

*Full length Research paper*

# Network of water agendas in the print media of Mexico City: Force of profusion of scarcity, famine and unhealthiness reported from 2019 to 2022

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Accepted 30<sup>th</sup> April, 2022

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The media are assumed by the present writing as a key piece in the establishment of an agenda with democratic purposes, however, a review of the categories of spheres, power, freedom, security and justice seem to guide the discussion to its inclusion as instruments of the State for the governability of civil society. In this sense, it is necessary to analyze the possible scenarios in which the media establish the issues that the civil and political spheres discussed around the clarification of their differences. Such an exercise of discussion will allow us to anticipate the contexts in which the four actors, society, market, State and means will pass through three axes that go from power to freedom, from security to insecurity and from justice to injustice supported by two approaches: liberal and community. A documentary, exploratory and bioinformatic study was carried out with a selection of press releases published from 2019 to 2022 in newspapers with national circulation. The prevalence of a water agenda focused on insalubrity was found, which allowed inferring a hegemonic verisimilitude and verifiability framework among the consulted press. Water problems were discussed as central axes and themes of a risk communication agenda associated with COVID-19. In reference to the theoretical, conceptual and empirical frameworks, an investigation of the water agenda oriented to risk perception of public service users was suggested.

**Keywords:** Power, freedom, security, justice and sphere

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## INTRODUCTION

Until May 2022, the pandemic is the cause of twenty million deaths associated with atypical pneumonia that swell underreports recognized by the ministries of health. The epidemiological traffic light was the

instrument in which public services were restricted due to the distancing and confinement of people. In this risk communication scheme, the print media associated water problems with the pandemic

The objective of this work was to establish the water agenda indicated by the scarcity, tariffs and unhealthiness associated with the municipal drinking water service in a scenario of health crisis.

Are there differences between the communication of risks related to water problems reported in the press with respect to the observations in the present study?

The premises that guide this work suggest that press releases are organized around a health and economic agenda. As the pandemic intensified, it guided the dissemination of water problems. The print media followed a logic of plausibility that consisted of a communication of the risks of unhealthiness associated with the pandemic. Such logic of plausibility was not implemented in the problems of scarcity and tariffs because it was the logic of verifiability that allowed the press to influence its readers. In this way, the water agenda disseminated in Mexico City during the pandemic was guided by the epidemiological traffic light.

Therefore, there are no significant differences between the press releases published from 2019 to 2022 with respect to the records and analysis of this work.

### **Water Agenda Theory**

The relationships between public spheres involve the analysis of axes through which individuals' transit in reference to the State and the market. Mainly, the civil and political spheres have been disrupted by the media and in the case of civil society it has been confined to a scenario of perceptions in which the categories of security and justice are transformed into emotions related to anger, and I am afraid and distressed (García et al., 2017). This process is based on media effects in which a public agenda is established through framing and its associated meanings. In such a scenario, this paper discusses the relationships that are built between the civil sphere and the political sphere (Carreon et al., 2014).

For this purpose, the media sphere is analyzed about the categories of power, freedom, security and justice. Once exposed their similarities and differences three axes are anticipated for the analysis of the facts and their media coverage.

However, it should be noted that the axes of discussion derive from two approaches: liberal and communal (Garcia, 2022). In the first, the public spheres are considered as instruments of power and freedom, in the second, the categories of power and freedom are assumed as factors external to the community dynamics, their values, beliefs and traditions. In both axes, liberal and communal, the categories of security and justice are transformed into injustice and insecurity through a perceptual process in which the media biases information and disseminates feelings, emotions and emotions related to citizens and communities as victims. of political power.

About the construction of a democratic sphere and a participatory agenda, the civil and political spheres not only move along liberal or communal axes, but also oscillate between the senses of power, freedom, security and justice (Garcia, 2014). That is why this paper answer a fundamental question: Based on the assumption that and public spheres are entities of representation, discussion action, the construction of democracy would be observed in a sphere that, in addition to sharing the characteristics of public spheres, also facilitates the construction of a public agenda, although it is influenced for the issues that the media bias when establishing a framing of the facts. It should be noted that this document does not intend to carry out an exhaustive review of the terms, rather it tries to relate the categories based on discussion axes that can be used to anticipate at least three scenarios:

In the first, the public spheres disseminate freedoms, opportunities, capacities and responsibilities in order to build an antidemocratic public sphere in which the power of the State dilutes the conflicts that will lead to the transformation of the spheres into perceptual entities from which individuals will be located. in a plane of relative freedom since they will be able to express and discuss their ideas to the detriment of their safety (Aguilar et al., 20016).

In the second scenario, the individual's approach to build a diversity of private spheres from which the power of the State has been reduced to its minimum expression, but the media have consolidated a media agenda that allows them to define the topics of discussion and n Smut them in emotions, affections and feelings rather than reasoning, planning or deliberation (Garcia, 2021).

In the third scenario, the media have been confined to mere instruments of state power, which has become the guiding axis of discourses and rational and emotional actions both of individuals and of public spheres (García et al., 2018). The power to be subject to freedom, security and justice in the background that means the emergence of authoritarianism and deliberative totalitarianism and therefore accepted by individuals and spheres to ensure their protection from risk events that threaten their existence.

### **Studies of the water agenda**

The public spheres have been developed as concepts to explain the processes that suppose relations of power, establishment of freedom, guarantee of security and attainment of justice. From a conventional order, the spheres have been classified to identify actors involved in the phenomena that inscribe them as sociological objects (Garcia, 2021). By the spheres are observable and testable, it is worth pointing out that they explain the articulation between society, state and market without denigrating the participation of the media, they are confined to the instrumentation of ideologies or propaganda that from the spheres of

power are designed to restrict the freedoms of the civil sphere.

The public spheres suppose a conglomerate of social nuances with respect to which the citizens, the State and the market are coupled to a system of symbols, meanings and meanings oriented towards obtaining freedoms to generate opportunities, develop capacities and establish responsibilities (Garcia et al., 2016). In contrast, the military spheres assume society as a homogeneous entity to which they are subordinated no longer by civil control, but by the control of weapons that can be used as instruments of suspension of rights and eventual political instability.

That is, civil society as a sphere of inclusion of individuals assumes that the praetorian order is an instrument of self-control but considers the political and economic spheres as exogenous to its participatory and democratic development. In the political sphere, according to the definition of the civil sphere, the differences between the public and private spheres are resolved, since the State in terms of security is called to be an opportune watchman of civil rights management freedoms and capacities (Molina et al., 2019). However, in the case of the economic sphere, civil society delegates its investment and consumption decisions to financial institutions, since the market is considered as a scenario of offers and demands in which citizens only have the right to freedom. of choice and not decision. In its contractually essence, State and civil society agreed to subordinate individuals to a framework of political rights in which democracy seems to emerge as the result of clauses, that is, the individual delegates to society in the first instance and to the State in the second. order, your freedom.

The notion of civil sphere finds meaning in the most varied phenomena in which society, reduced to the individual, is confronted with the State, although this implies the coexistence of both spheres: civil and political in clear allusion to the market (Espinoza et al., 2019). This is because the values and actions are not linked by planned decisions, but rather by power structures that cross the public spheres and unmark them from their essence such as inclusion, discussion and construction. The market is also a sphere that underlies the political sphere and the civil sphere to protect the symbols of the relations of production. In effect, the public spheres subordinated to the economic sphere find accommodation in the assumptions that reveal them: power, freedom, security and justice.

### **Modeling of the water agenda**

Power and freedom are essential for the identification of public spheres, but the terms of security and justice serve to discern its scope and limits when it comes to agenda setting (Garcia et al., 2016). These are three axes in which the spheres travel and disengage to become public. In the first axis, power and freedom, in

the second security and insecurity and in the third justice and injustice.

In the first of the axes: power and freedom inhibit the mobility of the civil sphere in reference to the political sphere since the State in its opening to the protection of the private with public interest, restricts freedoms, but the civil sphere in its diversity of expression finds in the freedom of choice a counter weight to the incidence of the State in its privacy (Garcia, 2021). Once opportunities have been established based on freedoms, the civil sphere develops capacities and establishes responsibilities as fundamental parts of its development process.

In the second axes: security and insecurity are concepts that exemplify the distances between civil and political spheres because while society speculates that insecurity is the ultimate manifestation of institutions that restrict freedoms, the ruling class maintains that its primary function is to safeguard public interests, even though surveillance systems are increasingly financed by individuals (Bustos et al., 2022).

In the third of the axes: justice and injustice represent the public interests on which are reflected their privacy options that, beyond the relations between State, society and market, the public spheres are exhibited as scenarios in which it is possible to emergence of procedures that allow or inhibit recognition and punishment as measures to regulate relationships between individuals. In short, the public spheres were constructed from three axes of power-freedom, security-insecurity and justice-injustice from which the spheres have developed discursively, as clusters of thought, society, state and market have settled their differences based on the establishment of agendas through the media (Sandoval et al., 2021).

However, in the process of converting the civil, political, economic, community and public spheres, the media have privileged the establishment of issues that, due to their association with security events, constructed a representation of the power opposed to that of freedom and freedom. consequently, the justice-injustice axis was positioned as a pillar in the construction of a democratic agenda (Bustos et al., 2018). At such a juncture, the media sphere filtered its themes in civil discussion to support the transformation of the political sphere into a sphere of power in which security and justice were issues diametrically opposed to freedom. The public spheres, in their economic and public, community and liberal, central and peripheral dimensions, articulate a democratic sphere guided by systems of power, freedom, security and justice, but which, when moving towards the perceptual axes inherent to civil society, are transformed into insecurity and injustice (Garcia et al., 2012). In such a scenario, the relationship between state, society and market seems to be in dissonance with the liberal assumption according to which the civil and political spheres are promoters of the economic

sphere in which the expressiveness of individuals reaches its maximum splendor. The public and the private, as the liberal ideology says, are embossed by values, beliefs and actions in which the individual is constituted as a citizen and the formal State raises its security systems in tune with the freedom of choice. In contrast, in that corresponds to the communal, the civil spheres suppose the improvement of the tribal systems in which the sense of belonging matches with the follow-up of principles that can be collective, group and individual, but that govern the decisions and actions of each community participant. In both axes, liberal and communal, security is perceived when the State exerts its coercive power and underlies the perception of injustice. However, unlike the liberal axis, the communal axis considers that injustice is ancestral and not emergent as assumed by liberal civil society.

**METHOD**

The relationships between press releases related to scarcity, scarcity and unhealthiness in newspapers with national circulation can be studied from their transversality. A considerable sample was registered, captured and analyzed with the purpose of establishing their profuse connections. That is, the relationship of the central node with its edges (see Table 1).

**Table 1. Descriptive sample**

	2019	2020	2021	2022
Jornada	1	2	1	6
País	3	1	2	5
Reforma	2	3	4	4
Universal	4	2	3	5

Source: Elaborate with data study

A total of 48 press releases were considered as synthetic information on scarcity, scarcity and unhealthiness, following the agenda theory which warns about the bias of the print media to frame their notes in these problems.

The Delphi inventory was used, which reports the qualifications of expert judges in water problems, considering three phases: a qualification of the impact of the note in the establishment of the agenda, a feedback or comparative phase where the average of the initial qualifications is contrasted. with individual ratings. A third phase is observed the reconsideration of the qualification or the reiteration (Coronado et al., 2022).

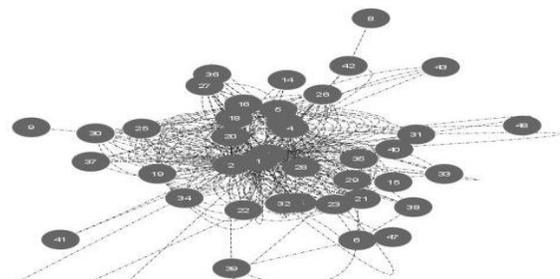
That is, during the pandemic period, it is possible to explore the record of the notes in order to be able to analyze their relationships, considering their degree of media coverage, which ranges from -1 for negative influence to +1 for positive influence, with 0 being no influence. of the media on their readers (Garcia, 2021). The data was captured in excel and processed in CytoScape version 3.0. The coefficients of profusion,

connectivity, centrality, grouping and structure were weighted in order to test the null hypothesis of significant differences between the findings reported in the literature with respect to the observations made in this study (Garcia, 2019).

Values close to zero suggested a greater profession, connectivity, centrality, grouping and structuring of press releases regarding water issues. The proximity of the values to zero served not to reject the null hypothesis regarding the significant differences between the network of findings and the structure of edges and nodes observed (Aguayo et al., 2022).

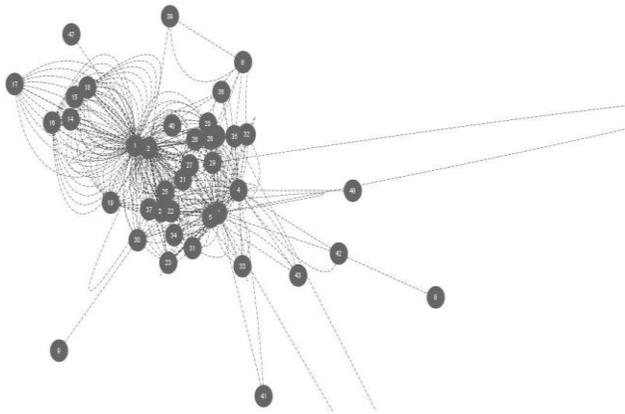
**RESULTS**

Figure 1 shows the network of relationships or structure of edges and nodes of the 48 press releases selected, qualified and processed in relation to the problem of scarcity. There is an entry of four interacting notes and a note resulting from the observations of content and learning inferred by the distribution and relationships of the findings. That is to say, the note nine in relation to the 30, 25 and 37 promote a media agenda where most of the other notes are registered, but they are synthesized in a central one that is the one and a resulting one that is the 48. It means then that the network of press releases follows a behavior of biased networks that guide readers towards a representation of scarcity as the central axis of the agenda built by the four media outlets during the pandemic.



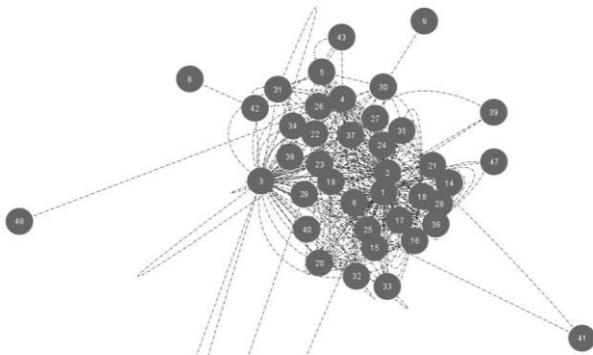
**Figure 1.** Bioinformatic structure of press releases related to water scarcity from 2019 to 2022 Source: Elaborated with data study

Figure 2 shows the relationships between the press releases related to famine as the central axis of the agenda established by the print media from 2019 to 2022. In Mexico City, the national newspapers began their framing of the tariffs with note 17 that activated the agenda of subsidies, forgiveness and increase in tariffs to lead to the sequence of frame eight. The profusion and connectivity between the initial note that represents the legitimacy of the tariff policies in the face of the pandemic and the final note that represents the legitimacy of the adjustments are subsequent. A reduction in centrality (articles grouped around a node or agenda) and grouping (articles structured around an agenda), seem to indicate that the policies were disseminated without bias by the media. In other words, the media did not intend to influence tariff policies in the face of a health and economic crisis.



**Figure 2.** Bioinformatic structure of press releases related to water famine from 2019 to 2022  
Source: Elaborated with data study

Figure 3 shows the interactions of the press releases regarding unhealthiness. Note 48 initiates the establishment of the agenda and notes 39 and 47 culminate the process. In other words, the press of national circulation consulted generated an agenda of learning about unhealthiness that was concentrated in most of its articles. The health and economic crisis reoriented the information disseminated in the print media.



**Figure 3.** Bioinformatic structure of press releases related to water insalubrity from 2019 to 2022  
Source: Elaborated with data study

In summary, the water problems in Mexico City, reported in the press during the pandemic, are characterized by a diffuse agenda regarding scarcity and tariffs, but centralized regarding unhealthiness. The three axes and topics covered by the press were limited to a risk scenario, but unhealthiness was the axis on which the press reoriented its risk communication.

## DISCUSSION

The contribution of this work to the state of the matter lies in the establishment of the water agenda by the print media during the pandemic. The water problems of scarcity, tariffs and unhealthiness suggest a scattered agenda, but guided by the health crisis. In other words,

the media disseminated information related to problems such as risks associated with the pandemic. The agenda is often considered as a conglomeration of biased information promoted by the media, but in a context of health crisis, the established agenda was dispersed and, in any case, reoriented towards risk communication. The media disseminated the problems of scarcity, tariffs and unhealthiness as risks associated with the pandemic. The water agenda focused on the problem of unhealthiness, reflecting the probable influence of the print media on its readers, but not as a political mechanism but as a survival strategy against COVID-19. Lines of studies concerning the effects of the water agenda on readers will allow explaining risk communication as a preventive strategy for infections, diseases and deaths associated with COVID-19 through the municipal water service. The anticipation of a risk scenario will allow preventive rather than reactive strategies in the face of the pandemic.

## CONCLUSION

It is the media that promotes the perceptions of insecurity and injustice in the liberal and communal spheres to influence the political sphere through three effects: agenda, framing and intensity.

The agenda effect assumes that public spheres are exposed to the circulation of information related to topics that the media diffuses according to their interests not in the sense of their audience expectation levels, but in the sense of the association between the media sphere and the policy whose intention is to govern the other spheres from influencing public opinion, but such an effect is ephemeral since yesterday's issues have been forgotten by the audiences.

The framing effect, according to the framework theory, is the result of the advertising campaigns that are constructed from informative biases in which the State is presented as the guiding axis of public as well as private life according to its actions.

It is exposed as the cause of the levels of security and justice. It is divided into a frame of plausibility to distend the disagreements within the civil sphere around security and injustice.

The media expose information that audiences will contrast with their experiences and adjust the latter to the media framing of the events. In the case of the verifiability framework, the civil and political spheres are at the expense of data that justify their decisions and actions.

In this sense, the media present that information that will serve to define responsibilities. Due to its degree of complexity, the framing effect is the longest in terms of construction and establishment of information biases in the public opinion.

The effect of intensity is more ephemeral because it consists of a series of images that impact the citizen's perception of security events which transforms into risks

and threats, as well as the facts of justice which it codifies as impudent State actions. It is an effect that with great precision divides the citizen perception in images and speeches and then guides decisions based on the symbols closest to their representations of power, freedom, security and justice. In this way, the meanings of insecurity and injustice are associated with that of power, which is no longer perceived as an instrument of governance, but rather as a mechanism of control and manipulation of the State towards the individual.

In short, the public spheres are exposed to the influence of the media to such an extent that the construction of a democratic agenda is permeated by concepts such as insecurity and injustice which are the result of three effects: agenda, framing and intensity. In such a scenario, the category of power is associated with perceptions of insecurity and injustice while the category of freedom is dissociated from security and justice in the liberal axis through which public spheres move.

On the contrary, in the communal axis the public spheres are constructed from the belonging, the commitment and the ancestral trust that suppose the permanence of senses close to the power, freedom, security and justice, but that do not finish substituting the values, norms, uses and customs that within a community are gestated.

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