

# Journalistic deontology on violence against women. Who produces the documents? A longitudinal disaggregated study by sex on authorship

*Deontología periodística en materia de violencias contra las mujeres. ¿Quién elabora los documentos? Un estudio longitudinal desagregado por sexo sobre la autoría*



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**Abstract:**

The article focuses on the study of the authorship of deontological production on violence against women and the media in Spanish and Latin American contexts from 1999 to 2018, based on a sample of 58 guidelines. Objectives: to analyse the specific authorship by gender to identify men's and women's degree of involvement and whether there is a relationship between the gender of the authors' of the guidelines and their level of commitment to them. Methodology: the use of empirical research techniques for the study of the authorship, from which five types have been established, women or majority of women, men or majority of men; mixed; a women's collective; and institutional authorship (unknown). Results: 60% of the guidelines were written with women's advice, while 9% has been attributed to men. In 10% of them men and women have participated equally, 7% presumably belongs to women's collectives, and the remaining 14% of authorship is unknown. Moreover, this quantitative difference is related to the degree of commitment of the guidelines, that is, the guidelines attributed to women present higher levels of commitment than those produced by men.

**Keywords:**

Violence against women; deontology; journalism; guidelines; authorship

**Resumen:**

*El artículo se centra en el estudio de la autoría de la producción deontológica en materia de violencias contra las mujeres y medios en los contextos español y latinoamericano desde 1999 hasta 2018, a partir de una muestra de 58 códigos. Objetivos: analizar la autoría específica atendiendo a la variable de género para conocer el grado de implicación de mujeres y hombres y detectar si existe relación entre el género de los autores de los códigos y el nivel de compromiso de estos. Metodología: empleo de técnicas de investigación empíricas para el estudio de la autoría, a partir del cual se han establecido cinco tipos: mujeres o mayoría de mujeres; hombres o mayoría de hombres; mixta; colectivo de mujeres; autoría institucional (se desconoce). Resultados: el 60% de los códigos han contado con el asesoramiento de mujeres para su redacción, mientras que el 9% se atribuye a hombres. En el 10% han participado tanto hombres como mujeres de manera equitativa, el 7% pertenece, presuntamente, a colectivos de mujeres, y del resto (14%) se desconoce su autoría. Además, esta diferencia cuantitativa guarda relación con el grado de compromiso de los códigos, es decir, los códigos atribuidos a mujeres ofrecen niveles de compromiso más elevados que los elaborados por hombres.*

**Palabras clave:**

*Violencias contra las mujeres; deontología; periodismo; códigos; autoría*

## 1. Journalistic deontology on violence against women. Reflections on a literature review.

Violence against women (hereafter, VAW) <sup>1</sup> is a current global Human Rights problem and is pervasive in all societies. It is a timeless phenomenon that does not discriminate in terms of nationalities, ethnicities, cultures, religions, and customs—although all these elements can influence different manifestations and forms of violence (Zurbano-Berenguer, 2015b). Instead, it is characterized by its universality.

The magnitude of the problem is such that it has a prevalence of 30% worldwide according to the World Health Organisation (WHO), in other words, one in three women who have had an intimate relationship with a man “has been a victim of physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence” and 38% of femicides committed globally “are due to conjugal violence” (WHO, 2013: 2). The national outlook is no less bleak: from January 1, 2003 –when official figures began to be recorded–

1 Violence against women is defined as: “the acts and threats of such acts, performed in public and private life that are life-threatening, a danger to women's and girl's integrity, body and dignity and whose origin (explicit or otherwise) to control and subjugate the female gender is based on an underlying socio-ideological model that determines the roles, attitudes and identities of the social subjects (men and women) according to their sexual condition, which is also influenced by other categories such as class, race, ethnicity, religion and heteronormativity, among others” (Zurbano-Berenguer, 2018: 83).

until December 31, 2018, a total of 975 women were murdered at the hands of their partners or ex-partners according to the Statistical Portal of the Government Delegation for Gender Violence.

However, official state figures are just the tip of the iceberg, since they only take intimate partner violence into account, which results in a poor and simplistic conceptualisation of the phenomenon and reduces VAW to the scenario of affectivity (Zurbano-Berenguer and Liberia-Vayá, 2014). This reductionist view is not only problematic for the female victims who are too afraid to report the crime or those who are not assaulted in their intimate-affective environment, but it also affects citizens, as they cannot get an approximate idea of the issue due to the lack of complete and real data.

In this sense, journalistic work is responsible for informing and shaping public opinion about this serious problem in which women's human rights are systematically violated. However, the media's explanation of violence is also reductionist, since "the journalism profession, like citizens, are not always educated in this respect" (Menéndez, 2014: 55).

For this reason, various academic and professional circles have focused on the daily activity of the media to show their concern for how VAW is conveyed and represented. A concern based on the absence of women in the media, the mistreatment of their identities, the sexualisation and objectification of their bodies and as far as this work is concerned, a distortion and simplification of the violence of which they are victims.

Therefore, the studies on the approach and treatment of this violence have multiplied in the last two decades. Works such as Simons' and Khan's (2018) or Simons' and Morgan's (2018) address the change in the coverage and configuration of the media as prevention tools for VAW, following previous research lines that reflected on the dynamics of gender representation and gendered aggressions (Anastasio and Costa, 2004; Wozniak and McCloskey, 2010; Roberto, McCann and Brossoie, 2013; Ross *et al.*, 2018). In the current media context, reflecting on the content in digital media has begun to be a new line of specific research (Salter, 2013; Vega, 2018). Also, the consolidation of this concern in the academic sphere favours contextual studies such as Ahmed's (2014), which works on representations in Pakistan, Bullock, and Cubert (2002) focus on Washington State or Fairbairn and Dawson (2013), who use Canada as a context for analysis.

Similarly, since the end of the 20th century, the focus on the media coverage of VAW has resulted in prolific publications of deontological documents on how to deal with this social problem sensitively, ethically and responsibly, such attention is related to the scientific evidence that the media has the capacity to influence in general, particularly in the case of VAW.

"This influence is no longer limited to the traditional functions of informing and shaping public opinion as to the most important and that which it fundamentally continues to associate its activity with. It also has a growing educational prominence, as a socialiser, creator of leisure and fashion trends, etc. As we all know, the media today constitute one of the greatest powers of the symbolic configuration of the society in which we live" (Aznar, 2005b: 20)<sup>2</sup>.

In addition to being socialisers and educators, the media are the primary source of information regarding VAW, since around 90% of the public affirm that they are made aware of this reality through the media (Ministry of Health, Social Policy, and Equality, 2011). Thus, what and how the media portrays it will determine the population's knowledge about this problem.

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2 It is a free translation of the original.

In this sense, studies such as those carried out by Lorente reveal the relationship between news media information and social sensitivity to VAW: “[...] as sensitivity increases, homicides decrease the following year; but when sensitivity decreases, murders increase the following year. There is an inverse relationship between sensitivity and number of homicides” (2009: 55).

The focus on the media’s capacity to advocate transcends national borders, and there are many academic discussions concerning what the intrinsic responsibilities of journalism should be:

“Because the public gets much of its knowledge concerning IPV<sup>3</sup> from the news media, it is important to understand what media sources, such as newspapers, currently report. The role the media play in forming public conceptions or misconceptions about IPV leads to a need for a more in-depth examination of what the media present to the public. If the media do not portray IPV as important, then society at large will probably not view it as important” (Wozniak and McCloskey, 2010: 939).

Moreover, Aznar adds another cause for this concern: since the end of the 80s “the attention paid to *new social problems* has been increasing in the guidelines” (2005a: 39), such as racism, xenophobia, terrorism or violence against women, all of which pose a threat to democracies. For Aznar, these guidelines present two novelties: a) they deal with specific issues or problems of the information reality and b) in many cases their implementation and publication arises from civil society’s initiative and not so much from the professional journalism environment.

The media’s impact on forming public opinion in this specific area has also been addressed in academic research and there are studies that focus on analysing the media based on existing deontological manuals on VAW such as those by: Gallego (2003), Aznar (2005b), López (2006, 2007 and 2008), Carballido (2007 and 2009), Martínez-Rodríguez (2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013), Bandrés (2011), Zurbano-Berenguer and Martínez Fábregas (2011), Zurbano-Berenguer and Liberia-Vayá (2013), Easteal, Holland and Judd (2015), Zurbano-Berenguer (2015a and 2015b), Peris (2016), Sutherland *et al.* (2016), Edo (2017), Zurbano-Berenguer and García-Gordillo (2017).

Regarding the content of the protocols, some works analyse the recommendations to establish similarities and differences, and in most cases, the same conclusion is reached: the proposed recommendations in the manuals are significantly uniform. Martínez-Rodríguez (2012) summarises the 10 common features in the codes:

1. What the most appropriate term is (or not): gender violence, violence against women, male violence, domestic violence, etc.
2. What gender-based violence is: a social and structural problem, a violation of women’s human rights, dignity, and freedom.
3. Contextualisation of facts: cultural and sociological causes. Do not fall into justifications such as alcohol, drugs, jealousy, or mental illness.
4. Do not stereotype: VAW does not discriminate in terms of ethnicity, culture, educational level, or economic status; it occurs in all social classes.
5. Consider it as a social scourge and not as isolated and coincidental events.

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3 IPV (intimate partner violence) is how international literature refers to affective violence between partners.

6. Do not use sensationalist resources for media coverage of VAW.
7. Provide a follow-up news story, especially one in which women manage to escape violence.
8. Provide service information that is useful for female victims.
9. Maintain the victim's anonymity and respect the abusers and/or murderer's presumption of innocence.
10. Use expert sources, not relatives, friends, or neighbours.

When following-up on the recommendations, academic literature coincides that there has been an improvement in framing—from a purely episodic framing to a more thematic one— (Carballido, 2009). Concerning the terminologies—hardly any insulting terms such as domestic violence are used— and the coverage has also improved since VAW has undergone a process of theming, that is to say, it has become a practically indispensable issue in the media's agenda. On the one hand, this has led to a quantitative increase of its presence in the media, allowing it to gain visibility and, on the other hand, a qualitative improvement in the way the phenomenon is approached journalistically (Soriano, 2004; Vega, 2014).

At present, however, the debate is centred on whether the informative treatment of this reality complies with the ethical-journalistic quality standards in the guidelines despite its qualitative improvement. It also focuses on whether news publication harms or benefits both the victims and survivors of this scourge—revictimising them and blaming them or dignifying and empowering them—, as well as its effect on citizens' social understanding of the problem.

The reality of journalism seems to confirm that the abundance of deontological materials about VAW does not correspond proportionally to professionals' implementation of them. Furthermore, according to some authors “the same mistakes are still being made as in the many decalogues of good practice” (Jorge, De la Maya and García, 2016: 996), since these guides have a series of restrictions such as their “voluntary nature” and their “limited scope and dissemination” (Gallego, 2003: 233).

There are other limitations which make the impact of such documents rather insufficient, which range from the “excessive ambiguity with which many of these norms are drafted” to their aforementioned “limited binding power” (Soriano, 2004: 168). The lack of precise wording does not make it easy for professionals to apply the guidelines due to the urgency and speed with which they work. They are neither useful nor easy to apply, and their voluntary nature, typical of self-regulation, is effective only when freely committing to them, which varies according to the journalists' knowledge and sensitivity towards VAW.

For Aznar, communication professionals are:

“the qualified subject in charge of producing the means, a qualification suitably supported by the corresponding preparation and training. They are the ones who are especially obliged to know about the evaluative and normative aspects of communicative activity, as well as have a special sensitivity regarding the effects derived from their activity [...] the professional is the one who must incorporate the normative aspects of communication through their qualified work. The ethical aspects of communication must form part of the media's production process, thanks to journalists” (2005b: 59-60).

However, studies that analyse the discrepancy between the recommendations and their application in journalism indicate the main causes for non-compliance as both the lack of specific academic and professional training on the subject and collectives of journalists' lack of knowledge about the deontological documents (Martínez-Rodríguez, 2011; Zurbano-

Berenguer, 2015b). However, even if professionals are knowledgeable about these guidelines, they will reject them if they doubt their effectiveness, do not strive to put them into practice (Aznar, 2005b) or view the vast ethical production as an attempt to control their activity and limit their professional freedom.

Coinciding with Zurbano-Berenguer, it seems “paramount to agree on action strategies with those that are to carry them out” (2015b: 345), instead of continuing to produce good practice manuals profusely, which, moreover, only repeat the already existing deontological content. Because as Aznar points out, “the best guarantee for which guidelines do not limit the different ways of understanding journalism and communication is to have as many professionals as possible participate in drafting and approving them, through consensus” (2005a: 61).

Regarding the origin and source of the protocols for VAW, some investigations have already carried out taxonomies and in-depth studies (Martínez-Rodríguez, 2011; Zurbano-Berenguer, 2015b; Edo, 2017), even though most coincide in pointing out four types of authorship:

- Public powers: local and regional governments and their departments and Women’s Institutes. Two of the documents that can be associated with this type of authorship are *Las noticias sobre violencia contra las mujeres. Trátalas bien*, from Pamplona City Council or *Pautas para el tratamiento informativo adecuado de la violencia contra la mujer en los medios de comunicación*, 2011, from the Ministry of Women and Social Development of Perú.
- Professional organisations: press associations, journalists’ associations, The Federation of Spanish Journalist Associations (known as FAPE in Spanish) or the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ). In this section it is essential to highlight the initiative of women’s journalist associations, such as the Catalan or Granada women’s associations for developing and publishing these manuals: *Decálogo sobre el tratamiento informativo de la violencia de género en los medios de comunicación*, 2005, from the Granada Press Association’s Women Journalists’ Group and *Decálogo de buenos usos en la información sobre violencia doméstica*, 2007, from the International Network of Women Journalists and Communicators of Catalonia.
- Civil Society: as in the previous case, most of them are women’s organisations such as the Federation of Progressive Women or the Club of 25 which in 2007 published *Propuesta de decálogo para el tratamiento de la violencia de género en los medios de comunicación*. Following Aznar, these documents “reflect some citizens’ growing commitment to improving the media” (2005b: 26).
- Media: though still few, they represent the highest level of commitment from the journalists who develop and publish them. The first document in Spain of this kind was the *Decálogo para informar sobre violencia de género*, 2008, published by the newspaper *Público*.

Martínez-Rodríguez points out that the origin of the guidelines is varied and collaborative by highlighting that:

“One of the most noteworthy and positive distinctive features is that, despite the fact that these are deontological regulations, which affect professional collectives, in many cases their initiative comes from their cooperation with different administrations, which try to ensure the same end: to end violence against women by all means possible” (2012: 66).

Therefore, there are mixed documents that are the product of this collaboration, which are also considered as milestones in the history of the media and the fight against VAW. An example of this is the collaboration agreement signed in 2001 by the *Instituto Oficial de Radiodifusión y Televisión* (IORTV) and the Women’s Institute, which would open the way to “the

incorporation of this topic (VAW) in self-regulation guidelines and practices” (Carballido, 2007: 234). An agreement that would culminate in the First National Forum “Women, Violence and the Media,” held in 2002, from which the *Emergency Manual* emerged, a complete guide for the treatment of VAW, which more media would ratify voluntarily a posteriori (López, 2006).

The recommendations are prolific, which is positive as they catalyse sustained and diverse efforts. However, they have the following drawbacks: different social sectors’ concern about the phenomenon can sometimes respond more to the self-need to express their public stance against VAW than respond to real social awareness and concern about how the media reports the problem and the influence, at the very least negative which they may be exerting on public opinion. Therefore, efforts remain discursive, thus reducing the effectiveness of these protocols.

Zurbano-Berenguer explains the reason why the documents have multiplied by stating that it “seems to be limited to the need [of those who publish them] to demonstrate adherence to gender equality policies [...] publicly and they seem to be more orientated to institutional publicity than to their effective implementation by journalists (2015b: 344-345).

It seems necessary to add a complementary reflection to the current studies on journalistic deontology and VAW: do gender biases influence the development of the materials?

Van Zoonen’s “hypothesis of the feminisation of journalism” states that an increase in the number of women in the newsrooms would bring about a change in the sociodemographic structure of the collective of journalists and consequently, a change in journalistic practice and contents (quoted. in De-Miguel *et al.*, 2017). To contextualise this at the level of monographic deontological production, it is necessary to ask: are women, merely because they are women, more concerned than men about the informative treatment of the violence that they suffer daily? The answer to this question lies in the articulation between the hypothesis of the feminisation of journalism and the one supported by the authors of this study on the feminisation of specific deontological work in the field of VAW.

The stances about this hypothesis are varied. Some maintain that female journalists do not show a greater predisposition to include topics of female interest, introduce a gender perspective in media content or deal more broadly with gender and inequality issues than would male journalists (Gallego, 2002) while others understand the feminisation of the profession of journalism, both quantitatively and qualitatively. Specifically, Limor and Lavie (quoted. in Soriano, Cantón and Díez, 2005) distinguish two stances: one which links quantitative transformation to a change in the way information is treated and another which does not consider that an increase in women in the profession is going to modify journalistic content, since professionals are governed by newsworthiness values, which do not include the category of gender.

At an international level studies analysing the way women practise journalism compared to men, find that women and ethnic minorities are more likely to become news sources when they write the news (Rodgers and Thorson, 2003). Furthermore, in women-led media organisations, reporters tend to look for and include more female sources in the information than in male-led media (Everbach, 2006).

In the Spanish sphere, the situation is the same. On the one hand, the reports carried out in Spain by the Global Media Monitoring Project –known as GMMP<sup>4</sup>– corroborate that the gender of the journalist influences subject choice in the news: in the news produced by female journalists the presence of women is higher than in those produced by men (GMMP, 2015). On the other hand, research on the Spanish press developed by Matud, Rodríguez, and Espinosa (2011) found that the number of articles written by men was double those written by women and in the articles where sources were consulted, they were mostly male voices.

Concerning the specific problem of VAW, 945 media professionals were surveyed by Martínez-Sánchez in 2010 –40% men and 60% women– revealing journalists' different perceptions regarding the informative treatment of the phenomenon. Some of the results were:

- 53.12% of men consider that a female perpetrated assault on a man is the most newsworthy, while 50.18% of women consider a female perpetrator's conviction as the most newsworthy.
- 50.42% of men believe that the news should include descriptions of modus operandi and details of the crime; while 33.27% of women believe the same (2010: 27).

In summary, these reflections on the possible link between the presence of women in the media and their 'differentiated way' of practicing the profession lead us to consider whether there is a greater presence of women developing VAW ethical guidelines and whether the distribution of the sexes participating in the manuals decisively affects their final result. Thus, the hypothesis of the feminisation of journalism transferred to deontology means that we should ask ourselves: are women in the field of journalism more concerned and sensitive to this problem? What are the implications of men's and women's differing participation in the guidelines?

## 2. Hypothesis and objectives

Regarding what has been indicated up to now the present investigation is based on the hypothesis that female academics or researchers and female media professionals, or professionals such as psychologists, social workers, lawyers, etc., who work in the generic field of gender equality are more aware and sensitised to information that affects women. This means that women participate in developing the ethical codes about VAW and the media more so than men.

While the objectives that this work pursues are:

1. To identify the specific authorship of those who have advised and/or drafted the recommendations attributed to public, private, and academic institutions, the media, press associations, social collectives, etc.
2. To disaggregate and quantify women's and men's participation and evaluate its proportionality.
3. To evaluate the specific authorship of the deontological documents and the level of commitment of those documents.

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4 It is a global initiative that investigates, through monitoring, incidence and representation of gender in the media. Its beginnings date back to 1995 and it documents the changes in the representation of women in the news around the world every five years.



### 3. The object of study and method

This paper presents a sample of 58 guidelines on VAW and the media, published in Spain<sup>5</sup> and different Latin American countries from 1999 to 2018 (see Table 1)

The information has been collected through specific academic and professional bibliographic review on the issue, –as is the case with the manuals that refer to other guidelines–, since a literature review is one more methodological technique, and even “an obligatory step in social research in general”, to carry out studies and research, whether qualitative or quantitative in nature (Valles, 1999: 109). Thus, new technologies, which directly allow us to contact Women’s Institutes, press associations, feminist collectives, and public bodies, have facilitated, corroborated, and expanded this compendium. Two issues should be highlighted: the sample is not representative, even though it aimed to be exhaustive. Therefore, the results are not representative albeit faithful to a well-documented reality. The most disclosed and accessible documents extracted from the Latin American sphere serve only as examples in other geopolitical coordinates and are in no way intended to represent all member countries.

**Table 1. Spanish and Latin American deontological documents on violence against women and the media.**

Ref.	Year	Title	Authors	Location
1	1999	Decálogo de recomendaciones a los medios de comunicación para el tratamiento de la violencia contra las mujeres. Cómo tratar bien los malos tratos	Andalusian Women’s Institute	Andalusia
	2001	Manual de estilo periodístico para informaciones sobre casos de violencia doméstica o que afecten a menores	Medios de comunicación de la Demarcación de Girona	Cataluña
2	2000	Decálogo para los medios de comunicación sobre el tratamiento de la violencia contra las mujeres	City Council of Pamplona, The University of Navarra and IPES Foundation	Navarra
3	2001	Manual de estilo periodístico para informaciones sobre casos de violencia doméstica o que afecten a menores	News Media of the Delegation of Girona	Catalonia
4	2002	Manual de urgencia sobre el tratamiento informativo de la violencia contra las mujeres	IORTV and the Women’s Institute	Spain
5	2002	Notícies amb llaç blanc. Manual per a periodistes sobre la violència domèstica	Unió de Periodistes Valencians (Valencian Journalist) Union	Valencian Community
6	2003	Recomendaciones sobre el tratamiento de la violencia contra las mujeres en los medios de difusión	Women’s Institute Navarra	Navarra

5 The International Federation of Journalists Protocol has also been included (2008) because although it is international, there are outstanding Spanish journalist associations and trade unions such as FAPE, FeSP, CCOO and ELA (Euskal Sindikatua) among its members.

7	2003	Protocolo para el tratamiento informativo de la violencia de género y agresiones sexuales en La Rioja	La Rioja government	La Rioja
8	2003	Decálogo para el tratamiento informativo de los malos tratos en el entorno familiar	Balearic Women's Institute, Balearic Islands Journalist Union and Balearic Island Government	Balearic Islands
9	2004	Recomanacions del Consell de l'Audiovisual de Catalunya sobre el tractament de la violència de gènere als programes informatius i d'entreteniment als mitjans de comunicació	Consell de l'Audiovisual de Catalunya (CAC) (Audiovisual board of Catalonia)	Catalonia
10	2004	Medios de comunicación e violencia de xénero. Declaración de Compostela	Galician Observatory of the media and the Professional Association of Galician Journalists	Galicia
11	2004	Decálogo básico (Decálogo de Zaragoza) para iniciar el debate en los medios de comunicación	City Council of Zaragoza	Aragón
12	2005	Tratamiento de la violencia contra las mujeres en los medios de comunicación. Recomendaciones para las buenas prácticas en la información sobre violencia de género	Federation of Spanish Journalist Associations (FAPE)	Spain
	2005	Las noticias de los malos tratos. Propuestas para abordar la información sobre la violencia de género	Instituto Aragonés de la Mujer	Aragón
	2005	Lenguaje no sexista en medios de comunicación y publicidad. Apuntes para la igualdad	Cabildo de Tenerife	Canarias
	2006	Código para el tratamiento informativo de la violencia de género	Junta de Castilla y León	Castilla y León
	2007	Propuesta de decálogo para el tratamiento de la violencia de género en los medios de comunicación	El Club de las 25	Spain
	2007	Protocolo de actuación periodística y publicitaria sobre igualdad de oportunidades entre mujeres y hombres y tratamiento informativo sobre la violencia de género	Gobierno de Cantabria	Cantabria
	2007	Medios de comunicación e violencia de xénero. Manual de Redacción Xornalística	Xunta de Galicia	Galicia
13	2005	Decálogo sobre el tratamiento informativo de la violencia de género en los medios de comunicación	Women's group of journalists of the Press Association of Granada	Andalusia

14	2005	Decálogo – Recomendaciones para evitar una comunicación sexista y androcéntrica y para el tratamiento adecuado de la violencia de género	<i>Regional Council of El Bierzo</i>	Castille and León
15	2005	Las noticias de los malos tratos. Propuestas para abordar la información sobre la violencia de género	Aragón Women's Institute	Aragón
16	2005	Lenguaje no sexista en medios de comunicación y publicidad. Apuntes para la igualdad	Cabildo de Tenerife	The Canary Islands
	2008	Protocolo de la FIP para la cobertura informativa de casos de violencia contra las mujeres	Federación Internacional de Periodistas (FIP)	Spain
	2009	Recomendaciones: El tratamiento de la violencia machista en los medios de comunicación	Consell de l'Audiovisual de Catalunya (CAC)	Catalonia
17	2006	Código para el tratamiento informativo de la violencia de género	Regional Government of Castille and León	Castille and León
18	2007	Propuesta de decálogo para el tratamiento de la violencia de género en los medios de comunicación	The Club of 25	Spain
19	2007	Protocolo de actuación periodística y publicitaria sobre igualdad de oportunidades entre mujeres y hombres y tratamiento informativo sobre la violencia de género	Government of Cantabria	Cantabria
20	2007	Medios de comunicación e violencia de xénero. Manual de Redacción Xornalística	Regional Government of Galicia	Galicia
21	2007	Decálogo de buenos usos en la información sobre violencia doméstica	International Network of Female Journalists and Communicators of Catalonia	Catalonia
22	2008	Decálogo para informar sobre violencia de género	Público	Spain
23	2008	La igualdad de género no es cuestión de suerte: Catálogo de recomendaciones para el tratamiento de la violencia de género en los medios de comunicación	Cabildo de Tenerife	The Canary Islands
24	2008	Recomendaciones para un tratamiento informativo adecuado de la violencia contra la mujer en los medios de comunicación	I International Women and Media Congress (CIMMCO)	Valencian Community
25	2008	Protocolo de la FIP para la cobertura informativa de casos de violencia contra las mujeres	International Federation of Journalists (FIP)	Spain
26	2009	Recomendaciones: El tratamiento de la violencia machista en los medios de comunicación	<i>Consell de l'Audiovisual de Catalunya (CAC) (Audiovisual board of Catalonia)</i>	Catalonia

27	2009	Los periodistas nos comprometemos. Manifiesto contra la violencia de género	Press Association of La Rioja	La Rioja
28	2010	Recomendaciones genéricas de cómo informar sobre violencia contra la mujer en las relaciones de pareja	Centro Reina Sofía	Spain
29	2010	Intervención en publicidad y comunicación sexista	Canary Islands Institute for Equality	The Canary Islands
30	2010	Código de los profesionales de CSTV para la elaboración de informaciones sobre violencia machista	<i>Canal Sur Televisión</i>	Andalusia
31	2011	Recomendaciones: Tratamiento informativo para la igualdad de género en Extremadura	Women's Institute of Extremadura, Press Associations of Mérida, Cáceres and Badajoz and regional media in Extremadura	Extremadura
32	2011	Diez pautas para un tratamiento eficaz de la violencia de género	Elena Bandrés Goldáraz	España
33	2013	Derecho a la Información y Justicia: Guía para el tratamiento informativo de los procesos judiciales	Audiovisual Board of Andalusia (CAA)	Andalusia
34	2014	Informar sobre la violencia contra las mujeres. Guías de buenas prácticas para los medios de comunicación	City Council of Zaragoza	Aragón
35	2015	Decálogo - El papel garantista del Consejo Audiovisual de Andalucía del tratamiento informativo ético de la violencia machista en los medios	Ana Jorge Alonso	Spain
36	2015	Propuestas de la jornada "Tratamiento informativo de la violencia machista en la era digital"	Participants of the conference organised by La marea	Madrid
37	2016	Guía para el tratamiento informativo de la violencia de género	Audiovisual Board of Andalusia (CAA)	Andalusia
38	2016	Protocolo de buenas prácticas: Tratamiento de la información sobre violencia machista en los medios de comunicación	Journalist Association of Aragón and City Council of Zaragoza	Aragón
39	2016	Decálogo para el tratamiento informativo de la violencia contra las mujeres	BEGIRA (Advisory Commission for a non-sexist use of advertising and communication)	Chile

EMAKUNDE (Basque Women's Institute)	The Basque Country	La violencia tiene mil caras. Guía para Profesionales y Comunicadores/as de Medios de Comunicación en Violencia contra las Mujeres	UNFPA	Chile
40	2017	Periodismo contra las violencias machistas	La marea and Oxfam Intermón	Spain
41	2017	Guía para el tratamiento informativo de la violencia de género	Regional Government of Castille and León	Castille and León
42	2018	Decálogo para el tratamiento periodístico de las víctimas de la violencia machista	Journalist Association for Equality	Aragón
43	2018	Manual d'estil per al tractament de la violència masclista i el llenguatge inclusiu en els mitjans de comunicació	Unió de Periodistes Valencians (Valencian Union of Journalists)	Valencian Community
44	2007	La violencia hacia las mujeres en los medios de comunicación. Transformando las noticias	CISCSA and Red Mujer and Hábitat de América Latina	Argentina
45	2008	Decálogo para el tratamiento periodístico de la violencia contra las mujeres	PAR (Journalists of Argentina in network for non-sexist communication)	Argentina
46	2008	Lentes lilas para los medios de comunicación. La construcción de las noticias sobre violencia hacia las mujeres	UNFPA and Women's Secretariat Presidency of the Republic of Paraguay	Paraguay
47	2009	Manual de género para periodistas: recomendaciones básicas para el ejercicio del periodismo con enfoque de género	América Latina Genera (Practical Area of Gender RSCLAC PNUD)	Latin America
48	2009	Noticias que salvan vidas. Manual periodístico para el abordaje de la violencia contra las mujeres	Amnesty International Argentina-Civil Association for Amnesty	Argentina
49	2010	Por un periodismo no sexista. Pautas para comunicar desde una perspectiva de género en Chile	OREALC/UNESCO Santiago	Chile
50	2011	La violencia tiene mil caras. Guía para Profesionales y Comunicadores/as de Medios de Comunicación en Violencia contra las Mujeres	UNFPA	Chile
51	2011	Pautas para el tratamiento informativo adecuado de la violencia contra la mujer en los medios de comunicación	Ministry of Women and Social Development	Perú
52	2011	Proyecto de ley para el tratamiento mediático de la violencia de género	Gustavo Ferrari	Argentina

53	2011	Manual para periodistas y comunicadores sobre el tratamiento de noticias de violencia familiar	Acción por los Niños and J.M. Arguedianos Training Centre	Perú
54	2014	Violencias puertas adentro. Guía para una cobertura periodística con enfoque de género y generaciones	National Consultative Council to Combat Domestic Violence and Comprehensive System for the Protection of Children and Adolescents against Violence	Uruguay
55	2014	¿Los periodistas podemos ayudar? Manual para periodistas que informan sobre violencia de género	Conexión – Fondo de emancipación	Bolivia
56	2015	Periodismo libre de violencia. Protocolo para el abordaje informativo de la violencia contra las mujeres basada en género	Ministry of Communication of the Plurinational State of Bolivia	Bolivia
57	2016	Guía para el tratamiento mediático responsable de casos de violencia contra las mujeres	Public Defender's Office for Audiovisual Communication Services	Argentina
58	2017	¿Cómo abordar noticias de violencia contra las mujeres?	Ministry of Women and Vulnerable Populations	Perú

Source: Created by the authors

To identify the authorship and quantify women's and men's participation in writing guidelines –objectives 1 and 2–, the signatory institutions and entities have been contacted by telephone or via email when the document itself did not indicate the author. On some occasions, the responses have not shed any light on authorship due to either data protection or lack of knowledge, in which case, whether women or men have signed the manuals either in their capacity or on behalf of their organisations, companies or the media, has been taken into account. When this has not been possible either, the authorship has been attributed to presumably women, because these institutions are mostly composed of women, who edit the documents –such as the Women's Institute or women journalist collectives– or it has been directly attributed to organisations that appear as the authors.

Thus, five types of authorship have been established for advising and/or writing the manuals:

- a. Only women or a majority of women participated.
- b. Only men or a majority of men were involved.
- c. An equal number of men and women participated.
- d. It is assumed that women have been involved in the case of the Women's Institutes and women journalist associations
- e. The specific authorship is unknown and is attributed to the signatory entities – institutional authorship–.

In relation to objective 3, to evaluate the possible differences in the degree of commitment of the manuals according to the author's gender, the instrument designed by Edo and Zurbano-Berenguer (2019) (Table 2) has been used for this

measurement, based, in turn, on Aznar's (2005b) and Sutherland's *et al.* (2016) contributions. The results for the research which aims to test this tool are still in pre-print. In this investigation, the tool is described and applied to the same corpus of documents as the present paper.

**Table 2. Analysis sheet measuring the level of commitment of ethical documents on violence against women.**

IDENTIFICATION			
	Reference No.	Date	Authors
MEASUREMENT OF COMMITMENT INDICATORS			
		Yes	No
		Unknown	
A) Scientific justification for the proposal			
Q1. Is there a prior investigation?			
B) Applicability			
Q2. Is it clear, concise, and brief?			
Q3. Does it include examples?			
Q4. Does it include basic notions?			
Q5. Does the content of audiovisual resources differ?			
C) Intentionality			
Q6. Does it include the why and the what for?			
Q7. Does it include dissemination and implementation strategies in the profession?			
D) Authors' specialisation and relevance			
Q8. Is there evidence of communication and/or gender professionals collaborating in the document drafting?			
Q9. Is there evidence of communication and/or gender researchers collaborating in the document drafting?			
TOTAL			
ASSESSMENT	N / A / O		

Source: Created by the authors

The category system designed for measuring the level of commitment of the guidelines is set out in the analysis sheet in Table 2 –it consists of four indicators and nine subindicators– whose negative or unknown response is equivalent to 0 points and positive response to 1 point. Three differentiated ranges have been established for the proportional assessment of each guideline, on a nine-point scale –corresponding to the nine questions in table 2–. The document is considered to provide a negative level of commitment (N) when they are below five points, an acceptable level of commitment (A) when the document obtains between five and six points and optimum (O) when the document meets seven or more criteria.

The previous tool has been used in this work to cross-check the data relating to the level of commitment of the manuals with their type of authorship.

#### 4. Results

Regarding objective 1, to identify the specific authorship of each deontological document, the following table (Table 3) classifies the manuals –indicated by the references attributed in Table 1– into the five types of authorship.

**Table 3. Authorship of Spanish and Latin American deontological documents on violence against women and the media.**

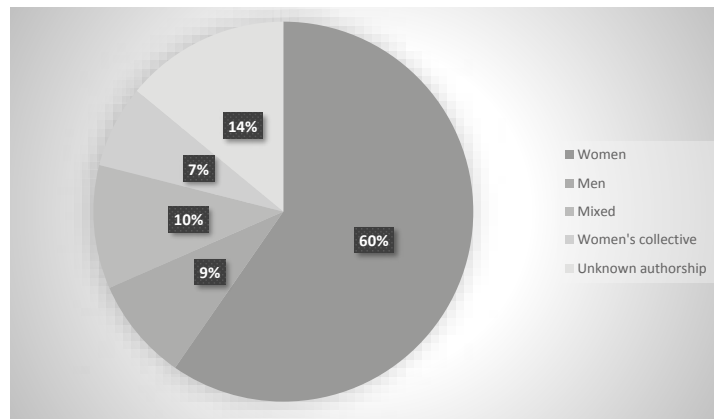
Types of authorship	Deontological documents ref.	TOTAL
a) Only women or a majority of women participated	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 11, 12, 14, 16, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 26, 27, 29, 32, 35, 36, 37, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 54, 55, 57	35
b) Only men or a majority of men were involved	3, 7, 17, 34, 52	5
c) An equal number of men and women participated	10, 28, 30, 39, 51, 58	6
d) It is assumed that women have participated as in the case of Women's Institutes and female journalist associations	8, 13, 15, 21	4
e) The specific authorship is unknown and attributed to the signatory entities	9, 24, 25, 31, 33, 38, 53, 56	8

Source: Created by the authors

In relation to objective 2, to disaggregate and quantify the participation of women and men, the results (graphs 1 and 2) show that a total of 35 guidelines (60%) have mainly relied on women to draft them mostly or totally –25 Spaniards and ten Latin Americans– as opposed to five (9%) who are attributed to only men or a majority of men –four Spaniards and one Latin American–. An equal number of men and women have participated in six of the protocols (10%) –four Spaniards and two Latin Americans–; while the authorship of four Spanish guidelines (7%) is attributed to presumably women because Women's Institutes and female journalist collectives sign the document. In the remaining guides, eight (14%) –six Spanish and two Latin American– it is not known who drafted them, so their authorship is institutional.

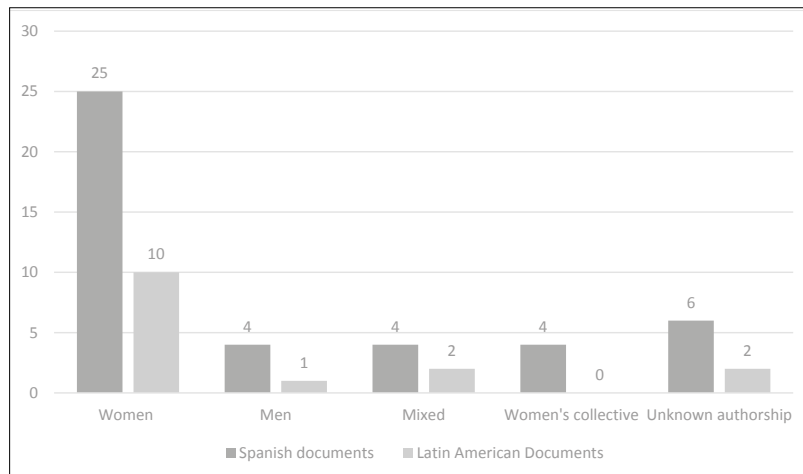
**Graph 1. Analysis of the authorship of Spanish and Latin American deontological documents on violence against women and the media**





Source: Created by the authors

Graph 2. Analysis of the authorship of the deontological documents on violence against women and the media in a differentiated way: Spanish and Latin Americans.



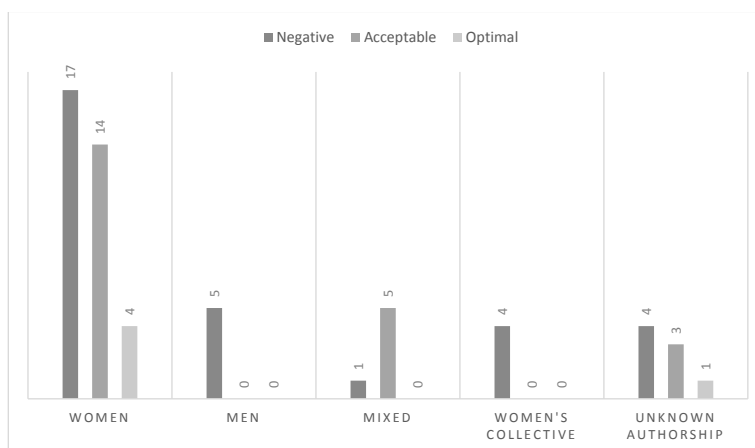
Source: Created by the authors

According to objective 3, to evaluate the specific authorship of deontological documents concerning their level of commitment, the yet to be published study by Edo and Zurbano-Berenguer (2019) has been used as a reference for comparison. Its results establish that 53% of the manuals provide a negative level of commitment, 38% are in an acceptable range, and 9% have an optimal level of commitment. Concerning the present study, the guidelines with the highest level of commitment are those in which women or women and men intervene equally, as detailed below.

Relating the results of both studies (graph 3), 49% (17) of the guides produced by women or a majority of women fail to meet the minimum level of commitment, while 40% (14) provide an acceptable level and 11% (4), an optimal level –in other words, in 51% of the cases the recommendations made by women pass and/or exceed the level of commitment. Protocols attributed exclusively or mostly to men fail and obtain a negative score in 100% of the cases. The guides in which an equal number of men and women have participated, 84% (5) of them pass the level of commitment, and 16% (1) fail. Regarding the guidelines presumably written by women, 100% are in the negative range. Finally, those documents whose authorship is unknown obtained acceptable levels of commitment in 37.5% (3) of the cases, negative in 50% (4) and optimal in 12.5% (1).

In summary, the resulting guidelines obtain an acceptable or optimal level of commitment more than half the time when participation is mixed or mainly female. When the authorship is attributed exclusively or mostly to men and/or presumably to women's collectives, all the guidelines present a negative level of commitment. In the case of unknown authorship, the degree of commitment of the guides fails in 50% of cases while the other 50% exceeds the minimum level.

**Graph 3. Level of the commitment of the Spanish and Latin American deontological documents on violence against women classified by authorship.**



Source: Created by the authors

The authorship of the Spanish documents that obtain an optimal level of commitment (Ref. 40, 41 and 43) corresponds in a differentiated way to only women or a majority of women. Women have also drafted the seven guidelines with the lowest score (Ref. 13, 15, 18, 27, 29, 31 and 42) or it is assumed that it was done so by women<sup>6</sup>, except one whose authorship is unknown. All the Spanish guidelines drafted exclusively or mostly by men (Ref. 3, 7, 17 and 34) fail to meet the minimum level of commitment.

<sup>6</sup> Guidelines 18, 27, 29 y 42 are drafted by women or a majority of them; guidelines 13 and 15, by a female journalist association and a regional Women's Institute, respectively, and the authorship of guideline 31 is unknown.

Concerning the Latin American documents, of the two guides with the highest scores (Ref. 48 and 56), one is drafted by women while the authorship of the other one is unknown. The guideline with the lowest score (Ref. 55) is drafted by a woman, while the only Latin American document drafted by a man (Ref. 52) has a negative level of commitment.

## 5. Conclusions

The initial hypothesis is confirmed as inferred from the results, demonstrating that there is a more significant quantitative presence of women who draft the guidelines, and this presence positively affects their degree of commitment. In other words, women not only participate more in drafting these documents but qualitatively their contribution results in higher quality content and that which can be more easily applied<sup>7</sup>.

The main conclusions that can be drawn are:

- Women fundamentally participate in the deontological context.
- Women's participation is a guarantee of the commitment of the guidelines, but the highest scores are presented when there is a collaboration between men and women.

Regarding this second conclusion, the highest percentage of guidelines that pass the level of commitment (84%) is presented when both sexes equally draft the materials. This shows that women's and men's collaboration when developing the guides results in higher quality standards, greater involvement and commitment, therefore it does not make sense to continue foregoing male contributions regarding journalistic deontology on VAW.

Also, this work shows that despite the increase in public awareness of this issue, much remains to be done if the media's inherent responsibility to inform the public about the issue continues to be placed upon women. This means not only making them implicitly over-responsible for taking corrective measures regarding this problem in the field of journalism but also foregoing men's efforts, knowledge, capacities, and worldviews, as they still do not seem to have made the fight against VAW their own.

Why do mainly women participate in the manuals? Is there a casual relationship between their participation and the topic, which is related to them, or on the contrary, are there power relationships, affinity, and so on? What has the female participants' motivations for collaborating been? And the men who have done so? And those who haven't? These are only some of the questions that arise after this completed work. In this work held on the hypothesis of the feminisation of journalism, it has been concluded that there is a double feminisation in the drafting of the deontological corpus: more women participate, and their participation influences the higher degree of commitment of the drafted documents. This, of course, raises profound questions about what institutions should do and how to improve the quality of journalism –which guarantees democracy through an informed and educated public opinion– in the face of a problem of such magnitude as VAW.

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<sup>7</sup> In this sense, it should be noted that this research has not taken into account whether the female authors have been chosen ad hoc because they are considered to be the most appropriate, prepared and sensitised to draft the deontological documents analysed here, which opens new avenues of qualitative research.

Before concluding, it should be clarified that the authors acknowledge journalism professionals' work and its inherent social responsibility, which is why they question the usefulness, intentionality, and drafting of deontological materials. Many of the materials neither include their participation or knowledge as proposed by Zurbano-Berenguer (2015b). In other words, this work does not assume that the eradication of VAW is an exclusive task for journalism or journalists, but it does assume that social sensitivity and the progressive reduction of aggression depends to a great extent on their work, under clear deontological criteria that are delimited and consensual.

Finally, it is important to emphasize that the path towards the eradication of violence can only be traversed by responsible and committed means that contribute to the creation of frameworks of social sensitivity that reject gender aggressions. It is therefore essential and fundamental that the deontological documents are not only moral and ethical but should also introduce elements of commitment to their understanding, acceptance, and effective application by the community of journalism professionals. The best guarantee for this to occur, which is highlighted in this work, is the collaboration between women and men.

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