Race-gender intersectionality in Mexican digital news on Kamala Harris

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Abstract: The present study aims to analyze the news information that emerged during Kamala Harris' campaign for U.S. vice-presidency on Mexican websites. For this, a content analysis was carried out in order to detect: a) actors who intervened in the information; b) topics covered; c) racial identification of the candidate; and, d) the presence of political frames versus personal frames. N=329 news items were selected from 10 traditional newspaper websites and 10 digital native media websites. It was found that the news focused mainly on political frames and political issues of the candidate; such behavior was more conclusive in the articles published in native digital media than in traditional media. Nonetheless, the study concludes that Harris' coverage was largely based on her race-gender intersectionality and her political ties to other men.

Key words: intersectionality, Kamala Harris, female politicians, gender studies, news frames.

Resumen: El presente estudio tiene como objetivo analizar la información noticiosa que apareció en sitios web mexicanos sobre la campaña de Kamala Harris para obtener la vicepresidencia de Estados Unidos. Para ello, se realizó un análisis de contenido de a) actores que aparecieron en la información, b) temáticas cubiertas, c) identificación racial de la candidata y d) la presencia de encuadres políticos y personales. Se seleccionaron N=329 noticias provenientes de 10 sitios web de diarios tradicionales y 10 sitios web de medios nativos digitales. Se detectó que, en términos generales, las noticias se enfocaron en encuadres y temas políticos de la candidata, un comportamiento que resultó más contundente en las notas publicadas en medios nativos digitales que en las de los tradicionales. No obstante, el estudio concluye que la cobertura de Harris estuvo basada de manera importante en su interseccionalidad raza-género y en sus vínculos políticos con otros hombres.

Palabras clave: interseccionalidad, Kamala Harris, mujeres políticas, estudios de género, encuadres noticiosos.

Introduction

August 11, 2021, Joe Biden, presidential candidate for the democraty party, announced that Kamala Harris would be his running mate for vice president of the United States (Biden, 2020). Harris is a political scientist and economist from Howard University and has a doctorate in jurisprudence from the University of Colorado (Owens, 2016). According to her profile on the Senate website, her political career includes serving as San Francisco from 2003 to 2011, as well as being elected California attorney general in the 2010 and 2014 races. In 2017, she was sworn in as a senator from that state, making her the second African-American woman and the first South Asian in senate history. Harris had also campaigned for the presidency of the country during the Democratic primaries, but discontinued it on December 4, 2019 due to lack of financial resources (Mars, 2019).

On December 14, 2020, The Electoral college confirmed Biden and Harris as winners of the presidential election (Cordero, 2020); thus, kamala became the first female vice president of theUnited Statesand the first non-white person to win the office, as she is decendant of Jamaican Donald Harris and Indian-American Shymala Gopalan (Barry, 2020). On a personal level, Kamala is married to American lawyer Douglas Emhoff and is stepmother to two children, Ella and Cole (Lyall, 2020).

In this context, the present research aims to analyze the news information that appeared during Kamala Harris' vice-presidential campaign on mexican websites. This work is inserted in the studies on intersectionality, which is defined as a critical approach that allows understanding the inequalities faced by those identities resulting from the connections between gender, race, ethnicity and social class (García-Peter and Villavicencio-Miranda, 2016; Guzmán Ordaz, 2015). Such an approach emerged during the third wave of feminism in the 1990s, particularly black feminism, in order to explore and understand the racist and sexist experiences lived by women of African descent (Alexander-Floyd, 2014; Collins, 1990; Crenshaw, 1991). For Guzmán Ordaz (2015), the proposal of intersectionality consists of questioning the essentialist and static vision of the category women used by hegemonic feminism, to give rise to a theory the does not present gender, race and social class as dissociated or disjunctive elements, bu understood simultaneously.

As Kamala Harris' identity is characterized as female and non-white, this paper seeks to recognize the media approach from an intersectional look between race and gender, which is advisable to identify complex and often

opaquely intertwined communicative narratives that would not be obtained by studying a single category (Brown and Gershon, 2016; Galy-Badenas and Gray, 2020; Towner and Clawson, 2016). To this end, we propose an exploration of the state of the art of journalistic coverage of women politicians and, subsequently, of the antecedents related to the approach to women with intersectional identities.

State of the art

Journalistic coverage of women politicians

The findings that are usually found in studies that address a difference between the approach of male and female political candidates can be condensed into four lines of research: mediatization of their intimate sphere, informative visibility, personality attributes and thematic agenda. For the first case, it has been explored that the media often repair on the private lives of female politicians by mentioning their children, parents, spouse, personal anecdotes and domestic or care routines (Flores Márquez, 2020; Foster Shoaf and Parsons, 2016; García Beaudoux *et al.,* 2018; Marañón Lazcano *et al.*, 2018; Rista, 2020; Van der Pas and Aaldering, 2020). According to Rodelo (2020), with this attitude, the media attribute to women candidates an ability for housework, which makes it difficult for them to be taken into account in the political arena.

In the same vein, there is an insistence by the media to focus on the appearance and clothing of female political candidates. Recent examples are the studies on: Hillary Clinton in the 2016 presidential campaign in the United States, María Eugenia Vidal for the mayoralty of Buenos Aires (García Beaudoux *et al.*, 2018), Josefina Vázquez Mota for the 2012 presidential election in Mexico (Vidal Correa, 2020a), Wendy Davis for the governorship of Texas in 2014 (Waters *et al.*, 2018) and Cristina Fernández for the vice presidency of Argentina in 2019 (Rista, 2020). Some attributes such as being flashy, glamorous, exotic, fashionable, with bodies resulting from surgeries and comparisons with Barbie dolls have been recorded in the research background (Foster Shoaf and Parsons, 2016; Rincón Soto, 2015; Waters *et al.*, 2018). This type of media practices objectifies women (Rodelo, 2020), in addition to reproducing and naturalizing stereotypes that could function as cognitive shortcuts for the electorate to decide their vote (García Beaudoux *et al.*, 2020).

In terms of media visibility of women's campaigns, three findings have been detected. The first is that the amount of information that emerges about women's campaigns is usually less than that of men, according to research in various countries (Haraldsoon and Wängnerud, 2019; Flores Márquez, 2020; Rodelo, 2016 and 2020; Van der Pas and Aaldering, 2020; Vidal Correa, 2020b). It is also observed that women appear less in news headlines (Vidal Correa, 2020a, 2020b), and that they are invited to a lesser extent to journalistic interviews than men (Baitinger, 2015; García Beaudoux *et al.,* 2020; Mitchelstein *et al.*, 2019).

The second finding in terms of visibility is that female candidates do not usually have the full protagonism in news pieces (Flores Márquez, 2020), but are approached together with influential men to provide legitimacy to their campaign (García Beaudoux *et al.*, 2018). Ríos Sierra (2017) calls this attitude of the media as co-responsibility, which repeatedly demerits the achievements of female candidates and makes them seem as if they were achieved because of their relationship with someone else, to the detriment of publicizing the women's own titles and trajectories (Power, 2017; Rista, 2020).

A final line of research on visibility has repaired how novel it is for the media for a woman to run for political office (Lima and Panke, 2016). It has been recorded that the news make explicit references about the sex of the candidates, that is, there is an insistence on presenting words such as woman, women, female candidate, among others (Van der Pas and Aaldering, 2020; Vidal Correa, 2020a; Ward, 2016a). For Lachover (2017), this action of reiterating gender has no greater news value than that of highlighting the otherness of female candidates. In addition, the fact that the fact that a woman participates in the political arena is uncommon, supports the idea that women do not belong in that sphere (Rodelo, 2020).

Studies have also pointed out that the media frame the personality of women politicians. In that sense, a dichotomy has been found in news information to show them, from a feminine personality, through traits such as sensitivity, sympathy and compassion (García Beaudoux *et al.*, 2018; Rodelo, 2020; Waters *et al.*, 2018), or through masculine traits such as severity, ambition, coldness and distance (Panke, 2015; Quevedo Redondo and Suárez-Romero, 2017; Waters *et al.*, 2018). There is a trend towards masculinization of the attributes of female candidates, both in their spots (Panke *et al.*, 2015) and in media coverage (Álvarez-Monsiváis, 2020; Van der Pas and Aaldering, 2020). For Gerrits *et al.* (2017), masculinization excludes women and femininity from the political arena, and reaffirms the hegemony of men and masculinity in that space.

In relation to the thematic agenda, care topics associated with the feminine, such as education, social welfare, health, transportation and culture, were the most located in the notes on female political candidates (Van der Pas and Aaldering, 2020; Waters *et al.*, 2018), to the detriment of topics related to the masculine, such as economy, security and foreign policy (Humprecht and Esser, 2017), despite the fact that the agenda of female candidates is preferentially focused on masculine issues (Kwon and Frisby, 2015). Such media behavior is presented as a gender imbalance, as it limits the field of action of female candidates (Álvarez-Monsiváis, 2019 and 2020).

Media coverage of women with intersectional identity

According to Brown and Gershon (2020), academic research on women politicians has historically focused on white women, which has restricted collective knowledge. However, some researchers have analyzed news coverage of women with intersectional identities.

Regarding the mediatization of the intimate sphere, the same phenomenon of reporting on the personal lives of minority female candidates is often found. For example, coverage of the campaign of Republican Representative of African descent Mia Love's campaign was conducted from gender stereotypes, such as the loving mother and the wife devoted to her white husband (Wineinger, 2019). Regarding dress and appearance, Bashri (2019) found that the attire by which Muslim women candidates demonstrate their faith attracts the attention of the press, mainly at the beginning of the campaigns.

On the issue of visibility, it has been found that the number of news pieces about intersectional female candidates is even lower than that of white women (Evans, 2015; Gershon, 2012; Ward, 2016a and 2016b).

Only women with intersectional identities run by conservative parties are given more space in news messages because of the novelty they represent (Snipes and Mudde, 2019; Ward, 2016b).

Concerning the gender of female candidates in the stories, there is evidence that information linked to intersectional identity candidates is explicit not only in gender, but also in race (Galy-Badenas and Gray, 2020; Lucas, 2017; Towner and Clawson, 2016; Ward, 2016a and 2016b); while the race and gender of white candidates turn out to be unquestioned by the media (Ward, 2016a). Moreover, the reiteration of gender is up to five times more evident in news reporting about women of ethnicity than for white women, through phrases such as "first Muslim woman," "first Asian

woman", "first woman of African descent" (Ward, 2016a and 2016b). In that sense, the intersection between gender, race and religion captures the media's attention; however, this detracts from the legitimacy of their positions, as it seems that female candidates enter by racial quota and not by their political experience (Galy-Badenas and Gray, 2020). Furthermore, with these phrases, the media reinforces the idea of focusing voting criteria on the identities of female candidates (Lucas, 2017).

Regarding the personality of women politicians, it has been observed that women politicians of African descent have had to redefine the way they are perceived by the media and the citizenry, to break with certain stereotypes and propose a new form of leadership theory (Johnson Carew, 2016; Showunmi *et al.*, 2016). For example, Michelle Obama was seen as a cold, serious and fickle woman at the beginning of Barack Obama's presidential campaign, so she had to rebuild her image, showing in YouTube videos her maternal side and promoting the American dream through a more affectionate language (Meyers and Goman, 2017). Over time, Michelle became a role model, but also a stereotype of what White voters expect of African descendant politicians (Block Jr., 2017; Haynes and Block Jr., 2019). Another example is the Asian-born politician aspiring to be the mayor of Toronto, Olivia Chow, who had to deal with news coverage that reflected her as unempathetic (Maiolino, 2018).

In terms of the thematic agenda of intersectional women's news, it has been found that there is a media perception that women of African descent tend to be more liberal than women of other races and genders (Johnson Carew, 2016), and that they have an agenda in support of the communities to which they belong (Gershon and Lavariega Monforti, 2019). For such reasons, the media expect their campaign to be turned towards racial issues and work on compensatory policies for the insertion of racial minorities in power groups (Maiolino, 2018). Because of this false liberal perception, African American women running for conservative parties often harden their position on issues such as immigration or exceptional nationalism to gain ground among their voters (Wineinger, 2019). A race -and ethnicity-conscious agenda short-circuits the level of action for female candidates; at the same time it disengages white representatives from taking on these types of issues (Block Jr., 2019; Lucas, 2017).

The impact of such media stereotypes has been studied in various ways, for example, by looking at the tone of the stories and voting intentions. On the tone of the information, it has been evidenced that white women have obtained less negative coverage over time (Van der Pas and Aaldering, 2020;

Vidal Correa, 2020b; Wagner *et al.*, 2019). However, this does not seem to apply for news stories about women of non-white backgrounds, whose negative tone remains constant (Gershon, 2012; Ward, 2016a and 2016b). To explain this behavior, Tolley (2015) recorded that the media tend to place greater emphasis on their inexperience and be more judgmental of mistakes made, despite their white male or female counterparts having similar political backgrounds (Towner and Clawson, 2016).

Studies on voting intention for female candidates of ethnic and racial backgrounds have shown that they generally obtain a higher number of favorable opinions among the identity community to which they belong (Mogahed and Mahmood, 2019). In contrast, it has been revealed that there is colorism in electoral politics, as white voters prefer to elect candidates with lighter skin tones, while they are mostly critical when deciding to vote for a black person (Block Jr., 2019).

Based on the above, four research questions were established:

PI1. Which actors appeared in the Mexican web news covering Kamala Harris' election campaign?

PI2. What topics did the news items collected that refer to Harris address?

PI3. How was Kamala's racial background portrayed in the digital data collected?

PI4. What differences were there between the gender, race, novelty, political experience and candidate frames?

For this last research question, two hypotheses were formed in order to measure the differences between these frames:

H1. Personal frames related to gender, race, and novelty dominated coverage of Kamala Harris' campaign in the digital press, to the detriment of political frames (political experience and candidate).

H2. Traditional newspapers that published news on their websites resorted to a greater extent to political framing than digital native media.

Methodological strategy

To answer the research questions, a content analysis was conducted in its inductive approach by means of a computer program, such as the one carried out by Aaldering and Vliegenthart (2016). For Arbeláez Gómez and Onrubia Goñi (2014), an inductive approach to content analysis gives greater freedom for the text itself to indicate which keywords, phrases, topics and attributes are the most reiterated throughout the text, in order to formulate inferences

but without losing the values of systematicity, verification and reproduction of results that distinguish the technique (Bernete, 2013; García Galera and Berganza Conde, 2005). In that sense, the codes are extracted from the text itself without previous classifications, so it is necessary to fragment it and group it into categories that will be in constant redefinition as the documents are analyzed one by one (González-Teruel, 2015).

Content analysis was relevant to this research because it was the same technique used in previous studies on female political candidates in the Mexican (Flores Márquez, 2020; Rodelo, 2016 and 2020; Vidal Correa, 2020a, 2020b and 2020c), Latin American (García Beaudoux *et al.*, 2020; Mitchelstein *et al.*, 2019), North American (Wagner *et al.*, 2019; Waters *et al.*, 2018) and European (Humprecht and Esser, 2017; Lachover, 2017; Sensales *et al.*, 2016), as well as in international coverage comparisons (Álvarez-Monsiváis, 2020; García Beaudoux *et al.*, 2018; Haraldsson and Wängnerud, 2019). Similarly, it is a proven technique in analyses on politics with intersectional identities (Bashri, 2019; Snipes and Mudde, 2019; Tolley, 2015; Ward, 2016a and 2016b). In addition, the choice of content analysis is supported by being the most employed method in political communication studies (Piñeiro-Naval and Morais, 2020).

Likewise, the news framing model was used, which focuses on the different "modes of written, spoken, graphic, and visual messages that journalists use to contextualize an event, topic, and/or actors within one or more news stories" (D'Angelo and Shaw, 2018: 214). The basis of the model is that journalists select aspects of a perceived reality to reproduce a message with specific concepts and interpretations (Ardèvol-Abreu, 2015; Piñeiro-Naval and Mangana, 2018). Framing has been used to analyze news about female political candidates (Álvarez-Monsiváis, 2019 and 2020; Quevedo Redondo and Suárez Romero, 2017; Rista, 2020; Vidal Correa, 2020a, 2020b and 2020c; Waters *et al.*, 2018) and with intersectional identities (Snipes and Mudde, 2019; Ward, 2016a, 2016b), which makes framing relevant to the study. Meta-research papers have also been found in which the relevance of the study of *framing* from content analysis is evident (Matthes, 2009; Carrasco-Campos and Saperas, 2015).

For the selection of the media, it was decided that they should be Mexican and that they should publish political news on a website with a wide reach. Thus, the focus of the current study is to reveal a transnational view of coverage that explains how the media construct realities and identities about international events (García Galindo and De Vicente Domínguez, 2014; Quevedo Redondo and Suárez Romero, 2017; Rodríguez-Wangüemert *et al.*, 2019).

To verify the findings of Nielsen (2020), who detected that traditional media have a better treatment of intersectional candidacies, by covering their demands and expanding their issues, it was decided to analyze both digital media that emerged from a printed version (traditional) and digital native media. Of the former, the ten with the highest monthly average number of visitors were selected, according to the National Catalog of Printed Media of Instituto Nacional Electoral (INE, 2020), which were: *Milenio* (2021), *El Heraldo* (2021), *El Universal* (2021), *Excélsior* (2021), *La Jornada* (2021), *El Financiero* (2021), *El Sol de México* (2021), *Reforma* (2021), *24 Horas* (2021) and *Publímetro* (2021) (Table 1).[1]

The ten digital native media considered for the study were: A*nimal Político* (2021), *Aristegui Noticias* (2021), *SDP Noticias* (2021), *Sin Embargo* (2021), *UnoTV* (2021), *La Silla Rota* (2021), *Reporte Índigo* (2021), *Sopitas* (2021), *López Dóriga* (2021) and *Cultura Colectiva* (2021). Of these ten websites, nine are the most visited political information media, according to the Comscore report for *El Economista* (Merchant, 2020). It should be noted that *Reporte Indigo* was added to equate the figure with that of traditional media, and also because it reported 3.3 million visitors according to INE (2020).

In order to conform the *corpus* of news, a census of these was carried out from August 10 to November 8, 2020; this period covers from the day before Joe Biden announced Kamala Harris as his vice presidential candidate until one day after the AFP and Reuters agencies (2020), among other media, communicated that the winners of the election were the candidates of the Democratic Party. Since the present research focuses on the approach to Kamala Harris, her name had to appear in the title of the news item, to ensure that she was the protagonist of the information (Álvarez-Monsiváis, 2020; Catalán-Matamoros and Peñafiel-Saiz, 2019; Bleich *et al.*, 2015). The compilation of the messages was carried out using Google News advanced search, based on the criteria previously discussed, to form a sample of N =329 news items, distributed in n = 222 for web news from traditional media and n = 107 for those from digital media (Table 1).

Once the journalistic notes were collected, the steps to follow to analyze them were derived from an adaptation to the qualitative content analysis proposal of Díaz Herrera (2018). The first step was to retrieve the news through the Google Chrome extension, called NCapture, whose function was to automatically save the news and exclude any external data to the information, such as comments, advertising, related notes, navigation

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1 All tables can be found in the Annex at the end of this article (Editor's note).

bars, among other elements that were not strictly part of the message. The second step was to configure the categories, using NVivo software, which analyzes unstructured information in order to generate categories to organize qualitative data. This program detected the 329 news items stored by Ncapture, and through the summary and word cloud it recorded the thousand most repeated words (with an extension of at least three letters) in the set of texts.

The third step was to create the category tree based on the most reiterated words, in which they were grouped into larger categories with the intention of making a finer analysis to explore the latent content of the text. Although it was an inductive perspective, broad categories were created according to the research questions: actors, themes and ways of mentioning racial origin. In the case of the last question, five frames were formed inductively as recommended by Muñiz (2020):

- Gender framing: number of news items in which the word "woman" or related words appeared in reference to Kamala Harris.
- Race framing: number of notes in which Harris's racial background was mentioned.
- Novelty frame: number of documents in which the word "first" appeared to indicate that she was the first woman and/or Afro-descendant to opt for or win the position.
- Framing of political experience: number of texts in which at least one political background of Harris was presented, such as: his position in the Senate, his position as attorney general of the state of California and as district attorney.
- Candidate framing: number of news stories in which Harris was mentioned because she is a candidate, aspirant or nominee for vice president of the United States.

The fourth step consisted of validating the categories and recategorizing them; therefore, from the word count, those words that did not describe the category created were purged. For example, a news item was valid if it contained the word "black" to refer to Kamala Harris' race, but was eliminated if it referred to another person or the color of an object. Also, existing categories were refined and new ones were created according to the words that were relevant. As a last step, and as a product of the previous procedures, a report was generated using NVivo where the set of categories with their level of frequency was recorded, by means of which the pertinent statistical analyses were made. Since the data was produced by software, an intercoder reliability test was not carried out.

As can be seen, the methodological strategy obeyed an automated content analysis technique. According to the Boumans and Trilling (2016) model, the approach used consisted of a dictionary-based counting method (Counting and Dictionary), by searching for the number of occasions that different keywords appeared with the help of a computer program. In this sense, an algorithm was not programmed to perform the analysis as in the supervised machine learning approach, nor were semantic analyses of co-occurrences performed as in the unsupervised machine learning approach. However, our methodological strategy shares with the latter approach that the review of the texts was inductive and open.

Analysis of results

To answer the first research question regarding who appeared in digital journalistic information along with Kamala Harris, a list of actors was made with their averages, which indicate the proportion of the total number of news items in which each character was present (Table 2). According to the results, there was a constant in showing the candidate accompanied by at least one other character ($M = 0.99$), who were mainly men. The most mentioned turned out to be: his running mate Joe Biden ($M = 0.95$), current U.S. President Donald Trump ($M = 0.80$) and, to a lesser extent, his counterpart from the Republican Party, Mike Pence ($M = 0.33$). Some women who stood out in the coverage were: former presidential candidate Hillary Clinton ($M = 0.14$), former vice presidential candidate Sarah Palin ($M = 0.07$) and journalist and presidential debate moderator Susan Page ($M = 0.07$). Although with a discrete participation, some of Harris' family members were also mentioned: her husband Douglas Emhoff ($M = 0.08$), her sister Maya Harris ($M = 0.06$) and her mother Shyamala Gopalan ($M = 0.06$).

Regarding the second research question related to news topics (Table 3), the main topic was associated with the conjuncture of the Covid-19 pandemic ($M = 0.52$). The topics of international politics and migration ($M = 0.44$), racism ($M = 0.42$) and economics ($M = 0.33$), which are usually considered masculinized, were recorded in a greater number of notes to the detriment of topics associated with care work or feminized, such as civil rights and minorities ($M = 0.30$), science ($M = 0.08$) and climate change ($M = 0.08$). News about typical campaign political events such as election debates ($M = 0.40$), election results ($M = 0.33$) and coverage of the Democratic convention ($M = 0.13$) were also found.

Regarding the third research question, it was detected that there was not a single way of mentioning Kamala Harris' racial origins (Table 4). The main one was when describing the origin of her parents ($M = 0.84$), due to her Jamaican ancestry on her father's side and Indian on her mother's side. She was also referred to in colorist terms, since she was mentioned as black in half of the news items ($M = 0.50$) and with the different combinations of the word "Afro" ($M = 0.44$), as African-American or Afro-descendant. It should be noted that her Asian ($M = 0.31$) and specifically Indian ($M = 0.17$) origins were more present than her Jamaican race ($M = 0.04$).

To answer the last research question, a follow-up of the frames of: candidate, novelty, gender, race and political experience was carried out, the results of which are found in Table 5. To find out if there were significant differences between the frames, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) was carried out on the results obtained; thus, statistically significant differences were detected between the frames, $F(1069) = 28.708$, $p < 0.001$.

A post hoc test based on Student's t distribution and the Bonferroni correction was then performed. This made it possible to determine the existence of three groups among the frames. Thus, the candidate frame ($M = 0.87, SD = 0.33$) was the one most frequently presented in the analyzed media, followed by the political experience frame ($M = 0.68$, SD = 0.47). In third place were the frames of gender ($M = 0.60, SD = 0.49$), race ($M = 0.57$, $SD = 0.50$) and novelty ($M = 0.53, SD = 0.50$), among which no statistical differences were detected. Based on these results, it was possible to reject *H1*, which asserted that gender, race and novelty frames would be more frequent than those of political experience and female candidate.

In addition, we sought to analyze whether there were differences between native and traditional media. Through Cohen's d test, it was found that the effect size was greater, although not conclusive, between the political framing presented by the native media ($M = 0.75, SD = 0.44$) and that of the traditional media ($M = 0.65$, $SD = 0.48$); likewise, the effect was greater between the candidate framing of the native media ($M = 0.92, SD = 0.28$) and that of the traditional media ($M = 0.85, SD = 0.36$). Therefore, it was found that native media resorted significantly more to the framing of female candidate and political experience than traditional media, thus *H2*, which expected the opposite, was rejected. However, there was no evidence that the gender, race and novelty frames were emphasized more by one type of media than another.

Discussion and conclusions

Regarding the actors that appeared in the news, it is possible to indicate that the media took the spotlight away from Harris to present her together with other actors, as Flores Márquez (2020) warns about the coverage of women politicians. This could give the idea that Harris achieved the vice presidency thanks to Biden's appointment or because of citizens' animus towards Trump, to the detriment of her political trajectory or achievements (García Beaudoux *et al.*, 2018; Power, 2017; Rista, 2020). This finding coincides with the perpetuation of co-responsibility posited by Ríos Sierra (2017), where the achievements of female candidates are represented in a shared manner with other men.

In contrast to what has been highlighted in research that has found a mediatization of the intimate sphere of women candidates (Flores Márquez, 2020; Foster Shoaf and Parsons, 2016; Garcia Beaudoux *et al.*, 2018; Rista, 2020; Van der Pas and Aaldering, 2020), the present study detected a low presence of Harris' family members, as husband Douglas Emhoff, her sister Maya Harris and her mother Shyamala Gopalan were barely mentioned. In that sense, the Mexican media preferred to cover Kamala Harris in relation to other politicians, rather than her close family circle.

Regarding the second research question about the thematic agenda, it is concluded that the topics associated with the masculine, preferably international politics, migration and economy, were more frequent than the topics associated with the feminine, such as science and climate change. This contradicts what has been found in some research regarding there being a preponderance of female topics in female nominations (Humprecht and Esser, 2017; Van der Pas and Aaldering, 2020; Waters *et al.*, 2018). This may have been due to the fact that it was a transnational coverage in a country that has a border with the United States; therefore, the media, rather than placing it in female or male issues, made the coverage based on the way in which the election of Kamala Harris as vice-president could impact Mexico.

However, where we do agree with previous studies is that the coverage of Harris –as a woman of Asian and Jamaican descent– was conducted based on issues of racism and migration. According to the literature consulted, this attitude of the media limited Harris' field of action, since due to her origins she seemed obliged to opine on racial issues and support for her community, whether or not it was part of her political agenda (Gershon and Lavariega Monforti, 2019; Maiolino, 2018; Wineinger, 2019).

As for the third research question about what were the ways to refer to Harris' racial origin, at least eight ways were found. In this case, it is concluded that the media described her as a candidate with multiple identities. This complexity recounted in the news is interesting especially because of studies showing that ethnic communities tend to vote for political representatives of their ethnicity, which returned the candidate as part of more than one ethnic/racial community and thus with greater potential to attract the vote of those communities (Block Jr., 2019; Johnson Carew, 2016; Mogahed and Mahmood, 2019). Therefore, it is suggested that future studies on intersectional identities emphasize whether journalistic information reiterates a single or multiplicity of identities.

From the last research question, two conclusions were drawn. First, that the journalistic treatment in the Mexican media was focused to a larger extent on Harris' status as a candidate and her political experience. While race, gender and novelty were present throughout the campaign, they were no more prevalent than political framing.

Such a finding goes against what was detected by previous studies that demonstrated a concealment of political credentials, to show her preferentially as a political subject of otherness in the political arena (Galy-Badenas and Gray, 2020; Lucas, 2017; Power, 2017; Rista, 2020; Towner and Clawson, 2016; Ward, 2016a and 2016b). In this sense, we agree more with the works that have found a politicization of news information when addressing international news (García Galindo and De Vicente Domínguez, 2014; Quevedo Redondo and Suárez Romero, 2017; Rodríguez-Wangüemert *et al.*, 2019).

However, it is recommended that the frames of race, gender and novelty continue to be the subject of academic research, because although they were less present in this work, they were not omitted, because they appeared in up to 50% of the journalistic information and could be used by the electorate as cognitive shortcuts to cast their vote (García Beaudoux *et al.,* 2020).

The second finding regarding this last research question was that digital native media showed statistically higher coverage of political framing than traditional media, despite expectations to the contrary (Nielsen, 2020). In this sense, it is suggested to make more extensive comparisons between native and traditional media to find out if the new way of doing journalism on the Internet offers a more politicized view of intersectional female candidates.

Overall, the work created an emerging theoretical scaffolding on how women politicians with intersectional identities can be studied in electoral campaigns. It is recommended that future studies focus on examining

the different ways of mentioning racial origin and the balance in news coverage between political and personal frames. However, it is suggested that the relevance of using this model in different contexts be reviewed through reliability tests on the proposed instrument, which represented a methodological limitation for the present study.

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Annex

Table 1

News collected according to the media analyzed

Print media websites			Digital native media websites		
Site	Monthly visitors (millions)	News analyzed	Site	Monthly visitors (millions)	News analyzed
El Universal	39	49	*UnoTV*	17	17
El Heraldo	32	32	*SDP Noticias*	8,2	5
Milenio	25	27	*Animal Político*	3,7	4
La Jornada	20	7	*Cultura Colectiva*	3,6	5
Excélsior	16	23	*La Silla Rota*	3,4	19
Reforma	11	18	*Reporte Índigo*	3,3	4
24 Horas	4,8	23	*Aristegui Noticias*	3,3	14
El Sol de México	4,7	15	*Sin Embargo*	3,2	8
El Financiero	4,5	15	*Sopitas*	1,4	5
Publímetro	4,2	13	*López-Dóriga*	1,4	26
Total	161,2	(N = 222)	Total	48,5	(N = 107)
Total monthly visitors	209.7 million				
Total news collected	N = 329				

Source: Own elaboration with data from INE (2020) and Merchant (2020).

Table 2

Actors featured in the story with Kamala Harris

Actors	Natives		Traditional		Total	
	f	M	f	M	f	M
Joe Biden	103	0,96	208	0,94	311	0,95
Donald Trump	86	0,80	178	0,80	264	0,80
Mike Pence	35	0,33	75	0,34	110	0,33
Barack Obama	41	0,38	56	0,25	97	0,29
Hillary Clinton	13	0,12	32	0,14	45	0,14
George Floyd	9	0,08	24	0,11	33	0,10
Douglas Emhoff	9	0,08	16	0,07	25	0,08
Sarah Palin	4	0,04	20	0,09	24	0,07
Susan Page	6	0,06	16	0,07	22	0,07
Brett Kavanaugh	4	0,04	17	0,08	21	0,06
Maya Harris	10	0,09	11	0,05	21	0,06
Nancy Pelosi	3	0,03	16	0,07	19	0,06
Shyamala Gopalan	9	0,08	10	0,05	19	0,06
Otros / Ninguno	1	0,01	2	0,01	3	0,01
Total	(N = 107)		(N = 222)		(N = 329)	

Note: Each news item may have featured more than one actor.

Source: Own elaboration based on the analyzed news items.

Table 3

News topics

Topics	Natives		Traditional		Total	
	f	M	f	M	f	M
Covid-19 pandemic	58	0,54	114	0,51	172	0,52
International policy and migration	41	0,38	104	0,47	145	0,44
Racism	47	0,44	92	0,41	139	0,42
Electoral debates	41	0,38	91	0,41	132	0,40
Election results	44	0,41	66	0,30	110	0,33
Economy	44	0,41	65	0,29	109	0,33
Civil rights and minorities	27	0,25	72	0,32	99	0,30
Democrat Convention	16	0,15	27	0,12	43	0,13
Science	12	0,11	16	0,07	27	0,08
Climate change	9	0,08	17	0,08	25	0,08
Others	2	0,02	16	0,07	18	0,05
Total	(N = 107)		(N = 222)		(N = 329)	

Note: Each news item may have featured more than one topic.
Source: Own elaboration based on the analyzed news items.

Table 4

Ways of referring to Kamala Harris's racial origin

Race framing	Natives		Traditional		Total	
	f	M	f	M	f	M
Parental origin	53	0,82	106	0,85	159	0,84
Black	32	0,49	62	0,50	94	0,50
African-American	32	0,49	52	0,42	84	0,44
Asian	20	0,31	39	0,31	59	0,31
Indian origin	17	0,26	15	0,12	32	0,17
Color	10	0,15	17	0,14	27	0,14
Jamaican origin	4	0,06	4	0,03	8	0,04
Mixed breed or mestizo	3	0,05	3	0,02	6	0,03
Total	(N = 65)		(N = 124)		(N = 189)	

Note: Each news item may have presented more than one reference to its origin.
Source: Own elaboration based on the analyzed news items.

Table 5

Presence of news frames according to the type of digital media

	Natives		Traditional		Total		
Framing	M	DE	M	DE	M	DE	d de Cohen
Candidate	0,92	0,28	0,85	0,36	0,87	0,33	0,21
Political experience	0,75	0,44	0,65	0,48	0,68	0,47	0,22
Gender	0,57	0,50	0,61	0,49	0,60	0,49	0,08
Race	0,61	0,49	0,56	0,50	0,57	0,50	0,10
Novelty	0,52	0,50	0,53	0,50	0,53	0,50	0,02
	(N = 107)		(N = 222)		(N = 329)		

Note: The frames had a range of variation from 0 (absent) to 1 (present) in each news item analyzed.

Source: Own elaboration based on the analyzed news items.

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