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## Three decades of advertising research in Spain: analysis of scientific communication journals (1980–2013)

### Abstract

**This article presents the main findings of a study on advertising research in Spanish communication scientific journals for the last thirty years. A total of 853 articles collected from 53 journals, ranging from 1980 to 2013, were used in the analysis, to study characteristics on journals, articles and authors (such as article subject or authors' institutional affiliation). Results allow a better understanding of the research on advertising conducted in Spain during the last three decades.**

### Keywords

**Advertising, research, scientific production, Spain, scientific journals**

### 1. Introduction

Communication research in Spain has reached a noticeable degree of development. The term “mature” is what many authors (Martínez Nicolás, 2009; García Jiménez, 2009; De Aguilera, 1998) have been using to characterize this situation, although we should underline “opposing evidence” (Fernández-Quijada & Masip, 2013: 22) that conclude that this maturity is still in the process of being reached. Many are the challenges, in fact, that have to be overcome before communication research sets itself at the same level of scientific production in other areas. These challenges are, for example, “methodological insufficiency” (Martínez Nicolás & Saperas Lapiedra, 2011: 124) or its scarce internationalization. As for the last, the Spanish communication journals constitute 4% of the communication titles in Web of Science (De-Filippo, 2013: 30), and Spanish communication research in the SSCI journals has not stopped growing since the noticeable momentum starting from 2005 as corroborated by Masip (2011b: 5), but it is not less true that the degree of internationalization of the Spanish communication titles is still limited (Fernández-Quijada, 2011a).

Now, independently of the maturity level reached, the momentum experienced by communication research, especially in the 90's, has led to its becoming a relevant object of study by researchers. From the first works on the subject (Jones, 1998; De Aguilera, 1998; Jones, 1997; Cáceres & Caffarel, 1993; Caffarel, Domínguez & Romano, 1989), to the more recent ones (Rodrigo Alsina & García Jiménez, 2010; García Jiménez,

2009; García Jiménez, 2007), meta-research on communication has been consolidating and increasing in rigor.

Precisely, it is the desire for scientific validation of their research work that has led many authors to address this subject starting with the analysis of scientific communication journals, using either national titles (Fernández-Quijada, Masip & Bergillos, 2013; Escribá & Cortinas, 2013; Fernández-Quijada, 2011a; Fernández-Quijada, 2011b; López-Rabadán & Vicente-Mariño, 2011; Martínez Nicolás & Saperas Lapiedra, 2011; Castillo & Carretón, 2010; Fernández-Quijada, 2010; Almirón & Reig, 2007), or broadening the study to communication journals of foreign countries (Fernández-Quijada & Masip, 2013), or exclusively focusing on journals that have an international impact (De-Filippo, 2013; Castillo, Rubio-Moraga & Almansa Martínez, 2012; Masip, 2011).

In other cases, the research work has focused on communication research on concrete titles (Fernández-Quijada, 2012; Herrero Gutiérrez, López Ornelas & Álvarez Nobell, 2012; Roca-Correa & Pueyo-Ayhan, 2012; Saperas, 2012; López-Ornelas, 2010; Colle, 2009), restricted to geographical areas (Bergillos & Fernández-Quijada, 2012) or specific themes (Rodrigo-Alsina & Lazcano-Peña, 2014; Ruiz San Román & González, 2012; Haro de San Mateo & Martínez Méndez, 2011; López-Berna, Papí-Gálvez & Martín-Llaguno, 2011).

The interest for meta-research does not always move with equal intensity to other, distinct areas of knowledge of the communication sciences. This is what happens with our object of study in the present work, advertising research in Spain. Among the pioneering projects, we can highlight the work by Fernando Martín (1983), a compilation of the works on advertising published from the beginning of the last century, or a comprehensive essay such as that from Mario Herrero Arconada (1994). More recently, other authors (Oliva Marañón, 2013; Postigo Gómez, 2005), have also addressed this subject, but without a doubt, the most relevant research work is that performed by Martínez Pestaña (2010), where the author analyzes the Spanish scientific production on advertising in monographs, doctoral theses and trade and scientific journals, starting from the birth of the first university communication departments up to the year 2001; with the results referring to the study of the doctoral theses published in both articles (Martínez Pestaña, 2011; Martínez Pestaña, 2004), and updated in a recent work (Marcos Recio, Martínez Pestaña & Blasco López, 2012), with the same happening to the results of the advertising monographs (Martínez Pestaña, 2011).

Additionally, we could also mention other, more recent articles that have focused on research published on more specific areas of advertising, such as Spanish scientific journals (Martínez-Pastor & García-López, 2013), doctoral theses presented in Spanish universities (De Vicente Domínguez, 2011), or on the whole of editorial production (Navarro Beltrá & Martín Llaguno, 2011). Moreover, a few Spanish researchers have also shown interest in the study of scientific production on advertising in the creative advertising discipline, but without circumscribing it to the national arena (Del Río & Sánchez, 2011; Roca-Correa & Mensa, 2009; Del Río, 2006). All of these studies bring Spain closer to the tradition that already exists in other countries, that of studies on advertising research, as witnessed by some of the main works published on advertising research in general (Garrett & Iyer, 2013; Cheng & Kim, 2010; Ford & Merchant, 2008; Pitt, Berthon, Caruana & Berthon, 2005; Carlson, Grove & Stafford, 2005; Zou, 2005; Henthorne, Latour & Loraas, 1998), as those focused on concrete subjects or in a specific journal title (Ha, 2008; West, 2007; Cho & Khang, 2006; Taylor, 2005; Muncy & Eastman, 1998).

In short, we can attest that typically, research on Spanish scientific output in advertising restrict their object of study to concrete themes, and when they offer a more holistic view, they are usually contributions in the genre of the essay or as a bibliographic review in nature, save for the already mentioned study by Martínez Pestaña (2010). In our

case, we tried to offer a general view of advertising research, not focused on specific areas, but at the same time, more current than the above-mentioned study.

Before presenting the methodological details of our work, it would be convenient to underline the growing importance that advertising research has been acquiring in Spain in the last few decades. Starting from the history of teaching of advertising that Méndiz Noguero (2000) traces, we could establish four phases that accompany the historical evolution of that research work. The first, between 1915 and 1939, is the phase that includes the predecessors, key figures such as Pedro Prat Gaballí, a period where, very timidly, the basis of the scientific study of the advertising phenomenon began to take root. The second, from 1939 to 1971, is characterized by two decades of paralysis of the process, framed in the economic and social depression itself that was felt in Spain, followed by a time of short momentum from 1959 motivated by the economic development and the beginnings of the institutionalization of advertising. The third stage, from 1971 to 1989, is made up by the beginning of university teaching of advertising, that had been in the process of forging, mainly from 1967, but finally materializing with the creation of the first university departments of Information Sciences in 1971 and the implementation of the Advertising degree at the Universidad Complutense de Madrid, and the Universidad Autònoma de Barcelona, and later in the Basque Country and Seville. The fourth stage, considered to be from 1989 to the present, starts with an accelerated implementation of the Advertising degrees in different Spanish universities.

Throughout this process, the legitimization of advertising research has been difficult. The first university departments, and of course, their advocates and teaching staff, had to build the theoretical corpus of the disciplines whose scientific dimension was put into question, in many cases with evident problems in funding for the research work. It was a time of “initial uncertainty” (Reig, García Orta, Moreno & Luque, 2000: 259) and of searching for a strategic definition of the role that would correspond to the new communication studies. Precisely with the last mentioned, the professionals in this sphere did not help with the consolidation of Communication in general, or advertising in particular as areas of scientific research; “in communication studies, as a majority, knowledge as an objective did not exist, but the profession exploited and determined any sort of teachings; with this, the idea of science was diluted or was even reduced to a simple laboratory matter” (Benavides Delgado, 2008a: 180).

Gradually, and in many occasions thanks to the volunteering of the researchers and teaching staff, the importance of communication research was pushed forward. In this sense, we should highlight the birth of the CRA (Communication Researchers Association; AIC, Asociación de Investigadores en Comunicación in Spanish) in the 80's, or the posterior creation towards the end of the nineties, of the Forum on Communication Research (Foro de Investigación en Comunicación), “a platform not only for the dissemination of knowledge, but, what was more important, of consolidation of the research groups that would allow the disciplinary development of communication” (Benavides Delgado, 2008b: 12). In the framework of this event, and the Ciclo de Comunicación organized by the Universidad Complutense de Madrid, numerous works that helped in the reflection of the communication tendencies were edited. Some of these are worth mentioning due to their relation to the object of study of the present research work (Benavides Delgado, Alameda García & Fernández Blanco, 2000; Benavides Delgado, Alameda García, Fernández Blanco & Villagra García, 2005).

More recently, the creation of the AE-IC (Asociación Española de Investigación de la Comunicación; Spanish Association of Communication Research) in 2006 has been fundamental, with an intense and fruitful trajectory in the organization of research meetings and editorial production, uncompromisingly helping with the scientific advancement of the communication disciplines. The last renovation of the school curricula,

the process of adaptation to the Bologna Process, and in general the enormous expansion in the teaching centers and studies on advertising paint a picture where the multitude of researchers has grown exponentially; in 2012, there were already 127 Communication or Information Science, with about thirty of them on the advertising and public relations spheres (Túñez López & Martínez Solana, 2013: 3).

Therefore, the possibilities for the development of advertising research, which had already stood out in the previous stage, grow. In fact, the study performed by Martínez Pestaña (2010: 329) concluded that the last decade analyzed (1991-2001), is the one having the largest scientific production; and in a posterior work, it is shown that the years that saw the most advertising-related thesis defenses in Spanish universities were the years ranging from 1996-2006. From this point on, there is a slight decrease, that the authors attribute to the “a state of consolidation or stabilization of advertising research” (Marcos Recio, Martínez Pestaña & Blasco López, 2012: 445).

As a result, advertising research is enhanced, propelled by the growth in the number of researchers, but, as Benavides Delgado (2012) argues, we have to take into account that this research acquires relevance for the finding of solutions to the new problems in advertising management and branding of businesses, mainly during the period of greater economic growth of the country. As a trade-off, the “focus on journalism” (Martínez Nicolás & Saperas Lapedra, 2011: 114) in communication research in the last few years has been highlighted, with advertising research occupying a less-relevant space when compared to journalism (Castillo & Carretón, 2010: 311). On the other hand, the methodological shortcomings have also characterized the evolution of scientific production on advertising in the last few decades, such as “the lack of an epistemological substrate able to become aware of the complexity reached by the advertising phenomenon in the current capitalist societies” (Caro Almela, 2007: 56).

## **2. Materials and methods**

Wanting to contribute with precise and current knowledge of advertising research in Spain, we have performed this research work, with the main objective being to examine scientific production on advertising in approximately the last thirty years in Spanish scientific communication journals. For this reason, we started with a quantitative analysis of the articles published in these journals. The main objective was broken down into the following, specific objectives: formally characterize scientific production; identify and characterize the titles that contributed to its diffusion; identify and characterize the centers of production; identify and characterize the authors and study the dynamics of co-authorship; and characterize scientific production by subject or theme.

We should make clear that other communication tools (monographs, doctoral theses, etc.) were not analyzed, as they have already been studied, and due to the understanding that scientific journals constitute the most utilized diffusion channels for research. Also, scientific titles from other areas or foreign communication journals were not studied, due to the fact that our aim was to obtain information on the publication patterns of the Spanish scientific communication journals, as an important means, from the quantitative point of view, to become acquainted with the reality of the scientific production in advertising research, independent of the country of origin of the researchers responsible for its production. The study is not, hence, about the whole of advertising research in Spain, although we are aware that the results can be significant for painting a picture of advertising research in this area in the last three decades.

For the selection of the scientific communication journals, a triangulation was performed with the databases dated January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2013. In first place, all the titles from the Communication field were gathered. In second place, all the titles from the sub-genre

Communication Sciences, within the Social Sciences subject were selected from the Latindex catalog. And in third place, all the titles from the Communication genre were obtained from the In-Recs from the last issue corresponding to year 2011. Instead of selecting the titles present in all three databases, and in order to have a sample with the greatest representation, we opted for selecting the whole of the journals present in at least one of these three sources; we excluded the journal *Informe anual. La comunicación empresarial y la gestión de los intangibles en España y Latinoamérica*, which, although found in the Latindex catalog, did not fit with the type of journal that were going to be analyzed. We should mention that we selected journals that were currently published, and also journals that were no longer published, as we hoped to study the research published independently of the current state of the title.

Similarly, it should be noted that, to avoid duplicity, we considered the printed and digital versions of the different journals as a single work, and we also integrated into a single title those titles that were a continuation of previous work that had the same title (i.e., in the case of *Questiones Publicitarias*). In the end, we obtained a collection of 53 journals, listed in table 1, where the basic aspects of each title (title, ID, year first published, and their presence in the databases that were used as sources), the period of time used in the study, and the percentage of the units of analysis (manuscripts) that were found.

After the journal selection, we proceeded to gather all the issues published from 1980 to 2013 (both years included). In the cases where the period of a journal did not reach the year 2013, means that we were dealing with a title that was no longer published or that by January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2014, an issue that corresponded to 2013 had not been published yet. We opted for 1980 as the first year of the study period because it was the year when the first, still published Spanish scientific communication journal, was born (*Anàlisi*), even though we confirmed that no advertising articles existed until 1983. We selected the articles that had a single, strictly advertising-related subject. For this reason, we rejected those articles that addressed other subject matter, such as marketing and branding management, propaganda and political communication, public relations or corporate communication, design, consumption or the behavior of consumers, unless the focus of the articles was eminently about advertising. Similarly, we rejected the texts that although referring to advertising, jointly analyzed other communication phenomena such as journalism. As shown in table 1, the total number of articles analyzed was 853; we excluded articles that did not gather the characteristics of a scientific article, such as reviews or journal reviews, news or notes, introductions, presentations or editorials, transcripts of the collective contributions to round tables, and fragments of previously-published books.

To each unit of analysis, a code sheet was used (annex 1), composed of different variables according to each of the objectives pursued in the study. To guarantee the reliability of the coding, the application of the codes to each article was done in parallel by two coders (*double check*), prior to the definition of the patterns of analysis, with possible contradictions revised in group meetings. This was fundamental in view of the thematic analysis of the articles, which had, as we can see, great complexity due to the wide variety of points of view or perspectives in the scientific study of advertising. The content analysis would compel passing a value judgment on the variables, from which to categorize each unit of analysis, leading to pursuing double checking in order to reduce the risk of harming the final results. Later on, an initial database was created for the 853 articles in the statistical software SPSS with all the items in the code sheets, resulting in a total of 37 variables, all of them categorical, except for the year of publication. For the authorship analysis, a database with 1,248 records was subsequently created.

Baladrón-Pazos, A.J., Correyero Ruiz, B. & Manchado Pérez, B.  
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**TABLE 1. Journals and units of analysis**

Title	Year	DICE	LATINDEX	INRECS	Period	Frequency (%)
adComunica (ADCOMUNICA)	2011	X			2011-2013	4 (,5)
ADResearch ESIC (ADRESEARCH)	2010	X	X		2010-2013	10 (1,2)
Ambitos. Revista Internacional de Comunicación (ÁMBITOS)	1998	X	X	X	1998-2013	9 (1,1)
Anàlisi. Quaderns de Comunicació i Cultura (ANÀLISI)	1980	X	X	X	1980-2013	11 (1,3)
Anuario ThikePI (AT)	2007		X		2007-2013	0 (0)
Area Abierta (AA)	2001	X	X	X	2001-2013	16 (1,9)
CIC. Cuadernos de Información y Comunicación (CIC)	1995	X	X	X	1995-2013	5 (,6)
Communication Papers (CP)	2012		X		2012-2013	2 (,2)
Comunicació. Revista de Recerca i d'Anàlisi (COMUNICACIÓ)	2010	X	X		2010-2013	2 (,2)
Comunicación. Revista Internacional de Comunicación Audiovisual, Publicidad y Estudios Culturales (COMUNICACIÓN)	2002	X	X	X	2002-2013	27 (3,2)
Comunicación y Estudios Universitarios (CYEU)	1990	X	X		1990-2002	13 (1,5)
Comunicación y Hombre (CYH)	2005	X	X	X	2005-2013	7 (,8)
Comunicación y Sociedad (CYS)	1988	X	X	X	1988-2013	37 (4,3)
Comunicar. Revista Científica de Comunicación y Educación (COMUNICAR)	1994	X	X	X	1994-2013	45 (5,3)
Conexiones. Revista Iberoamericana de Comunicación (CONEXIONES)	2009	X	X		2009-2011	0 (0)
Derecom (DERECOM)	2010	X	X		2010-2013	3 (,4)
Doxa Comunicación (DOXA)	2003	X	X	X	2003-2013	15 (1,8)
Estudios sobre el Mensaje Periodístico (EMP)	1994	X	X	X	1994-2013	20 (2,3)
Etic@net (ETIC@NET)	2002		X		2002-2013	5 (,6)
EU-topías (EU-TOPIAS)	2011	X	X		2011-2013	0 (0)
Fonseca Journal of Communication (FJC)	2010	X	X		2010-2013	1 (,1)
Fotocinema (FOTOCINEMA)	2010	X			2010-2013	0 (0)
Historia y Comunicación Social (HYCS)	1996	X	X	X	1996-2013	3 (,4)
I/C Información y Comunicación (I/C)	2003	X	X	X	2003-2013	2 (,2)
Icono 14 (ICONO)	2003	X	X	X	2003-2013	33 (3,9)
IDP. Revista de Internet, Derecho y Política (IDP)	2005		X		2005-2013	0 (0)
Index Comunicación (INDEX)	2011	X	X		2011-2013	3 (,4)
Logo. Revista de Retórica y Teoría de la Comunicación (LOGO)	2001	X			2001-2004	2 (,2)
Mediaciones Sociales (MEDIACIONES)	2007	X	X	X	2007-2012	2 (,2)
Mediátika. Cuadernos de Medios de Comunicación (MEDIÁTIKA)	1997	X	X		1997-2012	2 (,2)
Miguel Hernández Communication Journal (MHCJ)	2010	X	X		2010-2013	3 (,4)
Obra Digital (OD)	2011		X		2011-2013	1 (,1)
Pensar la Publicidad. Revista Internacional de Investigaciones Publicitarias (PLP)	2007	X	X	X	2007-2013	119 (14,0)
Periodística (PERIODÍSTICA)	1989	X	X		1989-2012	0 (0)
Quaderns de Filologia. Estudis de Comunicació (QF)	2002	X			2002-2008	1 (,1)
Questiones Publicitarias (QP)	1993	X	X	X	1993-2013	117 (13,7)
RedIRIS. Boletín de la Red Nacional de I+D RedIRIS (REDIRIS)	1991		X		1991-2013	0 (0)
Revista de Ciencias de la Información (RCCI)	1983	X			1983-1995	4 (,5)
Revista de Comunicación y Salud (RCYS)	2011	X	X		2011-2013	1 (,1)
Revista de la SEECT (RSEECT)	1998	X	X	X	1998-2013	9 (1,1)
Revista Española de Comunicación en Salud (RECS)	2010	X	X		2010-2013	6 (,7)
Revista Internacional de Relaciones Públicas (RIRP)	2011	X	X		2011-2013	0 (0)
Revista Latina de Comunicación Social (RLCS)	1998	X	X	X	1998-2013	45 (5,3)
Revista Mediterránea de Comunicación (RMC)	2010	X	X		2010-2013	7 (,8)
Revista Universitaria de Publicidad y Relaciones Públicas (RUPYRP)	1990	X			1990-2000	40 (4,7)
Sesión no Numerada (SNN)	2011	X			2011-2013	0 (0)
Sphera Pública (SP)	2000		X	X	2000-2013	24 (2,8)
Teknocultura (TEKNOCULTURA)	2001		X		2001-2013	0 (0)
Telos (TELOS)	1985	X	X	X	1985-2013	51 (6)
Textual & Visual Media (T&VM)	2008	X	X		2008-2012*	1 (,1)
Trípodos (TRÍPODOS)	1996	X	X	X	1996-2013	87 (10,2)
Vivat Academia (VIVAT)	1998	X	X	X	1998-2013	18 (2,1)
Zer. Revista de Estudios de Comunicación (ZER)	1996	X	X	X	1996-2013	40 (4,7)
TOTAL						853 (100)

### 3. Results

Of the 53 titles used, there is a core group that greatly contributes to the diffusion of the results of advertising research, as shown in table 1. Specifically, six journals published 54.4% of the research works, and ten of the first titles accumulated approximately seven of every ten articles. This high concentration is influenced by the logical role that the specialized advertising scientific journals play in promoting the diffusion of advertising research performed in Spain, fundamentally *Pensar la Publicidad* (14.0%) and *Questiones Publicitarias* (13.7%). But we should not forget the increasing interest trend for the results of advertising communication research coming from the group of communication titles. As such, to the previous two titles we can add the following journals: *Trípodos* (10.2%), *Telos* (6.0%), *Comunicar* (5.3%), *Revista Latina de Comunicación Social* (5.3%), *Revista Universitaria de Publicidad y RR.PP.* (4.7%), *Zer* (4.7%), *Comunicación y Sociedad* (4.3%) and *Icono14* (3.9%).

To evaluate the impact and scientific quality of the analyzed titles, we took into account indicators such as their inclusion in the *Social Science Citation Index*, for being an important international benchmark database, and in the Clasificación Integrada de Revistas Científicas –CIRC (Integrated Classification of Scientific Journals)– in its last issue of 2012, as it is an important instrument in the sphere of human and social sciences journals published in Spain. Thus, 12.0% of the articles are in titles that are currently found in the SSCI, a percentage that is obviously limited, as the number of titles (three) that belong to this index is also limited. As for the CIRC category of the journals, most of the articles were published in journals belonging to the B category (65.1%), far away from the C category journal (19.3%); the publications in titles in the A category (12.3%) and the D category (1.9%) are few, while a residual 1.4% correspond to non-classified titles. In any case, all of this is just a reflection of the current scientific quality of the journals gathered, and not of the analyzed articles.

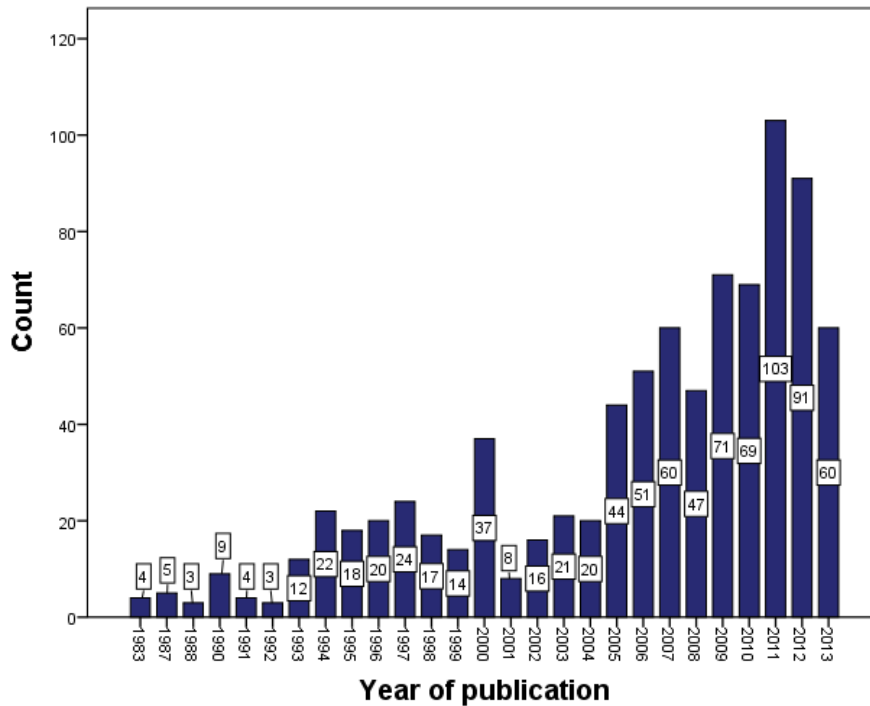
Besides the breakdown by title of the published advertising research, it is interesting to address their temporal distribution. For this reason, we used the last year of the issue where the article appeared (i.e. if the issue was December 1990–january 1991, it was defined to be 1991). In the following figure, we can visually see the practically constant increase in the last thirty years of the number of articles on advertising in the Spanish scientific communication journals. To explain this upward trend, it is important to take into account the growth in number of the already existing titles, and therefore, of the spaces where the researchers could present the result of their research. In the eighties, only 5 of the 53 titles analyzed existed; in the nineties, 15 more were created, and in the year 2000 up to the present, the other 33 titles were created.

We could point to two milestones that mark the evolution of advertising research published in Spanish scientific communication journals: on the one hand, the first years of the nineties decade, and on the other, the early years of the present century. As for the first, in 1990, and overall, starting in 1993, the yearly records of the articles significantly increase with respect to what had been happening in the eighties. We are seeing a first and timid phase of emergence of advertising research, helped by the initiatives and collaborations by the universities for encouraging the study of Communication (some of these have already been mentioned at the beginning of the article). This phase, also, developed within the framework of growth experienced by the study of Advertising in Spain, and, as a result, in the number of researchers in this area. We shouldn't forget that from 1971, when the first studies on Advertising were created, until 1990, only four universities taught these subject, while at the end of the nineties, the number of universities was fifteen.

The constant growth in the number of advertising centers, studies and research also help in the understanding of the second temporal milestone, found during the first years of the XXI century, and more decisively from 2005. Also, it is around this time when, after the approval of the University Organic Law in 2001 and the posterior creation of the Aneca in

2002 that new mechanisms for boosting, to a greater degree, the publishing and dissemination of research as a way to professionally promote academia workers, were established. Here, we talk about a second phase of consolidation of published advertising research, with an important, and it many ways progressive, increase in the number of texts that the Spanish scientific communication journals dedicate to this area of knowledge.

**Figure 1.** Distribution of journals by year



It is obvious that the objective of our work is not to prove that the referred to scenarios are the cause for the increase of the research published, but they can serve to support the interpretation of the numerical data in the framework of the already-mentioned main factor: the growing number of communication journal in the ecosystem of scientific publishing in Spain. Furthermore, the peaks in the published scientific production in a few of the years in the time series analyzed can be explained by the publishing of special issues or monographs on advertising in a few of the titles, with their posterior analysis if the contraction of data detected in 2013 is to be believed.

To formally characterize the scientific production on advertising in Spanish communication journals, we also think it is important to highlight, besides the year of publication, the language used. As a data point, we used the main language used in the publishing of the article, independent of whether or not the journal had a bilingual edition, a practice that have been growing in the past few years. In table 3, we can see that most of the texts are written in Spanish, with other languages from Spain such as Catalan or Basque marginally used. Marginal are also articles that are exclusively published in English (1.4% of the total), or other foreign languages such as Portuguese (0.6%) or French (0.4%), this being a symptom of the scarce internationalization of advertising research in Spanish scientific communication journals, something that will be corroborated with other indicators that will be mentioned in the following paragraphs.



The low rate of internationalization can also be seen when analyzing the dynamics of co-authorship, which in general terms, puts into plain sight the scarce collaborative dimension of advertising research published in Spanish scientific journals in the last thirty years. 66.7% of the articles were written by a single researcher, and the other 284 of the 853 articles analyzed show that it is also common for two researchers to sign the work (23.3% of the total), with co-authorship by three (8.0%) or more than three (2.0%) being less frequent.

If we focus on co-authorship, (table 2), we can see that slightly more than two-thirds are intra-institutional co-authorships, meaning, that the different authors belong to the same institution; another 25.4% are inter-institutional co-authorships (more frequent when the number of authors is greater) and only 6.3% of the co-authored articles count with the participation of an author that belongs to a foreign country. This 6.3% are composed of barely 18 articles, of which 14 have a foreign author from Latin America, an indication of the restricted orientation of the published works to collaboration with English-speaking researchers. By further breaking down the data by the institutions where the main authors belong to, it is interesting to see that when the main author is affiliated to a public university, inter-institutional co-authorship is more frequent (25.4%, as opposed to 14.3% from private universities) and in those articles that have as the main author, a researcher that belongs to a private university, the co-authorship is more international (12.5% as opposed to 4.7% from public universities).

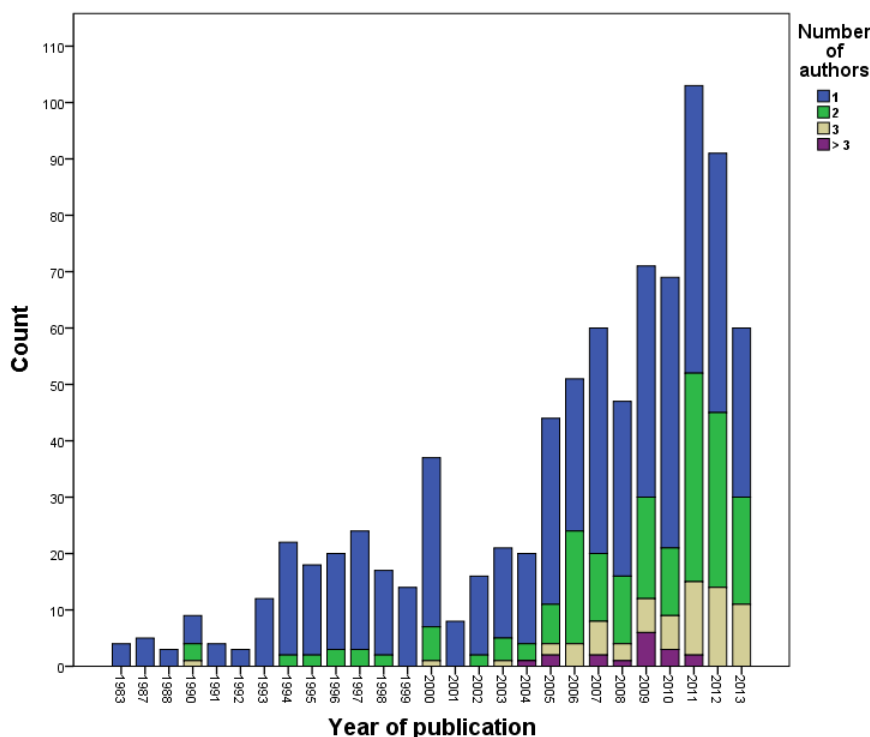
**TABLE 2. Type of co-authorship by number of authors**

			Number of authors			Total
			2	3	More than 3	
Type of authorship	Intra-institucional	Headcount	141	46	7	194
		% from the total number of authors	70,9%	67,6%	41,2%	68,3%
	Inter-institucional	Headcount	45	18	9	72
		% from the total number of authors	22,6%	26,5%	52,9%	25,4%
	International	Headcount	13	4	1	18
		% from the total number of authors	6,5%	5,9%	5,9%	6,3%
Total	Headcount	199	68	17	284	
	% from the total number of authors	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	

As for the low number of authorships, we should mention that, in any case, in the last few years, a clear tendency has been materializing leading to a greater number of published articles written by more various (more than 1) authors. In figure 2, we can visualize the equalizing tendency between individual authorships and co-authorships, beginning in 2011. This is evidence of the increasing collaborative spirit among the researchers in this area, through which different advertising research groups have been consolidating in the different centers of scientific production. Otherwise, the global figures of co-authorships

would be even less than, except for unique cases, the first twenty years of the period analyzed, when they were exceptional in nature.

**Figure 2.** Distribution of single and co-authorship by year



Another objective of our study was to identify and characterize the authorships and the centers of production of published research on advertising in the Spanish scientific communication journals. We should make clear that in the case of co-authorships, we opted for giving the same weight to the different authors in each article, independently of their place on the author list, discarding other possibilities, such as granting more weight to the first author, and less to the following ones, or assigning the article to the main author, etc. When opting for completely crediting all the authorships in an article, as if they had individually written it, some redundancies are produced, so the results gave a total number of 1,248 authorships versus the number of 853 articles. However, we considered this to be more applicable, to not penalize the secondary authors and to more adequately analyze the data according to the objectives of the study. We have to take into account that these 1,248 authorships are distributed among 676 researchers, but for the objectives of our study, we will focus on the analysis of the authorships, hence, we will talk about authors, and not researchers.

The analysis of the centers of scientific production and their geographical setting was performed following the same criteria, and with the same explanations. Thus, the equality by gender is total: curiously, 50.0% of the 1,248 authors were women, and 50.0% are men. This equality can be lightly distinguished when differentiating among first and second authors. Thus, in the case of first authorship, the percentage of men increases to 53.6%. The difference among genders as a function of the type of university is very slight, with the number of women among the authors in public universities being noticeably higher, with the opposite among those who belong to private centers (see table 3).

**TABLE 3. Type of author's institutional affiliation by author's gender**

			Author gender		Total
			Male	Female	
Type of institution where author is affiliated	Public university	Headcount	433	469	902
		% of total	34,7%	37,6%	72,3%
	Private university	Headcount	132	104	236
		% of total	10,6%	8,3%	18,9%
	Public research organism or university professor	Headcount	17	13	30
		% of total	1,4%	1,0%	2,4%
	Private research organism or university professor	Headcount	5	10	15
		% of total	0,4%	0,8%	1,2%
	Business or business linked organism	Headcount	33	19	52
		% of total	2,6%	1,5%	4,2%
	Other public organism	Headcount	4	9	13
		% of total	0,3%	0,7%	1,0%
	Total	Headcount	624	624	1248
		% of total	50,0%	50,0%	100,0%

In table 3, the total data with respect to the author's institutional affiliation are gathered. The majority belongs to public universities (72.3%), as opposed to private universities (18.9%). Next are authors who form part of businesses or organisms of various types that belong to businesses (4.2%), as in many occasions, the communication journals have accepted advertising sector professionals as authors for advertising articles. The authors that work in non-university research or teaching organisms are represented in minor percentages; these are primary education centers, secondary education, etc. The percentages are similar if we split the data into first and secondary authors.

These numbers are proof of the importance of the public university as a production center of research on advertising that has been published in Spanish scientific communication journals. However, some clarification is needed. In first place, what was just said does not lessen the importance of the research work performed by private universities, as in reality, their numbers are less, and in most cases have a shorter historical trajectory; logically, their volume of published scientific production is less as well. In second place, we should stress that beyond the global data, there is a great diversity that is not dependent on the public or private nature of the center. Therefore, we thought it essential to rank the more productive universities based on an analysis of the authorships. These data can be seen in table 4. Hence, among the ten main universities, there are two private universities: Ramon Llull University, in fifth place, and University of Navarra, in ninth place; among the first twenty, we also find three non-public universities: Universidad Católica San Antonio (14<sup>th</sup> place), Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca (17<sup>th</sup> place) y Universidad CEU San Pablo (18<sup>th</sup> place). However, in the case of Navarra, the percentage of authors that contribute to the communication journal of that institution, *Comunicación y Sociedad*, is 27.8%, while in the University Ramon Llull, the percentage of authors that belong to that university and that also publish in their university's journal, *Trípodos*, increases to 83.6%. In other words, in this

last case, we can see a greater degree of endogamy in the publications, something that should be taken into account when making sense of its first place in the ranking of private universities, ahead of University of Navarra.

**TABLE 4. Ranking of the author's distribution by university**

	Frequency	Percentage	Validated percentage	Accumulated percentage
UNIVERSIDAD COMPLUTENSE DE MADRID	134	10,7	10,7	10,7
UNIVERSIDAD DE SEVILLA	119	9,5	9,5	20,3
UNIVERSIDAD DE ALICANTE	107	8,6	8,6	28,8
UNIVERSIDAD REY JUAN CARLOS	92	7,4	7,4	36,2
UNIVERSIDAD RAMÓN LLULL	55	4,4	4,4	40,6
UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE BARCELONA	51	4,1	4,1	44,7
UNIVERSIDAD DE VALLADOLID	40	3,2	3,2	47,9
UNIVERSIDAD DE VIGO	40	3,2	3,2	51,1
UNIVERSIDAD DE NAVARRA	37	3,0	3,0	54,1
UNIVERSIDAD DEL PAÍS VASCO	28	2,2	2,2	56,3
UNIVERSIDAD POMPEU FABRA	26	2,1	2,1	58,4
UNIVERSIDAD JAUME I	22	1,8	1,8	60,2
UNIVERSIDAD CARLOS III	21	1,7	1,7	61,9
UNIVERSIDAD CATÓLICA SAN ANTONIO	19	1,5	1,5	63,4
UNIVERSIDAD DE MÁLAGA	19	1,5	1,5	64,9
UNIVERSIDAD DE CORUÑA	16	1,3	1,3	66,2
UNIVERSIDAD PONTIFICIA DE SALAMANCA	16	1,3	1,3	67,5
UNIVERSIDAD CEU SAN PABLO	15	1,2	1,2	68,7
UNIVERSIDAD DE MURCIA	15	1,2	1,2	69,9
UNIVERSIDAD DE VALENCIA	14	1,1	1,1	71,0

The most productive university in the ranking, as a function of the number of authors that publish in Spanish scientific communication journals, and not as a virtue of other variables that do not form part of the object of study in the current research work, is the Universidad Complutense, as slightly more than 10% of the authors are affiliated to it. It is followed by Universidad de Sevilla (9.5%), Universidad de Alicante (8.6%), and the Universidad Rey Juan Carlos (7.4%). The size and historical trajectory in advertising of the Universidad Complutense could be the reasons of their place in the ranking, but we should mention that the Universidad Autònoma de Barcelona, a pioneer in the implementation of Advertising studies, occupies an inferior place: sixth. Therefore, we should take into account other factors, such as the great number of scientific communication journals published or co-published by this institution (around a fourth of the 53 journals analyzed), where a numerous amount of the accounted authors are found (60.4% of the authors that belong to the Universidad Complutense contribute to the journals that belong to that institution).

As for the second place, occupied by the Universidad de Sevilla, we understand that its place in the ranking could be influenced by its historical trajectory (it is the fourth university that implemented Advertising studies) and also due to the fact that an important number of authorships are found in the journal *Questiones Publicitarias*, published by this institution, and specialized in advertising subjects (specifically, 45.5%). The third place, belonging to the Universidad de Alicante, shows the dynamism of this center, and in particular of a few of its highly productive researchers, as referred to published advertising research in the Spanish scientific communication journals. Even if they do not have a historical trajectory that is as extensive as other universities (it started offering an Advertising degree in 1998), or an institutional journal with a long publishing history, they gathered 8.6% of the authors. A similar dynamism was seen by the authors of the 7.4% that put the Universidad Rey Juan Carlos in the fourth position of the ranking.

Meanwhile, the other centers that were pioneers in the implementation of Advertising studies are located in lower positions: Universidad del País Vasco (from 1977, however, in tenth place), Universidad de Málaga (from 1992, and fifteenth place) or Universidad de Vigo (from 1994 and in eighth place). We should take into account, in any case, the difficulties that some of the universities had to overcome, for example, in the first year after the implementation of their Advertising degrees.

Lastly, as a function of the center of scientific production's geographical area, independent of whether or not it was a university, the results point to the fact that in nine out of ten cases, they are national (Spanish), as shown in table 5. When the authors belonged to a foreign institution, in almost half the cases, the institution was Latin American, with the number of authors belonging to European or North American institutions comprising a much reduced number. There is no doubt that this is an indication of the scarce internationalization of the advertising research published in Spanish communication journals, something that was already mentioned in previous paragraphs, for example, when specifically discussing co-authorships of international character.

**TABLE 5. Geographical location of the institutions**

	Frequency	Percentage	Validated percentage	Accumulated percentage
National	1143	91,6	91,6	91,6
Latin American	60	4,8	4,8	96,4
European	34	2,7	2,7	99,1
Other	7	,6	,6	99,7
North American	4	,3	,3	100,0
Total	1248	100,0	100,0	

Another fundamental objective of the present study was the thematic characterization of the advertising research published in Spanish scientific communication journals in the last thirty years. Without a doubt, this objective had the most complexity, due to the thematic diversity of the advertising research and the difficulty in isolating the objects of study that could be defined by pre-defined categories. As a result, to successfully reach this objective, a great ability of synthesis was used in the construction of a category list. Once the

list was constructed, we determined the main object of analysis of each unit of analysis, via a comparative analysis of the 853 sample articles.

In first place, 13 thematic areas were defined, as specified in table 6, according to what was found to be the main object of study of the articles. Most of the articles were from the creativity and advertising messages areas; they made up slightly more than a third of the total, and in this category, we found works related to the theory of advertising creativity, strategies and creative resources, as well as analysis of advertising creativeness and advertising representation of this creativeness. The second thematic area with the most number of articles (13.0%), were on epistemology studies on advertising and on the cultural implications of the advertising phenomenon. In continuation, the areas that were most studied were: advertising media and media planning (8.8%, studies on the different advertising media and advertising media planning); effects of advertising and targets (8.1%, studies on the reception and effects of advertising, either generic or those referring to specific targets, both social and economic); the structure of the advertising system (6.3%, studies on the advertising market, advertising management and the different actors that participate in the advertising system: advertisers and agencies, etc.); advertising history (6%, studies that address the advertising phenomenon in its different facets from a historical perspective); advertising professionals (5.4%, studies on the labor market, the routines and the productive processes of advertising workers, professional profiles and advertising professional training); advertising formats (5.3%, studies on specific advertising modes or formats).

Less frequent were the addressing of the advertising phenomenon from a legal perspective or research on advertising deontology and the ethics of advertising in its different dimensions. In the same vein, the scarce presence of advertising meta-research (meaning, studies on scientific advertising production and the development of methodologies for research on advertising) as well as other research on other thematic subjects that are, overall, cultivated by a few specific titles, such as the connections between art and advertising, on advertising as an educational tool, and the different implications between education and the advertising phenomena (with the contributions by the journal *Comunicar*, for example, being fundamental in this last case) were noted.

Besides the thematic subject that defines each article, it is important to present the results gathered from other analyzed variables such as geographic area, advertising typology and media sphere. With respect to the first variable, around four out of ten articles had the main object of study that refers to the national setting, as shown in table 7, and approximately two of every ten were focused on the study of advertising at the national level. The numbers of articles that exclusively analyzed regional or local realities were very inferior.

The rest of the works could not be placed in any of these four categories, as the nature of the object of study did not have a geographical portion, or if they had it, it was not detailed in the article at any moment. The percentage of this type of article was high, but in any case, this result did not refrain us from concluding that most of the articles that were restricted to a determined geographical area mainly had a national focus, with those that had an international focus coming in second place. When we cross-examined the data from the thematic subject with the geographical location, we saw that there were themes that were more habitually focused on local or regional spaces (mainly the studies on advertising professionals, where 26% of the cases were restricted to both of these spaces) and others where there was a greater tendency of focusing internationally; for example, 41% of the articles on advertising history focused at the international level.

**TABLE 6. Thematic area of the articles**

	Frequency	Percentage	Validated percentage	Accumulated percentage
creativity and advertising	310	36,3	36,3	36,3
advertising and culture theory	111	13,0	13,0	49,4
advertising media and media planning	75	8,8	8,8	58,1
effects of advertising and targets	69	8,1	8,1	66,2
structure of the advertising system	54	6,3	6,3	72,6
advertising history	51	6,0	6,0	78,5
advertising professionals	46	5,4	5,4	83,9
advertising formats	44	5,2	5,2	89,1
advertising law	32	3,8	3,8	92,8
advertising and education	24	2,8	2,8	95,7
advertising meta-research	17	2,0	2,0	97,7
ethics and advertising deontology	14	1,6	1,6	99,3
art and advertising	6	,7	,7	100,0
Total	853	100,0	100,0	

**TABLE 7. Geographic area of the articles**

	Frequency	Percentage	Validated percentage	Accumulated percentage
national	349	40,9	40,9	40,9
not specified	214	25,1	25,1	66,0
international	172	20,2	20,2	86,2
not available	59	6,9	6,9	93,1
regional	38	4,5	4,5	97,5
local	21	2,5	2,5	100,0
Total	853	100,0	100,0	

As for the media environment (table 8), close to half of the published research in Spanish scientific communication journals addressed the phenomenon of advertising in the general terms, and did not focus on the advertising media types according to their traditional categorization. Among the articles that addressed the different media environments, we found that the environments that were most analyzed were the following: advertising on television (15.6%), advertising on the Internet and new technologies (11.5%),

graphic advertising (9.6%), advertising on the radio (3.5), outdoor advertising (1.6%), advertising in film (1.3%), and advertising in no-conventional media (0.8%).

Evidently, then, there is a clear parallelism among the main conventional advertising media environments studied in the scientific articles analyzed, and the importance that these articles have in the professional sector due to the advertising investment that each of them provides. The scarce published research on advertising in non-conventional media reveals the non-interest of the academics towards it, even though it gathers more investment as compared to advertising in conventional media. Now then, we should be prudent with this type of judgment, as in many cases, the *below the line* is closer to other disciplines, such as public relations or organizational communication, leading to the exclusion of this type of articles from the sample. When splitting the data on the media sphere of the articles, we see that the works on advertising history are the ones that are more focused on graphical advertising (approximately four of every ten), the ones on advertising formats are mainly focused on the Internet and new technologies, (in 45.4% of the cases), while those on creativity and advertising messages are more focused on television (in 28.4% of the total).

**TABLE 8. Media sphere of the articles**

	Frequency	Percentage	Validated percentage	Accumulated percentage
advertising in general	387	45,4	45,4	45,4
advertising on television	133	15,6	15,6	61,0
advertising on the internet and NICT	98	11,5	11,5	72,5
not specified	95	11,1	11,1	83,6
advertising in the press	82	9,6	9,6	93,2
advertising on the radio	26	3,0	3,0	96,2
outdoor advertising	14	1,6	1,6	97,9
advertising in film	11	1,3	1,3	99,2
advertising on non-conventional media	7	,8	,8	100,0
Total	853	100,0	100,0	

Lastly, with respect to advertising typology, we defined five categories from the start: commercial, institutional, political, social advertising, and one that has been labeled auto-advertising, which refers to businesses, public administrations, political parties, non-governmental organizations, and, lastly, agencies and advertising media. 48.4% of the units of analysis were not studies that were exclusively centered on one of these categories, but in many of them at the same time, with another 12.8% where the central theme did not imply a specific advertising typology. Even with these high percentages, in the cases where the articles were focused on one of the established advertising types, it should be known that it was done mainly in commercial advertising (28.7% of the total) and less on institutional, political, social advertising, or auto-advertising).

Focusing only on the articles exclusively affiliated to one of the first two starting categories (commercial vs. institutional advertising), we can make several clarifications. In first place, the works on institutional advertising were more regional and national in reach



than those of commercial advertising, which had more studies on international matters. In second place, the articles that only addressed institutional advertising were more general in nature, and did not usually specialize in concrete media spheres, which explains the lack of studies that are only focused on institutional advertising on the Internet, radio, film external or non-conventional advertising. On their part, among the commercial advertising articles, it was more frequent to see analysis of advertising in graphical media than in institutional ones. In third and last place, from the thematic point of view, there were no great differences, although we could point to the greater relevance of the works on advertising law in the case of the articles that only deal with institutional advertising, or validate that there are not studies about other areas, such as advertising history or advertising and education that are exclusively focused on institutional advertising.

**TABLE 9. Advertising typology of the articles**

	Frequency	Percentage	Validated percentage	Accumulated percentage
various	413	48,4	48,4	48,4
commercial advertising	245	28,7	28,7	77,1
not specified	109	12,8	12,8	89,9
institutional advertising	49	5,7	5,7	95,7
political advertising	20	2,3	2,3	98,0
auto-advertising	10	1,2	1,2	99,2
social advertising	7	,8	,8	100,0
Total	853	100,0	100,0	

#### **4. Conclusions**

Research on advertising published in Spanish scientific communication journals has experimented sustained growth in the last thirty years, allowing us to conclude that there is a situation of incipient maturity in the scientific production in these area in Spain. This is true notwithstanding the relative youth of the research on Advertising and the difficulties that, especially in the first years, the academic staff faced in promoting and legitimizing their research. The decade-by-decade increases in the number of universities that perform studies on advertising, and for matter, of the critical mass of the researchers, as well as the scientific titles, are factors that explain this situation.

As for the last factors, the titles that are specialized on advertising play an important role, even though generalist communication science titles also accept advertising works in increasing number. But it is also necessary to consider the greater demands in the course of evaluating the academic's research work, imposing a new culture of scientific evaluation whose influx can be seen in the years after the creation of national agencies such as the CNEAI (1989) and more so of the ANECA (2002).

Nonetheless, scientific production on advertising that we have gathered in the Spanish scientific communication journals have not freed itself of some of the ballast that characterize the last three decades analyzed. One of them is the scarce internationalization, as noted by various indicators. In first place, the lack of use of the English language or other foreign language as the main language is evidence of the absolute prominence of the

Spanish language used. This makes clear the orientation towards the Latin American sphere, at the expense of the English-speaking market. In second place, precisely most of the foreign authors that author the research work come from Latin American institutions: they represent approximately half of the foreign authors, which on their own, do not even add up to one out of every ten of the total. And in third place, the articles that have international co-authorship make up a very low percentage of the total sample analyzed.

Internationalization is a symptom of the maturity of scientific research, as well the weight of co-authorship in the production processes. This last fact is the second ballast that has to be mentioned, as only a third of the work authored by various authors, and of these, most of them are collaborations between researchers from the same institution, which is proof of the limited collaborative dimension of advertising research published in Spanish scientific communication journals in the last thirty years.

Internationalization and co-authorship can have an influence on the impact of the researched performed, and due to this, in the last few years, steps have been taken to try to overcome the previously mentioned ballasts. In the case of internationalization, there are more and more scientific journals that offer bilingual editions, although the data on the temporal evolution with respect to foreign authors are still too minor for the making of valid conclusions. There is greater progress in the case of co-authorships, with a clear tendency consolidating towards the publishing of research work with various researchers, which at the present time, are already about half of the annual total. This is the case, then, of the incipient maturity referred to above, despite the relative youth of Advertising as an academic discipline.

On a separate issue, the data of our study prove that the type of author of the articles on advertising published in Spanish scientific communication journals is, besides of Spanish nationality and only author, a public university employee, without differences due to gender. The important weight of the public universities in the scientific production on advertising is coherent with what they quantitatively have had in the education panorama of secondary education in Spain. In any case, among the private centers, there are some that stand out by their dynamism, just as other public, recently implemented centers do, opposite the other more senior members of communication studies.

From the thematic point of view, the complexity of coding of the articles due to the diversity of the themes and the perspectives addressed in them was already shown. Taking this into account, we can conclude that the scientific production on advertising in the Spanish communication journals orient themselves to commercial advertising than to other types of advertising, such as institutional or political advertising. Also, the research works that are focused on a specific geographical settings mainly analyze national realities, and in second place, international realities, with research of purely local in nature being scarce. On the other hand, almost half of the published articles do not align themselves to a specific media sphere, meaning, they address the generality of the advertising phenomenon or refer to various media spheres at the same time.

However, among those that do focus, the usual practice is to concede more importance to the media that greatly get more advertising investment in the Spanish market, save for the case of *below the line* advertising, showing a certain connection between the researchers and the market. Lastly, the more numerous studies are the ones that address the theory of advertising creativity, creative strategies and resources, as well the analysis of the advertising creativeness and their advertising representation. Also, the percentage of published research on advertising epistemology and the cultural implications of the advertising phenomenon, on advertising media and its planning, or on the reception and the effects of advertising messages is relevant.

To sum up, it is necessary to highlight that this study has had an eminently descriptive character, with posterior, more explanatory in nature research necessary. This, however, is

a task that goes beyond the initial objectives of the present study, although it would allow the development of a more profound, specific causal analysis. The results point to future lines of research (i.e. directed towards the delving into the evolution of the research lines of advertising research, profiles and researcher networks), at the same time that our study covers a scientific void when referring to current descriptive works on advertising research in Spanish scientific communication journals.

Furthermore, the sources used in the analysis were national, as, in accordance to the delimitation of the object of study; we tried to inquire on advertising research in Spanish scientific communication journals, and not on advertising research of Spanish authors. However, the research could be extended to sources and foreign databases if we wanted to know, with greater precision, the degree of internationalization of the scientific production on advertising that comes from Spain.

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<b>ANNEX 1. CODE SHEET</b>
<p><b>IDENTIFICATION VARIABLES</b></p> <p>1. Coding unit            2. Journal [53 categories]            3. Title            4. Publication year            5. Language [7 categories]</p>
<p><b>CONTEXT VARIABLES</b></p> <p>6. CIRC Category of the journal [5 categories]            7. Inclusion in the SSCI of the journal [2 categories]</p>
<p><b>AUTHORSHIPS VARIABLES</b></p> <p>8. Author number [4 categories]            9.1. Type of co-authorship [3 categories]            9.2. Type of international co-authorship [4 categories]            10. Name of first author            11. Gender of first author [2 categories]            12. Institution of affiliation of first author            12.1. Type of institution of affiliation of first author [7 categories]            12.2. Geographical setting of the institution of affiliation of first author [6 categories]            13. Department of affiliation of the first author [7 categories]            14. Name of other authors            15. Gender of other authors [2 categories]            16. Institution of affiliation of other authors            16.1. Type of institution of affiliation of other authors [7 categories]            16.2. Geographical setting of the institution of affiliation of other authors [6 categories]            17. Department of affiliation of other authors [7 categories]</p>
<p><b>THEMATIC VARIABLES</b></p> <p>18. Advertising Typology [7 categories]            19. Media sphere [9 categories]            20. Geographical sphere [6 categories]            21. Thematic area [13 categories]</p>