.

For instance, Williams and Delli Carpini (2011) define a media regime as a set of norms, values, practices, and institutions that set the parameters in which the political discourse occurs, and public opinion develops. This is linked to Paul Starr's idea of *constitutive moments* that provide the institutional basis for change. For instance, Starr argues that the Postal Service in the United States is a constitutive moment because it allowed for the expansion of local newspapers under a federal government's subsidy. Starr explains that in the case of the Postal Service, a political decision such as the establishment of the subsidy for newspapers through the Postal Service triggered a transformative process in the relevance of local media and the press in the United States.

Conversely, for Williams and Delli Carpini, we are currently under a new *media regime* because of the new set of rules, norms, values, and practices that emerged with the massification of digital technologies. The monopoly of the political discourse and the audience is no longer in the hands of broadcasting. During the broadcasting regime in the United States, there was a crystallization of some modern journalistic values such as neutrality, objectivity, and the truth as a “must” that journalists should follow in news coverage. Media institutions were considered the authority figures for the development of professional journalism. During the broadcasting era, the institution of journalists, based on Lippmann’s more elitist idea of knowledge-based reporting, became predominant.

Lippmann argued that people are not “omnipresent” citizens. Therefore, they need to be educated to a certain extent to fulfill the demands of a functional democracy. The figure of a professional body of individuals dedicated to delivering information, be a watchdog, provide a check on power, and disseminate symbolic meaning to maintain societal values was prevalent during that time. Moreover, broadcasting garnered the majority of the audiences because of a low-media choice environment. Now issues such as the decline of journalistic authority, media trust, fragmentation of the audience, polarization, online echo-chambers are fostered by transformative technologies.

Furthermore, as Just (2011) posits, people inundated and invaded the newsroom creating a sense of horizontality between citizens and political figures and journalists. This has undermined the role of the professional journalist as the gatekeeper of the flow of news. Observers argue that this has reduced news media's capacity to become a public arena where different points of view are represented and a locus where social reality is constructed (Bennett, Pickard, Schroeder, Lagos, Caswell, 2004).

Historically, scholars have studied the role of news media in relationship with democratic participation as well. In the early 20th century, as mentioned before, Lippmann proposed a more elitist approach. He considered the role of journalism to educate a public that is, for lack of a better word, “ignorant” in many aspects of public affairs. His approach is based on the idea that journalism has a role in enlightening citizens to participate in a functional democracy. However, Lippmann believes that it is impossible to aspire to have fully educated citizens or omnipresent people. Therefore, journalism will always have a limited role in the democratic process.

On the other hand, Dewey argues for a more participatory democratic process in which mass media provide information that citizens need to participate in public life. Moreover, the Habermas model is the one in which mass media is not only a content-delivery mechanism to inform citizens but in itself constitutes a public sphere in which people deliberate rationally and unconstrained from governmental pressures, and in which consensus is needed to influence political decisions (Habermas, 1991). The evolution of this public sphere from the *Greek Agora* to the *Coffee Houses* in 17th-18th centuries in England, to the mass media in the 20th century has been strongly contested by many scholars that claim this deliberative approach of the public sphere has never existed in a “pure” form (e.g., Dahlberg, 2005; Achen, & Bartels 2017).

However, for others, Habermas's conceptualization of the public sphere is still a powerful idealistic representation that shapes a normative evaluation of the role of professional media. For example, Curran (1991) claims that mass media's core role is "*assisting the equitable negotiation or arbitration of competing interests through democratic processes.*" (p.30). This negotiation materializes in this public forum called mass media and driven by a body of experts called journalists. The logic of the occupation for journalists is to provide information useful (public affairs) for people to participate in a democracy. However, this occupational logic collides with people's preferences to consume more soft news, which can be problematic to fulfill the requirements of a democratic, participatory process (Boczkowski, & Mitchelstein, 2013).

In the case of Latin America, the role of mass media as a public sphere has been examined based on the constraints of the media systems that have developed, with similarities and differences, across the region. One of the most useful theoretical tools for

understanding Latin America's media systems is the "*Captured Liberal Model*," proposed by Guerrero (2014).

This model is based on the category of the *Liberal Model* elaborated by Hallin and Mancini. In the original conception of this model, Hallin and Mancini explore the media systems of Britain, Ireland, the U.S., and Canada. They conclude the media is dominated by market logic and functions with little presence or direct influence of the state or governments. At the individual level, this model finds that neutrality and objectivity are central values for journalists that provide information for citizen-consumers. For Guerrero, in Latin America, countries have market-oriented media organizations with similar journalistic values as proposed in the *Liberal Model* in the Western world.

However, the author explains that Latin America's media system is liberal but "Captured" by two main factors: 1) Low regulatory efficiency (inconsistent application of legal frameworks and lack of adequate regulations), 2) A high degree of interference in the media's role of watchdog (unfavorable conditions for professionalism and weak guarantees for journalistic practices) (Guerrero, 2014, p. 57). This classification is fluid and conceived as a continuum. Countries like Chile or Uruguay appear to have higher regulatory efficiency and less interference for media to perform the watchdog role than countries such as Colombia and Mexico, where the political system has a more negative effect on these two factors.

Besides, in the current media environment, the news cycle has become faster than ever, and there is constant pressure for journalists to cover news stories, tweet, post, and fill news quickly. If we add to this equation budget cuts and revenue loss in traditional media newsrooms, dangerous threats are emerging. Perhaps the most important for the

case immigration reporting is the decrease in investigative journalism in general, and Latin America is not the exception (Saldaña & Mourão, 2018). This is concerning because migration represents a complex social phenomenon. Thus, if fewer resources are invested in investigating underlying causes and the complexity around immigration, it is most likely that stereotypical, simplistic, or relying largely on official sources type of coverage remains the norm.

Journalistic practices and routines

As I have mentioned throughout the chapter, this dissertation assumes that reporters influence and mold, to a certain extent, the news coverage of immigration. The way reporters help to shape news is based mainly on their routines and self-perceived role in deciding what to cover and how to cover a specific story.

Moreover, at the most basic level, the influence of reporters starts with deciding “*what is news*”. Based on his seminal work about this topic, Herberts Gans explains that, even when technology has changed the media environment(s) where journalism happens, he argues that values and assumptions to decide “what is news” has not changed that much. In a way, the events journalists cover are still “new,” but the judgments and methods of choosing and selecting the content and how to write about it have remained without many changes (Gans, 2004, xvii).

In determining what is news, there is a set of news values guiding the decision-making process such as a) prominence and importance; b) conflict and controversy; c) the unusual; d) human interest; e) timeliness or how close in time is the news to us; d)

proximity (Shoemaker & Reese, 2014, p. 171). Additional values such as "*journalistic gut feeling*" have also been argued to influence what is deemed newsworthy (Schultz, 2007).

Moreover, as Tuchman (2002) argues, "*news is both a permanent social structure and a means of social reflexivity and contestation: a product and a productive process.*" (p.90). News values offer an explanation for the end product (e.g., the news story), but the *productive process* is better explained by looking at reporters' routines, which is precisely what this dissertation does. At a more fundamental level, routines are repeated practices that shape journalistic work. These routines are at the intersection of the power of sources to deliver the information, the demands from the audience and the decision news organizations make to provide the information, as producers of content. It is through the interaction of these three main actors that routines crystallized. In other words, the flow of information circulates among sources, audiences, and news organizations, affecting the understanding reporters have about an issue and molding the process of reporting a story (Gans, 2004; Shoemaker & Reese, 2014; Schudson, 1989). Besides, the concept of efficiency emerges as a key to understand the interactions between sources, audiences, and news media (Gans, 2004). This means for journalists, most of the time, decisions are based on making the daily routines easier and faster to produce content. Efficiency is a value that allows the sustainability of news production in a system with a high demand for information.

Other scholars have tried to explain routines using a different approach. For instance, Høyer (2005) offers a compelling "news paradigm" that encompasses five main routines 1) the event; 2) news values; 3) interviewing; 4) the inverted pyramid; 5)

journalistic objectivity. Arguably, this "news paradigm" incorporates the same elements as the source-audience-news organization model that other authors used to explain journalistic routines. For example, interviewing is the power of sources to provide information. News values, events, and inverted pyramid (i.e., intro explaining the who, where, when, why, and how?) are within the abilities of a news organization to produce and shape the content. However, in Høyer's "news paradigm," audiences are overlooked, though an argument can be made that objectivity is part of the audience's expectations regarding news content. Objectivity becomes a procedure that journalists utilize as a defense mechanism against criticism of their work (Shoemaker & Reese, 2014; Shudson, 2001). But at the same time, objectivity as the idea of accuracy, balance, and neutrality (Høyer, 2005) meets the audience's expectation of having unbiased information and meets the journalistic expectation of providing a multi-perspective content of a specific event. This aligns with the journalists' self-perceived role of "*reporting the worlds as they see it*" based on nothing but facts (Shudson, 1989).

Therefore, this dissertation contributes to empirically examining what is the approach that traditional and digital-only outlets are taking on reporting intraregional immigration in Latin America, by analyzing news content and journalistic practices, in the particular context of the three cases: Chile, Colombia, and Mexico. One of the main objectives of looking at news production is contributing to the literature on media systems by taking into consideration the agency of journalists shaping, at least partially, the coverage about immigration. In other words, my understanding of media systems is one in which mass media is not always the dependent variables of social, economic and

political structures (Hallin & Mancini, 2004). Instead, there is a mutual dependency between the work emerging from newsrooms and the social context and specificity where this work happens (Mellado, Márquez-Ramírez, Mick, Alonso, & Olivera, 2017). The news coverage of immigration does not occur in a vacuum determined entirely by social structures. Individuals working for media organizations, guided by professional journalistic standards, can influence the coverage, which affects the society they live in.

Overview of the chapters

This chapter was intended to provide some of the foundations for the rest of this dissertation. First, I explained the main theoretical contributions and the importance of doing comparative research regarding immigration. Chapter 2 will introduce the context of migration around the world and in Latin America with an emphasis on the countries of interest for this project (Chile, Colombia, and Mexico)

Chapter 3 will delve into the current immigration news literature, focusing on the available research in the Global North (i.e., U.S., Canada, and Western Europe). The minimal academic study of the immigration news in Latin America offers an opportunity to take a comparative perspective and contrast the existing literature produced in the developed world about migration coverage and the role of mass media in representing this issue. Detailed research questions in connection with the methods are also discussed in Chapter 3.

In Chapters 4, 5, and 6, I analyze Chile, Colombia, and Mexico respectively, and I address the overarching research questions considering the particular findings in each of

these countries. The empirical analysis informs the discussion of the main features and characteristics of each of these nation's media system. The connection between the content analysis, interviews, and how media works helps the reader to situate the findings in a particular context. Then, Chapter 7 explains general trends that emerge from the three countries and proposes initial generalizations of the results based on these case studies. This final comparison is also shaped by the theoretical framework developed as a comparative contrast of how news media in the Global North has covered immigration.

CHAPTER 2

Immigration trends in the world and in Latin America

This dissertation examines the role of news media in reporting immigration in three specific countries in Latin America that are facing demographic changes in the last decade caused by intraregional migration movements: Chile, Colombia, and Mexico. This dissertation is not about Mexicans crossing into the U.S. or Colombians migrating to Europe. Instead, it is about the movement of people occurring within the borders of a specific region such as Latin America (Cerruti & Parrado, 2015).

Moreover, these three case studies are used to draw some initial conclusions about the migratory phenomenon and news media representation of it in a developing country setting. In this dissertation, the concepts of Global South and developing nations are used interchangeably. The term “Global South” is not perfect (see Horner, 2020), but provides a nuanced approach to differentiate between developed versus developing nations. As Dados and Connell (2012) explain:

The phrase “Global South” refers broadly to the regions of Latin America, Asia, Africa, and Oceania. It is one of a family of terms, including “Third World” and “Periphery,” that denote regions outside Europe and North America, mostly (though not all) low-income and often politically or culturally marginalized. The use of the phrase Global South marks a shift from a central focus on development or cultural difference toward an emphasis on geopolitical relations of power. (Dados, & Connell, 2012).

For the objective of this dissertation, the concepts Global South and developing countries are useful to mark a distinction with the realities of immigration issues in the United States, Canada, and Western Europe. Therefore, for this research project, the term

Global South appears adequate, and it will be used as synonymous with developing countries and a way to refer to Latin America as a region as well.

Within this context, this chapter offers a piece of concise contextual information to situate this dissertation in the trends of immigration in the world and in Latin America specifically. Also, I will discuss the current immigration patterns and events for the case studies of interest.

Immigration trends

By 2019, about 3.5 percent of the world's population (272 million) was international migrants, which is generally defined as any person who changes his or her country of usual residence (UN, 2017; IOM, 2020). This is an increase of 0.2% from 2017. Despite this small percentage, immigration has become a highly controversial issue in many countries around the world, fueled political polarization, and generated a large amount of media attention. More recently, the public's focus has been mostly on the refugee crisis in Europe and the shift in the rhetoric and policies towards immigration in developed countries such as the United States after the 2016 presidential election. However, the world has historically witnessed massive inflows of people from developing countries to other developing nations. More recently, for instance, there have been large numbers of Syrians entering Turkey; Central Americans crossing to Mexico; Rohingya people fleeing to Bangladesh and Venezuelans migrating to Colombia and other Latin American nations⁶. Although South-South migration is a recurring

⁶ Although the Global Pandemic caused by the COVID-19 during 2020 brings a new scenario to discuss immigration movements (Migration Policy Institute, 2020) this dissertation addresses the changes happening before this public health emergency. These changes are still unprecedented regarding intraregional migration movement in the Global South, specifically in Latin America before 2020.

phenomenon, mass communication research about the role of news media coverage of immigration in developing countries is lacking.

Contrary to the common perception and news media coverage emphasis, immigration influxes and dynamics from a developing country to other developing countries have increased over the past years (starting in 2005), surpassing at a particular point in time the migration dynamic of developing-to-developed nations. According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), in 2015, more than 90 million people born in a developing country resided in another Global South nation, five million more than the amount who migrated from South to North (IOM, 2015a). Also, between 2010 and 2017, the rate of international immigrants in the South increased by 3.2%, which is larger than the growth rate in the North in the same period (UN, 2017). In other words, more international migrants are moving South-South than South-North.

The current trends also show that Europe and Asia are the regions with the largest share of immigration in the world (61%), followed by North America (22%), although the United States and Germany are by far the countries where most immigrants reside (IOM, 2020).

The recent patterns also indicate that Latin America and the Caribbean are migrants-sender regions, mainly to North America and Western Europe. In 2019, around 26 million migrants from Latin America were living in North America, more than double the number in 1990. Also, 5 million were in Europe in 2019 (IOM, 2020). Although Europe and North America are the places hosting more of the international migration overall, intraregional movement in the developing world is on the rise with an increasing

share of 39% in 2005 to 44% in 2019 of international migrants living in the South (UN, 2019).

One of the regions in the Global South where intraregional migration has increased is Latin America, and it is worth exploring further. Mexico is receiving more Central Americans than ever before, becoming a country of destination and not just a migrants-sender nation. Also, in South America, the intraregional migration has intensified with an 11% increase between 2010 and 2015 (IOM, 2018). Some of the reasons explaining these changes are labor force supply and demand and economic motivations. However, more complex causes for this intraregional migration patterns are long-lasting political and social crises in countries such as Haiti and Venezuela (IOM, 2020).

The new intraregional migration reality in Latin America has made salient different concepts and categories of immigrants depending on the context. For instance, in Mexico, Central Americans are seeking asylum or protection, similar to Venezuelans in Colombia. In Chile, most of the newcomers are not seeking asylum; instead, they have other motivations to migrate such as economic opportunities or family reunification. Based on the findings of this dissertation, news media in these countries tends to use the words immigrants, migrants, refugees, or asylum-seekers loosely and sometimes as synonymous. However, at least for the clarity of the reader, these concepts represent different realities and require specific definitions.

Defining immigrants, versus refugees versus asylum seekers

The frequently used definitions about immigrants, migrants, refugees, or asylum seekers are based on the United Nations descriptions (International Organization for Migration; High Commissioner for Refugees; Department of Economic and Social Affairs). For example, refugees are defined as: *“a person who, owing to a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it”* (IOM, 2019, p.171). This is different from the definition of asylum-seeker, which is characterized as the *“right to be recognized as a refugee and receive legal protection and material assistance.”* Therefore, not all asylum-seekers will become refugees, but all refugees are initially asylum-seekers. These categories have been a product of international conventions informing immigration laws worldwide (e.g., 1951 Refugee Convention). However, receiving nations establish specific parameters and requisites to process and determine refugee eligibility.

Most commonly, the concept associated with the movement of people at an international level is immigrants or migrants. In general, these definitions are based on the common understanding that a migrant or immigrant is a person moving to a country or nation different from the one of their nationality, residence, or citizenship. In cases of stateless persons, the definition is based on their nation or state of birth or habitual

residence. These umbrella concepts include permanent and temporary intention to make the new country their usual residence. Also, the definitions do not exclude irregular situations regarding the documentation or visa status. The critical element of these classifications is that the receiving nation or state is understood as a new place of residence—this differentiated immigration phenomenon with tourism or business-related trips.

These concepts are necessary to clarify in light of the contemporary developments in Latin America's intraregional movement of people. This is especially relevant in countries such as Colombia and Venezuela or Mexico and Guatemala that have shared borders and fluid flows of people in these border regions.

For the primary goal of this dissertation—to examine the news media representation of intraregional migration in Latin America—the next section will offer a historical overview of the main characteristic of immigration in the region, in order to later develop the cases of the three countries of interest in connection with the period of this study (2014-2018).

Immigration in Latin America

Historical perspective

This context aims to historically situate the unprecedented movement of intraregional migrants in the region in the last decade, which is the motivation of this dissertation.

Latin America is a region formed by transatlantic and international immigrants, who deeply impacted the construction of communities and the states. (Moya, 2018). Also,

the fluidity of border movements between countries has been a critical feature of the migration patterns in the region. Latin America became a migrants-sender region increasingly during the second half of the 20th century, which also correlated with an increase of movement across the regions' countries (Foote & Goebel, 2014; IOM, 2020; Goebel, 2016).

Besides the waves of Spaniard colonizers in the 15th century, two other periods of the region's history are relevant regarding the amount and origin of migrants. During the 18th and 19th century, African slaves forcible settled, mostly, into the Caribbean and Brazil. During the mid-19th century and middle of the 20th century, countries like Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay received thousands of European immigrants, the largest influx of migrants in the history of Latin America, that resembles the waves of transatlantic migration in Canada and the United States.

In addition to the European migrants, Jews, Chinese, and members of the Ottoman empire came into the region. The substantial amount of immigrants from the Ottoman empire (e.g., Armenians, Lebanese, Palestinians) with Turkish passports created phenomenon like in Chile, a country that until today has the largest concentration of Palestinians outside of the Middle East (Baily, & Miguez, 2003; Clark, Hatton, & Williamson, 2003; Goebel, 2016; Moya, 2018).

Two key elements that emerged during the process of immigration in Latin America impacted the composition of society. First, the region experienced a high level of *Mestizaje* –Miscegenation– which is the mix between Europeans and Indigenous (e.g., Telles, 2007). In Latin America, as an extractive colony, the indigenous population was

used for labor and extraction mostly in mines. The *Mestizaje*, often a violent process, happened as a part of the colonization of the territories, from the 16th to the 19th century.

Besides the miscegenation of Indigenous with European conquerors, the Black slaves brought another element into the racial environment of the region: The *Mulattos*, the mixed between white Europeans and Black slaves (Telles, 2007; Twinam, 2015).

As a second critical element during the historical process of immigration in Latin America was the concept of “*Whitening*” among the governing elites. At the core of this idea of Whitening was the pressure and expectation for *Mestizos*, *Mulattos*, *Indigenous* to follow a European way of living. This means to endorse cultural and social norms based on Western European notions. As Jose Doming Sarmiento, an Argentinian president from the 19th century, once claimed, Latin America is in the “*struggle between European civilization and indigenous barbarism, between intelligence and matter*” (as quoted in Martínez-Echazábal, 1998, p. 25). The idea of a superior race became part of the very foundation of Latin America by the 19th century. Moreover, the views from social Darwinism and the European race as superior were ingrained at the core of the elite’s approach to governing the newly formed nation-states (Graham, 1990; Martínez-Echazábal, 1998)

The two elements derived from the immigration patterns in Latin America until the mid-20th century connect with this dissertation's objective at the contextual level. The racial divide and tensions that have marked the development of Latin American nations can be linked to the new waves of intraregional migration, particularly the arrival of Black immigration from Haiti and Colombian migrants into Chile. By looking at the historical role of race and immigration in the region, we can see the powerful linkage that

emerges between ethnicity, race, and origins of immigrants in the current waves of newcomers and the marginalization of these communities. All this movement, in other words, is happening in a region where "*pigmentocracy*" (Levitt, 2015), skin color or ethnic background determines significantly an individual's position in the social scale. This means, darker skin negatively affects social mobility, and in particular being Afro or Indigenous-descendant is correlated with discrimination and poverty (Chong, Ñopo, Ronconi, & Urquiola, 2008; Telles & Steele, 2012). This is relevant for this dissertation because the journalists interviewed for this project perceived that migrants are becoming part of the "poverty pockets" in the cities and towns where they settled. Thus, immigration becomes interconnected with poverty and, in general, there is a lack of media interest in covering poverty in these countries, which also translates into a disinterest in reporting about migration issues. More details about this will be unpacked during the section about journalists' perceptions of immigration in these countries.

Starting in 1960, Latin America shifted to a migrants-sender region, mostly of labor-oriented adults to areas in the Global North, especially the United States (Acosta & Freier, 2018). These were economic migrants seeking better work opportunities in developed countries. During that time, intraregional migration in the region was modest and concentrated mostly on neighboring countries' borders (Clark, Hatton, & Williamson, 2003).

As in other regions in the world, the trend of intraregional migration in Latin America (especially during the 1970-2000s) was driven by economic reasons and concentrated into nations experiencing economic bonanzas (e.g., Venezuela, Argentina, Brazil). During that time, political exiles from military dictatorships and a significant

number of Colombians fleeing internal conflict contributed to the share of intraregional migration.

Overall, intraregional migrants benefit from proximity to social networks and the opportunity to find a common language, religion, and cultural similarities in the host society (Berg & Besharov, 2016, p.66; Cerrutti, & Parrado, 2015; Pellegrino 2001).

Additionally, the end of military regimes in the region (during the 1980s) shifted the immigration policies from border security toward respect for human rights (Acosta & Freier, 2018; Cantor, Freier, & Gauci, 2015). Scholars argue that this human rights approach, at least at a discursive level, was crystallized in the South American Conference on Migration (SACM) established in the 2000s. This declaration promotes a positive perspective on immigration and explicitly condemns criminalization and securitization as policies toward immigration (SACM, 2020). Acosta and Freier explain that SACM has allowed South America to apply policies targeting irregular migrants under a frame of securitization, but at the same time prioritizing the human rights considerations and discourses (Acosta & Freier, 2018, p. 73). For instance, Freier (2016) calls this the “*reverse immigration policy paradox*” (analyzing in specific the case of Argentina, Ecuador and Brazil), in which there is a welcoming official discourse to irregular migrants but covertly actions to reject them, particularly those coming from Africa, Asia and the Caribbean (Freier, 2016, p. 152). These actions to reject irregular immigrants or restrict their presence translate for example, in the case of Argentina, in denying a path for residence to migrants entering clandestinely, or in the case of Ecuador, the extremely difficult process to apply for a residence permit after the expiration of a tourist visa.

From a policy perspective, this human rights approach/discourse shift to immigration after the end of military dictatorships is relevant for this dissertation's objective because Chile, Colombia, and Mexico implemented new visas and temporary work permits to deal with the current influx, but at the same time deportations and "assisted returns" were part of the contingency plans.

Furthermore, stricter barriers in developed countries, especially for undocumented migrants; the 2008 economic crisis and its negative impact in the labor market; and political and economic advances in countries of the region are some of the reason Latin America started to see more intraregional migration in recent years (Cerrutti & Parrado, 2015). During the writing process of this dissertation (Spring 2020), the world faced a global pandemic caused by Covid-19. The period of analysis and data collection in this project considered 2014-2018, and the effect of this global public health crisis is out of the scope of this study. Still, inevitably new immigration policies and impacts on migrant communities are expected to emerge as a result of Covid-19.

Overall, the historical context of Latin America as migrant receiver and sender region allows us to situate the events at the center of this dissertation: 1) The increased immigration movement of Venezuelans, Colombians, and Haitians in Chile; 2) The massive influx of Venezuelans in Colombia; and 3) A large number of Central Americans, including unaccompanied minors, crossing into Mexico.

Moreover, the above section touches briefly on issues such as the role of race and immigration and the shift on the political discourse after the fall of the military regimes in Latin America. Based on this context, the next section will introduce the key elements of the demographic changes in Chile, Colombia, and Mexico during 2014-2018.

Current movements and social dynamics

The case of Chile – The new destination for foreigners coming from non-neighbor countries.

Chile has a population of 19 million people. It is one of the Latin America's countries with the fastest economic growth in recent decades, and according to the World Bank it is a high-income nation⁷. Although it experienced a military dictatorship for 17 years (1973-1990), Chile has a long tradition of democratic governments. Despite persistent economic progress and political stability in the past thirty years, the country faces high levels of income inequality, and at least 30% of the population is financially vulnerable. This economic disparity partially explains a wave of social protests the country experienced in the Fall of 2019⁹.

Regarding migration, during the last decade, Chile has faced one of the most significant surges of immigrants among Latin American countries and became a regional destination for people (Doña Reveco, 2018). According to the U.N. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean and the International Labor Organization, between 2010 and 2015, immigration in Chile increased 4.9% each year (ECLAC-OIT, 2017), which was the fastest rate of growth among all countries in the region. But the most significant surge in absolute term started to materialize in 2014.

As in many other countries, the exact number of immigrants is complicated to calculate, and Chile is not the exception. Recent immigration patterns in the country are

⁷ [Chile. The World Bank.](#)

⁸ [Ibíd.](#)

⁹ [Chile: An Overview. Congressional Research Service.](#)

characterized by people entering Chile with a tourist status and applying for a working visa, mostly from other Latin American countries. However, if in 2014 the number of visas issued was 140K, in 2018 it was 438K¹⁰. According to other assessments, immigrants in Chile represent around 4.4% of the overall population of the country (INE, 2018). Moreover, between 2014 and 2019, 27% of the visas were assigned to Venezuelans nationals, follow by Peruvians –border nation– (17%), Haitian (16%), and Colombians (14%)¹¹. Although there are different visas categories (e.g., temporary, permanent), the number of documents issued by Chile serves as a proxy for the sudden and massive number of immigrants that the country received in the last decade. Only by 2019, the official estimation is that 1.492.522 foreign nationals live in Chile (an increase of more than 19% from 2018)¹². In the same year, 2019, Venezuelans represented 30.5% of all the foreigners in Chile, double the number from the second largest community (Peruvians).

The Venezuelan migration into Chile has increased at historical rates. During 2015-2016 there was a 111% increase in the number of Venezuelans, and in 2017, the annual migration rate from this country into Chile was 218% (IOM-Chile, 2018). The numbers of Colombians, Haitians, and Dominicans also have augmented in the last years, which adds to the historical Peruvian immigration pattern. During 2010-2014, Peruvians became the largest group granted permanent residency visas (IOM, 2017).

¹⁰ [Extranjeria-Chile, 2020](#)

¹¹ [Extranjeria-Chile, 2020](#)

¹² [Extranjeros residentes en Chile, 2019. Extranjeria Chile.](#)

Between 2014 and 2018 (the period of interest for this dissertation), Chile was under the government of the center-left president Michelle Bachelet. One of her goals was to change the 1975 immigration law, established during the military dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet, with an emphasis on border security. However, a new comprehensive immigration law never saw the light under her administration. In early 2018, the center-right politician Sebastian Piñera took office and proposed a new immigration law with a discursive emphasis on controlling immigration and tightening border controls (Doña Reveco, 2018). Still, as of mid-2020, this law is being discussed in the Chilean Congress. In addition to pushing for this immigration reform, Piñera, through executive orders, changed several visas categories and requirements, including modifications aiming to control Venezuelan and Haitian migration specifically.¹³

In a national survey from May 2019¹⁴, immigration appears as priority 13th that the government should focus on. The same survey in December 2019¹⁵, shows a drop of immigration as a priority issue and ranked it in the last place. Equally, another survey asked about immigration in Chile, starting in 2017¹⁶. In that year, the results of the question “*Do you think Chile has a major conflict¹⁷, a minor conflict or no conflict between Chileans and immigrants*” show that 38% of the people saw the conflict as large, and 46% said the conflict was minor; 15% said that there was no conflict. The same question in 2018 shows an increase of 6% of people saying the conflict between Chilean

¹³ [Presidencia Chile](#)

¹⁴ [CEP, May 2019](#)

¹⁵ [CEP, December 2019](#). Part of this drop of immigration as a concerning priority can be linked to the waves of social protests Chile experience from October 2019.

¹⁶ [Encuesta Bicentenario, PUC](#)

¹⁷ As a “*conflictual relationship*” between Chilean and immigrants.

and immigrants was large (44%). Another increment of 4% appears in 2019 regarding the large conflict. The same survey indicates that in 2018, 75% of the people perceived the amount of immigration as “excessive,” while in 2019, the percentage dropped to 70%.

The objective of reporting these few examples of public opinion results is to illustrate how immigration has become a topic that creates strong and polarized views among Chileans. The reasons behind this increasing opposition to immigrants are understudied. However, initial evidence suggests that individuals in municipalities with a large presence of immigrants, and negative perceptions about the performance of the national economy, tend to report more opposition to immigrants (González, Muñoz, & Mackenna, 2019). Also, in boroughs with a rapid increase of Haitian migration, the perception of crime and insecurity increases, but actual crime rates do not change (Severino & Visconti, 2020).

The complexity of this issue and the nuances also are explored in this dissertation using the interviews with the journalists from Chile and their perceptions of immigration in the country.

Overall, the trends and patterns of immigration in Chile show a sharp and drastic change in the country created by the inflow of migrants from other non-border Latin American countries (Venezuela, Colombia and Haiti) at an unprecedented rate. Therefore, Chile offers a compelling case to study news media coverage of this new social issue that has become salient in the public narrative. Of particular interest is the case of Black immigrants. As some scholars argue, Chile has neglected its “*Black history*” and the arrival of Haitian migrants has made the debate about race more

relevant. Moreover, based on colonial discourses, contemporary Chilean society constructs the concept of race based on the pervasive idea of “*Whitening*” that dominated the view of immigration during the 19th Century in this country and across Latin America (Tijoux, 2016; Véliz, 2018). As I will expand more in the section with empirical findings about Chile (Chapter 4), the salience of race is also reflected in the news coverage during 2014-2018. Although Haitian migration is not the largest migrant group, race plays a role in the high amount of news stories (compared to the other migrants’ groups) and the focus on the marginalization Haitians suffer when living in Chile.

The case of Colombia – The immigrant crisis

The sudden upsurge of Venezuelans in Colombia —an influx of more than 1.8 million people in the last five years¹⁸— has put to test the historical migration dynamic between these two neighboring nations. This unparalleled phenomenon centers the attention on how the national rhetoric is created toward this group —that is, the role of mass media in portraying this issue.

Colombia and Venezuela share more than 2,200 kilometers (~1,367 miles) of a continuous border, one of the most active migration corridors in Latin America (IOM, 2007). Historically, the border regions of both countries have experienced high mobility of people, mostly seeking job and trade opportunities. This has been defined as a “*pendulum migration*,” especially by Colombian authorities: That is, an immigration movement characterized by a frequent back and forth of Venezuelans within one day to

¹⁸ [Migracion Colombia and \(2020\)](#). According to the official numbers in 2016, the number of Venezuelans was 53.747 and by March 2020 the figure was 1.809.872. (1.025.638 Irregulars and 784.234 Regulars).

buy or sell products in Colombia, but not to permanently live in the country (Migración Colombia, 2018a;b).

Colombia has been considered a migrants-sender country, and a large number of these immigrants have settled throughout the years in Venezuela, representing the main flow of migrants to Venezuela (e.g., Cerrutti & Parrado, 2015). However, this dynamic has changed. Over the past few years, the Colombian border has experienced a record inflow of both Venezuelans and Colombian-Venezuelans, escaping the profound social, political, and economic crisis in Venezuela. In early 2018, the Colombian president, Juan Manuel Santos, labeled this influx as the “*most serious issue*” that the country was facing (Deutsche Welle, 2018). Others, particularly Western news media outlets and think-tanks, claim that Colombia and Brazil are dealing with a true Venezuelan refugee crisis, the worst of this type in Latin American history (Council on Foreign Relations, 2018a; Financial Times, 2018; Brookings, 2018; The Washington Post, 2018). According to the United Nations, by mid-2019, about 4 million Venezuelans have escaped the country, and in 2018 Venezuelans represented the largest nationality seeking asylum in the world (more than 340,000) (IOM, 2020).

Moreover, Venezuela's political and economic situation is expected to push more people out of the country. About four out of ten Venezuelans (36%) declared they would move permanently to a different country¹⁹. In 2014, around 22% of the people reported the intention to move from Venezuela, according to the same survey. Moreover, out of those who declared they would move out in the latter study, 13% said they would like to

¹⁹ [Gallup Millions of Venezuelans Say They Would Leave If They Could.](#)

move to Colombia; the United States comes first with 18% and Peru third with 12% of the preferences (Gallup, 2019).

As briefly mentioned above, the change in the pattern of immigration between Venezuela and Colombia can be explained by the spillover effect of the situation in Venezuela (Ruiz & Ruiz, 2017; Council of Foreign Relations, 2018b). Under President Nicolás Maduro, the country is facing a deep economic and social crisis contributing as the main push factor of the most massive migration movement in Venezuelan history (Ruiz & Ruiz, 2017). A comprehensive and historical analysis of the Venezuelan crisis is beyond the scope of this manuscript; however, there are clear indicators about the severity of the reality in Venezuela.

The crisis in Venezuela can be coupled with another development, but in Colombia. In 2016, the Colombian government reached a historic peace agreement with FARC-EP (*Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia – Ejército del Pueblo*). After more than 50 years of armed conflict between the Colombian government and *la guerrilla*, this peace deal set the stage for demilitarizing regions of the country that have faced violence and displacement of millions of Colombians (Equipo de Paz Gobierno, 2018). Also, the long conflict negatively impacted the country's economy, preventing a more substantial income per capita growth for decades ²⁰.

Colombia has a population close to 50 million people and more than 9 million are considered “*victims of the armed conflict*” (affected in some way), and within those, 8 million have been displaced because of the violence (Unidad para las Víctimas, 2020).

²⁰ [The World Bank: Colombia: Winning the war on poverty and inequality despite the odds.](#)

The number of deaths linked to the conflict is more than 220,000 (MPI, 2017). The five decades of civil war created a migration movement from Colombia to its neighboring countries Ecuador and Venezuela, and other nations around the world. By 2010, almost five million Colombians – about ten percent of the total population – were living abroad, the majority of them driven by forced migrations associated with drug trafficking and *guerrilla* violence (Wabgou, Vargas, & Carabali, 2012). With the instability in Venezuela, many Colombians are returning to their home country, putting extra pressure on the immigration system and the society as a whole, changing the migration dynamic between the two countries and in the region (MPI, 2017).

During most of the period of interest of this dissertation (2014-2018), Colombia was under the presidency of Juan Manuel Santos (2010-2018), a liberal center-right president. In August of 2018, Iván Duque, a conservative right-leaning politician succeeds Santos as president. Like other countries such as Peru and Brazil receiving large groups of Venezuelans, Colombia, mostly in 2017, started to issue special stay permits and border mobility cards to establish initial policies to manage the influx.²¹ Also, in 2018, Colombia launched the Administrative Register of Venezuelans in Colombia, as an initiative to count the Venezuelans living in the country.²²

Furthermore, survey data²³ indicates an increasingly negative perception of Venezuelan immigration in Colombia. For example, for the question *"Do you have a positive or negative opinion about the Venezuelans coming to Colombia"* in October

²¹ [Migration Policy Institute. A South American Migration Crisis: Venezuelan Outflows Test Neighbors' Hospitality.](#)

²² [RAMV Colombia](#)

²³ [Proyecto Migracion Venezuela](#)

2018, 42% had a favorable opinion, but in April 2020, only 15% did. Also, negative opinions grew from 52% (2018) to 81% (2020). The same data shows that five out of ten Colombians see immigration as a threat to security in 2020, while in 2019, the ratio was four out of ten.

Surveys earlier than 2018 are not abundant; however, a 2017 study conducted in Cucuta, a city on the border with Venezuela, shows that 66% of people perceived the immigration of Venezuelans and Colombian-Venezuelans as a threat to the town. Additionally, 37% said that the city should provide shelter and food, while 20% responded that authorities should do nothing (Cucuta Como Vamos, 2017).

A different study carried out during October of 2017 in Medellin, a city far from the Venezuelan border, offers a similar perspective on Colombians' concerns. For the question *"what are the most vulnerable issues that the Venezuelan immigration will affect,"* 75% said they worried about employment creation and social development. Respondents also declared that drug trafficking, prostitution, crime, overpopulation, underemployment, and poverty will increase because of Venezuelans. Interestingly, when people were asked, *"if a Venezuelan asks for help, would you give it to her/him?"* 88% answered Yes, and only 6% said No. When the question was, *"Do you agree that the Colombian government gives legal protection to Venezuelans,"* 80% said Yes (Universidad de Medellin, 2017). According to the researchers of this survey, people in Medellin believed Colombia should help Venezuelans but at the same time they blame them for different problems. One potential explanation for this contradiction, based on this survey data, is that people in Medellin are aware of the crisis in Venezuela and a

certain level of solidarity emerges; however, this empathy is also mixed with feelings of insecurity in their neighborhoods because of the sudden increase of newcomers.

In January 2018, one of the few national surveys asking about immigration indicated that 64% of Colombians agreed on giving Venezuelans temporary humanitarian help, 24% said they should be deported, and 12% agreed to grant them refugee status (La Gran Encuesta, 2018). This national data could be compared with previous assessments about the general opinion of foreigners and immigrants in Colombia before the Venezuelans' newest movement. In 2015, the Latinobarometro, a panel survey of 18 Latin American countries, showed that 39% of Colombians did not agree with the statement that "*foreigners come to the country to compete for jobs*", while 29% said that they agreed with the statement. In the same study, 49% opposed the idea that "*should there be a law to keep foreigner citizens out of the country,*" while 23% said they agreed with this assertion. (Latinobarometro, 2015).

The interviews with journalists in Colombia will serve as a point of contrast of the public opinion data explained above. Based on their perceptions, the reporters will explain some key points about the interplay between news media and the increasing negative perception of Venezuelans in Colombia.

Furthermore, the current movement of Venezuelans into Colombian territory offers a relevant case study to analyze the role of news media when the country faces a "immigration (refugee) crisis."

The case of Mexico – The sudden increase of Central American migration²⁴ as an immigration crisis

Mexico is known as a migrants-sender country (particularly to the United States), but in the last decade, the situation shifted with peaks of unaccompanied minors, family units and individual migrants from the Northern Triangle of Central America (Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador) arriving into the country. Most of these foreigners enter Mexico without a visa but with the hope to obtain some sort of protection in Mexico or the United States if they manage to cross both borders. According to Basok et al. (2015), the *Instituto Nacional de Migración de México* (INM) calculates the numbers of irregular immigration based on three components:

1. The number of people in Mexican detention centers that were planning to cross to the U.S.
2. The number of migrants detained by the U.S. immigration authority at the U.S.-Mexican border.
3. The volume of migrants who have entered the United States via Mexico.

Based on these measures, the INM estimates that between 1995 and 2011, 200,000 unauthorized migrants from Central America (mostly from El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala) journeyed across Mexico, some even more than once a year (Basok et al. 2015, p.4, Berumen et al. 2012).

Additionally, the situation of unaccompanied minors has been exceptional in the last few years. According to official Mexican data²⁵, in 2014, more than 23,000 minors

²⁴ Segments of this context was presented to the annual conference of the International Communication Association in 2018 in an individual paper and some excerpts are also part of an unpublished manuscript (Severino & Salas, 2020)

²⁵ [Secretaria Gobernacion Mexico. Niñas, niños y adolescentes en situación migratoria irregular, desde y en tránsito por México](#)

were arrested in this country, and in 2019 this number was 52,000. Another indicator of the increase transit of Central American family units and unaccompanied children comes from the apprehensions at the United States southern border.²⁶ The increase in arrests of these immigrants started to peak in 2014, but in 2019 reached a historical level. In that year, out of the nearly one million arrests at the U.S. Southern Border, about 474,000 were families and 76,000 children without any parent or legal guardian, most of them from Guatemala and Honduras.²⁷

The 2008 financial crisis in the United States, coupled with increased security at the U.S. southern border and swelling violence in the northern part of Mexico, contributed to keeping stable irregular immigration figures from 2009 -2011 (Basok et al. 2015, p.4, Berumen et al. 2012). But starting in 2012, the apprehensions increased. According to the *Programa Especial de Migraciones de Mexico*, PEM (Special Program for Migrations), since 2012, migrants from Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador have been rising at a stable rate with noticeable peaks (i.e., 2014 -2016 - 2018-2019).

Migration from Central America to Mexico and the United States is nothing new, but the peaks, mainly of 2014, 2016, and 2019, can be explained by a set of reasons. According to Androff (2016), unaccompanied children from Central America were fleeing to escape increasing violation of human rights in their home country, mostly attributed to the rise of drug-related organized crime (Androff, 2016). El Salvador and

²⁶ [US Customs and Border Protection. Southwest Border Migration FY 2019.](#)

²⁷ These number also considered Mexican families and unaccompanied minors but this nationality represents a low percentage compared with the cases of Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador (see [U.S. Border Patrol Southwest Border Apprehensions by Sector Fiscal Year 2019](#) for the detailed breakdown).

Honduras are among the countries with the highest homicide rate per 100,000 population in the world (UNODC, 2014). Moreover, the intention to migrate has become an indicator of how insecurity is a push factor for many in El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala (Hiskey et al., 2014:2016). As Hiskey et al. (2014:2016) explain, even when people were aware of increasing border security in the U.S. and the dangers of the journey through the northern part of Mexico, the intention to leave their country was stable if the person was a victim of violent crime in one of the Northern Triangle nations (El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala).

Family reunification also may have played a critical role during the new influx in 2014 and 2016. Androff (2016) explains that many Central American adults migrated to the U.S. before 2014. Because of the escalation of violence in the Northern Triangle, they want their spouses and children to join them. Another factor that could explain the new surge of migrants was a rumor spread by smugglers about the United States' granting amnesty to underage immigrants. As Androff argues, the myth was based on a misinterpretation of the Obama's administration DACA program (Deferred Action for Children Arrivals). This program gave immigration benefits to people that entered the United States before the age of 16 and were in the country since 2007 (Androff, 2016, p. 73).

Mexico is a country of about 130 million people, and it is the 11th largest economy in the world but faces problems of income inequality, social inclusion, and poverty²⁸. In the period analyzed for this dissertation (2014-2018), Mexico was under the presidency of Enrique Peña Nieto, a center-right politician from the Institutional

²⁸ [Mexico overview. The World Bank.](#)

Revolutionary Party (PRI). The PRI ruled Mexico for 70 years and was defeated in 2000. Peña Nieto represented the return to power for the PRI. However, after him, a left-leaning politician, Andrés Manuel López Obrador (AMLO), won the election and became the new president of Mexico on December 1, 2018.

During Peña Nieto's tenure, Mexico started the *Programa Frontera Sur*²⁹ (South Border Program) to regulate and control the immigration influx at the borders with Guatemala and Belize. The plan focuses on more infrastructure for border security, protection of immigrants, and seeking support from regional and international allies.³⁰ Also, as in other immigration contexts, the Mexican government started issuing special permits and visas for Central Americans. Additionally, by the end of Peña Nieto's presidency, his administration launched the *Estas en tu Casa* (Make yourself at home) program allowing Central Americans to obtain temporary work permits while their migration status was solved.³¹

Furthermore, the perception of Central American migration has become increasingly negative among the public. One of the most useful resources about immigration perception in Mexico is the *2015 Encuesta Nacional de Migración en México -UNAM* (The National Migration Survey). In this study, for example, 44.2% of women had a good opinion of the foreigners³² overall living in the country. The

²⁹ [Programa Frontera Sur](#)

³⁰ [Mexico's Southern Border Strategy: Programa Frontera Sur](#)

³¹ [Estas en tu Casa Program. Gobierno de Mexico](#)

³² One warning of the wording of the survey is the use of the word foreigners instead of immigrants. This could influence the responses.

percentage of men was a little lower, 36.9% and the overall negative opinion about foreigners was small, with 6.1% among men and 4.7% in women (UNAM, 2015).

The same survey asked about the number of foreigners living in Mexico: 18.4% answered that there were too many, 37.3% responded that the amount is adequate, and 27.5% said that there are few foreigners in Mexico. Nonetheless, when Mexicans were asked about the "*most discriminated foreigners in Mexico*," at the top of the list were people from Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador³³—the same source countries of the current immigration movements.

When looking at more recent survey data, there is evidence of the change to a more negative attitude toward immigrants. In a national study in 2019³⁴, 64% said that immigrants are a burden for the country, and they take jobs and benefits away from Mexicans; 20% said that immigrants are a benefit for the nation. Also, in the same survey, 39% stated that immigrants are responsible for more crime, and 55% favor deporting migrants back to their countries.

However, these numbers are a somewhat contradictory with public opinion data from 2018 regarding the Migrant Caravan³⁵ formed by thousands of Central Americans trying to reach the U.S., crossing Mexico. In a national survey³⁶, 52% supported the free transit of this Caravan through Mexico, while 32% opposed it arguing that the immigrants would cause problems in the job market, public services, and security.

³³ The authors of the National Migration Survey mentioned that almost 46% of the people surveyed did not answer this particular question.

³⁴ [Encuesta Reforma-The Washington Post](#)

³⁵ [IOM Migrant Caravans](#)

³⁶ [Encuesta de las Heras-Demotecnia. Caravana Migrante](#)

Moreover, 72% oppose Mexico building a wall along its southern border to keep immigrants away. Also, 60% said that Mexico acts toward Central Americans better than the United States treats Mexican migrants.

The examples of public opinion data are useful for this dissertation's objectives for two main reasons. First, they show an increasingly negative attitude towards immigrants in Mexico. Second, these numbers also illustrate the complexity of the issue and the potential contradiction that might emerge between the perception of Central Americans as *in-transit* migrants (e.g., Caravan) or Central Americans perceived as immigrants with plans to stay in Mexico in the long term. These complexities and nuances are explored with the journalists interviewed for this project and enriched by their perspective about the immigration of Central Americans.

In conclusion, this chapter started by offering an overview of the current global trends of immigration and then delving into the reality of the three case studies of this dissertation. In general, the numbers show that each of these countries (Chile, Colombia and Mexico) is facing a unique influx of newcomers from other Latin American nations. Across the three countries, the arrival of new migrants poses novel challenges for the hosting nations. For instance, in Mexico and Colombia, many foreigners seek asylum or refugee status, and these groups come from their "next door" neighbors escaping dire situations in their countries. The case is different in Chile, which is receiving mainly economic migrants but also from nations facing crises (Venezuela and Haiti). Also, in Chile, the Haitian migration makes salient race as an added element to the immigration debate.

Additionally, in the three countries, the trend in public opinion data shows an increasingly negative attitude toward new migrants. Perhaps a difference appears in Mexico and Colombia versus Chile. The first two countries show a certain level of contradiction between solidarity/empathy and opposition to immigrants. For example, the available data shows that Mexicans are in favor of the Migrant Caravans, but they worried about the problems Central Americans can bring to the nation. Similarly, in Colombia, data indicates that people are willing to help Venezuelans, but at the same time, they blame them for increasing insecurity. One potential explanation about the solidarity/empathy could be the geographical and cultural proximity of the immigrants coming into Mexico and Colombia. This topic will be expanded further with the accounts of journalists interviewed for this project.

These new demographic changes offer a valuable opportunity to research the role of the press in depicting this inflow of people and connect this representation(s) with reporting and writing practices in each country that help to shape the news content. Although this dissertation is not testing directly the effects of news on public perceptions, the evidence that I will be developing in the next chapters suggests a strong relationship between news media depiction of immigration and how people perceive the phenomenon. Therefore, the fact that news media has the “power” to shape attitudes about migration issues underscores the urgency also for understanding the decisions in a news organization that could “*explain*” why the news coverage about this topic is produced as it is.

CHAPTER 3

Immigration news and methodological approach

Introduction

This dissertation's main objective is to study the news media representation of intraregional immigration and immigrants in Latin America, using three case studies: Chile, Colombia, and Mexico. The analysis is in itself a comparative attempt to identify common trends and characteristics between these countries. As discussed in the previous chapter, the relevance of these nations as case studies is determined by the recent and sudden immigration influx they have experienced.

Mexico and Colombia represent cases of "*immigration or refugee crisis*" that resembles events in other regions of the world because of the magnitude and rapid increase in border crossings. Chile is an example of a steady and diverse demographic change mostly caused by Colombian, Venezuelan, and Haitian migration. The importance of studying this issue is twofold. On the one hand, it allows us to determine how journalism adapts and produces news of a novel phenomenon. The decisions reporters take to create the narrative about immigrants in their countries can influence how people perceive this issue and the policy discussion around it (Dell'Orto & Birchfield, 2013; Pérez, 2016). Additionally, examining immigration cases in developing countries provides evidence about newsroom practices that affect the production of stories about immigration. By considering these practices, there is a potential real-life connection between academic research and practitioners who work on these news stories.

Based on research, there are suggestions and observations to be made about the decisions taken by journalists in the immigration news beat.

Moreover, this dissertation's inductive nature aims to build some foundations for more research in this area across the Global South, particularly in Latin America, where the representation of immigrants in the news media has not been profusely examined yet. Thus, I will argue that, with such an unexplored area of research, a good starting point can be found in the literature produced about migration news in the Global North. Using this as a term of comparison, the goal is to identify similarities and differences that might emerge, leaving enough room for findings grounded in the complexity and distinctive context of each country (Mancini, Mazzoni, Barbieri, Damiani, & Gerli, 2019). In other words, and as I developed more extensively in Chapter 1, the objective of this project is not to assume that immigration news has similar characteristics because it covers the same topic. Instead, the goal is to determine how these similarities and differences manifest themselves in different and specific country contexts and what relationships might surface by examining how media works in these nations. At a theoretical level, this is important because this research understands news media and, in particular, professional journalism as a key social actor for the production of information required for democracy to work. At the core of this production of information is the work of reporters and journalists and their perceived role and values; thus, exploring the ways immigration news is “created” allows us to have a more complete picture of why news is produced as it is (Schudon, 2018; Hallin, 1992).

Also, the evidence indicates that most people are not exposed to immigrants in their daily lives, and they learn about immigration issues based on their media consumption (Lecheler, Matthes & Boomgaarden, 2019; Eberl, Meltzer, Heidenreich, Herrero, Theorin, Lind & Strömbäck, 2018; Hopkins, 2009). Moreover, this current project assumes that news media constitute an essential space where meaning about reality is negotiated and constructed, and media discourses set the parameters for policy decisions in the case of immigration (Boomgaarden & Vliegenthart, 2009; Dell’Orto & Birchfield, 2013; Schulz, 2004). Therefore, the metaphors, frames, narratives, and discourses news media use to depict, portray, and “*talk*” about migrants are critical to understanding policy decision-making processes, public opinion, and how the public conversation evolves about this topic.

Similarly, this dissertation argues that the specific approaches to depict immigration are affected by newsrooms routines of journalists and editors. Therefore, the analysis of the content of immigration stories serves a starting point to establish relationships between content and production decisions of news in specific contexts (Hallin & Mancini, 2004; Guerrero & Marquez-Ramirez, 2014). Consequently, this research does not examine the effect or impact of news on the audience or the “public.” Instead, it looks at the content of news media, and it proposes connections about potential elements that influence why this “end product” of news organizations (i.e., immigration news) emerges as it does in these countries.

Research questions

In order to explore the issue of immigration news in Latin America, this research was guided by two overarching questions and other, more specific ones that add nuances and align with the complexity of the phenomenon.

Research Question 1: *What is the representation of intraregional immigration in the news media in Latin America?*

1.1) How has news media in Latin America covered intraregional immigration issues during 2014-2018?

What are the media frames found in the news media coverage of immigration in Mexico, Colombia, and Chile between 2014 and 2018?

- a. *Are news frames or characteristics of the news stories frequently found in the Global North news media present in the coverage of immigration in the Global South?*
- b. *Is there a "reciprocity" or "solidarity" frame predominant in any of the three countries regarding immigration? (e.g. Colombia- Venezuela)*
- c. *What is the importance of race in the coverage of immigration in each country?*
- d. *What is the importance of the transition from being a migrants-sender nation to a migrants-receiving country?*
- e. *Do frame differences correlate with the perceived political leaning of the media organization?*
- f. *Are there other frames emerging from each country that are specific to the reality of these nations?*

Research Question 2: *How do journalists in Latin America describe their newsmaking practices in covering immigration?*

2.1) *Is there a relationship between their self-perceived practices and the aggregate news coverage produced by news media in these countries?*

Such relationship will be analyzed by comparing and contrasting the practices discussed by the journalists with the following textual elements:

- a. *Words and concepts to label migrants and immigration*
- b. *The relevance of the country of origin of immigration influxes*
- c. *Sources used to cover immigration issues.*
- d. *Use of numbers and statistics to cover the phenomenon*

The following section provides the relevant theoretical framework that specifically informs these research questions and provides context for the answers to these inquiries. First, I will introduce and discuss some of the most common findings in the Global North literature about the representation of immigrants and immigration-related topics in the news media. These findings will serve as a comparison point for the emerging results of this dissertation about the representation of immigration in Latin America. Also, I will expand the specific evidence of framing and immigration news. Then, I will review the factors that may impact the news production about immigration, the sources represented in the coverage, and how this could relate to the reality of the countries of interest of this project and the research questions. Moreover, I will explore the context of violence in reporting immigration, a distinctive contextual element in Mexico and Colombia. This violence factor is not commonly found in reporting migration in the developed world and has a potential impact on the perceived role and practices of journalists in these countries.

Finally, after reviewing the relevant theory informing this research, I will detail the methodology, to lastly provide the research questions once again, in direct connection with the method and data used to answer them.

Contrary to the case of Latin America and the Global South in general, the way news media represents immigrants has been frequently studied in developed countries (e.g., United States, Canada, Western European nations and Australia) and generally centered in the South-North migration. There are different methodological and epistemological approaches to researching news immigration. Scholars have studied immigration and media mostly from sociolinguistics (e.g., Chavez, 2008, Santa Ana, 1999), social psychology (e.g., Esses, Medianu & Lawson, 2013), political science (e.g., Abrajano, & Hajnal, 2015; Haynes, Merolla, Ramakrishnan, 2016; Hopkins, 2010; Perez, 2017) and mass communication (e.g., Benson 2014; de Vreese, Boomgaarden, & Semetko, 2011; Dell’Orto & Birchfield, 2013; Suro, 2008; Kim, Carvalho, Davis & Mullins, 2011). However, at the core of all these approaches lies the same inquiry, about the emphasis, focuses, and angles news media takes to depict immigrants and immigration as a relevant social phenomenon and the potential impact of these representations.

Regardless of the methodological approach, there are commonalities in how news media reports immigration in the United States and Western European countries. First, there is an agreement that migratory issues are mostly relevant for news organizations when “*something newsworthy happens*,” even for the local or neighborhood press. This

³⁷ Few portions of this contextual information have been used in three of my individual conference papers although in different versions (ISA, 2018, ICA, 2018, ISA, 2019) and some very limited number of paragraphs are adapted from an unpublished manuscript: *Moving north: Central American migration and the discourse of newspapers in the United States and Mexico*. (Severino & Salas, 2020).

means that only specific events trigger coverage on the topic. Even if a community has a significant presence of foreign-born population, this does not translate into a consistent flow of immigration information in their news outlets (Eberl, Meltzer, Heidenreich, Herrero, Theorien, & Strömbäck, 2018; Fabregat, Medina-Bravo, & Meyers, 2019).

Another of the features across the coverage of immigration in news media is the use of a humanitarian or human-interest approach to telling immigrants' stories, which means a dramatic human account about a specific migrant (e.g., Berry, Garcia-Blanco & Moore, 2015; Benson, 2014; Figenschou & Thorbjørnsrud, 2015; Hallin, 2015; Lawlor, & Tolley, 2017; Suro, 2011). This humanitarian or human-interest angle conceives immigrants as victims of injustices and systematic violations of human rights in the receiving society, and typically focuses on a single case or a particular group of immigrants (Benson, 2014; Masini, Van Aelst, Zerback, Reinemann, Mancini, Mazzoni, & Coen, 2018). Also, this storytelling approach can be found when advocacy groups demand respect for the human rights of immigrants, and they push for policy changes from local authorities (Berry, Garcia-Blanco & Moore, 2015).

The humanitarian strategy relies on the "*human victim*" to portray the suffering. It tends to provide details that can make the reader connect at an emotional level to the case presented in the news story. Although this humanitarian approach can elicit more feelings of empathy or "*positive feelings*" among readers, it has been argued that it is not always the case. The sense of proximity that a humanitarian news reporting about immigration can create among the audience does not always occur. Rather it depends on how the news transmits this humanitarian angle (e.g., based on drama or policy debate). Also, a backlash from the audience could occur based on the frequency of the coverage.

A high amount of reporting using the humanitarian strategy could lead to “*compassion fatigue*,” making the audience less sympathetic to the tragedy depicted in news stories (Chouliaraki, 2006; Berry, Garcia-Blanco & Moore, 2015; Zelizer & Allan, 2010).

Therefore, to reduce the “*compassion fatigue*,” reporters seek alternative methods to cover human stories. For instance, they choose angles based on policy solutions, political debate, the benefit of the migrants to the host society, or, in more extreme cases, they stop covering the issue at all (McIntyre, 2019).

Additionally, another commonality in the news coverage of immigration in the Global North is the connection to a specific demographic. In the United States, the concept of immigrants is linked to Latinos (Abrajano & Hajnal, 2015; Perez, 2016; Valentino, Brader, & Jardina, 2013, Zamith, 2014) and in the case of Europe, it is associated with Muslims or North Africans (Bennett, Ter Wal, Lipinski, 2011; Ogan, Willnat, Pennington, & Bashir, 2014; Zamith, 2014). This is interesting because, in different historical periods, these populations have not represented the largest immigration waves in these countries, particularly Latinos in the United States.³⁸

Moreover, Pérez (2016) argues that, generally, media coverage about immigration in the United States has been heavily based on a negative depiction of Latino migrants. According to this author, this created an adverse bias toward Latinos, which translates into a negative opinion of immigrants in general, regardless of their origin. Pérez explains that this implicit association has damaging consequences in any policy-making process about immigration in the United States (Pérez, 2016). Similarly, the negative depiction of immigrants is also found in Europe. In Western European nations, news reporting

³⁸ [Pew Research Center. Key findings about U.S. immigrants.](#)

portrays immigrants heavily based on negative angles, such as delinquents and criminals. Also, the news stories are usually conflict-centered and foster stereotyping, which contributes to emphasizing immigrants as threats to the host society (Eberl, Meltzer, Heidenreich, Herrero, Theorien, & Strömbäck, 2018; Fabregat, Medina-Bravo, & Meyers, 2019).³⁹

Another salient characteristic of the coverage of immigration in developed nations is the focus on illegality. Suro (2008) and Pérez (2016) posit that there has been an unbalanced coverage of illegal immigration in the United States, even though undocumented migrants do not represent the majority of the country's foreign-born population. "*American journalism has produced a narrative that conditions the public to associate immigration with illegality, crisis, controversy, and government failure*" (Suro, 2008, p.VI). Therefore, this emphasis on illegality infuses a negative tone on the perception of immigration in general. Similarly, Kim et al. (2011) show that news media in the United States links illegality with crime, which promotes negative stereotypes about immigrants (particularly Latinos) and contributes to making the distinction between legal and illegal immigrants confusing. Across Europe, particularly in British newspapers, the focus on illegal immigration has been at the center of the news coverage in recent history, and it represents a disproportional coverage of illegal migrants above legal workers, international students or other lawful migrants (Blinder, & Allen, 2016; Allen, 2016)

³⁹ Exceptions have been documented regarding this representation at initial moments of newcomers' inflow. For example, during the European Refugee Crisis, news media moved from an empathetic coverage of refugees to more hostile news reporting, which aligns with the prevailing negative depiction of immigrants explained in this section. For details, see *Dell'Orto, & Wetzstein, 2018*, in particular, *Chapters 5 and 14*.

Furthermore, authors that have studied immigration from sociolinguistics, such as Santa Ana (1998;1999), Chávez (2008) and Cisneros (2008) explain that Latino immigrants in the United States have been depicted as a threat (Chavez, 2008), as pollutants (Cisneros, 2008) and associated to diseases, invasion, and floods (Santa Ana, 1998;1999). The authors claim that the media's language decisions have contributed to a negative attitude towards immigrants. Also, in the context of the United States, Hopkins (2010) suggests that *"hostile political reactions to neighboring immigrants are most likely when communities undergo sudden influxes of immigrants and when salient national rhetoric reinforces the threat"* (Hopkins, 2010, p. 40). The author develops this in the context of the politicized places hypothesis, which studies the interaction between local and national conditions that help to construct immigration as a threat. Therefore, Hopkins attributes the anti-immigrant sentiment in local communities with increasing immigration, to the national rhetoric represented in the news media coverage of the issue. Therefore, the role of media content is at the center of how people perceived the phenomenon of immigration in their communities.

In Canada's context, immigration is generally reported under economic terms (Lawlor, & Tolley, 2017), but political elites and media create a crisis mentality about immigration because of the uncertainty the issue triggers in the general public. This affects the *dehumanization* of immigrants, which could lead to extreme behaviors toward these groups (Esses et al., 2013).

Concerning Latin America, very limited evidence from practitioners suggests that trends such as stereotypes, linkage to crime, and stories centered on human interest and drama are common in Mexican immigration coverage. Also, the absence of structural

causes or more in-depth reporting of the push factors are prevalent in Mexican news media (Narcia, 2015; Knight Center, 2011). In Brazil, the approach to immigration news shows that it can be erratic —positive and negative— depending on economic and social factors, but it is commonly associated with partisan political coverage. Furthermore, there are traits of racism when covering Black immigrants, such as Haitians in Brazil (Rocha, 2015).

Another point of analysis that emerges from the literature about immigration news in the Global North is the nuances between migrants/immigrants versus refugees' coverage. This type of studies erupted particularly after the Syrian refugee crisis in Europe (2015), and it is where most of the academic research has been produced (Colombo, 2018; Brändle, Eisele, & Trenz, 2019; Dell'Orto & Wetzstein, 2018; Eberl et al., 2018; Greussing, & Boomgaarden, 2017; Lecheler, Matthes & Boomgaarden, 2019). Although some of the news features in the coverage of *immigration* are also present in the case of news about *refugees*, scholars have found distinctive characteristics worth explaining.

For instance, in the case of refugees, the concept of “crisis” is a commonality among the news storytelling. Crisis appears connected not only to the massive amount of people fleeing war-torn places (e.g., Syria), but also the lack of control and contingency plans to deal with it (Dell'Orto & Wetzstein, 2018).

Likewise, commonly the representation of refugees is dominated by administrative actions taken to deal with the arrival. The coverage also highlights how these newcomers are a security threat or a drain on public resources (economic burden), and whether their refugee claims are valid or legitimate. These emphases can create less

than expected humanitarian approaches in reporting refugees (Colombo, 2018; Greussing, & Boomgaarden, 2017; Lawlor & Tolley, 2017). Additionally, scholars argue that in the case of a refugee crisis, state and governmental actors appear as clear agenda-setters and they dominate the public discourse about the issue (Brändle, Eisele, & Trenz, 2019). Lastly, it has also been argued that news media in the Global North, particularly in the U.S., inclines to combine or uses interchangeably the words immigrants and refugees, which creates a blurry distinction for the audience about the difference between the two terms (Hoewe, 2018).

The characteristics of the coverage of refugees in developed countries exposed some of the distinctions around the media coverage of immigration, and the ramification of the issue when refugees and asylum seekers are incorporated in the landscape. Moreover, the objective to provide the most critical differences between the news reporting of refugees and immigrants in the Global North is linked to the cases of Mexico and Colombia in this dissertation. Both countries are dealing with an immigration crisis that is strictly similar to what in other contexts has been labeled as a refugee crisis: In the case of Colombia, Venezuelans coming from a crisis-torn country, and in Mexico, people (including unaccompanied minors) escaping violence and insecurity from Central America's Northern Triangle.

For this dissertation's objective, the common features of the news media coverage about immigration in the developed world, are a point of evaluation and a foundation for potential similarities and differences in the case of three Latin American countries (Chile, Colombia, and Mexico). Based on the journalists' perceived role and routines, the nature of immigration as an emotionally sensitive phenomenon, and the pervasive role of

governments in the news agenda in these countries, the expectation is that the coverage by news media in these nations shares some characteristics of the media content from the Global North. For example, since immigration is usually linked to a humanitarian emergency or a crisis, the humanitarian-type approaches are also expected to be relevant in Latin America. However, the prevailing cultural roots, religion, language, and borders fluidity (Cerrutti & Parrado, 2015; Lawrence, 2011) might reduce the connection between migrants and cultural threats or threats, in general, to the host society. Similarly, the presence of illegality is not expected to be as salient because of the historical relationship between migrants-receiver and migrants-sender countries (Mexico–Guatemala, and Colombia–Venezuela) and the flexibility of mobility within Latin America.

Therefore, the expectation is that news media focuses more on the country of origin than specifically charged labels such as “*illegal migrants*.” The proximity could also bring the presence of solidarity or reciprocity components into the media narrative, acknowledging the geographical and cultural ties between countries.

Additionally, for Chile, a specific feature on the coverage is likely to emerge caused by the Black migration from Haiti. This migrant group should be more frequently covered in the media even when they are not necessarily the more significant number of foreign-born in the country.

The prevalence of state, governmental or official voices commonly linked to setting the media agenda, especially on refugees’ coverage in the Global North, is anticipated to be a salient component in Latin America – particularly for Mexico and Colombia, where there is already a long tradition of producing news reporting heavily

based on “*official voices,*” and they are facing a “*refugee crisis*” (see Chapter 5 and 6 for review).

Overall, the literature about immigration in developed countries shows that dramatic human cases, illegality, specific demographics (e.g., Latinos, Muslims), and dehumanization are the conventional approaches with which news media represented immigration. Also, distinctive features appear when covering refugees, such as the concept of crisis and the focus on the measures to contain and manage the influx. However, at the core of all of these characteristics, is the specific way news media and journalists communicate and shape the immigration message. One method of understanding how the content is crafted is looking into the concept of frame, which is the methodology used for part of the content analysis in this dissertation.

Framing and the issue of immigration

One of the objectives of this research is to analyze media frames of immigration news in Mexico, Colombia, and Chile. The concept of frame is a broad research program and not a unified theoretical paradigm (Reese, 2007) that crosses several disciplines (sociology, psychology, political science, economics), which makes it an interesting research method with many applications.

Framing is an essential practice of news reporting, and it is a crucial aspect of media coverage (Chong & Druckman, 2007). News framing assumes that “*how an issue is characterized in news reports can influence how it is understood by audiences*” (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007, p.11).

Also, the stylistic decisions on how words, phrases, images, and presenter styles are distributed to an audience are essential in news frames (Chong & Druckman, 2007; Gamson & Modigliani, 1987). Gamson and Modigliani describe the concept of frame as a central organizing storyline or idea that gives meaning and connection to a series of events. Additionally, as Entman (1993) explains, news framing is selecting an aspect of reality and making it more salient. Importantly, this choice also promotes “*a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described*” (Entman, 1993, p.52). Therefore, for Entman, frames shape our interpretation, evaluation, and potential solutions of an issue, which is fostered by how news media decides to highlight a specific aspect of reality. Thus, framing is not just a way to present a topic or event; it implies a particular position about the issue, giving meaning to it, and suggesting how to think about it (Entman, 1993: 2003; Nelson & Kinder, 1996). As such, the way reporters and journalists frame news might influence opinions regarding a topic or event.

Scholars explain that by making an element more salient, news framing can shape an individual’s opinion and understanding of an issue. This is possible because framing stresses “*specific elements or features of a broader controversy, reducing a usually complex issue down to one or two central aspects*” (Nelson, Clawson, & Oxley, 1997, p.568). However, besides meaning and understanding of an event, news frames imply a policy direction or an “*answer to what should be done about the issue*” (Gamson & Modigliani, 1994, p.376). The idea that news framing could influence how we understand an issue has been linked to effects on attitudes and consequent actions.

Scheufele (1999) proposes “*the individual-level effect of frames,*” which argues that news framing influence on thoughts might have an impact on following behaviors (Chong & Druckman 2007; Scheufele, 1999). Scheufele also explains the process of “*frame setting,*” meaning the influence of different frames on thoughts and the underlying psychological process in place. Therefore, to understand how different frames could trigger dissimilar reactions, the literature identifies the two most common types of frames: *Episodic* and *Thematic* (Iyengar, 1996).

Episodic frames are those in which news coverage depicts issues based on a specific event or individual (e.g., the story of an undocumented immigrant crossing into the U.S.). Episodic news frames are events-based or a personalized story that tends to explain a broader topic with concrete examples and with the expectation to be more compelling for the audience (Iyengar, 1996, p.62). Based on content analysis in the U.S., Iyengar (1991) empirically showed that television news reports are either presented within episodic or thematic frames. The objective of his research was to examine the influence of news on how the audience attributes political accountability and in what ways news shape people's attitudes and opinions (Iyengar, 1991; Ericson, 1993). Iyengar found that when the news is presented within an episodic framing, people “*see accountability in individualistic terms (single problem, single issue, single individual responsibility, single immediate solution), rather than in terms of wider social forces and problems understood through a consistent ideological lens*” (Iyengar, 1991; Ericson, 1993). Therefore, episodic frames put a “*face*” on an issue (Aaroe, 2011).

On the other hand, *thematic frames* are those in which political issues are presented in a broader, more general, and abstract way. They are characterized by placing

the news in a context and within common trends (Iyengar, 1996, p.62). As Iyengar defines them, thematic frames put issues within "*collective outcome, public policy debates, and historical trends*" (Iyengar, 1991, p. 18). Hence, a thematic frame is an issue inserted in a general context (Aaroe, 2011; Iyengar, 1996). For instance, the coverage of a new influx of immigrants from Central America, focusing on the economic cost for Mexico, could fit the thematic frame category. In this type of news framing, the focus of the attention is distributed among different actors or institutions. Thematic frames portray the information impersonally, and there is no one "*face*" in the story but many "*other faces*" or even no faces at all.

In the case of immigration, this dichotomous approach between thematic versus episodic frames is too broad to study the complexities this social issue entails. For instance, nuances about issue-specific frames such as crime, security, integration are left out if analysis of immigration is conducted just under the umbrella concept of thematic and episodic framing. Thus, I argue that episodic and thematic frames are a secondary step on framing analysis for immigration news, an argument that is supported by several scholars' work.

The academic research on immigration news coverage has used episodic and thematic frames and identified, within these two categories, other specific frames (e.g., victim or hero frame as episodic). This approach is more exhaustive to grasp the immigration debates in the media (Abrajano & Hajnal, 2015; Abrajano, & Singh, 2009; Haynes, Merolla & Ramakrishnan, 2016).

For example, Haynes, Merolla, and Ramakrishnan (2016) explore the use of tone (pro-immigration, anti-immigration and neutral), episodic frames, and policy-specific (or

issue framing) in liberal and conservative mainstream outlets in the United States. They explain that issue frames have a more significant effect on public perception about immigration than episodic and equivalency frames (or if the media label immigrants as illegal or undocumented, for example). The authors show that when the issue of migrant legalization is framed as "opportunity to become citizens," it has a stronger impact of supporting legalization than when framing it as amnesty, which is the preferred frame in conservative mainstream media outlets. Additionally, they argue that the negative tone of the coverage tends to have a more significant effect on public opinion. Similarly, others have also tested the role of tone as a way to frame immigration but including in the framing analysis the idea of policy-solution and ethnic minority (Abrajano & Hajnal, 2015; Abrajano, & Singh, 2009). As an example, Abrajano and Hajnal explain that a positive tone is when a news article reports about the economic benefits of immigration to the country. A negative tone is a news article where immigrants are linked to criminal activities.

Furthermore, these authors explain that news media creates a threat narrative about fiscal, social, and cultural consequences of immigration, which, combined with a demographic change in the United States, fostered political division along party and ethnic lines.

As it is clear from these examples above, episodic and thematic frames categories in the case of immigration are much richer when combined into a larger and detailed analytical framework. This methodological strategy has also been used in comparative migration and media research, particularly in studies that explore exclusively the content of media and do not test the effects on public opinion. This is particularly relevant in this

dissertation's case because its central focus is to understand how news media represents migration to make a meaningful connection with factors that could explain the production of the coverage as it is (e.g., journalistic decisions and how media works in each country).

For instance, in his study about the difference between the United States and France on covering immigration, Benson (2014) developed detailed frames to analyze news stories: Victim (global economy, humanitarian, racism/xenophobia), hero (cultural diversity, integration, good worker), and threat (jobs, public order, fiscal, national cohesion). In his framing analysis, he found that in the United States, the most prevalent way journalists approach immigration is by using a frame that focuses on the individual and episodic aspect of an immigrant story. The author calls this a "*humanitarian frame*" of migration news, which, along with the *public order* frame are the most relevant in the U.S. and France. This humanitarian frame is in itself an episodic frame, but Benson provides a more exhaustive classification and categories of frames that enrich the empirical result of his research. For Benson, the predominance of this frame in the United States is due to the media system's being dominated by commercial and instrumental political ends, rather than a journalistic system shaped by civic and cultural purposes, as could be the case of France. Therefore, the humanitarian frame in the U.S. could be linked to a market strategy to attract readers.

One of the problems with the *humanitarian frame* is that it leaves out of the reporting underlying structural factors that cause and influence migratory flows (Benson, 2014; Suro, 2011). However, in a comparative framing analysis between Norway, the U.S., and France, Figenschou and Thorbjørnsrud (2015) explain that even when the

majority of articles take a humanitarian or case-based approach, this does not translate into less quality reporting. Instead, this journalistic narrative decision provides a tool to communicate, through the migrants' lens, the complexity of the issue that increases the quality of journalism. They also explain that the presence of a humanitarian frame is not mutually exclusive of having a different perspective on immigration in a news article. This study shows evidence that contradicts the common assumption that migration is portrayed as a dangerous and anonymous threat.

Similarly, Zamith (2014) studies the news wire agencies Associated Press (AP) and Agence France-Presse (AFP) to assess how they covered immigration in the United States and France during 2007-2011. He uses a methodological combination of reporters' lexical decisions, such as positive or negative adjectives and specific frames, such as border security, law, and order, national identity, social movements, and legal, among others. The author finds that less than a third of the coverage in France by the AP and AFP used the frame of illegality. However, in the United States, more than half of the coverage by these newswire agencies focused on illegality (Zamith, 2014).

Following a similar framing analysis methodology, but particularly in the case of five European countries (Spain, Italy, Germany, UK, and Sweden), Berry, Garcia-Blanco, and Moore (2015) found that during the refugee crisis in 2015 in the Mediterranean Sea, threat themes in media coverage were more prevalent in Italy, Spain, and the United Kingdom than in Germany and Sweden. In general, the Swedish news coverage was the most positive among all the countries, while the UK reporting was the most negative (Berry, Garcia-Blanco, & Moore, 2015). They also explain that depending on the country, news media uses different language when reporting on this movement of people.

In Spain, the most common word used was "immigrants," but in Germany and Sweden, the media preferred "refugee" and "asylum-seekers." Arguably, these language decisions set the tone for the type of local and national debate about the immigration influx.

The methodological approach of framing in comparative research about immigration news appears to be consistent in capturing the complexities of this social issue. This literature, focused on the developed world, agrees on the richness of inductive analysis to understand the reality of each country's media narrative. Also, there is an agreement in complementing more inductive analysis with other methods and strategies to increase the number of news articles for the examination (e.g., quantitative framing analysis, computer-assisted research).

Moreover, scholars researching immigration based their studies on the common framing categories found in the existing literature. Also, somewhat consistent is the use of frame types linked to a more positive understanding of migrants (benefit frames) and others that depict immigrants under a more negative light (threat frames). One of the crucial things absent from these examples of framing analysis is the voice of the reporters and journalists covering the issue of immigration. This is central if the line of research, as the case of this dissertation, tries to connect variables that explain the type of immigration news present in different societies. Although the core of framing analysis is trying to comprehend the end product of news outlets (e.g., a news article), there is also value in bringing attention to contextual, structural and individual decision-making issues on the production of this news reporting that may affect the frame that people will be exposed to.

Evidence about the variables influencing the news coverage of immigration

Shoemaker and Reese offer a five-level hierarchy model to try to explain what shapes media content in general: 1) the characteristics of the individual reporter, 2) routines and practices in which the individual reporter operates, 3) the media organization where the individuals develop their work (roles, media structure, and internal policies), 4) social institution and the relationship with other similar institutions, 5) the social system, which represents the most macro level where constructs such as ideology influence the content (Shoemaker & Reese, 2014, p. 8). Some academic work has tried to connect these variables developed by Shoemaker and Reese in the specific case of immigration news. For instance, Benson (2014) has adopted the idea of the journalistic field (i.e., Bourdieu) that encompasses the concept of logic or practices within a media organization and the structure or ecology in which the institutions are operating. The author explains that the journalistic field is structured into two heteronomous poles: A civic nonmarket pole (e.g., France) and market pole (e.g., the United States), and the predominant journalistic field is a predictor of the type of immigration news produced in each country. Benson's approach deals more with the macro and mezzo level of analysis of journalistic news production. His strategy of combining framing analysis with a more structural perspective of how media works in different countries is a methodological approach that importantly informed this dissertation project. Therefore, framing categories used by this author are part of the frames adapted for this research. Also relevant for my study are his theoretical concepts regarding the role of media systems as a variable that impacts the production of immigration news.

Furthermore, in an attempt to analyze macro-level issues in the production of immigration news, Mancini et al. (2019) offer four predominant variables that influence the coverage comparing four European countries (Belgium, Germany, Italy, and the United Kingdom). The first variable is national belonging. This means how geographical proximity affects the ways news is communicated and the role of "*domestication*" of the events. The newspaper genre is the second variable they explain, based on the newspaper's decision to cover the issue using a human-interest story (e.g., episodic) versus news analysis (e.g., thematic). In the case of the news genre, they argued that human interest stories are typically portraying the immigrant in a positive light and the news analyses depict immigration as a more problematic matter. Most of these news analyses are embedded in editorial and opinion pieces.

In third place, Mancini et al. (2019) explain that political orientation also offers some explanation about how immigration is reported. Center-right newspapers are more prone to a narrative that endorses what they call "*parochialisms*" (very "nation-based" discourse), and center-left outlets offer a more cosmopolitan perspective on the problems associated with immigration. Additionally, they found that media ownership (the fourth variable) and media concentration do not affect how newspapers produce immigration news. Therefore, national belonging, news genre, and political orientation are the most significant in shaping immigration coverage.

The examples of comparative studies about media and immigration described here offer rich theoretical and methodological information about the reality of Europe and the United States. They open an opportunity to conduct comparative research, guided by their

results and findings, on underexplored regions of the world, such as Latin America, where immigration is an increasingly relevant social issue.

Furthermore, the hierarchical model proposed by Shoemaker and Reese will guide the different aspects this dissertation is studying. For example, the three first levels will be mostly addressed by the interviews conducted with twenty journalists in Latin America:

1. The characteristics of the individual communicator
2. Routines and practices in which the individual reporter operates
3. The media organization where individuals develop their work

Similarly, levels four and five will be explored using previous research, analysis, and also the interviews:

4. Social institution and the relationship with other similar institutions.
5. The social system, which represents the most macro level where construct such as ideology influence the content. Based on this dissertation's scope, the emphasis will be on the media system aspect (level four) in each country, although it will also provide preliminary analysis for level five (e.g., the context of violence).

In the sections above, I have discussed the relevance of framing analysis in immigration news and some of the best approaches to research this topic using this concept/methodology. I have also provided initial evidence about the variables that might affect the production of immigration news in general. The chapters dedicated to each country (Chile, Colombia, and Mexico) further describe the emerging literature on how media works and journalistic roles, values, and practices in their particular country

contexts. This information is essential because it represents a crucial variable that influences news reporting.

However, immigration news research in the Global North also centers the analysis in another specific component: The *voices or sources* that are present and dominate the news stories. The importance of the findings from the developed countries in the case of voices is pivotal because frames are closely connected with the sources of information that reporters used to write their stories (Benson & Wood, 2015). Hence, by knowing more about the voices captured in the storytelling, the connections with the frames could be even more fruitful. Also, as listed in the research question, this following section matters as a theoretical context for the presence of sources in the case of Latin American immigration news reporting.

Who gets to speak in immigration news?

For this dissertation's objective, sources are generally defined as people or institutions reporters access to gather the information that helps shape the meaning of news reporting (McQuail, 2005, p.322). Commonly the relationship between sources and journalists is one about a power dynamic -- the power to control and spin a message that will potentially have an effect on the public and in the society more in general (Berkowitz, 2020; Carlson, 2016). As Berkowitz argues, at the heart of this relationship is the question "*who gets a voice*", which literally means the degree to which mainstream voices dominate media messages and how much do minorities emerge as authoritative figures in news stories. This question ties directly with the research on immigration news and the sources used in this type of reporting.

Multi-country studies in the Global North show that in general, governmental and political official voices are the predominant sources in the coverage of immigration, and immigrants are normally underrepresented although they are the main focus of the story (Benson, & Wood, 2015; Chouliaraki, & Zaborowski, 2017; Masini et al., 2018; Thorbjørnsrud, & Ustad Figenschou, 2016; Tyler, & Marciniak, 2013).

For instance, Masini et al., (2018), in their comparative study of Germany, Belgium, Italy, and the UK, find that the most predominant source category was "National Politics" (i.e., politicians and government). Close to 50% of the news articles with one source category correspond to "National Politics." Immigrants only ranked as the fourth source category, with relatively low frequency compared to the other three groups above. Only in 6% of the news article using one source, immigrants are the unique voice. Similarly, Thorbjørnsrud, & Ustad Figenschou (2016) show that less than 10% of the quoted sources were immigrants across news articles in the U.S., France, and Norway.

The agreement among authors is that immigrants and refugees are relegated to a secondary role as a news source with a very "low" voice. This is paradoxical because they are at the center of the issue news media is covering. Another point in common across developed countries is that the presence of immigrants as voices in the stories is positively correlated with depicting them as victims. Also, this representation of the foreign-born population helps to shape the frames of the reporting. For instance, more presence of immigrants as active speakers in the news is related to fewer threat frames. However, academics argue that immigrants are always "*silent victims*" (Masini et al., 2018). Other researchers, however, have shown that even when portrayed as victims, if

migrants' voices are "*heard*" in the news coverage, they are not always *passive* victims. Thus, immigrants as sources, in these cases, contribute to the perception of this group as politically engaged and active in the community (Thorbjørnsrud, & Ustad Figenschou, 2016).

Additionally, as Benson and Wood (2015) explain, governmental voices make salient news frames such as the problem immigration represents for society. But, when immigrants and pro-immigration voices emerge as active sources in the news narrative, the news stories' framing revolves around the solutions immigrants need. This influence in the framing from migrants and pro-immigrants interest groups can contribute to more empathetic coverage toward the newcomers.

Overall the comparative evidence from the Global North reveals that governmental and political voices are, by far, the most relevant and frequently used in the coverage of immigration. Also, the presence of these sources has a direct impact on the way news media frames the issue.

Based on the literature from the Global North, the expectation for the cases analyzed in this dissertation is that sources follow a similar pattern. That is, governmental voices should be predominant in Chile, Colombia, and Mexico because, in these countries, the official discourse is pervasive in many other topics (e.g., "*prensa oficialista*"). However, one potential difference with the Global North is that governmental voices in Latin America might not necessarily link immigration with a problem, because of the common historical and cultural roots. Additionally, the presence of immigrants as a less frequent voices is also expected in Latin America because of the extensive reliance on official communication (i.e., press releases).

Additionally, in Latin America, particularly in Mexico and Colombia, another variable can explain the pervasive presence of governmental and political sources: The context of violence and the dangers for practicing journalism as a potential deterrent in covering immigration in places where organized crime is present. Therefore, relying on official communication can be both cost-efficient but also safer for most reporters in these two countries.

The context of violence in the coverage of immigration news marks a sharp departure point with the literature in the Global North. None of the studies analyzed above are conducted in countries where organized crime and drug-trafficking criminal groups influence the reporting of migration issues. While the specific cases are discussed at length in the chapters about Mexico and Colombia, in the next section, I will provide information about the potential effect that a violent context can have on journalistic roles and practices. This evidence will better inform the empirical results in Mexico and Colombia and helps to address in part the research question about the self-reflection journalists do in covering migration stories.

Reporting immigration in a violent context

Thus far, I have presented a review of the literature about immigration news in the Global North with an emphasis on the features that relate more closely to this dissertation. The objective is to establish a contrast point with the reality emerging from the Latin American nations examined for this research. Nevertheless, a unique characteristic arises from the Global South regarding immigration news: The context of systematic and organized violence that immigrants and journalists face in many places in

Latin America. This environment of violence is expected to have detrimental consequences for how the coverage of immigration is made. Instead of providing the case of Mexico and Colombia in detail (this is developed in the corresponding chapters), this section will discuss the effects that a violent context has on journalists' performance, with an emphasis on Latin America.

According to the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), between 1992 and 2020, 1,490 journalists and media workers have been killed globally (CPJ, 2020). In the case of Latin America, in 2019 alone, eighteen journalists were killed, a record number since 2000 (IFJ, 2019). Why are journalists being killed or silenced in Latin America? At the heart of this answer is the perceived role of the press to provide a flow of information for a functional democracy. This role is based on denouncing corruption and keep a check on power and the powerful (commonly known as the "*watchdog*" role), and violence prevents this role from being fully achieved (Berger, 2020; Cottle, Sambrook, & Mosdell, 2016; Hughes, & Lawson, 2005; Hughes et al., 2017; Hughes, & Vorobyeva, 2019; Simon, 2014; Waisbord, 2002:2007).

Many countries in Latin America share characteristics of the definition of "*uncivil societies*" regarding the press and media freedom (Sambrook, 2016). As Sambrook argues, an uncivil society can take a form of a dictatorship, war zones, or places where crime or corruption negatively affect social, political, and economic institutions. From a journalism perspective, this means areas closed to scrutiny, inspection, and accountability from the press, which signifies blind spots of information, diminishing the quantity and quality of the news stories society requires.

For Latin American countries, these places with little press scrutiny are generally present in specific regions, often far from capital cities. From a democratic journalism perspective, these areas have in common the absence of a *state* (or strong state institutions) that cannot provide the basis for the functioning of the press. As Waisbord (2007) posits, "*state absence facilitates anti-press violence, undermines the economic basis for news organizations, and weakens the rule of law.*" (Waisbord, 2007, p.115).

Similarly, Hughes & Svorobyeva (2019) argues that countries with mixed political or hybrid regimes are particularly dangerous for journalism. The authors explain that these regimes present subnational authoritarian regions where the respect for rights and electoral accountability is lacking. Therefore, the protection of journalists is minimal, increasing threats and murders (Hughes, & Vorobyeva, 2019).

In terms of the impact of violence on the role of journalists, research has found that in places like Mexico and Colombia, journalists feel less freedom to report news about organized crime and have reduced autonomy to write and cover stories (Hughes et al., 2016). Likewise, the effect of violence, in general, is more impactful among local reporters because they live in communities where organized crime operates. Their involvement in the local reality makes them more careful in the things they can or cannot report or write about, weakening their autonomy and freedom, which creates "*unspeakable facts*" in these communities (Høiby, 2020; Sambrook, 2016). The implications go beyond the local community, because the inability to cover stories linked to organized crime and corruption in particular regions by local reporters also prevents these stories from being known at a national level. Moreover, even when national reporters try to investigate in dangerous areas with the help of a fixer, they expose these

fixers (local journalists) to the dangers of retaliation once the stories are published nationally (Høiby, 2020)

Far from exhaustive, this section provides a piece of contextual information useful when exploring reporters' perceived role in Mexico and Colombia covering immigration. Based on the literature explained above, the expectation is that journalists interviewed in these two countries would express concern about their safety when reporting stories about migratory movements in specific regions. Therefore, it is also anticipated, in the content analysis, a lack of investigative stories featuring migration issues outside the capital city. The fact that this research project focuses on national media might inhibit the emergence of violence as a relevant restriction for covering immigration. Perhaps the most interesting point about violence is the lack of in-depth reporting pieces in areas controlled by organized crime.

The literature about immigration news in the Global North examined above is the foundation for the comparative nature of this research project. Frames, sources, and other trends present in the depiction of immigration in news media in developed countries are crucial elements to contrast in the case of the Global South. However, this dissertation's inductive and exploratory approach leaves the door open for emerging findings based on idiosyncratic and the specific context in each country. In the next section, I will detail the method and the data gathering process to answer each of this project's research questions. Additionally, I will justify some methodological decisions and approaches. By the end of the following section, I will connect the research questions with specific data sources.

Method and Research Design

To the best of my knowledge, no current academic research has compared the news media representation of immigrants in Latin America in an exhaustive form. As explained in the theoretical framework, most of the existing literature revolves around the role of news in portraying immigrants in the developed world. Therefore, one of the methodological challenges of this present research is finding theoretical approaches, based on the existing literature about immigration and media, that can be “adapted” to understand the phenomenon in Latin America. Therefore, this study tries to be cautious about following each country’s reality as different and unique. At the same time, the objective is to extract some initial theoretical arguments about immigration coverage in the Global South, and about journalistic practices from the emerging commonalities and differences in these three case studies.

Thus, to answer the research questions, I use an exploratory (inductive) approach based on content analysis and semi-structured interviews with journalists. The methodology is informed by Creswell & Poth (2016) approach of cross-cases-analysis, the relevance of analysis of themes within case studies, and the interpretation of the meaning of the cases (p.74-76).

In this section, I will develop the different steps of the research design.

1. Content Analysis

The content analysis is one of the most crucial methodological tasks for this project because it offers the empirical evidence about the representation of immigration in the media in these three countries. The analysis followed these steps:

1. News media outlet selection and articles collection

This step deals with the sample creation for the news frame analysis. This research focuses on news articles published in print and online from 2014-2018 in each of the three countries from selected media outlets, which will serve as a proxy of the national news environment. The five-year period allows us to have a corpus of data that helps identify specific events that may have triggered more coverage about the issue. Also, this period between 2014-2018 captures the rapid demographic changes in the three case studies. Moreover, this study does not analyze broadcasting material, for cost and logistical constraints in accessing the content for all three countries; instead, it focuses on the text content of newspapers, both print and online.

The selection of newspapers and media outlets was driven by two main criteria:

a) Quantitative assessment: National coverage and circulation (e.g., Factiva, Census of Print Media in Mexico, Valida for Chile). In addition to the news articles from the print edition, the content incorporates the web version of each of the newspapers selected (e.g., El Espectador + elespectador.com). Also, web traffic rankings and other reports were used to determine the relevancy of the news outlets (e.g., Alexa Amazon and Reuters DNR 2019).

In the case of Chile and Mexico, the Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2019 (Reuters DNR, 2019) was a crucial resource to inform the outlets selection based on the ranking listed there. For Colombia and Mexico, the Media Ownership Monitor project from Reporters without Borders provided additional information to select the newspapers. Additionally, academic research has also focused on the coverage of the largest newspapers in the case of these countries (e.g., Chile: El Mercurio and La

Tercera; Valenzuela, Piña, & Ramírez, 2017, Colombia: El Tiempo and El Espectador; Muñoz, & Sánchez, 2013, Mexico: El Universal: Idoyaga et al. 2012).

Besides traditional and national newspapers, this research added web-only news outlets to analyze a changing media environment in each country, and the potential difference of this type of informational media platforms. Most of these digital-only news media appears in either the Alexa Amazon ranking for web traffic (Alexa Amazon, 2019) or the Reuters DNR 2019.

b) Qualitative assessment: In addition to the quantitative metrics, I used a subjective evaluation of tradition, prestige, and quality of these newspapers and news websites based on personal communication with local sources. I had contextual conversations with ten journalists, former journalists, and academics in the region. Table 1 has the detail for the country and current occupation for these experts.

Table 1: List of sources to assess media environment and outlet selection

Francisca Skoknic	Journalist/ Academic	Female	Chile
Paulette Desormeaux	Journalist/ Academic	Female	Chile
Enrique Uribe Jongbloed	Academic	Male	Colombia
Liliana Gutierrez	Academic	Female	Colombia
Cristobal Vasquez	Journalist	Male	Colombia
Victor Garcia Perdomo	Academic/former reporter	Male	Colombia
Nathaniel Parish Flannery	Journalist/ writer	Male	Mexico
Melissa Martinez	Academic/practitioner	Female	Mexico
Manuel Guerrero	Academic	Male	Mexico
Pablo Gaitan	Academic	Male	Mexico

Based on the quantitative and qualitative assessments, Table 2 shows the list of news outlets by country⁴⁰, type of newspaper and circulation. Also, it provides a column that indicates the data sources used to collect the news articles for analysis.

Table 2: News sources by country

Country	Type	Local/National	Data Source	Circulation/Traffic
CHILE				
El Mercurio	Newspaper-print	National	DataBase (Factiva)	125,986
La Tercera	Newspaper-print	National	DataBase (Factiva)	85226 (~77,478)
emol.com	Newspaper - web	National	Web Scraping	Alexa 5th / Reuters 1st
latercera.com	Newspaper - web	National	Web Scraping	Alexa 24th / Reuters 10th
El Ciudadano.cl	Web	National	Web Scraping	Reuters 12th
El Mostrador.cl	Web	National	Web Scraping	Reuters 8th
The Clinic.cl	Weekly - web	National	Web Scraping	Reuters 16th
<i>Source: ALEXA Amazon 2019(web Traffic), FACTIVA (Dow Jones), Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2019, Valida</i>				
COLOMBIA				
El Tiempo	Newspaper - print	National	DataBase (Factiva)	240, 238
El Espectador	Newspaper - print	National	DataBase (Factiva)	NR (~240,000)
eltiempo.com	Newspaper web	National	Web Scraping	Alexa 19th
elespectador.com	Newspaper web	National	Web Scraping	Alex 37th
Semana.com	Weekly – print & web	National	Web Scraping	MOM
Minuto 30.com	Web	National/regional	Web Scraping	Alexa 6th/MOM
La Silla Vacía.com	Web	National	Web Scraping	MOM
<i>Source: Media Ownership Monitor RSF (MOM), ALEXA Amazon 2019 (web Traffic), FACTIVA (Dow Jones), Encuesta General de Medios 2016</i>				
MEXICO				
El Universal	Newspaper-print	National	DataBase (Factiva)	133,400

⁴⁰ Since Mexican media market is bigger, I added one extra newspaper in comparison to the five from Chile and Colombia.

Reforma	Newspaper-print	National	DataBase (Factiva)	138,875
Milenio	Newspaper-print	National	Web Scraping	99,827
La Jornada	Newspaper-print	National	DataBase (Factiva)	NA
Reforma.com	Newspaper web	National	Web Scraping	Reuters 8th
Milenio.com	Newspaper web	National	Web Scraping	Alexa 31st
Lajornada.com	Web	National	Web Scraping	Reuters 14th
Eluniversal.com	Newspaper web	National	Web Scraping	Alexa 23th / Reuters 1st
Aristegui Noticias	Web	National	Web Scraping	Reuters 2nd/MOM
SDP	Web	National	Web Scraping	Alexa 24th/MOM
<i>Source:</i> National Census of Print Media in Mexico, Media Ownership Monitor RSF (MOM), ALEXA 2019				

Moreover, two of the main challenges for the collection of the news articles were:

1) Not being able to gather the information directly in the field; 2) To access the print and web articles from 2014-2018 from a centralized source. Unlike researching the United States or European media outlets, there is not yet a comprehensive database to collect all the news articles from Latin American news sources, including websites and digital-only platforms. To try to minimize the potential adverse effect of this, I used the following resources:

Together with a computer scientist⁴¹ we developed a strategy to harvest the news articles from the news websites in these three countries and create a unique database for this project. This strategy includes the use of software-assisted techniques to collect the text from each news article and convert it into a pdf. to analyze them individually. To create this comprehensive database, I used three primary resources: 1) The news outlet

⁴¹ Daniel A. Ortega (Universidad de Concepcion- daortega@udec.cl).

websites 2) The Internet Archive (Wayback Machine)⁴² 3) Factiva⁴³ (when available) for the mainstream news outlets, and their print and sometimes web versions of news articles. Appendix 1 explains in detail the process and method used for data mining.

Table 3 shows the different steps and the random sample created for the final analysis.

After the web scraping for each news site, the news articles were filtered using a search string⁴⁴ and then, when available, the Factiva articles were merged along with the scraped ones. Once cleaned for duplication, the final corpus of potentially relevant articles was 20,734⁴⁵. Because this represents too massive a number of articles to code manually, the next step was to create a sample to conduct a relevancy coding, that is to manually assess if an item was relevant to the objective of this study. To conduct this step a random sample was selected using the following criteria:

- 1) 10% of news articles of all the newspapers with 1,100 or more stories.
- 2) 20% for outlets with 500-1,100 news articles,
- 3) The outlets with 500 articles and below the analysis considered all the news stories⁴⁶.

The method was similar to a stratified approach, meaning the sample considered a percentage per news outlet per year⁴⁷. By choosing this method of sampling, I ensured

⁴² Search Terms for the web scraping: **CHILE:** "inmigrantes", "migrantes", "refugiados", "haitianos", "colombianos", "venezolanos", "peruanos", "bolivianos" **COLOMBIA:** "inmigrantes", "migrantes", "venezolanos", "refugiados" **MEXICO** "centroamericanos", "centro américa", "américa central", "guatemaltecos", "hondureños", "salvadoreños", "inmigrantes", "migrantes", "refugiados"

⁴³ Search string for Factiva: **COLOMBIA:** venez* AND (inmigra* OR migra* OR refugi*), **CHILE** (haiti* OR colombi* OR venez* OR peru* OR bolivi*) AND (inmigra* OR migra* OR refugi*) **MEXICO:** (inmigra* OR migra* OR refugi* or extranjer*) AND (centroamerican* OR centro america OR america Central OR guatemala* OR hondur* OR el salvador OR salvadoren*)

⁴⁴ Search string for narrow search and merged. **Colombia:** venez* AND (inmigra* OR migra* OR refugi* OR extranjer*). **Chile:** (haiti* OR colombi* OR venez* OR peru* OR bolivi*) AND (inmigra* OR migra* OR refugi* or extranjer*). **Mexico:** (inmigra* OR migra* OR refugi* or extranjer*) AND (centroamerican* OR centro america OR america Central OR guatemala* OR hondur* OR el salvador OR salvadoren*)

⁴⁵ [Database and sample for content analysis accessible in this link.](#)

⁴⁶ To determine these percentages, I conducted at least two manual testing to see if these levels of sampling (at least at 10%) would capture enough relevant articles.

⁴⁷ Rounding occurred.

more representativity of the content for each newspaper yearly. Moreover, all the digital-only newspaper that had initially fewer news articles were not sampled; therefore, the relevancy coding was done in all the news retrieved from their websites (except SDP Mexico). The total number of articles analyzed manually for relevancy was 3,165.

Table 3. News Articles and sampling

Country	Source	Scrapping (w/Narrow)	Factiva (w/Narrow)	Union	Duplicated	Finals	Sample
Chile	El Ciudadano	1067	0	1067	0	1067	211
Chile	El Mostrador	280	0	280	0	280	280
Chile	Emol	676	1440	2116	4	2112	209
Chile	La Tercera	296	938	1234	33	1201	117
Chile	The Clinic	262	0	262	0	262	262
Colombia	El Espectador	1632	1131	2763	169	2594	257
Colombia	El Tiempo	1784	464	2248	38	2210	219
Colombia	La Semana	674	0	674	0	674	133
Colombia	La Silla Vacía	67	0	67	0	67	67
Colombia	Minuto 30	102	0	102	0	102	102
Mexico	Aristegui Noticias	264	0	264	0	264	264
Mexico	La Jornada	569	2262	2831	5	2826	281
Mexico	Milenio	373	1370	1743	52	1691	167
Mexico	Reforma	0	2808	2808	1	2807	279
Mexico	SDP Noticias	632	0	632	0	632	125
Mexico	Universal	174	1789	1963	18	1945	192
						20,734	3,165

2. Coding procedure for relevancy and content.

The content analysis for this project is based on two steps: relevancy and content (including frames) (e.g., Riffe, Lacy & Fico, 2014; D'Angelo, Kuypers & Ebrary, 2010).

The relevancy coding was based on the sample of the news articles (3,165). The first step of the relevancy coding was to assess intercoder reliability⁴⁸. I worked with a trained research assistant using a relevancy protocol/codebook (Appendix 2). We had four training sessions and at least three iterations of reliability coding to adjust the protocol and our criteria. The levels of agreements were⁴⁹: Chile 94%; Krippendorff's $\alpha=0.87$. Colombia 92% Krippendorff's $\alpha=0.83$. Mexico 87% Krippendorff's $\alpha=0.70$. After achieving acceptable levels of intercoder reliability (Lombard, Snyder-Duch, & Bracken, 2002), we coded the 3,165 stories (evenly distributed). The result was N= 1,792 news articles relevant to the objectives of this study (i.e., news stories about intraregional migration). The relevancy coding also serves as a source of inductive reading and immersion into the news corpus. This step provided valuable information for the frame categories developed for this research.

After the relevancy coding was completed, I manually reviewed all of the 1,792 articles⁵⁰ to reassess the relevancy. This evaluation and variation are explained in detail in each case study (Chapters 4, 5 and 6).

The next step after determining the final subsample of relevant articles was to code for content. This content examination includes Frames, Sources, Use of Numerical Trends, and Word Choice.

The decision was to conduct the content analysis using me as the only coder. The advantage of this is having a very rich understanding of the data. The downside is that

⁴⁸ The subsample for intercoding reliability considered around four news article per outlet per year, which is close to a 10% of the 3,165. Since the digital-only newspaper stories are all contained in the 3,165 there were not excluded for the subsample. Therefore, we could assume some kind of duplication. For the rest of the news outlets the subsample was drawn from the universe (N=20,734), although duplication could occur in these cases is less likely.

⁴⁹ I used <http://dfreelon.org/utis/recalfront/> for alphas and levels of agreement.

⁵⁰ [Database and sample for content analysis accessible here.](#)

intercoder reliability was impossible to calculate, although scholars have argued for the viability of one coder⁵¹. Moreover, the manual content coding was conducted using a detailed codebook (Appendix 3) that was developed exclusively for this project guided by the literature about immigration news in the Global North. Appendix 3 also explains the coding for sources and the presence of numerical data in each news story.

For the quantitative framing analysis, I adapted the definitions from the operationalization in comparative research about immigration of Benson (2014), Berry, Garcia-Blanco (2015), and De Vreese, Boomgaarden & Semetko (2011). Additionally, country-specific frames are defined based on my inductive immersion analysis of the news articles and previous research on this topic in Chile, Colombia and Mexico. Also, the expectation was that a news article can have multiple frames contained in its text, therefore I developed the analysis using a ranking type approach. Table 4 offers the definitions of the frames used in the analysis. Based on Benson's idea of discursive indicators, each frame definition encompasses several topics or themes. The analysis of each news article was conducted using each frame's definition, as an umbrella concept, and by looking for the presence of discursive indicators in every news story. For example, the Victim frame could be Political and Economic, Humanitarian/Human Rights, or Racism, and Xenophobia. All of these types of Victim frames also have a specific definition of discursive indicators to facilitate the coding process.

Table 4. Definition of frames

Frames	Definition/ discursive indicator ⁵² (How news media describe and cover the issue of intraregional migration)
1) <i>Victim</i>	

⁵¹ Some scholar has explored the viability of one-coder approach (see Liebrecht, 2015; Downe-Wamboldt, 1992; Bulut Sürdü, Özsozgun Çalışkan, & Esen, 2020; Singh, & Pandey, 2019).

⁵² Benson (2014).

<i>Political and economic</i>	Immigration is caused by problems in the immigrants' home country, affecting their ability to remain in their nations. They are victims of scarce economic opportunities, political instability, violence, and abuses which are social determinants that affect the individual decision to migrate. Therefore, this definition is aiming to identify the presence of push-factors triggering migration.
<i>Humanitarian/human rights</i>	Immigrants are victims in the host country or receiving nation of poverty, lack of access to health care, violence, human trafficking, access to fair legal process, and organized crime. Moreover, they are in danger while crossing borders, on their journey, and they are victims of violation of human rights. Also, immigrants are victims of abuses by governmental institutions and business practices. The suffering of immigrants is central in this narrative.
<i>Racism/Xenophobia</i>	Immigrants are victims of hate, crime, and discrimination in the host country or receiving nation. This includes violence (physical or verbal) based on ethnicity, country of origin, and/or religion. Discrimination and the discussion about this issue are part of this frame.
<i>2) A threat for the host country</i>	
<i>Economic</i>	Immigrants and immigration, in general, are linked to a fiscal burden (negative impact on the local economy), as resources need to be allocated to deal with this issue. Also, immigrants are associated with taking local jobs, creating a negative impact on wages, and sharing public resources intended for locals.
<i>Cultural</i>	Immigrants bring values and habits that challenge the way of living in the community they settle in, negatively impacting the host country. Moreover, the culture of the immigrant group undermines or goes against a perceived national identity creating tension with the receiving society.
<i>Security/Public Order</i>	Immigrants coming into the host country -legally or irregularly- represent a threat to the rule of law in the host society (they engage in unlawful activities). They are linked to breaking the law and committing crimes such as drug trafficking, robbery or others. Also, they are associated with disrupting the environment, overcrowding public spaces, and bothering locals.
<i>Health</i>	Immigrants, and immigration in general, are portrayed as a threat to public health, carrying diseases and creating a burden to the hosting nation's health system
<i>Border security</i>	Immigrants create a problem at the borders and country checkpoints. They pose a threat to the migration institution capacity. They are disrupting the borders and threatening the stability of the receiving country borders' institutions and communities.
<i>3) Benefit for the host country</i>	
<i>Economic/good worker</i>	Immigrants, and immigration in general, are linked to a positive impact on the country's economic system. The immigrants are good and hardworking, which contributes to the society where they are migrating to. The skilled workers are contributing to the growth of the host country. Non-skilled workers take jobs that are not being filled by locals, having a positive effect on the host country's economy.
<i>Cultural/diversity</i>	Immigrants bring new cultural values and traditions, having a positive influence on the host society. New cuisine, music, language, sports, and arts are portrayed as a positive contribution to the host country that

	fosters a better immigrants' adaptation to the receiving culture. Also, the host society is implementing events to foster cultural diversity and the news article focuses on these events.
<i>Integration/Assimilation</i>	Immigrants are willing and enthusiastic to quickly adapt to the cultural norms of the receiving country. Immigrants respect the rule of law and their civic duties. Immigrants are linked to success stories of integration into their host communities, creating a positive impact. Also, the host society is implementing assimilation events or policies, and these are central in the storytelling.
<i>4) Political responsibility</i>	
<i>International cooperation and Relations</i>	Immigration is an issue that requires regional collaboration between countries dealing with the matter. The responsibility is not allocated into one specific country and needs the attention of many different international political actors. Here the role of foreign governmental and international organization emerges as central in the narrative.
<i>Policy solutions and Debate</i>	Immigration has generated a specific change of policy in the receiving country. Authorities have to implement policy solutions to face the immigration influx. Changes in visas, specific documentation, or containment solutions are part of contingency plans. Additionally, immigration triggers political debate and discussion about the ideas on how to control or deal with the influx. There could be cases in which the debate of ideas appears connected to conflict between political actors.
<i>5) Country specific frames</i>	<i>*Using the framing approaches from the Global North constrains the emergence of frames unexplored in the literature about immigration. Therefore, these are frames that try to expand the study of immigration news from a comparative perspective.</i>
<i>Salience of race</i>	Immigrants from Afro-descended origins, such as Haitians and Caribbean Colombians, are particularly salient in receiving nations with minimal history of Afro descendants (e.g., Chile). Therefore, in the news coverage race will also be prominent in describing their immigration experience, becoming central to the storyline.
<i>Solidarity/Reciprocity</i>	Immigrants are welcomed based on the historical relationship between border countries (Colombia- Venezuela /Mexico-Guatemala). There is a sense of moral responsibility and giving back to the immigrants, coming to seek a better future in a neighbor country because of the shared history and cultural roots.
<i>Transitionality</i>	Immigration is a new phenomenon for the country and is taking many by surprise. This is particularly salient in historically migrants-sender nations such as Colombia and Mexico that are experiencing a transition to be a migrants-receiving country. Immigration flows are closely linked to the in-transit phenomenon, but also the role of countries as refugee-receiving nations.

3. Textual analysis and words choice

In addition to the framing examination, I analyzed a random sample of news articles per country (around 120 in each). Based on the tradition of textual media analysis (Creswell & Poth 2016; McKee, 2003; Tuchman, 2002; van Dijk, 2002), I did a close reading of this group of news articles, writing observations and notes that allow for

detecting emerging topics and themes to 1) better inform the findings from the framing coding and 2) discover nuances and other emphases in the coverage not necessarily contained in the defined frames. The overall goal was to have an in-depth understanding of the news reporting to establish better and richer connections with the interviews content⁵³.

Likewise, another component of the content analysis was identifying the word choices present in immigration news (Hoewe, 2018; Haynes, Merolla, Ramakrishnan, 2016). The objective of this step was to determine the presence of labels that could be found in the Global North (e.g., illegals) and detect frequent words that can also enrich the framing analysis. To conduct this step a computational code helped to determine the presence of words in the entire sample obtained after the relevancy coding⁵⁴. Unlike a common word cloud or frequency count, this method detects the presence of a particular concept or term in the headline and the rest of each news article separately. Therefore, if the word is present more than once in the news article, it would only be recorded once. Thus, instead of frequency, this strategy accounts for the presence and occurrence of concepts or terms, which allows excluding potential news articles that use words repetitively.

Overall the content analysis has several parts that will be reported separately in each empirical chapter: 1) Framing analysis; 2) Source presence; 3) Use of numerical figures (full codebook available in Appendix 3); 4) Textual and word choices. The specific units of study are explained below.

Units of analysis for content analysis

⁵³ These findings are reported separately in each empirical Chapter (4,5,6).

⁵⁴ The list of words was made based on the close reading and coding of each of the news stories. Appendix 4 has the words used.

1. The manual framing coding: 1) The headline, lede paragraph, and first paragraphs (defined as the first 200 words) of all news articles⁵⁵. Textual analysis 2) in-depth textual analysis of a random sample of around 120 news articles for each country
2. The first and other sources are analyzed manually on all the 1,792 news articles in the headline, lede paragraph, and first paragraph (defined as the first 200 words).
3. The presence of statistics and numerical trends is analyzed manually on all the 1,792, headlines, and lede and first paragraph (defined as the first 200 words).
4. The presence of words and labels is done on all the 1,792 news articles using an automated programming code⁵⁷.

The second crucial source of data to answer the research questions for this dissertation are the interviews with journalists from the newspapers from which the content was analyzed in each country.

2) Interviews

I conducted 20 semi-structured interviews⁵⁸ (40-60 minutes) with reporters, journalists, and editors who work or have worked on immigration in these countries and in the outlets examined here. The objective of these interviews was to unveil the “news media individual-level variables” and provide qualitative evidence to find relationships with the news frames found in the content analysis step. The bylines of the news articles from the sample served to determine potential interviews. Through personal connections in the countries and the use of Twitter, I ended up having a snowball sample to reach 20

⁵⁵ This decision was made because these are the most impactful and relevant components of a news article for the reader and also for the reporter (Ecker, Lewandowsky, Chang & Pillai, 2014; Dor, 2003; American Press Institute, 2018; McKane, 2013; Thomson, White & Kitley, 2008)

⁵⁶ If the issue of immigration was in a part of the text different than the headline, lede or first paragraph, I look for the relevant part and code accordingly.

⁵⁷ The initial sample to detect words and concepts was 1,792 news articles, however after the manual framing coding the total number on news stories is different because of some excluded items. The specific number can be found in Chapter 4 (Chile), Chapter 5 (Colombia), Chapter 6 (Mexico).

⁵⁸ The interview guide is available in the Appendix 5.

interviews. The interviews were recorded using WhatsApp audio⁵⁹. This method was the most secure and efficient, and it was approved by the journalists. Oral consent was given in each interview and a written agreement was also shared. The IRB process was approved⁶⁰. Although the interviews were about their professional practices, I offered the journalists the chance to remain anonymous to have a more transparent and honest conversation; since most of them preferred that option, the interviews are reported using the country, gender and the type of newspaper they work for. Table 5 shows the total of interviews per country.

Table 5: List of interviews

Chile		
Male	Journalist	Traditional
Non-binary	Journalist	Online-only
Male	Editor	Traditional
Female	Journalist	Online-only
Female	Journalist	Traditional
Female	Journalist	Non-traditional
Colombia		
Female	Editor/Journalist	Online-only
Male	Journalist	Traditional
Female	Journalist	Online-only
Female	Journalist	Online-only
Male	Journalist	Traditional
Male	Journalist	Traditional
Female	Journalist	Traditional
Mexico		
Male	Editor	Traditional
Female	Journalist	Traditional
Female	Journalist	Traditional
Female	Journalist	Online-only
Male	Journalist	Traditional

⁵⁹ Perhaps phone interviews, Skype, FaceTime or WhatsApp interface are not ideal for qualitative research. However, the advantages of remote or virtual meetings have been increasingly documented in the literature. Despite practical and logistical advantages (e.g., access, cost, interview security), virtual communication, for interviewing journalists (always busy) can be even better for scheduling issues and reducing attrition. Another concern about qualitative research using phone or virtual interviews is the challenge of building rapport. Academic literature has explored this phenomenon and has foster techniques to create rapport. Moreover, there are situations when virtual communication has advantages for getting more rich information because of the feeling of anonymity in the interviewee (by phone) and also being able to respond questions in a setting that is more comfortable for the subjects (for discussion see: Weller, 2017; Drabble, Trocki, Salcedo, Walker, & Korcha, 2016; Trier-Bieniek, 2012).

⁶⁰ IRB ID STUDY00007671. "Not Human Research".

Male	Journalist	Traditional
Male	Journalist	Traditional

The interviews were conducted in Spanish, and the analysis was made based on the notes and transcribed text of the audios⁶¹. After reviewing in detail the content of the interviews, I established common themes that emerged from them and in connection to the content analysis (Creswell & Poth, 2016; see Valenzuela, Piña, & Ramírez (2017) for a similar approach in Chile, and García-Perdomo, & Magaña (2020) for analysis of interviews with journalists in Colombia). I only translated into English the quotes that I used to illustrate specific points. The quotes were edited for clarity and consistency but not altering the meaning or content.

Research Questions in connection with the source of data to answer them

Finally, to recap in detail the research questions in connection with the methods outlined thus far, below are the questions of this dissertation with a short explanation about the data sources that help answering them:

Research Question 1: What is the representation of intraregional immigration in the news media in Latin America?

For this overarching question, four sources of data were triangulated: 1) Content analysis based on framing; 2) Textual analysis; 3) Content analysis based on labels/sources/numeric data used in the coverage; 4) Interviews with reporters and journalists writing about immigration in each country.

1.1) How has news media in Latin America covered intraregional immigration issues during 2014-2018?

2. *What are the media frames found in the news media coverage of immigration in Mexico, Colombia, and Chile between 2014 and 2018?*

⁶¹ All transcriptions and translation made by me.

- a. *Are news frames or characteristics of the news stories frequently found in the Global North news media present in the coverage of immigration in the Global South?*

This question is answered by the framing analysis that is informed by the common frames identified in the coverage of immigration in the Global North, as well as by the word choice and labels examined in the coverage.

- b. *Is there a "reciprocity" or "solidarity" frame predominant in any of the three countries regarding immigration? (e.g. Colombia- Venezuela)*

This question is answered by the framing analysis, also informed by the usage/presence of specific words within the content of the news article.

- c. *What is the importance of race in the coverage of immigration in each country?*

This question is answered by the framing analysis and also informed by the usage/presence of specific words within the content of the news article.

- d. *What is the importance of the transition to be a migrants-sender nation to a migrants-receiving country?*

This question is answered by the framing analysis and also informed by the usage/presence of specific words within the content of the news article

- e. *Do frame differences correlate with the perceived political leaning of the media organization?*

This question is answered based on the framing analysis, but also triangulating with the data emerging from the interviews and how journalists perceived the political leaning of their news outlets. The discussion about the media system in each country also informed the answer to this research question.

- f. *Are there other frames emerging from each country that are specific to the reality of these nations?*

To answer this question, I did a textual analysis of a subsample of news stories in each country.

Research Question 2: How do journalists in Latin America describe their newsmaking practices in covering immigration?

In general, this question is answered using the 20 interviews I conducted with journalists and reporters from the news outlets analyzed and involved in immigration coverage in these three Latin American countries.

1. Is there a relationship between their self-perceived practices and the aggregate news coverage produced by news media in these countries?

a. Words and concepts to label migrants and immigration

b. The relevance of the country of origin of immigration influxes

In specific, this is answered by the content analysis of the usage of words and the interviews. This analysis tries to explore the way journalists perceived their responsibility to avoid promoting xenophobia and be as neutral as possible in the coverage, for example, not mentioning nationality. Also, if they try to stay away from potential labels such as "illegal" and highlighting the country of origin of the migrant groups in headlines and lead paragraphs.

b. Sources used to cover immigration issues.

This is addressed by using the content analysis of top sources quoted and used in each of the news articles. Reporters acknowledge easy access to immigrants as sources. This could potentially mean that the "voices" of immigrants are reflected in the coverage. Who gets to speak in the coverage of immigration is relevant in this case because it also allows exploring the evidence of "*prensa oficialista*" that is present in Latin America, according to the academic literature.

d. Use of numbers and statistics to cover the phenomenon

This is answered by the content analysis of news articles and examines the concept of episodic versus thematic coverage of news about immigration. The presence and use of statistics and general numerical trends are associated with more thematic coverage, while the human stories are associated with an episodic approach to write about immigration.

After this review of the relevant theoretical framework and the methodology used in this research, the next chapter is the first of three presenting the empirical evidence for the different countries (Chile, Colombia and Mexico). Each of the data chapters will have an introduction, followed by a literature review of the emerging scholarly work about media systems and journalism practices. Then, each part of the content analysis will be developed, followed by the examination of the interviews. Finally, a conclusion section

bringing all the information analyzed together closes each chapter. The last part of this dissertation (Chapter 7) provides the initial comparison among the three cases studies and the discussion of the results, along with the general theoretical and practical implications of this research project.

CHAPTER 4

Immigration news in Chile

This chapter is the first of three presenting the empirical findings for the countries examined (Chile, Colombia, Mexico) to answer the broad question of how news media in Latin America portrays intraregional immigration, as analyzed both from the content and the journalistic production angles. This section focuses on Chile, as an example of a nation relatively new to contemporary migration movements and with an exponential increase in the diversity of foreign nationals in recent years. The upsurge of intraregional immigrants (more than 500% between 2011 and 2019⁶²) had an effect on public discourse and the amount of media coverage on this topic. To the best of my knowledge this is the first systematic effort to study the news reporting of immigration issues in Chile.

First, this chapter provides an overview of the current state of the Chilean media system and academic studies about journalism in this country. The objective of this context is to better inform the empirical results of this case study. After reviewing a general perspective on how media works in Chile (with an emphasis on the press), I will describe, in detail, the results of the content analysis and how the interviews with reporters help answering my research questions.

Media system and journalism in Chile

The systematic study of the Chilean media system and journalism in this country has been sporadic from a Mass Communication perspective, although with an increasing

⁶² In 2011 the number of visas issued to immigrants was 82K and in 2018 the number was 438K ([Extranjeria-Chile, 2020](#))

publication rate since the 2000s (Mellado, 2012). The Chilean media system could be categorized roughly under the Liberal model proposed by Hallin and Mancini (2004), mainly because it is market-oriented, and market dependent. Still, the notion of the “*Captured Liberal*” model developed by Guerrero (2014) offers a better approach as a theoretical model. This author suggests that, although in Latin America private media companies are predominant, government regulation coupled with political and economic interests prevent the development of the watchdog function of the press in full capacity.

In Chile, a few powerful actors control the media landscape. The general agreement among the scholars is that the media system in this South American nation is characterized, historically, by lack of pluralism and concentration of property and content, especially notable in the print news media, which has created a deficient structure for independent journalism. Moreover, the press market is dominated by a duopoly of El Mercurio and Copesa (La Tercera), whose owners were supporters of Pinochet’s military dictatorship during 1973-1990 (Bresnahan, 2003; Mellado, Moreira, Lagos, & Hernández, 2012; Freedom House, 2019). While these two newspapers have a reputation for representing more conservative and right-leaning views, recent research shows that their coverage has a consistent presence of “informative” news articles, where there is no interpretation or obvious political frames, which means a less partisan political interpretation on social reality (Gronemeyer, del Pino, & Porath, 2019).

Furthermore, as Monckeberg (2011) explains, media concentration is particularly worrisome because media owners in Chile are part of the political elite and members of the dominant economic groups, typically with ties to the conservative sectors of the society. Reporters without borders (RWB) shares a similar analysis. Even though RWB

recognizes that the country has a stable democracy and attacks on the press are extremely rare, there are “*hangovers*” from the military dictatorship such as the limited room for pluralism (Reporters without borders, 2019). Besides, in the RWB world press freedom ranking, Chile appears in the 46th place, dropping eight positions since 2018. One of the causes of this decline is the lack of protection of journalists and media workers during protests and the obstacles to covering issues such as political corruption.

A study by the National Press Association of Chile (ANP, 2018) shows that journalists have a mediocre evaluation of access to information from different authorities and institutions in the country. For instance, on average journalists graded with a 4, in a 1 (awful) – 7 (excellent) scale, three dimensions of information access: willingness to share public information, the reliability of the data, and information delivery in a timely fashion (ANP, 2018).

According to Mellado, Frost, and Hanitzsch (2017), on average, journalists and reporters in Chile are males in their early thirties and with a university degree in communication or journalism from a Chilean higher education institution. Also, they have in a large percentage a full-time job. In their study about 500 journalists in the country, the authors find that the most critical aspects of the job are “to report things as they are,” “to provide analysis of current affairs,” and to “educate the audience.” The prevalence of these aspects among journalists offers evidence that reporters adhere to a more “classic” view of the press in society, which is also confirmed by a strong understanding of, and commitment to, professional ethics (Mellado, Frost, & Hanitzsch, 2017).

Starting in 2010, several layoffs, restructuring of media companies and outlets closures have created a feeling of crisis in the news media system in the country (Reuters Digital News Report, 2019). Radio and television are also facing challenges and constraints, particularly the public broadcasting television station (TVN), which differs from other public systems because it is funded entirely by private advertising, but the majority of members from the board of directors are elected by the Chilean president and the Senate.

Additionally, the online environment emerges as a place where companies are looking to create sustainable strategies to attract an audience. Chile has an internet penetration close to 80% of the population, and online is one of the most important sources of news. However, trust in the news has decreased below 50%, following perhaps a global trend (Reuters Digital News Report, 2019). Digital native newspapers have increased in Chile since the 2000s, offering alternative sources of news coverage. However, they face similar financial challenges as traditional news organizations, creating a sustainability problem. One exception is El Mostrador, which started two decades ago and still functions as an alternative source of mainstream political information, and even as an example of agenda-setter like El Mercurio (Emol) and La Tercera, Chile's two most traditional newspapers (Godoy & Gronemeyer, 2012).

During the period of production of this dissertation, Chile faced an unprecedented social movement and protests rooted in increasing inequality in the country. This social unrest started on October 18, 2019 and had a profound effect on many institutions in the country, including the press. Although a detailed analysis of this social phenomenon is outside the scope of this research project, it is an important piece of contextual

information for the readers because it will emerge in the interviews with the journalists and media workers.

Based on these characteristics of Chile's news media landscape, the expectation is that the political leaning of the newspapers would influence the immigration coverage, specifically in the case of El Mercurio and La Tercera. Also, the prediction is that these outlets, plus El Mostrador, would cover the issue around the political debate, with less emphasis on the human aspect of the stories. This is based on their preference for covering politicians and the traditional political agenda. Although there is no existing research about the other news outlets analyzed in this case study (The Clinic and El Ciudadano), the expectation is they would deviate from the approach of the traditional outlets such as El Mercurio and La Tercera, because they are perceived as having a more left-leaning political leaning.

Therefore, informed by the emerging literature about journalism studies and the media system in Chile, this chapter offers the empirical results of the representation of immigration and immigrants in the Chilean press during 2014-2018. First, I will examine the content analysis based on the framing, sources, and numerical elements present in the coverage. Then I will present the results of the word choice about immigration used by journalists. Also, by exploring the interviews conducted with reporters from these media outlets, the objective is to establish certain connections and relationships about news production of immigration news in this country.

Immigration news in Chile: Findings

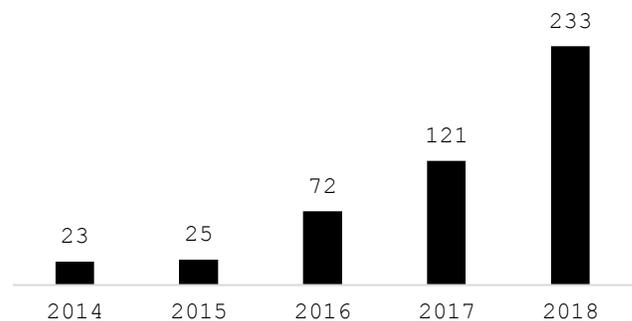
Based on the methodology developed in detail in Chapter 3, this analysis has the following elements: 1) The most common frames, 2) Word choice, 3) Sources, 4) Presence of numerical elements and, 5) Semi-structure interviews.

The content analysis was conducted on 476⁶³ news articles for five news outlets in Chile. Table 1 shows the distribution from each newspaper, and the frequency across the five years is listed in Figure 1.

Table 1: News articles per outlet

Newspaper	%	Count
El Mercurio	18.35%	87
La Tercera	9.49%	45
El Ciudadano	10.13%	48
The Clinic	22.15%	105
El Mostrador	39.87%	189
<i>Total</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>474</i>

Figure 1: News Article per year



Two things are important to observe from these charts.

A) 2017 and 2018 combined represent more than 75% of the coverage about immigration in the five-year period. This trend aligns with the peaks of migratory inflows entering the country starting after 2010. However, a couple of newsworthy immigration-related events are linked to the amount of coverage during these two years. The first is

⁶³ After the relevancy coding, the articles are 504, however while conducting the manual content analysis some articles exclude: 1) there were too short and not frame could be analyzed 2) The were wrongly coded as relevant (e.g., Discussion about race but not related to immigrants). These numbers are in range with the level of agreement achieved by the two coders during the relevancy coding process. In the case of Chile was 94%.

the death of a Haitian migrant (Joane Florvil⁶⁴) in police custody, a month after been accused of abandoning her two-month-old child in 2017. The case was surrounded by confusion and unclear elements. The official version that emerged as the most accurate one is that she asked a security guard of a municipal public building (Rights Protection Office) to look after her baby because she needed to find a translator to help her denounce a robbery that had happened to her husband the day before. The security guard notified the police for child abandonment, but the language and cultural barrier prevented Joane from fully explaining the situation. Once arrested and during police custody, she hurt herself out of despair. After a month, Joane Florvil died in a public hospital. This case represents a “wake up call” for the reality of immigration in Chile, as explained by the reporters interviewed by this chapter.

The other newsworthy event in this period is the presidential campaign and election year during 2017. The candidate for the opposition, Sebastian Piñera (right-wing), made immigration a central message of his campaign. One of his statements was, “*in Chile, many of the members of organized criminal groups are immigrants*”⁶⁵. He won the election and also promoted a new immigration reform with the umbrella narrative of “*ordenar la casa*” (to tidy up the house). These two events, plus the peak of migratory influx during 2017 and 2018, are factors to consider while looking at the amount of coverage during the five-year period.

B) As seen in Table 1, there is an uneven distribution of news articles for each newspaper. There are two potential explanations for this: 1) Some outlets covered the issue less or 2) the amount of overall coverage retrieved during the construction of the

⁶⁴ [Protests follow Haitian mother's death in Chilean police custody.](#)

⁶⁵ [La Tercera, November 29, 2016.](#)

database is lower for some outlets because the articles were not available from the sources used to construct the database particularly during 2014-2017⁶⁶. The sampling strategy for all the news outlets was the same and used a fixed percentage per outlet per year, similar to a stratified random sample. For El Mercurio and La Tercera the database also considered both the print (Factiva) and the online versions to amplify the scope of potentially relevant news stories. The objective was to capture the potential differences between the print and website version of these news outlets. Although this project is about the overall press coverage of immigration in Chile (and Colombia and Mexico), this uneven distribution of news articles could potentially skew some of the results. A strategy to address this issue is explained in the following section (frame analysis).

Most common frames in the news coverage

The codebook developed for the framing analysis considered 16 frames that were used to examine each news article⁶⁷. As explained in more detail in Chapter 3, I created a ranking-type analysis for frames based on discourse or narrative indicator, and the position of the frame (headline, lede, first paragraphs) in the news story. This means the same news article can have more than one frame. After reviewing the presence of frames in the case of Chile, all the news articles but two⁶⁸ had more than three main frames

⁶⁶ The case of La Tercera is one of this in which the retrieving of all potential news stories using web scraping was difficult. However, for La Tercera, the database Factiva was used for the content, which reduces the chance to have a less “representative” news collection from this news outlet.

⁶⁷ I used a Qualtrics form for the coding ([accessible here](#)).

⁶⁸ Only two news articles with more than three frames were excluded. Although the unit of analysis is the headline, lede and first paragraphs (first 200 words) some news presented diverse discursive indicators that allow for up to three frames, however the presence of a third frame is very minimal. Also, some news had longer lede plus the 200 words after account for several lines of information.

coded. Therefore, the analysis in the case of Chile focuses only on the top three categories presents in each story.

Table 2 shows that the *Victim – Humanitarian or Human Rights* frame is the most prevalent. News stories that have this frame ranked as number one represent 31% of the total coverage analyzed in Chile. Also, in 37 news stories, this frame appears as the second most important. As a core discursive or narrative indicator, this frame puts the suffering of the immigrants at the center of the story. The definition used in the codebook for this frame highlights that immigrants are portrayed as victims, in the host or receiving country, of poverty, lack of access to health care and to fair legal process, violence, human trafficking, or abuses from state actors and institutions, and business practices (different from the other two Victim frames in the codebook: *Political and Economic* and *Racism and Xenophobia*). Moreover, this frame also portrays immigrants as victims during their journey and the risk linked to the border crossing. The following excerpts from news article illustrate the presence of this *Victim- Humanitarian --Human Rights frame* because they exemplify attacks, violation of human rights and suffering of migrants in Chile.

*Emol, Chile 06/04/2017*⁶⁹

Bodies of migrants could remain unclaimed at the Medical Legal Service for up to four years

A woman with double nationality (Costa Rican and Dominican) suffered from carbon monoxide poisoning, according to the autopsy report. She was with a Colombian citizen, Hary Vallesilla, who also died. Both were in a closed room with a propane heater, said the police deputy, Vicente Torres. The remains of these two immigrants wait at the Medical Legal Service waiting to return home. They are not the only ones waiting to be

⁶⁹ Translations made by me.

returned and their bodies are not the ones with the most time at the Medical Legal Service.

El Mostrador, Chile 11/02/2018

District attorney's office looking into poisoning of a Haitian caused by one of his coworkers in San Felipe

The Haitian worker denounced his associates for sexting during work hours.

The Clinic, Chile 11/30/2017

The myths about Joane Florvil's arrest

“The extreme difficulty of Joane in expressing herself revealed the lack of protection immigrants face in Chile. The story of what happened to Joane was built based on unconfirmed data and distorted accounts”.

The second most common frame is the *Political – Policy Solutions and Debate*. Out of the total of news, 13% (61) were ranked first with this news frame, and 24 news articles listed this one as the second choice. The narrative indicators of this frame are about the way immigration has created policy changes and debates in the receiving nation. Also, the political discussion around this topic is a relevant feature of this news category. In a way, this is a frame where the center of the news story is not the suffering or particular problem of immigrants; instead news reporting is focused on political actions and actors. In Chile, modifications in visa requirements for Haitians and Venezuelans, and the political discussion around these changes, are central to this frame. Also, contingency plans and quick decisions to adapt to the influx are characteristics of the stories ranked under this definition of *Political – Policy Solutions and Debate*. A couple of news articles exemplify the presence of this news frame in the sample analyzed

for this case study. The examples below mainly illustrate the political debate around immigration in the country.

La Tercera, Chile 05/23/2018

Constitutional Tribunal accepts request against President Piñera’s migratory executive order

The Constitutional Tribunal accepted a request from part of the opposition, to refute the executive order presented in April by President Piñera about the migratory process regulation.

El Ciudadano, Chile 11/30/2016

MP asks, “not to criminalize migrants and not to replicate Trump’s approach about foreigners in Chile.”

“Migration is happening across developed and developing countries, which means that in other countries Chile is perceived as a good place to live”, argue Daniel Melo (PS). The member of the House asks Chile Vamos politicians to treat migration with responsibility without populism.

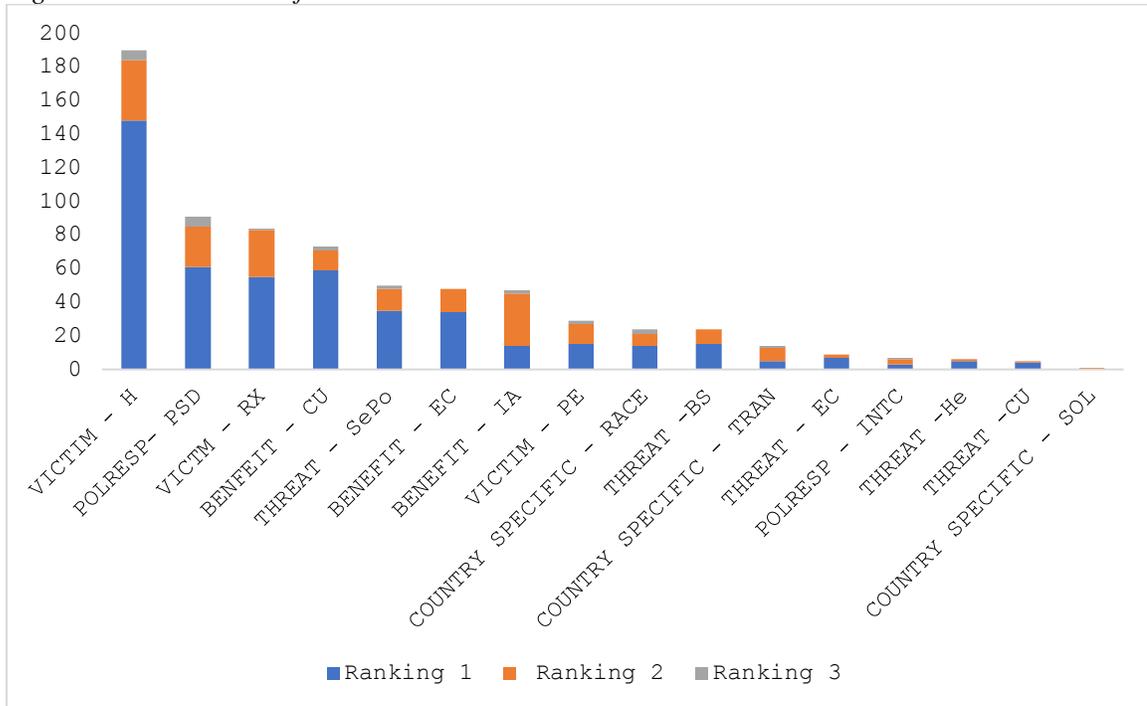
The frames *Benefit – Cultural* and *Victim – Racism and Xenophobia* share the third place of the most common categories, each representing 12% of the total coverage examined (news ranking these categories as first frame). *Threat – Security and Public Order* and *Benefit – Economic* come in fourth place, with 7% of the coverage ranking them as the predominant frame.

Figure 2 provides the visualization of the distribution of the most frequent frames during 2014-2018, and the prevalence of all the 16 frames categories listed in the codebook.

Table 2: Most common frames

Frames	Ranking 1	% of total news	Ranking 2	Ranking 3	Total
VICTIM - H	148	31%	36	6	190
POLRESP- PSD	61	13%	24	6	91
VICTIM - RX	55	12% ⁷⁰	28	1	84
BENEFIT - CU	59	12%	12	2	73
THREAT - SePo	35	7%	13	2	50
BENEFIT - EC	34	7%	14	0	48
BENEFIT - IA	14	3%	31	2	48
VICTIM - PE	15	3%	12	2	29
COUNTRY SPECIFIC - RACE	14	3%	7	3	25
THREAT -BS	15	3%	9	0	24
COUNTRY SPECIFIC - TRAN	5	1%	8	1	14
THREAT - EC	7	1%	2	0	9
POLRESP - INTC	3	1%	3	1	7
THREAT -He	5	1%	1	0	6
THREAT -CU	4	1%	1	0	5
COUNTRY SPECIFIC - SOL	0	0%	1	0	1

Figure 2: Most common frames



⁷⁰ 11.6% and 12.4.% (For the Victim-RX and Benefit-CU)

As seen in Table 1, the distribution of news for each outlet is uneven (i.e., El Mercurio 87 versus El Mostrador 187); therefore, I decided to compare the presence of the most prevalent frames by grouping the news outlets between traditional (El Mercurio and La Tercera) and non-traditional (El Mostrador, El Ciudadano, The Clinic) outlets. This comparison takes into consideration the percentage of news frames in the total coverage for each individual newspaper. For instance, the most prevalent news frame *Victim – Humanitarian and Human Rights* of the aggregate coverage in the country, in the case of El Mercurio (Emol) represents 24% of the total coverage of this newspaper during 2014-2018 (considering all the news articles that ranked the *Victim – Humanitarian and Human Rights* frame in first, second and third place). For La Tercera, it represents 31% of the total coverage. Both traditional newspapers register a lower percentage of this *Victim – Humanitarian and Human Rights* frame than the non-traditional outlets. El Ciudadano, for example, has the highest percentage of this frame, with 60%. This finding represents an important distinction between the emphasis of the immigration coverage depending on the nature of the publication. In the case of non-traditional newspapers, the trend shows that El Mostrador, El Ciudadano and The Clinic allocate more space in the coverage to a humanitarian approach to immigration, which translates into looking at the underlying suffering and different cases of violations of human rights of this minority in the country.

The second most prevalent frame in the aggregate coverage is *Political – Policy Solutions and Debate*. For this case, the traditional news media, El Mercurio (25%) and La Tercera (31%) have the higher percentage, while two of the non-traditional outlets

score below 20%, except for El Mostrador. This could be explained by the importance of political debates and opinion pieces in El Mercurio and La Tercera’s coverage.

In two other frames, traditional media is above the non-traditional ones: *Threat-Security and Public Order* and the *Benefit-Economic* of immigration, although for *Benefit- Economic* frame, El Mercurio has a more significant percentage than La Tercera.

For the *Benefit -Cultural* frame, the difference in percentage is not as large as in other categories. In this case, non-traditional media ranges from 13-19%, and traditional newspapers between 9-15%.

Non-traditional news media ranked higher in frames such as the cultural benefit of immigration and immigrants as a victim of racism and xenophobia. For the frames of the cultural benefit of immigration, the percentage of coverage in each news outlet is relatively similar, with La Tercera scoring the lowest percentage with 9%. These percentages show initial evidence that traditional newspapers (El Mercurio and La Tercera), and El Mostrador to a certain extent, write about immigration under a more political debate angle, which does not utilize human cases to tell the news stories. Table 3 has the detail for all the percentages for the relevant frames.

Table 3- Traditional vs. non-traditional (Frames as percentage of each newspaper coverage).

Newspaper	N	Victim-H	Political-PSD	Benefit-Cu	Victim-RX	Threat-SePo	Benefit-EC
Traditional							
El Mercurio	87	24%	25%	15%	3%	14%	17%
La Tercera	45	31%	31%	9%	11%	24%	9%
Non-traditional							
El Ciudadano	48	60%	15%	15%	13%	6%	4%
El Mostrador	189	44%	22%	19%	19%	6%	8%
The Clinic	105	40%	6%	13%	32%	11%	11%

Informing the frames with the textual analysis

Besides the quantitative content analysis, I did a close reading of a sample of news articles⁷¹ to enrich the findings from the coding framing process.

Among the relevant nuances found, in the case of *El Mercurio*, when the coverage is about public services and the policy changes caused by immigration (e.g., housing, health, and education), news articles are full of data and using a “neutral” informative strategy. Also, in the case of *La Tercera*, a neutral narrative can be found when covering the political debate about the new immigration reform. These approaches are aligned with the relatively large predominance of the *Political – Policy Solutions and Debate* in these newspapers. The examples below help to illustrate this argument:

El Mercurio 9-16-2016.

Migrant students amount to more than 17,800 in the country.

60% are in Santiago’s Metro area. According to the Ministry of Education in Santiago’s Municipal district the majority of migrant students are Peruvians (1,995), Colombians (584) and Ecuadorians (153). Although the migrants are a minority on the school’s enrollment (less than 1% of the 3 million spots), the Educational Deputy, Valentina Quiroga, says that the increment is exponential. If in 2010 there were 12,845 in the school system, last year we had 17,880 representing a 39% increase.

La Tercera, Chile 12/14/2018.

Half of the visas requested for Venezuelans have not been processed.

There are more than 90,000 citizens from Venezuela who have applied for the Democratic Responsibility visa. However, the Minister of Foreign Affairs explains the process is advancing in a positive way.

⁷¹ In the case of Chile, 128.

Furthermore, in *El Mercurio* and *La Tercera*, when the topic covered is about deportations or law enforcement officials are involved, the news stories tend to emphasize immigration as a problem, which is commonly related to a punitive representation of migration found in developed countries. Similarly, immigration as a threat or problem appears when immigration events are reported together with border control for illegal drug trafficking. Charged labels and nationality in the headlines or lede are common in these news articles. Also, traditional newspapers predominantly cover health-related topics. In this case, the decision is to accentuate immigration groups and certain diseases, which could be connected to portraying immigrants under a negative light.

These findings provide evidence to support the reason traditional newspapers have a higher percentage than non-traditional outlets of frames such as immigration as a threat to security and public order (Table 3).

La Tercera, Chile 12/04/2018.

Plan 2019 for HIV prevention focuses on migrant population. They are 36% of the cases.

The 36,4% of the confirmed cases of HIV among foreigners are people from Venezuela, 28,6% from Haiti and 11,2% Colombians. “The numbers are from 2017 and I started my position in April 2018. I am leaving this job, but I think the plan is working. I am moving to a different role”, explain Ana Maria San Martin to *La Tercera*. She argues that her resignation as head of the HIV Department (Health Ministry) is not linked to the latest data published by ONUSIDA ranking Chile as one of the 10 countries around the world where HIV has increased.

In the case of non- traditional newspapers, their coverage of immigration explicitly acknowledges the benefit of migration. For example, they tend to emphasize initiatives and projects for the cultural integration of migrant communities. However, the

writing style is different from traditional media. Non-traditional outlets show a more “opinionated” way to describe immigration. This writing style and the presence of integration/assimilation stories could be linked to portraying immigration less as a threat in general. But also, they emphasize the violation of human rights and the negative impact of restrictive immigration policies. These examples from El Ciudadano and El Mostrador help to illustrate these points.

El Ciudadano, Chile 09/30/2015

First Migrant School of Rock in the Metropolitan Region

Nine theoretical and practicum sessions are part of the first cycle of the Migrant Rock School, which tries to foster musical talents from the migrant community. On Monday, September 28th this first cycle started at the Catholic University Silva Henríquez, organized by the Council for Arts and Culture, Popular and Rock Schools, Migrant Unit of the CNCA and the Council of Culture of the Metropolitan Region.

El Mostrador, Chile 08/31/2016

Foreign workers in Chile in jobs not wanted by Chileans. Peruvians are the majority.

Immigrants represent close to 2% of the workers in the country and they are mostly concentrated in the commercial sector.

Although non-traditional news outlets (El Mostrador, El Ciudadano and The Clinic) have a significant percentage of their coverage focused on the humanitarian aspect of immigration, they also reproduce third-party content from other outlets that creates an interesting dynamic of the coverage. Typically, when non-traditional outlets reproduce content from national and international media, there is a lack of counter-frames or they do not “process” the information with the same criteria they do it when creating original content. Therefore, it is possible to find coverage in these non-traditional outlets

that emerges as oppositional to their original material, which is typically less punitive about immigration.

Presence of specific words in the immigration coverage

The analysis of word choice in the coverage of Chile was conducted by looking at the presence of specific words⁷² in the headlines and in the rest of the entire text separately,⁷³ not at a combination of terms⁷⁴. The objective is to assess the general trends of word choices to cover immigrants and also to explore the prevalence of mentions of the migrants' nationality, all this informed by the close readings of all news articles during the framing coding process.

First, the two preferred terms used by the coverage in the headline is “inmigrantes” (immigrants) and “migrantes” (migrants). This perhaps is not as interesting as the label in third place, which is “extranjeros” (foreigners). Part of this could be linked to the journalistic strategy of looking for synonyms to name the same phenomenon, but also an argument could be made that “extranjeros” is a less charged concept to describe a potentially sensitive issue such as immigration. The same trend emerges by looking at the presence of the label in the text below the headline in all the coverage. In third place, “extranjeros” appears as the preferred word to describe the people coming into the country after “inmigrantes” and “migrantes.” Again, this word choice is relevant because the word “extranjeros” in Chile is commonly used in the context of tourism or people

⁷² Refer to the Appendix 4

⁷³ The analysis was conducted over 491 news articles, the difference with the 474 is because here I did not excluded short texts or “fake news correctors” type of news. I only excluded news that follow into the non-relevant category on the relevancy coding.

⁷⁴ This analysis is based on occurrence rather than frequency 1= present 0 = non present. This allow to exclude potential outliers.

coming into the country for temporary reasons. Table 4 shows the occurrence of these words in the headline and the text after.

Table 4: Word choice for headline and news text after headline⁷⁵

	Inmigrantes (Immigrants)	Migrantes (Migrants)	Extranjeros (Foreigners)	Inmigrante (Immigrant)	Migrante (Migrante)
Headline	63	58	23	11	11
Text after headline	252	235	204	77	101

The second piece of this analysis focuses on common labels associated with the coverage of immigrants in other global contexts, such as illegals, irregulars, and undocumented. The terms “illegal” (illegal) and “irregular” (irregular) are the ones with a more significant presence in the lede and body of the text (very minimal presence in headlines, only five “ilegales”), followed by the plural form of these words “ilegales” and “irregulares.” However, in general the presence of these labels is rare. Also, there is an important caveat for this result informed by the reading of the news articles during the framing coding: The concept of “ilegales” (plural for illegal) is used to refer to immigrants, instead of “illegal” (singular form), which in the coverage is a word that reporters used referring to illegal actions against migrants (e.g., illegal detentions or deportation of immigrants) rather than as a label to describe these individuals. Overall the terms irregulars or irregular are the preferred concepts news outlets use to describe immigrants (i.e., “irregular migrants”). The analysis of the interviews with reporters will

⁷⁵ The numbers listed here represent the single occurrence of a word in one article (headline and rest of the article). There could be overlapping meaning that in one article Immigrant and Foreigners could be present, but the objective is to examine the incidence of the words in the entire corpus, rather than if it is exclusive to one specific article. For instance, the words Inmigrantes + Migrantes + Extranjeros are all present in 14 articles. Also, Inmigrantes + Extranjeros together are in 33 stories, Migrantes + Extranjeros in 28. Migrantes + Inmigrantes in 107.

provide further explanation about the word choices in the coverage. Table 5 describes the words used by each newspaper.

Table 5: Labels in the lede and rest of the text

Source	Irregulares (Irregulars)	Irregular (Irregulars)	Indocumentados (Undocumented)	Indocumentado (Undocumented s.)	Ilegales (Illegals)	Ilegal (Illegal)
El Ciudadano	3	5	1	0	2	6
El Mostrador	7	19	3	0	3	19
Emol	1	10	2	0	6	10
La Tercera	2	4	0	0	1	4
The Clinic	3	10	2	4	7	13
Total	16	48	8	4	19	52

In third place, the analysis of word choice and labels focuses on the nation of origin highlighted in the coverage. As seen in Table 6, the coverage is heavily skewed toward Haitians (Haitianos) immigrants. They have, by far, the largest presence in the headlines and in the rest of the text. In second place, the headlines are usually about Venezuelans (Venezolanos), but in the text of the news articles, the nation of origin more predominant is Colombians (Colombianos) after Haitians. People from Peru (a border nation) come in third place, and then are country nationals from Bolivia, Ecuador, Dominican Republic, and Cuba. The significant presence of Haiti in the coverage is an interesting finding because, during 2014-2018, the largest group of immigrants came from Venezuela in the first place, followed by Peruvians. Haitians represent the third country of origin with more immigration during these years into Chile and Colombians are ranked fourth⁷⁶.

Table 6: Nation of origin

	Haitianos	Venezolanos	Colombianos	Peruanos
Headline	69	18	12	12

⁷⁶ Patterns of immigration are developed in Chapter 2, but for details on this reference the information is in [Extranjeria Chile](#). Even when looking at the years 2017-2018 (where more of the news coverage happened) Venezuelans are still the largest group receiving visas among all the nations mentioned here.

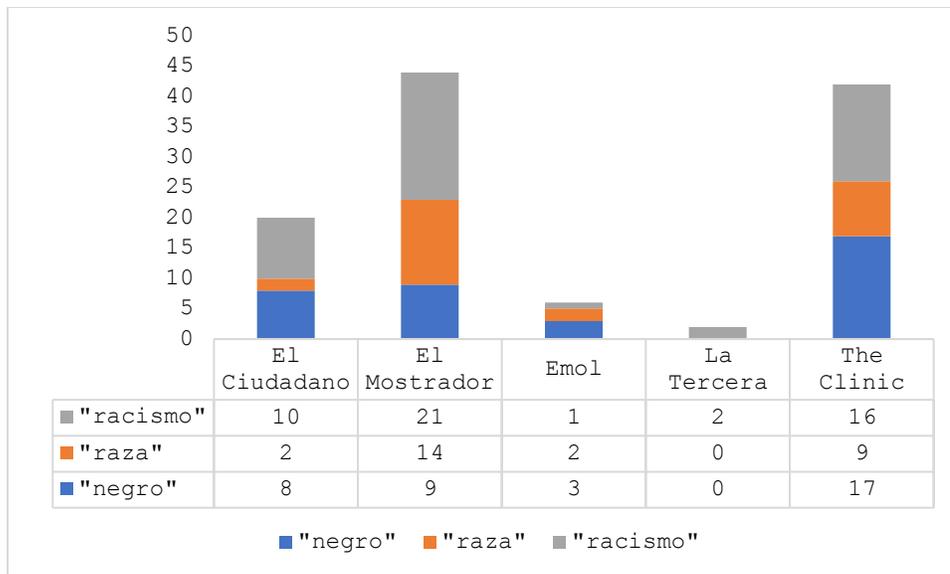
Text after Headline	Haitianos	Colombianos	Peruanos	Venezolanos
The Clinic	51	21	20	16
La Tercera	17	11	7	15
Emol	43	22	25	11
El Mostrador	104	47	31	40
El Ciudadano	17	10	12	6
Total	232	111	95	88

The section of the interviews will offer additional connections for these findings, but to further explore the issue of disproportionated coverage of Haitian migration, I examined the frequency of concepts linked to these immigrant group such as “raza” (race), “racism” (racism), “negro” (black⁷⁷). The word choice having a more substantial presence is “racism” (50 occurrences) follow by “negro” (37) and in third place “raza” (27). The chart below (Figure 3) shows the distribution of the word choice by news outlets⁷⁸ to make the illustration easier. The traditional newspapers (El Mercurio and La Tercera) use these words noticeably less in the coverage, in comparison with the non-traditional news outlets. The use of these words is an indicator that the discussion about race, particularly regarding the Afro-descendent migration from Haiti, is more relevant for El Mostrador, The Clinic, and El Ciudadano.

Figure 3: Presence of words linked to race

⁷⁷ “Negro” in Spanish is the similar to saying Black person in English.

⁷⁸ Again, in this case the objective is to detect the single use of this words in the corpus of the news articles. Overlapping can occur, this mean one article can have more than one of these words. For example, Raza + Racismo + Negro = (6 articles) / Raza + Negro = (10) / Racismo + Negro = (18).



Together, the common word choices and labels could be explained further. For example, the selection of words such as “extranjeros” (foreigners) and “irregular and irregulares” provides a strong indication that the coverage departs from potentially more charged words such as illegals, which is a common trend in the coverage of immigration in many developed nations. Linking the migratory influx to labels such as extranjeros (foreigners) is also a suggestion that the phenomenon is new to the country, because it is a concept related to topics different from immigration (e.g., tourism, international business, foreign soccer players, business, professionals, etc.).

Moreover, the most common nationality mention is Haitians, although they are not the largest group going to Chile. This result speaks to the relevance for the news media of an immigration from an Afro-descendent demographic. The presence of concepts related to race reveals also the different approaches and emphases between non-traditional and traditional outlets regarding covering race. El Mostrador and The Clinic invest more space covering issues that involve a racial angle. The examples below help to illustrate this point:

The Clinic, Chile 06/10/2015.

Being a black immigrant in Santiago

Colombians, Dominicans, Haitians, and Ecuadorians are the new “cheap labor” of the national economy. They are in cleaning services, construction workers or waitresses at “*café con piernas*” [coffee shops where staff uses clothes considered to be revealing⁷⁹]. Chileans sexualized their darker skin. A group of researchers from the Universidad de Chile are studying this black immigration as a phenomenon that the society needs to assimilate.

El Mostrador, Chile 12/07/2016

A matter of skin: Chileans speak their minds about immigrants.

They come to take jobs, they changed neighborhoods, they can impact our genes, these are part of the complaints Chileans have against immigrants in places with large concentrations of them.

“At 6AM there is a line of blacks walking to the subway”, says a taxi driver [at General Velasquez Avenue]. Before reaching La Alameda [street], he points to the houses around the Padre Hurtado Sanctuary.

Sources and numerical data presence

Another element of the content analysis is the use of sources to understand the “voices” represented in the news. For this step, the analysis considers the first source used in the coverage, and then all the sources different from the first one registered.⁸⁰

The sample examined here shows a large presence of “Journalists or Columnists”. This category was used to capture editorial columns or opinion pieces. This number is skewed by non-traditional outlets that offer more space online for these types of formats. In second place, “Governmental” (National and State authorities) are the most frequent ones as first source, and in third place, “Immigrants” are the most common voice used in

⁷⁹ [“Café con piernas”](#)

⁸⁰ Refer to the Appendix 3- Content Analysis Codebook for details.

writing about these stories. The category “Other” that is ranked fourth is predominantly present in the non-traditional outlets, as percentage of the total number of stories, and represents sources such as local, national, and international media content they replicate in their websites. The category “None” appears in fifth place, followed by “Academics and Experts”.

When examining the sources after the first one, there is a similar pattern. Besides focusing on the “None”⁸¹ category, non-traditional outlets contribute to the significant presence of the “Other” category in the aggregated coverage (Table 7). Again, this is mostly because they reproduce content from other media sources (local, national, news agencies, and international media). Also, immigrants, governments, local elected authorities, police, and academics or experts are predominant in the voices used by the reporters in the coverage of the issue of immigration. Additional source categories emerge as relevant, such as a member of a church and national and local NGOs.

Table 7 shows the categories for the first source listed in the article by news outlet. The description of all the categories are in Appendix 3.

*Table 7: Most common sources (first source listed)*⁸²

Source	Emol	La Tercera	El Ciudadano	The Clinic	El Mostrador	Total	% of Total News (N=474)
Journalist or columnist	3%	4%	12%	19%	62%	74	16%
Government (National and State authorities)	25%	26%	6%	8%	35%	72	15%
Other	0%	4%	9%	37%	51%	57	12%

⁸¹ The large presence of “None” could be linked to the methodology of examining the headline, lede and first paragraphs (defined as the first 200 words).

⁸² This table shows the first source used in each newspaper as a percentage of the total news stories analyzed in Chile. Therefore, the percentages in each cell do not represent the presence of first sources in relation to the specific number of stories per outlet. In other words, with these percentages, we can only say, for example, that from the 72 stories using a Government source (as first), 35% of these stories are from El Mostrador.

Immigrant, refugee, migrant	23%	9%	12%	33%	23%	57	12%
None	19%	2%	12%	14%	52%	42	9%
Activists/Artist/Athlete	19%	4%	8%	19%	50%	26	5%
Academic/Researchers/Experts	16%	4%	12%	36%	32%	25	5%
National or Local Non-governmental Organization, NGO	14%	9%	18%	14%	45%	22	5%
Police (a member of a law enforcement authority)/ Firefighters	71%	12%	0%	0%	18%	17	4%
Law/Judiciary (e.g., judges)	31%	0%	25%	19%	25%	16	3%
Local elected authority (e.g., mayor- MP)	38%	13%	25%	6%	19%	16	3%
Business/Private Sector (e.g., business owners)	31%	6%	0%	31%	31%	16	3%
Local citizen/neighbor	8%	8%	0%	69%	15%	13	3%
Member of Church/Religion	29%	0%	14%	29%	29%	7	1%
Member of a foreign government (e.g., President of the United States, Embassy)	50%	50%	0%	0%	0%	4	1%
International/regional political organization (ONU-ACHNUR, CIDH-OEA)	25%	50%	0%	0%	25%	4	1%
A family member or friend of immigrant, refugee, migrant	0%	25%	0%	25%	50%	4	1%
International Non-governmental Organization, NGO (e.g., Human Rights Watch)	0%	0%	0%	50%	50%	2	0%

Based on sources used, there are few points of analysis that are worth mentioning.

The significant presence of governmental sources indicates that the official political discourse is helping to shape the coverage of immigration and the government agenda determines to a certain extent the type of topics the news outlets analyzed here decide to cover. More about this topic is developed further in light of the interviews with reporters.

Another point of analysis is the predominant presence of immigrants as sources in the news articles. This finding suggests that it is possible for reporters to interview migrants and have a first-hand account of the migrants' experience. However, as shown earlier in the results, the *Victim – Humanitarian and Human rights* frame is the most frequent in this sample, which could correlate with the fact that voices of immigrants are

used to highlight them as victims or to “put a human face” to this humanitarian-approach, rather than use their voices with a different purpose. This argument could also be deepened by adding the presence of activists and local pro-immigration NGOs, whose agenda and public discourse is mostly about advocating for protecting immigrants from human rights violations.

Using a single individual case to produce a news story is a common practice of journalism around the world. The “human case” is intended to create an emotional connection to engage readers in the story. From an academic perspective, this practice has been studied under the idea of episodic versus thematic frames. The common agreement is that episodic frames are those more emotionally charged and able to trigger feelings from the audience. Conversely, thematic frames are based on facts, trends, and numbers with little room for emotional engagement from the readers. Having these concepts in mind, the content analysis in this project also tries to assess, at least initially, the potential presence of these types of frames. The coding considered the presence of numerical trends and statistics to make a claim about the existence of features in each news article that allow for interpreting them as more thematic or episodic. The caveat here is that the analysis did not code directly for thematic versus episodic, but only to find features linked to one or the other.

For instance, the use of statistical trends and numerical data, a characteristic related to thematic frames, is very low in the sample analyzed for the case of Chile. Only 44 news stories have in the headline some statistics or numerical trends (Table 8). Moreover, the presence of these type of elements increases when we look into the rest of the text after the headline: Demographic/Health/Educational, Visa requests, Deportation

or Returns Economic/labor or jobs emerge, but the numerical data are typically to add context rather than the main plot of the news storyline. However, still, the vast majority of news stories do not feature any numerical evidence after the headline.

The distinction between traditional and non-traditional news outlets offers a noteworthy point of contrast again. By analyzing the presence of statistics and numbers from each newspaper, as a percentage of the total number of stories examined in Chile, traditional outlets (El Mercurio and La Tercera) score higher than the non-traditional media in the use of these elements in the headlines and the rest of the news body. Of all the news articles using statistics in this sample (Table 8), El Mercurio is the newspaper that contributes with more numerical figures (as a percentage of the total of news in the aggregated coverage). There are two types of statistics in the case of traditional outlets that appear as more predominant: Deportation or Returns of immigrants and issues linked to demographic changes and the adaptation of public services such as housing, education, and health with the arrival of newcomers into the country. These findings also align with the type of frames most commonly found in these traditional newspapers, which are the *Political – Policy Solutions and Debate* and even immigration as a threat to *Security and Public Order*. Therefore, these features in the story-telling of traditional outlets show that they incline to a coverage more frequently detached from a single-case episodic approach (e.g., policy debates), but at the same time, they utilize frames that tend to portray immigration in a more negative way (e.g., a threat to security and public order).

Table 8: Numbers in headlines as a proxy of a more thematic coverage⁸³

	Emol	La Tercera	El Ciudadano	The Clinic	El Mostrador	Total	% of Total (N=474)
None	16%	9%	11%	24%	40%	430	91%
Deportations or returns	27%	13%	0%	7%	53%	15	3%
Economic/labor or jobs figure	50%	13%	0%	0%	38%	8	2%
Visa requests	43%	14%	0%	0%	43%	7	1%
Demographic / Health / Educational	57%	0%	0%	14%	29%	7	1%
Detentions/apprehensions	67%	33%	0%	0%	0%	3	1%
Asylum requests/refugee requests	0%	0%	0%	50%	50%	2	0%
Crimes against immigrants/Death	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1	0%
Rescue of immigrants	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	1	0%
Crimes by immigrants	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0	0%

Thus far, the content analysis of immigration news for Chile used in this case study shows several trends in these five very influential news outlets. First, the amount of coverage correlates with the influx of immigrants during 2017 and 2018 and newsworthy events that happened during those years. Second, regarding the frames, there is a clear tendency for writing about immigrants as victims of violations of human rights, but also for reporting the issue based on a human case perspective. However, by looking at the breakdown between non-traditional and traditional media, the trend is that traditional newspapers have a different approach. They generally incline to cover the issue by focusing on the *phenomenon of immigration* rather than *immigrants as individual cases*. This is also supported by the initial evidence that traditional outlets used more numerical trends to explain the immigration phenomenon, which is linked to a more emotionally

⁸³ The percentages in each cell are the presence of numbers and statistics in each newspaper as percentages the total number of stories in Chile. The objective is to use this information for the aggregate presence of numerical figures in the coverage. It is not about the presence of statistical figures as a percentage in each specific news media' totals. In other words, for example, based on Table 8, out of the 15 news articles using Deportations or returns statistics, we can say that 53% comes from El Mostrador.

detached form of coverage (e.g., thematic frame). However, this approach could also be correlated with the presence of threat frames in the case of traditional media outlets, because they highlight topics such as deportation and pressures that immigration puts onto public services.

Additionally, there is a clear trend to cover Haitian immigration more frequently, although this group is not the largest inflow. The racial component might explain the attention put onto these Afro-descendant newcomers. The non-traditional newspapers spend a significant portion of their coverage on this issue.

The sources used in the coverage speak about the role of the official (e.g., government) voices to drive the agenda and the public discourse; however, the voices of immigrants are also substantially represented in the news stories, which could offer different narratives, the same as the presence of activists and local pro-immigration NGOs. However, since the victim frame is predominant, the presence of immigrant voices is mostly used to highlight the suffering as a counter narrative.

To make a further connection with the findings in the content analysis and try to understand the production of immigration news in Chile, we turn to the interviews conducted with reporters from these news outlets.

Journalists' self-reflection on the immigration coverage.

This section unpacks the content of the semi-structured interviews with reporters in Chile and tries to establish connections and relationships with the coverage about immigration examined in the content analysis above. By triangulating the content analysis with the interviews, in the case of Chile, I provide evidence to answer the overall

questions of how news media in Latin America portrays intraregional immigration, and how journalists reflect and describe their newsmaking practices in covering this migration phenomenon.

These are semi-structured interviews⁸⁴ exploring two main topics: 1) The journalistic practices, routines and decisions they make in their own newspapers; 2) The perception journalists have about the coverage of immigration in the country and the position they take to observe the phenomenon. Although the limited number of interviews might not allow for reaching a high level of “saturation,” there are also very few journalists in Chile covering immigration issues exclusively, since it is more a rotating beat with little specialization, thus trying to have a large sample of “immigration reporters” is in itself an almost impossible task. Therefore, the value of the first-hand accounts presented here is dual: 1) The interviews were focused on journalists working for the specific newspapers analyzed for this case study;⁸⁵ 2) Journalists interviewed had experience in covering immigration in Chile.

For this country, I interviewed six journalists, three from traditional newspapers (including one editor) and three from non-traditional outlets. In total, three were female between 29-39 years old, two males between 35-40, and one non-binary in their 30s. They all have between 5 and 14 years of experience in journalism. The results of these conversations are reported based on the emerging themes after a close analysis of each of them and in relationship with each other. Also, there are some direct quotes from the interviews to exemplify the common themes.

⁸⁴ See Appendix 5 for the Interview Guide.

⁸⁵ Except for El Ciudadano. I could not access to journalists from this news website during the time of this project.

1) Journalistic practices, routines and decisions.

a. Specialization and learning process.

Journalists agreed that the massive influx of immigrants took everyone by surprise, including the news media. *“We were covering the issue blindfolded, we did not know exactly what was happening”* is one common expression that emerged in the conversations. Although the phenomenon started by early 2010 with Colombians in the northern part of the country, the increasing number of Haitians and Venezuelans coming to the capital city started to capture newsrooms’ attention. The constant influx of population from border nations such as Peru, Bolivia, and Argentina, that in the 2000s became very large, apparently did not create the need to have a particular beat on immigration in these newspapers. As reporters acknowledged, their newsrooms did not have any standards or guides on how to cover immigration based on past experiences with this topic. Therefore, the level of specialization was non-existent, nor was there a training process to cover the issue or a style guide to use for the coverage of immigration. Journalists agreed that the constant “state of crisis” that news media (tradition and non-traditional) is facing in Chile impacts the ways they can approach specialization, training, and ultimately simple resources to produce content about any topic, including immigration. The only exception was El Mercurio, which since 2017 started to have one reporter exclusively working on immigration. However, after the waves of protests in the country in October 2018, the reporter moved to a different beat.

“To think about specialization is very hard in the precarious state of the media in this country. There are very limited resources for moving to places where stories

are happening, and in general, the budget is very small, so any type of specialization is very difficult” (Journalist, male, traditional media).

The “crisis” environment in which they work forced these newsrooms to find ways to adapt to report about migration. The journalists acknowledged there was a learning process that develops in an organic way, assuming also multiple mistakes writing about, for example, how the immigration system in the country works. There were no clear writing rules, but instead a lot of conversations among reporters and editors deciding how to cover specific migration-related topics. Even a senior reporter admitted that his editor assumed he (the reporter) has “better” judgement, so he did not receive any guidance for working on immigration stories.

When the interviews were conducted (Winter-Spring 2020), in one of the non-traditional news outlets (El Mostrador), there were two Venezuelan journalists who brought a different emphasis to the coverage. But, in other cases, the reporting on immigration fell into the general coverage of human rights, particularly in non-traditional outlets, in which that type of topic is more present. This offers an explanation for the significant presence of the *Victim- Humanitarian /Human Rights* frame in these types of media.

The learning process in these newsrooms also created tension between different sections of the newspaper. For instance, journalists recognized that sections such as Police or Justice would have a different approach and sensibility to cover the topic than sections such as Education, Health, or Entertainment. In the Police beat, the emphasis is put on the nationality and crime-related issue involving immigrants, which can create a more negative coverage about the topic. However, this same tension allows for the development of certain standards that became common to the entire news institution. In

general, the strategy mentioned across the journalists was to apply the same high standard as in any other coverage to the immigration phenomenon, which means being rigorous in the reporting, remaining neutral, objective and double-checking information.

“We had daily conversations that created precedents for future coverage [...] Even if it was not something I wrote, I talked to people in other sections to find better ways to tell the story. For example, the use of the word illegal, that is a specific example that we changed. We started to use irregular immigration, not illegal. It is not just a semantic decision; it is an error, a mistake to talk about illegal persons. Perhaps, when I first started to work on immigration coverage, I was not aware of this, but after having conversations in the newsroom and with different sources, I realized how important these language decisions are and that we need to be careful” (Journalist, female, traditional newspaper).

Another relevant learning process about language was how to talk to an immigrant that speaks a different language than Spanish, such as the Haitians. The journalists said that at the beginning it was very challenging to have the Haitian community represented in the coverage because no one in the newsroom (and among Chileans more generally) spoke Creole. Therefore, this linguistic barrier also posed a challenge for incorporating Haitian voices in the media narrative; however, after the first year, spokespersons from this community started to appear.

“For example, if I were to cover a fire in a supermarket (in an immigrant neighborhood), and I have one Haitian and another Venezuelan witness, I probably will ask both of them what they saw, but I will only understand what the Venezuelan has to say, and she will also understand what I am asking [...] This creates a distance with the Haitian sources” (Journalist, female, non-traditional media)

b. Independence and agenda

The journalists interviewed recognized having a high level of independence in their newsroom on writing about immigration. The fact that there was not a lot of

experience and precedents allowed journalists to have flexibility proposing angles, and “*everything could be an interesting story.*” Also, there was very little editorial determination because newspapers did not have a clear editorial take on the case of immigration. Here the perceived political leanings of the papers are an interesting point of analysis. Journalists working in traditional newspapers such as La Tercera and El Mercurio acknowledge that these publications have a reputation for being right-leaning newspapers. Particularly in the case of El Mercurio, this perception has a historical component because the paper supported the military dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet. However, journalists working in these traditional outlets stated they can cover the topic of immigration very freely and independently. In the case of non-traditional newspapers, the perception is that they are also free to take different perspectives on the coverage. However, reporters in these non-traditional outlets express a more progressive approach to topics and having the human right angle seems a priority.

Overall, journalists perceived the effect of the political leaning of the newspaper they work for is not very significant on immigration. Among all the reporters interviewed, there was a sense that the coverage from the right and left is not as politically charged as in other countries such as the United States. However, there are tendencies from reporters in non-traditional new outlets to claim that political leaning of newspapers tainted the coverage (generally more punitive in right-leaning outlets), using as an argument the lack of success stories about immigration in the mainstream media. They attribute responsibility to the columnists the newspaper gives space to, and also to the sections, in traditional newspapers, where the news about immigration is produced (e.g., City beat versus Police beat).

Perhaps the most common editorial influence became the negotiation that happens with the headlines they want to publish. Depending on the newspaper, the editor has more or less power to decide the final headline. Also, there is a recognition that online headlines need to be more attractive to capture the audience, which is not necessarily the case for the print version. However, the trickiest part of the reporting was the sources to consult and interview, especially at the beginning of the migratory arrival. To avoid potential conflict of interest or “low-quality sources” (e.g., self-proclaimed experts), reporters relied on the official voices, such as the government and public servants. The sources also represented a challenge even when migrant communities started have spokespersons because, as the reporters explained, it was difficult to assess if they truly represent a large immigrant community or just a small portion of it.

The main challenge to the self-perception of independence perhaps is what or who drives the coverage or set the agenda about the relevant immigration-related topics. The use of official sources in the early stages of the coverage is one indicator of how the elites’ political discourse permeated the angles of the coverage. But the agreement among the reporters is that it was difficult to put topics on the agenda beyond the governmental one. They may provide different angles to it, but in general what the President or Cabinet members say or do about immigration would most frequently be covered. The pervasive presence of the presidential agenda regarding immigration relates with the high prevalence of Political frames (e.g. Policy and Political Debates) in traditional newspapers such as El Mercurio and La Tercera, but also in El Mostrador, that tend to center their reporting on political issues.

Also, journalists perceived a general lack of interest in immigration news from the public because immigration and poverty became intertwined, and they observed a great indifference toward topics related to less privileged groups. Here is where journalists took responsibility for not having permanent coverage about immigration as part of the stream of information they write about. Although they think their stories are carefully crafted and respectful, they assume that there should be more abundant immigration stories in their newspapers besides the political agenda. As one journalist describes it:

“We follow the events, and when those passes, we don’t follow up with immigration [...] We care mostly about the political class, what they do, and what they don’t [...] We have a responsibility for having a permanent voice of immigration that is something that we have failed, which allows us to give back certain dignity to the people and the stories they share with us” (Journalist, female, non-traditional media).

Moreover, one of the emerging topics from the interviews is that the initial coverage focused on the surprise factor of migration, as a new thing in the country, and also on the links between crime and immigration. Then, around 2017 and 2018 the angles shifted toward the needs, challenges and problems immigrants were facing, which opened up the door for topics related to the type of immigration institutions the country had and how these institutions collapsed. Similarly, the emphasis was about the harsh living conditions of immigrants and the more restrictive political measures the government started to implement. At this point, some of the journalists recognized the lack of trust in official figures and the relevance of other sources that started to become more reputable outside the political establishment, such as experts, NGOs, and Catholic church-affiliated groups.

c. Decision making and responsibility

Journalists make decisions based on what they are going to publish and how to relate a story. This decision-making process is part of every step of their work, including the angle, source selection, and the narrative they develop. In the case of immigration, two common themes emerged from the interviews: The paradox of “victimization” and the danger of stereotyping.

The paradox of victimization is when reporters recognized the suffering of many immigrants and found it very hard not to portray them as victims, even when they tried to find a different approach. Dramatic experiences are part of the story of immigrants in Chile because of precarious living conditions, the difficult reality they are escaping from, and the dangerous experiences on their journeys to arrive to the country. For reporters, all of these ingredients make it very difficult not to center the stories on the human drama.

“In one story (at the border between Chile and Peru), many Venezuelans were living in the streets, with no documents and just waiting for an appointment at the Chilean consulate [...] Mothers gave birth during the journey to Chile [...]. Babies were sleeping inside cardboard boxes in the bus station. Very difficult not to portray them as victims, if they are” (Journalist, male, traditional media)

Covering emotionally charged topics such as immigration affects the reporters more than they anticipated. Beyond the professional relationship, there is also a personal component involved: To start caring for people that you see frequently. This emotional connection to the topic was hard to anticipate because other news beats on which journalists have worked are not as emotionally charged as immigration. For example, one reporter confessed she even started to cry, interviewing immigrant victims of human trafficking in the south of Chile. Another reporter told how immigrants explain to her their plans to cross the border illegally with all the dangers this involves. This might also

contribute to communicating the stories of immigrants filled with emotional features, and since they were mostly involved in vulnerable situations, the victim's perspective emerges as natural.

“I started to become close to some sources because I was always in the same places they were, such as the immigration office downtown Santiago. They were very disoriented and in need of information, so when I wanted to ask something for my reporting, they will ask me things back because they need help. This is something very complex that is not common in other topics I cover for the newspaper” (Journalist, female, traditional media).

Together with recognizing the particular role of emotions on reporting immigration, journalists also acknowledged that covering this topic poses another challenge: The danger of stereotyping. The concept of responsibility emerged repeatedly among reporters when addressing this subject. They call their work a “responsible” one, which means applying standards of journalism such as neutrality and fact-based reporting to the immigration topic. Also, traditional media workers agreed that there is an educational role to play. This is where explaining and stating the facts become a core principle they follow. They based their perception even on their own personal experience; when they talked to their families, people in the streets, or the taxi drivers, they understood that people were not having the rights facts when they talked about immigration, and they tried to be cautious not to fuel these misperceptions.

The idea of being cautious also taps into the sources they consult. They agreed on the presence of a latent xenophobia in the country and they decided not to follow the political extreme or giving too much space to those political discourses that blame immigration for different problems. They understand that using words with negative connotations or portraying a particular group of immigrants as linked to crime or violence can lead to stereotyping.

“We tried to report with the highest standards, we try to do this in all the topics we cover, but immigration is particularly sensitive, and we want to give very little room to interpretation [...] There is a minimal margin of error; that is why we are cautious because one mistake could be harmful to a large group of people. The vast majority of immigrants do not come to Chile to commit crimes; they come for new opportunities” (Journalist/editor, male, traditional media).

This notion of “responsible” coverage in the case of immigration is not conditioned by the metrics or the potential readership of their work. They understand that at least for those who carefully read the news, they want to present the facts. This is influenced by a normative understanding of the work they do. Reporters interviewed here believe they “create reality,” which impacts how careful they try to be in reporting this topic. Also, predominantly reporters working in non-traditional newspapers try to be very cautious about over-exposing immigrants as sources. For these reporters being careful and responsible is not just about portraying immigration in a way that does not exacerbate feelings and emotions, but also about showing high respect for the immigrants who decide to open up their lives for journalists to tell the stories.

“We try to explain to immigrants what it means to be exposed publicly in a news publication [...] We see in the media coverage how there is always an effort to “chilenizar” (domestication) which in many opportunities show the immigrant under a ridiculous light, and there is lack of respect for their form of communication” (Journalist, non-binary, non-traditional media).

2. Positionality in society:

a. Perception of immigration and media coverage in the country.

Journalists are informed citizens, and they are looking for stories while carrying on with their personal lives. All the journalists interviewed in Chile were based in Santiago, the capital city, and they have experienced first-hand the demographic transformation of the city.

“It was like a taboo; the lack of experience with migratory issues creates [a situation where] people of my age and educational level struggle to find a way to be politically correct. I also perceived a certain discomfort in older people because of the change in the urban demographic” (Journalist, male, traditional newspaper).

They explained that Venezuelans and Colombians are more easily assimilated because of the common language, while the Haitians are easily recognizable because of the skin color. The overall perception of the phenomenon of immigration is twofold for these reporters. First, they agreed that becoming a receiving nation of immigrants is probably good news because the country is attractive to others, and this means that there are things in Chile that people lacked somewhere else. Second, they perceived the immigration phenomenon as very complex, which makes the news coverage tricky. The different waves of immigrants from the upper-middle class Venezuelans coming to the country with economic and social resources, to Colombians with nothing but one suitcase, and Haitians that required a rapid adaptation of public services, created a true challenge for the news coverage.

The other common topic that appeared from the reporters as informed citizens is the perception of the role of news media in general (including radio and television) on treating immigration in the country. Their impression is that three main features developed from the coverage of immigration—first, this idea of a benevolent approach from the news media in general. As one journalist calls it, there was a “*buenismo*” (benevolent attitude):

“It seems bad to talk about limitations or restrictions. There is not a very deep discussion about how to achieve a smoother transition for the migrants [...] In a way, this “buenismo,” makes you lose distance from the phenomenon” (Journalist/editor, male, traditional media).

Voices from traditional media outlets link this benevolent coverage with the fact that the phenomenon was new, but after the initial surprise, the coverage moved into recognizing immigrants as part of the Chilean society instead of as “others.”

The second common characteristic of the general media coverage perceived by the group of reporters is the predominance of sad stories about the suffering of immigrants, stories that use sensationalism as a way to attract audiences.

“When media covers femicides, they even can show the victim’s underwear if this brings higher ratings, but if it is femicide of an immigrant this is even more brutal and heartless” (Journalist, non-binary, non-traditional media).

The third characteristic is the link of immigration to problems and crime. In this case, the voices from the non-traditional newspapers are critical of the role of traditional media outlets, while reporters from traditional newspapers blame broadcasting for this practice that fosters stereotypes and stigma of immigrants.

“[We tried not to cover crime committed by a Colombian if we would not have covered it if the same crime had been committed by a Chilean] We do it with the conviction that if you start to produce headlines like those, it would create the idea that all Colombians in Chile are criminals. The television newscasts did this, and this created stereotypes and prejudice toward Colombians.” (Journalist/editor, male, traditional newspaper).

b. The particular case of Haitian migration

Another specific theme surfaced across the interviews with this group of journalists: The challenge posed by Haitian immigration. The reporters acknowledged the Haitian influx was the most newsworthy. It has extra ingredients compared to immigration from other Latin American nations: One of the most salient ones being having Black people in Chile. Perhaps in 2014 or 2015, the press was looking at this phenomenon by highlighting the uniqueness of this, which was especially attractive

outside metro areas, in small towns where Haitian migrants started to work in agriculture and farming. But after a couple of years, the coverage changed because the cities began to witness the presence of Haitian neighborhoods in underprivileged conditions, and racist attacks became more frequent. Therefore, the narrative of Haitians as victims appears in many news media. Journalists reflected that writing about Haitians was like “*walking on eggshells*” because it was a sensitive issue that deviated from the mainstream topics that Chilean audiences were used to receiving. Also, the language was a significant barrier, and, among Haitians, all the spokespersons were male. This created a barrier to covering issues that are affecting women or, as one reporter labeled it, it “*is a masculinization of the migration*” because the voices we hear in the media are mostly men.

“Husbands don’t allow women to speak Spanish. In one of my stories, the Haitian woman did not want to talk about personal stuff because the translator was a man. I have to figure out a way to find a woman to translate for me because this woman had terrible things that had happened to her in the hospital and wanted to share it with me.” (Journalist, female, non-traditional newspaper).

In the case of Haitian migration, reporters interviewed here agreed the death of Joane Florvil, the Haitian woman accused of child abandonment who later died in police custody, was a tipping point in the coverage of Haitians. The coverage of this issue was massive and exposed the conditions of Haitians in Chile as terrible on many levels, according to the reporters. However, the coverage reached a saturation level (i.e., overproduction of stories about the topic), which opened the door for the official discourse to permeate without many counter-frames offered by news media.

Interviews: main takeaways

In general, the group of reporters agreed that immigration took newsrooms by surprise and unprepared. Therefore, they acknowledged a level of improvisation in the coverage, which does not mean unprofessional, but rather, being blind to the complex reality that immigration represents. As one of the journalists explains,

“There were a lot of mistakes because we did not know how to do this coverage [...] I think there is something that happens with every minority. How do we talk about migrants, how do we label them, what sources do you go to? [...] We make similar mistakes in any difficult coverage, the coverage that involves groups that do not fit the mainstream of our society” (Journalist, female, non-traditional media).

These interviews also provide rich information that allows for making connections with the content. For instance, journalists are very aware of the potential effect of their job. Thus, this create a sense of responsibility and high levels of consciousness to avoid stereotyping and linking migration with negative issues or using negative charged labels. This might lead to a benevolent coverage of immigration. However, at the same time, the paradox of victimization plays a role, because trying to tell the human drama of immigrants opens the space for sensationalism and exploiting the suffering of this group. This is particularly evident in the case of Haitian migration, where race and poverty influence the victimization of the group.

There is also a distinction that arises depending on the type of newspaper reporters work for. Journalists in traditional newspapers presented themselves as less opinionated, the conversations with them were in a more neutral tone and focused on newsroom practices. Conversely, those working for non-traditional media seemed to have an opinionated take on things, and the analysis of the immigration phenomena in the

country, in general, was more pessimistic than that by their colleagues in traditional media.

Finally, as mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, the massive protests and social movement that took place in Chile in October 2019 is considered a breaking point for this group of reporters. On the one hand, the social crisis proved that alternative media is a valuable source even for journalists to access information. Besides social media, they mentioned also community radios or local news websites. However, these journalists also recognized that immigration coverage became a very low priority, which made the topic disappear from the news radar. As one of the reporters from a traditional newspaper confessed, her immigration beat was canceled, and she was moved to other duties more closely linked to the social revolution. If this was the case for one very well-established news institution, the prospect for the other news outlets about covering immigration is far from auspicious.

How does all the analysis come together?

This chapter presented a detailed analysis of how newspapers in Chile reported immigration news from 2014 to 2018, as the first country case study of three about how news media covered this issue in Latin America, which is the central inquiry for this research.

Informed by the context of how the media system works in Chile, this analysis incorporates news outlets beyond the most traditional newspapers (El Mercurio and La Tercera) as a way to examine the potential difference with non-traditional outlets.

Accordingly, one of the research questions of this project is what are the frames found in the news media coverage of immigration in Chile during 2014-2018? The

analysis shows a high prevalence of a *Victim* frame in the representation of immigration and immigrants in Chile. Specifically, the *Humanitarian -Human Rights* frame is the most frequent, which aligns with some of the literature in the Global North of the same phenomenon. The large percentage of this frame to represent immigrants is driven largely in this analysis by non-traditional outlets. This type of outlets gives more space to opinion pieces and columnists that tend to discuss immigration from a human rights perspective.

The presence of the *Political Responsibility – Policy Solutions and Debate* frame is linked to traditional media (El Mercurio and La Tercera). In these cases, the coverage addresses political information or policy debates rather than base the narrative on a humanitarian approach. Interestingly, the conversations with reporters of these news outlets were also more neutral in terms of the opinion they have of the immigration phenomenon in the country. Additionally, more punitive frames such as *Threat- Security and Public Order* also score higher in traditional media reporting. The fact that El Mercurio and La Tercera are linked to the center-right political spectrum of the country could offer evidence to interpret these results in line with the findings in another global context. One caveat about this is that the *Benefit- Economic/Good worker* frames also is prevalent among traditional newspapers (e.g., El Mercurio), and these frames are commonly associated with a positive representation of immigration in the scholarly work from the developed world. Therefore, the perceived political leaning of a news outlet might lead to contradictory findings. Typically, in the Global North political leaning is an “independent variable” that predicts a particular framing of immigration, but based on the results presented here, in the case of Chile, it could be difficult to predict frames solely

based on political leaning of newspapers. This data help to address the research question about the relationship between frames and the perceived political leaning of the media organization.

Another research question guiding the analysis is the relationship between journalists' self-perceived practices and the aggregate news coverage produced by news media in the case of Chile. By looking at the labels, the finding that emerges as distinctive is the use of the word foreigners (*extranjeros*) to refer to immigration and the low incidence of the term illegal (*ilegal*) to label the influx. Even though it could be related to a journalist stylistic decision of using synonyms to avoid looking repetitive, this finding aligns with the reporters' own perception about their responsibility to avoid stereotyping and stigma toward the newcomers.

Perhaps it does not come as a surprise that there is a significant presence of governmental sources throughout the corpus of news. As reporters acknowledge, the governmental and political agenda was the driver of the immigration coverage for the most part (which is also the case for many news topics, not just migration). Yet, the significant presence of immigrants as the first source of many of the stories can be interpreted as a way to at least hear their experience directly. However, the victimization coverage offers an element to argue that the voices of immigrants represented in the reporting are usually to illustrate the suffering rather than to empower them as a relevant actor on the public debate. The in-depth analysis of a sample of news stories aligns with the portraying of immigrants as victims.

Finally, in the case of Chile, this chapter explores the importance of race, which is linked to Haitian migration. Foreign nationals from this country represent an additional

layer of complexity, according to the reporters interviewed. If immigration was already complicated, adding the racial component made the Haitian inflow a good case of unusual and atypical news event. Both factors combined commonly garner a large number of news stories. In this case, non-traditional news outlets lead with more coverage and content regarding race. This could also be related to the number of columnists and opinion pieces they are able to publish online.

Overall, the data from Chile shows a news reporting primarily based on a Victim frame and a Political frame, and the latter primarily influenced by governmental and official sources. Also, in the news writing, the idea of immigrants as illegals is virtually absent. More emphasis is put on the nations of origin and the concept of “foreigners.” The “responsible” self-perceived role taken by journalists, and the benevolent angle can serve as evidence to explain the absence of charged labels (e.g., illegal), and the presence of a Victim frame based on human rights and the humanitarian aspects of immigration. Furthermore, the next chapter will explore findings related to Colombia.

CHAPTER 5

Immigration news in Colombia

In the previous chapter, I looked into the case of Chile and the relationship between the news coverage of immigration and journalists' perceptions about the topic. In this chapter the case study is Colombia, and the objective again is answering the overall question of this dissertation about how news media in Latin America portrays intraregional migration issues. The three countries explored in this dissertation (Chile, Colombia, and Mexico) represent nations with a sudden and recent increase in immigrants from other developing countries, but all have specific characteristics. In particular, Colombia represents an "immigration-refugee crisis" type of phenomenon that could resemble the events of Syrians fleeing to Turkey (Gedan, 2017). According to the official number, by 2020, close to 1.8 million Venezuelans were in Colombia⁸⁶. However, the number is likely higher because of unaccounted irregular movements. The increase in Venezuelans crossing to Colombia started to upsurge primarily in 2016, and in a few years, Colombia received more immigrants from Venezuela than any other nation in Latin America.

First, this chapter provides an overview of the current state of the Colombian media system and academic studies about journalism in this country. The objective of this context is to enrich the empirical results of this case study. After reviewing a general perspective on how media works in Colombia (with an emphasis on the press), I will explain, in detail, the results of the content analysis and how the interviews with reporters help to answer my research questions.

⁸⁶ [Migracion Colombia](#)

Journalism and the press in Colombia

Although there is no long tradition of research about the media system and journalism in Colombia, the agreement among researchers studying this topic is that, as in many Latin American countries, politics and journalism are closely connected in Colombia. There is a history in the country of presidents as media owners, journalists, or leaders of newspapers, as well as newspapers affiliated to traditional political parties (Arroyave & Barrios, 2012; Hallin & Papathanassopoulos, 2002). Similarly to Chile, the Colombian media system is market-oriented, but it is not fully competitive, which has an effect on plurality and diversity of content. Also, the lack of government regulation and political and economic interests constrain the development of professionalism among media workers (Montoya-Londoño, 2014). For these reasons, the Colombian media system is better characterized as a Captured Liberal Model (Guerrero, 2014), which means that it is not quite the Liberal model proposed by Hallin and Mancini because of different social factors that influence and diminish the watchdog role of the Colombian press.

Moreover, in a comparative study of seven countries, Hallin & Papathanassopoulos (2002), explain that Colombia has followed the path of advocacy journalism as other countries in Latin America: *“journalism in these countries tends to emphasize opinion and commentary, and newspapers to represent distinct political tendencies”* (Hallin & Papathanassopoulos, 2002, p.177). Arroyave and Barrios (2012) reach a similar conclusion. However, they also explain that journalists take a role as problem-solver and push for change with a large influence on public opinion, even though this role is constrained by the dependency between press and powerful actors. The

authors describe how, in Colombia, the press was born as privately owned by families with clear political affiliations. Furthermore, the political leaders of Liberal and Conservative parties were also part of the families that controlled most of the press. This trend started to change by the 1960s and 1970s, when other economic groups began to acquire print outlets. However, the connection between journalism, media owners, and politics is very ingrained in Colombian public life. For example, the former president, Juan Manuel Santos, belongs to the Santos family that, until 2007, was the owner of *El Tiempo*, one of the largest and most traditional newspapers in the country.

Hallin & Papathanassopoulos (2002) also explain that the broadcasting industry in Colombia is characterized by a mix between public and private actors. The transmission facilities are generally state-owned, but private companies produce the content of the broadcasting. However, they argue that in Colombia, as in Mexico and Brazil, the regulation on private broadcasting companies is weak.

Additionally, in the past few years, media ownership concentration in Colombia has increased, limiting pluralism. For instance, three companies control around 60% of the television, print, and radio market (Reporters Without Border, 2020; Hallin & Papathanassopoulos, 2002). Moreover, the long internal armed conflict has created a late transition to democracy, which has allowed for clientelism in the country's media system, as is the case in many Latin American countries.

The World Press Freedom Index-RWB (2020) ranks Colombia 130 out of 180 countries. Despite the peace deal with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) in 2016, Colombia is still one of the most dangerous nations in the world for journalists, especially in rural areas where guerrilla groups remain active (RWB- World

Press Freedom Index, 2020). According to the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), between 2010-2020, eight journalists were killed in the country (CPJ, 2020). Moreover, in a study of 300 journalists surveyed about personal safety, 41% of them confessed receiving a threat as part of the daily reporting routines (Arroyave & Barrios, 2012). Besides violence against journalists outside urban areas, most regional newspapers rely on government advertising, which produces a lack of coverage of corruption involving public officials (Zuluaga & Martinez, 2012).

Nevertheless, Internet penetration in Colombia has increased rapidly during the past decade. More than 64% of the population are internet users (The World Bank, 2020), which creates a very dynamic landscape for digital journalism. Therefore, more online independent journalism initiatives have emerged and gained popularity as news sources, such as La Silla Vacía, launched in 2009 (Arroyave & Garcés, 2017; Zuluaga et al., 2012; Hallin & Papathanassopoulos, 2002).

The Colombian journalistic workforce is male-dominated, with professionals in their mid-thirties with university degrees in communication and journalism, most of them working full-time (Arroyave & Garcés, 2017). Also, among the top priorities for the work they do are to “report the news event accurately,” “provide analysis,” “promote cultural diversity and tolerance,” “foster social change” and “educate the audience,” as well as “mobilize the public to engage in public affairs” (Arroyave & Garcés, 2017; Weiss, 2015). These professional functions appear to be consistent among all the journalists in the country, regardless of the media platform. Also, adhering to codes of professional ethics has the same level of agreement among reporters. However, more classical functions of journalism, such as impartial observers and watchdogs, generate less

consensus among reporters, which correlates with the advocacy inclination of news writing (Arroyave & Garcés, 2017).

Moreover, the journalistic autonomy to work in Colombia is conditioned by violence against the press, clientelism, and inequalities (i.e., lower wages and job insecurity), even though, as Hughes et al. (2017) argue, Colombian journalists perceive a high level of autonomy and freedom in choosing, reporting, deciding the angle, and publishing news stories. This is particularly evident among journalists in the capital city (Bogota) and working for online news outlets.

Based on the way journalism and the media system work in Colombia, the expectation in the case of immigration news coverage is that it would have a large presence of official and political sources due to the close ties between journalism and political parties. Nevertheless, the advocacy approach plus the educational aspect and promoting tolerance could be particularly salient when covering an issue such as the Venezuelan inflow.

Therefore, informed by the emerging literature about journalism studies and the media system in Colombia, this chapter offers the empirical results of the representation of immigration and immigrants in the Colombian press. First, I will examine the content analysis based on the framing, sources, and numerical elements present in the coverage. Then I will present the results of the word choice about immigration used by journalists. Also, by exploring the interviews conducted with journalists from the media outlets used in the content analysis, the objective is to establish connections and relationships about news production of immigration news in this country.

Immigration News in Colombia – Empirical Findings

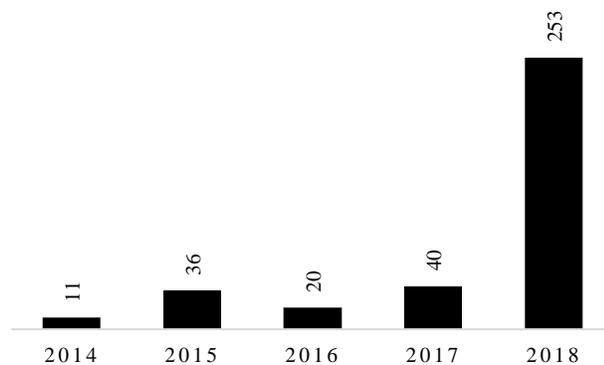
Based on the methodology (developed in more detail in chapter 3), this analysis has the following elements: 1) The occurrence of the most common frames; 2) Presence of word choices; 3) sources; 4) the presence of numerical elements; and 5) semi-structured interviews.

The content analysis was conducted on news articles from five news outlets in Colombia⁸⁷. Table 1 shows the distribution from each newspaper, and the frequency across the five years is represented in Figure 1.

Table 1: Count for each outlet

Newspaper	%	Count
El Tiempo	32%	116
El Espectador	28%	102
Semana	13%	47
Silla Vacía	8%	27
Minuto 30	19%	68
Total	100%	360

Figure 1: News article by year



The main objective of this research is to study the aggregate representation of immigration and immigrants of Colombia's newspapers during 2014-2018. However, there are a few considerations after looking at Table 1 and Figure 1.

⁸⁷ The total number of articles after the relevancy coding was N=387. Once I conducted the content and framing analysis, the final number of articles was N=360. I excluded short articles in which frames are difficult to assess and also stories that were not coded correctly during the relevancy process. The percentage of agreement for the two coders during the relevancy coding process was 92%. Therefore, the reduction of articles during the content and framing analysis is within the margin of disagreement between the two coders.

For instance, El Tiempo and El Espectador, the two largest and more traditional national newspapers in Colombia, together account for 60% of the news articles of this sample. The retrieving of data and the sampling strategy was the same for all newspapers. One explanation for the difference in the number of stories across the outlets is that La Silla Vacía is a web-only news outlet covering exclusively power and political affairs. They describe themselves as informative media that try not to follow the daily news agenda, instead unveiling the power relationship of political actors⁸⁸. Based on this description and the number of news stories, it seems that for La Silla Vacía immigration is not a political issue. Therefore, the volume of news stories, in general, could be fewer than a traditional newspaper.

Conversely, Semana is a weekly magazine. The stories were retrieved on its website that updates news stories hourly or daily. However, an argument could be made that they also produce less volume of news stories, in general, than a daily newspaper such as El Tiempo or El Espectador.

Lastly, in the case of Minuto 30, the available data to retrieve (using web scraping) was limited to 2017 and 2018. This explains the fewer stories from this news website. However, this is not necessarily a problem because the period 2017-2018 concentrated the vast majority of the news articles in all the newspapers analyzed for this case study. For those two years combined, the total number of stories about immigration is 293 out of 360. This issue limited the possibility of using this corpus to detect variance of frames across time; nonetheless, the sample from the five years as a unified corpus of analysis provides rich information about immigration news in Colombia.

⁸⁸ [La Silla Vacía](#)

Also, a few national events offer some potential explanation for the frequency of news articles presented above. First, in 2016, Colombia signed a Peace Agreement⁸⁹ to end a decades-long conflict with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). The negotiations for this accord started back in 2012; however, during 2016, the news agenda was heavily conditioned by this historical event. This could mean that even when the Venezuelan crisis was under way, news media attention was mostly on the Peace Agreement (Charry, 2020).

Another newsworthy event is the progressive border shutdown between Venezuela and Colombia that started in August of 2015 and lasted almost a year. The Venezuelan regime ordered the border closed after an incident in which three soldiers and one civilian were injured by Colombia paramilitaries, according to the Venezuelan government. Due to this political conflict, the official numbers show that 2,000 Colombians were deported, and more than 18,000 returned to Colombia⁹⁰; this data does not account for irregular crossing. Also, the return of this population to Colombia posed an interesting challenge because, as the news articles examined for this case study shows, many of these people are “Colombo-Venezuelans.” This means they could have double nationality and/or they are Colombians who have lived in Venezuela for many years, and they do not necessarily perceive themselves as Colombians.

Once the borders reopened by mid-2016, and with the economic and social situation of Venezuela getting worse, the number of people coming into Colombia started to increase⁹¹. Therefore, another event that created coverage, and may explain the trend

⁸⁹ [Colombian Peace Agreement](#)

⁹⁰ [Migracion Colombia](#)

⁹¹ [Migracion Colombia](#)

of news stories for this chapter, is the creation of the *Tarjeta de Movilidad Fronteriza* (Border Transit Card) by the Colombian government as a policy to control the growing influx of Venezuelans. The same year (2017), Colombia's government launched the *Permiso Especial de Permanencia* (Special Permit of Residence), allowing Venezuelans to work and access some public services while in Colombia. In 2018, another policy was implemented that garnered media attention, *Registro Administrativo de Migrantes Venezolanos* (Venezuelan Migrants Registration)⁹², a sort of census for Venezuelan immigrants living in Colombia.

These political events provide an explanation for the frequency of news stories that appear in Figure 1. However, to address the potential imbalance in the number of articles across newspapers (for example La Silla Vacía's 27 versus El Tiempo's 116), I examined the presence of frames as a percentage of each newspaper. More details about this strategy are explained below.

Most common frames in the news coverage

The codebook developed for the content analysis includes 16 different frame options, and it is organized as a ranking. I transferred the codebook into a Qualtrics form, and I treat each news article as an independent unit for framing, sources, and numerical data⁹³. The entire sample was examined using this ranking, based on the definitions from the codebook and the presence of the discourse or narrative indicators in the headline, lede, and first paragraphs. Therefore, if a news frame is ranked first it means that the discursive indicator is present in the headline and/or lede. For the case of Colombia, the

⁹² [RAMV](#)

⁹³ I used a Qualtrics form accessible here: [Colombia Qualtrics](#)

presence of more than two frames for each unit of analysis was minimal⁹⁴. However, to be consistent among all the case studies, the analysis focuses on the top three frames present in each article.

As seen in Table 2, the *Political Responsibility – Policy Solutions and Debate* (*POLRESP- PSD*) is the most common frame ranked first in the aggregate news coverage.

Table 2. Most common frames

Frames	Ranking 1	Ranking 1 % of total news (N=360)	Ranking 2	Ranking 3	Total
POLRESP- PSD	75	21%	27	1	103
VICTIM – H	69	19%	33	0	102
VICTIM - PE	51	14%	26	2	79
COUNTRY SPECIFIC - TRAN	6	2%	55	17	78
POLRESP - INTC	45	12.5%	16	0	61
THREAT - SePo	48	13%	5	1	54
COUNTRY SPECIFIC - SOL	12	3%	14	0	26
THREAT -BS	7	2%	14	2	23
BENEFIT - EC	11	3%	3	2	16
BENEFIT - IA	12	3%	4	0	16
THREAT -He	7	2%	3	2	12
THREAT - EC	6	2%	5	0	11
VICTM - RX	7	2%	1	0	8
BENFEIT - CU	4	1%	2	2	8
THREAT -CU	0	0%	0	0	0

The *Political Responsibility – Policy Solutions and Debate* category represents 21% of the overall sample. This means 75 out of the 360 stories examined are focusing primarily on covering immigration under this frame. The definition of this category of framing is based on the idea that changes in the migratory patterns create specific

⁹⁴ The unit of analysis is the headline, lede and the first paragraphs (defined as the first 200 words). Except for the case of the frame “Transitionality” that has 55 occurrences as Rank 2 and 17 occurrences as Ranking 3, the rest of the sample has minimal presence of a third frame. The presence of a third frame is commonly linked to longer lede or the presence of different voices (i.e., sources) in the first paragraphs.

modifications on policies that also influence political debates. Additionally, authorities are required to implement contingency plans and containment solutions to face the increasing arrival of newcomers. In Colombia, the news articles around the implementation of the *Border Transit Card* (2017), the *Special Permit of Residence*, and the *Venezuelan Migrants Registration* (2018) are aligned with the coverage of *Political Responsibility – Policy Solution and Debates*. This frame category, in the case of Colombia, also captured news as public service announcements to the immigrant community regarding policy changes. The examples below illustrate this frame.

*El Tiempo, Colombia 12/24/2018*⁹⁵

Venezuelans in Colombia have a new opportunity for the SPP

Migración Colombia announces the dates to issue the Special Permanence Permit

Venezuelan citizens that entered the country before December 17th, 2018 and have a stamp in their passports could apply (starting December 27th), to the Special Permanence Permit, according to the announcement made by the director of Migración Colombia, Christian Kruger Sarmiento.

El Espectador, Colombia 07/26/2017

Seeking visa for Venezuelan immigrants

As a response to the political, social and economic crisis in Venezuela, with thousands of citizens coming into Colombia, the MP Maria Fernanda Cabal announced a project to give them a humanitarian visa.

Minuto 30, 11/30/2018

**Colombia launched a website for Venezuelan's application for the mobility permit.
Link: www.migracioncolombia.gov.co**

The Colombian government announced that starting today, Venezuelan citizens can apply to the Border Mobility Card, to enter temporarily into the country, on the website of Migración Colombia.

⁹⁵ Translations made by me.

The second most frequent frame in the aggregate coverage of immigration in Colombia is the *Victim – Humanitarian and Human Rights*. Sixty-nine out of 360 news stories have this frame ranked number one, representing 19% of the total coverage (Table 2). According to the definition of this framing category, news coverage focuses on the suffering of immigrants in the receiving society. It is humanitarian in the sense that immigrants need assistance but also this frame captures the different abuses the foreign-born experienced in Colombia. Immigrants could be victims of poverty, lack of access to health care and housing, but also victims of organized crime, government, and business practices. The dangers of organized crime and the impoverished conditions immigrants live in the country are linked to this framing category. A few examples from the coverage are useful to show the *Victim – Humanitarian and Human Rights* frame:

La Semana, Colombia 07/28/2017

Sleeping on the streets, Venezuelans suffering for a future in Colombia.

The worsening crisis in the neighboring country makes more people coming into Cucuta, the city with the second highest rate of unemployment in Colombia.

Jose has slept on the street for more than a week, sometimes he spends nights at a local shelter for food. Like other Venezuelans migrating to Colombia, Jose is full of frustration, looking for a job and a better future for his family.

El Tiempo, Colombia 10/24/2018

Divided families: another drama of Venezuelan migration

According to the National Assembly, 40% of the Venezuelan migrants are head of household and leave their children in Venezuela. “My day is very long”, says Madeleiny Villareal, a Venezuelan immigrant (32) working as a street vendor for the last eight months. Her day starts at 4:30AM, when she wakes up to get ready to leave at sunrise.

The third most frequent frame in the coverage between 2014-2018, with 14% of the sample ranking in the first place, is another Victim category, but this one the *Political*

and Economic Victim type⁹⁶. The narrative indicator of this frame is centering on how media describes the problems immigrants are facing in their home country —scarcity of economic opportunities, violence, or political instability. There is a recognition of these elements as “push-factors” for migrants to leave their home. In the case of Colombia, the critical situation facing Venezuelans under Maduro’s regime is commonly highlighted as part of the coverage, and as key explanatory cause of the movement of Venezuelans into Colombian territory.

El Tiempo, Colombia 08/22/2018

Minister of Foreign Affairs to visit border regions for situation with Venezuela.

Governors are asking for solutions. Government says the plan is ready.

The complex migratory situation of Venezuela, caused by the economic and social crisis in our neighbor, and some border conflicts with Maduro’s regime, sparked the visit of the Minister of Foreign Affairs to regions on the border with Venezuela to understand better the needs of these places.

El Espectador, Colombia 03/18/2018

The challenges of the Venezuelan diaspora for Latin America

With the job of his husband as concierge in an apartment building in Caracas, and her job as domestic maid, Monica and her partner have raised three daughters. But 2017 was an extremely difficult year. In one day even with double shift at work, Monica made less than a dollar. More than her husband, who made the equivalent of 6 dollars a month. High prices of food make it difficult to buy anything to eat and even worse, food is

⁹⁶ For this case, I conducted a separate analysis considering the events of 2015 when Venezuela shut down the border. During that time, Colombians and Colombo-Venezuelans were deported or returned voluntarily to Colombia from Venezuela. I detected 26 news articles (El Tiempo, El Espectador and Semana) that covered the issue. Eighteen of them have the Victim- Political and Economic frame as number one. Four the Victim – Humanitarian and Human Rights; two the Political Responsibility – International Cooperation and Relations and one the Political Responsibility- Policy Solutions and Debate. When excluding this news from the aggregate, the top two frames remain the same (PSD and Victim H). The news about deportation contributes to position the frame Victim-PE in third place instead of fourth that it is what happened when I excluded the news about deportation. I decided to incorporate these stories in the aggregate analysis because the news media coverage, even though it is about the return of these Colombians, highlights the fact that these populations probably have mixed households (Colombian and Venezuelan), they probably have lived in Venezuela for many years, and also some of them have dual nationality. Therefore, it is a type of immigration similar to any other foreign-born population.

growing scarce. During their assigned day for grocery shopping they wait in line for hours.”

The *Transitionality* frame came in fourth place, but most of the news articles occurrence ranked it as the second most important category of the story. This means that only six news articles ranked this *transitionality* frame number one, but 55 in second and 17 in third place, the highest of all the 16 categories in the sample (Table 2). The definition of this frame encompasses the depiction of immigration as a new phenomenon but also a recognition of transitioning from a migrants-sender to a migrants-receiving nation. In a sense, this could be considered a "meta frame," meaning that all the news coverage in itself is driven by this new immigration influx of Venezuelans. However, to examine this frame in the news articles sample, I looked for explicit mentions of this *transitionality* such as: “*Colombia is living a historical phenomenon*” (Semana, 2018) or “*Up to four million Venezuelans could migrate to Colombia under the worst-case scenario. Currently, close to a million Venezuelans have moved to Colombia. 2.3 have left the country because of the crisis. ‘We are facing a challenge that our country has never confronted before, neither has Latin America’ argues the Minister of Foreign Affairs*” (Minuto 30, 2018).

The frames that come in fifth and sixth place are *Political Responsibility – International Cooperation and Relations* and *Threat – Security and Public Order*. The Political Responsibility frame is defined by representing immigration as an issue that is beyond the control of one specific country, and the political responsibility is shared by different international actors, such as nations in the Americas and multilateral organizations. In the case of Colombia, the role of the United States, United Nations and other Latin American countries such as Peru and Ecuador are related to the news frame:

“The Colombian government has requested in several opportunities assistance to deal with the Venezuelan migration crisis. [President] Duque asked for financing from OAS and IDB” (Minuto 30, 2018).

The *Threat – Security and Public Order* frame associates immigrants with breaking the law and causing negative disruption to the social environment. In Colombia, the news coverage falling into this category is generally linked to crime committed by Venezuelans and unauthorized camps created by the migrants in towns and cities where they arrived. The following excerpts show examples, one also mentioning the nationality (Venezuelan) in the headline when referring to crimes committed by immigrants.

El Tiempo, Colombia 04/09/2018

Reinforcement of security in Santa Marta for wave of crimes

This weekend a man holding a boy in his arms was killed in a kidnapping attempt. Illegal migration of Venezuelans in the city is linked to the increase in crimes.

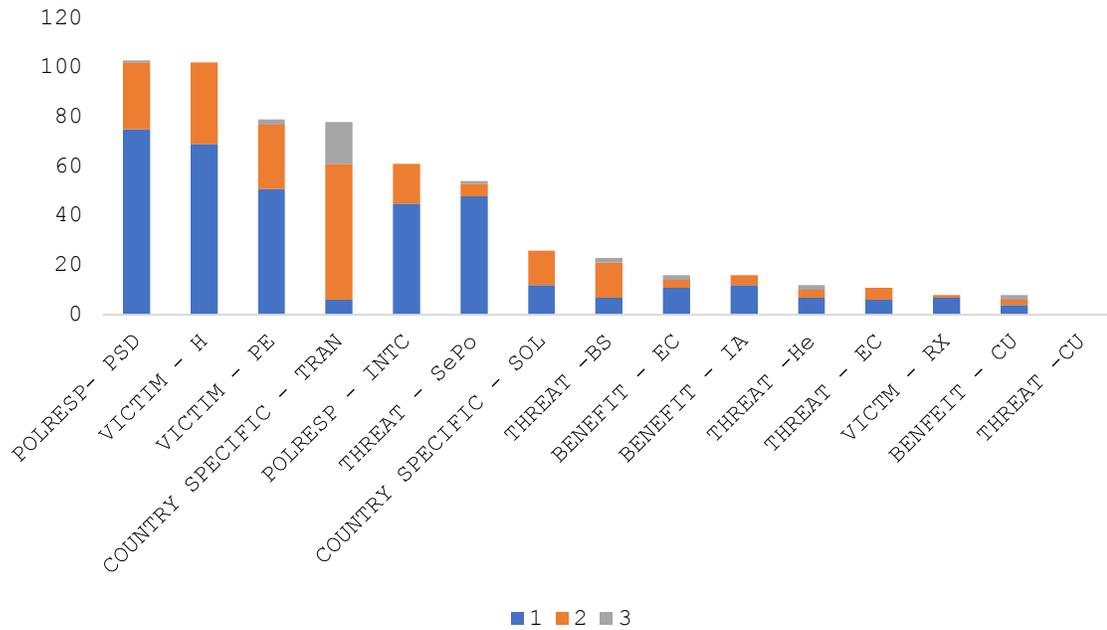
El Espectador, Colombia 06/18/2015 Redacción Judicial

Colombia expelled a Venezuelan accused of the killing of a journalist

Yonny Eduardo Bolivar was delivered at Cucuta’s border control to Venezuelans authorities.

Table 2 shows the incidence of each frame, and Figure 2 provides a visualization of these news frames in the aggregate coverage of immigration in Colombia. An interesting observation emerges when examining the frames that have little presence in the sample. For example, none of the *Benefit* categories have high incidence. Also, the *Racism and Xenophobia* category has low presence, although the journalists interviewed for this case mentioned latent and explicit xenophobia as part of the daily life in many Colombian neighborhoods. I will expand more on this topic in the coming sections.

Figure 2. Most common and frequent frames during 2014-2018



To examine even in more detail the aggregate coverage in the case of Colombia, I grouped the newspapers between traditional and non-traditional. In the case of the traditional outlets, El Tiempo and El Espectador are the largest national newspapers in the country, and Semana is a well-respected weekly magazine. The three of them also have an online version. The non-traditional, La Silla Vacía and Minuto 30, are digital-only news websites founded in 2009 and 2013. Also, Minuto 30⁹⁷ is based in Medellín (the second-largest city in Colombia), but it is a news site with one of the highest online traffic in the country⁹⁸.

The objective of looking into the presence of frames as a percentage of each outlet is to address the potential overrepresentation of frames on newspapers such as El Tiempo

⁹⁷ [RSE](#)

⁹⁸ [Alexa ranking](#)

and El Espectador that combined represent 60% of the sample. Table 3 explores the disaggregated information⁹⁹.

For instance, the largest difference between traditional and non-traditional outlets is marked by two frames: *Political Responsibility - Policy Solutions and Debate* and *Victim- Political and Economic* categories. In non-traditional news outlets (Minuto 30 and La Silla Vacía), 40% of the coverage is about *Political Responsibility – Policy Solutions and Debate*, which in the aggregate analysis is the most frequent frame. While for traditional newspapers, the proportion of this frame, as a percentage of their entire coverage, ranges from 13% (Semana) to 33% (El Espectador). One potential explanation is that Minuto 30 reproduces governmental communication about immigration that is commonly linked to the implementation of policies and contingency plans. Similarly, La Silla Vacía has a vocation for covering power, and in the case of immigration, power relationships are intertwined with the way the government is dealing with the influx from Venezuela.

Conversely, Minuto 30, and La Silla Vacía have the lowest percentages in the *Victim – Political and Economic* frame. This means that they put less emphasis on explaining or highlighting potential push-factors causing the migration from Venezuela. Rather they emphasize political news and immigration from the perspective of Venezuelans once in Colombian territory.

⁹⁹ For consistency with Chile and Mexico, the percentage considered the first three frames coded for each news article. This means that, for example, 22% in the case of Political-PSD in El Tiempo encompasses the news that has this frame in first, second, and third place. However, as explained above, the presence of the third frame in news articles is very minimal. The decision to use the three frames is more a consistency practice among all the countries.

As the aggregate analysis showed, the second most common frame is *Victim – Humanitarian/ Human Rights* category. El Tiempo and El Espectador have the highest percentage, but also one of the traditional outlets, Semana, has the lowest of all the newspapers (traditional and non-traditional). One potential explanation for the lower presence of the *Victim-H frame* in Semana, and also in La Silla Vacía, could be that these two news media have a strong focus on political actors. They devote less content to stories narrated from a “human case,” which is generally linked to the *Humanitarian and Human rights* frame.

Table 3 Presence of frame as a percentage of the coverage in each newspaper

	N	Polit-PSD	Victim- H	Victim -PE	Transitionality	Polit-Intc	Threat -SePo
<i>Traditional</i>							
El Tiempo	116	22%	30%	22%	32%	13%	20%
El Espectador	102	33%	34%	25%	7%	19%	11%
Semana	47	13%	17%	38%	32%	17%	15%
<i>Non-traditional</i>							
Minuto 30	68	40%	28%	12%	16%	26%	15%
La Silla Vacía	27	41%	19%	11%	30%	4%	11%

Informing the frames with the textual analysis

The framing analysis provides detailed information about the trends of the coverage of immigration in Colombia, showing that the *Political Responsibility* (Policy Solutions and Debate) frame and two *Victim* frames (Humanitarian and Political and Economic) are the top three more common. This section offers the main takeaways of a textual analysis of a sample¹⁰⁰ of the news articles to explore potential nuances in the coverage not fully captured by the content examination presented above.

¹⁰⁰ 122 randomly selected (31% of N=387)

For instance, the border (*“frontera¹⁰¹”*) between the two countries plays an essential role in the storytelling in both traditional and non-traditional outlets. This relevance of the border appears not only because the initial influx settles in border cities, but also for the political attention and importance that governments of Colombia and Venezuela give to the territorial limit. This politicization of the border is picked up by the news media coverage.

“[Migración Colombia] claimed that Colombia did not close the border and reminded people that Venezuela was the nation that shutdown the border in 2015. The Colombian president, Ivan Duque, stated that it is not on his plans to close up the border, as some voices have suggested. Duque also said that closing the border will worsen the situation of migrants” (Minuto 30, 2018).

Moreover, the news media tends to create a sense of a *double crisis*: A border crisis and a crisis in Venezuela. This crisis narrative permeates in the stories portraying immigration in ways that could be linked to threats and using concepts such as *“massive waves of immigrants.”* Arguably, news media tries to raise awareness about this crisis and call for action from the authorities (local and national). Still, perhaps inadvertently or carelessly, they ended up portraying immigration as a threat, as the examples below illustrate.

La Semana, Colombia 06/10/2017

Cucuta, the first stop of the Venezuelan exodus

The migration influx of citizens of the neighboring country starts in Cucuta, the capital of Northern Santander. The city is in a puzzle, and things get worse every day.

El Tiempo, Colombia 02/01/2018

Cucuta, on the edge of a social crisis for migratory wave.

Improvised shelters and other things illustrate the magnitude of the humanitarian crisis.

¹⁰¹ The word *“frontera”* has 174 unique appearances in the entire sample (after the headline).

Many improvised shelters in public spaces, more informal vendors yelling on the streets with a Venezuelan accent, and high level of connection between foreigners and crime are some of the daily things happening in Cucuta caused by the humanitarian crisis.

Besides, the fluidity of the border between the two nations makes the current immigration phenomenon especially complex to cover for news media, in particular to identify who the immigrants are. There has always been a historical exchange and mobility of people, and decisions such as the shutdown in 2015 from the Venezuelan government disrupted the lives of many. During this time, Colombians and Colombian-Venezuelans returned or were deported back to Colombia, and the news coverage treated them as victims of the Maduro regime. Interestingly, the same media approach is taken during 2017 and 2018 about Colombians returning because of the crisis in Venezuela. For example, El Espectador highlights this issue like this:

“The challenge of Venezuelan migration”

Colombians living for decades in the neighboring country are coming, as well as the Venezuelans they have witnessed how their possessions are now under the law of the Revolution [Bolivarian]. (El Espectador, Colombia 02/06/2018).

Another emerging finding from the close reading of a sample of articles is the presence of contradictory frames in the same news article. News stories might use a policy or political debate angle but also adding a victim approach. Moreover, some stories could start the news reporting using a threat frame and then incorporate voices to depict immigration as a benefit. Perhaps one explanation of the presence of these contradictory frames is the need to create a sense of “fairness” or balance in the story. For example, El Tiempo will use a headline and a lede such as: *“Six kilos of cocaine seized from Venezuelan immigrant in Cali. The foreigners were sleeping in improvised*

houses close to the bus station.” However, further in the text a quote from the Security deputy of the Cauca Valley would give a different angle to the story: *“I want to underline that the vast majority of Venezuelans arriving into Cali are hard-working and law-abiding individuals, and they are just going through a rough situation”* (El Tiempo, Colombia, 11/27/2018).

Likewise, another observation from the sample examined is the variance on how immigration is treated depending on the newspaper’s section. Police or Judicial sections portray immigration as a threat to the country in terms of security and public order, making a connection between Venezuelans and crime. These headlines illustrate these findings.

“Crime: the collateral effect of Venezuelan migration. (La Semana, 02/10/2018).

“Two Venezuelan criminals deported” According to the authorities they are members of the *“Bloque Libertadores de Vichada.”* [drug-trafficking group] (El Espectador, Colombia 09/10/2015 Redacción Judicial).

The governmental discourse and agenda are also essential to comprehend aspects of the news writing. For the Colombian government (during 2014-2018), immigration was a political tool to signal the failures of Maduro’s regime in Venezuela. The countries are at the opposite extremes of the ideological spectrum, something that emerged in the conversation with the journalists and is explored in detail later in this chapter. The Colombian government uses immigration for political gain, and an *“open arms”* strategy to Venezuelan migrants is seen as a political statement about the precarious state of things in Venezuela. Typically, then, when a news story is based on governmental

accounts, it most likely will have an “*open arms*” angle to it. News media reproduces this official discourse without much processing or offering counternarratives.

Minuto 30, Colombia 10/31/2018

DUQUE: While the world closes borders, Colombia decided to support Venezuelans.

President Ivan Duque emphasizes that his country chose “Solidarity” and “Fraternity” with Venezuelans escaping the crisis, not closing the border as other countries do.

El Espectador, Colombia 09/05/2017

Colombia must help Venezuelans and not turn its back on them, says Migración Colombia

Christian Kruger, director of Migración Colombia, answers those who want to close the border. He argues this would only cause irregular crossing. Kruger explains that Colombia must look for the necessary tools to incorporate Venezuelans looking for opportunities instead of turning its back on them.

Overall, the variance between traditional and non-traditional outlets in this sample is minimal regarding the focus on a storytelling based on a “crisis” situation, portraying immigrants as a threat when reporting crime and reproducing governmental messages without many counter ideas. However, when newspapers create counter-frames and are critical to the “open arms” policies taken by the government, they tend to connect immigration to the burden it produces, for example, in public services or as a threat to security. This could be an unintentional consequence of keeping the political elites accountable. The section with the interviews provides additional information and discussion about this topic.

Words choice in the immigration coverage

After analyzing the framing of the news reporting, this section provides findings about the choices of words in the corpus analyzed for this case study¹⁰². The analysis centers on the occurrence (not frequency)¹⁰³ of specific words (not a combination of terms). This process allows for identifying general trends about word preferences in the corpus that is also informed by the close analysis of the data conducted during the framing and textual analysis.

The first analysis is to explore the preferred terms used to talk about the people coming to the country. In developed countries, the usage of words such as immigrants, migrants, and refugees appears to be very common. Table 4 shows that Colombia's news media uses predominantly the term "Venezolanos(as)" (Venezuelans) when talking about the influx. Moreover, the words "Migrante(s)" (Migrants) emerges as the second most common word. Then, "Ciudadano(s)" (citizens), and "Extranjero(s)" (foreigners) are predominately used in the text after the headline in reference of the inflow. Perhaps journalists utilize different words as a stylistic decision to avoid the same term in the news story. However, an argument can be made about the prevalence of the name "Venezolanos." Colombia does not have a tradition of receiving immigrants; therefore, the massive and sudden influx of Venezuelans is a new phenomenon. Based on the media coverage analyzed here, the word "Immigrant" is used for the inflow of people from distant nations. For example, El Tiempo reported in 2015: "*A group of illegal immigrants from Pakistan is detained in Medellin*" (El Tiempo, 2015, 2/13/2015). Therefore, the use

¹⁰² The total number of articles for this analysis is 365. For this part, short news articles that were not included for framing analysis were taken into consideration.

¹⁰³ This analysis is based on presence/occurrence rather than frequency 1= present 0 = not present. This allows excluding potential outliers or articles that use the same words repetitively.

of the word Venezuelans means something different than what commonly news media consider an immigrant. In a way, by using the term Venezuelans, they acknowledge that the people crossing the border are the next-door neighbors. Still, the use of the word migrant is also widespread. This could be linked to journalistic adaptation to the large number of people entering Colombia and the realization that the country has become a receiving nation of Venezuelans. Based on the reading of the news articles, and the presence of words, the use of Venezuelan immigrants or Venezuelan migrants is prevalent as a way to name the influx. Moreover, as two of the journalists interviewed for this research explained, the meaning of the word Venezuelans changed. Before, it referred to a wealthy nation, while now it is all about immigrants running away from the crisis in this country.

Additionally, the high occurrence of words not commonly linked to immigration coverage in developed countries contexts, such as citizens and foreigners, also provides indication about the *newness* of this phenomenon in Colombia, and how journalists try to make sense of how to name this new experience.

Table 4. *Common word used to describe the influx*¹⁰⁴

	Venezolanos (Venezuelans)	Migrantes (Migrants)	Inmigrantes (Immigrants)	Refugiados (Refugees)	Ciudadanos (Citizens)	Extranjeros (Foreigners)
Headlines	161	29	8	7	7	2
Text after headlines	309	147	57	51	140	70

Moreover, the immigration coverage in the context of South-North is characterized by using labels such as illegal or undocumented referring to migrants.

¹⁰⁴ The numbers listed here represent the single occurrence of a word in one article (headline and rest of the article). There could be overlapping meaning that in one article Venezuelanos and Foreigners could be present, but the objective is to examine the incidence of the words in the entire corpus, rather than if it is exclusive to one specific article. For instance, Venezuelanos + Migrantes = 128 articles in which both words appeared. Also, Venezuelanos + Inmigrantes = 52, Venezuelanos + Ciudadanos = 124. These combinations also support the prevalence of the word Venezuelanos as one of the preferred labels with potential combinations with Migrantes, Inmigrantes and Ciudadanos.

When exploring the headlines of the corpus of news, there are only one or two occurrences of the word illegal, irregular, or undocumented. But, the text after the headline shows the prevailing trends of these labels. The term “*irregular*” has the largest incidence with 37 appearances. Then “*ilegal*” (illegal) and “*ilegales*” (illegals) are terms also commonly used. However, based on the close examination of the news during the framing and textual analysis, the terms illegal and illegals are frequently linked to “illegal border crossings” (trochas¹⁰⁵) and “illegal migrants camps”¹⁰⁶. Illegal and illegals are not common to label immigrants or Venezuelans. Anecdotally, during the relevancy coding, it was possible to find news such as “*17 illegal immigrants rescued in Uraba*” (*El Tiempo* 9/2/2015) that used the word illegal when talking about immigrants not from Venezuela but from Africa, Cuba or other non-border nations. Even more, comparing the incidence of words in Table 4 and Table 5 the labels such as irregulars, illegals or undocumented have little presence in the overall sample with respect to the terms Venezuelans, immigrants, migrants, citizens or foreigners. This could indicate that using labels usually found in the Global North is not common in the Colombian press.

Table 5. *Common words use as labels for the influx*¹⁰⁷.

Newspaper	Irregulars (Irregulares)	Irregular (Irregular)	Ilegal (Ilegal)	Ilegales (Ilegals)	Indocumentos (Undocumented)	Indocumentado (Undocumented s.)
El Espectador	8	17	14	9	1	0
El Tiempo	4	9	10	8	3	0
La Semana	1	3	4	8	1	0
La Silla Vacía	1	2	5	6	1	0
Minuto 30	1	6	0	0	1	0
Total	15	37	33	31	7	0

¹⁰⁵ This means illegal border crossing. This term has nineteen occurrences in the text after the headline.

¹⁰⁶ This term has twelve appearances.

¹⁰⁷ There could be overlapping meaning that in one article more than one label could be present, but the relevance is the usage of the word rather than if it is exclusive of one article.

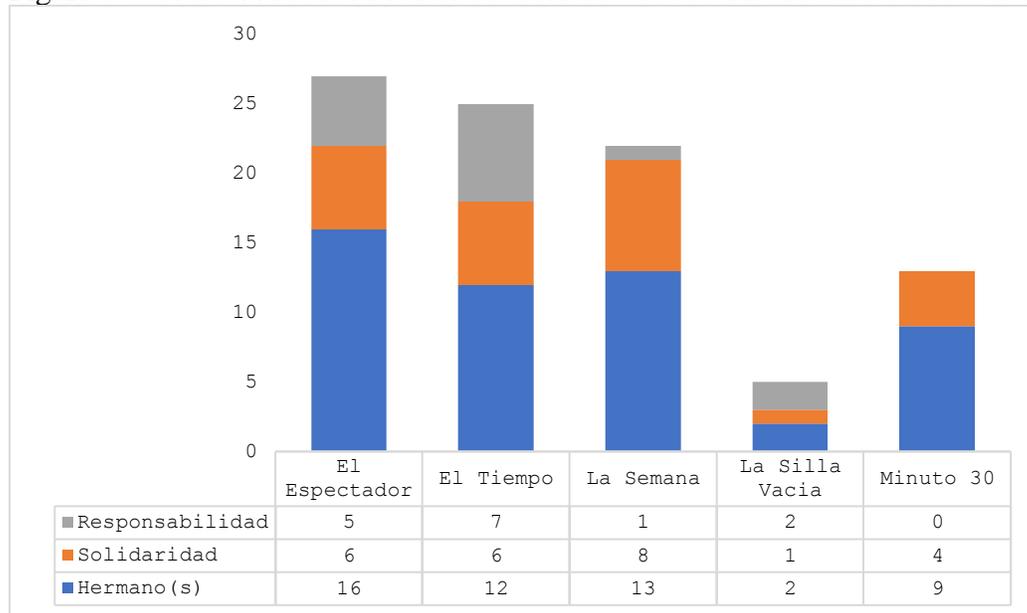
Colombia and Venezuela are two nations with a shared history and common cultural roots (i.e., religion and language). Also, Venezuela received during the 1980s and 1990s Colombian migrants looking for better economic opportunities and also fleeing from Colombia's internal conflict. This context is the reason to explore words linked to this potential reciprocity from Colombia now that the migration flow reversed. After reviewing several words¹⁰⁸ linked to this issue, Figure 3 has the concepts with the highest presence in each newspaper¹⁰⁹. The first term with the largest presence is "Hermano + Hermanos" (Brother(s)) with 55 mentions. Secondly, the word "Solidaridad" (Solidarity) has 25 appearances, and two traditional newspapers (El Tiempo and Semana) are the ones with the highest share. This number of appearances matches almost exactly with the number of total news coded under the Solidarity frame (Table 2); in third place is "Responsabilidad" (Responsibility), with 15 occurrences.

However, in the content analysis, the solidarity frame as the first frame in the news articles has a minimal presence of 3%. The governmental discourse pushes for this narrative of solidarity of open arms, but it looks as though it did not permeate media coverage beyond reproducing the official agenda. This means news media did not take this solidarity frame as a central approach to cover the issue. The interviews with the journalists offer some explanation.

¹⁰⁸ Other words used for this were: "Solidario," "Caridad," "Hermandad," "Pana(s)" (friends), but the one reported in Figure 3 has the largest presence. Appendix 4.

¹⁰⁹ After reviewing for overlapping for the combination of terms this ranges from 1 to 4 news articles that contain some combination of words (for example, "Hermano + Hermanos", "Solidaridad + Responsabilidad," "Solidaridad + Hermano," "Responsabilidad + Hermano." This means that all the other occurrences are exclusive to one article.

Figure 3: Words linked to the historical connection between Colombia and Venezuela



Overall the presence of specific terms in the entire sample of news provides general patterns of the word choices in the coverage. In general, having migrants in Colombia is a rare occurrence, therefore producing the news stories using Venezuelans, Citizens, and Foreigners as a way to name the people crossing the border from a neighboring country suggests a lack of experience with migratory influxes. But also, perhaps the usage of these words is intended to create a distinction between those coming from a neighboring country and others coming from far away.

Additionally, charged labels such as illegal or illegals have little presence in the corpus and commonly are not linked to the immigrants themselves, but rather related to illegal border crossings or immigrants' camps. These findings contribute to the argument that this type of labels in the case of Colombia are less prevalent than in news coverage in the developed world. Moreover, words suggesting the reciprocity of Colombia with Venezuela, such as Solidarity, Responsibility, Brothers mostly appear when news media reproduces the governmental discourse of solidarity.

Sources and numerical data.

Another piece of content analysis is the preferred sources used by news media outlets. The goal of this analysis is to determine what voices are represented in the news coverage and the potential implications of those choices.

Table 6 shows the first source used in the reporting by news media. Governmental voices (national and local) represent 38% of the sources in the sample. El Espectador (traditional media) is the outlet with the most significant presence of this category, and La Silla Vacía (non-traditional) has the lowest use of governmental sources, considering the total number of news using Governmental sources in the aggregate coverage. Immigrants represent 10% of the sources. Two of the traditional newspapers -- El Tiempo and Semana -- have the largest proportion of immigrants as the first source in their news reporting in this sample. La Silla Vacía has zero immigrants as a primary source. An explanation of this is that they focus more on power, politics, and analysis. In third and fourth place, the category "None" and "Local elected authorities" are the most common, each of them representing 8% of total sources used in the entire sample. Member of a "Foreign government" and "International political organizations" emerge in fifth and sixth place with 19 occurrences each (5% of the total).

Based on the first sources, the high prevalence of governmental authorities is an indicator of how news media takes an "official" perspective in reporting immigration, which can be directly related to the significant presence of the *Political Responsibility – Policy Solutions and Debate* frame. The use of official sources contributes also to illustrate that the preferred approach of newspapers is based on the governmental agenda. For example, the director of "Migración Colombia" (the office in charge of immigration)

appears in 10% of the news corpus as a source. The role of this office is to implement the policies and contingency plans to deal with the newest migratory influxes. Additionally, the presence of government sources contributes to emphasizing the chaotic situation in Venezuela and the political strategy of highlighting the failure of the Maduro regime as the leading cause of the inflow of Venezuelans. For instance, and as additional piece of information, the word "Maduro" (Nicolas Maduro, leader of Venezuela) has 106 unique occurrences in the entire sample. Moreover, the examples below are two quotes from the two Colombian presidents dealing with the Venezuelan influx during the period analyzed here.

La Semana, Colombia 02/08/2018

Santos says the Venezuelan crisis lead to heartbreaking events such as the case of 22 children abandoned in Colombia. “It is a tragedy, I want to reiterate to President Maduro that these are only the results of his policies and decisions, it is not Colombia’s fault, rather they are consequences of his rejection of any kind of humanitarian help that we have offered multiple times,” Santos explains.

El Espectador, Colombia 10/10/2018

“Venezuela is living a drama, a drama that is also caused by a region that for many years allowed the emergence of a dictatorship [disguised as a democracy] that finally controlled all the powers [three branches of power in the country] in Venezuela,” explains Duque during his speech at the XXIV Summit of the Montevideo Circle.

Table 6. *First sources used in the news coverage*¹¹⁰

Source	El Tiempo	El Espectador	Semana	Silla Vacía	Minuto 30	Total	% of the total (N=360)
Government (National and State authorities)	27%	36%	8%	4%	24%	135	38%
Immigrant, refugee, migrant	39%	14%	25%	0%	22%	36	10%
None	20%	20%	20%	27%	13%	30	8%

¹¹⁰ This table shows the first source used in each newspaper as a percentage of the total news stories analyzed in Colombia. Therefore, the percentages in each cell do not represent the presence of first sources in relation to the specific number of stories per outlet. In other words, with these percentages, we can only say, for example, that from the 135 stories using a Government source (as first), 36% of these stories are from El Espectador.

Local elected authority (e.g., mayor- MP)	50%	21%	7%	14%	7%	28	8%
Member of a foreign government (e.g., President of the United States, Embassy)	26%	21%	16%	0%	37%	19	5%
International/regional political organization (ONU-ACHNUR, CIDH-OEA)	11%	32%	21%	0%	37%	19	5%
Journalist or columnist	27%	53%	7%	13%	0%	15	4%
Police (a member of a law enforcement authority)/ Firefighters	80%	13%	0%	7%	0%	15	4%
Other	21%	36%	14%	7%	21%	14	4%
Law/Judiciary (e.g., judges)	25%	25%	42%	0%	8%	12	3%
Academic/Researchers/Experts	33%	17%	17%	33%	0%	12	3%
Activists/Artist/Athlete	29%	43%	14%	0%	14%	7	2%
Business/Private Sector (e.g., business owners)	67%	17%	0%	17%	0%	6	2%
Member of Church/Religion	60%	0%	0%	0%	40%	5	1%
Local citizen/neighbor	75%	25%	0%	0%	0%	4	1%
National o Local Non-governmental Organization, NGO	0%	0%	50%	0%	50%	2	1%
International Non-governmental Organization, NGO (e.g., Human Rights Watch)	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	1	0%
A family member or friend of immigrant, refugee, migrant	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0	0%

The presence of immigrants as the second source is connected to the presence of the *Victim – Humanitarian and Human Rights* frame in the coverage. The voice of immigrants is utilized to show the struggle and suffering they have to experience. Thus, immigrant sources are commonly used to portray them as victims either of abuses in Colombia or also victims of the Venezuelan crisis that forced them to migrate. This last feature (the crisis in Venezuela) is linked to the presence of the frame *Victim – Political and Economic*, the third most frequent frame in the corpus. This quote from an immigrant supports this argument:

“We came here not to die of starvation, there is nothing to do. There is no money and the company where my boyfriend worked closed. It was either keep surviving there or coming to Colombia”, says Sandra Cardenas (28). (El Tiempo, Colombia 02/11/2018)

Local elected authorities (such as mayors) as sources suggest that the coverage concentrates in the border regions (i.e., Cucuta), where the influx creates different pressures elevating the local political voices to the national public conversation. Similarly, the presence of members of foreign governments in the news is related to *Political Responsibility – Inter. Cooperation and Relations* framing category, and the emphasis that news media puts on the idea that dealing with the immigration influx requires an international strategy.

In general, the most important voice in the immigration coverage in Colombia is the government and political actors, which shows the inclination of this country's press to follow the official discourse (i.e., *prensa oficialista*), and to reproduce the government agenda often with few counter-narratives. Additionally, an examination of the type of sources used after the first one shows the "None" category, by far, in first place. The caveat here is that the unit of analysis is limited to the headline, lede and first paragraphs, thus the category "None" could be overrepresented. However, an argument could be made that in short news (200 words), the presence of a second source is very minimal, and the stories are produced only relying on one source. Therefore, if the presence of governmental sources is the most prevalent as the first voice, the official voice is massively pervasive in the coverage.

The last piece of the content analysis is examining the presence of numerical data (i.e., statistics) in the news. Usually, the predominant use of numerical information and statistics in news writing has been linked to a more thematic approach to reporting the news. This means quantitative data as the main plot of the story, which relates with

looking at the issue from a more distant and even emotionless perspective. This is contrary to the episodic take on writing news, in which the news is centered on a particular case to emphasize and trigger emotions. The academic literature refers to these categories as thematic versus episodic frames in news coverage. For immigration, there is a positive relationship between focusing on individual immigrants' stories with the presence of episodic frames. Therefore, in the case of Colombia, the objective of looking at the presence of numerical data is to have extra elements to establish connections with the type of frames emerging from the news corpus.

Table 7 shows that 92% of the sample analyzed for Colombia has "None" numerical or statistical data in the headlines. This could suggest preliminary evidence of a lack of more thematic approaches to the coverage of immigration. The most common frame in Colombia is the *Political Responsibility – Policy Solution and Debate*, which is arguably in itself a frame category where statistical trends could be more present. In a way it is a thematic frame. However, as the data suggests, the lack of numerical data in Colombia could be a sign that this frame is driven by the official political discourse, quotes, discussion, and governmental voices about policy, rather than the presence of statistical data to write about the immigration phenomenon. Coupled with this, the minimal incidence of numbers and quantitative data in the headlines is a useful piece of information when looking at the victim frames ranked two and three as the most common frames. These victim frames are about dramatic and individual migrant cases that arouse an emotional reaction, generally mediated by the suffering of these people.

Demographic/Health/Educational statistics appears in second place. In Colombia this category also contains the reports of border crossings and exchanges of population

across border towns. This category has an incidence of 5% in the overall coverage and is mainly about migration crossings. Similarly to the case of sources, the data present after the headline is limited by the unit of analysis considered for this case study (i.e., headline, lede, and first paragraphs), but the "None" category is again the one with the highest frequency.

Table 7. Presence of numerical data in the headline¹¹¹

	El Tiempo	El Espectador	Semana	Silla Vacía	Minuto 30	Total	% news
None	33%	28%	14%	8%	17%	330	92%
Demographic / Health / Educational	11%	50%	6%	0%	33%	18	5%
Visa requests	50%	0%	0%	0%	50%	4	1%
Economic/labor or jobs figure	33%	0%	0%	0%	67%	3	1%
Crimes by immigrants	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	2	1%
Deportations or returns	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	1	0%
Detentions/apprehensions	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1	0%
Rescue of immigrants	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	1	0%
Crimes against immigrants/Death	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0	0%
Asylum requests/refugee requests	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0	0%

Overall, the aggregate news coverage of immigration in Colombia during 2014-2018 displays several patterns. First, among the top frames are two about political responsibility (policy debates and international cooperation) and two portraying immigrants as victims (abuses and push factors in their home country). The political frames indicate a strong presence of the government agenda in the news writing, which is

¹¹¹ The percentages in each cell are the presence of numbers and statistics in each newspaper as percentages the total number of stories in Colombia. The objective is to use this information for the aggregate presence of numerical figures in the coverage. It is not about the presence of statistical figures as a percentage in each specific news media' totals. In other words, for example, based on Table 7, out of the 18 news articles using Demographic/Health/Educational statistics, we can say that 50% comes from El Espectador.

also supported by the high incidence of official sources and the lack of thematical elements (such as numerical data and statistics) in the coverage.

The voice of immigrants is used to underscore the pain they endure, which relates to the prevalence of the victim frames and the preference for calling them "Venezuelans," signaling the proximity of this group of immigrants. Although victim frames are dominant, it does not necessarily translate into more empathetic coverage, which could be represented by a larger presence of the solidarity frame in the news. Instead, solidarity emerges only when it is a message from a public official.

Benefit frames are virtually non-existent, and the threat frame with more occurrence is the *Social and Public Order* that is related to crime, prostitution, and occupation of public spaces by immigrants.

To make a further connection with the findings in the content analysis and to try to explain, to a certain extent, the production of immigration news in Colombia, we turn to the interviews conducted with reporters from the news outlets examined above.

Journalists' self-reflection on immigration coverage

This part of the chapter examines the seven semi-structured interviews with journalists in Colombia and establishes connections with the coverage examined in the content analysis. By triangulating the content with the interviews, in the case of Colombia, I provide evidence to answer the overall questions of how news media in Latin America portrays intraregional immigration and how journalists reflect and describe their newsmaking practices in covering this migration phenomenon.

These semi-structured interviews explore two main topics: 1) The journalistic practices, routines, and decisions they make in the coverage in their own newspapers; 2) The perception journalists have of the coverage of immigration in the country and the position they take to observe the phenomenon.

Similar to Chile, the limited number of interviews might not allow for reaching a high level of “saturation.” However, there is also a limited number of journalists in Colombia covering immigration issues exclusively. It is more a rotating beat with little specialization, thus trying to have a large sample of “immigration reporters” is, in itself, an almost impossible task. Therefore, the value of the first-hand accounts presented here is dual: 1) The interviews were focused on journalists working for the specific newspapers analyzed for this case study - El Tiempo, El Espectados, Silla Vacía, Semana, Minuto 30; 2) Journalists interviewed had experience in the coverage of immigration in Colombia.

For this country, I interviewed seven journalists, three from online news websites, and four from traditional news outlets. In total, four were female between 31-47 years old, three males between 28-45. They have between 5-25 years of experience in journalism. The results of these conversations are reported based on the emerging themes after a close analysis of each of them and in relationship with each other. Also, there are some direct quotes¹¹² from the interviews to exemplify the common themes.

1) Journalistic practices, routines and decisions.

a. Specialization and learning process.

¹¹² Translation made by me.

A common realization of the journalists interviewed is that immigration is a “*phenomenon that is here to stay.*” Although this understanding comes from a few years of experiencing and reporting the topic, journalists agreed it had been a discovery process as immigration developed. “*We were not ready,*” one of the reporters concluded. As in other Latin American countries, the massive influx of people into Colombia took everyone, including the press, by surprise. As a result, the analysis is that the media was not prepared for this new phenomenon, and journalists were critical of the time it took to react.

“We are reporting, and at the same time we are learning about the topic. Also, there is a learning process of seeing this phenomenon as permanent and not something going away soon. Immigration now becomes part of the fabric of Colombia” (Journalist, female, non-traditional media).

The feeling of catching up has delayed any formal effort at specialization, and it is more a process of learning by doing. For instance, a reporter admits his mistakes in the early years of the coverage by not knowing how to interpret and make sense of the data about “pendulum or circulation migration”¹¹³ at the border. Moreover, the professionals agreed that there is a lack of style guides journalists can use and learn from to write on migration.

Particularly for the news website, the expectation is to have updates as soon as the news is available. This can explain the lack of counternarratives or nuances from the official sources. Also, in order to meet the demand of up-to-date news, journalists rely on press releases or wire stories from news agencies. This practice limits the possibilities of

¹¹³ More details about the definition [UNECE](#)

offering original content. Particularly at the beginning, journalists were mostly focusing on the official version of the story.

“While we were covering the political discussion between the foreign affairs ministers of Colombia and Venezuela, outside our newspaper offices, I would see families from Venezuela carrying their suitcases on the street trying to catch a bus or something, those stories we were not telling and exploring” (Reporter (former), female, traditional media)

The learning and specialization have been an organic process where the figure of the news editor is central. Even though reporters described the existence of collaborative work in the newsroom to learn about and decide how to cover immigration, their editor emerges as the main authority figure. The interaction journalist-editor is predominant in defining the angles and solving sensitive questions around immigration. The problem with the dynamic of editor – journalists in the case of immigration is that lessons learned do not always permeate into the practices of the entire newsroom. Therefore, even when a reporter learned about avoiding nationalities in the headlines, for example, there would be always other sections in the newspaper making mistakes.

Another learning experience for some of the journalists interviewed here is managing their own emotions while being exposed to stories about suffering and sadness. They see it as something new, different perhaps from other topics they have covered. However, part of this learning process is also being able to maintain a level of neutrality and detachment as with any other news story:

“There are feelings involved when covering immigration; whoever says it is not the case is lying because it is about suffering and the pain of divided families. So, it is difficult not to have your feelings involved, but the risk is being partial. [When I am interviewing immigrants about their suffering] I just hold it together, be strong, and then with my family or my colleagues decompress, but when interviewing, I try to be neutral and not show to the immigrant that I am affected emotionally by her or his story” (Journalist, male, traditional media).

According to the interviews, the uniqueness of the Venezuelan migration also requires learning how to set limits with the sources, because they see reporters as a source of information, which is much needed for newcomers. For example, a reporter told a story about a group of Venezuelan migrants that deserted the army. The newspaper ran story about them, but after the story was published, the group reached out to the reporter repeatedly asking for help and assistance.

Largely, the learning process has led to a new level of specialization but following a very intuitive process of “*trial and error*” with the objective of setting best practices for the future. The agreement among reporters is that coverage could be better, but also there is an interest in learning how to do it better.

b. Independence and agenda

The seven journalists interviewed for this research agreed they have high levels of independence in their newsrooms to decide angles, sources, and headlines for their pieces. There is no conditioning or censorship in how they can approach the issue of immigration, and they have to be 100% comfortable with the news article to sign the byline. Perhaps, as discussed above, the editor becomes the “restrictive” figure, but it is overall within the parameters of a natural dynamic (i.e., reporter-editor) part of the journalistic work.

They do admit that the digital news environment put pressure on finding the “*sexiest*” headlines that could bring more clicks, which creates tension between the reporters and people in charge of the newspapers’ websites. Journalists working for print media admit making an effort to write literary headlines, but the web looks for more strategic ones that attract more viewers. These negotiations can also raise tensions on

how the digital news flow might affect the coverage of immigrations because they need to update news fast. Sometimes this fast pace means being less aware or sensitive in the ways to communicate the story or simply making mistakes that can be harmful to the immigrant community.

“One wrong word or an unclear concept or an ambiguous idea can create concepts that are negative about the Venezuelan exodus” (Journalist, male, traditional media)

The independence of the journalists based in Bogota and other big cities such as Medellin contrasts with their perception about the autonomy of local reporters in “*zonas calientes*” (hot spots), where organized crime might have control over a particular territory. Journalists agreed that in the capital city they feel very safe covering immigration, and there is little risk that compromises independent reporting. However, in border regions or other hot spots, local reporters sometimes do not have access to sources to cover the issue (i.e., immigrants), or prefer not to report because armed groups control immigration corridors or exploit immigrants. For local reporters, digging deeper into this reality could be dangerous.

The difference between the capital city (Bogota) and the rest of the country influences the perceived level of independence reporters have to report immigration. As one of the journalists claimed, “*Colombia is five or six different countries in one,*” and this diversity creates a challenge on generalizing the coverage outside Bogota. However, for the group of journalists interviewed here, another way to think about independence is who or what sets the news agenda about immigration. The agreement among all of the reporters is that the political relationship between the two countries impacts the coverage.

“News media try to show the causes of the migratory movements, always using a political lens and looking at Venezuela. The Colombian center-right government

wants to highlight that we as a country represent the opposite of “el chavismo” [...] We are telling stories about why they are fleeing Venezuela and how our neighbor is a failure” (Journalist/columnist, male, traditional media).

The agreement that the political agenda is very pervasive opens the reflection to the lack of different angles that news media can offer without newsworthy events or when the governmental agenda is not active on immigration. The journalists believed migration is a high importance topic but with very little intensity in the public discourse beyond the official narrative. This is also coupled with the description of *“the news cycle in Colombia is schizophrenic, big stories they last at most one week” (Journalist, female, non-traditional media)*, which makes the immigration news agenda erratic. When the governmental agenda is absent, one obvious angle is looking at the poor living conditions Venezuelans are enduring in Colombia; nevertheless, reporters perceived a general indifference in the audience about the connection between immigration and poverty. Even more, they explained that Colombia is also a developing country, like Venezuela, with many unmet needs, which creates a backlash when publishing issues linking immigration and subsidies or governmental help for the migrants. For example, when the newspapers have published stories about the government giving school material to Venezuelan kids, or public officials organized a job fair for immigrants, some of the responses to that type of coverage is *“Colombians also have needs, and I am unemployed.”*

“Sometimes, I feel like a lone wolf writing positive stories, but the audience doesn’t necessarily care. People are not interested in migration, and I think they are tired of being told “do not be xenophobic” (Journalist, male, traditional media).

Thus, the challenge after a few years of Venezuelan immigration is to find different angles and to take an in-depth look into the phenomenon in the daily routine of

Colombians. According to some of the reporters, this challenge is very complex because Venezuelan immigration, being in its early stage, does not have an organized diaspora or community that can contribute to putting different topics on the news media agenda.

“There are no business or cultural projects that news media can look at and say, this is an effect of immigration. The successful case. That takes time. For example, I still don’t know where to eat a good Venezuelan arepa” (Journalist/columnist, male, traditional media). Potentially, this could be linked to frames about the benefit of immigration in the country that, in this case study, are virtually absent from the coverage analyzed.

Another of the challenges of immigration reporting is using different voices than public officials. The reporters in Bogota said that it is easy to find a Venezuelan immigrant as a source of a news story because they are everywhere. However, the common use in the reporting is to depict them as victims and put the emphasis on the suffering. There is no consistent effort to use the immigrants’ voices to bring issues that are absent in the news. An element that adds to this reality is that many immigrants prefer to remain anonymous in interviews because Colombian media are widely consumed in Venezuela and there could be retaliation. Therefore, according to the reporters, the debate about Venezuela in the public sphere is more a monologue among Colombians talking about Venezuelans. The concept of immigration as a mirror where migrant voices tell certain truths that Colombians do not see is something journalists agreed they would like to see more from the Venezuelan community. As one reporter exemplified, Venezuelans are thankful for the reception of Colombia and *“they are like a new guest in your home that doesn’t want to cause too much trouble.”*

c. Decision making and responsibility

Several concepts emerge when discussing the journalists' responsibility and how they reach decisions on immigration coverage. Being honest, ethical, using rigorous reporting, and source checking are some of the most common responsibilities discussed. They perceived themselves as agents of change in an environment where a lot of information has to be demystified about immigration.

However, for Colombian journalists, there is also an essential responsibility of playing an educational and public service role for Colombians and Venezuelan immigrants at the same time. This pedagogical role of news coverage is fostered by sharing the same language and also some cultural proximity. Reporters interviewed here see value in transmitting useful information for the immigrants and "teaching" the Colombian audience about migration topics.

"We, as journalists, make a mistake to write for other journalists. We assume that the public knows a lot or understands things that we take for granted. We have to do a lot more teaching or pedagogy" (Journalist, male, traditional media).

Another part of the responsibility of their work is making decisions that avoid xenophobia and stereotypes. A reporter's story after visiting her town illustrates a new dilemma. She recounts that people would see a large percentage of immigrants from Venezuela in their neighborhoods as well as an increase in perceived crime and prostitution, and make a direct link between immigration and these issues. The dilemma is how to cover an issue that concerns people in local communities but at the same time avoid xenophobia and stereotyping. Reporters acknowledge that xenophobia is a "sleeping giant" in Colombia -- something that is increasingly present, but media has made it invisible.

In the early stages of the Venezuelan inflow, news media was reluctant to talk about xenophobia. As some of the journalists explained, it was not politically correct, and it is also an uncomfortable reality. The media also ignored it mostly because they did not know how to approach the issue. However, reporters see covering xenophobia that emerges in part of the population as a responsibility; otherwise, it is something that will explode, and news media will have no control on that agenda.

"I wrote a piece about immigrants around the time when the new unemployment data was made public, and it was an increase in unemployment. The comments I received were 'see they are taking our jobs,' that is why unemployment is increasing" (Journalist, male, traditional media).

"To cover xenophobia means to replicate hate discourses. I wrote a story in 2019 where I was just referring to a xenophobic social media posts and threats. My editor asked me why I was not citing them explicitly. I argued that is amplifying the message, but after more discussion with my editor, we decided to cite the tweets explicitly because that is something that was happening in Colombia" (Journalist, female, non-traditional media).

Although journalists acknowledged news media had diminished its power to influence people's attitudes and perceptions, they agreed that one of the primary responsibilities is to offer counterstereotypes and counter-narratives that bring different angles to the immigration reporting. This appears to be a common strategy to cover issues that are sensitive and to avoid fueling xenophobic sentiments.

"My role is [to ensure] that economy is not used to promote xenophobia. It is hard to counterargue that in a country of 40 million people more than 1.5 immigrant will definitely have an impact on the economy, but that impact is not per se negative [...] Also, my role is to understand and communicate whether the policies to tackle immigration are being successful" (Journalist, female, non-traditional media).

Overall, reporters interviewed for this case recognized they need to be extra careful about treating any immigration-related news. This contributes to the highest sense

of responsibility in the work they do and the decisions they make, from the headlines to the sources they choose to give voice to in their stories, always having in the back of their mind that any mistake could exacerbate the increasing xenophobia they perceived in some groups in Colombian society.

2. Positionality in society

a. Perception of immigration and media coverage in the country.

Journalists perceived themselves as informed citizens with many opinions about the events happening in their communities. Most of the time, these opinions are not part of the news reporting they publish, however analyzing their opinions in this study helps to understand the position from where they look at the immigration phenomenon. In part, this positionality also could be rich information to understand the aggregate coverage people see in their media environment.

For instance, one of the reporters explained that the historical context of both nations conditions the perception of Venezuelan immigration. *“Colombia cannot take a step aside, we are neighbors, and we share the same house”* (Journalist, female, non-traditional media). While journalists acknowledged the cultural proximity of both countries, they also explained that the influx of Venezuelans produced a cultural shock. According to the reporters, the different accent plays a role in this, but also the fact that the latest wave of Venezuelan migrants is poor. This condition makes the immigration dynamic different from the earliest inflow of migration, which adapted faster to Colombian society.

Reporters also perceived immigration as a total transformation for Colombian society. However, at the same time, immigrants have become part of the landscape, part of the everyday routine in many cities, a new normal. Therefore, even to their professional eye, immigration does not represent a “new” newsworthy phenomenon.

The journalists observed how this new normal is the perfect place for the emergence of xenophobia. The widespread feeling, which they hear the most on the streets, is that immigrants are committing crimes, taking job away from the local population, and that Venezuelan women come to Colombia to be prostitutes. That is why they think their responsibility is to provide at least the facts that go against this stigma and stereotypes.

“In the past, Colombian women, when they migrated to other countries (i.e., Spain) they would be stigmatized as a prostitute, now the Venezuelans entering Colombia are being stigmatized as a prostitute. There is a lack of reflection on the stereotypes that we, as a society, create.” (Journalist/columnist, male, traditional media).

Additionally, reporters argued that Colombia is not a rich country, and education and health are always under budget and not very efficient. The problem is that immigration produces more demand for these public services, which contributes to xenophobic reactions because Colombians now see Venezuelans too in the long line for a doctor’s appointment.

Reporters recognized that xenophobia has increased, and they also agreed that public officials and the government is very cautious about not fueling this sentiment. Somewhat as a surprise, the journalists admitted that politicians across all parties are not even using immigration as a political strategy or as an electoral tool. To the contrary, politicians ignored the topic of Venezuelans because it represented a tricky situation for

candidates – they risked to be perceived as the xenophobic candidate if they speak against Venezuelans, or be perceived as pro-immigrants and face the criticism from a constituency demanding the same assistance immigrants were receiving.

2. Role of news media

Journalists explained that the aggregate media coverage in the country (Television, Radio, other newspapers) has underlined more negative than positive aspects. For instance, they said that the relationship between immigration and crime was very salient at the beginning of the news coverage. One of the reporters even cited an example of how a news story she read in the early years of the influx highlighted that thief involved in a robbery was “*not Venezuelan.*” Although journalists agreed news coverage has changed due to self-reflection and experience, still there are headlines such as “*Colombian women say Venezuelans are taking their husbands.*”

For reporters another common approach in the general media coverage is abusing of the drama of the immigrants. From the surprise factor of seeing thousands of Venezuelans crossing the border to the terrible images of children eating from the garbage, these stories saturated the news, and the challenge, according to the reporters, is how to move beyond that.

“News media has exploited the pain and suffering. We have not moved past telling stories from the migrants walking and crossing the border. We ended up looking at them not as humans just as victims which contributes to the perception of suffering and could even contribute to more xenophobia” (Reporter (former), female, traditional media)

The victim approach is the easiest one to report, argued the reporters, but they also offered a caveat regarding this option in the case of Colombia. They perceived that

the victim frame is a bit tricky in this country because many Colombians are victims of internal migration caused by armed conflict, so the questions reporters receive is “*why are you telling me this about the Venezuelans if Colombians have suffered the same.*”

Therefore, the humanitarian approach might not have the potential effect of empathy that reporters may think it has.

Journalists reflected that highlighting negative aspects of immigration is caused by the lack of knowledge about the issue across the media in the country. They believed that all news media should move into reporting about the benefit of immigration as a way to contribute to a new narrative in the public discourse. They mentioned a couple of initiatives taken by newspapers such as “*Panas en Colombia*”¹¹⁴ (“*Friends in Colombia*”) by *El Tiempo*, which tries to provide useful information to the immigrants but also feature positive stories. However, some of the reporters interviewed here claim that this is not enough to shift the perception of the media coverage in the country.

Generally, journalists tend to see other news media portraying immigration as linked to negative issues, such as crime and prostitution and also exploiting the suffering of Venezuelans. However, they also acknowledged that their own newsrooms have things to learn and improve, particularly about searching for news stories that can engage the audience more by emphasizing the positive impact of migrants.

Regarding the impact of the political leaning of media, reporters agreed that it is something that can be found more in broadcasting than in the press. However, they admitted that news media, in general, is very cautious with the Venezuelans on the streets. They confessed it is an implicit agreement among media that immigration has not

¹¹⁴ [“Panas en Colombia”](#)

to be linked to internal political division. Even newspapers such as El Tiempo and Semana that reporters identified as more right leaning, the coverage does not reflect a more conservative take on immigration (i.e., restrictive policies or securitization of borders). This could be explained by two main factors. First, the phenomenon still relatively new, and news media has not developed a clear editorial take on the issue. The other reason is the tacit understanding that the leading cause of immigration is the crisis in Venezuela caused by the Maduro regime, which is perceived as a negative political and economic model for Colombian mainstream media.

3. The particular case of Solidarity

As discussed above, the coverage of immigration in Colombia has been profoundly permeated by the governmental voice. An essential part of the official discourse was emphasizing open arms, not stigma, and no xenophobia toward Venezuelans. Journalists understand this “Solidarity” approach as a political strategy from the Colombian government. The government uses immigration to highlight the horrors of the Venezuelan regime, and it becomes a pragmatic political strategy from a Conservative government to show Colombians and the rest of Latin America the risk of authoritarianism such as the one started by Hugo Chavez in Venezuela.

“Commonly, right-wing governments oppose immigration, but here in Colombia, the Duque administration, a right-wing government, is in favor of immigration because it is an advantageous political strategy. For the Colombian government to receive Venezuelans is a way to show how bad Venezuela is under Nicolas Maduro (a left-wing government) [...] So that is how the issue became politicized, rather than an internal partisan divide [...] A right-wing government with an open arms policy for immigration is a fascinating case study.” (Journalist, female, non-traditional media)

Journalists believed that, although the solidarity message permeates the news media, it was not as dominant as the government would have expected. Even in this case study, only twelve news articles were coded under the solidarity frame. For example, reporters mentioned cases when people started to complain about immigrant camps in Bogota or other cities, and the typical government response was, “*Do not forget what Venezuela once did for us.*” However, the journalists admitted that perhaps at the beginning, a feeling of empathy and solidarity existed in the general population, but it has decreased after several years of the migratory influx. They even argued that the current level of xenophobia they perceived among the population shows that the concept of brotherhood was never as strong as people (including the journalists) believed it to be.

Interviews: main takeaways

In general, journalists perceived the immigration phenomenon as a transformative force in Colombian society, but the news coverage is not reflecting the importance of this change. They recognized not being prepared to cover the issue, which means they feel always catching up rather than ahead of the coverage. This could influence the lack of counter-frames they can push into the public agenda to counterbalance the governmental voices. The presence of the official views in the case of immigration contributes to a news agenda that is mostly controlled by the government.

At the same time, reporters perceived that the victimization of immigrants is an easy approach to cover the suffering of the Venezuelans. Yet again, they have not been able to move or transition to a news coverage that highlights a different aspect of the migratory influx (different from the victim approach). At least in the capital city, Bogota,

they reported having independence and no constraints to report on migration events. Access to immigrants as sources is easy, but the challenge lies again in finding stories that focus on unusual or novel facets of the Venezuelan community. Here is where they also blame the audience. They perceived a lack of interest in positive news from and a general apathy about stories of immigration that emphasize common challenges that Colombians are also facing, such as access to health and education. The fact that Colombia is a developing country poses an extra challenge for the angles and type of stories reporters can tell, because they do not want to trigger sensitivities of people dealing with similar struggles as the immigrants. That is why the political and victim frames based on the push factors are the easiest way to cover immigration; however, these frames do not provide counterstereotypes.

As informed citizens, reporters are concerned about the increasing levels of xenophobia among some groups in the country. This poses a dilemma because they do not want to contribute to xenophobic sentiments, but at the same time, they feel the responsibility to cover these expressions as part of the value of “giving voice to everyone” in the news reporting.

Finally, they recognized that the history between the two countries makes Venezuelan migration unique, and the reciprocity message could be even stronger. Still, at the same time, their perception is that the Colombian government has pushed the solidarity discourse, rather than news media. In addition, they recognized that immigration is not yet a political statement for most of the mainstream media in Colombia because it is still a “newish” phenomenon. This facilitates the government

using it as unifying political strategy by focusing on an external “threat,” such as the political system and crisis in Venezuela.

How does all this information come together?

The overall objective of this research project is to answer the question about the representation of intraregional immigration in the news media in Latin America. The first goal is to use the information in this chapter to explain *what the media frames found in the news media coverage of immigration in Colombia during 2014-2018 are*. In the aggregate analysis, the *Political Responsibility – Policy Solutions and Debate* is the most common frame followed by two Victim frames (*Humanitarian* and *Political and Economic*). Most of the coverage in the sample here corresponds to 2017-2018, which correlates with the exponential increase of Venezuelans.

Moreover, the prevalence of the political frame is linked to the presence of political voices used by the news media to cover immigration changes. They are mostly focusing on policies the government is implementing to deal with this new movement of people. This is also connected with a public service approach newspaper take to communicate useful information for the migrant community, which is facilitated by the shared language between the two countries.

The surprise factor of the massive influx of Venezuelans took news media unprepared, and the prevalence of victim frames could link to this because it is the simplest way to portray the immigration phenomenon. The suffering of the immigrants is the center of the *Victim-Humanitarian* category, but the high presence of the *Victim-Political and Economic* one, which focuses on push-factors, also indicates the relevance

of the official discourse trying to underline the failures of the current Venezuelan regime.

Additionally, a problem that emerges with the improvisation on the coverage is making mistakes and even providing contradictory frames in news stories. Commonly, journalists reproduce the narrative of local authorities asking the national government for assistance to control the influx, and perhaps unintentionally linking immigration with threat frames such as crime and danger to the public order in receiving communities.

Furthermore, the aggregate coverage lacks benefit frames, which is connected to the challenge of finding different approaches to the story. However, the absence of immigrant voices providing alternatives narratives and the absence of an organized Venezuelan community could also contribute to the lack of more positive stories about the benefit of immigration.

Also, two of the research questions this data helps answering are the presence of reciprocity-solidarity frame and the importance on the coverage of the *Transitionality* frame (becoming a migrants-receiving nation). The *Solidarity* frame is present but ranked only as 7th most common in the corpus. Another indicator of the presence of a Solidarity frame are words like “Brothers” and “Responsibility.” These appear in the sample but only in 26 news articles (out of 360). According to the reporters, the Solidarity agenda was something the government wanted to install in the public arena. But, beyond the official efforts, the news media did not make this topic a priority and did not amplify it.

The *Transitionality* concept or the relevance of changing from a migrants-sender nation to a migrants-receiving one is present in the sample. However, only six news articles coded it as the first frame. Most of the *Transitionality* relevant articles appeared

as a secondary frame (55 articles) but still the fourth most common frame. This could indicate that it is a relatively important topic on the aggregate coverage, but it is not salient as a first frame in many news articles. Also, the presence of transitionality indicators could be linked to governmental voices emphasizing the unprecedented and historical nature of the influx of Venezuelans.

Furthermore, the way journalists in Colombia reflect on the work they do covering immigration has multiple levels. They perceived three essential responsibilities. One is not to contribute to xenophobia, which is something they see as an increasing phenomenon in Colombia. The relatively low presence of charged words (i.e., illegals) in the corpus to label immigrants suggests that at least the newspapers analyzed here are careful not to promote concepts that can foster stigma.

Also, journalists believed they have failed in providing counter-stereotypical stories that can move the public discussion to the potential benefit of immigration to the country. They assumed this as a primary responsibility. Furthermore, reporters also see themselves as responsible for educating the public, which could be linked with news articles reporting on useful information for immigrants. As described in the section on the media system in Colombia at the beginning of the chapter, journalists in this country perceived as some of the most relevant roles of their profession “to promote cultural diversity and tolerance,” “foster social change,” and “educate.” Based on the interviews conducted for this chapter, these roles are consistent in the case of immigration news.

Moreover, journalists also agreed that the government agenda impacted profoundly the news coverage, and they relied heavily on the official information to produce news coverage about immigration. Journalists also explained that in the case of

Colombia, it is still difficult to find a coverage tainted by partisan views. A potential explanation is that a fixed or set editorial stance about immigration is not fully crystallized. Therefore, the presence of threat frames or frames commonly connected to conservative values in other parts of the world, in the case of Colombia is related to the section of the newspaper (judicial or police) rather than the entire outlet.

Following the analysis of Chile and Colombia, the next empirical chapter explores the findings for immigration news in Mexico.

CHAPTER 6

Immigration news in Mexico

This chapter is about Mexico and the relationship between the aggregate news coverage of immigration and journalists' perceptions and practices about the issue during 2014-2018. As with the other countries, the objective is to answer the overall question of this dissertation -- how news media in Latin America portrays intraregional immigration. The three cases this dissertation explores (Chile, Colombia, and Mexico) have experienced a rapid change in their demographics due to migration influxes from other Latin American nations, but all have specific attributes. Somewhat similar to Colombia, Mexico represents the case of an "immigration refugee crisis" because of the surge of Central Americans from Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala (i.e., The Northern Triangle) escaping impoverished living conditions, violence, and seeking humanitarian help but also family reunification in the United States (Musalo and Lee, 2017; Negroponete, 2014; Lorenzen, 2017). This inflow has several distinct characteristics that make the Mexican case worth exploring. The first one is the significant presence of unaccompanied minors and family units from Central American nations entering Mexico to reach the United States' southern border. Different from other patterns of immigration at the U.S.-Mexico border, this group, particularly in the early waves, was entering the United States to ask for protection. This means they, in a larger majority, voluntarily *presented themselves* to the U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers (Rosenblum, 2015).

Although Mexico is historically a "transit" nation for Central Americans trying to enter the United States, the number of people crossing has been unprecedented in recent

years (Rodríguez, 2014; Basok & Rojas, 2018). Another characteristic is the phenomenon of "Caravans." This means large organized groups of immigrants mobilizing from Central America trying to reach the United States, traveling through Mexico, which increases the visibility of this event in the public agenda, and provides a sense of security for the immigrants who are victims of several violations of human rights as they transit through Mexico (Montes, 2019). These distinctive features, in particular the in-transit phenomenon, make the immigration pattern of Central Americans in Mexico different from the case of Colombia and Chile, which were explored in Chapters 4 and 5.

First, this chapter provides an overview of the current state of the Mexican media system and academic studies about journalism in this country. The objective of this context is to enrich the empirical results of this case study. After reviewing a general perspective on how media works in Mexico, with a focus on the press, I will explain, in detail, the results of the content analysis and how the interviews with journalists help to answer my research questions.

A context of journalism and the press in Mexico¹¹⁵

The media system in Mexico is a commercial one, where the owners of mass media are wealthy private individuals well connected to the political establishment (Hallin, 2000). As with Chile and Colombia, the concept of the "Captured Liberal" media system also applies to Mexico (Guerrero, 2014). The lack of conditions for the crystallization of professional journalism, such as political and corporate pressures and

¹¹⁵ Few portions of this section were part of a paper presented at ICA 2018 and they are also part of an unpublished manuscript.

the absence of protection mechanisms against high levels of violence, are negative factors affecting the watchdog role of media in the country. Immigration and organized crime in Mexico are closely linked, which creates a dangerous combination for any reporter who wants to dig into these issues. This is also coupled with low regulatory efficiency and concentration of the media market that contributes to this concept of "Captured Liberal Media System." More than explicit actions from the political elites and the government to limit press freedom, the political influence and state intervention on the Mexican media system follows a series of "*unwritten arrangements*" that were established mostly during the 20th century and still affect the functioning of the media in the country. As Márquez-Ramirez (2014) argues, these mechanisms are: *bribery, control and handling of criticism, silencing oppositional voices, and discretionary allocation of broadcast licenses*. Also, the influence of the state in the media market manifests more explicitly with mechanisms such as newsprint subsidies and dependence on official political advertising (Márquez-Ramirez, 2014, p. 279).

Additionally, Mexican journalism is accounted as *oficialista*. This means that most of the coverage is based on governmental and official press releases, and areas of controversy are not covered by the media (Hallin, 2000; Narcia, 2015). The characterization of *oficialista*, as Hallin explains, is not merely because the government pressures media to meet its agenda; perhaps more important is the complicity between economic, social, and political elites founded on social ties and common interests (Hallin 2000, p. 101). The idea of *oficialista* journalism was particularly strong during the 70 years that the *Partido Revolucionario Institucional* (PRI) was in power, a period that ended in 2000. During those seven decades, the mass media in Mexico was a crucial

component of the PRI's political power (Marquez-Ramirez, 2014). Therefore, media in this country generally reflects an elitist perspective and has a tradition of relying on official communication. Nevertheless, it is plausible to argue that with the end of the PRI government and the rise of digital media in Mexico, some characteristics of the Mexican media system are shifting.

The change in political power in the early 2000s also brought a wider social transformation. The end of the PRI government created a fragmentation of organized crime and increased deadly battles for controlling territories (Relly & Gonzalez de Bustamante, 2017). This issue has affected the practice of journalism. Nowadays, one of the biggest challenges for journalists in Mexico is their safety while reporting. According to the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), Mexico is among the top ten countries where journalists and media workers are murdered. The CPJ estimates that since 1992, approximately 123 journalists and media workers were killed covering different topics such as crime, corruption, politics (CPJ, 2020). National organizations, such as the *Comisión Nacional de Derechos Humanos* (National Office of Human Rights) estimates that between 2000 and 2018, 141 journalists have been murdered (CNDH, 2019). Also, in Mexico, the impunity for killing journalists is among the highest in the world (Relly & Gonzalez de Bustamante, 2017). Relly & Gonzalez de Bustamante (2014) claim that violence against journalists in Mexico increased substantially between 2006 to 2012, when President Felipe Calderon carried out a war against organized crime using military forces to fight drug cartels along the border. Since Calderon's war against organized crimes started, the country has witnessed around 60,000 deaths linked to drug cartels, organized crime, and corruption (Relly & Gonzalez de Bustamante, 2014).

Regarding the profile of journalists in Mexico, in one of the few studies about this topic, Márquez-Ramírez and Hughes (2016) explain that majority are men in their mid-thirties with a college education and working for one specific news outlets. Based on a survey of 376 reporters in the country, the most crucial perceived professional role is to "report things as they are," followed by "promoting tolerance and cultural diversity." In fifth place, the reporters in this study ranked the role of "monitoring and scrutinize political leaders" (the watchdog function of the press). They also declared adherence to a high level of "commitment to professional ethics." In the same study, journalists reported a high degree of autonomy and independence within their newsroom while deciding the selection and angles of their news stories. Moreover, journalists stated that news production is heavily influenced by their understanding of journalist ethics and information access. Also, four out of ten journalists declare censorship as an influencing factor in their daily routines. However, these authors do not measure violence in the country as a potential source of influence in news production (Márquez-Ramírez and Hughes, 2016)

Particularly about the country's journalistic culture, the implicit mechanism of influence established for many decades has created a "post-authoritarian" press environment that manifests itself through passive reporting methods and relies on the biased agenda of small elite groups (Marquez-Ramirez, 2014). Also, issues such as the coverage of drug cartels is characterized as sensationalistic, based on isolated events with little context and cross-checking (Hernandez-Ramirez, 2011). Corruption is also part of the equation while reporting. Hallin & Papathanassopoulos (2002) explain that governmental corruption is considered a cause of limited professionalization of the media

in this country. For instance, accessing official information or immigrants' detention facilities is very challenging, and excessive bureaucracy and legal procedures to get clearance for original reporting take a long time (Narcia, 2015).

Based on the context of the journalistic culture and how the media system works in Mexico, the expectation is that the news coverage of immigration will share similar characteristics with any other news reporting in the country. For example, a high prevalence of official (governmental) sources is expected, with a significant presence of stories highlighting isolated events involving sensationalistic angles. Also, there could be a lack of investigative pieces with an in-depth context of newsworthy events, such as the surge of unaccompanied minors and the migrants' caravans.

Informed by the context developed above, this chapter offers the empirical results of the representation of immigration and immigrants in the Mexican press. First, I will examine the content analysis based on the framing, sources, and numerical elements present in the coverage. Then I will discuss the results of the word choices used in the news reporting. Similarly, by exploring the interviews conducted with reporters and journalists from the media outlets used in the content analysis, the objective is to establish relationships about news production of immigration news in this country.

Immigration News in Mexico – Empirical Findings

This analysis has five central elements: 1) The occurrence of the most common frames; 2) Presence of word choices; 3) sources; 4) the presence of numerical elements; and 5) semi-structured interviews.

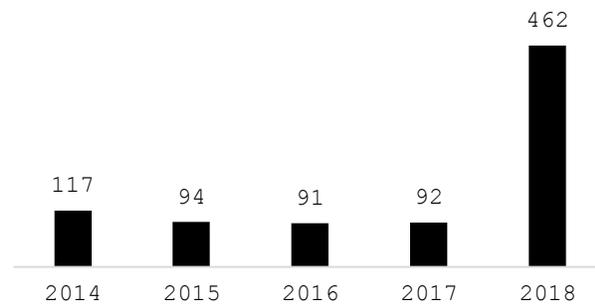
In the case of Chile and Colombia, the content analysis was conducted on news articles from five news outlets. For Mexico, I decided to have an additional national newspaper to account for the country's much larger media market size. Four of the news outlets are print newspapers (although the digital edition was also studied), and two are digital-only. The analysis is conducted using the five years as the entire corpus (not differentiating by years).

Table 1 shows the distribution of articles from each newspaper, and the frequency of stories across the five years is in Figure 1.

Table 1: Frequency of articles 2014-2018

Newspaper	%	Count
Jornada	20.33%	174
Milenio	14.49%	124
Reforma	20.68%	177
El Universal	15.07%	129
Aristegui Noticias	17.99%	154
SDP	11.45%	98
Total	100%	856

Figure 1. Number of articles by year



As seen in Figure 1, 2018 represents 54% of the corpus of interest in this case study. A few newsworthy events can explain the amount of coverage, particularly in 2014 and 2018, that have the larger percentage. In 2014, the first peak of Central American unaccompanied minors traveling through Mexico toward the United States reached an unprecedented number as illustrated by the apprehension of 23,096 of them, compared with 9,630 the previous year (SEGOB, 2015). This new phenomenon of family units and minors traveling alone is one of the causes of the slightly larger amount of coverage in 2014. Although during the period 2015-2017 the movement of families and minors did

not stop, it seems that media attention was not as intense as in 2014, based on the sample in this study.

The amount of news stories for 2018 is driven mostly by the October Migrant Caravan. Although migrant caravans from Central America to Mexico are not a new phenomenon (Thornton, 2018), the one from Fall 2018 was highly visible because of the number of people (estimated of 7,000) from Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala (IOM, 2020) and the political responses it created both on the U.S and Mexican sides (Lind, 2018). For example, the President of the U.S. (Donald Trump) called this Caravan an invasion and deployed military personnel to the U.S. southern border¹¹⁶. Mexican president Enrique Peña Nieto called for the legal entry of Central Americans with the intention to remain in Mexico¹¹⁷.

Also, similar to the samples from Chile and Colombia, the number of news articles for each newspaper fluctuates (Table 1). Reforma has the highest number (177) and SDP, the lowest quantity of news stories (98). The analysis of frames will also include frames as a percentage of each news outlet. More details about this are explained below.

Most common frames in the news coverage

The codebook developed for the framing analysis includes 16 categories. Each category was defined by discourse indicators. The ranking type of analysis allows to

¹¹⁶ [Politico](#) 10/29/2018

¹¹⁷ [El Universal](#) 10/20/2018

assess the relative hierarchy of the frame depending if it is in the headline, lede or in the text¹¹⁸. A N=856 was the total of manually coded stories¹¹⁹.

The *Victim- Humanitarian/Human rights* frame is ranked as the most common category in the corpus of news of this case study. Three hundred and six (306) of the news articles classified this frame in first place (36% of the 856 news articles). A total of 391 occurrences of this frame is present considering the stories that categorized it in first, second, and third place¹²⁰ (Table 2).

Table 2. Frequency of frames in Mexico 2014-2018.

Frames	Ranking 1	Ranking 1 percentage of total news (N=856)	Ranking 2	Ranking 3	Total
VICTIM - H	306	36%	82	3	391
POLRESP- PSD	191	22%	79	3	273
COUNTRY SPECIFIC - TRAN	75	9%	76	13	164
POLRESP - INTC	87	10%	26	0	113
COUNTRY SPECIFIC - SOL	49	6%	43	4	96
VICTIM - PE	49	6%	40	3	92
THREAT - SePo	45	5%	12	1	58
THREAT -BS	33	4%	11	0	44
VICTM - RX	8	1%	6	0	14
BENEFIT - EC	3	0	2	0	5
BENFEIT - CU	3	0	0	0	3
BENEFIT - IA	3	0	0	0	3
COUNTRY SPECIFIC - RACE	3	0	0	0	3
THREAT -He	1	0	0	0	1
THREAT -CU	0	0	0	0	0

¹¹⁸ As explained in the method section the unit of analysis for this part of the project was headline, lede and the first 200 words.

¹¹⁹ After the relevancy coding the total number of news was 901. During that stage of the coding news reporting about immigrants from Cuba or Africa were included as well as short stories. During the framing coding I also discovered stories that were wrongly coded as relevant. The percentage of agreement was 87% therefore, the 45 excluded articles are in range regarding the relevancy coding.

¹²⁰ Although the framing analysis considered the headline, lede, and the first 200 words, the length of the lede varies across newspapers. Therefore, it was possible to detect, in some cases, more than two frames. None of the articles have more than three. Thus, the analysis was conducted considering only the top three frames.

THREAT - EC	0	0	0	0	0
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The discursive indicators for this frame (*Victim- Humanitarian/Human rights*) are based on depicting migrants as victims of violence, poverty, and crime in the receiving nation, and also facing abuses from state agencies or governmental institutions. In the case of Mexico, this victim frame reflects the ill treatment and violations of human rights Central Americans suffer while crossing into the country, and also when they are portrayed as in-transit migrants, whose main goal is to reach the U.S. southern border. Commonly, the stories into this category are based on official accounts of immigrants as victims of smuggling, kidnapping, and murder. Another common approach for this type of news reporting is the individual story of a Central American crossing into Mexico and the dangers she faces in her journey through the country, including threats that could come from organized crime gangs but also from corrupt authorities (police and migration officials). This is even more salient when the victims are children and unaccompanied minors from Central America. These news articles below try to exemplify these findings.

Aristegui Noticias, Mexico 10/20/2016

NMI rescue 121 Central Americans crammed in a truck in Tabasco

The National Migration Institute (NMI) rescued on Thursday a group of 121 Central American migrants with symptoms of asphyxia and dehydration when they've been transported in a cargo truck in poor conditions on a Tabasco's highway.

SDP Noticias, Mexico 06/12/2015

Organs trafficking to the United States increases; Solalinde

Since 2007, trade and trafficking of human organs from Central American migrants in transit to the United States has been recorded. This issue has swollen during 2014. Alejandro Solalinde, director of the humanitarian shelter "Hermanos en el camino", denounces that this phenomenon is terrible and extremely serious, and the modus operandi is very sophisticated.

Reforma, Mexico 09/30/2014

Denounce abuses of immigrants from the NMI

Migrants and activists denounce abuses, torture and illegal detentions of immigrants by the National Migration Institute (NMI)

La Jornada, Mexico 08/17/2014

“Daniela Paulette, small and thin with only 30 kilos and eight years old, crossed the Mexican Southern border and she is alive to tell her story. Her life is a testimony of the suffering of many children who are increasingly travelling alone trying to reach the United States.”

The *Victim- Humanitarian/Human Rights* frame in the case of Mexico appears in news connecting current events with the mass murder of immigrants that occurred in the past, and also connected to the discovery of mass graves in different parts of Mexico.

One of the first and most notorious of these type events was the “*Matanza de San Fernando*” in 2010, where 72 immigrants from Central and South America were killed by Los Zetas drug cartel. The examples below illustrate this type of news stories:

SDP Noticias, Mexico 08/21/2015

5 years after the San Fernando massacre, there are no punishments yet against the perpetrators.

Amnesty International protests that the Mexican government has not been able to conduct an investigation to clarify the massacre against 72 migrants.

Aristegui Noticias, Mexico 08/21/2015

“Pray for me” a story from Carolina Jimenez

Amnesty International director talks about the massacre of San Fernando where 72 migrants were murdered in Mexico, five years ago. 58 men and 14 women from Central and South America were killed in a rancho in Tamaulipas, close to the border between Mexico and Texas.

The second most common frame in the aggregate coverage of immigration news in Mexico during 2014-2018 is the *Political Responsibility – Policy Solutions and Debate*. One hundred and ninety-one out of 856 articles ranked this frame as the number one present in the story. This is roughly 22% of the entire sample analyzed for this case study. Taking together the articles that ranked this frame in first, second, and third place, the total occurrence of this category is 273 (Table 2).

The discursive indicator of this frame is defined as the political and policy debates generated by the new immigration influx. This frame also incorporated discussions between policymakers about how to best deal with the latest movement of foreign nationals into the country. In Mexico, a series of containment policies were implemented by the government to provide short-term solutions to the massive influx of Central Americans. Additionally, this frame is salient during the coverage of the Caravan in 2018, when national and local governments implemented measures to manage and control this vast number of people mobilizing together in their territories, as the examples show.

La Jornada, Mexico 11/16/2018

Migrants part of “Estás en Casa” received their first payment

Central Americans worked on remodeling the market grounds in Tapachulas, Chiapas, a place where they received shelter for a few days. Out of the 2,697 members of the migrant caravan, 566 applied to the “Estás en tu Casa” governmental program and this Friday they received their first salary of 2,262 pesos.

Reforma, Mexico 04/22/2014

Government announces program for migrants.

The federal government is set to implement the “Paso Seguro” program in the Southern border with the objective to control the migration in that region, according to Paloma Guillen, deputy of Migration, Population and Religious affairs of the Minister of Interior.

Milenio, Mexico 11/27/2018

In Tijuana, 614 migrants received humanitarian visas

Through the work fair organized at the border of Baja California, 614 Central Americans received “Humanitarian” visas which allow them to look for jobs, informed the Minister of Interior.

Overall, the frames *Victim – Humanitarian/Human Rights* and *the Political Responsibility – Policy Solutions and Debate* are the most dominant categories in the sample examined here. Combined, 58% of news articles ranked either of these two frames in the first place. Table 2 provides the details of the incidence of these frames and the occurrence of each category.

Nonetheless, other frames are relevant to explore further, although they do not emerge as predominant as the *Victim – H* and *Political – PSD*. For instance, in third place, the *Transitionality* frame appears with a total of 164 counts, and 75 news articles ranked it as the first frame (and 76 in second place). The definition of this category encompasses the idea that Mexico is transitioning from a migrants-sender to a migrants-receiving country. In Mexico, this frame is connected to news stories that explicitly express the reality that Central Americans were initially “in-transit” but later ended up staying in Mexico. The articles in this category attribute the decision to remain in the Mexican territory to the increasing barriers to entering the United States, but also to the lack of possible alternatives because returning to their home countries is too risky.

Additionally, the *Transitionality* frame in the case of Mexico includes the recognition, revealed by the news stories, of becoming a country that receives refugees. Although in the past Mexico has accepted waves of political refugees from Central and

South America, the scale of this new inflow is unparalleled, and the news media echoes this transformation from a migrants-sender to a *refugees*-receiving nation.

Aristegui Noticias, Mexico 04/26/2017

From a transit country to a final destination for migrants; Jesuits

Mexico's answer is below the need for protection. In 2015, out of more than 3,000 requests, the government only approved 949 refugee status. From being a country of transit for thousands of people migrating to the United States, in the last five years Mexico has become a final destination. Facing this phenomenon, the Mexican government's response is not enough for the need of protection for many Central Americans.

Universal, Mexico 06/20/2018 Agencia El Universal

“Mexico is now a destination for refugees”

SDP Noticias, Mexico 07/17/2018

Petitions for AMLO to review Mexican refugee laws

The UNHCR is demanding a stop to leaving migrant children in closed shelters. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is asking to review the current Refugee and Political Asylum laws in Mexico to align this legislation with international treaties and agreements for refugee's protection. This is needed because Mexico is becoming a country of destination for migratory influx and not just an in-transit nation.

The fourth most common frame is *Political Responsibility – International Cooperation and Relations*. This framing category captures the news articles reporting immigration as a phenomenon that requires multilateral and regional cooperation of different international actors. These actors can be other countries or political organizations that work at a multinational level.

Therefore, the political responsibility of dealing with immigration is shared, and it is not an exclusive obligation of the receiving nation. In the case of Mexico, this frame is interrelated to the policy coordination efforts of Central American and Mexican

authorities but also the role the United States plays in the southern border of Mexico. Additionally, related to this framing category is the presence of international organizations such as the United Nations pressing the authorities in the region to find a humanitarian solution to migrants' movement. A couple of news articles excerpts help clarifying these points.

Reforma, Mexico 05/24/2017

Human Rights commissioner proposes a migrant census

Luis Raul Gonzalez convened representatives from Latin America to register migrants in several countries. During the II Summit of the Human Rights Commissioners from Iberoamerica “Migration and Human Rights: a new perspective,” Gonzalez explains the lack of registration and identification of migrants puts them at risk of abuses.

La Jornada, Mexico 08/10/2018

Videgaray and Pompeo discuss migration and security over the phone.

In a phone call, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Luis Videgaray and the Secretary of State of the US, Mike Pompeo, discussed the need to reduce the irregular migration in Mexico. For the Women Migration Institute of Mexico, this conversation is worrisome because they could be part of the plan of Mexico becoming a “safe third country,” which means our country would be a sort of filter for asylum-seekers planning to reach the United States.

The frames that appear fifth and sixth are the *Solidarity/Reciprocity* and the *Victim- Political and Economic*. Each of these frames has 49 news articles that ranked them in the first place, but the *Solidarity* category has a larger number of occurrences in news stories in second and third place. The *Solidarity* category in Mexico emerges predominantly as a message that news media replicates from sources calling to help the “in-transit” members of the Caravans.

“In the midst of the human tragedy of many Central American families in Mexico, fleeing poverty, Hermosillo will receive the migrant caravan with open arms, and they

will provide humanitarian assistance while they are in this city, expresses the mayor Celida Lopez. (Universal, Mexico 10/24/2018 Agencia El Universal)

Moreover, the *Political – Political and Economic* frame discursive indicator encompasses the idea of news media explicitly covering the “push factors” driving the migration movements. In the case of the Central American influx, this category is related mostly to the violence and risks people face in the Northern Triangle nations (Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador).

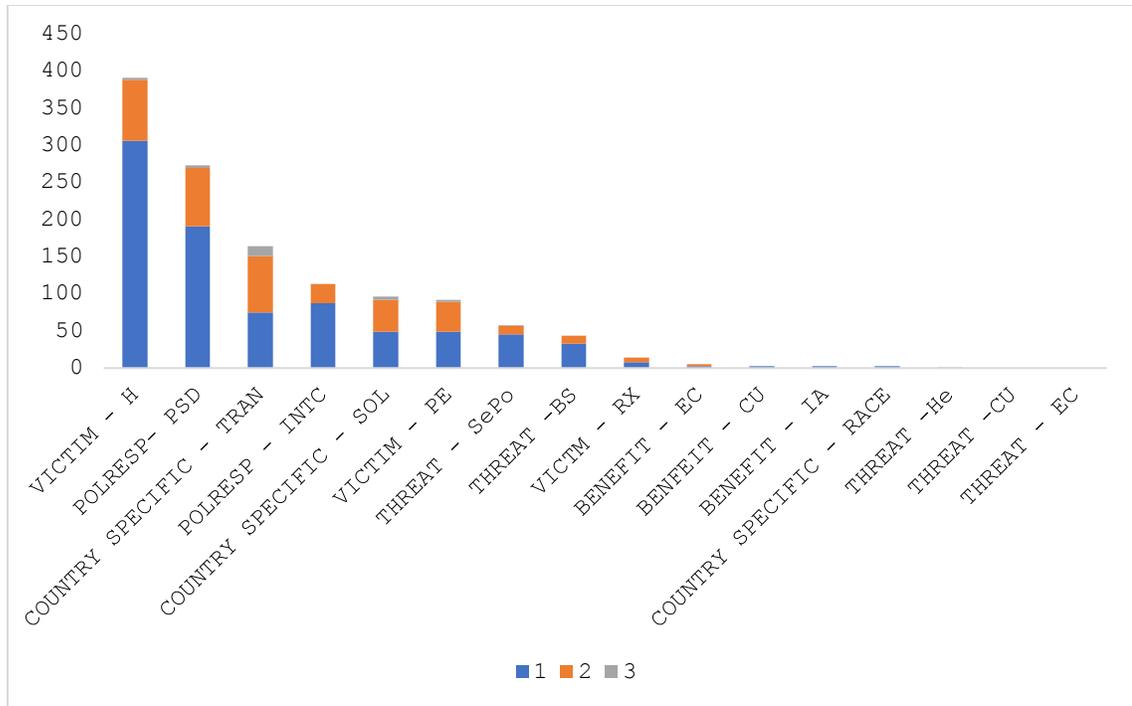
Milenio, Mexico 07/14/2014

“People are escaping as if we were in a war”

The parish of the bishop of San Pedro Sula, Romulo Emiliani, is shrinking and is increasingly getting smaller, caused by the terrible violence, thousands of people are escaping the most dangerous city in the world.

Similarly, noteworthy is the relatively low presence of threats or benefits frames. The ones emerging as the most common are the *Threat - Security and Public Order* and *Border Security*. Part of the occurrence of these threat frames is the way news articles present stories about migrant apprehensions and arrests. I will expand more on this nuance in the next section, informed by my close reading of a subsample for the corpus. Figure 2 presents the occurrence of each frame in the entire sample for this case study grouped by the three top frames present in each news story.

Figure 2: Presence of frames in Mexico from 2014-2018.



Furthermore, as shown in Table 1, there is an uneven distribution of news articles across the six newspapers. Although the gathering method of stories and the sampling strategy was the same across all of them, some newspapers might have covered immigration less frequently than others. However, to examine further the presence of frames in the coverage, I look into each news outlet and assess the percentage each frame represents in their specific coverage¹²¹. For this part of the analysis, the decision was to divide the newspapers into traditional versus non-traditional. The non-traditional ones are newer sources of information in the Mexican news market and are digital-only news platforms (i.e. Aristegui Noticias and SDP).

Non-traditional newspapers have a more significant presence of *Victim-Humanitarian/Human Rights* frame than traditional ones (Table 3). Aristegui Noticias, a

¹²¹ As for the cases of Chile and Colombia and consistent across all the framing analysis, the presence of frames in each news outlet included the articles that ranked the framing category in first, second and third place.

digital-only news source, has the highest occurrence of this Victim category (54%), and the lowest for this frame is a traditional source, Milenio (33%). One potential explanation for the presence of more *Victim- Humanitarian/Human Rights* frames in non-traditional news sources is that as digital newspapers, they reproduce more official information about immigrants rescued and/or killed. Likewise, SDP and Aristegui Noticias are smaller newsrooms compared to the traditional publications. Thus, the combination of fewer reporters and the need for constant information updates on their websites might explain why they use more press releases from governmental institutions describing rescue or murder of immigrants.

In the case of the second most common frame in the aggregate news coverage – *Political Responsibility- Policy Solutions and Debate* -- the variance between traditional and non-traditional news outlets is minimal. Arguably the lack of difference in this political frame could be linked also to the prevalence of official voices in the reporting. As will be expanded later in the chapter, by far the more substantial sources across the news corpus are governmental (local and national) and public officials. Therefore, a political frame could be related to the high presence of this kind of sources. Similarly, the other relevant political frame in the analysis is the *International Cooperation and Relations*, and the difference across the six news outlets is marginal, except for SDP. A similar explanation for both victims and political frames is the predominant presence of official accounts and voices. Table 3 provides the breakdown of the incidence of the most prevalent frames in the aggregated coverage by news media.

Table 3. *Presence of frame as a percentage of the total coverage in each newspaper*

	N	Victim – H	Pol - PSD	Transitionality	Politic-Inter	Solidarity	Victim -PE
<i>Traditional</i>							
Reforma	177	42%	31%	18%	17%	6%	13%
El Universal	129	48%	26%	15%	12%	20%	9%

La Jornada	174	48%	34%	21%	17%	7%	13%
Milenio	124	33%	35%	23%	9%	12%	5%
<i>Non-traditional</i>							
Aristegui Noticias	154	54%	37%	21%	16%	9%	15%
SDP	98	48%	26%	16%	3%	17%	7%

Informing the frames with the textual analysis

To better answer the overall research question of this project in the case of Mexico -- how news media cover intraregional immigration in Latin America -- I conducted a close reading of a subsample of the news articles¹²². The inductive analysis provides context and nuance for some of the findings from the framing evaluation stated above. The results here are reported based on the emerging topics of this examination.

First, news articles reporting detention, apprehension, or deportation of immigrants are not necessarily framed or discussed under a threat narrative. Instead, the preferred approach is using a humanitarian angle, making salient that immigrants are victims of human trafficking, violence or abuses. However, the word choices create confusion or contradictory perspectives about the content of the article. For instance, news reports would highlight the rescue of immigrants in the headline, which could be interpreted under a humanitarian perspective. Still, in the lede or body of the same article, they will report the arrest and deportation of immigrants, sometimes using words such as “*aseguramiento*” (a less charged word in Spanish for arrest) and also “*retorno*” (a synonym of deportation), which are concepts associated to perceiving immigrants as a threat to security and public order. These examples clarify these findings.

Milenio, Mexico 10/25/2016

MNI secured 17 migrants from guesthouse in Tabasco

¹²² In the case of Mexico the sample was 135.

Three minors are among them. Authorities inspected the building and found a group of Central Americans without legal documents to prove their lawful permanence in the country. After feeding them and providing medical assistance, the process to return them to their country of origin was activated.

SDP Noticias, Mexico 11/24/2018

Worsening conditions for migrants in Tijuana

Overcrowded places, uncertainty about their legal future, and the weather are hitting the Honduran migrants seeking refuge in the United States and Mexico. They traveled 5,000 kilometers trying to reach the U.S., but although they are almost there, at the border between Tijuana and Mexicali, their surviving conditions are worsening. Cold, rain and overcrowded shelters are taking a toll on the migrants. Tijuana's authorities say 120 migrants are being detained and in process of deportation for committing different crimes.

Another element of the coverage not fully captured in the framing analysis is the explicit language used in reporting attacks against immigrants. Although it is not a feature present across all newspapers analyzed here, it is possible to find a narrative style that emphasizes horrifying information about the abuses to Central Americans. This is interesting considering that none of the newspapers in this case study are "tabloids," which could be expected to use that kind of language.

La Jornada, Mexico 06/06/2014

Central Americans narrate to Senators, the "terror" they endure in transit through Mexico

Killing him was not enough. They throw him into the ground, dead already, they beheaded him and cut his body in two. They ripped his stomach...how could this be happening in Mexico? the migrant told the Senators.

Additionally, a particular theme emerges when media reports about family members of missing immigrants seeking justice in Mexico. Although these stories fall under the victim frame because they are centered on the suffering of the immigrants, these articles portray the migrants as more "empowered" by demanding answers from

Mexican authorities. One example is the coverage of the “Mothers’ Caravan¹²³” searching for their missing children in Mexican territory. In these news stories, the immigrants' voice is salient and particularly critical of the justice and immigration system in the country, and the way the disappearance of migrants has been handled by Mexico. The energetic voices of immigrants and activists make these stories different from the other victims' articles that are largely focused on reporting the events from the official perspective, typically highlighting the number of immigrants injured, rescued, or killed, without providing other counter-narratives. These two excerpts of news stories show the depiction of immigrants as more "active" actors than just victims of abuses and violence.

Reforma, Mexico 11/25/2016

Criticizing the Plan

The Mothers’ Caravan of Missing Migrants denounces to the Senate that Mexico is doing the dirty work of the United States because of the deportation of hundreds of Central Americans. The Frontera Sur program [implemented in 2014 to control migration to the US] has created a hunting of migrants. “We were told about the prosperity plan, but we don’t see this. Mexico is among the countries with more people deported” denounces the Guatemalan, Catalina Lopez.

Universal, Mexico 11/26/2016 Agencia El Universal

Alerting about the more than 70,000 missing migrants.

[Ruben Figueroa, representative of the Migrants Movement] Highlights that women members of the XII Mothers Caravan of Missing Migrants arrived into the region to continue the search for their loved ones. They filed a claim at the Attorney General’s office in Tamaulipas to activate an official search for missing migrants.

One additional finding surfaces at this point in the analysis. Unsurprisingly, there is a large presence of stories about the two borders: *The Mexican and U.S. southern*

¹²³ [Making Absence Visible \(2017\)](#)

borders. For instance, the word “*frontera*” (border) has 379 unique occurrences in the text of all news articles. This means at least 44%¹²⁴ of the news in this sample refer to this concept. The textual analysis helps understand better the usage of this word in the news reporting. Generally, in Mexico the concept “border” alludes to the northern limit with the United States. Historically that it has been the focus of the Mexican media coverage regarding immigration. However, the shifts in the patterns of migration, as well as political decisions such as the *Programa Frontera Sur* in 2014¹²⁵, changed the understanding of “border”, and news reproduces voices that account for the new meaning of the term of “*frontera*” (border) in the public discourse. The sample analyzed here provides evidence that news media now focuses on the “two borders” rather than just one.

Milenio, Mexico 10/22/2018

PAN ask for security and solidarity to the Migrant Caravan

“Generally, when we talk about border in Mexico, we look up north, but today we have to educate ourselves with a different sensibility. Now when we talk about border, we need to look also South. They are [Central Americans] Latin American brothers, they are human beings and they deserve the best treatment”

La Jornada, Mexico 08/27/2014

The program for the South is discriminatory

Measures imposed by the federal government at the Southern border to stop Central American migrants en route to the United States, are discriminatory and violate human rights. Also, they resemble a Mexican Border Patrol [similar to the US], denounce advocacy groups.

¹²⁴ The total for the word occurrence is based on N=871. This N is larger than the one used for the framing analysis because for this step, I included short news that were excluded for the framing examination.

¹²⁵ [Programa Frontera Sur](#)

Across the six Mexican news outlets examined here, there are common patterns that emerged in this textual analysis. First, stories about immigrants' apprehensions are commonly reported under a humanitarian approach, highlighting that the immigrants are routinely victims of smugglers and human trafficking. However, the use of words such as detention or arrest in headlines and lede could signal to the reader a story in which migrants are a threat to the social order.

Also, past killing of immigrant groups are covered under a description of “*seeking justice*” in which Central Americans are depicted as individuals demanding answers for their disappeared children and family members, rather than immigrants as victims of cruelties.

Finally, the borders play a central role in the stories. News media in Mexico acknowledges the shift in importance from the Northern border to their Southern border, and they reproduce voices that account for this changed discourse.

Little variation, at least in the subsample analyzed, emerges between traditional newspapers and digital-only media. Perhaps the only notable difference is that in online-only news outlets (i.e., Aristegui and SDP), there is a more direct reproduction of press releases and official documents. I will explore this further in the sources section of this chapter.

Word choices in immigration coverage

In addition, the content analysis of the coverage of immigration in Mexico examines the preferred language or word choice in Mexican newspapers. The analysis is

on the occurrence (not frequency)¹²⁶ of specific words (not a combination of terms). This process allows for identifying general trends about word preferences in the corpus and it is also informed by the close analysis of the data conducted during the framing and textual examination.

The first objective of this section is to identify the presence of specific terms and concepts frequently linked to immigration coverage in other contexts (i.e., Global North) and see if these words are also common in the coverage in the Global South. Secondly, I identify concepts that are particular to the reporting in Mexico to strengthen the connection between the frames and the interviews with reporters from these news outlets, which helps answer my research questions.

First, the preferred word to describe the people from Central America coming into Mexico is “Migrantes” (Migrants). Three hundred seventy-eight (378) news articles use this label in the headline and 766 in the rest of the text. “Migrante” (Migrant) is also a term widely used to identify a particular individual member of this influx, the same as the word “Centro Americanos” (Central Americans), particularly in the text after the headline. These three words are the most common way to label the foreigners coming into Mexico. Another label that emerges as prevalent in the body of the news article (not as much in the headline) is “Refugiados” (Refugees) with 131 articles using this word. “Extranjeros” (Foreigners) is also a term used to name people coming into the country. Two more words are common identifiers to the influx in the case of Mexico: “Niños” (Children) and “Caravana” (Caravan). Based on the examination of the news articles

¹²⁶ This analysis is based on presence rather than frequency 1= present 0 = not present. This allows excluding potential outliers o articles that use the same words repetitively.

during the framing analysis, news articles typically refer to the “Caravana Migrante” (Migrant Caravan). Still, regarding the children, they would refer to them as “Niños centroamericanos” (Central American children).

The relatively high presence of the term “Migrantes”¹²⁷ (Migrants) suggests that Mexican news media puts more emphasis on the condition in which Central Americans are coming into the country, rather than on identifying the influx as people coming from neighboring nations that share a common history and cultural roots. Instead of using only the word “Centroamericanos” (Central Americans), the news articles analyzed here allocate importance in the condition of “Central American migrants,” which in a way creates a more charged approach to describe the influx. During the relevancy coding, there were examples of news in Mexico covering immigration from Cuba, Africa, and Asia into the country. Interestingly, news media uses “migrants” also to describe these people coming from non-neighboring nations.

“Due to a wave of Cubans migrants, the migratory station, Siglo XXI, the largest in Latin America, and other Southern border shelters are overrun.” (Reforma, Mexico 10/28/2015)

“Alert for discrimination of African and Asian migrants” (Universal, Mexico 08/31/2016).

These two examples illustrate that using the term “migrants” attached to the Central American influx puts this movement of people at the same “level” as people coming from overseas or “far away” lands. The conversation with journalists will provide

¹²⁷ The numbers listed here represent the single occurrence of a word in one article (headline and rest of the article). There could be overlapping, meaning that in one article *Migrantes* and *Centroamericanos* could be present, but the objective is to examine the incidence of the words in the entire corpus, rather than if it’s exclusive to one specific article. For instance, *Migrants* + *Centroamericanos* (after the headline) = 459 articles have both words. This is even more indicative that the preferred label is using *Central American migrants* although using this method I cannot assess the presence of the combination of the two words.

more insights into this writing decision. Still, even the reporters acknowledged that the concept of “Central American migrants” triggers an adverse reaction in people, which is why they are trying to move away from that form of identification of the influx.

Table 4 provides the details of each word used to identify the Central Americans.

*Table 4. Words used to identify the influx*¹²⁸

	Migrantes (Migrants)	Migrante (Migrant)	Centro americanos (Central Americans)	Refugiados (Refugees)	Inmigrantes (Immigrants)	Extranjeros (Foreginers)	Niños (Children)	Caravana (Caravan)
Headlines	378	82	64	11	8	3	21	109
Lede + Text	766	326	504	131	63	123	163	326

Furthermore, another common discussion in the analysis of news coverage of immigration around the world is the usage of labels such as “legal,” “illegal,” “undocumented,” or “irregular” migration. In the case of Mexico, the most common term across traditional and digital-only news outlets is “indocumentados” (undocumented plural), with 133 articles using this term (about 15% of the total news sample). Although the word “illegal” has the second-highest presence, this could also be caused by the presence of news of illegal detentions or arrest of Central Americans, rather than using “illegal” as a term to label migrants. Table 5 provides more detail about these labels and the incidence by the newspaper in the lead and the entire body of the text.

*Table 5. Preferred word uses for Central American migrants (body of the news)*¹²⁹

	Irregular (Irregular)	Ilegales (Illegals)	Ilegal (Illegal)	Indocumentados (Undocumented)	Irregulares (Irregulars)
Aristegui Noticias	7	1	9	12	3
La Jornada	13	2	13	37	4
Milenio	5	4	7	19	0

¹²⁸ The total for the word occurrence is based on N=871. This N is larger than the one used for the framing analysis because for this step, I included short news that were excluded for the framing examination.

¹²⁹ After reviewing for the presence of words in one more than articles, for example, Indocumentados + irregular(s)= 3(4), Indocumentados + ilegales = 3.

Reforma	4	3	18	36	1
SDP	1	2	4	8	0
El Universal	7	3	8	21	2
Total	37	15	59	133	10

Overall, news media in Mexico uses the word “migrantes” most frequently to refer to the Central Americans, which might make the phenomenon more distant to the Mexican public, because, in a way, it neglects the geographical and cultural proximity these countries have with Mexico. This is a finding that emerges across all the newspapers analyzed for this case. Similarly, all the news outlets prefer the label undocumented when describing Central Americans, which is typically a less charged label than illegal, a word commonly found in other contexts (i.e., Global North) to describe irregular migration inflows.

Another topic that emerges in the analysis of word choices is the concept of “Transitionality” captured in the framing analysis. One of the criteria for a news article to be coded under this transitionality frame was if the story describes Mexico as a refugee receiving nation (not about “in-transit”¹³⁰ migration). For instance, the word “Asilo” (Asylum) is present in 135 news articles¹³¹ and in 25 headlines. The word “refugees” is used in similar numbers (131 appearances, Table 4) Based on the close reading of the news sample, the coverage of Central Americans uses the labels of "asylum seekers" and "refugees" interchangeably to discuss the situation of many individuals. Still, most importantly, the incidence of these concepts in the coverage suggests the presence of this transitionality idea. The news reporting emphasizes the "new" nature of Central

¹³⁰ For instance, the term “transito” (in-transit) appears in 138 news articles, which indicates the relatively importance of this description while covering the Central American movement into Mexico.

¹³¹ In only two of these articles the word “Refugiados” is also present.

American immigration by reproducing narratives from public institutions, NGOs, and activists about becoming a refugee receiving nation in unprecedented numbers.

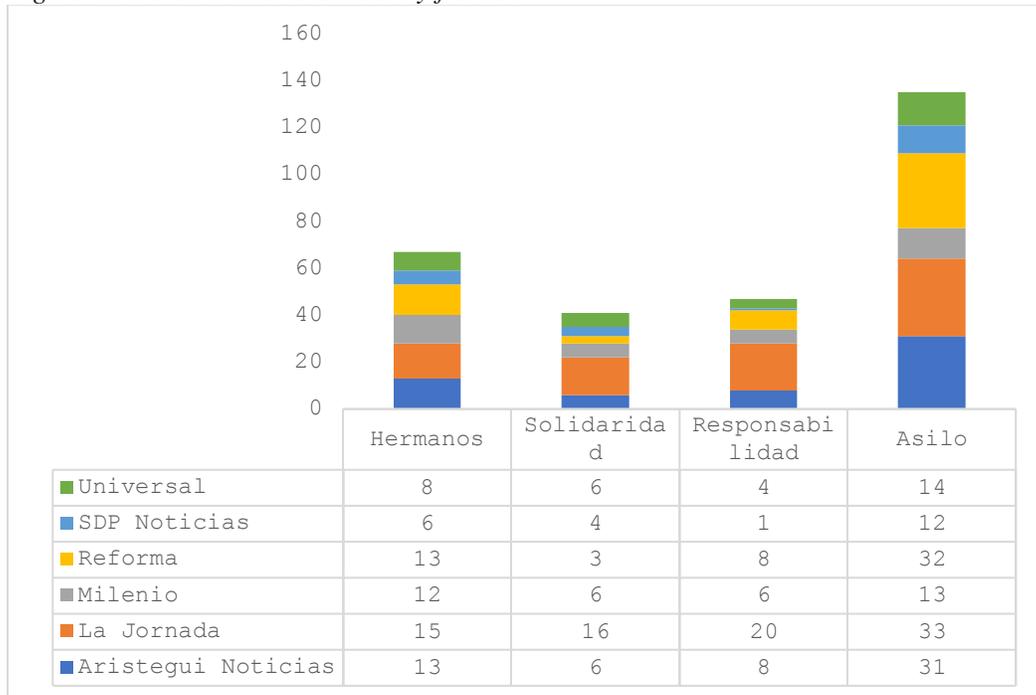
Linked to this transitionality finding is the existence of words and terms closely related to the Solidarity frame. In this case, words such as "Solidaridad" (Solidarity), "Hermanos" (Brothers), "Responsibility" (Responsabilidad) are proxies for this narrative of Solidarity. However, these three terms have a relatively low presence in the entire Mexican corpus analyzed in this case. For instance, *Brothers* has 67 occurrences, *Responsibility* has 47, and *Solidarity* 41. These concepts appear commonly related to sources such as priests, Catholic church members, or activists who demand action to help Central Americans:

Jesuits call for respecting human rights of Central America caravan.

Also, they ask Mexicans to “open our hearts to the solidarity with our migrant brothers as best as we can. Understanding the violence and poverty they are escaping from in their countries” (*Aristegui Noticias, Mexico 10/19/2018*).

Figure 3 shows the presence of these words (Brothers, Responsibility, Solidarity) in comparison with the term "Asilo" ("Asylum"). In the next section, I will expand on the sources and the importance of activists and members of a church in the overall coverage, which relates to the presence of humanitarian approaches to immigration, including a call for solidarity.

Figure 3. Words linked to Solidarity frame¹³²



Sources and numerical data

The content analysis of the news on immigration in Mexico also includes the sources used in the news stories. This section's objective is to explore the voices that are commonly utilized by the reporting across traditional and non-traditional news media in this case study.

The presence of governmental and official voices is central in the coverage of immigration in Mexico. Of the total news articles, 32% use federal or local political authorities as the first source (i.e., the president, ministers, deputies, heads of public divisions), which is three times larger than the second category (immigrants with 9%). The prevalence of this type of source is aligned with a more “*oficialista*” coverage. This

¹³² For consistency, here are the words present in one article. Brother + Solidaridad + Responsabilidad = 2, Brother + Solidaridad = 14, Hermanos + Responsabilidad = 6. Again, the objective of this method is to detect the single presence of words but overlapping occurs. The same words and “Asilo”, the overlapping ranges from 6-8 articles.

means there is a dependence on official communication with few counter-frames offered in the news articles. This finding can be linked to the high presence of “*comunicados*” or press releases in the news corpus. One hundred twenty-three stories (around 15%) reproduce “*comunicados*”¹³³ in their reporting without many added elements or voices. However, this characteristic in the coverage is more prevalent in digital-only newspapers (i.e., *Aristegui Noticias*).

After governmental sources, the second most common source cited or used in the news coverage are Central American immigrants. This means 9% of the articles have an immigrant as the first “voice” in the story. Immigrants’ voices are generally utilized to illustrate the pain they experienced and to provide the “human case” to narrate violations of human rights. The only exception is Central Americans who belong to organizations that are seeking justice for missing migrants (i.e., “*Caravana de Madres*”).

The category “None” comes in third place, with 8%, meaning news writing in which no explicit or identifiable sources are stated, and the stories appear to be based on the reporter's account of the events.

Sharing the fourth and fifth place are members of the church (Catholic in the case of Mexico) and activists. Both categories have a 7% incidence in the sample. Catholic priests, NGOs leaders, and immigrant activists linked to grassroots organizations are included in these categories. Commonly these voices, in the news stories, advocate for better treatment of immigrants in general, and they appear as strong referents to denounce abuses against Central Americans. Moreover, particular names are repeated throughout the coverage, and they emerge as influential pro-immigrant voices. For example, the

¹³³ This is based on the explicit use of the word “*comunicado*” in the news article’s body.

Catholic priest Alejandro Solalinde is used in 39 news articles as a human rights advocate. Therefore, members of churches and activists play a critical role in the coverage and in transmitting the voice of immigrants when they are not present as sources. Thus, the view of activists and church members contributes to the Victims and Solidarity frames in the coverage, because they highlight the tragedy of Central Americans and promote humanitarian actions.

The sixth most common source in the coverage is “members of a foreign governments”. This category includes representatives from Central American countries, but also U.S officials, including Barack Obama and Donald Trump¹³⁴. Table 6 provides the percentage of sources in each newspaper and the total each category represents in the total sample. Perhaps noteworthy in the case of Mexico is that all categories are represented, although some have minimal incidence.

Table 6. First sources cited or used in the news¹³⁵

Source	Jornada	Milenio	Reforma	El Universal	Arist.	SDP	Total	% total news (N= 856)
Government (National and State authorities)	18%	17%	18%	15%	21%	11%	273	32%
Immigrant, refugee, migrant	22%	11%	32%	11%	10%	15%	73	9%
None	13%	18%	25%	14%	20%	10%	71	8%
Member of Church/Religion	31%	16%	15%	13%	15%	10%	61	7%
Activists/Artist/Athlete	22%	7%	34%	19%	15%	3%	59	7%
Member of a foreign government	20%	10%	27%	20%	12%	10%	49	6%
Local elected authority (e.g., mayor- MP)	10%	17%	15%	29%	5%	24%	41	5%

¹³⁴ In the case of Trump, 135 articles refer to him in their reporting, not necessary as a news source.

¹³⁵ This table shows the first source used in each newspaper as a percentage of the total news stories analyzed in Mexico. Therefore, the percentages in each cell do not represent the presence of first sources in relation to the specific number of stories per outlet. In other words, with these percentages, we can only say, for example, that from the 273 stories using a Government source (as first), 21% of these stories are from Aristegui Noticias (Arist.).

International/regional political organization (ONU-ACHNUR, CIDH-OEA)	30%	8%	20%	10%	25%	8%	40	5%
Journalist or columnist	39%	31%	6%	3%	17%	6%	36	4%
National or Local Non-governmental Organization, NGO	15%	9%	24%	26%	15%	12%	34	4%
Other	9%	3%	12%	12%	29%	35%	34	4%
International Non-governmental Organization, NGO (e.g., Human Rights Watch)	30%	0%	15%	5%	45%	5%	20	2%
Police (a member of a law enforcement authority)/ Firefighters	15%	20%	10%	20%	15%	20%	20	2%
Academic/Researchers/Experts	21%	11%	37%	11%	21%	0%	19	2%
A family member or friend of immigrant, refugee, migrant	44%	22%	11%	22%	0%	0%	9	1%
Local citizen/neighbor	0%	50%	17%	0%	17%	17%	6	1%
Law/Judiciary (e.g., judges)	33%	0%	33%	17%	17%	0%	6	1%
Business/Private Sector (e.g., business owners)	20%	40%	20%	20%	0%	0%	5	1%

In general, across traditional and digital-only news outlets, the larger percentage of the news articles relied on governmental officials as the first source to report the news. Also, there is a strong presence of verbatim press releases (“*comunicados*”) from public officials and documents gathered at press conferences. For example, as journalists interviewed for this case study explained, the current administration of Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador has established a morning press conference (la mañanera¹³⁶) that sets the daily agenda for most news outlets in the country. The pervasive official perspective of the news prevents the development of counter-frames challenging the governmental discourse. Besides, the presence of immigrants, activists, and members of the Catholic church follows the same pattern of denouncing the abuses against Central Americans, which contributes to the victim framing in the news coverage. An exception to this is

¹³⁶ [La Mañanera](#)

when activists and priests call for action to help and show solidarity toward the newcomers.

Although the analysis of sources considered the headline, lede, and the first paragraphs of each news article, the sources captured after the first one follows a similar pattern as the one reported above: The presence of government, immigrants, and activists is still prevalent in the aggregated news stories.

The last part of the content analysis includes a look into numerical and statistical data in each news story. The presence and emphasis on using numbers and statistics to report news events are commonly linked to what the literature calls thematic frames. This is an approach that bases the storytelling on “the big picture,” expressed as numbers and figures rather than personal accounts. The use of a human case or individual stories is closely related to more episodic frames. This is “putting a face” to the events, which generally triggers an emotional reaction in the reader. In the case of Mexico, the presence of statistical trends in the headlines is relatively low: 82% of the news stories do not report any numerical data. Moreover, 5% of the coverage uses statistics about Detention/Apprehension and Rescue of Immigrants.

The absence of statistical figures correlates with the substantial presence of the *Victim -Humanitarian/ Human Rights* frame in Mexico. Commonly, this victim frame would be based on a human case approach and not based on numerical trends. Nevertheless, in Mexico, some statistical trends are present, such as Detentions/Apprehensions and Rescue of Immigrants. Still, they are also utilized in the coverage to depict immigrants as victims, which contributes to the overall prevalence of the *Victim – Humanitarian/Human Rights* frame in the sample.

Similar to the manual coding process of the sources, the numerical data analysis is limited to the headline, lede, and first paragraphs (defined as the 200 words after the lede). Nonetheless, when examining the presence of numerical data after the headline, the “None” category still is very predominant, but in second place appears Demographics numbers¹³⁷. This account of demographic changes is determined mostly by the large Migrant Caravan that transformed the social demographics, although temporarily, of many regions receiving a large number of migrants at once. In third place, the Asylum and Refugee requests emerge, which is associated with the idea of Transitionality and Mexico becoming a refugee-receiving country. Although these are numbers that are not in the headlines, they do indicate the predominant topics covered in the news media in Mexico using numerical data, but not necessary contributing to a large presence of a more thematic approach. Table 7 has details about the numerical data use in the headlines of each news outlet in Mexico during the period 2014-2018.

Table 7. Presence of numerical or statistical information in the headline¹³⁸

	Jornada	Milenio	Reforma	El Universal	Aristegui Noticias	SDP	Total	% of total news (N=856)
None	21%	13%	23%	15%	17%	10%	702	82%
Detentions/ apprehensions	17%	24%	17%	19%	7%	17%	42	5%
Rescue of immigrants	7%	26%	10%	12%	21%	24%	42	5%
Demographic / Health / Educational	17%	17%	14%	21%	21%	10%	29	3%
Asylum requests/refugee requests	26%	0%	5%	0%	58%	11%	19	2%

¹³⁷ In the coding, I use “Demographic” to account for people in shelters and other short-term policies, particularly during the movement of the caravans of migrants.

¹³⁸ The percentages in each cell are the presence of numbers and statistics in each newspaper as percentages the total number of stories in Mexico. The objective is to use this information for the aggregate presence of numerical figures in the coverage. It is not about the presence of statistical figures as a percentage in each specific news media' totals. In other words, for example, based on Table 7, out of the 42 news articles using Deportations/Apprehensions statistics, we can say that 24% comes from Milenio.

Crimes against immigrants/Death	17%	8%	17%	25%	8%	25%	12	1%
Deportations or returns	17%	33%	17%	0%	17%	17%	6	1%
Economic/labor or jobs figure	0%	0%	0%	0%	50%	50%	2	0%
Crimes by immigrants	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1	0%
Visa requests	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1	0%

In conclusion, the content analysis of the aggregated news stories about immigrants and immigration in Mexico during 2014-2018 offers some clear patterns. First, the most frequent news frame is the *Victim – Humanitarian/ Human rights* and more than a third of the news articles ranked this frame in first place. Across all six newspapers (traditional and non-traditional) analyzed, the pattern is similar regarding the presence of this specific category. This frame stresses the suffering of Central Americans and the abuses they endure both on their way to Mexico or once they are in transit to the United States. Moreover, the dominance of governmental voices contributes to this victim frame. Usually, official communications are accounts of either rescue or detentions of immigrants, which are also depicting Central Americans as victims rather than a threat to the country's security. The unaccompanied minors' phenomenon and the 2018 Caravan of immigrants are also described as news stories where immigrants are victims of the political and economic situation in the Northern Triangle (sixth most frequent frame). The salience of these two events -- unaccompanied children and the migrant caravans -- are linked to these two victim frames: *Victim - Humanitarian and Political/Economic* in the news sample.

Additionally, the lack of numerical data in the headlines could also be connected to a reporting based on human stories and cases, where dramatic details and events are more prevalent than general statistical trends about immigration in the country.

The second pattern from the content analysis is the presence of political frames such as *Policy Solutions and Debate* (second most common) and *International Cooperation and Relations* (fourth most frequent). Usually, these frames include debate and discussion between political actors, with little presence of immigrant voices or perspectives. The central role of government sources to set the news agenda largely contributes to the incidence of these political frames. Moreover, international actors and cooperation initiatives are also reflected in these framing categories.

Additionally, two other frames emerged as relevant in the coverage: *Transitionality* and *Solidarity*. The realization that Mexico has become a refugee-receiving country appears in the news media reporting, mostly through the voice of political actors and civil society members, such as activists, grassroots leaders, and representatives of the Catholic church. These same voices also drive the solidarity frame because they demand assistance and help for Central American migrants.

Furthermore, the preferred label to describe the influx in the case of Mexico is migrants and undocumented. The illegality of Central Americans is not a feature that is salient in the stories, while this description is frequently found in the coverage of immigration in developed countries.

The next section expands on the conversations with journalists from Mexico that cover immigration and work for the news outlets examined for this case. The goal is to provide a potential relationship between the news coverage and the news production within the newsrooms.

Journalists' self-reflection on immigration coverage

This section of the chapter analyzes seven semi-structured interviews with journalists in Mexico and establishes relationships with the content analysis developed above. By triangulating the content analysis with the interviews, in the case of Mexico, I provide the information needed to answer the overall questions of how news media in Latin America portrays intraregional immigration and how journalists reflect and describe their newsmaking practices in covering this migration phenomenon.

The reporters interviewed are from the newspapers included in the content analysis, except for SDP¹³⁹. These interviews explore two main general topics: 1) The journalistic practices, routines, and decisions they make in the coverage of this issue in their newspapers; 2) The perception journalists have about the coverage of immigration in the country and the position they take to observe the phenomenon. The limited number of interviews might not allow for reaching a high level of "saturation", but the value of the first-hand accounts presented here is dual: 1) The interviews were focused on journalists working for the specific newspapers analyzed for this case study (El Universal, La Jornada, Reforma, Milenio, and Aristegui Noticias); 2) Journalists interviewed have experience in the issue of immigration in Mexico.

In the case of Mexico, there are four males interviewed between 25-50 years old and three females between 32-37. While their years of experience in journalism range widely from 3 to 31 years, the average is 16 years. The results of these conversations are reported based on the emerging themes after a close analysis of each of them and in

¹³⁹ I was not able to access to reporters in this newsroom.

relationship with each other. Also, there are direct quotes from the interviews to exemplify the common themes.

1) Journalistic practices, routines and decisions.

a. Specialization and learning process.

Somewhat differently from the cases of Chile and Colombia, immigration coverage in Mexico is not new. Among the reporters interviewed, there is a certain level of acknowledgment that immigration has always been an essential topic for Mexico. Still, the coverage is always event-driven, and it has never been a permanent core topic in the news media agenda. The reporters in Mexico explained that most newsrooms do not have a specific person assigned to the immigration beat, and immigration can be covered by different journalists depending on where the news event generates. For instance, six of the seven journalists in this case study work on the Human Rights beat, which encompasses immigration-related issues. However, they explained that Police or Judicial reporters could also cover immigration. The other journalists interviewed has an editorial role, and his duties are broad. This lack of specialization about covering immigration across the newsroom creates variance on the coverage in different sections of the newspapers. Additionally, reporters recognized they are always against the clock and sometimes the intense workload does not allow for any kind of specialization and training.

“The tone [of the coverage of immigration] changes depending on the section of the paper. In each section reporters assumed the ‘bad habits’ of the sources. Those covering the Army, for example, have a more punitive perspective of immigration. That translates into a harder take of the news article they write. I

cover Human Rights, so I try to be more sensitive” (Journalist, male, traditional media).

“A lot of times I see journalists publishing information or data without knowing the problem. I see the lack of specialization but also the excess of work that pushes for that” (Journalist, male, traditional media).

The agreement across the journalists interviewed is that the learning process is a personal responsibility, more than established guidance or formal education about immigration news reporting. They saw problems generated when others in the newsroom do not have the same preparation. For instance, reporters from traditional newspapers explained that young journalists working in the digital team lack experience and sensitivity, which negatively affects their work. At least those working in traditional newspapers see as a problem, for example, news articles based on Twitter or social media, because of the disconnect between the reality on the streets versus the reality on the Internet.

“There is a lack of specialization in newsrooms. I’ve fought many times because I am covering something on the street, working with a source and [the digital team] published something that ruins my work on the streets. They even used my name on the bylines” (Journalist, female, traditional media)

The journalists in this sample have experience covering human rights topics, which makes them more sensitive to immigration issues. They argued that many of the abuses they report happening to Mexicans are replicated in the case of Central Americans. According to the interviews, the proximity to the pain makes the line between activism and journalism thinner. However, reporters confessed that the same specialization in covering other issues related to human rights makes them even more prepared to maintain a "journalistic rigor." They defined this rigor as the practice to double-check information and double-check sources, but also keep certain emotional

distance from the topics, although sometimes it is impossible to be completely detached from emotional reactions that potentially permeated the coverage.

“Everything I cover is very hard and immigrants experience terrible things [...] I interviewed a man [my same age] who was wrongly accused of being the leader of a crime organization. He had a lot of torture marks, one week after the interview he got murdered. That was very hard for me” (Journalist, male, traditional media)

In general, the journalists agreed that immigration is something that Mexico has experienced as a social phenomenon, but mostly in terms of Mexicans moving into the United States. The new influx of Central Americans poses a new challenge for newsrooms because they have to adjust to the idea of being a destination country for immigrants. Reporters interviewed explained that the experience on the human rights beat provides specific sensitivity to cover immigration, but it is not enough because the particular nature of the phenomenon demands a different newsroom culture that can create a homogenous sensitivity across all the newspaper sections.

b. Independence and agenda

Independence

Journalists reported having a high level of independence to conduct their work within their newsrooms. They have the autonomy to choose topics, angles, and emphasis on the stories. However, reporters in one of the newspapers (La Jornada¹⁴⁰), explained that sometimes they could not use specific sources that hold very different views or have been involved in conflicts with the paper in the past (i.e., politicians). The two reporters

¹⁴⁰ Based on the interviews La Jornada is perceived as a left-leaning newspaper.

interviewed from La Jornada also explained that this has not represented a large barrier to have diverse perspectives on the reporting, and only has happened in limited cases.

Therefore, it is not a generalizable restriction.

Another place where reporters confessed independence is limited within the newsroom is the decision about the headlines. It is a constant “*tira y afloja*” (tug-of-war) between reporters and editors, most notoriously in traditional newspapers. Journalists see as a problem that editors are not close enough to the topic, which might negatively affect the headlines they decide to publish.

“Many times editors have a particular idea about the topic, but it does not relate with my intention or the idea I wanted to communicate [...] I’ve tried to use inclusive language, but there are editors with old habits that changed words and certain concepts” (Journalist, female, traditional media)

“For example, my editor and co-editor have always worked on the political beat. They are removed from the human rights perspective... that can be a factor that made them biased, and they could use concepts or words that are incorrect. A year ago, we interviewed migrants in Mexico City, and they asked us to blur their faces [they were escaping the Maras]. Video editors did not edit the faces. I think it is also because of a heavy workload. It was an honest mistake. But still, the faces of the immigrants were exposed. These details speak about the level of sensitivity. (Journalist, male, traditional media)

One dimension of the independence of journalists is what happens inside the newsrooms, but in the case of Mexico, a more crucial dynamic is the reality outside the newsroom, because of organized crime and the inherent risks of being a reporter in this country. For example, one of the journalists interviewed for this project is under a death threat for exposing a drug-related issue in Mexico City. He mentioned that two colleagues had been murdered, and his editor always reminds him, “*I want journalists, not heroes.*”

Reporters recognized that immigration and organized crime are connected because, in many places, drug cartels use immigrants as a workforce, or kidnap them to ask for money. Therefore, digging into stories of immigrants can unveil situations involving criminal organizations. However, there was a high level of agreement that working on immigration topics in Mexico City is not dangerous compared to border regions where organized crime is more present.

“If I were to do a story of the Central Americans in transit, for example, accompanying them from the southern Mexican border to the US border, [we did it during La Bestia]. The organized crime becomes the core danger because they are infiltrated in different branches of the institutions, the police. If the group of immigrants were to get detained at a police checkpoint or station, you would not know if they are police members or members of the organized crime” (Journalist/editor, male, traditional newspaper).

“[You can touch the sensitive fiber of the cartels by exposing the violence on migratory routes] When I cover immigration in the field, I have to check how security is in that place. If I don’t know, I ask if it is safe. To cover immigration, you have to be vigilant. Migrants are the merchandise for organized crime, and with your reporting, you are putting the spotlight on these people. [...] I think we need a collaborative approach to this type of coverage. By collaborating with colleagues, we can report on these issues that we somehow self-censor to avoid violence and dangers” (Journalists, female, non-traditional media).

Journalists agreed that organized crime and corruption are challenges to report immigration stories outside the capital city. Moreover, limited newspaper budgets also make it very difficult to send teams to do in-depth reporting in places with a significant presence of immigrants, such as border regions. For the reporters, these two issues restrict the type of coverage of Central Americans, and organized crime especially creates a certain degree of self-censorship on events happening outside Mexico City. However, they see that migrant Caravans provided a setting in which safer reporting could be done. Also, the reporters expressed the importance of collaborative work with other journalists

and reporters when covering immigration. Also, they agreed that working more closely with fixers and institutions in the “hot spots” of organized crime and immigration provides a level of protected access that is crucial to cover issues beyond the press releases and public announcement spin by the central government.

Another aspect that plays a role in journalistic independence is governmental advertising. Reporters explained that newspapers depend on many sources of revenue. Although private advertising money is central to the operation of their business, public money in the form of governmental advertising is a significant income. This creates an explicit tension between journalists and the leadership of the newspapers. Reporters recognized that they try to cover any topic without censorship or direct pressure from sources. Still, sometimes the government has the power to influence individual editorial decisions beyond the control of the reporters based on the money they allocate to newspapers.

“If you write something about Human Rights criticizing the government, you have to be ready because they will deny everything and refute your information. There are very few newspapers that can afford that political cost but also the risk that comes with the price of cutting governmental advertising money from their revenues. There is a strong dependency on public money of news media, it is sad, but it is the true” (Journalist, female, traditional media)

“My newspaper signed an advertising contract with the Mexican National Migration Institute [governmental agency]. This contract was right around the time I had access to exclusive pictures of the conditions inside a migration station [under their jurisdiction] from an anonymous source. The newspaper administration ordered not to publish the pictures if we could not publicly attribute or publish the source. Because of the advertising money already secured, the newspaper did not want to jeopardize this contract with the National Migration Institute.” (Journalist, male, traditional media)

Agenda

Reporters agreed that immigration, like many other topics in the news cycle, depends heavily on the presidential agenda. As one of the journalists explained, *"Immigration is only relevant when the presidents talk about it [...] We do not have our own agenda"* (journalist, female, traditional media)." Although they recognized that immigration "news" happens every day, it is difficult to find coverage every day about it in their newspapers. For example, they clarified that during 2014 and before, Central American immigration news was mainly covered in terms of the train ("La Bestia") that migrants would use to cross the country to reach the United States' southern border. According to the journalists, most of the stories would show the accidents that Central Americans suffered during the trip and the many murders committed by crime gangs.

Likewise, they also confessed that news media is too worried covering what the president has to say, rather than having an alternative agenda or even a different twist on the stories. While this happened during Enrique Peña Nieto's presidency (2012-2018), it is even more pervasive under the current president, Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, because he holds a daily morning press conference, and news coverage is solely based on the topics he deems relevant. Therefore, if immigration is not among these issues, it will not be covered at all.

"We lived with immigration events daily. Perhaps, there could be this perception that immigration news doesn't make the cover very often. If it is not a current newsworthy event, it will not go on the cover. It has to be a very newsworthy event to make the cover and those events are generally political or criminal related such as the case in Tamaulipas" (Journalist/editor, male, traditional newspaper)

"For example, two weeks ago, I went to McAllen, Texas, there is one organization building its own border wall. They have already built seven miles. They are buying land for this purpose. I proposed the idea to my editor, and it

was approved, so I went. When I came back, I said, OK, let's publish it, but they kept it unpublished for several days. After they posted online with a lot of editing. That was very frustrating, and there you see a lack of initiative to set the agenda [on immigration]" (Journalists, female, traditional newspaper)

The power of the president to set the newspaper's agenda is reinforced by newsroom practices conditioned by limited budgets and intense work pressure on the reporters. For example, using press releases ("*comunicados*") as part of an original news report is a common practice across all newspapers analyzed here (most notoriously in digital-only outlets). The fast pace to fill the news and the need to write multiple stories in one day creates an ideal place for the president to set the agenda with very little opposition.

"There are times in which reporters, in a hurry for all the articles they need to write, or just to do their job fast, copy and paste the information released by the government and they publish how the authorities refer to migrants" (Journalist, male, traditional media).

In addition to the uses of "*comunicados*," journalists across traditional and non-traditional outlets agreed that there is a lack of openness and transparency from the authorities regarding sensitive information on immigration topics, such as kidnapping or killing of Central Americans that involve Mexican public institutions.

"The cynicism of public officials is very frustrating... You can publish violations of human rights from the Guardia Nacional with a video showing it. But at the press conference, the government would say. 'This is a lie'" (Journalist, male, traditional media).

"In the AGUJA [a governmental] migration station, a minor died, and the circumstances surrounding this death were never clear. We have asked to enter the stations, but they are closed, and these are supposed to be shelters for migrants, but the governmental ones are closed. Only those run by NGOs are open" (Journalist, male, traditional media).

As the reporters called it, the "government cynicism," plus the lack of access to credible information from the institutions and authorities, harms the journalistic work covering Central American migrants. Many times, reporters have decided not to follow up immigration news because of their inability to confirm information or access new data to sustain a novel angle or perspective on a particular story. This impacts not only the coverage's quality but also the possibility to offer a counter-narrative to the presidential agenda. Moreover, occasionally they declared that it is hard even to find sources who can contradict the official discourse. Thus, the columnists' role in each newspaper might be particularly relevant in the case of Mexico, because they can provide alternative points of view (from the government) using the newspaper platforms to reach a particular audience.

Nonetheless, the recent developments of unaccompanied minors and the migrant caravans from Central America created a spotlight on immigration that journalists are trying to exploit to create more regular coverage. The fact that these two events (unaccompanied children and the caravans) were highly visible in the capital city contributes to the visibility of immigration in the country as a crucial topic for public debate. However, the reporters admitted that limited resources, and the explicit and implicit restrictions created by the authorities, make it very difficult to pushing for more migration stories.

c. Decision making and responsibility

For all journalists interviewed, a critical aspect of the decision-making process to cover immigration is how to offer a new perspective about Central Americans to their

audiences. Although finding a new “twist” or a “different angle” to events is something journalists seek for all topics, migration represents a particular challenge. As they acknowledged, immigration always embodies the same kind of tragedy, which quickly fatigues people. Therefore, they need to be even more attentive than with other issues they report. Besides dealing with the trauma and pain of immigrants, they also need to consider the emotions that immigration triggers in people. They admitted an emerging xenophobia among Mexicans, which is something that they do not need to deal with in other topics they cover. Thus, their decision-making criteria are based on creating a positive sensitivity towards immigration, so people can start seeing the phenomenon under a broader perspective, and not just as victims or threat.

“I tried to make people more sensitive to the issue. If my mom changes a little bit her negative perception that is a win. I always try to create a positive effect and transmit the idea that migrating is a human right [...] We need to put ourselves in the migrant’s shoes (Journalists, female, traditional media).

“I approach the topic with sensibility. For example, I don’t say in my article Central American migrants, because that is already a charged idea or concept. I try to say, “foreigners.” In Mexico, when you talk about foreigner, people think about the Europeans vacationing here. At least at the beginning of the article, the reader doesn’t read Central American migrant [...] We have a great responsibility” (Journalist, male, traditional media)

To create a specific sensitivity is an essential responsibility that journalists assume in the coverage of immigration. Besides this sensitivity, they agreed they have a duty to creating a new consciousness about the causes of Central American migration. Journalists firmly believed that transmitting a strong message that migrants from the Northern Triangle are in Mexico out of necessity could influence the way people perceived the phenomenon. They agreed that more work needs to be done on permeating the coverage with more stories about the real motives behind the migratory movement.

“We tell stories about [immigrants] passing through Mexico, how fragile and vulnerable they are, that they don’t have food or even silly things such as a newborn from Central American parents with a funny name. We don’t go to the places where immigration starts [...] We don’t seek out the deep stories about the origins of immigration or propose alternatives about what the communities in Mexico are doing with immigration” (Journalists, female, traditional media).

“I don’t think the story of a migrant is more terrible than the story of a Mexican victim of crime. With the immigrants, you have to be more careful because they are escaping a situation of risk, fleeing to save their lives.” (Journalist, male, traditional media).

Reporters understand that portraying immigrants under a different angle also means giving them more and different voices in the reporting -- not only depicting migrants as victims but showing instead that they have *agency* and strong reasons to migrate. However, reporters face the challenge that Central Americans can be reluctant to talk to the press. Journalists explained that although reporters have relatively easy access to their testimonies, sometimes the migrants prefer not to speak for fear of retaliation in their home country (if they are deported). Thus, the challenge and responsibility for journalists are even more complex, because they need to be extremely sensitive to the source and at the same time try to portray them in a light that is different from the victim approach, with the hope that these angles will change how the Mexican public perceived Central American migration.

“[We have] a huge responsibility. People are paying attention to the stories you write—these stories you don’t have to put a label. No victimization. I don’t want to revictimize them because the migrants are already vulnerable. Imagine revictimize them even more. I am cautious of how I am going to expose them without hurting them [...] I am working on the successful cases to avoid discrimination toward migrants. To avoid people saying there are migrants taking our jobs. I am trying to portray them as people that want to live and contribute to Mexico” (Journalists, female, non-traditional media)

2.) Positionality in society

a. Perception of immigration in the country.

Reporters are informed citizens. They are sources of information, but they also absorb events in their environment with a specific sensitivity that helps them to find stories. However, most of the time, their own perceptions of any social phenomenon are absent (at least explicitly) in their news reporting. The objective of this section is to listen to the informed opinions of reporters in Mexico about how they perceived the Central American migration. By providing this context, the idea is to take their viewpoints and positionality from which they report and write about immigration.

All but one journalist said they perceive negative feelings in the Mexican population against Central Americans. One of the reporters said, *“A Mexican can be the same day discriminated against and discriminate against Central American migrants.”* Journalists see this as a sharp contradiction. The perception of Mexicans as welcoming and “open arms” with foreigners has shifted. Even more, as the interviewees explained, the country has a past of receiving political refugees, but the newest influx of Central Americans is changing this perception of a welcoming nation. According to them, the negative feelings present in the southern and northern border regions, where the presence of Central Americans is most substantial, also replicates in the capital city.

“It is a very complex phenomenon, a lot of stereotypes, political uses. It is hard to make people understand that it is a human right. Mexico is a society that has always received foreigners with open arms, but with immigration, it is different, and there is this idea that it is harmful to the community.” (Journalist, male, traditional media)

Additionally, journalists recognized a “Trump” and “AMLO” (Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador) effect on how the conversation about immigration has developed in the country. Already during the Trump campaign in the United States (2016), the salience of immigration-related topics increased in Mexico. Though news media in the country focused on Trump’s references to Mexican migration, the journalists also perceived that during that time, the public became more attentive to the Central American movement. News media also echoes the effects of the Mexican *Programa Frontera Sur* established in 2014 as a containment policy at the southern Mexican border.

“Treatment of immigrants in Mexico, worse than in other places. The pressure of the United States on Mexico for controlling the migratory influx at its the southern border is working” (Aristegui Noticias, Mexico 06/16/2016)

The journalists made it clear that Mexico has already built an invisible wall, which was paid by Mexico at its the southern border by enacting policies such as *Frontera Sur*. They explained that Mexico is doing the “dirty work” of the United States, mainly due to economic pressures. Although AMLO came into office with an “open arms” discourse about immigration in late 2018, his policies ended up aligning with more securitizing of the border, the reporters argued, driven by the conditions imposed by the United States in the negotiation of tariffs (under the United State-Mexico-Canada Agreement that replaces NAFTA):

“We have become what the United States does to Mexicans. We switched from an open-door discourse to the securitization of the border” (Journalists, female, traditional newspaper)

“This is the paradox of doing what you also criticize. Mexico is doing in the South what we criticize the United States in the North” (Journalist, male, traditional media)

From the news media perspective, journalists agreed that Central American migration in Mexico is a humanitarian crisis. The massive number of people crossing the border and the systematic violation of human rights suffered in Mexico deserve no other label than a “humanitarian crisis.” However, they said Mexican authorities still do not assume this crisis narrative. Furthermore, they explained that the crisis in Central America is more prominent and more profound than any message that Mexico and the United States can craft to persuade migrants to stop moving north. Journalists explained that this lack of understanding from the government about the scope of the immigration phenomenon and the implications for the future of Mexico is something that the public is not receiving as a message from the government or the news media.

b. Role of news media

The seven reporters interviewed for this case study agreed that, in general, news media in Mexico (broadcasting, television, radio) exploits a survival narrative – a unidimensional representation of Central Americans emphasizing the pain they endure. Journalists argued that even though this representation approach is not necessarily harmful, there is a lost opportunity in the media coverage because news reporting is superficial. The idea of Central Americans as “survivors” can provide space for exploring the “push factors,” such as the violence in Central America or other motives (i.e., family reunification) to migrate. However, according to the journalists, news media only scratches the surface of this type of story, without digging deep into the complexities of these migratory movements. Moreover, they perceived that news media “swallows” the government euphemisms about the arrest (aseguramiento) and deportations (personas

devueltas), which does not contribute to the development of different frames or narratives in the news texts.

"I assume responsibility. News media are insensitive with the topic. Only reporters that cover it more directly are more sensible. In newsrooms or news media directors, they do not necessarily understand. It is effortless to take the official discourse to cover the issue, especially for news outlets without specialized reporters. The official discourse is about containment, and that permeates to the people" (Journalist, male, traditional media)

Reporters also perceived a difference between broadcasting and the press. They explained that television coverage tends to make generalizations, and it has a “good versus bad migrants” approach. Also, they observed xenophobia in social media or local news outlets in places with a large presence of Central Americans. However, the agreement is that in national and traditional newspapers, immigration is not covered negatively or with explicit xenophobia. Further, they explained that the perceived political leaning of each newspaper does not lead to a biased reporting on this issue, so a news outlet regarded as right-leaning and a left-leaning newspaper would not have a significant variance in the coverage. The journalists recognized that columnists and the paper's section might account for particular biases in the storytelling. Still, in general, they perceived a fairly homogenous reporting, particularly in newspapers with an established human right beat.

"I don't perceive national media writing stories to stereotype migrants, at least on purpose or intentionally. Newspapers [with different perceived political views] write articles with a human rights angle, commonly denouncing violence against immigrants. There is not a political difference that I perceived" (Journalist, male, traditional media)

Furthermore, reporters appeared very collegial and marked a clear distinction between the work they and their colleagues do day after day on the streets and the

political leaning of the newspapers. They argued that there is no difference in the journalistic rigor they all used to conduct their work and attribute the political opinion that the public has of newspapers to the media owners. This collegial perception is shared mostly about the work of the press (traditional and digital-only).

Interviews: main takeaways

Overall, journalists expressed a high level of autonomy within their newsrooms regarding immigration reporting. The negotiation about the headlines is perhaps the only limitation to their independence. However, outside the newsrooms, several restrictions prevent journalists from reporting on immigration with more flexibility and in a fully independent way. Mexico is one of the most dangerous places to practice journalism. Migration is generally linked to organized crime; therefore, digging into topics about migrants could lead to getting involved in sensitive and dangerous situations. All the journalists interviewed (except one) are based in Mexico City, and they recognized that covering immigration in the city is safer than at the borders. However, limited resources and the risk of sending reporters from the capital to do more investigative pieces in the “hot spots” contribute to the minimal presence of this type of in-depth stories in the news media.

Additionally, the presidential voice and agenda permeate in a pervasive way the immigration coverage. Journalists recognized a lack of counter-discourse to broaden official communication. The significant presence of verbatim press releases (*comunicados*) makes the press a conduit to amplify the governmental voice. Although

journalists expressed the desire to propose alternatives, the pressure to publish, heavy workload, and lack of specialization about immigration provide a perfect combination for the use of press releases as a simple reporting strategy.

Moreover, official communication typically is about detention or rescue of immigrants from smugglers and policies to deal with the influx. None of these approaches provides contextual information regarding the motives and “push factors” for the movement. In particular, the accounts of apprehension and rescue of Central Americans is a fertile ground for the emergence of the prevalent victim narrative about the migrants.

Despite the limitations and constraints to cover migration, journalists make an effort to create sensitivity about the topic among their readers. By avoiding charged label such as illegals to describe the influx, they hope to reduce the negative perception Mexicans have started to develop against immigrants. They recognized that the concept of Central Americans had become a negatively charged idea among Mexicans and linked to disruptions to the public order.

However, by reporting the suffering and sacrifices Central Americans experienced, journalists play a social role in keeping authorities accountable for the violations of human rights happening in the country.

How does all this information come together?

The overarching research question for this study is how news media in Latin America portrays intraregional migration. The information in this chapter helps to answer

this question by first explaining the media frames found in the press coverage of immigration (i.e., Central Americans) in Mexico during 2014-2018. In the aggregate analysis, the *Victim – Humanitarian/Human Rights* is the most common frame, followed by the *Political Responsibility – Policy Solutions and Debates*.

Most of the news articles in the sample for Mexico are from 2018. This is predominantly driven by the first Migrant Caravan from Central America. The year 2014 also has more news stories than 2015, 2016, and 2017, which correlates with the first significant influx of family units and unaccompanied minors from the Northern Triangle nations.

The significant presence of the *Victim – Humanitarian and Human Rights* frame is linked to the official accounts of rescue and apprehensions of Central Americans transmitted by governmental agencies, such as the National Migration Institute. Even when detentions and arrests could be linked to threats frames, in most cases, news media still report them under a humanitarian perspective.

Moreover, the victim frames are also related to the survivor's narrative by which the press covers the Central Americans. By focusing on the suffering and violation of human rights, they portray the immigrants predominantly as victims during the crossing into the country and as "in-transit" foreigners who want to reach the United States.

The governmental voices dominate the coverage. For example, the presence of *Political Responsibility – Policy Solutions and Debates* is also connected to the overrepresentation of official views. This political frame is driven by the discussion between authorities on how to deal with the inflow and generally focuses on short-term policy solutions (i.e., temporary visas). Likewise, the presence of the *Political*

Responsibility – International Cooperation and Relations as one of the top six frames in the coverage is linked to the official sources and the regional coordination efforts to manage the influx.

Different constraints such as the dangers of covering border regions, underfunded news institutions, and the lack of training on immigration reporting contribute to the absence of different perspectives to the official agenda, and to the common practice of using press releases as a central piece of the news writing.

Furthermore, the scarcity of more original reporting could also be associated to the absence of benefit frames in the news coverage. Another element that could prevent the emergence of different frames, including benefits frames, is how the news media utilizes immigrants as sources. Although they are the second most common source after the governmental ones, their testimonies are only used to emphasize the pain and sacrifices they have made. This is also a lost opportunity for using the immigrants' voice to provide context about the "push factors" making them migrate from the Northern Triangle.

Additionally, two of the questions that this data helps to answer is the presence of the *Solidarity* frame in the case of Mexico and the importance in the coverage of the *Transitionality* frame (becoming a migrants-receiving nation). The *Transitionality* frame is ranked as the third most common one on the sample. In Mexico, this frame appears related to the idea of this country becoming a refugee-receiving nation and the emphasis news reporting puts on it. The strict immigration barriers imposed by the United States forced many Central Americans to ask for refugee and asylum in Mexico, a political shift

that the Mexican press focuses on. The significant presence of the word "asilo" (Asylum) in the corpus of news also signals the importance of this debate.

The *Solidarity* frame appears as the sixth most frequent frame. This category materializes when members of civil society call for help and assistance for the Central Americans. For instance, in the list of sources, activists, and members of the Catholic church are ranked fourth and fifth, which correlated with the presence of the *Solidarity* frame. Word indicators such as "*Brothers*" (Hermanos), "*Solidarity*" (Solidaridad), "*Responsibility*" (Responsabilidad) are also present in the corpus but not as frequently as other such as "*Asilo*". This could indicate that the *Solidarity* frame is mostly driven by the sources used in the news reporting. Also, the call for humanitarian actions during the 2018 Migrant Caravan from these types of sources could explain part of the presence of the *Solidarity* frame.

Furthermore, the way journalists in Mexico reflect on the work they do covering immigration has multiple dimensions. They perceived as a critical responsibility to make people more sensitive to the issue and to avoid contributing to the negative feelings they observed among the public. This aligns with one of the leading perceived roles of Mexican journalists found in the emerging literature cited at the beginning of the chapter, about "promoting tolerance and cultural diversity." The low presence of charged words in the headlines and to describe the issue suggests this responsibility and sensitivity permeates the news reporting. Also, the minimal incidence of threat frames contributes to the mission to avoid depicting immigration as a negative social phenomenon. However, the preferred way to talk about the movement of Central Americans is by the word "Migrants," without naming the newcomers by their nationalities or just as Central

Americans. This could contribute to creating a certain distance with the members of this group of newcomers. Many Mexicans and Central Americans from the Northern Triangle (especially Guatemalans) share cultural roots. Yet, this cultural proximity is not reflected in the coverage, and the use of the term "Migrants" may contribute to widening the distance between the public and the Central Americans. Although, at least one journalist said he tries to avoid the term Central Americans at the beginning of his news articles because the concept has an increasingly bad reputation among the readers.

Besides, reporters acknowledged the responsibility of offering more counter-narratives or frames different from the ones transmitted by the governmental officials. They see an opportunity to increase the coverage of the "true" motives Central Americans have for migrating. Through telling these types of stories, they hope to make their readers more sensitive to the migration phenomenon.

Finally, the most common frames and the reflection of journalists could explain the role of perceived political leaning on the immigration coverage. Perhaps, in other contexts of migration (i.e., Global North), the occurrence of threat frames is linked to right-leaning or conservative media outlets. In the case of the sample analysis for Mexico there is a low presence of threat frames. Also, journalists agreed that the perceived political leaning of newspapers has not notably affected the coverage of immigration. In other words, they see a consistent coverage of the immigration phenomenon mostly based on a victim perspective, regardless of the perceived political leaning of the newspapers. A possible explanation is that editorial decisions and a clear stance of the immigration phenomenon take time to fully crystallized, and in the case of Mexico, becoming a receiving nation of immigrants is a fairly new phenomenon.

CHAPTER 7

Comparative analysis and discussion

This dissertation examines the news media representation of intraregional migration and immigrants in Latin America during 2014-2018. To conduct this analysis, a sample of 1,690 stories was selected from a database built for this project (of more than 20,000 news articles) from sixteen different newspapers. Also 20 interviews with journalists from Chile, Colombia, and Mexico were used as research evidence. To the best of my knowledge, this is the first academic attempt to build theoretical and empirical ideas from this phenomenon in this region. Although immigration in the Global North is a hot academic research topic (e.g., Lecheler, Matthes, & Boomgaarden, 2019), the lack of scholarly projects looking at intraregional migration in the Global South make this dissertation timely and useful for comparative purposes. Additionally, the objective of this project is comparing three different realities in the Global South to explore the differences and similarities emerging within a region (i.e., Latin America), and contrasting this evidence with the research in the Global North. Moreover, the exploratory and inductive nature of this project is a necessary first step to build future work on an under-researched topic such as intraregional migration in the Global South.

Therefore, this chapter will answer the research questions using the evidence from the three countries combined. The sources of information that I will triangulate for this are: 1) the content analysis based on framing and textual analysis; 2) content analysis based on labels/sources/numeric data used in the coverage; 3) interviews with reporters and journalists writing about immigration in each country. After highlighting the central

findings, I will explain the main limitations of this research project and the lines for future research.

According to comparative mass communication scholars (Hallin & Mancini, 2004; Hanitzch et al., 2011; Thussu, 2009), research outside developed countries provides limits to generalizations of concepts and theories, but also re-emphasizes the critical role that local context has on evaluating any social phenomenon and the function of the press (Rojas & Valenzuela, 2019; Mancini & Hallin 2012). By conducting comparative research, we attempt to create new knowledge that enriches the possible generalizations about the social world.

In addition, in this project's specific case, the focus on immigration news in countries with little experience dealing with contemporary waves of the foreign-born helps to shed light on the adaptation process in newsrooms and journalists' perception of their role. Therefore, the method for this dissertation included content analysis of news – to examine the frames present in the coverage—as well as interviews with reporters, which provide the rich information on adaptation, practices and decision-making in writing about immigration.

Immigration is a complex topic with many layers. On the one hand, it represents dealing with an international phenomenon inside a nation's boundaries. This, in itself, poses a novel challenge for journalists because they have to adapt to the unfamiliar nature of the issue. On the other hand, immigration triggers emotional reactions on the public and can be used as a political tool. Newsrooms are not immune to the sensibilities and attitudes that immigration might sparks. Therefore, it is relevant to analyze the process reporters experience on adapting to covering migrants.

Furthermore, the immigration inflows analyzed here are mostly "next door" migrants. This project is not about foreign people coming from faraway lands. In Colombia and Mexico, their "neighbors" are the ones crossing and escaping unlivable conditions in their countries. Chile is a little different; the Venezuelans and Colombians are coming from the same region, with the same language and shared pre-colonial roots (Cerrutti & Parrado, 2015), but they are not necessarily a "next-door" neighbor. The case of Haitian migration in Chile is perhaps the best example here of an immigration phenomenon frequently found in the Global North: The cultural, racial, and linguistic difference between the newcomers and the receiving locals is wider than in the other cases examined here.

At the core of this dissertation is the conviction that professional journalism and news organizations still matter as an essential social institution for a democratic society (Schudson, 2018). It is through mass media that most people learn about immigration, therefore, the way news represents and portrays this phenomenon has a potential effect on how the public perceives it and policymakers act about it (Dell'Orto & Wetzstein, 2018). Equally important is to understand the role of journalists in this process —why news about immigration is reported as it is. By knowing the decision-making process and the constraints journalists face when writing about migration in specific contexts, the fundamental role of the press emerges as even more critical in places with developing democracies (Hughes, & Vorobyeva, 2019).

What are the media frames found in the news media coverage of intraregional immigration in Mexico, Colombia, and Chile from 2014-2018?

Before expanding on the media frames, I will address the distribution of news articles across the five years. In the sample analyzed, the most significant portion of news

stories is from 2018 (56% of the total sample of 1,690 news). This is because of specific events driving the news cycle, such as the Migrant Caravans in Mexico, but also it correlates with the increasing number of immigrants entering into Chile, and policies implemented in Colombia around that time. Although immigration patterns to these countries started to shift before 2018, the concentration of news articles in 2018 could also be interpreted as an indicator of the time it took for the topic to permeate deeply into the news agenda (or the political one).

An alternative explanation is that the news cycle was mostly dominated by news events that triggered the most coverage during 2018; however, other issues such as the 2014 waves of unaccompanied minors from Central America could have produced substantial coverage too, at least in Mexico. In the sample studied here, that did not happen. Sampling and retrieving article strategies could also influence this, but the method was consistent across newspapers and years. However, based on the findings from the framing analysis, the categories emerging in 2018 (e.g., *Victim – Humanitarian/ Human Rights*) are the same as those appearing in earlier years. In other words, news media uses the same frames to represent immigration regardless of the news events driving the agenda and the number of stories.

The relevance of the Victim – Humanitarian / Human Rights and the Political Responsibility -Policy Solutions and Debates frames

In the next paragraphs, I will explain the presence of the most relevant frames focusing on the two that account for the largest portion of the coverage: *Victim – Humanitarian/Human Rights* and *Political Responsibility – Policy Solutions and Debate*.

In Chile these two frames combined account for 44% of the coverage (news articles that ranked them first as a framing category); in Colombia they account for 40% and in Mexico for 58%. Because of the significance of these two categories, the comparative analysis that follows will focus on the specifics on these two frames, although there will also be an examination of the categories that appear in third and fourth place¹⁴¹ across the coverage to provide also a point of comparison of the differences in the coverage and not just the similarities.

In the three countries examined in this study, the *Victim-Humanitarian and Human Rights* frame dominates. Chile and Mexico ranked this category number one, and Colombia number two. Notably, Mexico is the country where this category emerges as the most frequent: 36% of the news articles coded in the case of Mexico have this frame as number one. In Colombia, this percentage is 19% and in Chile 31%.

The definition or discursive indicators (Benson, 2014) of this frame emphasize that immigrants are victims of diverse abuses, pain, and suffering in the receiving nations. The tragedy, sorrow, and frustration are critical elements of the news stories that focus mostly on immigrants (i.e., specific individuals) and not immigration as a concept or political matter. Therefore, the coverage is generally linked to "human cases." In Chile and Colombia, the news stories are centered on individual immigrants with first-person accounts of violations of human rights. In the case of Mexico, the examples also include the rescue of groups of immigrants from human traffickers and gangs. This is worth noticing because the victimization in Mexico is highlighting a collective of immigrants

¹⁴¹ The top four frames, considering the news articles that rank the framing category in first place account for more than 50% of the coverage in the three countries (Mexico 78%, Chile 68% and Colombia 56%). The case of Colombia is a little bit different, but I expand on this at the end of this section.

rather than a specific individual. In a way, Chile and Colombia are more similar in portraying the human case of particular migrants, and using that lens tells the story of suffering. The example of Mexico is a little different because the official account of immigrants saved, rescued, or arrested focuses on the collective rather than a specific case. This distinction speaks directly about the heavy reliance of Mexican media on government sources.

In each country, certain actors are responsible for the “attacks” and victimization of immigrants (i.e., perpetrators). In Chile, for example, the immigrants are portrayed as victims of poverty and the lack of access to public services such as health and housing. This means there is no clear perpetrator such as police, government or other institutions. The difference in Chile is the coverage of Haitians; there the perpetrator of attacks, commonly xenophobic, are individual members of the society (e.g., coworkers, neighbors, etc.) and not institutions.

Another characteristic in Chile is that migration and poverty have become intertwined. Therefore, covering poverty means also covering immigrants and immigration. Similarly, in Colombia, the Venezuelans' marginalization puts the news reporting of poverty and immigration at the same level. Venezuelan migrants, besides suffering from impoverishing living conditions and lack of public services (e.g., education and health), are also victims of organized crime (i.e., perpetrators) in border towns. This is somewhat comparable to the situation in Mexico, where Central Americans are largely victims of organized crime, which appears in news coverage as the most common perpetrator of abuses against immigrants, followed by corrupt members of the police and other governmental institutions. In Mexico, differently from Chile and

Colombia, there is less emphasis on the coverage of poverty and lack of access to public services for Central Americans. The issue of reporting about Central Americans as "in-transit" hinders news coverage based on established communities of migrants demanding access to health, education, and housing.

Although the main objective of this project is to analyze the aggregate news coverage, some observations can be made by comparing traditional and non-traditional (digital-only) newspapers. As seen in Table 1, Chile has the sharpest difference between these two types of outlets regarding the *Victim- Humanitarian/ Human Rights* frame. This difference could be partially explained by the significant presence of opinion pieces and the preference for first-person account stories mostly in the digital-only newspapers. For Mexico and Colombia, the variance is not as substantial between the two types of news outlets. For instance, the two most traditional papers in Colombia, El Espectador and El Tiempo, have a larger presence in their coverage of the *Victim – Humanitarian / Human Rights* frame than the rest of the news outlets. A potential explanation is the use of reporting based on dramatic human cases of Venezuelans.

Moreover, in Mexico and Colombia, the similar percentages across newspapers (traditional and non-traditional) of the *Victim- Humanitarian / Human Rights* frame suggests that news media in general in these countries are relying on the “human case” type of narrative regardless of the platform. Also, in these countries the official communication permeates profusely the news media agenda and commonly the public messages are about the victimization of immigrants.

Table 1 has the details about the presence of the *Victim – Humanitarian and Human Rights* frame in each newspaper analyzed for this dissertation.

Table 1: Most frequent frames present in each newspaper

Newspaper	Number of articles	Victim-H	Political - PSD
CHILE			
<i>Traditional</i>			
El Mercurio	87	24%	25%
La Tercera	45	31%	31%
<i>Non-traditional</i>			
El Ciudadano	48	60%	15%
El Mostrador	189	44%	22%
The Clinic	105	40%	6%
COLOMBIA			
<i>Traditional</i>			
El Tiempo	116	30%	22%
El Espectador	102	34%	33%
Semana	47	17%	13%
<i>Non-traditional</i>			
Minuto 30	68	28%	40%
La Silla Vacía	27	19%	41%
MEXICO			
<i>Traditional</i>			
Reforma	177	42%	31%
El Universal	129	48%	26%
La Jornada	174	48%	34%
Milenio	124	33%	35%
<i>Non-traditional</i>			
Aristegui Noticias	154	54%	37%
SDP	98	48%	26%

The second most prevalent frame is *Political Responsibility – Policy Solutions and Debate*. In Mexico and Colombia, 22% of the news stories use this as frame one, while in Chile it represents 13%. The discursive indicator of this framing category is about governmental actions aiming to control and manage the increasing influx of migrants. These actions generally spark political debate among policymakers and other actors, which is also included in this category's definition. The description of this frame focuses more on immigration as a *phenomenon* rather than on individual immigrants. This means that the salient aspect of the news stories is the implementation of a new policy (i.e., special visa types or migration permits), the political debate about immigration reforms, or announcements from local governments regarding short-term containment plans to deal with the surge of immigrants.

Across the three countries, the president and the executive branch's news coverage plays an essential role in the frequency and presence of this framing category. Therefore, *the Political Responsibility – Policy Solutions and Debate* frame is infused with the official perspective of the policy changes targeting immigration. At a national level, the political debate in Colombia and Mexico emerges mostly as considering the assistance migrants need. But at local level, especially in border cities, the policy debates, driven by these towns' mayors, are about how to control the migration flows and the lack of resources to manage the massive number of newcomers. In Chile, the political debate revolves around the access to public services for immigrants, but also the immigration reform pushed by the Piñera administration.

The direct quotes used to cover the presidents and politicians are the main contributors of this Political frame, rather than the elaboration of narratives from the news reporters. This, and the lack of voices offering different angles, influences the absence of counter-information given to the governmental sources.

Likewise, across the three countries, the extensive use of governmental sources is predominant. For instance, in Mexico and Colombia, the government is the first source used in respectively 32% and 38% of the news stories, which is almost three times larger than the second category (i.e., immigrants, migrants, refugees). Chile is different because government is used as the first source in 15% of the stories, though it is still the predominant one¹⁴². Therefore, the *Political Responsibility – Political Solutions and Debate* frame category is closely related to the reproduction of official messages by the news media. Also, in Chile and most visibly in Colombia, there are news articles written

¹⁴² This is excluding the Journalists or Columnists category.

as public service announcements. These are very informative pieces that generally reproduce governmental actions and measures targeting the migrant community, such as asking them to participate in an immigrant census or to register to obtain a temporary visa document.

Additionally, the presence of this Political frame as a percentage of the news articles for each newspaper is shown in Table 1. Mexico has a fairly homogenous distribution of this frame across traditional and non-traditional outlets, which could be caused by the reproduction of the official sources across all mediums and platforms. Also, in Mexico news media typically utilizes “*comunicados*” (press releases) from the government as a cheaper and safer method to report on immigration topics. The use of official communications appears more prevalent in the Mexican digital-only news platforms analyzed here (Aristegui Noticias and SDP). Reproducing “*comunicados*” is a cost-effective solution to fulfill the demand of constant information updates. Moreover, these institutions (digital-only) have smaller teams and even more limited budgets than traditional newspapers. The verbatim use of “*comunicados*” is a distinctive feature in the Mexican case, especially in digital-only platforms.

Furthermore, the traditional media in Chile (El Mercurio and La Tercera) has larger presence of this political frame (*Political Responsibility – Political Solutions and Debate*) compared to the non-traditional newspapers. This could be explained by the more “informative” approach some scholars attribute to these two newspapers (Gronemeyer, Pino, & Porath, 2019), but also to the predominance of official voices in the coverage of immigration in El Mercurio and La Tercera at least in the sample examined here. For Colombia, the percentage is the opposite of Chile: Non-traditional

media has more coverage with this political frame than traditional outlets (El Espectador and El Tiempo). One explanation for this is that digital-only news media, with small teams, focus their resources and attention on governmental and political elites' actions that are easier and less demanding to cover than original reporting.

Furthermore, the emerging academic research about the media system and the journalistic culture in these three countries is useful to interpret the results of the two most prevalent frames found in the sample. The three countries have a market-oriented media system that would put them close to the definition of the Liberal Media proposed by Hallin and Mancini (2004); however, there are local realities that make this definition not comprehensive enough to the situation in these nations. Therefore, the idea of Captured Media System developed by Guerrero (2014) offers a better argument to understand the media system in these contexts and the potential relationship with immigration coverage.

Under the definition of a Captured Media System, the low regulatory efficiency and a high degree of interference on the media's watchdog function are the aspects that prevent a fully developed Liberal Media System in these countries. Additionally, there are other characteristics shared by these countries about how media works. Ownership concentration and the close ties between political elites and media proprietors are part of the landscape in which journalism takes place. In the case of immigration news, the way media works in these three countries can be linked to the idea that news media follows closely the political elite's agenda. More than explicit and direct influence from media owners into the daily news coverage, newspapers analyzed here typically write for the political and economic elites in these countries, and these elites are closely interrelated.

Therefore, the tight relationship between elites and news media could be associated also to a more “*oficialista*” take on news reporting.

From the journalistic studies literature in these countries (e.g., Mellado, 2012), the perceived role that emerges from reporters as the most prevailing one is “reporting things as they are.” In Mexico and Colombia, the role of promoting diversity and cultural tolerance is also salient, while in Chile and Colombia, the educational role of the press is prevalent among journalists.

Although this research project does not seek to establish a causal relationship between these aspects of the media system and the perceived journalistic roles and the presence of frames such as *Victim- Humanitarian / Human Rights* and *Political Responsibility – Policy Solutions* and Debates, some connections are very suggestive.

First, news media ownership and the connection between owners and political elites do not appear to have a critical effect on the journalists’ routines. Based on the interviews with journalists from these nations, which I will discuss in more detail in a section below, the reporters perceived a high level of autonomy to conduct their job inside the newsroom. None of the reporters anonymously interviewed for this project mention receiving editorial pressures to cover immigration in a particular way, nor do they suggest being conditioned by external people to report the events with a biased perspective. Moreover, according to the journalists, immigration did not appear to be an extremely partisan issue in these countries, therefore less pressure from political actors is to be expected.

Rather than media systems, a more interesting influence on the coverage of immigration for this dissertation is the perceived role of journalists in the news

production of migration news. Journalists in these countries attribute great value to “reporting things as they are” (Arroyave, J & Garcés, 2017; Mellado, Frost, & Hanitzsch, 2017; Márquez-Ramírez, & Hughes, 2016) – and the *Victim – Humanitarian / Human Rights* frame correlates perfectly with the role of writing things “as they are,” because immigrants in Chile, Colombia and Mexico are victims of a myriad violations of human rights and abuses. Therefore, reporters generally do not see other ways of portraying this reality. Moreover, in Colombia, the presence of advocacy journalism has been documented in the literature, and the presence of the *Victim – Humanitarian / Human Rights* frame could be related to this journalistic practice. In the case of immigration, reporters might be inclined to take the victims’ side to report the stories, which is a characteristic of the advocacy journalism field in Colombia.

In different contexts, such as the Global North, the victim approach is linked to a more sensationalistic strategy with the commercial objective of increasing readership (Benson, 2014). Based on the analysis exposed here, I argue that in the case of Latin America, and particularly in Mexico and Colombia, the victim framing in the news coverage plays a critical role. News media in these countries keep a public account of the abuses and at least make them visible and available to the public, as a way to regain *some* authority as a social institution that denounced these violations against migrants.

Moreover, although the victim frame has been criticized in the Global North (e.g., Suro, 2008) for failing to provide explanation and context about immigration, in the case of Latin America it creates a record of the abuses happening to migrants that otherwise would be not available to the public. In a way, the victim frame in the case of the countries analyzed here might be the consequence of a series of factors and constraints

beyond the control of reporters such as limited resources for more in-depth reporting or findings new angles to the government messages, and violent contexts to explore different perspectives in the places where immigrants settled. However, and perhaps unintentionally, the victim frame plays an essential part in advocating for more accountability about the violations of migrants' human rights. Based on the sample for this study, news media falls short on explicitly allocating responsibilities and highlighting the potential long-term solutions the phenomenon requires. In general, it is unclear from the news articles examined for this project that news media visibly demands answers from specific political actors. The lack of investigative reporting and the prevalence of the governmental voices contributes to this finding.

Also, interestingly, in all the three countries public perception of immigrants is worsening, and citizens are having more negative feelings toward the newcomers. Even if the *Victim-Humanitarian / Human Rights* frame could be expected to trigger feelings of empathy and increase public sensitivity toward the migrants, according to the trends on public opinion this framing approach is not having the impact journalists might want in people's perception about the phenomenon.

Furthermore, the *Political Responsibility – Policy Solutions and Debate* is the second most common frame. As with the *Victim-Humanitarian / Human Rights* frame, this political responsibility category's presence in the aggregate media coverage can be examined using the media system's research and journalism studies in these countries. For instance, the close connection between economic and political elites might influence the more "*oficialista*" coverage, which contributes to the presence of this political frame. This can be particularly salient for Mexico and Colombia, where the literature has found

a more persistent presence of an "*oficialista*" coverage in general, which implies giving disproportionate space to the governmental voices. Even more, in the case of Mexico, the post-authoritarian press culture (Marquez-Ramirez, 2014) can also impact the persistent use of press releases and official communications from political institutions ("*comunicados*"). This type of element demands less reporting, which seems suitable for underfunded newsrooms that are always looking for efficient ways to produce news.

However, other relationships also emerged linked to the presence of the *Political Responsibility – Policy Solutions and Debates* frame when looking at the journalistic practices documented in the literature. The educational role of journalists from Colombia and Chile is essential, which can be linked by the presence of this frame as manifested, for example, in news articles focusing on public announcements to the migrant community that fall into this Political framing category. The main objective of these stories is to educate newcomers about the actions taken by the government that directly affect them, making the educational role very manifest. This trend is observed with more frequency in Colombia and Chile and with less emphasis in the Mexican newspapers.

Table 2 provides the relevant empirical and theoretical elements used in the analysis of the two most frequent frames in the aggregate coverage. Several elements on this table will be explained further in the following paragraphs.

Table 2: Comparing Immigration News Coverage in Latin America.

Immigration News	Chile	Colombia	Mexico
<i>Content Analysis</i>			
Common frames	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Victim – Humanitarian/Human Rights 2. Political Responsibility – Policy Solutions and Debate 3. Victim – Racism- Xenophobia 4. Benefit – Cultural/Diversity 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Political Responsibility – Policy Solutions and Debate 2. Victim – Humanitarian/Human Rights 3. Victim- Political and Economic 4. Transitionality *(Political – Inter and Threat SePo)¹⁴³ 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Victim – Humanitarian/Human Rights 2. Political Responsibility – Policy Solutions and Debate 3. Transitionality 4. Political Responsibility – International Cooperation and Debate
Coverage nuances	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Salience of Race 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reciprocity/Solidarity 2. Violence 3. Border 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Violence 2. Reciprocity/Solidarity 3. Border (s)
Word choices/labels to describe immigration	Irregular(s) - Country of origin (Haiti, Venezuela, Colombia)	Irregular(s) / (illegal (s)) – Migrants- Citizens Country of origin (Venezuelans)	Undocumented – Migrants Central Americans (no specific country of origin) *Caravan - Children
Main sources	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Journalists/Columnists 2. Government 3. Other 4. Immigrants, refugee, Migrant 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Government 2. Immigrant, refugee, 3. Migrant 4. None 5. Local Elected authority 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Government 2. Immigrant, refugee, Migrant 3. Member of Church/Religion 4. Activists/Artists/ Athlete
<i>Theory</i>			
Media System	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Market oriented 2. Liberal but “Captured” 3. Few powerful actors (duopoly of the print press). 4. Close connection between political, economic elites in media ownership 5. Traditional media = Informative 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Market oriented 2. Liberal but “Captured” 3. Close connection between political elites and media owners (Example of former presidents as media owners) 4. Ownership concentration 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Market oriented 2. Liberal but “Captured” 3. Close connection between political elites and media owners 4. Ownership concentration 5. “Oficialista” 6. “Post authoritarian” press culture 7. Impact of governmental advertising
Journalistic values and roles	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adhere to reporting “things as they are” “provide analysis” and “educate” 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Advocacy journalism, 2. Accurate reporting, analysis, “promote diversity and cultural tolerance” and “educate” 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adhere to reporting “things as they are”, “promote diversity and cultural tolerance”.

¹⁴³ Regarding the top four frames analyzed for this section, Colombia needs a special note. The news articles that ranked *Political Responsibility – Inter. and Threat- Security and Public Order* as number one frame are more than those ranking *Transitionality* as the first choice. However, when looking at the news articles that ranked *Transnationality* in first, second, or third place, *Transitionality* category is larger than the other two. Therefore, the reason was to use *Transitionality* as frame number four in the analysis for this chapter.

Also, as seen in Table 2, after the *Victim- Humanitarian/Human Rights* and *Political Responsibility-Policy Solutions and Debate*, each country has a different third and fourth most frequent frame. For example, in the case of Chile, the *Victim – Racism-Xenophobia* is the third frame while in Colombia it is the *Victim- Political and Economic*. In Mexico, the *Transitionality* frame appears in third place (Table 2).

As the fourth frame, Chile has the *Benefit- Cultural Diversity*, Colombia the *Transitionality*, and Mexico, the *Political Responsibility- International Cooperation and Relations* frame. The two countries that are facing an “immigration or refugee crisis” in this analysis, Mexico and Colombia, have in common *Transitionality* as a relevant frame. This framing accounts for how news media reports the transition to becoming a migrants-receiving nation. For Colombia and Mexico, this change is particularly important because these two countries have a long history of sending migrants abroad. For instance, the way news media covers this *Transitionality* in Mexico is underlining the increasing number of Central Americans requesting refugee status. In Colombia, this *Transitionality* appears mostly when news media includes the unprecedented influx of Venezuelans as immigrants fleeing a social and economic crisis in Venezuela. Still, newspapers do not depict them or label them predominantly as refugees. This marks a difference in the presence of this *Transitionality* frame in both countries. One explanation for newspapers not labeling Venezuelans as refugees is the cultural and shared history of Colombia and Venezuela. As Colombian journalists explained, Venezuela is the next-door neighbor and, in the social imaginary, refugees are assumed to be people from distant places. The cultural and geographical proximity prevents news media in Colombia from naming the influx a refugee crisis, although reporters recognized that the concept of “Venezuelans”

has changed. Before it was associated to a wealthy country and now it is linked to people crossing the border escaping the crisis.

Moreover, Chile and Colombia both have another victim frame among the top four (Table 2): For Chile, the *Victim – Racism/Xenophobia* and, for Colombia, the *Victim- Political Economic*. Non-traditional news outlets mostly influence the salience of the news stories centered on racism and xenophobia in Chile. They are the ones putting the focus on these issues and generally covering it under the format of an opinion piece or through the voices of columnists. This finding in Chile correlates with the value journalists give to “provide analysis” in news coverage, as the research shows (Table 2).

For Colombia, the presence of the *Victim- Political and Economic* category is connected to the depiction of the Venezuelan crisis. The definition of this frame is about the “push factors” that trigger a massive influx of migrants. Additionally, in Colombia, this frame could be linked to the reproduction of governmental voices critical of the Maduro regime and the ways they stress the crisis in the neighboring country. Although news media in Colombia reports the Venezuelan crisis as one of the main causes of the inflow, in the sample for this study, an in-depth analysis of the causes of the Venezuelan collapse is not present, which translate into a superficial reporting of the issue.

Instead of having another victim frame in the top four most frequent categories as Chile and Colombia (Table 2), Mexico has a political responsibility frame: *International Cooperation and Relations*. In the case of Mexico, this frame is present because the news media focuses on the regional political initiatives that Mexico engages in dealing with immigration, which is generally the reproduction of governmental voices discussing these

issues. Also, the role of the United States emerges as a factor that influences the presence of this framing category.

One of the two overarching research question guiding this dissertation is the type of frames present in the news media coverage in Mexico, Colombia, and Chile during 2014-2018. The detailed answer and description have been crafted in each chapter. However, in the section developed above, the objective was to take a comparative angle between the three countries. Overall, the aggregate news coverage in the sample used for this project shows a prevalence of the *Victim-Humanitarian and Human Rights* and the *Political Responsibility- Policy Solutions and Debate*. These two framing categories are the most common ones. The incidence of these two frames can be related to how media operates in these countries, and the journalistic values and roles found in the literature.

A few points of comparison with the Global North from the content analysis

Under the larger question of the types of frames found in the news in these three Latin American countries, there are also a few more specific research questions that this dissertation addresses. One of these asks if some of the frames and features of the coverage frequently found in the news media in the Global North are present in the coverage of immigration in the Global South. Based on the sample of news used for this project, the most similar frame is the humanitarian approach or the dramatic human story, which is also significantly prevalent in the Global North (Berry, Garcia-Blanco & Moore, 2015; Benson, 2014; Figenschou & Thorbjørnsrud, 2015; Hallin, 2015; Suro, 2011). The focus on a single case or a story of individual immigrants centering on the traumatic

experiences she/he has to sustain is at the core of this category. In Mexico, differently from Chile and Colombia, the individual immigrant is replaced by a “collective” of migrants that are the focus of the dramatic storytelling.

Additionally, this frame is also linked to a more episodic approach to reporting stories. This means focusing the writing on specific characteristics of an individual case rather than using a more thematic or less emotionally charged analysis. Across the three countries in this dissertation, the humanitarian frame is highly significant, as the presence of the *Victim – Humanitarian/Human Rights* category demonstrates. Moreover, the marginal presence of numbers and statistical trends found in this research (in the headline and after the headline) correlates with the substantial prevalence of a more episodic approach to covering immigration.

Differently from the news coverage of immigration in the Global North (Chavez, 2008, Perez, 2017; Suro, 2008 Berry, Garcia-Blanco, & Moore, 2015), threat frames are not highly relevant in the case of these three Latin American countries. The intraregional nature of this influx explains the absence of the Cultural threat frame in the case of Mexico, Colombia, and Chile. The common cultural roots and language shared by many of the immigrants and the receiving societies explain the lack of this Cultural threat frame (Cerrutti & Parrado, 2015; Lawrence, 2011). However, the threat category most salient in the three nations is the *Security and Public Order*; for example, in Colombia, this frame ranked sixth, in Chile fifth and Mexico seventh among the sixteen categories.

In Chile, the *Security and Public Order* threat frame (ranked 5th in this country) is more frequent in traditional newspapers when covering deportation, demand for public services, and when the news article is written by reporters on the Police beat. Similarly,

in Colombia, the presence of the *Security and Public Order* threat frame is present when the Police or Judicial beat reporters cover the stories. Also, this threat frame is related to an unintentional effect of offering counter-narratives to the governmental approach on immigration, which is generally an “open arms” narrative.

Similarly, in the Mexican case, this threat frame generally appears in news articles covering immigrants' apprehensions, rescue from smugglers, and deportations. As explained in the findings (Mexican chapter), this type of news story takes a humanitarian approach but the language and the emphasis (i.e., headlines) creates a mixed message for the readers, which in many cases can interpret these news stories under the *Security and Public Order* threat frame. Moreover, the common denominator for the presence of this frame is the lack of a homogenous sensibility about immigration across reporters in the newsroom. This finding relates to the lack of specialization reporters also acknowledged, a topic that I will develop further in a section below.

Other characteristics of the coverage in the Global North are worth exploring using the three countries analyzed here. For instance, research about immigration news in developed countries found that news media tends to focus on specific groups, such as Latinos in the United States and Muslims in Europe (Abrajano & Hajnal, 2015; Perez, 2017; Zamith, 2014), even when they are not necessarily the largest immigrant inflows at a particular point in time. Out of the three countries, Chile is the one that shows this characteristic with the coverage of the Haitian influx; in Chile, the media focuses more on this group even though it is not the largest migrant community. Race is the explanation for this finding. Haitians are the most racially different immigrants, and this

creates a sense of "novelty" because Chilean society is not accustomed to interacting with Black people (Foote & Goebel, 2014).

Two other features of the news coverage of immigration present in the Global North are the disproportioned emphasis on the immigrants' legal status and commonly stressing the illegality. This characteristic is mostly absent in Latin American coverage of intraregional migration. An explanation for this finding is the absence of visa requirements (at least before these new waves) and lax immigration policies that allow fluid mobility between neighboring countries. However, based on the interviews with reporters, I will argue that the main reason for the absence of an "illegality" centered narrative is the conscious decision news reporters make about not using potentially charged labels to refer to the immigrants. Table 2 shows the names and word choice used in the coverage across the three countries. The decision is to use "migrants" and the country of origin in many cases (Central Americans, Venezuelans, Haitians, Colombians, etc.). Also, reporters choose "irregular" and "undocumented" over "illegal" to describe the influx. Colombia might show a more substantial presence of the words "illegal" or "illegals," but this has to do with the use of these terms to describe the illegal crossings in border regions ("*trochas*"), and also with news coverage made in sections of the newspapers with less sensibility toward the Venezuelan immigration phenomenon.

Finally, another of the features found in the coverage of immigration in the Global North is the use of concepts such as refugees, asylum, asylum seekers, and immigrants as interchangeable and synonymous (Hoewe, 2018). For the Latin American countries examined in this project, this feature also emerges, particularly in Mexico and Colombia. Both of these nations face a "refugee crisis," but the news media's approach to labeling

the phenomenon sometimes differs from reality. This means news outlets acknowledge the crisis component but do not convey the unanimous message that most of the people crossing are or could qualify as refugees. Although in Mexico there is coverage of the increasing number of refugee applications, news media do not directly label or refer to Central Americans as refugees. An explanation for this could also be linked to the shared cultural roots and physical proximity with the sending-countries reality. These are neighbors and border countries; there has always been a fluid movement of people through these borders (Colombia- Venezuela; Mexico-Guatemala- Northern Triangle), therefore in these countries, "refugees" is understood as people coming from a "far away" nation. Journalists are deeply embedded in the culture of the country, and this understanding of the concept refugee also affects the way they choose to transmit the immigration phenomenon. Additionally, in the case of Colombia and Mexico, the official sources are cautious not to label the influx as "refugees," perhaps not to create a "crisis" narrative that can backlash depending on the governments' performance to control and deal with this "crisis." Thus, the pervasive influence of government sources in the media coverage could also explain the relatively low presence of the concept "refugee(s)."

Specific frames emerging in the Global South

1. The reciprocity and solidarity frame in Colombia and Mexico.

Colombia and Mexico have the *Solidarity/Reciprocity* frame as a somewhat relevant aspect of the aggregate news coverage. In Chile this frame is absent. This

category of framing is based on the idea of historical relationships countries have with each other.

For instance, in Colombia there is a sense of responsibility for welcoming Venezuelans as a way to give back the hospitality that country had in the past for Colombians fleeing internal conflict. Therefore, there is a feeling of "historical responsibility" that permeates the news, but not as a highly salient feature of the media coverage. In the content analysis of Colombia, this frame comes in seventh, and only twelve news articles have this category ranked as number one. Again, for this frame the main driver is the governmental voice that had a usually welcoming message toward Venezuelans. Still, it is also a political strategy to highlight the failure of the Venezuelan regime under the Maduro administration. The analysis of words such as *Responsibility* and *Solidarity* (selected as crucial concepts based on the reading of the news articles) also indicates the presence of this type of *Solidarity/Reciprocity* frame, but the frequency is not very high. The word *Brother(s)* is the most salient sign of this type of frame, with at least 51 occurrences in a corpus of 360 news stories. However, the incidence of this frame is mostly explained by the reproduction of official opinions, quotes or messages. These voices try to convey a politically motivated message about how Colombia is a "good" country, and Venezuela is a "failed state."

For Mexico, the *Solidarity/Reciprocity* frame is not based on "historical responsibility," but rather on the history of Mexico as a refugee-receiving country and the geographical and cultural proximity with the countries of the Northern Triangle. In the news coverage analyzed, the frame *Solidarity* appears in 49 news stories as the first frame. Moreover, concepts such as *Brothers* has 67 occurrences, and *Responsibility* has

47, and *Solidarity* 41. In a corpus of 856 news articles, perhaps it is not a substantial presence, but it remains an aspect of the news reporting that emerges as noteworthy, especially because it is a frame determined mostly by the opinions of activists, members of the Catholic church, and NGOs leaders advocating for a hospitable reception of Central Americans and the respect of their fundamental rights.

Overall, in Mexico and Colombia, the *Solidarity/Reciprocity* frame is present in the news coverage, but the incidence is low and mostly driven by the government (Colombia) and activists (Mexico). Therefore, it is not a frame that news media has adopted and amplified. This appears as an interesting issue, primarily because of the increasing levels of xenophobia emerging in these nations. An argument could be made that news media could potentially own the *Solidarity/Reciprocity* frame to confront xenophobic sentiments.

Although not directly about the *Solidarity/ Reciprocity* frame but linked to the shared geography and history, the concept of the border (“Frontera”) appears as a distinctive feature of the news reporting in Mexico and Colombia. Historically, for Mexican media, the focus has been its northern border (U.S -Mexican border), however, with the change in the migratory patterns, news media amplifies the relevance of the southern Mexican border, which allows the development of a narrative of the “two borders.”

For Colombia, the border is covered centered on the political use the Venezuelan and Colombian governments give to it. “La Frontera” emerges then as a news feature mediated by the tense political relations between the two countries.

2. *The importance of race in the coverage of immigration in Chile*

Haitian migration represents in Chile a novel social phenomenon because of the race of the immigrants coming from that country. These Black migrants are more noticeable than the other newcomers arriving into Chile (e.g., Venezuelans, Colombians), and this salience is captured by the news media by focusing more on this demographic even when Haitians do not represent the largest migrant community in the country. For instance, 69 headlines out of 474 are about Haitians. However, the frame *Race* appears only as the ninth most frequent in the aggregate coverage of Chile. Still, the *Victim – Racism, and Xenophobia* is number three, which indicates the relevance of the discussion in the news coverage about race and discrimination. One explanation for the presence of race as a newsworthy component is driven by events of bias toward Black Haitians, but also news about the extreme marginalization of this group. Haitians became intertwined with poverty pockets in cities and towns, which makes them many times invisible because, as reporters interviewed for this project claimed, poverty is not something news media covers as a priority in its agenda. Also, they acknowledged the difficulty of reporting stories about poverty that attract the audience's attention. Nonetheless, the racial component in the Haitians' case is a novel and distinctive element for the news coverage that can explain the significant focus on this immigrant group in the news media.

Additionally, the non-traditional newspapers in Chile (El Mostrador, The Clinic, and El Ciudadano) have the most considerable occurrence of words linked to race, such as "Racismo" (racism) or "Negro" (Black). Also, these news outlets have a larger

presence of columnists and opinion pieces that can explain the focus on race and Haitian migration.

Overall, the content analysis part of this project shows a clear pattern of the particular features of immigration news coverage in three countries in Latin America. Based on this analysis, the emergence of a victim (humanitarian/human rights) frame and a political responsibility (policy solutions and debate) frame as the predominant ones can be linked to the pervasive role of the governmental agenda in the news reporting. Governmental sources are the most common voices represented in the news reporting. The extensive presence of the official discourse and messages virtually controls the topics and emphases about the immigration phenomenon, with little counter perspective.

In addition, the victim frame appears to be an intentional strategy, at an individual-journalist level, to sensitize the audience and, most importantly, to keep a public record of the abuse immigrants face. Thus, this victim frame is not present because of sensationalistic motives or as a strategy to increase readership. However, the sensibilization strategy does not align with an impact on more empathy from the audience, because the perception about immigration is increasingly negative in these three nations.

Moreover, the victim frame is linked to a more episodic coverage of immigration that uses less numerical data and statistical trends to write the stories. In Latin America, the use of numerical figures as the central piece of the reporting is minimal, which correlates with a larger presence of a more human-based storytelling. Also, typically, the episodic frame uses a dramatic case to portray the suffering of migrants in general. Even

when migrants are the second most common source in the coverage, their voices are used to reproduce the victimization rather than showing them under a different light.

Furthermore, Haitian migration in Chile emerges as a distinctive characteristic in comparison with Colombia and Mexico. Black immigrants from this community put the issue of race as a specific feature of the immigration news in Chile. In Colombia and Mexico, the Solidarity and Transitionality are unique components of the news stories that are not found in the case of Chile. More connection to these ideas can be developed by looking into the second overarching question of this dissertation:

How do journalists and reporters in Latin America describe their newsmaking practices in covering immigration?

The previous section had several mentions of the self-perceived role and practices of journalists in its relationship with the aggregate coverage of immigration. In this section, I will develop other common topics from the journalists interviewed for this project.

Across the three countries, journalists perceived a high level of independence to conduct their work inside the newsrooms. The most common limitation is the autonomy to decide the headlines for the pieces they produce. There is a negotiation with editors about the “best title,” but aside from this, reporters acknowledged complete freedom to decide angles, perspectives, and stories they want to cover. This does not mean that all the stories will be published exactly as they envisioned them. Still, the consensus is that autonomy within their institutions is a core value they recognized. Even though in Mexico, Colombia, and Chile the close connection between political/economic elites and

newspaper owners is part of the news media ecology, none of the 20 reporters mentioned or suggested receiving internal or external pressure to introduce bias in their work.

Most significantly in Mexico and Colombia, violence and threats from organized crime and drug cartels prevent full freedom in the coverage of immigration. Reporters recognized the dangers of the “hot spots,” generally in borders regions, to cover migration. Therefore, this violence creates barriers and constraints for obtaining a complete picture of the immigration phenomenon. At the individual level, self-censorship plays a part in preventing more in-depth reporting. Reporters understand the danger of unveiling particular operations in specific regions of the country, and they prefer to stay away from these dangerous areas.

At the institutional level, underfunded newsrooms also prevent spending more resources on writing about immigration. Thus, most of the coverage of the issue emerges from the capital cities, and it does not represent the entire “reality” of the complex immigration phenomenon. Violence in these two countries might also be a cause for the pervasive use of official communication and the close reproduction of the political agenda in the news, because it is cost-efficient and safer. Moreover, the level of education and professional training of journalists in these countries is high and, in many cases, comparable with the standard of developed countries. However, internal challenges (i.e., money) and external threats (i.e., violence and organized crime) prevent reporters from developing their job at full potential. Among the three countries analyzed for this project, the Mexican press appears the most constrained and limited by the violent context and potential political interferences (i.e., government advertising).

Coupled with the minimal resources, reporters recognized the lack of specialization, which created a steep adaptation to cover any difficult topic. The feeling of always “catching up” leads to levels of improvisation in reporting, which does not mean a lack of professionalism. Instead, journalists explained they applied high journalistic standards as they will do with any other subject. However, they realize that immigration is not just like any other issue they have covered. Immigration represents literally dealing with a foreign reality in their nation. Generally, it involves a great emotional connection with the source, but also a topic that triggers passion in the audience. Therefore, journalists argued that they have to be extra cautious about the use of words and concepts to describe the phenomenon. This idea of “being extra cautious” does not mean self-censorship or advocating for the migrants, but rather following a “responsible and sensitive” coverage, understanding and making conscious decisions about the specific nuances of immigration as a social phenomenon.

Another distinctive challenge of the news coverage of immigration in developing countries is how reporters balance the victimization with the backlash from the audience that this could produce. For instance, in developing nations, public services (i.e., housing, health, education) are already overwhelmed by the local population and functioning with a low level of resources. Journalists acknowledged that immigrants put extra pressure onto these services and highlighting the lack of access migrants have to public services inevitably triggers negative responses from nationals who also struggle to access these same public services.

Therefore, as informed citizens, the journalists perceived a latent xenophobia developing in their countries, which made responsibility a central concept of their job. As

they expressed in the interviews, their role in covering immigration emphasizes not contributing to a hostile environment or fostering the emerging xenophobia. This self-perceived responsibility might be connected to a more benevolent take on reporting immigration, which appears as a common topic, particularly in Chile. This benevolent reporting is linked to the victim frame that emerges in the news coverage. For example, when immigrants are portrayed as victims, the story is generally about the suffering of an individual and how vulnerable this person is. This represents an empathetic or benevolent approach that limits the possibility of a news reporting based on dissecting in detail the long-term solutions and causes of immigration.

Across the three countries, reporters struggle to find new ways to offer counter-narratives or perspectives to the official agenda. The widespread presence of political and governmental sources, as the first voices used in the reporting, speaks about the predominance of the government account. Reporters argued for the need to have their own immigration agenda and making the issue part of the newspaper's core; however, this is an expectation or hope that faces many obstacles. Additionally, among the three cases, by looking at the first source listed in the news articles, Mexico and Chile offer a little more variety of sources than Colombia. This means that besides the largest categories of sources (e.g., government and immigrants), other types are represented (e.g., local citizens, business owners, etc.). The challenge reporters admitted is using these voices to find different twists and angles to the stories, instead of sticking with a victim or political responsibility frame.

Finally, journalists acknowledged that the newspapers they work at have a clear perceived political leaning, and the public recognizes this political inclination. In some

cases, historical events such as supporting a military dictatorship (e.g., El Mercurio) or current ownership determines public perception. However, the coverage does not explicitly show the political bias of newspapers, as could be the case for news stories other than immigration, according to the reporters.

Nonetheless, in Chile, journalists from non-traditional media argued that traditional newspapers would have a more punitive or conservative take on immigration. A potential explanation of this is again the section where the news reporting is produced (e.g., Police beat) and the columnists newspapers decide to publish. But, in general, the journalists in all three countries agreed there is not yet a definite editorial stance on the immigration topic, and they have not perceived a biased coverage from the press (excluding tabloids) in their countries. Most of the reporters see the human rights angle as a prevalent approach news media is taking to cover immigration. This human rights approach could also be linked to a more benevolent coverage with the significant presence of a victim frame.

Additionally, the immigration phenomenon in all these countries is a relatively new development. Many institutions are facing an adaptation to this new reality, and the press is one of them. Therefore, any clear editorial position toward immigration issues might take a little time to fully manifest. This is also a finding that differs from the research on immigration news in the Global North, where it is expected to find more punitive or threat frames linked to immigrants in conservative media and the opposite in liberal or progressive newspapers.

The interviews for this dissertation offered a series of concepts and ideas that closely connected with the content analysis results. The most important findings of this

research show that the news media in these three countries reports on immigration using predominantly two frames: *Victim- Humanitarian and Human Rights* and *Political Responsibility- Policy Solutions and Debate*. The main factor that influence the presence of these two frames are the pervasive presence of governmental voices as sources that reflect on the victimization of migrants and the short-term policy debates around the inflows. Journalists agreed that there is a lack of counter frames news media produces to counterbalance these government-driven frames with perspectives such as the benefit that immigration brings.

Additionally, illegality and charged labels to refer to the immigrant groups are generally absent from the news coverage. The recognition of the shared cultural roots and the idea of “next door” neighbors coming into the country contributes to this news reporting practices. Journalists said they are making a conscious decision to avoid labeling immigrants with concepts that can increase the xenophobia they perceived among the public. However, the same recognition of these migrants as “our neighbors” might prevent a more salient usage of the idea of a “refugee crisis” in Colombia and Mexico.

Also, another major finding between the three countries is the specific frames that emerged. In Chile, the Haitian migration brought the race component as a relevant feature in the news coverage. In Mexico and Colombia, the Solidarity and Transitionality frames appear as specific to these countries, but mostly driven again by governmental voices in Colombia, and to a certain extent by the voices of actors from the civil society in Mexico (Catholic church).

The need for this type of information is critical in an under-researched phenomenon such as immigration news in the context of developing countries. By enriching the content analysis with the first-hand account of reporters in Latin America, more nuanced conclusions can be made. Also, it provides fertile ground for conducting better informed comparative research about news and immigration worldwide.

Moreover, the empirical results and examination of this project are about immigration news, but immigration serves to illustrate the way news media in these countries work regarding covering minorities in general. Although immigration has some specific characteristics, such as dealing with a foreign reality in our own land, the analysis (and perhaps lessons) from this dissertation are easily transferable to the adaptation process and practices to cover any novel issues that diverts from these societies' mainstream concerns.

Finally, this dissertation conceived journalism as a relevant social institution that produces and reproduces the information that a democratic community requires to function. In particular, this research project cares about the role of professional journalism. As Hallin defines it, this type of journalism is: "*Committed more strongly to the norms of the profession than to political ideas*" (Hallin, 1992, p.15). Therefore, when professional journalists and news organizations represent immigration under a victim and political frames, the coverage is most likely to have a different impact on the public debate than if they would do it using, for example, benefit frames. However, by looking also at the decisions reporters make when writing about migration, and the contextual constraints they have in a specific country, the type of representation of immigration is

better understood, makes more sense, and some practical suggestions for change can be elaborated.

Therefore, the practical implications of this project are twofold: On the one hand, the news media representation of immigration in Latin America can help to understand better the connection between the emerging trends on public opinion about the issue in this region and the role of the professional press. For example, there is an increasingly negative feeling towards immigrants according to survey data in each country. By looking at the most predominant frames (Victim and Political), it seems that this strategy of reporting immigration is not having the expected or desired effect on shifting public perceptions in the way journalists might prefer based on their self-perceived role.

However, more broadly, this tension between public opinion and media frames moving in the opposite direction, in light of this project's empirical results, is discouraging.

Although journalists try to cover immigration avoiding stereotyping, or fostering negative feelings toward the newcomers, the coverage seems not to permeate the public as deeply as desired. Nevertheless, another argument can emerge from this tension. The fact that journalists are cautious and very responsible in writing about immigration can also be interpreted as a "resistance" to the negativity they perceived from the public. In other words, they become social actors that take a firm stance, follow professional practices, but they are not necessarily "neutral" regarding the coverage of this new phenomenon in their country.

Second, from a journalistic perspective, this research provides evidence about the way journalists write about immigration, which puts the focus on patterns and practices that can be improved when reporting migration, in ways that could inform better the

democratic public discussion. For instance, as reporters admitted, there is a need to have homogenous coverage across all sections of the newspaper. This means news pieces produced by the reporters covering the army or police should have the same level of sensibility as the articles written by journalists in the human rights beat.

Limitations and Future Research

As for any other research project, there are several limitations to this dissertation. First, the database for this study was created using web scraping and Factiva (when available). The objective was to cast a wide net to capture all potential news articles relevant to the topic. However, the method of retrieving the news articles via web scraping could be expanded to more news outlets to have a larger sample of publications. The initial list of news outlets considered more than 20 papers, but the restriction and limitation of retrieving news articles on certain websites did not allow for that number of newspapers.

However, the strategy to obtain the articles, as well as the sampling process, were consistent across countries and news media, and also using existing databases such as Factiva increased the chances of capturing most (if not all) the potentially relevant stories. In general, international research of news media content in developing countries faces the limitation of centralized access to the data. Differently from the developed world, there is not a Factiva or LexisNexis, with a large number of news stories ready to be analyzed for Latin America. This is possibly why the research on developing

countries' news coverage focused on one country and/or uses the coverage of most traditional media rather than non-traditional ones.

Therefore, the database created for this project is a unique asset to study intraregional immigration in these three countries. The systematic retrieving of articles from very diverse sources ensures that the aggregate coverage analyzed in this dissertation represents different reporting platforms and perspectives across the media markets in Chile, Colombia and Mexico.

Moreover, the relevancy coding was made using two coders, and the reliability outcomes were reported in the methodology section. However, the decision was to conduct the framing analysis based only on my coding, and therefore no intercoder reliability is reported. The strategy for the framing analysis was based on a detailed codebook developed for this project available in the appendix. By coding using the definitions on the codebook, the framing examination was conducted in a systematic and rigorous way. Moreover, based on the results of these steps and the improvements made in the codebook based on this project, the plan is to replicate the process using more than one coder. The expectation is to find similar results to those reported here.

Also, in the methodology, the decision for the manual part of the content analysis was to examine the headline, lede and first paragraphs (defined as the first 200 words). Therefore, content such as frames and sources were not considered after that threshold. Although a limitation, research suggests that most people do not actively consume news articles in depth; instead, they scan headlines and other portions of the stories (Ecker, Lewandowsky, Chang & Pillai, 2014; Dor, 2003; American Press Institute, 2018). Moreover, the inverted pyramid style of news writing appears as a standard feature in the

sample analyzed here for Latin America. Thus, the most relevant information is available in the first paragraphs of each news story (McKane, 2013; Thomson, White & Kitley, 2008).

Another limitation of this project is that it focuses on the press (print and digital). Broadcasting was excluded because access to the content was not feasible remotely. However, the newspapers considered here were chosen following several criteria to make sure they were the most relevant and also representative of the market in each country.

Regarding future research, already a project using the total number of news articles (~20,000) is under way. In collaboration with the computer scientist who assisted with the construction of the database, we are developing a topic modeling approach to analyze the entire corpus of news. The ability to analyze large amounts of data using a computing assisted technique, plus the results of the inductive research conducted for this dissertation, should lead to rich information about the coverage of immigration in these three countries.

Furthermore, there is already a plan to use the news coverage, at least from Chile, to find correlations with public opinion surveys about immigration perception. Perhaps the presence of a victim frame could trigger empathy in people, potentially leading to a more positive attitude about immigrants in this country. Based on the public opinion data available in these countries, the perception of immigration has become increasingly negative. Therefore, comparing the presence of the victim frame in a certain period with the public opinion data during the same period could lead to interesting (and even

contradictory) results regarding the effects of the coverage of immigration based on a victim approach.

Also, different races among the immigrants in Chile could offer an interesting setting to explore the effect of immigration and racism in people's perceptions of the same phenomenon.

Linked to one of the limitations, further research should explore the same type of questions within broadcasting news content in Latin America. According to the journalists interviewed for this dissertation, broadcasting tends to cover immigration in ways that promote stereotyping. More research using news stories from television and radio could enrich the findings of this current project.

Portions of this dissertation were written under the Covid-19 pandemic. The effect on immigration and immigrant populations around the world has been significant, and in certain Latin American countries such as Brazil, Peru and Chile, the virus hit hard and some of the policy solutions did not work as smoothly as expected to control the spread. It would be interesting to analyze how news media in Chile, Colombia, and Mexico represented immigration during this pandemic and if this public health crisis shifts the presence of the most frequent frames found in this project.

As a concluding thought, at the core of the seven chapters of this dissertation is the importance of the press on not only transmitting information but also sharing everyday experiences and providing a window (frame) to worlds we do not necessarily have access to. The case of intraregional immigration in Latin America offers an interesting opportunity to analyze the news media representation of this issue and the role of journalists in influencing this representation. By examining the relationship that

emerges between newsrooms and the content that circulates in print and online, we, as citizens, can have better tools and information to evaluate the role of the news media.

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Method overview

This Appendix offers the main steps for the process of extracting news stories from different media (newspapers) during 2014-2018 in Latin America. The objective was to create a database of news stories about intraregional immigration to conduct the manual analysis for this dissertation. The two main sources of articles are websites and [FACTIVA](#) (database).

The newspapers used for the creation of this database were:

Chile: El Mercurio, La Tercera, emol.com, latercera.com, ElCiudadano.cl, ElMostrador.cl, TheClinic.cl

Colombia: ElTiempo, ElEspectador, eltiempo.com, elespectador.com, Semana.com, Minuto 30.com, LaSillaVacía.com

Mexico: El Universal, Reforma, Milenio, La Jornada, Reforma.com, Milenio.com, Lajornada.com, Eluniversal.com, Aristegui Noticias.com, SDP.com

For this project, we used web scraping techniques on Python. The Selenium libraries, *Requests*, and *Beautiful soup* were utilized for the extraction of the data from the websites. *Requests* is used to create HTTP protocol solicitation; in this particular case it also allows to get the HTTP documents from a specific web page so this can be consulted using the *beautiful soup* library. Using this method, we could work with static pages (which do not contain JavaScript content). In websites with JavaScript, we used the *selenium library* to execute the JavaScript before extracting the information.

Additionally, we used thread execution (optimization). By doing this, we can execute different parts of the code at the same time, which is especially useful in this project because the extraction of the data is four to five times faster than it would've been sequential (without thread execution). The handling of execution threads was used with the multiprocessing library in order to do these tasks quicker.

The data was stored on a csv. file to be read by the *pandas library*. After cleaning and sampling each news article (file) was transformed into an individual pdf.

Main steps:

1. Extraction of information

¹⁴⁴ Prepared by Fernando Severino (U. of Minnesota - US) with the assistance of Daniel Ortega (U. of Concepción - Chile). Please contact Fernando Severino at sever564@umn.edu for any questions.

This step was divided into two main processes:

a.- Candidates links are determined by specific search terms for each country: This method allows to capture news articles potentially related to the research questions to apply a filter in a secondary step.

Search Terms for each country for the initial web scraping:

- **CHILE:** "inmigrantes", "migrantes", "refugiados", "haitianos", "colombianos", "venezolanos", "peruanos", "bolivianos"
- **COLOMBIA:** "inmigrantes", "migrantes", "venezolanos", "refugiados"
- **MEXICO:** "centroamericanos", "centro américa", "américa central", "guatemaltecos", "hondureños", "salvadoreños", "inmigrantes", "migrantes", "refugiados"

b.- Download news content. Three different scenarios happened when extracting the news:

Case 1: WayBack Machine: La Tercera (Chile), La Jornada (Mx) y El Universal (Mx) 2014 needed the *Wayback Machine* as a source of the news articles (Internet Archive <https://archive.org/web/>).

Using the *WayBack Machine* consisted of three steps:

1. Search all the available website's snapshots and saving the more current one. These snapshots are obtained through the available API (Application Programming Interface). (https://archive.org/help/wayback_api.php).
2. Review sections of the website. Sections such as Sports and others that would be most likely irrelevant to the objective were not considered. This way, only the cover page of the sections where immigration news would be most likely present were downloaded, reducing calculation time.
3. Search with *brute force* the search terms on the text. For this, we used regular expressions (re.regular) and incomplete terms, similar to the narrow search (explained later). The search of the specific words was conducted in headlines and lede when available (The headlines and the lede was the available information displayed at the snapshots)
 - **La Tercera:** [reportaje, pulso, nacional, la-tercera-pm, mundo, entretenion, cultura, tendencias]

- **La Jornada:** [opinion, sociedad, cultura, economia, estados, politica, mundo, deportes, espectaculos, capital, ciencias]
- **Universal:** [nacion-mexico, ciudad-metropoli, estados, el-mundo, finanzas-cartera, tu-cartera-finanzas-personales, cultura, espectaculos, pymes-tu-empresa-tu-negocio, sociedad]

There are multiple reasons for using the approach described above. First, the *WayBack Machine* connection is unstable, thus if we extracted the information directly from the page, we could not be sure that the information was completely captured. That is why a copy of the covers or snapshots available in the *WayBack Machine* was downloaded.

Case 2: In the case of **La Semana** (Colombia) we had access to the API. Therefore, we conducted a direct search to the website database and there was no need to perform a web scraping due to the availability of this service.

Case 3: This is the most common case, where the search is conducted on the search engine of the web page (i.e., directly using the search box) guided by the search terms. Then, the web scraping is made on the results (links).

A fixed/standard format for extracting the news article was made for each page. But if the website changed the code HTML between 2014-2018, with respect to the previous versions, this page is not considered since it is a specific case (example: news with video or photo gallery).

2. Completing the data

Some of the extracted news had difference in the countries or sources. These differences were found in the HTML of each web page. To solve this, we "normalized" (uniformed) the names. The normalization left all words without the accent mark. For example, from "México" to "Mexico".

Moreover, when extracting the information, some of the news articles were captured without the source. To solve this, we manually added the sources to the news because we had different catalogs for each newspaper. For example, if 1,000 EMOL news were retrieved and 200 do not put EMOL (as source) but it is in the same catalog, we added the sources manually.

3. Data Cleaning

To eliminate repeated data (news articles) the following *simultaneous* criteria were considered:

- *Link*: Two news with the same URL were considered to be the same news. (only applies to web scraping)
- *Date*: News with an empty date field or that contains information that does not correspond to the date between 2014-2018, was removed because we cannot be sure that the news is within the desired search period.
- *Body and Title*: Bodies of the news articles must be the same. For this, the data is previously cleaned where accent marks are eliminated. All the words are converted to lowercases and the special characters were eliminated. (spaces, ñ, accent marks or any other kind of unwanted character).

The cleaning of duplicates was applied several times:

1. When extracting the links of the news articles (to avoid double processing because one news with the same link are considered the same news articles)
2. At a Country-level. After the news stories from all the media in one country were gathered a data normalization is applied. We verified there were no duplicates, applying this duplication check to *link, title, and body*.
3. All countries at the same time. When the data is grouped for all countries a duplicate review was performed again using the same criteria.
4. Finally, an additional duplication check was made after merging the FACTIVE and Web Scraping news articles.

4. Narrow Search to refine the database

The narrow search was applied to the news gathered by the scraping and FACTIVE. The objective was to refine the corpus of data.

The following search strings we used for filtering (narrow search):

- **Colombia**: venez* AND (inmigra* OR migra* OR refugi* OR **extranjer***).
- **Chile**: (haiti* OR colombi* OR venez* OR peru* OR bolivi*) AND (inmigra* OR migra* OR refugi* or extranjer*).
- **Mexico**: (inmigra* OR migra* OR refugi* or extranjer*) AND (centroamerican* OR centro america OR america Central OR guatemala* OR hondur* OR el salvador OR salvadoren*)¹⁴⁵

Transformations were applied to the title, lede, and body to “normalize” the writing of the words. Therefore, when applying the search strings, we do not have to worried whether it a word starts with a capital letter or the word was written with accent marks. For example:

Salvadoreño → *salvadoreno*

¹⁴⁵ We add the word extranjer* as a potential synonym for *inmigrantes or migrantes*.

These searches (using search strings) were performed on titles, lede and the rest of the text. We used *re library*, with regular expressions, which allows us to find data matches in different parts of the text. For example, doing the search for the word "cas*", the results could be words such as: *casa, casco, caso, cascada*.

5. FACTIVA Extraction

This project uses FACTIVA as a database for mainstream news outlets. The objective of using FACTIVA was to have the print versions of the news articles when available to add them to the website stories retrieved with the web scraping. To ensure the analysis of online news as well, the scraping considered also the website for these mainstream news outlets available at FACTIVA (La Tercera + latercera.com).

First, we downloaded the rtf files, with the requested data (using the search strings) and saved them in a folder. Then we run the script "rtf2html.sh" inside the folder where the rtf files are located. This script transformed the rtf files into a html file. Then we parsed it by "html_to_csv.ipynb" and generated the csv files with the news.

For FACTIVA the following search strings were used:

- **Colombia:** venez* AND (inmigra* OR migra* OR refugi*)
- **Chile:** (haiti* OR colombi* OR venez* OR peru* OR bolivi*) AND (inmigra* OR migra* OR refugi*)
- **Mexico:** (inmigra* OR migra* OR refugi* or extranjer*) AND (centroamerican* OR centro america OR america Central OR guatemala* OR hondur* OR el salvador OR salvadoren*)¹⁴⁶

6. Merge Factiva + web scraped stories

The merge of data from FACTIVA and the web scraping is performed on the clean data sources. First, the duplicates are reviewed on FACTIVA in the following fields

["Title", "Body", "Lede"] which is also the definition of a “*news article*” in this process.

Then the articles obtained by the scraping and by FACTIVA are merged.

Duplicates are eliminated, attributes were reviewed (Title, body and lede). In the case of finding a duplicate among the different data sources, the news extracted from FACTIVA were left in the data set.

7. Sampling for manual coding.

¹⁴⁶ extranjer* was not included in the search for FACTIVA (when extracting from the database), because the results were potentially skewed to non-relevant news.

- Between 500 and 1,100 news, 20% of the news are sampled.
- 1,100 and more stories 10% of the news are sampled
- Below 500 all articles were analyzed.

To sample the quantities indicated above, we used the [pandas library](#) with the `sample` method. This library allows us to sample the data, present in a dataframe, by selecting the indicated amount. A potential difference of 1 or 2 news articles could've have occurred due to the sampling automated method and rounding (truncation), but the parameters were set at the targeted levels.

After sampling, we generated a pdf for each news stories using the *reportlab* library. These pdfs contain: source, date, author (when available), title, the lede, body and the link to the web page of the news (when available).

Note about FACTIVA and the ñ

In the rtf files, the search description does not include the * after the ñ but the searched was conducted using the ñ and the *

Based on few iterations for FACTIVA salvadoreñ* y salvadoren* yield to the same results. Only Reforma (Mx) has a difference of one news article.

Procedure for Article Eligibility for Study about Immigration News

This study is about news media coverage about **intra-regional immigration** and immigrants in Chile, Colombia, and Mexico in recent years (last decade). To assess if the news stories selected for this study are relevant (i.e. the content is about intra-regional migration flows) we are conducting a reliability test in which your job is essential.

The main concern is **relevancy** of the news articles regarding intra-regional immigration in these countries. This means people moving from a developing to another developing country within Latin America. Also, the interest is on recent influx of people rather than immigration patterns in the early XIX and XX century in Latin America (e.g. Jewish, Italians, Germans, Lebanese, Arabs, etc.). Therefore, the news article should address the issue of movement of people from other countries (Latin American nations) coming into Chile, Colombia and Mexico.

Each country has a relevant immigratory influx from specific countries. For example, in the case of Mexico are mostly unaccompanied Central Americans minors and family units. For Colombia these are Venezuelans and in the case of Chile are Colombians, Venezuelans, Haitians, plus the common migratory movements from Peru, Bolivia and Argentina. The main focus of this study is around this type of immigration (demographic).

A special mention has to be made about references of immigrants and immigration in different activities such as **sport, arts, religion, besides economic (labor) and political (immigration policies or institutions)**. If the news article covers the issue of intra-regional migration using **ANY** of these angles should also be considered as relevant.

Coding Procedure:

The coding will be done in the spreadsheet shared with you. The articles to code are based on a database created for this project that uses a particular search string for each country¹⁴⁷. The total news stories are 308 from 2014 -2018. Each news outlet has a folder with pdf. files for every year. Each of these files has a specific ID that matches with the one on the spreadsheet. Each coder should review all the files and use a dichotomous code:

(0) = not relevant, (1) = relevant. (plug this in the same column).

¹⁴⁷ **Colombia:** venez* AND (inmigra* OR migra* OR refugi* OR extranjer*)

Chile: (haiti* OR colombi* OR venez* OR peru* OR bolivi*) AND (inmigra* OR migra* OR refugi* or extranjer*)

Mexico: (inmigra* OR migra* OR refugi* or extranjer*) AND (centroamerican* OR centro america OR america Central OR guatemala* OR hondur* OR el salvador OR salvadoren*)

As stated before, relevant articles are those that meet the relevancy criteria of intraregional migration in each of the countries. As a way to make the decision easier try to answer these questions:

1) Is the issue of intraregional immigration in the headline, lede paragraph, or in other substantive part of the body (one or more paragraphs)?

2) If it is not in the headline, lede paragraph or in a substantive part, is there a relevant paragraph or sentences about immigration?

3) Is the issue of immigration discussed in reference to the situation of the countries of interest? For example, if it is a Mexican newspaper talking about immigration in the US, does it also bring the topic back to the reality of Mexico? (see examples below)

4) Is the origin of the news article in the country of interest? (For example, does the article start with Texas or Ciudad de Mexico in the localization?)

5) The sources used by the news article or cited are of the country of interest, for example, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Mexico talking about unaccompanied minors.

One or more questions are answered “Yes” it means the article is relevant = (1)

In each news story look for the Spanish words “*inmigrantes*”, “*migrantes*”, “*extranjeros*”, “*refugiados*” as a clue for relevancy as well as some of the nationalities of interest (see footnote)

Be aware that news outlets, also tend to report about refugees, asylum-seekers and immigration as synonymous, if a news story talks about refugees and/or asylum-seekers (refugiados/ en busca de asilo) in Chile, Mexico or Colombia should be included.

Specific considerations for each country:

Chile:

1) There are cities in the North of the country, which news media will link foreigners to crime and violence. Make sure they directly refer to immigrants and foreigners to consider the news story relevant. (people living in Chile, but they are identified as citizens of other countries).

Also, in the North of the country there are Chilean Afro-descendants. Only if the news story is about the current immigration phenomenon should be considered as relevant (1).

2) Chile has military connection with Haiti through the United Nations. News stories might talk about immigration from Haiti using this framework. Consider the news

relevant only if spend a considerable paragraphs discussion the current Haitian migration in Chile.

3) Other recent inflow of immigrants from countries outside Peru, Bolivia, Colombia, Venezuela and Haiti also consider them as relevant.

Colombia:

1) Colombians returning from Venezuela by deportations or the crisis in Venezuela is an interesting case. Although they are not necessary a “foreign migrants”, for this study we will consider it relevant (1). The reason behind is that many of them are mixed families and/or they have spent a good portion of their lives in Venezuela.

Also, news articles talking about border issues and mentioning movement of people across border regions (including human trafficking) should be coded as relevant.

2) The case of internally displaced people in the case of Colombia is NOT relevant for the objective of this research.

3) If the office of Migratory Affairs (Migración Colombia) is mentioned in the story should be a clue about the potential relevancy of the news article.

Mexico:

1) Similar than Colombia and Chile, if news articles mention refugees or immigrants from other countries, we will consider these cases as relevant. I will conduct a revision of these cases later on.

2) Additionally, the relevance of issues in the border of Mexico- USA and the border between Guatemala-Mexico are both relevant if the news article expands and discuss the topic from the Mexican perspective (sources, stories, etc.). Also, the movement of people across these borders is relevant also if written under the Mexican perspective (e.g., deportation, returns from migrants to Mexico)

3) *Matanza de Tamaulipas*. This was a massive murder of immigrants that might appear in the coverage. Considered any news article about this as relevant.

Special topics for all countries:

1) There will be cases in which immigration is covered in some lines of the article. If the articles elaborate more than one line, we will consider it relevant. The question you should ask yourself is: *Is there any possible analysis to be made based on the mention of immigration in the news story or there is not enough content in the mention?*

2) There will be cases where immigration is not directly mention, rather concept such as people seeking protection or seeking asylum. These cases also should be relevant. Also, cases where they refer to immigrants as “foreign workers”.

3) If articles talk about “victims of abuses” not necessary mentioning their condition of immigrants. These should be relevant cases too. In these stories, look for words like foreigners or country of origin.

See examples below for reference for each country (in Spanish):

A. Mexico:

YES (1)→

Respuesta militar no es opcion contra migrantes: academicos UNAM - Aristegui Noticias

El investigador de la UNAM, Juan Barron, enfatizo la necesidad de visibilizar la tragedia humanitaria que viven los migrantes y la desaparicion de personas en la frontera.

El despliegue de dos mil a cuatro mil soldados de la guardia nacional de Estados Unidos en la frontera con Mexico para intentar detener la migracion ilegal a ese pais es una estrategia estridente y de magros resultados, consideraron academicos de la UNAM. Durante una conferencia de medios celebrada en el Instituto de Geografia (IGg), Juan Carlos Barron Pastor, investigador del Centro de Investigaciones sobre America del Norte (CISAN) destaco que "la respuesta militar no es la opcion" para detener el acceso de los migrantes a Estados Unidos. "Desde el CISAN nos manifestamos en contra de cualquier opcion militar hacia los migrantes connacionales, centroamericanos, y demas personas que se encuentran en extrema vulnerabilidad", senalo Barron Pastor. Se busca realizar con mayor estridencia acciones que ya han ocurrido en otros tiempos (con los expresidentes George W. Bush y Barack Obama). "Es la tercera vez que se envia esa guardia a la frontera y sabemos de sus magros resultados", recordo el academico de la UNAM. De acuerdo con un comunicado de la UNAM, considero que la respuesta a esta violencia estructural responde a un cambio de estrategia por parte de la Presidencia de EU, pero reconocio que "en este momento el numero de deportaciones ha bajado, el numero de cruces fronterizos esta en su nivel mas bajo en anos". Pedro Isnardo de la Cruz Lugardo, investigador de la Escuela Nacional de Trabajo Social (ENTS), indico que hay que rechazar, denunciar y oponerse en todas sus posibilidades a este embate de Trump, que atenta contra la esfera de derechos, de proyectos de vida y lo que supone la universalizacion en todo migrante. "Uno de los exitos politicos de Trump en su campana presidencial de 2016 fue colocar a la migracion como uno de los temas criticos, y esto le ha redituado, y quiza lo siga haciendo. Son beneficios politicos electorales", dijo de la Cruz Lugardo. Se debe visibilizar la tragedia humanitaria que viven los migrantes Barron enfatizo la necesidad de visibilizar la tragedia humanitaria que viven los migrantes. Asimismo, destaco la dramatica desaparicion de personas a ambos lados de la frontera y la operacion Streamline, que criminaliza indocumentados en Estados Unidos desde hace

10 años. "Esa operación consiste en tratar con cargos criminales a migrantes de la población civil". Se trata de una violencia estructural que pretende decirnos "como cierta gente merece vivir y otra morir, lo cual es indignante". El gobierno mexicano debe poner en el centro a las personas que sufren esta situación de migración ilegal criminalizada y atender, en la agenda política mexicana, el tema de los migrantes y las desapariciones. Al respecto, De la Cruz urgio a tener una agenda mínima de gobierno, candidatos, sociedad civil y centros de investigación respecto al asunto migratorio, para saber que hará el gobierno mexicano en las fronteras y cuál es la agenda para que no siga el flujo ilegal.

Tricky but YES (1) Pagaban ambulantes 2 mdp en Tapachula

Unos 4 mil 500 ambulantes pagaban hasta casi dos millones de pesos para vender en la vía pública en esta ciudad, pero solo 80 mil pesos entraba a Hacienda local, reveló el Alcalde Samuel Chacón. En entrevista, dijo que investigan quién o quiénes cobran ese dinero y el destino del mismo.

Informo que se han presentado las denuncias correspondientes y se aportan las pruebas respectivas ante la Procuraduría estatal para castigar a quienes lucraban con el comercio informal. Presumo que el recurso quedaba en manos de líderes ambulantes, aunque no descarto que en los actos de corrupción estén involucrados funcionarios municipales. "Ya iniciamos las averiguaciones, estamos haciendo las indagatorias con la Fiscalía, con el Procurador, para detectar a dónde iba ese recurso", aseguro. Menciono que del total de vendedores, solo 800 contaban o llegaron a tener un permiso de la autoridad. Mientras que del universo, la mitad eran **migrantes guatemaltecos**. El desalojo de informales ha desatado protestas y la instalación de un plantón frente a la Alcaldía en demanda de diálogo. El Presidente Municipal señaló que esta acción es parte de un programa de mejoramiento urbano de la ciudad. A los ambulantes, añadí, se les ha propuesto conformar tianguis itinerantes en colonias como parte del respeto a su derecho de tener una fuente laboral.

NO (0) → *This one is tricky, but it is a NO because is 100% US focused. It could be analyzed as a news article about the migrant caravan from a US perspective. There are not Mexican sources cited.*

"!Todos se quedaran en Mexico!": Trump sobre migrantes en la frontera - Aristegui Noticias

Las caravanas son "una forma de sacar a ciertas personas de su país y volcarlas en Estados Unidos por más tiempo", escribió el presidente de EU en su Twitter.

El presidente de Estados Unidos, Donald Trump, aseguro este domingo que las caravanas de migrantes centroamericanos son usadas para "deshacerse" de personas no deseadas en sus países de origen. "Sería muy INTELIGENTE si México detuviera a las Caravanas mucho antes de llegar a nuestra frontera sur, o si los países de origen no las dejaran formarse (es una forma de sacar a ciertas personas de su país y volcarlas en Estados Unidos por más tiempo)", tuiteo para rematar con: "Los demócratas crearon este

problema. !No mas cruces!". Would be very SMART if Mexico would stop the Caravans long before they get to our Southern Border, or if originating countries would not let them form (it is a way they get certain people out of their country and dump in U.S. No longer). Dems created this problem. No crossings! -- Donald J. Trump (@realDonaldTrump) 25 de noviembre de 2018 Sus comentarios se dan cuando varios miles de inmigrantes se agrupan en la frontera de Estados Unidos y Mexico en busca de asilo y como parte de caravanas que se originan en America Central. La comentarista conservadora Michelle Malkin califico a las caravanas de "abuso sistematico y planificado de nuestro sistema de asilo". "El presidente Trump tiene toda la razon de que comienza en el punto de origen y que, a lo largo del camino, todos los gobiernos que ayudan a facilitarlos al no trazar una linea en la arena en su propio pais tambien son culpables", apunto Malkin en "Fox & Friends". El tuit del domingo de Trump fue uno de una serie que comenzo el sabado sobre las caravanas de migrantes. En uno de estos expreso que a los migrantes no se les permitiria ingresar al pais a menos que sus solicitudes fueran aprobadas por el tribunal. "Los migrantes en la frontera sur no podran ingresar a Estados Unidos hasta que sus reclamos se aprueben individualmente en los tribunales. Solo permitiremos aquellos que entren en nuestro pais legalmente. Aparte de eso, nuestra politica muy fuerte es Atrapar y Detener. No 'Liberar' en Estados Unidos", advirtio. "Todos se quedaran en Mexico. Si por alguna razon se hace necesario, cerraremos nuestra frontera sur. !No hay forma de que Estados Unidos, despues de decadas de abuso, aguantara esta situacion costosa y peligrosa!", asevero.

Tricky but YES (1) → *The immigration issue originated in Mexico and touches the Mexican reality. It is a brief story so the couple of sentences make it relevant.*

EU solicita a Mexico investigue causas de enfermedad en ninos migrantes

Ello en respuesta a la muerte de dos ninos bajo custodia del gobierno estadounidense.

Mexico.- El gobierno de Donald Trump pidio al gobierno mexicano que indague las causas por **las que los menores migrantes presentan enfermedades respiratorias, con el objetivo de prevenir fallecimientos una vez que crucen la frontera**. De acuerdo con la secretaria del Departamento de Seguridad Nacional, Kirstjen Nielsen, tras la muerte de dos ninos migrantes bajo custodia de Estados Unidos, **solicito tanto a las autoridades mexicanas como** a los Centros de Control de Enfermedades estadounidenses, que indaguen las causas de las enfermedades y brinden asistencia medica en los albergues. El menor guatemalteco de 8 anos quien fallecio esta semana fue identificado como Felipe Gomez Alonso, cuyas causas de muerte permanecen bajo investigacion. Nielsen considera que existe un incremento de ninos migrantes con enfermedades respiratorias, lo cual es relevante si se contempla que el 60 por ciento de los menores que cruzan a EU son ninos o familias para cuyo albergue no se encuentran preparados los centros. Con informacion de Reforma y AFP

Tricky but Yes (1) →

Descarta Gobernacion ceder ante presiones

Luego de que el Presidente de Estados Unidos, Donald Trump, criticó el avance de la caravana migrante y anunció el reforzamiento de la seguridad en su frontera sur, **el Secretario de Gobernación, Alfonso Navarrete Prida**, afirmó ayer que el Gobierno de México no caerá en exigencias ni presiones de ningún tipo. En conferencia de prensa, el funcionario subrayó que el Gobierno mexicano respeta las declaraciones de cualquier presidente o líder de una nación, pero exige respeto a sus connacionales, a sus decisiones soberanas y a las acciones que toma para el cumplimiento de sus leyes.

"No vamos a caer en exigencias de gobierno alguno que pretenda provocar en México una reacción hostil por sí misma, sin fundamento, sin haber agotado todas las vías que se pueden dar en el diálogo que sostenemos, como vemos nosotros la migración", expresó en la Segob. "Para nosotros es cumplir con la ley, no vamos a aceptar presiones de país alguno, nosotros vemos la migración no como criminales, sino como un fenómeno de realidades compartidas, de respeto a derechos humanos". Navarrete Prida informó que hasta la tarde de ayer el Gobierno federal había recibido mil 128 solicitudes de refugio -100 más que el domingo- y que atendían a mil 28 migrantes en el albergue habilitado en el recinto Ferial de Tapachula. **El Secretario de Gobernación señaló ayer la infiltración de "grupos de intereses" y personas que se dedican a actividades delictivas, en la Caravana migrante centroamericana. "La información que hemos recibido con el apoyo de los países centroamericanos, nos permite suponer que, aprovechándose de esa condición de vulnerabilidad, hay personas que se dedican a actividades delictivas dentro de la caravana migrante"**, señaló. Además, que los migrantes que avanzan rumbo al norte también están siendo presas de "intereses específicos", para presionar posiciones políticas tanto en Centroamérica como en Estados Unidos.

B. Colombia:

SI (1)→

En menos de 72 horas más de 100 colombianos han sido deportados de Venezuela

Los ciudadanos colombianos se encuentran en el centro de migración de Cucuta.

Ya son 109 los colombianos deportados de Venezuela y que permanecen en el centro de migración de la ciudad de Cucuta, luego de ser sorprendido por la Guardia venezolana en supermercados y sitios de venta de productos básicos de la canasta familiar y viveres. Estas detenciones que se produjeron en menos de 72 horas, se realizaron en el marco de una fuerte ofensiva para frenar el contrabando en el territorio venezolano y que hasta el momento deja como resultado, la incautación de miles de kilos de alimentos en los últimos días. Los nacionales que permanecieron más de dos días en condición de capturados, fueron entregados a las autoridades migratorias de Colombia en el Puente Internacional Simón Bolívar. "Me sacaron de la manera más humillante, sin poder avisarle a mi familia que quedo en Caracas, estoy desesperada no sé que hacer no tengo dinero aquí donde estoy, no he podido contactarme con nadie en Colombia ni en Venezuela..." manifestó una de las mujeres deportadas a Caracol Radio. En un balance

entregado recientemente por las autoridades venezolanas, en un operativo adelantado en un almacén del occidente del país, se incautaron más de un millón y medio de pañales junto con más de 360 toneladas de detergente y miles de kilogramos de alimentos. El vicepresidente venezolano, Jorge Arreaza, indicó en una transmisión de la televisión estatal venezolana desde el almacén investigado que se encontraron 1.523.776 unidades de pañales, 360 toneladas de detergente en polvo, además de suavizante, máquinas de afeitar o toallas. En el almacén, situado en el estado occidental de Zulia fronterizo con Colombia, se acumulaban también casi 15.000 unidades de leche maternizada, 17.076 kilos de alubias, 1.1176 litros de leche completa líquida, 40.250 kilos de harina de maíz y 30.000 kilos de arroz, señaló Arreaza. También se almacenaban toallas sanitarias, champús de distintas marcas, jabón en polvo, pasta dental, baterías, servilletas, suplementos alimenticios, leche en polvo, salsas variadas y alimentos para mascotas. El vicepresidente venezolano de Seguridad y Soberanía Alimentaria, Carlos Osorio, explicó que se trata de productos que estaban siendo acaparados para profundizar el boicót a la economía. Encontramos productos almacenados desde el mes de septiembre y noviembre, dijo Osorio. Por su parte, el Superintendente Nacional de Precios Justos, Andrés Eloy Blanco, señaló que la empresa propietaria del almacén, llamada Herrera C.A. y ubicada en la zona industrial del municipio de San Francisco, fue ocupada por las autoridades competentes. El Gobierno venezolano lucha desde hace meses contra el desabastecimiento de productos de primera necesidad en el país, una situación de la que responsabiliza a una guerra económica por parte de empresas privadas, a las que acusa de acaparamiento. En Venezuela, una economía que importa la mayoría de los productos manufacturados que consume, el Gobierno subsidia una serie de productos de primera necesidad, como la leche, el pollo, el café y la harina de trigo o maíz. Además, importa mucho de estos productos a las dos tasas de cambio más bajas -6,3 y alrededor de 11 bolívares por dólar- de las tres existentes.

Tricky but Yes (1) → See bolded sentences.

OEA anuncia Grupo de Trabajo para abordar migración venezolana

El secretario general de la Organización de Estados Americanos (OEA), Luis Almagro, anunció hoy la creación de un Grupo de Trabajo dedicado a la migración de Venezuela, que estará dirigido por el exalcalde venezolano David Smolansky. Almagro describió a Smolansky, del opositor partido Voluntad Popular, como "una persona absolutamente comprometida con la causa de los migrantes venezolanos" y que "definitivamente tiene una impronta de cercanía, porque ha visitado los campamentos y ha estado cerca de la gente tanto en Brasil como en Colombia".

El Grupo de Trabajo tendrá dos misiones principales: elaborar un informe sobre la migración de venezolanos y captar fondos. (Ver más: Diosdado Cabello: Una "vergüenza" reunión sobre crisis migratoria venezolana) Su creación es una iniciativa de la Secretaría General de la OEA y, por tanto, los países miembros del organismo no formarán parte de este ente. De 33 años, Smolansky fue alcalde del municipio caraqueño de El Hatillo desde diciembre de 2013 hasta septiembre de 2017, cuando huyó de Venezuela tras ser condenado a 15 años de prisión e inhabilitado

politicamente por permitir la instalacion de barricadas en su localidad. **Smolansky, que escapoo a Brasil desde Venezuela y ha viajado a Colombia, ha intensificado durante los ultimos meses su defensa de los migrantes y refugiados venezolanos. (Ver mas: Esto acordaron once paises latinoamericanos reunidos en Quito sobre migracion venezolana)** Su carrera politica comenzoo en 2007 en el movimiento estudiantil que se opuso a la reforma constitucional que queria emprender el fallecido presidente venezolano Hugo Chaavez (1999-2013). Almagro hizo el anuncio sobre la creacion del Grupo de Trabajo en declaraciones a la prensa despues de una sesion extraordinaria de del Consejo Permanente de la OEA para abordar la crisis de migrantes venezolanos. La ONU estima que hasta junio de este anno 2,3 millones de venezolanos han salido de su pais, principalmente con rumbo a Colombia, Ecuador, Peruu, Brasil y Chile.

C. Chile:

Yes (1) →

Inmigrantes reciben record de 1.251 subsidios habitacionales en 2014 y preveen nuevo aumento

Desde 2008, el 89,5% de los 6.555 aportes estatales entregados ha sido para peruanos, bolivianos, ecuatorianos y argentinos. Entre los beneficiarios hay dos norcoreanos. Con un aumento sostenido en los ultimos annos y un nuumero total que ya supera las 441 mil personas, seguun el Departamento de Extranjeriia y Migracion (DEM) del Ministerio del Interior, los inmigrantes comienzan a integrarse a la demografiia nacional y dejan de ser minoriias circunscritas a determinados barrios de Santiago. Recogiendo este fenomeno, en 2004 el Ministerio de Vivienda y Urbanismo (Minvu) permitioo que extranjeros postularan a los subsidios habitacionales, aunque la demanda y la asignacion de los mismos recieen cobraron fuerza en 2008, con la nueva politica de vivienda. Asii, el anno pasado se llegoo a un record de 1.251 beneficios otorgados a inmigrantes.

Yes (1) →

Carabinero sorprende hablando perfecto creole para ayudar a haitiana

Usuarios de redes sociales han aplaudido el buen manejo del efectivo policial, quien afirmo siempre estar tratando de practicar el idioma para no perder la costumbre.

Un carabinero se ha vuelto famoso en las redes sociales luego de ayudar a una haitiana hablandole en creole. Su manejo en el idioma le permitio a la extranjera llegar al lugar indicado para realizar los tramites que necesitaba. El cabo primero Alexander Ortega fue hace tres anos designado para integrar la Mision de Paz de Naciones Unidas en Haiti, lugar en donde aprendio el idioma que hoy le ayudo a hablar fluidamente con la mujer, que agradecio y se sorprendio con su buen manejo en la lengua.

Appendix 3: Codebook for content analysis

A) Manifest content-coding process

Thank you for participating in this research project about media and immigration in Latin America. Your work is critical for this process.

Your role as a coder is to collect EXPLICIT/MANIFEST information from each news article that you have been assigned. Please read carefully every question and answer before you respond.

You need to record your answers in the electronic platform that I've developed for this project and shared it with you. As you are aware, the news articles are in a pdf. format, but they look similar to a traditional newspaper article. There are two formats of the pdf. files (see below).

Format 1:

Emol, Chile 12/11/2016 Catalina Iturriaga

Formalizan a banda que operaba en Extranjeriia



Headline

Se trata de un funcionario del aarea que depende del Ministerio del Interior, otros dos ex funcionarios puublicos y un colombiano. Los hechos salieron a la luz por una denuncia del mismo DEM, que fue investigada por la fiscal Carolina Suazo y la Brigada Investigadora contra la Tráta de Personas (Britrap) de la Policia de Investigaciones. Ambos determinaron que los imputados falsificaban documentos a los que estampaban timbres reales del Departamento de Extranjeriia y Migracion (DEM), dependiente del Ministerio del Interior, para darles apariencia de auteenticos. En algunos casos, de acuerdo a la acusacion, los imputados habriian falsificado documentos para que migrantes creyeran errooneamente que tenian visas en traamite. En otros habriian falsificado contratos de trabajo para renovar visas.



Lede

Seguun los antecedentes recopilados por los investigadores, los imputados Ceesar Araneda Nuunnez (ex funcionario del DEM), Cristiaan Hugo Veas (empleado del DEM), Neestor Gustavo Huenupaan Mellado (ex funcionario del DEM) y el colombiano Juliaan Herrera Hinostroza teniian funciones especificas. Araneda Nuunnez habriia ofrecido servicios como asesor migratorio, en los que falsificaba documentos con timbres verdaderos del DEM para migrantes, pero tambieen certificados de cotizaciones, finiquitos de contrato y contratos de trabajo falsos. Cristiaan Veas, en tanto, era el presunto encargado de tramitar las solicitudes con antecedentes incompletos y realizaba caalculos de multa de extranjeros infractores por un monto inferior. Neestor Huenupaan habriia falsificado documentos para gestionar ante la notariaa contratos de trabajo para extranjeros. Y Juliaan Herrera Hinostroza estaa imputado por materializar las gestiones de Ceesar Araneda usando



Body

Format 2:

The Clinic, Chile 07/26/2017 EFE / The Clinic Online

Nuevo visado para niños migrantes permitirá que accedan a beneficios independiente de la condición legal de sus padres

La presidenta Michelle Bachelet, anuncio hoy la creación de un visado gratuito especial para niños y adolescentes migrantes que les permitirá acceder a prestaciones de salud y beneficios en educación. Bachelet firmo un decreto que elimina el cobro para obtener el visado especial e indico que se esta trabajando con las embajadas y consulados de Peru, Venezuela, Bolivia, Colombia y Haiti para simplificar la entrega de certificados de nacimiento desde los países de origen. El unico requisito para obtener el visado especial es que los menores tengan un certificado de nacimiento legalizado en Chile, independientemente de la situación migratoria de los padres. "Como la ley considera que estan en situación migratoria irregular, los mas pequenitos ven limitados sus derechos o quedan a merced de la buena voluntad", dijo Bachelet al presentar la iniciativa en Recoleta, donde reside una gran cantidad de inmigrantes. "Es una tremenda injusticia que queremos empezar a dejar atras con un sistema que sea claro y transparente. Queremos que, hayan nacido en Chile o no, los niños y niñas tengan los mismos derechos", anadio la mandataria. El Gobierno calcula que durante la segunda mitad del año mas de 30.000 menores obtendran el visado especial para acceder a beneficios estatales. En el ambito educativo, los migrantes podran solicitar subvenciones y tendran acceso a programas escolares de alimentación, libros, transporte, uniforme y seguros, entre otros beneficios. Tambien podran beneficiarse de las políticas del sistema de protección social "Chile crece contigo" y otros programas sociales y de salud. Bachelet asegura que la creación del visado especial permite a Chile cumplir

Coding questions and procedure:

The content you need to look and register from the news articles is the following.

1) Please enter what THE FIRST source used or quoted in the article (choose ONLY ONE from the list) is

1. Government (National and State authorities)
2. Local elected authority (e.g., Member of Parliament, mayor- *alcalde*)
3. Member of a foreign government (e.g., President of the United States)
4. International Non-governmental Organization, NGO (e.g., Human Rights Watch)
5. International/regional political organization (ONU-ACHNUR, CIDH-OEA)
6. National o Local Non-governmental Organization, NGO.
7. Member of Church/Religion
8. Police (a member of a law enforcement authority)
9. Law/Judiciary (e.g., judges)
10. Immigrant, refugee, migrant
11. A family member of immigrant, refugee, migrant.
12. Academic/Researchers/Experts
13. Local citizen/neighbor.
14. Business/Private Sector (e.g., business owners)
15. Activists

16. Journalist or columnist
17. None
18. Other

2) Please enter the sources used or quoted in the article after the headline¹⁴⁸ (MARK ALL THAT APPLY).

1. Government (National and State authorities)
2. Local elected authority (e.g., Member of Parliament, mayor- *alcalde*)
3. Member of a foreign government (e.g., President of the United States)
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16. Journalist or columnist
17. None
18. Other

3) In the headline: Does the news article use numbers, percentages, or statistics about immigration? (Mark all that apply)

1. Economic/labor or jobs figure
2. Crimes against immigrants
3. Crimes by immigrants

¹⁴⁸ See unit of analysis for explanation of parameters.

4. Deportations or returns
5. Detentions/ apprehensions¹⁴⁹ of immigrants
6. Rescue of immigrants
7. Asylum requests/refugee requests
8. Visa requests
9. Demographic/Health/Educational
10. None

4) After the headline¹⁵⁰: Does the news article use numbers, percentages, or statistics about immigration? (Mark all that apply)

1. Economic/labor or jobs figure
2. Crimes against immigrants
3. Crimes by immigrants
4. Deportations or returns
5. Detentions/ apprehensions¹⁵¹ of immigrants
6. Rescue of immigrants
7. Asylum requests/refugee requests
8. Visa requests
9. Demographic/Health/Educational
10. None

Explanation of sources:

To make the identification of sources easier, first check the country of the news outlet you are analyzing:

Chile: Emol, La Tercera, El Mostrador, The Clinic, El Ciudadano

¹⁴⁹ In some countries the word apprehension could be “Arrestar”, “Detener”, “Capturar”, “Asegurar”, “Encarcelar”.

¹⁵⁰ See unit of analysis for explanation of parameters.

¹⁵¹ In some countries the word apprehension could be “Arrestar”, “Detener”, “Capturar”, “Asegurar”, “Encarcelar”.

Colombia: El Tiempo, El Espectador, La Silla Vacía, Minuto 30, Semana
Mexico: Aristegui Noticias, SDP Noticias, Milenio, El Universal, Reforma, La
Jornada.

Government (National and State authorities): President of the country, Cabinet Members, Deputies (*Ministros, Subsecretarios, Secretarios de Repartición*), Head of Governmental agencies from the country of the news outlet. Examples of presidents during the period of interest:

Chile: Michelle Bachelet, Sebastián Piñera.

Colombia: José Manuel Santos, Iván Duque.

Mexico: Enrique Peña Nieto (EPN), Andrés Manuel López Obrador (AMLO)

Also, in this category, you should include members of Immigration authority:

Chile: DEM – Departamento de Extranjería y Migración.

Colombia: Migración Colombia

Mexico: INM Instituto Nacional de Migración

COMAR. Comisión Mexicana de Ayuda a Refugiados.

Additionally, Government press releases are included in this category: Official communication from the government used to write the story. It could be that they do not cite a particular individual, just the document. If a specific individual is quoted or mentioned in these press releases, you need to determine the order in which the source is used. Also, even when a source is not quoted, journalists might use the expression “*According to...*”, if they identify a Government source should be included in this category.

Overall, this governmental category tries to capture all the sources that represent an official voice from a Governmental branch. For instance, Federal Attorney office or other repartitions like this should be included.

Local authorities: This is the category for local elected authorities such as *alcaldes* (mayors), *gobernadores* (governors), *consejales* (member of the city council). Also include press releases from local authorities.

Another source in this category is the member of congress: *Diputados* (house members, the lower chamber of Congress) and *Senadores* (a member of the senate).

Member of a foreign government (e.g., President of the United States, Secretary of State). For example, the president of the United States will appear mostly in the coverage of Mexico. If the president of Chile is in Colombia and you are reading a Colombian article, the Chilean president then is the member of a foreign government.

Also, foreign consulates or embassies should be included.

International/regional political organization. This could consider a member of different multilateral organizations globally and in Latin America, such as United Nations and the La Agencia de la ONU para los Refugiados (ACNUR), OEA (Organizacion de Estados Americanos and the Comision Interamericana de Derechos Humanos, CIDH), Grupo de Lima, Alianza del Pacifico, CARICOM.

International Non-governmental Organization, NGO (e.g., Human Rights Watch). These are organizations generally pro-immigration with an emphasis on concerns about humans' rights and protection of immigrants.

National o Local Non-governmental Organization (NGOs). This category includes individuals that are identified as part of a non-governmental organization. Some examples of this are people working on non-governmental "albergues" (shelters) or groups such as *Movimiento Migrante Mesoamericano* – *Caravana Madre de Migrantes Desaparecidos*, or grassroots associations and groups linked to immigration issues.

Member of Church/Religion. Priests, it will be most likely that they are Jesuits (*jesuitas* or *Servicio Jesuita a Migrantes SJM*), Nuns. We will consider the Catholic Pope in this category as well.

Police (a member of a law enforcement authority). In the case of Mexico, before 2019, Mexico has federal police and military police, now are everything is called *Guardia Civil*. Both should be coded under this category if they appear in the Mexican case. In Chile, the police are called *Carabineros*, but there is also a *Policia de Investigaciones (PDI)*, which also should be included. In Colombia is *la Policia Nacional de Colombia*.

Law/Judiciary: National and local judges, also attorney's immigration lawyers.

Immigrant, refugee, migrant.

A family member or a friend of immigrant, refugee or migrant.

Academic/Researchers/Experts: For this, look for the institution linked to the source—University (Universidad), Research Center (Centro de Estudio o Casa de Estudio), also included in this public opinion polls, Studies and reports.

Business/Private Sector (e.g., business owners). Besides business owners, this category also includes business organizations or commercial associations.

Local citizen/neighbor.

Activists/Artists/Athletes. There will be some confusion regarding this one because several of the activists are members of a Local NGO or part of the Catholic church. This category is the activists linked to other organizations such as artists, musicians, sports, or an activist not tied to a particular NGO.

Journalist or columnist: This will be relevant because it would allow us to code for the presence of editorial pieces, letters to the editor, or opinion columns.

None: it is not possible to establish a clear source and the reporting is based on the journalist account.

Other: This category includes wire agencies (e.g., EFE), national news agencies (e.g., Notimex) and national and international media as a source of the news reporting.

Explanation of numbers, statistics, or percentages. As a general rule, these numbers try to capture general trends and NO individual cases.

1. **Economic or jobs figure:** These are figures about the role/impact or effect of immigration in the economy of a country, such as unemployment, the share of immigrants in the labor market, percentage of immigrants in a specific economic field, or work.

For example: *“La participacion laboral de inmigrantes en la agricultura aumento de 6.898 en 2015 a 10.566 en 2017, lo que representa un incremento de 35%, segun cifras del INE “Instituto Nacional de Estadisticas de Chile.” (Emol, Chile)*

2. **Crimes against immigrants/Death:** Not incorporate **individual cases**; this is about numbers and statistics about the potential relationship between crimes against the immigrant. Think about trends or *“the big picture”*.

For example: *“Pedro Pantoja, asesor de la Casa del Migrante, enfatizo que existe un promedio mensual donde son asesinados entre 90 y 100 mil centroamericanos, por lo que en Mexico los ayudan a estabilizarse.” (Milenio, Mexico)*

3. **Crimes by immigrants:** Not **individual cases**. This is about numbers and statistics about the potential relationship between crimes allegedly committed by an immigrant. Think about trends or *“the big picture”*.

For example: *“Los venezolanos cometen sobre todo robos, con 801 capturas, y les siguen el trafico de estupefacientes (281), las lesiones personales (129), contrabando de hidrocarburos como la gasolina (123), fabricacion y porte de armas de fuego (120) y receptacion o compra de articulos robados (53). Ese paquete de conductas ilegales mas cometidas son, precisamente, los delitos tipicamente asociados con el deterioro de la seguridad urbana. El informe de la Fiscalia tambien registran 42 detenciones en flagrancia contra venezolanos por el delito de homicidio.” (Semana, Colombia)*

4. **Deportations or returns of immigrants to their country of origin:** This should incorporate the voluntary and forced repatriation of immigrants. **Not individual cases**, but the numbers could be about groups of immigrants that indicate a trend in the issue.

For example: a. *“Regresaron a Honduras 2 mil migrantes, dice Jimmy Morales.” (Headline, La Jornada, Mexico)* b. *“El miercoles comenzaron el regreso a su pais 176 haitianos que se inscribieron en el "Plan de Retorno Humanitario", en el cual el Gobierno se hace responsable de los costos de traslado. Segun el subsecretario del interior, Rodrigo Ubilla, hasta el momento hay mas de mil inscritos para volver a la isla.” (The Clinic, Chile)*

5. **Detentions/ apprehensions¹⁵² of immigrants.** This is beyond one particular case of an immigrant.

For example: *“Asegura INM a 102 indocumentados El Instituto Nacional de Migracion (INM) aseguro en Zacatecas a 102 centroamericanos indocumentados que llevaban mas de dos dias sin comer ni tomar agua, mientras eran trasladados a la frontera norte en autobuses de lujo. En un comunicado, el INM indico que del total de extranjeros, 57 son originarios de Guatemala, 24 de El Salvador, 18 de Honduras y 3 de Ecuador; entre los asegurados hay 20 menores de edad, de los cuales 16 viajaban sin compania de un adulto.” (Reforma, Mexico)*

6. **Rescue of immigrants.** This is beyond one particular case of an immigrant.

For example: a. *“En Veracruz fueron rescatados 102 migrantes centroamericanos, quienes viajaban en condiciones de hacinamiento en un*

¹⁵² In some countries the word apprehension could be “Arrestar”, “Detener”, “Capturar”, “Asegurar”, “Encarcelar”.

camion que transitaba sobre la carretera 150 libre Orizaba-Tehuacan, con destino al estado de Puebla, informo el Instituto Nacional de Migracion (INM).” (Aristegui noticias)

b. “Al teermino de 2014, Meexico habraa recuperado en territorio nacional a maas de 16 mil menores que viajaban rumbo a Estados Unidos, informoo el Instituto Nacional de Migracion (INM). Preciso que en lo que va de este anno ha rescatado a 10 mil 505, lo que significa 7.4 por ciento maas en relacion con los 9 mil 727 de 2013, y advirtioo acerca del aumento de este flujo de menores hacia el norte, situacion calificada por los responsables de la poliitica migratoria mexicana como emergencia humanitaria.” (La Jornada, Mexico)

7. Asylum requests/refugee requests

For example: a. “De acuerdo con la Secretaria de Gobernacion, a traves del Instituto Nacional de Migracion, hasta ahora se han atendido un total de 3 mil 230 solicitudes de refugio, de las cuales 2 mil 697 se encuentran en traamite; en tanto 533 personas han desistido de este traamite y, a su vez, solicitado su retorno voluntario asistido a su pais de origen.” (Milenio, Mexico)

b. “Registra gobierno mexicano mil 699 solicitudes de refugio por parte de migrantes. La SRE y Segob estimaron en mas de 4 mil 500 personas el numero de integrantes de la mega caravana migrante.” (SDP Noticias, Mexico).

8. Visa requests/Migration Documents

For example: “Segun el Departamento de Extranjeria y Migracion, los venezolanos se han consolidado en los ultimos anos como una de las comunidades que mas crece en el pais, aumentando de 22.921(2016) a 72.606 (2017) sus ciudadanos con permiso de residencia.” (La Tercera, Chile)

9. Health/Educational/Demographic: Statistics about the link between immigration and public health related issues, educational enrollment, demographic changes in cities and regions.

For example: “Menos del 2% de los venezolanos en Colombia estaan en el sistema de salud: Despues de que Migracion Colombia revelara que en el paais ya hay 550.000 venezolanos, el Ministerio de Salud se sumoo al grupo de instituciones que buscan pelear la crisis anunciando que se crearaa un plan baasico para aquellos extranjeros que no esteen afiliados al sistema de salud. Sin embargo, seguun informoo Blu Radio, en Colombia ya hay 8.780 ciudadanos venezolanos afiliados al Sistema de Salud. Entre estos, 8.220 hacen

parte del reegimen contributivo (93%), mientras el 560 hacen parte del subsidiado.” (El Espectador, Colombia)

Also, for example in the case of Mexico or Colombia, the number of people in shelters could be relevant for this category, as long the story moves beyond the single case.

10. None: There is not a clear statistical or numerical data as a central element of the story.

B) Framing analysis

The objective of this part of the study examines the frames that emerge from the news articles. This is conducted based on an in-depth reading of the information. The analysis will be informed by Entman’s definition of news frames: *“selecting and highlighting some facets of events and issues and making connections among them so as to promote a particular interpretation, evaluation, and solution”* (Entman, 1993).

What are the emerging frames in this news article?

Rank the frames in the order they appear in the news article guided by the definitions below. For example, if the frame is present in the headline and/or lede should be ranked as 1. Then if another frame is present but in the body of the text it should be ranked as 2.

These definitions are commonly used in the Global North literature about the representation of immigration. I adapted the definitions from the operationalization in comparative research about immigration of Benson (2013), Berry, Garcia-Blanco (2015) and De Vreese, Boomgaarden & Semetko (2011). Additionally, country-specific frames are defined based on my inductive immersion of the news articles.

Frames	Definition/ discursive indicator ¹⁵³ (How news media describe and cover the issue of intraregional migration)
<i>1) Victim</i>	
<i>Political and economic</i>	Immigration is caused by problems in the immigrants’ home country, affecting their ability to remain in their nations. They are victims of scarce economic opportunities, political instability, violence, and abuses which are social determinants that affect the individual decision to migrate. Therefore, this definition is aiming to identify the presence of push-factors triggering migration.
<i>Humanitarian/human rights</i>	Immigrants are victims in the host country or receiving nation of poverty, lack of access to health care, violence, human trafficking, access to fair legal process, and organized crime. Moreover, they are in danger while crossing borders, on their journey, and they are victims of violation of human rights.

¹⁵³ Benson (2014).

	Also, immigrants are victims of abuses by governmental institutions and business practices. The suffering of immigrants is central in this narrative.
<i>Racism/Xenophobia</i>	Immigrants are victims of hate, crime, and discrimination in the host country or receiving nation. This includes violence (physical or verbal) based on ethnicity, country of origin, and/or religion. Discrimination and the discussion about this issue are part of this frame.
<i>2) A threat for the host country</i>	
<i>Economic</i>	Immigrants and immigration, in general, are linked to a fiscal burden (negative impact on the local economy), as resources need to be allocated to deal with this issue. Also, immigrants are associated with taking local jobs, creating a negative impact on wages, and sharing public resources intended for locals.
<i>Cultural</i>	Immigrants bring values and habits that challenge the way of living in the community they settle in, negatively impacting the host country. Moreover, the culture of the immigrant group undermines or goes against a perceived national identity creating tension with the receiving society.
<i>Security/Public Order</i>	Immigrants coming into the host country -legally or irregularly- represent a threat to the rule of law in the host society (they engage in unlawful activities). They are linked to breaking the law and committing crimes such as drug trafficking, robbery or others. Also, they are associated with disrupting the environment, overcrowding public spaces, and bothering locals.
<i>Health</i>	Immigrants, and immigration in general, are portrayed as a threat to public health, carrying diseases and creating a burden to the hosting nation's health system
<i>Border security</i>	Immigrants create a problem at the borders and country checkpoints. They pose a threat to the migration institution capacity. They are disrupting the borders and threatening the stability of the receiving country borders' institutions and communities.
<i>3) Benefit for the host country</i>	
<i>Economic/good worker</i>	Immigrants, and immigration in general, are linked to a positive impact on the country's economic system. The immigrants are good and hardworking, which contributes to the society where they are migrating to. The skilled workers are contributing to the growth of the host country. Non-skilled workers take jobs that are not being filled by locals, having a positive effect on the host country's economy.
<i>Cultural/diversity</i>	Immigrants bring new cultural values and traditions, having a positive influence on the host society. New cuisine, music, language, sports, and arts are portrayed as a positive contribution to the host country that fosters a better immigrants' adaptation to the receiving culture. Also, the host society is implementing events to foster cultural diversity and the news article focuses on these events.
<i>Integration/Assimilation</i>	Immigrants are willing and enthusiastic to quickly adapt to the cultural norms of the receiving country. Immigrants respect the rule of law and their civic duties. Immigrants are linked to success stories of integration into their host communities, creating a positive impact. Also, the host society is implementing assimilation events or policies, and these are central in the storytelling.
<i>4) Political responsibility</i>	

<i>International cooperation and Relations</i>	Immigration is an issue that requires regional collaboration between countries dealing with the matter. The responsibility is not allocated into one specific country and needs the attention of many different international political actors. Here the role of foreign governmental and international organization emerges as central in the narrative.
<i>Policy solutions and Debate</i>	Immigration has generated a specific change of policy in the receiving country. Authorities have to implement policy solutions to face the immigration influx. Changes in visas, specific documentation, or containment solutions are part of contingency plans. Additionally, immigration triggers political debate and discussion about the ideas on how to control or deal with the influx. There could be cases in which the debate of ideas appears connected to conflict between political actors.
<i>5) Country specific frames</i>	<i>*Using the framing approaches from the Global North constrains the emergence of frames unexplored in the literature about immigration. Therefore, these are frames that try to expand the study of immigration news from a comparative perspective.</i>
<i>Salience of race</i>	Immigrants from Afro-descended origins, such as Haitians and Caribbean Colombians, are particularly salient in receiving nations with minimal history of Afro descendants (e.g., Chile). Therefore, in the news coverage race will also be prominent in describing their immigration experience, becoming central to the storyline.
<i>Solidarity/Reciprocity</i>	Immigrants are welcomed based on the historical relationship between border countries (Colombia- Venezuela /Mexico-Guatemala). There is a sense of moral responsibility and giving back to the immigrants, coming to seek a better future in a neighbor country because of the shared history and cultural roots.
<i>Transitionality</i>	Immigration is a new phenomenon for the country and is taking many by surprise. This is particularly salient in historically migrants-sender nations such as Colombia and Mexico that are experiencing a transition to be a migrants-receiving country. Immigration flows are closely linked to the in-transit phenomenon, but also the role of countries as refugee-receiving nations.

Appendix 4 - Words search for country.

These are the words used to look for labels and specific concepts in each country's news corpus using computational coding.

The list was made based on the close reading and coding of each of the news stories.

Chile:

"Inmigrante", "Inmigrantes", "Inmigracion", "Inmigracioon", "Migrante", "Migrantes", "MigraciOOn", "migración", "migracion", "Extranjero", "Extranjeros", "Refugiado", "Refugiados", "Asilo", "Ciudadano", "Ciudadanos", "ForAAneo", "ForAAneos", "Illegal", "Illegales", "Indocumentado", "Indocumentados", "Irregular", "Irregulares", "Haitianos", "Colombianos", "Venezolanos", "Peruanos", "Bolivianos", "Ecuatorianos", "Argentinos", "Cubanos", "Dominicanos", "Caribenos", "Islenos", "Dominicanos", "ilegal", "ilegales", "racismo", "raza", "negro"

Colombia:

"Inmigrante", "Inmigrantes", "Inmigracion", "Inmigracioon", "Migrante", "Migrantes", "MigraciOOn", "migracion", "Extranjero", "Extranjeros", "Refugiado", "Refugiados", "Asilo", "Ciudadano", "Ciudadanos", "Crisis", "solidaridad", "caridad", "recibir", "historia", "responsabilidad", "delicuentes", "xenofobia", "venecos", "prostitucion", "delitos", "prostitucioon", "crimen", "frontera", "ilegalidad", "ilegalmente", "Irregulares", "indocumentados", "indocumentado", "ilegal", "ilegales", "seguridad", "campamento", "irregular", "hermano", "hermanos", "Venezolanos", "Venezuela", "Nicolas Maduro", "Maduro", "hermandad", "pana", "panas", "connacionales", "solidario", "solidaria", "colombo-venezolanos", "colombovenezolano", "colombovenezolanos", "colombo-venezolano", "Kruger", "exodo", "eexodo", "venezolanas", "colombo-venezolanas", "trochas", "Migracion Colombia", "deportados"

Mexico

"Inmigrante", "Inmigrantes", "Inmigracion", "Inmigracioon", "Migrante", "Migrantes", "MigraciOOn", "migracion", "Extranjero", "Extranjeros", "Refugiado", "Refugiados", "Asilo", "refugio", "hermanos", "Ciudadano", "Ciudadanos", "Crisis", "solidaridad", "caridad", "recibir", "historia", "responsabilidad", "delicuentes", "xenofobia", "caravana", "ninno", "ninos", "menores", "documento", "comunicado", "conferencia", "Trump", "frontera", "ilegalidad", "ilegalmente", "Irregulares", "indocumentados", "indocumentado", "ilegal", "ilegales", "irregular", "hermano", "hermandad", "solidario", "solidaria", "centroamericanos", "Solalinde", "deportados", "aseguran", "pollero", "transito", "traansito"

Opening the Interview

Thank you very much for talking to me today. I have planned that our conversation lasts about 45 minutes to one hour, and I will be recording this audio for my analysis. During our time, there will be some core questions that I need to ask, but the rest of the time, it will be more like a conversation.

First, I want to make sure you have received the consent form by email. Otherwise, I can read it to you, and you can give me consent orally.

Audio consent:

Before starting the conversation, I would like to ask you for your verbal permission for this interview. This interview will be recorded and use for academic purposes. The content will not be linked to your name; therefore, it is an anonymous conversation if you prefer so. Please tell me your full name and if you agree to proceed with the interview.

Core questions

- Tell me about your work? What is the beat you cover more often? How independent are you on deciding your angle, sources, and headlines?
- Could you tell me about how do you perceive the issue of immigration in your country?
- How do you think your media institution has been dealing with the coverage of immigration? Are there any specific guidelines or standards for covering immigration news?
- What are the most significant constraints of covering immigration in your country?
- How different is to cover immigration in comparison with other topics you to have write about?
- Do you allocate any responsibility on how immigration is perceived in the public and the work you do?
- What is the perception of your media outlet political leaning? What is the perception people may have about the newspaper/media outlet you work?

Closing the interview

- Is there any question that you think I should have asked?
- What did you feel was the most important thing we talked about today? Why?
- Thank you so much for your answers.

¹⁵⁴ This is a translation. The interviews were conducted in Spanish using these questions.