

A picture of the public media research in Brazil

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Abstract

The survey presented here is the result of recent initiatives developed institutionally in Brazil about the public media. The hypothesis is that the quantitative growth of research that contributes to the construction of public media as an object of study, especially in the Communication field, is due to the strengthening of public policies in the area. The research is mainly based on papers presented on the national stage of the Brazilian Congress of Communication Sciences (INTERCOM), between 2001 and 2015. From the survey of the titles of the works presented, we find trends in research, which shows the growth of the theme in the related field, especially the political and economic aspects. We also look briefly at two reference case studies, TV Brazil, established in 2007, and TV Cultura, the public broadcaster of São Paulo's government, created more than 30 years ago, indicating the cyclical relevance to the research interest in public media in Brazil.

Keywords: Public Media. Brazil. TV Cultura. TV Brazil. Communication.

Introduction

By “public communication” we can understand the action to issue or distribute public character content, but that does not define whether a station is public or private. But the term “public media” can be understood as a mass communication media and composes the public field connected directly or indirectly to the State, with the fundamental principle – present or potential – of the mediation of information and content, production, and broadcasting of public interest content. Included in these conditions are TVs, radios, and educational press, foundation, municipal, state, governmental, institutional (government agencies and public companies) and university (for public institutions) (CARVALHO, 2016).

The historical prevalence of an essentially commercial model in the Brazilian broadcasting contrasts with the principles of the Federal Constitution (1988) which recognizes the coexistence of private systems, public and state, according to article 223. Nevertheless, in the electronic media is noticeable the hegemony of private broadcasters in the ratings, in territorial scope capacity or in technical quality of the productions. The discrepancy is

mainly due to the difference of the investment capacity of these means. In 2015 the *Empresa Brasil de Comunicação* (EBC), manager of *TV Brasil*, received from the federal government the amount of R\$ 547.6 million (PEREIRA; BRESCIANE, 2016). In the same year only *Globo Comunicação e Participações SA* operated with a net income of R\$ 2.1 billion, an amount almost four times higher than of the EBC, not counting the collected by other large private enterprises communication (Intervozes, 2016), owners of approximately 95% of the programming displayed on TVs and radios throughout the country.

In recent years some institutional initiatives from the Brazilian federal government has fomented further discussion regarding the public media, in good part based on the criticism of the public and private communication system. The country has experienced in recent years, the possibility of structuring a reorganization policy of the Brazilian communication system, providing the creation of a network which enables the display of different programs in relation to commercial media.

The creation of *Empresa Brasil de Comunicação* (EBC) in 2007, result of a movement led by the Ministry of Culture, then occupied by Gilberto Gil, from which was constituted the National Forum of Public TV's, as pointed out by Tereza Cruvinel, first director president of the company (PAULINE; SILVA, 2013), brought a new look as a proposal for public media contributing to greater diversity on the understanding of the topic. On the other hand, the *TV Cultura*, public broadcaster of the Government of São Paulo, a reference in the last 30 years on public television in Brazil, was experiencing a reverse process that resulted in the reduction of its content production capabilities.

The scenario contributed to increased concern about the future of public media in Brazil, expressed in the news of different means of communication in the country. At the same time there was the issue of consolidation from the creation of research networks linked to public universities such as the Federal University of Santa Catarina (UFSC), University of Brasilia (UNB) and the Federal University of Juiz de Fora (UFJF) which gave rise to the "Observatory of Public Broadcasting in Latin America", besides a number of recent studies that generated books, theses and dissertations on the subject¹. Also it's possible to find a work of collectives like *Intervozes* that has accompanied the development of public broadcasters in Brazil compared to the realities of other countries.

Is expressed therefore a concern in the Brazilian scientific field that contributes to rethink what has been developed on public means of mass communication through broadcasting and policies promoted by governments and directly or indirectly linked by the Union, State or municipalities.

¹ The Observatório de Radiodifusão has a list of more than 260 articles, books, theses and dissertations on public radio, public television and public communication policy (OBSERVATÓRIO..., s./d.).

In order to contribute to this debate, the article presented brings a survey of recent initiatives developed institutionally in the country and also in the Communication Sciences field. Through data from desk research, we demonstrate a scientific advancement from which the public media is consolidated as a line of research and study object. We verified that the field of knowledge is based on communication, in interface with Journalism, Advertising and Public Relations and with various other fields such as Law, Sociology, Politics, Psychology, among others.

Among the ancillary data, we presented informations of the Directory of the CNPq Research Groups, from which were searched records of search certified groups of Brazilian institutions. The densest work of this research, however, focuses on another documentary research, more precisely in the survey and classification of papers presented at the national stage of the Brazilian Congress of Communication Sciences (Intercom), between 2001 and 2015 in the category “Thematic Division”. Using the search system of the Intercom site, the works that were screened had as keywords “education”, “public”, “state”, “government”, and “university”. Once selected, the papers were read from the abstracts to identify if indeed they were framed by the theme.

The hypothesis is that the quantitative growth of research that contribute to the construction of public media as a study object, especially in the field of communication, is due to the deepening and strengthening of public policies in the area that favor the development of initiatives such as the *TV Brasil*. The establishment of relations between government, EBC, higher education institutions and researchers have an essential role in the results expressed here.

This article is part of a research started in 2014 about public media in Brazil, generating other results and is still in progress.

TV Cultura and TV Brasil: two models in reverse conditions

The *TV Cultura*, public broadcaster of the State of São Paulo, maintained by the *Fundação Padre Anchieta* and the *TV Brasil*, the *Empresa Brasil Comunicação*, a Brazilian public company, are now the two main public television stations in the country. The quality, the quantity of production, and the territorial scope of both leads to pursue being national references, seeking to offer differentiated content relative to what displays the commercial media.

The current political situation in Brazil contributes to an adversarial debate between the two stations. The government of Luis Inacio Lula da Silva (2001-2010), from Workers Party (PT), initiated a communication project that proposed to be an alternative to commercial media and that led to the creation of the EBC. The proposal was also seen as a

programming option to what had been broadcast by *TV Cultura* of São Paulo. In this debate we must consider that the federal government was being directed by the PT, and São Paulo by the governor Geraldo Alckmin, of the Brazilian Social Democratic Party (PSDB), the two main parties in the country and markedly opposites, at least in political strategies for the elections.

For common sense, EBC could be understood as a network to serve the interests of PT and *TV Cultura* as a broadcaster in the service of PSDB, making the state of public administration a framework for the care of party-political or individual's interests. In this sense, it requires an even greater effort of monitoring the scientific field, in order to avoid idiosyncrasies. The existence of the advice is, to some extent, the possibility of ensuring greater editorial autonomy in production and exhibition content², exceeding the historical state rigging problem of public broadcasters in the country.

The growths of generation capacity content of *TV Brasil* and of *TV Cultura* are directly related to the investments received by both. In 2007 the budget of the *TV Cultura* was R\$ 130 million. In the same year the EBC received R\$ 572 million (VALENTE, 2009). To get an idea of what this means in 2005 the estimated budget plus all 18 stations associated with Abepec reached R\$ 407 million (DIAGNÓSTICO..., 2006).

The much higher values than the other public broadcasters in the country, as is the case of “educational”, allows both *TV Cultura* and *TV Brazil* become references in public production and end up occupying much of the broadcast programming of other public broadcasters.

By production capacity, *TV Cultura* and *TV Brazil* are the big content suppliers for the network: 40% of the stations associated (AL, AM, BA, ES, RN, SC and TO) occupy 80% to 95% of their program schedule with material generated by the two. The captured programming of *TV Cultura* is on average 46.47%, ranging from 83.16% (TVE / AL) to 10.29% (TVE / MT), and *TV Brasil* occupies an average of 30.11% the broadcast programming of the associated stations, ranging from 5.46% (TVC / SC) to 83.24% (TVE / MA) (DIAGNÓSTICO..., 2006, p.47 – our translation).

But compared only to the advertising budget values given by the federal government to commercial broadcasters in the country's television, it is clear that the money given to the Brazilian public media is still very small compared to the private system.

² On September 2, 2016, through Provisional Measure 744, Michel Temer, as President of the Republic, abolished the Trustees Board of the EBC, which affects public policy drawn before. The organ was composed of 22 members: 15 representatives of civil society; four of Federal Government; one of the House of Representatives; one of the Senate; and a representative of the workers of the EBC, and had the main task to determine aspects of the content and programming of the communication channels of the company (CONSELHO ..., 2016).

In 2012, according to Valente (2009), the government gave more than R\$ 1.1 billion to private television companies in the country, basically composed of four major networks: *Globo*, SBT, Record, Band. The monetary collection of these companies in 2007 was R\$ 10 billion. The numbers show the discrepancy between public and private media in Brazil and help to explain why this can ensure higher audience ratings than that.

According to Ibope, *TV Cultura* reaches, in Greater São Paulo’s prime time, between 0.6 and 0.8 points on the audience ratings, which is considerable compared with other private broadcasters in the country. The *TV Brasil* fails to score any rate, remaining in the so-called “trace”. But only *Globo* has an average of 26 points in the same period. Added the rating of other private broadcasters, they exceed 50 points.

Table 1 – Ibope Data in The Great São Paulo for the television in 2012

	Base															Tot
22:50	723	0.8	-	0.6	-	27.0	1.3	0.8	8.8	-	5.0	-	7.5	-	0.6	62.1
22:51	723	0.6	-	0.6	-	26.9	1.3	0.8	9.0	-	4.8	-	8.0	-	0.5	62.0
22:52	723	0.4	-	0.6	-	27.0	1.3	1.0	8.9	-	5.0	-	7.6	-	0.5	62.1
22:53	721	0.7	0.1	0.6	-	26.7	1.5	0.9	8.9	-	5.3	-	7.7	-	0.5	61.8
22:54	721	0.8	-	0.7	-	26.2	1.0	0.9	8.6	-	5.2	-	7.7	-	0.5	61.5
22:55	721	0.8	0.1	0.7	-	26.2	1.2	0.3	8.6	0.2	5.5	-	7.8	-	0.5	61.6
22:56	721	0.8	-	0.6	-	26.8	1.0	0.3	8.7	0.2	5.4	-	8.0	-	0.5	61.7
22:57	722	0.8	-	0.6	-	26.7	1.4	0.3	9.2	0.2	5.5	-	7.6	-	0.5	61.4
22:58	723	0.7	-	0.6	-	26.3	1.0	0.3	8.7	-	6.2	-	7.3	-	0.5	61.2
22:59	725	0.7	-	0.4	-	25.1	1.0	0.4	8.8	-	7.0	-	7.6	-	0.5	60.8
23:00	725	0.8	0.1	0.6	0.2	24.1	1.2	0.3	8.4	-	7.5	-	7.6	-	0.5	60.2
23:01	716	0.8	-	0.7	-	24.2	1.1	0.3	8.7	-	7.3	-	7.8	-	0.5	60.6
23:02	715	1.1	-	0.7	-	23.8	1.3	0.6	8.6	-	7.4	-	6.8	-	0.5	59.8
23:03	717	1.3	-	0.8	-	24.4	0.4	0.8	8.4	-	7.2	-	6.6	-	0.7	59.7
23:04	715	1.2	-	0.5	-	23.9	0.2	1.0	8.8	-	6.8	-	6.6	-	0.5	59.2
23:05	716	1.1	-	0.6	-	24.3	0.1	0.6	8.6	-	6.9	-	6.5	-	0.4	59.0

Source: Castro (2015)

In *TV Cultura*’s case, the São Paulo State Government’s transfer to the *Fundação Padre Anchieta*, sponsor of the broadcaster, the values correspond to about 70% of the total collected. In 2013, the amount reached R\$ 193 million. The rest of the values is collected by a law to encourage culture, cultural support and program sales. The financial growth, however, did not prevent a crisis to establish in the station. Since 2003 *TV Cultura* has undergone a series of structural changes which include the broadcasting time’s sale for private companies, such as *Folha de S. Paulo* with *TV Folha* program, staff cutting, more than 200 in recent years, structure and equipment’s scrapping and a broadcast programming overhaul with reduced content production and increased relay of other broadcasters (REIMBERG, 2006).

Despite the cuts, *TV Cultura* is still recognized for the quality of its production and as public media reference, especially for shows like *Roda Viva*³, *Jornal da Cultura* and its children's programming. Combined with the history of the broadcaster, the oldest among the public media in operation since its purchase by the state government in 1969, the *TV Cultura* includes the cable TV channel Ra-Tim-Bum Univesp TV, which includes the production of public university TVs from São Paulo, and the radio stations *Cultura Brasil* and *Cultura FM*. The network also has 90 affiliated broadcasters, which guarantees the lead in relaying its contents, withal for educational channels.

The schedule from Monday to Friday of the *TV Cultura* is marked by the predominance of content aimed at children. In the morning they exhibit three hours of animated cartoon, series and children's plays and another 6 hours in the afternoon. The newscasts at noon and 9 pm add two hours of news. Also noteworthy are culture programs as *Metrópolis* and *Roda Viva*, appearing at night. The rest of the content is reserved for documentaries and telecourse, these appear during the early mornings, and reruns of the programs that fill the remainder of the program schedule that keeps the TV 24 hours in the air.

EBC came under expectations of entities that bring together researchers in communication, trade unions of journalists and civil society organizations⁴ that would take over the reference position in public media in Brazil, both by its production capacity in quantity and in quality. An analysis of the program schedule of *TV Brasil*, held in 2015 to our research, points to the existence of 20 news programs, being that 5h30 of journalistic programming daily (PROGRAMMING..., 2015). In addition, the broadcaster introduces a diverse content grade, including production of other public broadcasting such as *TV Cultura* itself and other educational, and public broadcasters from other countries. About 26% of the content shown on *TV Brasil* every day are own productions.

“At half-decade, the signal of TV Brazil, which employs 479 staff, reaches 61% of the population, through seven own stations and 45 affiliates. The audience, however, is low. In 2012, the preference for the channel in the Greater São Paulo varied from 0.06 to 0.11 point in Ibope” (APARATO ..., 2013, s./d. – our translation).

We must consider that the *TV Brasil* schedule varies more depending on the day of the week – there are about 150 programs shown on different days of the week – despite maintaining a fixed schedule for certain audiences. In the morning, they exhibit more educational programs. From 8 am begins the children's programming with cartoon and

³ Interview program exhibited since 1986, in a format of collective interview with different interviewers and interviewed people each editing. It is exhibited once a week in TV Cultura and relayed by many educative broadcasters.

⁴ One can list institutions as Brazilian Association of Journalism Researchers (SBPJor), Brazilian Society for Interdisciplinary Communication Studies (Intercom), International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR), Latin American Association of Communication Researchers (ALAI), Ibero-American Confederation of Scientific and Academic Associations of Communication (Confibercom), Federation of Lusophone Associations of Communication Sciences (Lusocom), and the National Federation of Journalists (Fenaj) and National Forum for Democratization of Communication (FNDC) (PAULINE and Silva, 2013).

series that dominate most of the broadcast programming. Children programs go up to 4 pm, but are cut in half by *Repórter Brasil*, the television news of the station, lasting 1 hour with an edition at night too. From the late afternoon are displayed variety shows and debate programs like *Sem Censura*. After the newscast, 10 pm, they displayed culture programs or documentaries such as *Caminhos da Reportagem* and then movies. The programming of the dawn is marked by reruns of *TV Brasil* own content and telecourse.

Among the issues to be solved by the EBC, following what the I Forum of Public TVs predicts, was the need for autonomy and editorial independence reaffirmation, to ensure credibility for the broadcaster. “With *TV Brasil* was inaugurated in Brazil the effective public television offer, and not from private or state-owned exploitation, like other broadcasters until then in operation” (COUTINHO, 2015b, p.28 – our translation).

Among the criteria discussed for the defense of production quality, it is highlighted the aspects that differentiate the content of *TV Brasil* to the ones of the called educational or commercial broadcasters. Coutinho (2015b) lists them: deeper understanding of the issues and consequently longer reports, prevalence of public interest news, reports exemption and plurality of opinions. The latter binds mainly to journalistic production and appears to be one of the central issues in the debate. “The prospect of a plurality of voices in the public television news guide the news programs constitution on a public broadcaster as a space for the exercise of the right to communication, in addition to the right to quality information, measured against benchmarks of excellence” (COUTINHO, 2015b, p.30 – our translation). Added the treatment to the viewers as citizens and not consumers, in addition to encouraging participation, greater relevance to issues related to human rights and representation of different identity groups in the country.

From the study of several *TV Brasil* programs, Coutinho et al. (2015th) recognizes the progress promoted by the issuer in terms of quality and verifies the fulfillment with most of the criteria approved at the Forum, but also outlines issues that deserve further review by the broadcaster.

The construction of a “Public Communication System in Brazil predicted for the establishment of a network in which it would be shared content between university, educational and institutional broadcasters, being *TV Brasil* the “headend”.

From the Forum document, the proposal for public broadcasters is to serve as a model to classifying the content displayed, addressing to children and young people, besides the production of informative content and debate proposing reflection and ensuring credibility to the vehicle. Not surprisingly, the children’s *TV Brasil* schedule is exemplary, following the model developed by BBC, which serves as inspiration also in parts for *TV Cultura*, which has its biggest popular programs hits such as *Castelo Ra-Tim-bum* and *Có-có-ri-có*.

This strategy was based on a critical reality analysis aimed at the formation of a new audience. First, the broadcasters from public or state-owned field do not produce enough content to fill their programming. Second, the quality of what is being shown in these stations is below that what would be acceptable. Third, there is no integrated system that is able to impose itself as a significant alternative to commercial media. And lastly, it would require the reformulation of the broadcaster's management mechanisms, providing greater social participation and democracy.

Seen as a whole, what the public broadcasters offer to the public, unless exceptions, [...] is a worsened version of worn out commercial formats. Almost never it overcomes the sad trace level at the audience. Worse: almost all of these institutions do not know what is – and has never practiced – editorial independence, resigns to flatter the rulers of occasion. In their news, many of them operate like private consultancies of the Executive occupants (BUCCI, 2008, s./p. – our translation).

Criticism is associated with the lack of interest from the government in making, mainly the educational broadcasters, communication media acting independently of the managers political interests. A problem that binds to the model implemented in the country, still in force, and expresses the drama mainly from educational broadcasters, whose programming is marked by the editorial control of statism.

Gaps in legislation, extended by the new situation that benefited private interests, meant that educational broadcasters in the country inherited the institutional model, making it easier to use for the service of partisan political interests, without competing with private interests. So it was not state policy to constitute broadcasters who vied audience with the private broadcasters. Rather, the state companies worked (and still work mostly) based on low quality content and low production itself relegated to the minor channels or with very low audience (CARVALHO, 2016, p.5 – our translation).

The change to an effective public communication system would not depend only on investment and quality production. In the opinion of the participants of the Forum, it needed to pass by a change in the way that the broadcasters were managed, following the example of what already happens in other countries, which count on public broadcasters managed by councils where members of civil society organizations participate, in order to reduce the pressure power from governments on the content to be displayed.

Another initiative also inspired by other countries, as reported by Laurindo Leal Filho, in Paulino and Silva (2013), was the establishment of “Ombudsman EBC”, whose

main task was to establish bridges between the public and the Board of Trustees, in a kind of ombudsman to ensure that there were contributions from the society regarding the content displayed or published by the company.

Among the recognized models, we can mention France Television, in Germany, ARD and ZDF, Canada, the CBC, the American PBS, the Portuguese RTP and Spanish TVE. All run by management boards. *TV Cultura* works with relative autonomy through the *Fundação Padre Anchieta*, as part of the participants of the institution's curator board is from civil society organizations. EBC worked in a similar way until September 2016, that is, through councils where most of the participants were nominated by civil society organizations.

Management democratization of the public broadcasters would be a prerequisite for change in the current model. According to Bucci (2015, s./d.), "Public communication therefore requires that the management be effectively public, that is, run by a council members able to represent the society, invested by power in fact and a well-marked mandate".

Rise of public media evidence

The situation of the Brazilian public media has fostered important academic debates, driven by initiatives in spheres of government, civil society or academic. In 1998, some of the main stations connected directly to state governments of Brazil created the Brazilian Association of Educational and Cultural Public Broadcasters (ABEPEC). A year later, it established the Public Television Network, where broadcasters associated transmit in real time, a high-level programming for the entire national territory. Among the main objectives, it was expected

gather public broadcasters that operate exclusively to educational content broadcasting, nonprofit; define and implement strategic projects for financial strength, technological upgrading and improvement of the programming of the associated; and represent the interests of the educational and cultural television towards the powers that be (ABEPEC, s./d. – our translation).

In 2006 it was held the "First National Forum on Public TV", from which was published the "Television Public Field Diagnostic", organized by the Ministry of Culture. The document outlines the policy of the Federal Government for the establishment of a national public network whose main engine is *Empresa Brasil de Comunicação* (EBC). Also establish guidelines for non-commercial and non-community issuers. These include: 1) the form of management (editorial and administrative), which must fit into society and not the government; 2) the ends (non-commercial); 3) to universal access; and also 4) the commitment of its programming with the values of democracy and human rights (DIAGNÓSTICO ..., 2006).

The theme also became part of the agendas of organizations involved in the struggle for the democratization of the media recently. In its proposal of “Law of Democratic Media”, developed during the “Freedom of Speech Challenges Seminar” in 2012, the National Forum for Democratization of Communication (FNDC) brings the defense of a public fund composed by taxes raised from private broadcasters to fund public broadcasters in the country, allowing them to structure without relying on the sale of commercial or business interests.

The National Federation of Journalists (Fenaj) approved at its last congress, held in 2014, a thesis in which it recognizes as positive the efforts of the Federal Government investment in the EBC and denounces the “takedowns” performed in some stations maintained by state governments, demonstrating a concern with the subject, including the *TV Culture*, *Rede Minas* and RTVE-PR.

In 2013 the Researchers Network on Telejournalism (Telejor), linked to Brazilian Association of Journalism Researchers (SBPJor), and composed of researchers from different educational institutions, published the result of a thorough research on the quality of public broadcasters programming, including the EBC and *TV Cultura*. It seems the work has been continued and is funded by research funding institutions as the *Conselho Nacional de Desenvolvimento Científico e Tecnológico* (CNPq).

Another work that deserves recognition in the academic field is what does the *Intervozes* Collective, which brings together intellectuals, professionals and activists in the debate on the right to communication in Brazil. In 2009 the group published a collection of articles about public communication systems in different countries, with special attention to Brazil.

In 2011 the Communication Policy Laboratory of the University of Brasilia (UnB), in partnership with the Program of Graduate Studies in Communication from the University of the State of Rio de Janeiro (UERJ), created the *Observatório da Radiodifusão Pública na América Latina*, a website that contains articles, news, theses, dissertations, books, reports, and information on public communication in different countries of South America, but focusing on the Brazilian situation.

It is an online public space, think tank type, which promotes discussion, analysis and diagnosis related to advances and impasses in the structuring and maintenance of public broadcasting systems in Latin America, using indicators and methodological tools of quantitative and qualitative character. Public radio and television stations are analyzed from the company’s participation instruments in the administration, of their management models, forms and sources of financing, production processes and distribution of content produced and also from the check existence of social mechanisms for evaluating the content and quality of programming (PORQUÊ ..., 2015, s./p. – our translation).

Using the search of the Research Groups Directory of the *Conselho Nacional de Desenvolvimento Científico e Tecnológico* (CNPq), its possible find a list of groups and/

or lines of research certificates whose themes include “public communication” and “public television”. From the concept about public media initially exposed, there is the existence of 9 research groups in Brazil, to which they are linked 15 lines in which the public media is constituted as a study object.

Board 1 – List of groups and lines of research on public media

Research group	Lines	Concentration areas	Institution	Year
Public and political communication nucleus	Political communication Public communication, politics and society Public and political communication	Communication	UFRGS	2008
Public/digital TV and the fictitious content production as factors of socio-cultural transformation	New dramatic theatrical and audiovisual content The fictional/dramaturgical content in public television as a paradigm of socio-cultural transformation	Communication	UFF	2008
Research Group in Communication, Politics and Technology	Elections, Technology and Public Communication	Political Science	UFPR	2010
Public Relations and Citizenship	Public Relations and Public Communication	Communication	UEL	2011
Observatory of Public Broadcasting in Latin America Observatory of Public Broadcasting in Latin America Parte inferior do formulário	Citizens and Public Means Diversity and participatory processes in public radio and TV stations Public broadcasting and the challenges of digital communication Public broadcasting in Latin America	Communication	UNB	2011
Communication, Culture and Politics	Policies and strategies in public communication	Communication	Unifap	2013
Research Group Discourse, Communication and Democracy	Communication and Politics	Communication	UTFPR	2015
Content production and social participation in public communication	Critical analysis of public media discourse	Communication	EBC	2016
Memory, Information and Communication	Management, treatment and information dissemination History, Memory and Public Communication	Communication	EBC	2016

Source: Consulta ... (2016)

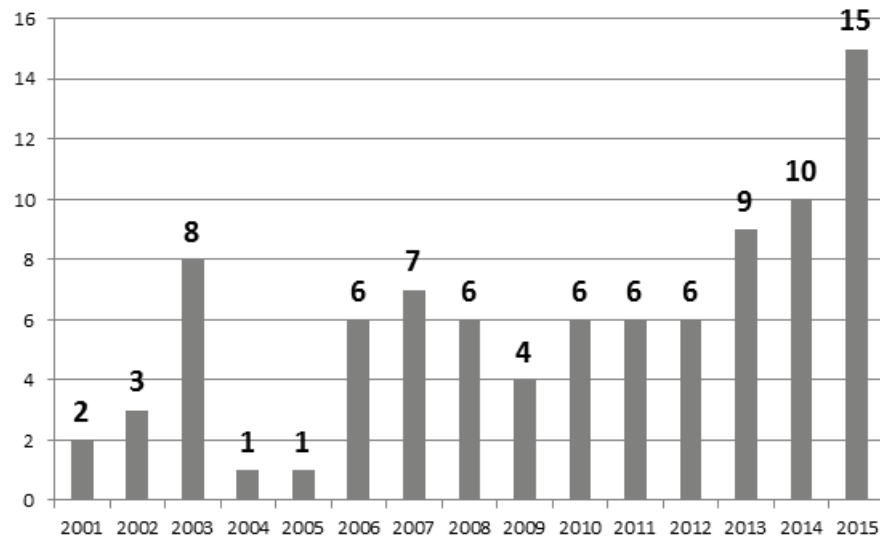
Table 1 can be read not only as evidence of the short time of research in the area in Brazil, but mainly as a sample of the growing interest of researchers, mainly from the area of Communication, regarding the public media. The first groups started research only in 2008, while the federal universities of Rio Grande do Sul and Fluminense are pioneers. UnB is the one that concentrates the largest number of research lines, followed by UFRGS and EBC, the latter is the only institution that does not fall in the higher education sector, indicating that the relationship of the company is not only for production, but also with the research. Concerning to the area of concentration, there is a predominance of Communication, 8 groups declared themselves to be in this area and only 1 in Political Science.

The Brazilian Congress of Communication Sciences (Intercom), held annually, also shows a consolidation in the number of articles published in the “Thematic Divisions” on public media. In a survey conducted for this article, it was found that were presented 90 works between the years 2001 and 2015, only in the national event stage. Using the search system of the Intercom site, the works that were screened had as keywords “educational”, “public”, “state”, “government” and “academic”. Once selected, the papers were read from the abstracts to identify if indeed they were framed by the theme. We selected those that somehow dealt with the theme, either with case studies, either with theoretical debates, whether from public policies or issues related to technology.

From the survey of the papers, as Congress (2016), we observed the predominance of researchers linked to federal universities, with highlights for the Federal University of Juiz de Fora (UFJF) with 10 works, most coordinated by Professor Iluska Coutinho, one of leaders of Researchers Network on Telejournalism (Telejor). The Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ) and the University of Brasilia (UnB) have 6 works and the Federal University of Santa Catarina (UFSC), comes next with 5 works. The leadership of these institutions in research on public media may also be related to the investments made by federal institutions such as the Capes and CNPq that finances researches and researchers working on the topic, which shows the concern of organizations linked to the federal government to encourage research that can contribute to public communication policies.

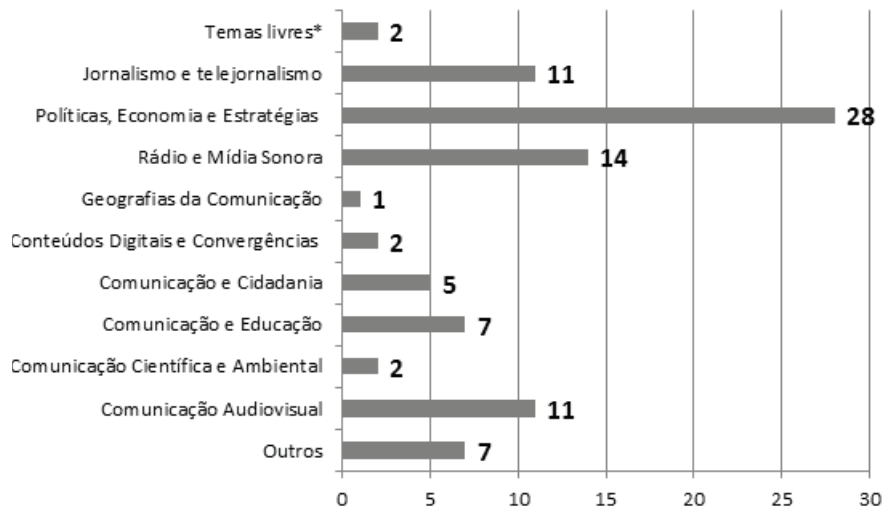
Observing other information from the survey, there are other issues that contribute to better understand how have acted researchers on public media.

Chart 1 – Presented Works about Public Media at Intercom (by year) (2001-2015)



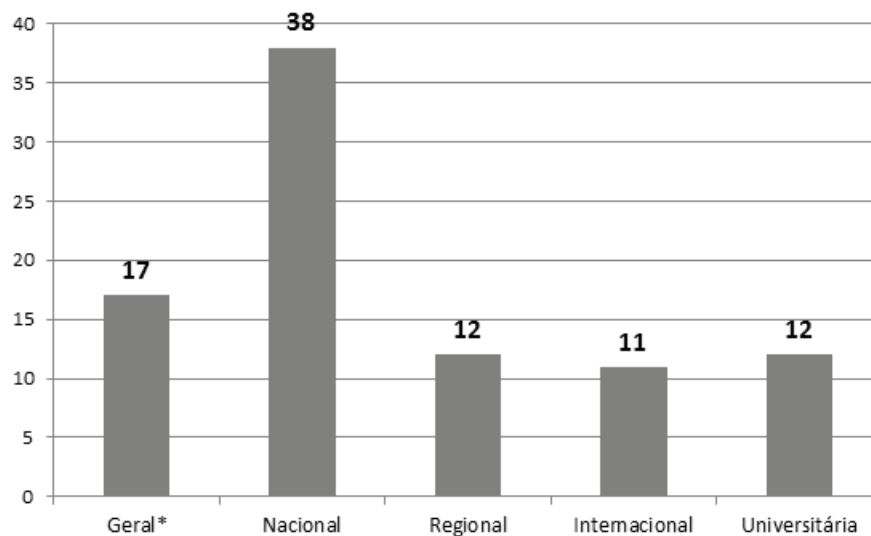
Source: Congressos (2016)

Chart 2 – Presented Works about Public Media at Intercom (by theme) (2001-2015)



Source: Congressos (2016)

Chart 3 – Presented Works about Public Media at Intercom (by range) (2001-2015)



* This includes works that proposed exclusively theoretical and conceptual discussions or analyzing different types of public communication.

Source: Congressos (2016)

As can be seen in Chart 1, the papers presented in the last congress of the Intercom point to a study object consolidation. The significant amount of work related to this issue begins to appear in 2006, precisely in the year that was the I Forum of Public TVs. The exception is 2003, when they were presented 8 papers, most in the group of “Sound Media”, coordinated by the professors Valci Zucoloto and Eduardo Meditsch from UFSC.

Chart 2 was organized to associate certain topics from groups with similar nomenclatures, as the names of Intercom groups have undergone some changes during this period and new groups were created. Most of the work is connected to political issues, driven by government action at the federal level that promoted advances through investments and debates on the subject. The theme is also recurrent in radio-related groups, demonstrating that there is a concern with this field, especially the “educational”, which brings out the case studies.

In what concerns the coverage, there is a work predominance that clung to the analysis of national broadcasters or the ones who produce content and relays it for regional broadcaster, as is the case of *TV Brasil* and *TV Cultura* (Chart 3). This can be explained by the fact that the Intercom have regional stages and a national stage, so that the groups can have items that focus on local cases eventually appearing more in regional steps while works on larger broadcasters gains more relevance in the national congress step.

Analyzing the three graphs, it can be said that research in public media presented in the “Thematic Division” in the Brazilian Communication Sciences Congress (National Intercom) have as trace the political/economic approach to the radio and TV media, mainly in nationwide. Noteworthy is the growth curve of the research subject in recent years, especially in the last year of the analysis, when the issue reaches its peak in the time series.

Final considerations

The survey presented points to the emergence of various initiatives that are resulting in new research, such as study groups and networks of researchers who are sticking more deeply on the public media, breaking with years of scant research on this subject, except in isolated cases.

From the data and analysis presented in this article, it is noticeable a growth in the number of studies that have public media as an object. The information presented here require, however, a qualitative analysis to observe how research has contributed to a practice in the field of public communication in Brazil.

Two issues deserve evaluation of researchers, in our view. First, an aspect that seems important, but that has been little verified are digital technologies of websites, social media, or even the interaction between traditional platforms, the internet and mobile devices with regard to public media. This seems a fairly open field for a lot of research, owing to the existence of digital media in virtually all public broadcasters. The second aspect refers to the relevance of research on public media in Brazil. Of course, in recent years it was seen a significant approach between the university and the public media debate. The next step should be to propose an even closer integration aiming to a production of knowledge that can serve the public media and, therefore, the society, whether in raising awareness about the importance of public media, although in setbacks times, or in improving the programming quality combined with a popular identification.

Besides the care that must be taken in relation to prejudiced views or party-political influences which surveys can suffer, it is essential to structure a network of researchers nationwide to enable them to understand more broadly what is happening with public media in Brazil, also taking as a reference the research of other Latin American countries that already have a certain tradition in the researches on public media. This observation, coupled with the scientific development in the area, has the difficult task of trying to understand the role of this media without losing sight of the previous analyzes that built a highly critical insight into the fragile public communication system in the country.

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