

Analysis of the representation of alcohol consumption and its prevention, from the perspective of framing theory, in the Spanish press: *El País*, *El Mundo*, *Abc* and *La Razón*

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Abstract: This article presents the results of the analysis of 103 alcohol-related texts published from January to June, 2009, by four Spanish newspapers: *El País* (22), *El Mundo* (35), *Abc* (24) and *La Razón* (22). Two methods were used to examine the representation of alcohol: structural analysis based on Kayser's model (1982) and content analysis based on framing theory. The latter method has been used to examine the journalistic treatment of biotechnology (Durant, Bauer, and Gaskell, 1998; Nisbet, M.C., Brossard, and Kroepsch, 2003; Rodríguez-Luque, 2009), which has been adapted to examine the subject of drugs (Paricio, 2010). A reliability of 90% was achieved in the Cohen's Kappa coefficient test for the 67 variables examined in this study. The genre most dedicated to the subject of alcohol was news articles (66.9%), whose main theme was related conflict (19 texts), particularly the consequences of drunk driving (9 texts). The most used frames by journalists were, in decreasing order, crime (identified in 62 texts), new research results (in 11 texts), and epidemiology (in 15 texts). However, only few texts were dedicated to the prevention of alcohol consumption (a theme in only 4.85% of the sample) and the legal institutions dedicated to this activity (2.91%).

Keywords: drugs; alcohol; content analysis; press; framing; structural analysis.

Summary: 1. Introduction. 2. Information on alcohol consumption and its prevention in the media. 3. Literature review on the cognitive effects of the media representation of drugs. 4. Hypothesis, objectives and methods. 5. Results. 6. Conclusions. 7. References.

Translation by **Cruz-Alberto Martínez-Arcos, M.A.** (University of London)

1. Introduction

Drug consumption is a cross-cutting social phenomenon that involves different actors and areas: health, education, economy, justice, communication, etc. As the Spanish foundation against drug addiction (*Fundación de Ayuda contra la Drogadicción - FAD*) indicates, drugs are chemical substances that create dependence and are consumed with non-therapeutic purposes and without medical control (FAD, 1998). According to the Spanish Ministry of Health and Consumer Affairs (*Ministerio de Sanidad y Consumo*), “alcohol is a central nervous system depressant that progressively inhibits brain functions. It affects the self-control capacity and initially produces euphoria and disinhibition, so it can be confused with a stimulant” (2007: 17).

Regarding alcohol consumption in Spain, according to the 2010 study on social values and drugs (*Valores Sociales y Drogas, 2010*), jointly conducted by FAD, the *Plan Nacional sobre Drogas* (Spanish National Plan on Drugs) and *Caja Madrid* (the oldest Spanish savings bank), the number of Spaniards between 15 and 64 years of age who admits drinking “regularly”, i.e. every day or every weekend, has increased almost by 15% (from 33.4% to 47%) in the last ten years. Despite the significant percentage of regular users, 66.8% of the surveyed Spaniards believed alcohol is “quite or very dangerous”, while a minority, 6.9%, perceived it as little or no dangerous.

With regards to young people, according to the Spanish national survey on the use of drugs in secondary schools (*Encuesta Estatal Sobre Uso De Drogas En Enseñanzas Secundarias - Estudes*), alcohol consumption among 14-18 year-olds became stable in recent years. However, the study also indicates that alcohol was still consumed by 58.5% of this sector of the population (in the month prior to the survey). The other most consumed drugs were tobacco (32.3%) and cannabis (20.1%).

Another important fact is that traffic accidents caused by the driver’s alcoholic intoxication are the most common cause of death among young people. According to the Spanish national institute of toxicology and forensic sciences (*Instituto Nacional de Toxicología y Ciencias Forenses*), 30.9% of the drivers killed in traffic accidents had a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) equal to or greater than 0.3 g/l. This figure has been confirmed by the Spanish department of road transport (*Dirección General de Tráfico*), which points out that alcohol is the triggering factor in at least one third of fatal accidents.

Therefore, alcohol is the most commonly used psychoactive substance in Spain, and despite it has great negative consequences on health and social aspects, the consumption of alcoholic drinks is a culturally accepted and widespread habit in the Western world. This great social and cultural acceptance is the main problem to prevent alcohol consumption as it has led people to adopt an attitude of total tolerance

towards it, despite knowing the risks associated with the abusive consumption of this substance (Navarro, 2000).

Over the years, there has been a change in the way people, especially the youth, consumes alcohol. This change is associated with the emergence of new ways of spending the free time, which has given rise to important social problems (Mateo and Del-Val, 1993). On the one hand, there are collective recreational activities that take place in public spaces during weekends. On the other hand, there is an individual recreational model that takes places in private and family spaces, during the weekdays, and revolves around the media. Thus, there has been a gradual replacement of the Mediterranean alcohol consumption model, which is mainly based on the consumption of alcoholic drinks during meals and celebrations, by the Anglo-Saxon model characterised by the massive consumption of alcohol in a short period of time.

In this sense, alcohol consumption has become a socialisation activity that is increasingly common among teens and young people. This activity takes place in the company of friends, and is associated with night recreational spaces during the weekends (*Cruz Roja Española* - Spanish Red Cross, 2010). This new alcohol consumption model plus the easy acquisition of the substance and the dismissal of its risks sometimes lead to a lifestyle marked by the excessive consumption of alcohol.

2. Information on alcohol consumption and its prevention in the media

Communication is a key factor in the prevention of excessive alcohol consumption. Institutions dedicated to the prevention and assistance of drug addictions have developed different prevention policies and strategies (targeting people in different environments like homes, schools and recreational centres) that are disseminated through the media.

As Beneit, García and Mayor (1997) indicate, “the media have the great ability to increase the knowledge of the population on a particular topic”, can “inform and raise awareness”, for example, “on certain harmful habits and practices” to promote their eradication, and can also contribute to “maintain and enhance” “positive habits” (1997: 288). The power of the media has also been acknowledged by Walter Lippmann (1922/2003), who considers the media are windows to the vast world that is beyond our direct experience which, according to him, determines our cognitive maps of the world.

In relation to our research topic it is important to note that communication professionals are interpreters of the social reality and that, depending on society’s perception of reality, they have a great impact on the social perception of the different aspects related to alcohol consumption (*Plan Nacional sobre Drogas*, 2007).

So for instance, in the last decades there has been a major change in the social perception of legal substances. Currently, social perceptions are different: social alarm

and outrage seem to have diminished, which has led to the trivialisation of the legal drugs. As a consequence only a minority of the population identifies alcohol and tobacco as drugs (Añaños, 2005; Arza, 2002), partly due to the fact that these two substances have always enjoyed an excellent image and are inseparable from the media's most popular fictional characters and are part of our cultural heritage (Coca, 2004). Escapism from personal problems has been replaced as the main motivator for consumption by the pursuit of pleasure in a recreational environment (Arza, 2002).

In the age of the information society, the media not only act as information channels, but also as advisers and educators.

In relation to drug addictions, the social media are not just transmitters of information about drugs, but are also a means of action for the full development of individuals (Vega-Fuente, 2004). If we consider that journalism focuses “on the appropriate transmission of knowledge on the current human realities that are useful for citizens to know in order to act freely and in solidarity” (Galdón, 1999: 25), journalists have the social responsibility to tackle the problem of drugs. Moreover, public service journalists have the social responsibility of properly meeting the real information needs of users, by taking into account their increasing interest on the issues that affect them personally (Diezhandino, 1994).

Media consumption among young people is primarily driven by recreational purposes, but that does not mean that young people do not value the media as a source of information (Martínez-Verdú, 2007). Therefore, the media can crucially contribute to the prevention of drug addictions because they are one of the main sources of information on drugs for young people, and society as a whole. In addition, the media are a powerful means of action for the full development of individuals.

The media are a crucial element in “the socialisation of young people, in the transmission of values and social attitudes,” because they offer images that young people can identify with and use to build their own identity at a time when the cultural referents have lost influence (Sánchez, Megías and Rodríguez, 2004: 7).

As Beneit, Mayor and García (1997: 288) point out, the media “have a great power to generate opinion, given their great credibility among individuals. They are able to reinforce certain attitudes previously held by the population”. Thus, after highlighting the problem of alcohol consumption and the role of the media as information-disseminators and opinion-makers, it results important to examine the treatment given by the media to the issue of alcohol consumption and its contribution to its potential prevention.

The performance of the media in this regard has been previously studied by anti-drug institutions and researchers and academics from various disciplines.

The 2007 Spanish National Plan on Drugs (*Plan Nacional sobre Drogas*, 2007) points out that advertising and information about alcoholic drinks in some media

outlets offer a positive image about alcohol consumption as it is associated to recreational activities, entertainment and social success. Meanwhile, the report on media and drug addictions of the 2000 National Plan on Drugs (*Plan Nacional sobre Drogas*, 2000) indicates that there are two frequent practices that are used in the representation of alcohol in the media and produce distortion and even negative effects: the repeated image of alcohol associated with young people in a recreational environment, and the generalisation of information that transmits the idea that all young people consume and abuse alcohol during weekends. These representation practices ignore the fact that despite excessive alcohol consumption has increased there is also an increasing number of young abstainers.

According to Zalakaín (2004), the information on drugs provided by the media has some deficiencies:

- Limited diversity in the agenda. The bulk of information offered by the media focuses on sports and politics, which translates into a lack of resources and space to address the issue of drugs.
- Limited training. Journalists have very limited knowledge about the topics they report.
- Limited specialisation. Journalists need to become specialised in certain areas, mainly those related to citizens' interests and quality of life.
- Limited resources. Many journalists work in precarious conditions, with limited research possibilities, without enough time to search for alternative sources, and without possibilities to maintain lines of research.
- Limited sources. The majority of news items come from police sources and a small percentage comes from experts in the field of drug addiction.

Zalakaín also points out that the media should take special care in addressing the phenomenon of alcohol consumption because inadequate and distorted information on this matter can lead to the excessive dramatization of the problem, which could hamper the understanding in terms of normalisation (Zalakaín, 2004) or, in the contrary, as it has already happened, it can lead to the trivialisation of alcohol consumption and its effects (Elzo, 2000).

Some studies on the media's treatment of drugs emphasise the prevalence of news articles that associate drugs and crime. García, Menor and Perales (1987), for instance, highlight that the main feature of the image presented by the press about drugs is a punitive focus, i.e. an image associated with conflict, violence, crime and environments that are close to the reader, which dismisses other aspects that could offer a different reality about the issue of drugs.

Some agencies and researchers have focused on creating recommendations for the informative treatment of drugs in the media. The Spanish Foundation Against Drug Addiction (FAD) has urged the media to analyse the facts from all points of view, and not only from the exclusively judicial/police point of view, in order to counteract the predominant image of the drug addict as criminal. FAD also stresses that there should be no neutral or justificatory treatments towards the harmful effects of drugs, both legal and illegal. Moreover, the foundation points out that the preferential treatment given by inertia or recognition to certain addictive substances should be avoided, and that while it would be ideal to inform about the negative effects of drugs, the media should also inform about the positive activities carried out by institutions and citizens to decrease their consumption (FAD, 2008: 18-21).

López-de-Luzuriaga and Bermejo (2004: 80) indicate that the representation of drugs must go beyond explaining the legal status, uses and origins and should also address the causes and consequences of their consumption. Regarding the form and approach of the journalistic texts, they propose the following recommendations: to use objective and verified information that may be used to reduce the risks of drug consumption; to include more news about drug prevention and to present a greater number of opinions from various sources; to disclose the sources of the presented data, research or studies; to examine other approaches to drugs, like social perspectives; and to provide elements for reflection.

Other interesting recommendations for the media treatment of drugs have been offered by the American Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration (SAMHSA), which focuses on alcohol. The SAMHSA recommends the media should not use former alcoholics or drug-addicts as role models when covering issues related to alcohol and other drugs, especially if they are famous people. According to the SAMHSA, even if the message is “do not do this, I suffered its consequences”, society actually hears: “I did this and now I am well. Taking drugs is part of the life of famous people”.

Another recommendation is to provide spaces for the dissemination of messages and information supporting activities to prevent alcohol consumption. It would be very positive if the media’s agenda considered the prevention of drug use as a top priority. The SAMHSA also recommends the media to balance news related to the consumption of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs with news related to the positive aspects of young people and adults who do not consume drugs. Finally, the SAMHSA recommends the media: to provide spaces for local anti-drugs institutions to present information related to the problems caused by alcohol, tobacco and other drugs; to collaborate with local, regional or national prevention groups and to support their information activities; and to avoid the glamorisation or glorification of celebrities that drink and smoke (Paricio, 2010).

3. Literature review on the cognitive effects of the media representation of drugs

Previous studies and theories on the cognitive effects of the media on the public opinion seem to indicate that any rigorous research on the media's informative treatment of a given topic, like alcohol consumption, must be informed by the tools provided by the theories of the agenda setting, framing, thematisation, the spiral of silence, and the social construction of reality.

The agenda setting theory proposes that the media's prior selection of themes of public concern persuades citizens to pay attention to some issues and to dismiss others. McCombs and Shaw (1972: 177), the creators of this theory, claim that:

“They apparently learn, furthermore, in direct proportion to the emphasis placed on the campaign issues by the mass media.[...] it is hypothesized that the mass media set the agenda for each political campaign, influencing the salience of attitudes toward the political issues”:

However, this theory is not only applicable to the political sphere but is also to any thematic area related to the activity of the media. Thus “at this stage it seems undeniable, thanks to agenda setting studies, that corporate media exercise a decisive influence in people's formal freedom of opinion, as a result of the prior selection of the themes the media decides to bring to our attention” (Dader, 1990: 90). For Dader, this theory is the explanation par excellence of the formation of public opinion and individuals' universe of public concerns.

In this sense, the media's agenda setting leads to the thematisation of reality. According to Saperas, thematisation can be defined as “the process of selection and evaluation of certain topics of interest that are inserted, contingently, in the public opinion, defined as the thematic structure that reduces social complexity to the various subsystems or partial systems in which it acts” (Saperas, 1987: 98).

This way, the issues covered in the media determine the thematic interest of citizens while the silenced issues hardly become part of those interests (Luhmann, 2000). This last part is connected to the Spiral of Silence theory (Noelle-Neumann, 1993). In other words, themes are conceived as the structures of meanings that are conveyed in different communications, that is, different types of discourses may be given to address the same theme. Likewise, the public opinion, understood as a structure of themes, is a way of reducing the complexity that characterises social reality.

At each step of the communication process, decisions are taken, some pieces of information are excluded and some others included, some issues are ignored and others are repeatedly represented, and headlines are written to capture the public's attention and graphic resources are used to illustrate the topics. Priorities are established and themes are chosen. Each of these steps is, in essence, the imposition of

a frame. Although there are differences between framing and the second level agenda-setting (Gamson and Modigliani, 1989; Scheufele, 1999). As McCombs clarifies in the evolution of his theories, the second level agenda setting refers to attributes, and framings are very special attributes: “Attributes defining a central theme are frames” (McCombs, M., 2005). According to Robert Entman (1993: 52): “To frame is to select some aspect of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described”.

According to Dader (1990) the media have the power to define the degree of relevance of a theme. In this regard, the social power to define situations as serious or not, or to shape the way people respond to a series of events, is present in the type of social interaction promoted by the news media every day in our societies. The framing of the information in one or another section of the medium can promote different types of social readings for the same text.

Fontcuberta points out that “the format of a medium reflects the value it grants to the news items it presents, while receivers interpret the medium according to the rules instructed to them by the medium itself” (Fontcuberta, 1993: 65).

The analysed theories are closely linked to the social construction of reality and indicate that information is powerful because it can create realities (Camps, 1990). This theory emphasises the power of the media to produce reality. The receivers of information organise their knowledge according to the proposals of the media, which determine the themes that deserve greater attention. In this sense, it seems that we can affirm that only what exists in the media exists in the real world.

In relation to the communication on drugs, there are two particularly interesting aspects of the coverage conducted by the media: 1) the thematisation conducted by the media because of its effects on individuals’ sphere of concerns, and 2) the role of the media in the construction of the reality of drugs. Therefore, in order to understand the link between the information treatment and public perception of the subject of drugs it is necessary not only to analyse the presence or absence of drugs in the media’s thematic agenda, but also the framing of this theme.

Therefore, if we focus on the representation of alcohol consumption, the media intervene in the thematisation they themselves develop with effects in people’s personal sphere of concerns (agenda setting theory) and also play a role in the construction of the public perception of alcohol consumption. However, the analysis of the presence or absence of the subject of alcohol in the thematic agenda of the media is not enough to understand the relationship between its information treatment and its relevance among the different issues concerning society.

4. Hypothesis, objectives and methods

Based on the previous arguments, this analysis of the media's treatment of the subject of drugs is informed by the theories of the agenda setting, framing and thematisation. The aim is to establish the importance granted to this subject from January to June, 2009, in order to identify the existing models of information used in alcohol consumption.

Therefore, the research is based on the following hypotheses.

1. We expect the information aimed at the prevention of alcohol consumption to have an important presence in the mainstream press (both in quantitative and qualitative terms), because alcohol consumption is a major problem in Spain, because the media has the responsibility of contributing to the education of society in healthy habits, and because the institutions dedicated to the prevention and control of drug addiction generally work in collaboration with the media.
2. The institutions dedicated to the prevention and treatment of drug addiction will have significant presence in alcohol-related journalistic texts, both as sources of information and subject matters.
3. Information about drugs in the media will follow the recommendations established by the main institutions and researchers in the field of drug addiction, i.e. the media will promote the prevention of alcohol consumption and will try to increase the social awareness about its health risks. The coverage, thematisation and framing: will promote educational and prevention values; will privilege the inclusion of examples of positive activities carried out by institutions and citizens; will not use neutral or justificatory approaches when dealing with legal and illegal substances; will avoid preferential treatments towards certain drugs; will avoid the glamourisation of drugs and its association with success; will not welcome the presence of famous people associated alcohol consumption (see the recommendations of the FAD, Lopez-de-Luzuriaga and Bermejo, and the American SAMHSA).

The specific objectives of this study are:

- To analyse the informative treatment given to alcohol consumption by the selected newspapers.
- To analyse the aspects connected to the subject of alcohol consumption in alcohol-related journalistic texts, in order to identify the reality projected on this matter, and in particular the main themes, genres, frames, and amount and type of sources.
- To establish the degree to what the mainstream press contributed or not to the normalisation of alcohol consumption, either by dismissing or highlighting its potential dangers and risks. This contribution will be evaluated based on the study

of the overall approach of alcohol-related texts towards alcohol consumption and the themes that associate alcohol with entertainment.

- To verify the degree of compliance with the recommendations of the different anti-drugs institutions such as FAD, the Deusto Drug Addiction Institute, and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).
- To verify the coverage of positive examples promoting preventative and educational values in relation to alcohol consumption (presence of institutions dedicate to drug addiction prevention, positive role models, etc.).

To achieve these objectives we analysed the alcohol-related texts published by the Spanish mainstream press from January to June 2009. Given that the universe of newspaper titles is very large, we selected a small sample according to the following criteria: distribution, circulation, and ideology. The selected newspapers are *El País*, *El Mundo*, *La Razón* and *Abc*. The following table presents the average number of daily readers of the selected newspapers based on the data provided by the General Media Study (*Estudio General de Medios-EGM*), published by the Spanish Association for Media Research AIMC (2009), which examined the circulation of these and other Spanish newspapers from February to November of 2009, which covers the period under analysis.

Table 1. Average number of daily readers across the sample of newspapers

Newspaper	Daily readers
<i>El País</i>	2,081,000
<i>El Mundo</i>	1,309,000
<i>Abc</i>	728,000
<i>La Razón</i>	355,000

Source: Authors' own creation based on data contained in the *EGM* 2009.

The analysis was applied to 100% of the alcohol-related journalistic texts published by the selected newspapers from January to June of 2009. A total of 103 alcohol-related texts were identified: 24 in *El País*, 26 in *El Mundo*, 36 in *La Razón* and 17 in *Abc*.

In accordance with the objectives of the study, these texts were subjected to two types of analyses: 1) evaluative analysis of the intensity (Bardin, 1986; Casasús, 1998;

Kayser, 1982; Martínez-Albertos, 2001) and approach; and 2) categorical analysis of themes, sources and frames (Bardin, 1986; Entman, 1993; Gamson and Modigliani, 1989; Scheufele, 1999). The reliability was tested with a double coding on 10% of the sample in the 67 variables, and reached 90% in the Cohen's Kappa coefficient test.

The variables used for the evaluative analysis of coverage intensity are page, length of the piece of information, genre, location within the newspaper, hierarchy in the page; height, width and size of headlines, number and priority of images, and typography. Each of these variables was evaluated with a 100-points scale. Regarding the analysis of the approaches of the texts towards alcohol consumption, they were classified as neutral, predominantly positive, predominantly negative, or ambivalent (Bardin, 1986; García-Ferrando, Ibáñez and Alvira, 1986; López-Aranguren, 1989; Piñuel and Gaitán, 1995). With regards to the categorical analysis, it took into account the texts' source, primary and secondary themes, and frames. Framing analysis is based on categories that have been already used in previous studies (Durant, Bauer and Gaskell, 1998; McComas and Shanahan, 1999; Nisbet, M.C., Brossard, and Kroepsch, 2003; Nisbet, M.C. and Lewenstein, 2002; Rodríguez-Luque, 2008, 2009) and on new narrative or framing devices that were established after conducting several analyses on random samples of texts: medical/scientific context, ethics/morality, political strategy, legislation, companies, epidemiology, public opinion, non-expert opinions, anecdotal personalisation, and crime.

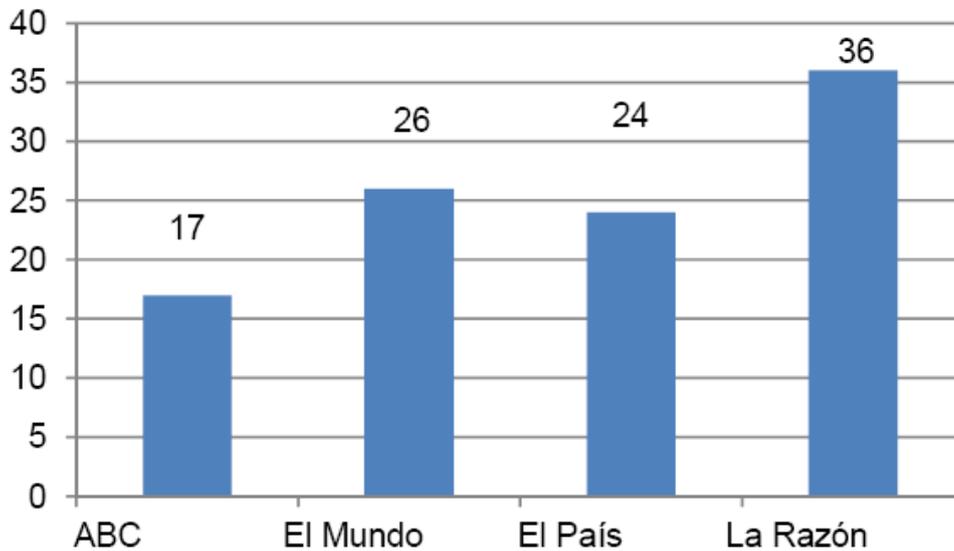
The creation of the categories to classify the main themes and frames was based on previous studies (Aguilar Serrano, Hernández-Martínez, Tomás-Dols, Llorens-Aleixandre, Tortajada-Navarro and Samper-Gras, 2010). Meanwhile, the classification of sources included: politicians, police/security forces, courts/judges, scientists, scholars, private institutions, psychological and health institutions, and non-experts.

A technical datasheet for the identification variables and the categorical and evaluative content analysis was created and applied to each of the units of analysis. The obtained data were examined with the statistical applications Microsoft Excel (for descriptive data and creation of graphics) and SPSS (for complex statistical analysis, variable cross-checks, and inferential reliability tests).

5. Results

From January to June 2009, the four selected newspapers published a total of 103 journalistic texts dealing with alcohol. As we can see in the following figure, the differences in the number of alcohol-related texts provided by each newspaper are not very significant. The newspaper that provided the largest amount of alcohol-related texts was *La Razón*, which provided 36 texts that account for 34.95% of the sample. *El Mundo* provided the second largest amount of alcohol related texts (26); *El País* the third largest number (24) and *Abc* the smallest amount of texts (17).

Figure 1. Number of alcohol-related texts provided across the sample of newspapers



Source: Authors' own creation

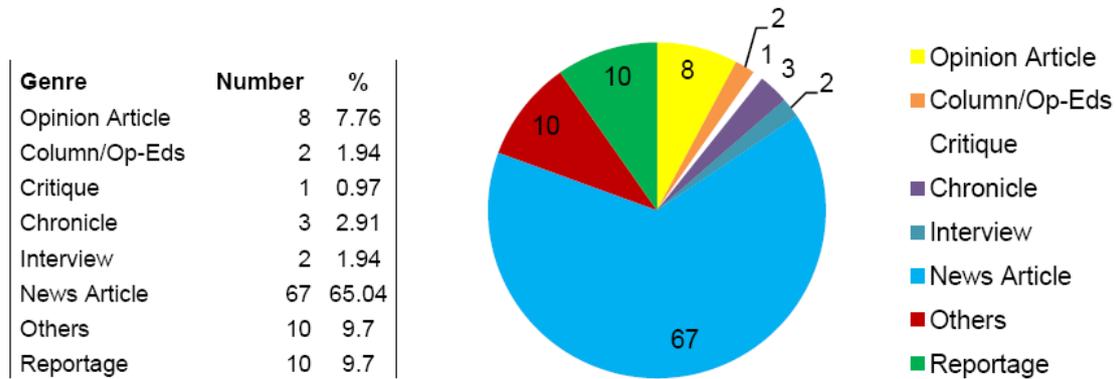
Table 2. Number and percentage of alcohol-related texts provided per newspaper

Newspapers	Number	%
Abc	17	16.5%
El Mundo	26	25.24%
El País	24	23.3%
La Razón	36	34.95%

Source: Authors' own creation

Regarding the genre of the texts, as we can see in the following figure, the news article was the most common genre: to be precise, 65.04% of the texts were news articles. The second most common genres were the reportage and the “other genres” category (each of these genres accounted for 9.7% of the cases), while the opinion articles were the third most common genre (accounting for 7.76% of the total sample). The least common genres, in descending order, were: chronicle, column, and interview.

Figure 2. Classification of texts by genre



Source: Authors' own creation

Regarding the sections where the alcohol-related texts were located, the “others” category, includes the original sections of each newspaper, provided the largest percentage of texts, 33%. The “society” section provided the second largest percentage of texts, 17.47%, and the “national” section provided the third largest percentage of texts, 11.65%. The other sections that provided alcohol-related texts are, in decreasing order: “health supplements” (with 9.7%), “accidents and crime” (with 8.73%), “culture” (5.82%), “international” (4.85%), “opinion” (4.85%), and lastly “regional” (with 3.88%).

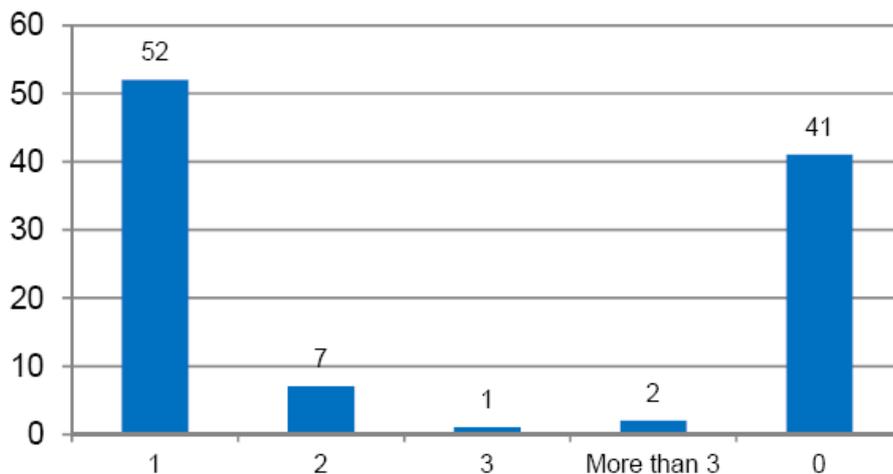
Table 3. Sections where the texts were located

Section	Number	%
Culture	6	5.82
International	5	4.85
National/Politics/Spain	12	11.65
Opinion	5	4.85
Others	34	33
Regional sections	4	3.88
Society	18	17.47
Accidents and Crime	9	8.73
Health supplements	10	9.7

Source: Authors' own creation

With regards to the texts’ graphic elements, we will only evaluated the inclusion of images based on a 100-points scale and using Kayser’s method. As we can see in the figure below, most texts only included one image (52), while a very important amount of texts did not include images whatsoever. There were only two texts that included more than three images. The average mark achieved in the formal analysis is not very high: 33.53 points.

Figure 3. Classification of texts by number of included images



Source: Authors’ own creation

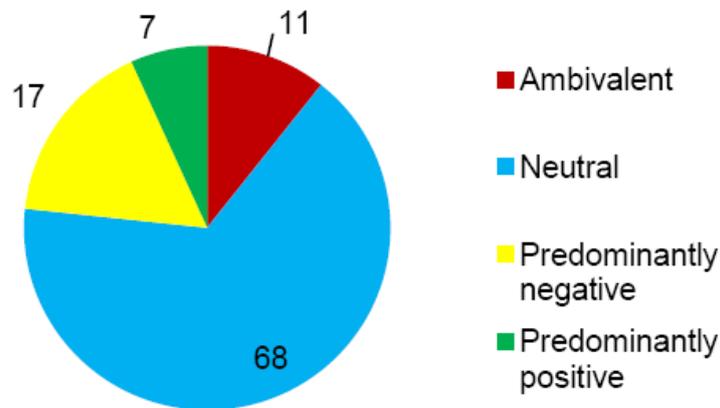
Most alcohol-related texts were located in even numbered pages (48), and had less presence in odd numbered pages. In terms of section openings, 10 texts opened a section in odd numbered pages and 5 opened a section in even numbered pages. Finally, there were 7 texts in front pages and only 1 in a back page.

Table 4. Location of texts in the newspaper

Location	Number
Back page	1
Odd numbered section-opening page	10
Odd numbered normal page	32
Even numbered section-opening page	5
Even numbered normal page	48
Front page	7

Source: Authors’ own creation

Figure 4. Overall approach of the journalistic texts towards alcohol consumption



Source: Authors' own creation

The most common approach towards alcohol consumption in the sample of texts was neutral, which was identified in 66.01% of the cases, or 68 texts. The second most common approach was “predominantly negative” (17), and the third most common was “ambivalent” (11). There were only 7 texts that exhibited a “predominantly positive” approach.

Table 5. Main theme of the texts

Main theme	Number	%
Drug trafficking, in general	1	0.97
Consequences related to drunk driving	14	13.59
Consequences related to conflicts/crime	11	10.67
Celebrities and alcohol consumption	7	6.79
Violence against women	3	2.91
Consequences on physical health	6	5.82
Consequences on mental health	1	0.97
Data on drug consumption	11	10.67
Data on addictive behavioural disorders	2	1.94
Data on general consumption	3	2.91
Prevention	8	7.76
Institutions	4	3.88
Presentation of studies and research results	8	7.76
Celebrities and prevention	3	2.91
Leisure	11	10.67
Others	1	0.97

Source: Authors' own creation

Regarding the main themes in alcohol-related texts, the most common was the consequences related to drunk driving, which appeared in 13.59% of the cases (14 texts). The second most common main themes were “consequences related to conflicts/crime”, “data on drug consumption”, and “leisure activities”, each of which appeared in 10.67% of the cases (11 texts). The third most common themes were “prevention” and “presentation of studies and research results” each of which appeared in 7.76% of the cases (8 texts). The fourth and fifth most common themes were “celebrities and alcohol consumption”, which appeared in 6.79% of cases (7 texts), and the “consequences on physical health”, which appeared in 5.82% of cases (6 texts). In contrast, the theme of “celebrities and prevention” only appeared in 2.91% of cases (3 texts), which is the same level of presence for “data on general consumption [of any kind, food, drinks, drugs, etc.]”. The least common themes were, in decreasing order: “data on addictive behavioural disorders”, “drug trafficking, in general”, and the “consequences on mental health”.

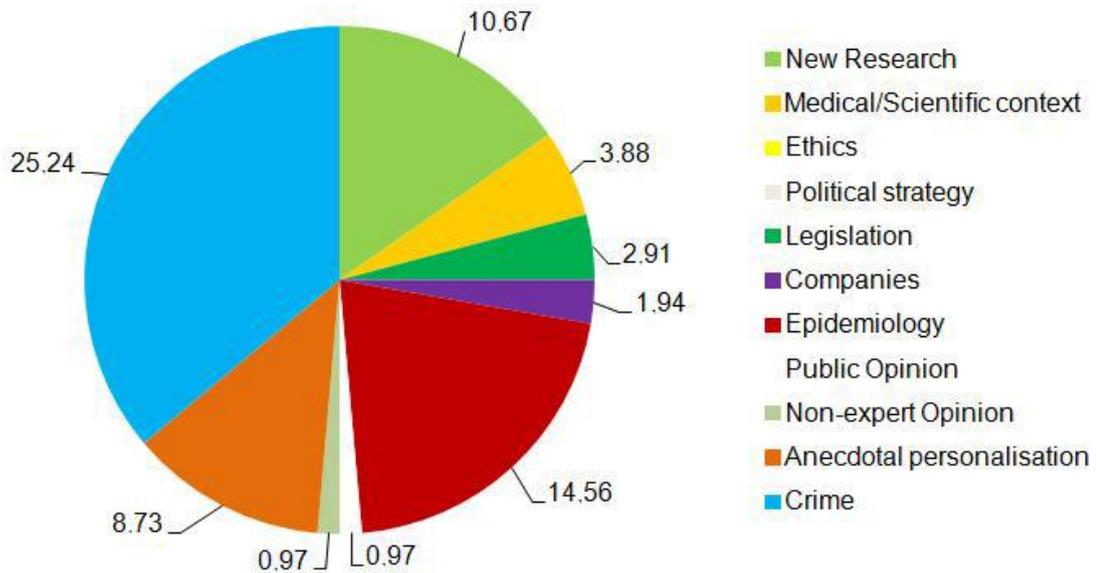
Table 6. Quantitative and percentage presence of the different frames in summary leads

Frames	In lead/highlighted		Present but not strongly	
	%	N°	%	N°
New research	10.67	11	26.21	27
Medical/scientific context	3.88	4	11.65	12
Ethics	0	0	8.73	9
Political strategy	0	0	3.88	4
Legislation	2.91	3	16.50	17
Companies	1.94	2	5.82	6
Epidemiology	14.56	15	31.06	32
Public opinion	0.97	1	13.59	14
Non-expert opinions	0.97	1	3.88	4
Anecdotal personalisation	8.73	9	18.44	19
Crime	25.24	26	34.95	36

Source: Authors’ own creation.

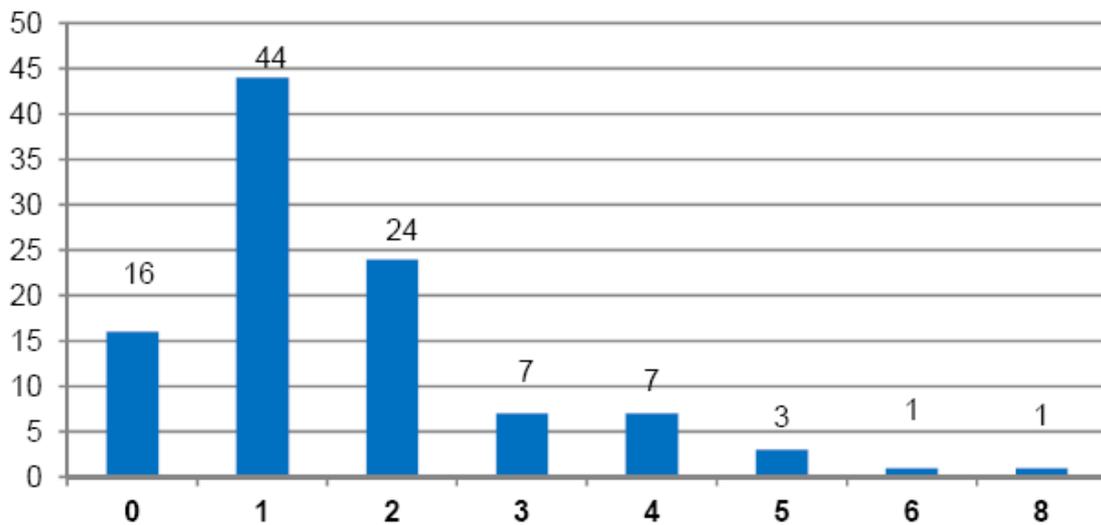
In terms of frames, the most common frame was “crime” as it appeared in 25.24% of the cases (26 texts), followed by “epidemiology” which appears in 14.56% of the cases (15 texts). The third most common frame was “new research results”, which appeared in 10.67% of the cases (11 texts). The least common frames were “anecdotal personalisation” (which appeared in 8.73% of the cases); “medical/scientific context” (which was identified in 3.88% of the cases); “legislation” (which was detected in 2.91% of the cases); and “companies (and markets)” (which appeared in only 1.94% of the sample).

Figure 5. Predominant frames in the sample of texts



Source: Authors' own creation

Figure 6. Classification of texts by number of cited sources

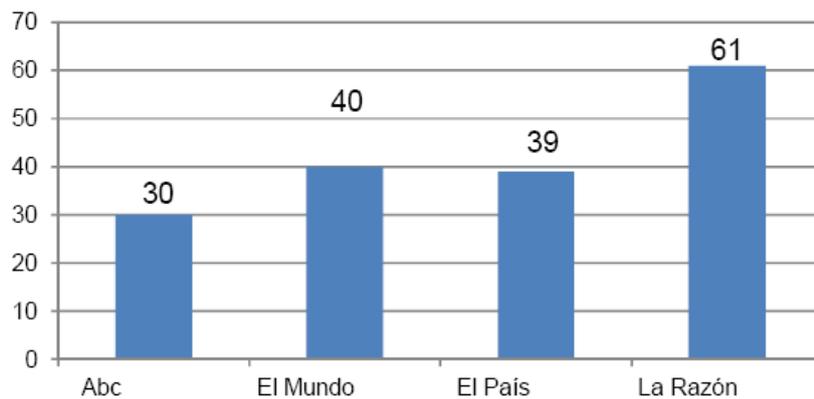


Source: Authors' own creation

As we can see in figure 6, the vast majority of texts only cited one source (42.71%), followed by those citing 2 sources (23.3%). There was a considerable percentage of texts, 15.53% of the sample (16 texts), that did not cite any personal source.

The newspaper with the largest number of cited sources was *La Razón* (61), which was also the paper that published the largest number of alcohol-related texts. *El Mundo* and *El País* cited almost the same number of sources, 40 and 39, respectively. *Abc* ranked last with 30 sources, although the difference is not very relevant.

Figure 7. Number of cited sources per newspaper



Source: Authors' own creation

As we can see in table 7, texts citing only one source mostly refer to private institutions (mentioned as single source in 16 texts), and politicians and security forces (each mentioned in 14 texts). The third most common single sources were psychological/health institutions and scholars (each mentioned in 7 texts). Finally, “scientists” were cited as single sources only in 6 texts.

The texts that cited two sources also referred mostly to private institutions (cited in 9 texts), which were followed by politicians (6) and non-experts (4). When three sources were cited, they refer mostly to psychological/health institutions (cited in 5 texts). Interestingly, when 4 or 6 sources were cited they referred to non-expert commentators.

Table 7: Classification of texts by number of cited sources

Number of Sources	Politicians	Police/ Security Forces	Courts/ Judges	Scientists	Scholars	Private Institutions	Psych/ Health Institutions	Non-Experts
1	14	14		6	7	16	7	14
2	6	2	1	1	1	9	2	4
3				1		2	5	2
4								1
6								1

Source: Authors' own creation

After applying a predictive algorithm to the data and specifying a precedent we can predict with confidence the subsequent behaviour. We have associated the presence and absence of alcohol-related texts with the frames in order to detect important presences or absences. The most relevant findings were related to the presences. Thus we can predict that in the sample of texts about drugs and alcohol, published by the selected newspapers, the frame of epidemiology will appear 2.47 more times than any other frame and that the framing of “new research results” will appear 2.15 more times than other frames. Under the same conditions, if the subject of alcohol is absent, i.e. when the texts deal with other drugs, we can predict that the “political strategy” frame will appear 1.95 more times than in the rest of the texts.

6. Conclusions

The subject of alcohol consumption does not have a significant quantitative presence in the agenda of the four studied newspapers. In total, 103 alcohol-related journalistic texts were identified and the differences in terms of coverage across newspapers are not particularly significant. The largest number of alcohol-related texts was published by *La Razón* (36), while the smallest number was published by *Abc* (17). In any case, the average number of alcohol-related texts published per month (of 30 days) was 4.29. In this sense, the first research hypothesis, which expected the Spanish media to give an important coverage to alcohol consumption given its severity in the country, was not confirmed in the analysed newspapers.

In view of the results obtained in relation to the quantitative coverage, the formal features and the different variables of analysis (genre, texts' location and graphic elements, etc.) we can conclude that the coverage of the issue of alcohol was, generally, poor and this favoured the public's dismissal of the coverage and the subject as a whole. In relation to genre, the news article was the most frequent genre as it constituted 65.04% of the sample of texts, followed by the reportage and “other genres” category, each of which accounted for 9.7% of cases. The low percentage of opinion articles on the subject (7.76% of the sample) was shocking. Most texts were located in normal even-numbered pages (48), in comparison to odd-numbered pages (32).

In terms of graphic elements, most texts (52) only included an image but a very considerable amount included none (41), so it can be concluded that not much importance was granted to the graphic treatment of the subject of alcohol. Based on a 100-points scale, the formal treatment variables under analysis achieved a low average mark: 33.53 points.

Therefore, we can conclude that the quantitative and formal analyses refute the first hypothesis.

The study also contradicted the second hypothesis, which expected to find a considerable presence of drug addiction prevention campaigns and institutions in alcohol-related texts as sources and main themes. Drug addiction prevention campaigns and institutions had a reduced presence as main themes, as they were the subject matter in only 8 and 4 texts, respectively (which represented 7.75% and 3.88% of the sample), and as sources, as earlier studies had pointed out (Zalakaín, 2004).

The vast majority of texts only cited one source (42.71%), while 23.3% cited two sources and 15.53% (16 texts) did not cite any source. The majority of texts that cited only one source referred to private institutions (16), followed by politicians and police/security forces (each in 14 texts). The third most common single-cited sources were psychological/health institutions and scholars (cited in 7 texts each), followed by scientists (cited in 6 texts). Interestingly, those texts that cited 4 or 6 sources, referred to non-expert commentators. All this leads us to refute the second hypothesis.

With regards to the third hypothesis, which expected the press to follow the recommendations of the experts advocating for the prevention of alcohol consumption (FAD, 1998; López-de-Luzuriaga and Bermejo, 2004; Paricio, 2010), the results highlighted that only a very low percentage of alcohol-related texts, 7%, was presented from a health perspective or section. Most texts appeared in the original sections of each newspaper and the society sections (in 17.47% of cases).

In terms of frames, the most common was “crime”, in 25.24% of the cases (26 texts), followed by “epidemiology” in 14.56% (15 texts). The third most common frame was “new research results” which appeared in 10.67% of the cases. Regarding the main themes in alcohol-related texts, the consequences related to drunk driving was the most common theme (14), followed by conflicts/crime, data on drugs consumption, and leisure activities, each of which appeared in 10.67% of the cases. So, despite the control of drug consumption in Spain is the under the responsibility of the Ministry of Health and not the Ministry of Interior, the criminal framing predominates over the health framing.

In relation to the results on the texts’ approach towards alcohol consumption, it was clear that the neutral approach was the most common, as it was identified in 66.01% of the cases (68 texts). This is a clear reflection of the normalisation of the consumption of this legal drug which, as many authors have pointed out, is not presented as a drug in the media.

The results are only partially consistent with our expectations to find a low presence of texts associating alcohol and celebrities and to find the media helping in the prevention of the abusive use of this substance, insofar as only 6.79% of the cases (7 texts) mentioned celebrities consuming alcohol. However, the number of texts that used celebrities to promote prevention was even lower: 3 texts (2.91%). Therefore, the press does not take advantage of the popularity of sports celebrities, for example, in

prevention campaigns and the promotion of healthy lifestyle that clearly discourage the abusive consumption of alcohol.

These results lead us to conclude that the third hypothesis was only partially corroborated, given that the texts were primarily located in the “others” and society sections, despite the health section is the most appropriate place to include information oriented to the prevention of alcohol consumption. Regarding thematic categories and frames, alcohol was fundamentally presented as a criminal issue, while there was a low use of more social frames, which are the most recommended by the reviewed authors (López-de-Luzuriaga and Bermejo, 2004). In terms of approaches, a clear message of rejection towards alcohol consumption was not identified. The most predominating approach was neutral.

The study found that the analysed newspapers partially complied with the recommendations made by institutions, like the American Department of Health, about avoiding associating success and alcohol and glamorising alcohol consumption. The analysed newspapers offered a very low percentage of texts associating celebrities and alcohol consumption. However, the analysis of the texts suggests that the analysed newspapers hardly provided any positive alternative models.

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