COVID EN ESPAÑA: ANÁLISIS DEL CONGRESO DE MÓVILES 2020 EN LOS DIARIOS 'EXPANSIÓN' Y 'CINCO DÍAS'

Covid in Spain: analysis of the 2020 Mobile Congress in the newspapers 'Expansión' and 'Cinco Días'

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Resumen

El COVID-19, conocido popularmente como coronavirus, ha sido uno de los fenómenos mediáticos más relevantes desde principios de 2020. Uno de los efectos más notorios de su rápida expansión en España fue la cancelación del Mobile World Congress (MWC). Se trata de un foro global que reúne anualmente a las principales empresas tecnológicas del mundo y se define, en materia de agenda empresarial, como uno de los principales eventos anuales del sector. Según las estimaciones realizadas por la empresa organizadora GSMA, la previsión de asistentes al evento, previo a los resultados conocidos, era de más de 100.000 personas, contando tanto los asistentes de las empresas participantes como el público en general. Pese a ello, el pasado 12 de

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febrero y refiriéndose a las sucesivas cancelaciones de las empresas patrocinadoras y participantes por motivos de salud pública, la organización del MWC decidió cancelar el evento. Se analizan en este trabajo 125 noticias de los dos principales periódicos económicos en España y a través de una metodología basada en el análisis del contenido se comprueba el impacto del Congreso objeto de este estudio. En el periodo estudiado se concluye que las noticias sobre el Congreso Mundial de Móviles no fueron tan relevantes para estos medios de comunicación como sí lo fueron los efectos del covid-19.

Palabras clave: coronavirus, móviles, mundial, congreso, medios, tecnología.

Abstract

COVID-19, popularly known as coronavirus, has been one of the most relevant media phenomena since early 2020. One of the most notorious effects of its rapid expansion in Spain was the cancellation of the Mobile World Congress (MWC). This is a global forum that annually brings together the world's leading technology companies and is defined, in terms of business agenda, as one of the main annual events in the sector. According to the estimates made by the organizing company, GSMA, the forecast of attendees for the event, prior to the known outcomes, was more than 100.000 people, counting both attendees from the participating companies and the general public. Despite this, on February 12th and referring to the successive cancellations of the sponsoring companies and participants for reasons of public health, the MWC organization decided to cancel the event. In this article 125 news items from the two main economic newspapers in Spain are analyzed and the impact of the Congress, object of this study, is verified through a methodology based on content analysis. In the period studied, it is concluded that the news about the World Mobile Congress were not as relevant for these media as the effects of Covid-19 were.

Keywords: coronavirus, mobile, world, congresso, media, technology

1. INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES

Based on the context defined in the summary, the aim of this article is to analyse the media coverage given to the coronavirus in the Spanish business press, considering as the starting point the date on which the first cancellation by a company took place and as the end point, 24 hours after the announcement of the cancellation of the event.

The main objective is to measure the predominant approaches to the relationship between the evolution of the COVID-19 virus and the holding of the Mobile World Congress in Barcelona, in digital media specialised in economics between 4 and 13 February 2020.

The secondary objectives of the research are the following:

- To analyse the degree of news priority of COVID-19 in digital economic media between 4 and 13 February 2020.
- To contrast the relevance of the holding of the Mobile World Congress in Barcelona as a particular topic in the coverage of COVID-19's evolution in the indicated period.
- Verify and analyse the presence of health expert spokespersons, institutional representatives of public administrations and company spokespersons in the aforementioned media coverage.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

In order to approach the object of study, a content analysis of the most widely read digital media in Spain was carried out. As stated by (Andréu, 2001), "Berelson (1952) maintains that content analysis is "a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication".

If in a generic way it can be noted that this analysis is "fundamentally a type of scientific measurement applied to a message, within the framework of purposes in the field of social sciences" (Tinto, 2013), in a strict sense it can be indicated that "it is a research technique aimed at formulating, from certain data, reproducible and valid inferences that can be applied to their context" (Krippendorff, 1980).

In this case, content analysis is applied to the media's treatment of the evolution of the COVID-19 virus and its impact on the Mobile World Congress, between 4 and 13 February 2020.

Methodologically, the following elements are established for the application of this technique:

1) Population analysis

Population analysis, in this article, is defined as all information whose subject matter refers to the coronavirus and has been published by specialised economic and financial media. This dimension responds to the objective of analysing the effects of COVID-19 on the Mobile World Congress from a business perspective, assuming as a premise that specialised coverage will be more relevant to business decisions than that offered by the media in general.

2) Sample selection

The following elements are taken into account for the selection of the sample:

a. Media selection: this sample is made up of the newspapers 'Expansión', from the Unidad Editorial group, and 'Cinco Días', from the Prisa Group, being together with 'El Economista' the most relevant specialised media by audience size in Spain according to the General Media Framework for Spain 2020

(AIMC, 2020). However, for the purposes of this research, the newspaper 'El Economista' has been excluded from the sample for a) not including its audience data in the latest edition of the aforementioned monitor; and b) not being able to apply the search parameters selected for this analysis to its digital edition.

b. Format: the format chosen is that of the free digital press, as it is the type of media that allows for the most extensive coverage of any event or topic, as it is not subject to content programming (radio and television) or to the limitations of print publication. In addition, it allows for greater methodological precision as it is possible to use advanced search patterns to filter the news relevant to the study.

c. Geographical scope: they are national media, accessible and available to any reader.

d. Audience size: they are media specialised in economic and financial issues, aimed at an informed audience interested in this type of coverage. According to the data collected in the aforementioned Framework, the penetration of the financial media in the population is 0.5%, with the percentages for 'Expansión' at 0.3% and 'Cinco Días' at 0.1% respectively.

e. Audience characteristics: according to estimates made by the managers of both newspapers (Unidad Editorial 2020, Prisa, 2020), the prototypical audience of these media is mainly male, belonging to the upper and upper-middle social classes, predominantly urban and university-educated, although there are slight differences between the two media. Both audiences are characterised in the following table.

Table 1. *Audience characteristics in content analysis.*

Category	'Expansión'	'Cinco Días'
Audience according to AIMC (%)	0,3%	0,1%
Reported audience	6,2M	4,4M
Sex of the audience	64% male	62,6% male
Age of audience	32% +55 years old	47% 35-45 years old
Social class of audience	50% medium-high and high	87% medium-high and high

Source*: AIMC (2020), PRISA (2020), Unidad Editorial (2020).*
Own elaboration.

f. Dates: The proposed time range covers all news published between 4 and 13 February 2020. In determining the start date, the first public health-related cancellation of attendance announced by a company participating in the event is considered a relevant milestone. As for the closing date, the announcement of the cancellation of the event on 12 February is taken as a relevant milestone, considering the following 24 hours to cover the first reactions and statements of all the agents involved.

3) Definition of the unit of analysis

As for the selection of the content to which the variables will be applied, "the news" has been selected as the unit of analysis. In other words, all the elements of information differentiated and presented to the public in a separate interface on the media's website. Thus, a total of 125 news items from the newspapers representing the sample have been analysed: 61 on the website of the newspaper 'Expansión' and 64 on the website of the newspaper 'Cinco Días'. When selecting the news items, we considered all those that a) were published in the defined time interval; b) maintain a match of 80% or more with the terms "coronavirus" or "covid-19" in the search criteria.

4) Code development

A codebook is established consisting of 16 variables, grouped as follows:

a. Basic information. This category collects the variables corresponding to the "medium", through which it is possible to analyse which news items belong to each of the media selected in the sample and on what dates they were published, in chronological order. Likewise, each news item is assigned an alphanumeric code to enable its differentiation.

b. Structure of the information. This category includes variables related to the basic information of the news item and the consideration given to the information by the medium. Thus, the variables 'title', 'subtitle', 'genre', 'section' and 'author' of the news item are included. These types of variables allow us to analyse and compare the type of treatment that each media outlet gives to the evolution of the virus, as well as the prominence it gives to it in its content agenda. On the other hand, the identification of the author, in combination with other variables, allows for a deeper analysis of the source of information (Ericson, 1991, cited in Canel et. al., 2002).

c. Coverage topics. Based on a preliminary observation of the news items in this study, a list of subcategories is drawn up to enable all the pieces to be classified according to the most relevant subject matter. However, given the confluence of subcategories that would foreseeably occur in the news items identified in each medium, it was decided to prioritise the topic that, in the analysis of the headline, subtitle and body of the news item, was clearly predominant over the rest of the possible topics. Thus, the topics proposed for this variable were as follows:

   I. Virus evolution: news whose content mainly deals with the evolution of the virus over time, the number of infections, the number of associated deaths, vaccines and drugs against the disease, etc.
   II. Effects on the global economy: news items whose content refers to the impact of COVID-19 on global companies and financial markets. Excluded from this category are all news items that respond directly to a specific Spanish company or that make direct reference to the MWC.

III. Effects on the Spanish economy in particular: news reflecting the economic impact of COVID-19 on the Spanish economy as a whole or on any Spanish company.

IV. Notification of cancellation of participation of one or more companies in the MWC: news whose main topic is the communication of non-attendance made by the companies participating in the MWC. Excluded from this section are all those pieces that deal with the cancellation of the congress in a broad perspective.

V. MWC cancellation: this category differs from the previous one in that it includes all news items that emphasise the need (or not) to cancel the event over and above the particular reasons given by the participating companies. This distinction is important as there are notable differences in the treatment during preliminary observation, especially in the identification of the source.

VI. Other: news items whose content and classification respond to the search parameters, as well as their development, which cannot be framed in any of the previous categories.

d. Source of information. One of the objectives of the research is to contrast the presence of expert health spokespersons, institutional representatives of public administrations and company spokespersons in the media coverage of COVID-19 on the selected dates. The following variables are intended to analyse the source of information in the news pieces, as well as the treatment given to them by each media outlet. Thus, the following variables have been included as closed-response variables:

I. Mention of health experts (A): health experts are understood to be professionals or spokespersons from research centres, hospitals, health response centres and international reference organisations. Examples include the World Health Organisation and Fernando Simón, Director of the Centre for the Coordination of Health Alerts and Emergencies of the Spanish Ministry of Health.

II. Mention of institutional representatives (B): those representatives at local, regional, national or European level who have been identified in the news items.

III. Mention of company spokespersons (C): all those members of the company's management, whether or not identified by their own name, whose words are understood as official communication from the company.

In addition to the aforementioned variables, the identification of the respective spokespersons with name, position and institution or company to which they belong, as well as the literalness reflected in the body of the news item, have been included as open response variables.

3. RESULTS

This section describes the results obtained for each of the observed variables. Each section describes the individual results for each medium and the results as a whole, applying an audience weighting factor to reflect average values representative of the media coverage.

Quantification and description of the pieces

In terms of the number of news items, a total of 125 news items were published, 61 in 'Expansión' and 64 in 'Cinco Días', with a standard deviation of 2.12 and an average of 6.2 items per day in the period analysed. Of these, 94% are classified in the "informative" genre, 100% in 'Expansión' and 88% in 'Cinco Días'. The remaining 12% are from the "column" (10%) and "editorial" (2%) genres.

Table 2. *Genre*

Genre	'Cinco Días'	'Expansión'	Total	MP	%
News	56	61	117	59	94%
Editorial	1	0	1	0	1%
Column	7	0	7	3	5%
Interview	0	0	0	0	0%
Photo gallery	0	0	0	0	0%
Other	0	0	0	0	0%
TOTAL	64	61	125	62	100%

Source: own elaboration.

In terms of sections, "Business" is predominant, with 40% of the news items, followed by "Economy" (23%), "Markets" (16%) and "Society" (15%). Others such as "Opinion" comprise less than 10% of the news items. As for the particular treatment of each newspaper, the greatest differences can be observed in the society category, with 26% of the news items in the newspaper 'Expansión' (the second category with the most news items in this medium), in contrast to 'Cinco Días', which does not present any in this category. As will be seen below, this difference in categorisation may be due to the predominant thematic focus in 'Expansión', with greater emphasis on the evolution of the virus than in 'Cinco Días'. As for the authorship of the articles, most of them refer to a press agency as the author (43%), with EFE and Europa Press standing out in particular. This is more so in the case of 'Expansión', where news items signed by agencies account for 61% of the coverage, compared to 19% in 'Cinco Días'. On the other hand, in the latter newspaper, it is the editors identified by name who sign most of the news items, with a total of 31 (48%). The newsrooms claim 14% of the coverage and only 8% of the news items do not identify the author of the piece. It is also worth noting the scarce reproduction of news items from other media, with only one from the 'Financial Times' and one from 'El País', respectively.

Table 3: *Authorship of news pieces*

Author	'Cinco Días'	'Expansión'	Total	MP	%
Agencies (EFE, Europa Press...)	12	38	50	27	43%
Identified editor	31	13	44	20	33%
Unidentified editor	5	5	10	5	8%
Editorial staff	15	4	19	9	14%
Other newspapers	1	1	2	1	2%
TOTAL	64	61	125	62	100%

Source: *own elaboration.*

3.1. Thematic analysis

In order to systematically analyse the specialised media's coverage of the coronavirus and its impact on the MWC, the 125 news items were classified according to the most relevant theme of the piece, observed in the headline, subtitle and body. Thus, the quantitative analysis reveals "the effects on the global economy" as the main topic, being present in 39% of the pieces. It is followed by the evolution of the virus with 23% and low-involvement ads with 12%. Therefore, it can be seen that, in coherence with the specialisation of these media, the most relevant topics are those that directly and indirectly relate COVID-19 to significant macroeconomic impacts, particularly in countries such as China, Japan and the United States.

In this way, statements such as "Toyota, Airbus and Foxconn close factories in China; Burberry and Canada Goose warn of the benefits" ('Cinco Días') or "The coronavirus threatens the global technology industry" ('Expansión') appear.

Table 4: *Main news topic by medium*

Main theme	'Cinco Días'	'Expansión'	Total	MP	%
Cancellation of companies as participants	9	6	15	7	12%
Cancellation of the MWC	10	5	15	7	11%
Effects on the Spanish economy	7	7	14	7	11%
Effects on the global economy	24	24	48	24	39%
Evolution of the virus	10	17	27	14	23%
Other	4	2	6	3	5%
TOTAL	64	61	125	62	100%

Source: *own elaboration.*

As for the impact on the Spanish economy, both the effects at macroeconomic level and at stock market and business level, 14 pieces (11%) are observed, which indicates a lower level of interest, especially when compared to the follow-up given to the paralysis of the production plants of technology and automobile companies in China. Specifically, examples of news analysed within this category include the following headlines: "Wuhan virus causes losses of up to 8% in Spanish stock market funds" ('Cinco Días') or "The Ibex dispels the warnings of the coronavirus in its assault on the highs and other news at this time" ('Expansión').

If we combine all the news that directly and indirectly relate the virus to the national economy (cancellation of the MWC, low participation and effects on the Spanish economy) we obtain a total of 44 and 34% of coverage, 5 percentage points less than the predominant topic.

Finally, the evolution of the virus stands out as a separate topic, with 23% of the total number of news items, including those mentioning the number of cases identified, the actions taken by health and/or governmental authorities, as well as the spread of COVID-19 to other countries.

3.2. Sources of information

It is especially useful for the purpose of this article to identify and quantify the sources of information used by each media outlet in the proposed coverage. It allows us to analyse those people or institutions that provide information in the media, as Ericson (1991, cited in Canel et al., 2002) points out, and to contrast the intersections between the different sources in the news, understanding intersection as the combination of 2 or more sources within the same piece. To this end, we identified "mentions of health experts", "mentions of institutional spokespersons" and "mentions of company spokespersons" as response categories and quantified the number of news items referring to any of these sources, the total number of individual mentions of each source and, subsequently, the identification of the most cited subjects or spokespersons throughout the coverage.

In 'Expansión' it can be seen that the most cited sources are health experts, with 22 news items citing at least these sources, which represents 41% of the total number of references. In this newspaper, the most cited health experts are the Chinese National Health Commission, with 12 mentions, Tedros Adhanom, President of the World Health Organisation, with 7, and Fernando Simón, Director of the Centre for the Coordination of Health Alerts and Emergencies, with 3.

Among the texts collected from these sources, those referring to the coronavirus as "public enemy number one of all humanity" (WHO, 2020) or those in which Fernando Simón describes the state of health of patients affected by the virus stand out.

Cinco Días' shows a clear preference for business sources in its coverage, with up to 29 articles referring to this source (55%) and a total of 77 mentions of business

spokespersons in the body of the articles. The most frequent in this coverage were GSMA company officials, with 11 mentions, followed by Huawei and Xiomi, both with 3 each. It is worth noting that the rest of the companies mentioned had a frequency of 1 or 2 mentions, so they were excluded from the list of most frequent sources.

Thus, the reasons given by the different companies to justify their withdrawal as MWC participants are cited in much of the news, taking as a case in point Amazon, the company that justified its absence by the outbreak and the continuing concerns around the new coronavirus (BBC, 2020).

These data contrast with the scarce presence of institutional spokespersons in the series analysed. In aggregate values, this source only appears in 22 of the 125 news items analysed, with the most relevant spokespersons being Salvador Illa, Spain's Minister of Health (6 mentions in total), Joan Guix, Secretary of Public Health of the Generalitat of Catalonia (5) and Nadia Calviño, Vice-President for Economic Affairs and Digital Transformation in Spain (4).

Table 5: *Most mentioned health experts (A)*

Source	'Cinco Días'	'Expansión'	Total	MP	%
WHO	10	7	17	8	43%
National Health Commission of China	3	12	15	8	43%
Fernando Simón, Director of the Centre for Coordination of Health Alerts and Emergencies	2	3	5	3	14%
TOTAL	15	22	37	19	100%

Source: *own elaboration.*

Table 6: *Most mentioned institutional spokespersons (B)*

Source	'Cinco Días'	'Expansión'	Total	MP	%
Salvador Illa, Minister of Health	4	2	6	3	40%
Joan Guix, Secretary for Public Health of the Generalitat of Catalonia	4	1	5	2	32%
Nadia Calviño, Vice-President for Economic Affairs	2	2	4	2	28%
TOTAL	10	5	15	7	100%

Source: *own elaboration.*

Table 7: *Most mentioned corporate spokespersons (C)*

Source	'Cinco Días'	'Expansión'	Total	MP	%
GSMA	11	2	13	6	60%
Huawei	3	1	4	2	19%
Xiomi	3	1	4	2	19%
TOTAL	17	4	21	9	100%

Source: *own elaboration.*

Furthermore, the results of the analysis of the sources in the two newspapers evaluated are relevant. Thus, only 17% of the total number of news items show some kind of intersection of sources, being similar in both media (11 in 'Cinco Días' and 10 in 'Expansión'). Of these, the most frequent intersection is the one that combines health experts with institutional spokespersons, with a total of 8 news items that meet this criterion, followed by the intersection between institutional and business spokespersons, with 5. The results are shown in Tables 8 and 9, considering a universe of 125 news items (U) and the sets 'health experts' (A), 'institutional spokespersons' (B) and 'business spokespersons' (C).

Table 8: *Frecuencia de menciones por intersección para conjuntos de fuentes*

Conjuntos	'Cinco Días'	'Expansión'	Total	%
(A ∩ B) – C	2	6	8	6%
(A ∩ C) – B	2	3	5	4%
(B ∩ C) – A	6	1	7	6%
(A ∩ B ∩ C)	1	0	1	1%
TOTAL	11	10	21	17%

Source: *own elaboration.*

In contrast, Table 9 shows the results of the sole source analysis applied to the above sample.

Table 9: *Frequency of exclusive mentions for each source*

Sets	Cinco Días	Expansión	Total	%
A - (B ∪ C)	8	13	21	17%
B - (A ∪ C)	2	4	6	5%
C - (A ∪ B)	20	17	37	30%
(A ∪ B ∪ C)'	23	17	40	32%
TOTAL	53	51	104	83%

Source: *own elaboration.*

The use of exclusive sources stands out, meaning news items that only include one type of spokesperson in the body of the information. Thus, the most frequent exclusive source is the company spokesperson, with 37 unique mentions, compared to 21 for health experts and 6 for institutional spokespersons.
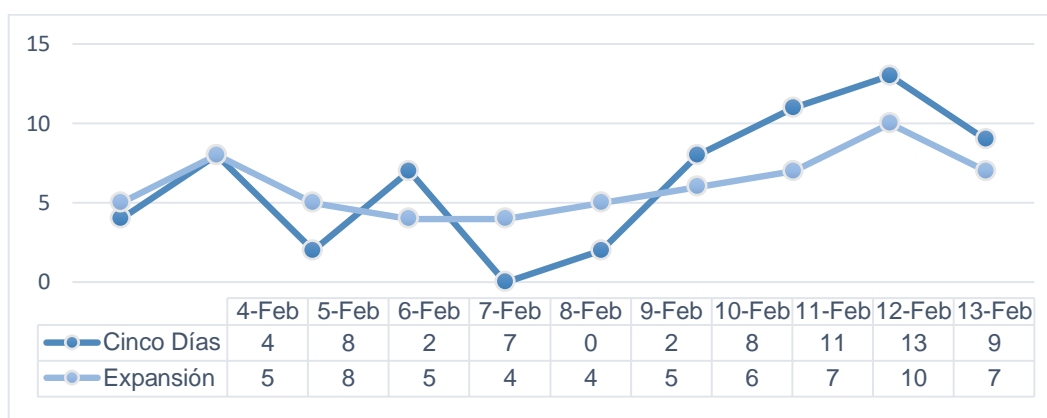
4. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section analyses the media coverage as a whole, considering the representativeness of the selected sample.

In the first instance, coverage is obtained with an average of 6.2 news items per day, with the 11th, 12th and 13th February being the days with the highest number of news items published (18, 23 and 16, respectively). To measure these figures would require an exhaustive analysis of other topics that are beyond the scope of this paper.

Therefore, it is possible to deduce that this is a coverage that could well exceed the standard of monitoring that a digital medium usually has. Moreover, this is confirmed by the standard deviation observed between the days of publication, which is 5.9 and is especially concentrated on 11, 12 and 13 February. Graph 1 shows the variation in the number of news items published per half day.

	4-Feb	5-Feb	6-Feb	7-Feb	8-Feb	9-Feb	10-Feb	11-Feb	12-Feb	13-Feb
Cinco Días	4	8	2	7	0	2	8	11	13	9
Expansión	5	8	5	4	4	5	6	7	10	7

Graph 1: News published by media and day
Source: *own elaboration.*

In terms of genre, section and authorship, there are no significant differences other than those already mentioned between the two media. It is only worth noting the difference between the use of content produced by media agencies between 'Expansión' and 'Cinco Días', with the former being much more likely to use this figure (up to 3 times more than in 'Cinco Días'), which is in line with the preference of the latter to transfer the authorship of the pieces to their own editors within the medium. Thus, applying the weighting factor, it is noted that 44% of the news coverage is dominated by news coverage that partially or totally reproduces the agency's content, followed by the editors identified at 33%, as shown in graph 2.
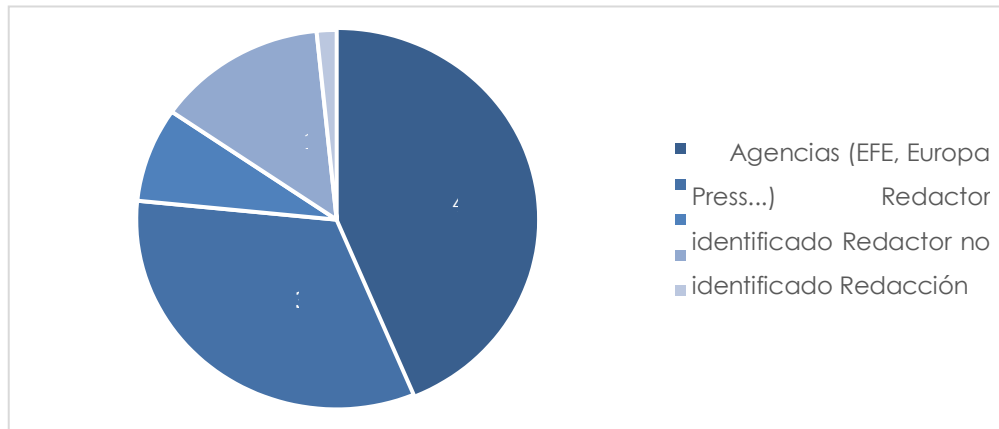
Graph 2: *Authorship of news published in aggregated values*
Source: *own elaboration.*

4.1. Thematic Analysis

A review of the topics most covered by each media outlet shows that, as a whole, the effects of the virus on the global economy account for 39% of the total coverage, as shown in graph 3. This is followed in order of relevance by the evolution of the virus, with 23%, the notification of non-attendance at the MWC with 12%, and the cancellation of the event with 11%. By media, the main difference is in the monitoring of the evolution of the virus, with 'Expansión' being the one that devotes most news to this topic and, consequently, gives rise to the difference indicated above for the 'Society' section, in the news ranking.
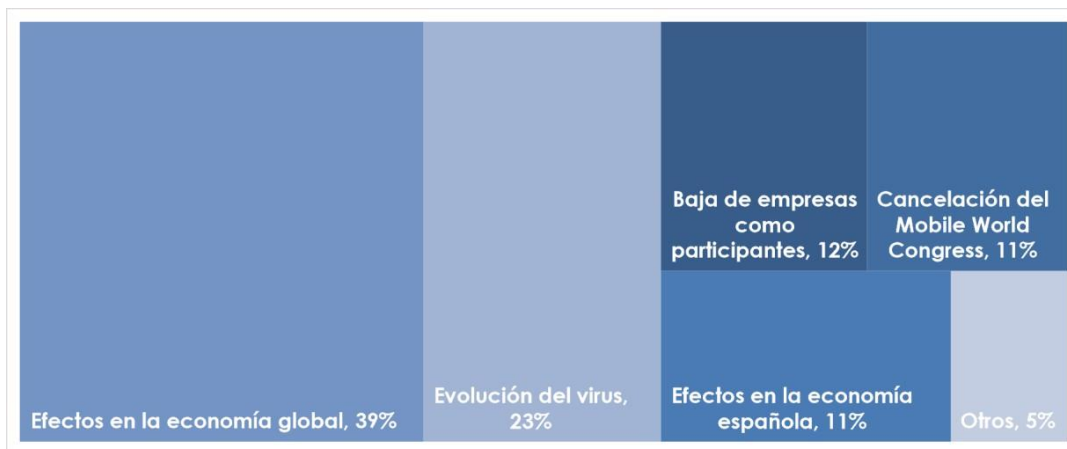
Graph 3: *Published news*
Source: *own elaboration.*

With regard to the thematic monitoring carried out by each media outlet, and following the same reasoning as for the number of news items published, it can be argued that, intuitively, the increase in the publication of content is due to the cancellation of the MWC, an event of presumed interest for the audience of these media and which, in particular, would become relevant due to the losses of technology giants such as Ericsson or Facebook and the subsequent cancellation of the event by the organising company (GMSA).

However, a detailed analysis of the topics per day of publication qualifies this argument. Thus, between 4 and 8 February, the monitoring of the impacts of COVID-19 at a global level predominates, accounting for almost 50% of the pieces. The significant change in trend is observed on 12 and 13 February, days in which, although with less relative weight, the cancellation of the MWC predominates.

This analysis is consistent with the results obtained from the evaluation of the sources of information, which highlights the figure of the business spokesperson as the main source and, in particular, the organisation of the congress as the most cited source. In turn, it contrasts with the scarce recourse to institutional sources, which are concentrated in the last days of the period analysed and which respond to the evolution of the virus in Spain, with the cases in the Balearic Islands, and to the institutional response to the cancellation of the event.

It can be concluded that the media focus most used during the coverage responds to the need to know what economic repercussions the virus is causing, understanding as a trigger the production stoppage in the main technology factories and automobile companies in the province of Hubei, China. In contrast, the Mobile World Congress is comparatively less relevant for the specialised media, being subordinated to the global impact of COVID-19, even in the days prior to the announcement of its cancellation.

4.2. Sources of information

The analysis of the sources of information reveals enlightening data. There is a clear preference for business sources over other types of spokespersons, with a total of 114 explicit mentions of company representatives in the body of the news, compared to 61 of health experts or 37 of institutional spokespersons. There are several reasons for this phenomenon:

a. Natural development of events: From the coverage itself, it can be deduced that, in the first instance, it is multinational companies and Chinese citizens who are most affected by COVID-19. Therefore, given that global industries have come to a standstill as a result of the virus, it is reasonable for coverage to focus on corporate communications about it. Moreover, it is not until the first cases occur in Spain and the option to cancel the MWC materialises that the issue acquires a news relevance that transcends the purely business sphere.

b. Readers' particular interest: the profile of the reader who chooses newspapers such as 'Expansión' or 'Cinco Días' and their specialisation in business, economic

and financial issues, seems to be sufficient reason to prioritise business sources over other types of sources.

c. Explicit interest of business spokespersons: having recognised the reader profile and the interests of these media, it is intuited that companies will have a greater predilection for transmitting their press releases and other communications to this type of media specifically.

Among the business sources, GSMA stands out as the organiser of the MWC and Huawei and Xiomi, both of Chinese origin. These are followed in number of mentions by Iberia and Air France, due to flight cancellations to the Asian country and which, both because of the nationality of the former and the proximity of the latter, can be understood as more relevant than other companies. The rest of the mentions of institutional spokespersons are given for a) explaining the effects of the virus on their production chains; or b) explaining the reasons that lead the company to cancel its participation in the MWC.

Of the latter variant, it is worth noting the practical uniformity that all the companies have in arguing their decision. In all cases, although with slight grammatical variations, the will to safeguard the health and well-being of the company's workers is evident, assuming that attendance at the MWC puts this value at risk. Likewise, the communications assume that this is not an easy decision for the steering committees and that, ultimately, they reiterate their support for continuing to hold the event in the coming years. The latter is the case for most companies, with Vodafone and Facebook standing out, among other examples.

In terms of health experts, the treatment given by expert health sources is striking. Unlike institutional or business sources, this category shows a less rigorous treatment of the information and the identification of the source itself. Thus, it is common to find that the National Health Commission in China, the body responsible for communicating the evolution of the virus in the Asian country, is confused with the Ministry of Health of that country, or even has its name changed. Another example is the case of the World Health Organisation and the omission or confusion of its spokespersons, Tedros Adhanom, as president, and Michael Ryan, as executive director.

This contrasts with the treatment given to Spanish health sources, especially the Director of the Centre for the Coordination of Health Alerts and Emergencies, Fernando Simón, who is referred to as the highest competent authority for the communication of everything related to COVID-19 in Spain.

Finally, the presence of institutional representatives is particularly low throughout the coverage, concentrating mentions around the cancellation of the MWC and with reactive addresses to this cancellation.

As for the statements made by the spokespersons, particularly in the case of members of the national government, there is a high degree of coherence between all the interventions collected, with the discursive axis being the defence of the MWC as a

world-class event and the rejection of the health reasons put forward by the companies to justify their absence from the event.

Thus, there are no noteworthy references to the evolution of the virus, the effects on the global economy or any other related issue. This may be due to a particular lack of interest on the part of the media to pick up the interventions of institutional spokespersons, which a priori is unlikely, or to a scarce public manifestation of the opinions of national, regional or local governments on the coronavirus. In any case, a comparison with the general press and other media would be necessary to validate these assertions, and is a possible avenue for future research.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the previously analysed results and having applied the content analysis technique to 125 digital business press news items related to the coronavirus, between 4 and 13 February 2020, it is possible to conclude that:

1) Specialised media coverage is dominated by a business focus, particularly related to the effects of the COVID-19 virus on the global economy and, in particular, on multinational companies with relevant industrial centres in and around the Chinese cities of Wuhan.

2) This business coverage draws mainly on articles measuring the impact on individual companies, as well as the effects predicted by financial analysts on the country's macroeconomic variables. In addition, stock market analysis, which is common in this type of media, complements the profiling of the effects of the virus.

3) It is a coverage which, according to the data obtained, is a priority for the media, achieving an average of 6.2 news items per day in the period analysed. However, an even greater concentration is observed at the moment when the virus becomes relevant at a national level, alluding both to the first cases of those affected in Spain and to the real option of cancelling the Mobile World Congress.

4) Despite this, the Mobile World Congress as an individual topic, separate from the rest of the issues, is not so relevant for these media, compared to the effects on the world economy or the evolution of the virus per se. Even on 12 and 13 February, when the suspension of the event is announced, the other topics are slightly less relevant.

5) All coverage is dominated by the use of business information sources, in contrast to other sources such as health experts or institutional spokespersons. These sources stand out both for the greater number of articles in which their speeches are included, as well as for the total number of representatives mentioned, with the number of company spokespersons being notably greater than that of other communicators.

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