

Articles

Masculinities studies in Communication research in Brazil

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to describe the development of research on masculinities in indexed Communication journals, based on an analysis of works published between 2000 and 2019 in Brazilian magazines indexed as A2 in Qualis 2013-2016. The studied parameters were: distribution by year, number of authors, affiliation, regional distribution, Communication interfaces, citation index, methodologies and theoretical framework. The results reveal an increase in the number of published research on masculinity in recent years and an articulation between the concepts of gender and the role of mass media, in a theoretical perspective that privileges resistance and visibility policies.

Keywords: Communication. Gender. Masculinities. Scientific Production. Performativities.

Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to describe the development of masculinities research in indexed Brazilian Communication journals, based on an analysis of published papers related to masculinities studies between 2000 and 2019. Specifically, we will analyze the scientific production of Brazilian journals indexed as A2 in Qualis 2013-2016, in Communication and Information main area, in which it was evaluated the presence of papers related to gender and male studies.

In 2006, Escosteguy and Messa (2006, p. 65) diagnosed that "links between Communication research and gender studies" were "still poorly explored", in a research that

mapped this question on theses and dissertations that addressed this interface in Brazilian Communication postgraduate programs. Santo (2008, p. 317) also stated, in a study on scientific production from 2000 to 2007, that "few researchers are interested in this subject, despite all information studies facets having implications for gender relations and vice versa". Gender, however, has attracted more attentive eyes in recent years and this paper will map this interest on the intersection between Communication and masculinities studies.

Selection Criteria

Brazilian journals whose main area is Communication and Information and that are classified as A2 in Qualis system in the four-year period from 2013 to 2016 are: *Matrizes, Intercom, Famecos, Em Questão, Galáxia, E-Compós* and *Comunicação, Mídia e Consumo*. We consider that papers published in these journals represent an important part of Brazilian qualified scientific production, since these journals are positioned in the major area strata according to Qualis editorial quality criteria. Articles published from 2000 to 2019 that contained discussions about masculinities were selected in available numbers on official websites of these journals. Taking into account the foundation year and the numbers available, *Intercom, Famecos* and *Em Questão* have been studied since year 2000; *Galáxia* since 2001; *E-Compós* and *Comunicação, Mídia e Consumo* since 2004.

In order to collect research corpus, the keywords "masculinities", "masculinity", "masculine" and "gender" were searched in journals' search bases. In this paper, we decided not to start with a preliminary discussion on the notion of masculinities, since articles analyzed, as we will detail below, take different premises and propositions to conceptualize and discuss this term. Nevertheless, we can affirm that all of them discuss what it means to be a man in contemporary times from cultural, aesthetic, semiotic and performative processes (as well as symbolic violence systems, harmful not only to women but also for men themselves) — and not as an innate biological condition. With obtained results, we procedure a manual selection of texts that specifically discussed masculinity issues in Communication studies (since the search for the word "gender", for example, revealed articles focused on feminine questions. These papers were excluded from selection because they did not fit this study objectives). Based on these criteria, a total of 24 articles were found: 6 of them at *Comunicação*, *Mídia e Consumo*; 5 at *Famecos*; 4 at *E-Compós*; 4 at *Galáxia*; 3 at *Em Questão*, 2 at *Intercom*; and none in *Matrizes*, in the analyzed period.

From this initial screening, both formal criteria and those relating to content were observed in the selected papers. The following parameters were mapped: distribution by year, number of authors, affiliation, regional distribution, interfaces with Communication, citation index, methodologies and articulation of theoretical framework in relation to the concept of genre.

Brazilian scientific papers on Communication and masculinities: presentation and discussion

The increasing attention given by Communication area to gender studies in recent years can be clearly seen in our mapping. In proposed selection, if we take a look at the distribution of published papers over the years, in 2000 we have found 1 article that explores the interfaces between Communication and masculinities; 3 in 2008; 1 in 2009; 1 in 2011; 3 in 2012; 1 in 2014; 2 in 2016; 3 in 2017; 4 in 2018 and 5 in 2019. The first relevant data, therefore, refers to the fact that the interest in the subject of masculinities has increased in recent years in Communication area. From 2000 to 2007, only 1 paper were published about this topic. From 2008 to 2015, it is possible to observe 9 papers; and, from 2016 to 2019, 14 texts.

About researchers' profile, the 24 articles found are signed by 37 authors (with recurrence of authorship in some of these papers). Among them, 51% are men and 49% women, all of them Brazilian. The researchers who signed the largest number of papers were Ronaldo Cesar Henn and Felipe Viero Kolinski Machado (3 papers each) and Vicente William da Silva Darde and Christian Gonzatti (2 papers each). Regarding authors' region of affiliation, 11 texts are signed by authors from the Southeast region; 10 texts from the South region; 1 by authors from the Northeast region; 1 co-authored by authors from the Northeast/Southeast region; and 1 in co-authorship by authors from South/Northeast.

Obtained data show that there is an equal genders division in authorship in papers about masculinities published in the most qualified Brazilian communication scientific journals. This data contrasts with other research realities: Zurbano-Berenguer *et al.* (2018), for example, point out that most studies on gender studies published in Spanish Communication journals from 1988 to 2017 were written by women. There is, however, a regional predominance of authors from South and Southeast regions - that, together, sign 92% of published papers on Communication and masculinities.

It is possible to observe the establishment of a researchers' network on this subject, since the most cited author, Felipe Viero Kolinski Machado, defended a thesis about it (masculinities in magazines) in 2017. Ronaldo Henn, also one of the most cited authors, was Machados's research supervisor. Christian Gonzatti developed a master's dissertation and a doctoral thesis on gender issues, both under Ronaldo Henn supervision — and the three authors co-authored papers with each other over the years.

About papers themes, interfaces of masculinities studies with Communication are varied, with a predominance of audiovisual studies area: among analyzed papers, 9 interface with this field. It is followed by far by other areas, such as Journalism (3 articles), Advertising (3), Social Network Studies (2), Music (2) and Literature (2). Next, we found studies in Information Sciences (1 article), consumption behaviors (1) and religion (1).

One data that gives the importance dimension of analyzed papers in Communication field refers to the dialogue that they establish with other texts on the same theme, based on

citations in other journals. Regarding this aspect, it is possible to observe that these papers are frequently cited in other publications. Among the analyzed texts, the most cited article was written by Darde (2008), "A construção de sentidos sobre a homossexualidade na mídia brasileira", with 30 citations, according to Google's H index¹. It is followed by "Os estudos de gênero na Ciência da Informação", by Santo (2008), with 13 citations; and "Som de cabra macho: sonoridade, nordestinidade e masculinidades no forró", by Trotta (2012), and "Performances de masculinidade, práticas de subversão: o consumo de telefones celulares entre jovens de camadas populares", by Silva (2012), with 10 citations each. In addition, 25% of papers has at least five citations, according to H index, and 25% at least one citation. 29% of the articles do not have any citation – and all of them were published in recent years (2018) or 2019), so the short circulation period of these articles in the scientific community is a factor to be considered for this low rate of citations. Together, these data indicate that these are not papers with isolated discussions, but they establish live dialogues within the field. There is also a space for dialogue between authors who study this subject because, in addition to citations, it is possible to observe, as we will discuss below, that a significant number of most cited authors in studied papers are Brazilian.

From now on, we can observe more specific content issues of selected papers, with the aim of investigating theoretical and methodological lines that are most frequent in these texts.

There is an important thematic recurrence on masculinities studies in Communication journals: 12 of the 24 papers are about the spaces of appearance and circulation of homosexual relationships and the media representations of homosexuality and/or transvestility. This is the case of the paper written by Zago and Santos (2014), which analyzes texts and photographs published on a dating site for gay men in order to observe subjectivities forms based on corporeality in these spaces. The paper "Documentário Queer no Sul do Brasil: apontamentos gerais", written by Marconi and Tomaim (2016), analyzes LGBT representations in documentary cinema, seeking to understand how these films share queer narratives/aesthetics. The text "O Queen, a queen: controvérsias sobre gêneros e performances", by Amaral, Monteiro and Soares (2017), study performances of musical artists with the aim of mapping how gender issues, with a focus on non-hegemonic masculinities, can be important tools for thinking about value construction in pop music. Colling and Pirajá (2011) also discuss in "Queridas, mas nem tanto" media representations of dissident sexualities.

Another interesting recurring data is that the majority of studies are focus on communicational instance of production, especially regarding to masculinity mediatizations, in 87,5% of texts. That is the case of paper "Som de cabra macho: sonoridade, nordestinidade e

^{1 &}quot;The H index of a researcher is defined as the number of articles published by the researcher, whose citations are greater than or equal to that number. For example, when we say that the H index of a researcher is ten, it means that he has at least ten articles published, each with at least ten citations. The greater the number of articles of great interest published by the researcher, the greater the number of citations achieved, and the greater his H index, reflecting the academic and scientific quality of the researcher and his production capacity. However, only the total number of articles, for example, may hide the lack of relevance of each text in isolation. We can thus say that the H index is the result of the balance between the number of publications and the number of citations." (THOMAZ et al., 2011, p. 90).

masculinidades no forró", that analyze the complexities of Northeastern identity construction from sounds collectively assumed as typical, among them, the mediation of masculinity values. Castellano (2019) analyzes the discourse on gender identity in parenting advice books in "Criando gênero: o discurso sobre criação de meninos e meninas na autoajuda de aconselhamento parental". The production instance is also analyzed in Darde's paper (2009), in which the author analyzes the fact that, in journalistic routines, from time and space constraints, masculinities representations are based on heteronormativity, reducing them to simplified versions of what it means to be a man. At least, in "Corpos e 'modelos' de masculinidades: o foco nas mídias", Vitelli (2019) maps the plurality of male prototypes present in media, demarcating surfaces of emergence of different masculinities.

Reception studies are present in some texts, such as Silva (2012), entitled "Performances de masculinidade, práticas de subversão: o consumo de telefones celulares entre jovens de camadas populares", in which, from an ethnographic approach, it is discussed cell phone role in the construction and expression of subjectivities among young males. Henn and Dias (2019) study reception instance from the analysis of readers' comments in reports about a crime against a non-binary person, seeking gender conceptions implied in these comments. Reception focus, however, is present in fewer articles on the subject (12,5% of analyzed texts).

Such thematic direction towards masculinities discourses mediation in media is accompanied by a specific methodological approach: Discourse Analysis is used as a methodological option in half of analyzed papers. It is followed by semiotic studies, in 17% of texts, which reveals a primacy of data interpretation through the bias of language. It is still possible to observe ethnographic analysis in 4% of papers and literature review as main methodology in 8% of them. In 20% of papers, there is no specific methodological field explained.

Thematic and methodological recurrences point out to important aspects of Brazilian scientific production on communication and masculinities, especially when tensioned with theoretical frameworks most frequently cited by analyzed papers. The list of bibliographic references cited by all texts studied comprises a set of 579 entries of books titles and scientific articles. References to news, reports or non-scientific texts were excluded from this list. For the analysis of the most cited authors, from this initial list, only authors who had at least 3 bibliographic entries in two different articles were considered. By bibliographic entry, it is considered each time a book by the same author is cited in different articles, so that, if the same book has been cited in two different articles, we count two bibliographic entries. With this procedure, we intend to exclude the specific themes of each article (such as journalism or cinema) so that we can observe the common theoretical fields related to gender and masculinities².

² In addition to authors listed in the following paragraphs, the most cited Communication authors were: Raquel Recuero (7 bibliographic entries), Henry Jenkins (7), Jesús Martin-Barbero (3), Adriana Amaral (3) and André Lemos (3). The discussions, however, concerned specific issues of studied papers, not related to gender and masculinity issues. For this reason, these references were not considered in the discussion of this paper.

The most cited author, in obtained list, was Judith Butler, with 20 entries, followed by Michel Foucault, with 16. This is relevant data, since it reveals that the understanding of gender as a performative act is consolidated in this area studies. To say that gender is performative is, first of all, to take a stand against a common understanding that replaced biological determinism for cultural determinism in gender studies. In other words, it is about understanding gender as a certain type of representation whose appearance is not given simply by birth, nor by an inherent internal will of individual, nor merely by a set of possibilities anticipated by culture. Gender, in studied papers, is understood as action, that is, as something that is constructed as it is enunciated, from the reiteration and repetition of acts that have some correspondence with social and cultural norms. Such norms are also performative, so that, between the two ideal types of gender (masculine and feminine), there are subjects with oscillating and unfinished gender performativities that struggle with a culture in permanent mutation. Masculinities, therefore, dialogue with the understanding that body itself is a language. Together, the books "Gender Trouble" and "Bodies that Matter" become the most present references in studied papers. They are cited by 65% of these articles.

Alongside, the low citation of classic authors on gender and masculinities is noteworthy. Robert W. Connell's classic study of hegemonic masculinity has only six bibliographic entries. Pierre Bourdieu and Simone de Beauvoir are also rarely mentioned, with, respectively, two and one entries. In some appearances, such authors are cited to be denied, that is, to express gender conceptions that are not related to the discussion proposed in papers. The small number of references to these classic studies points out to a rejection of essentialist conceptions of gender such as "femininities" or "masculinities". The concept of masculinities (albeit in plural) is insufficient for area studies – in the same way that the concept of "femininity" in gender studies is seen as an inadequate and reductive notion.

Connell's concept of hegemonic masculinity has, in fact, passed through some revisions based on the assumption that it carries a unique pattern of power relations (based on domination of women by men), and ignoring other aspects of gender hierarchy. The concept also fails by presenting a classificatory terminology of traits on legitimated ways of being a man, which plasters its conceptualization (CONNELL; MESSERSCHMIDT, 2013). The studied papers incorporate such criticisms to the concept of hegemonic masculinity, taking it as a secondary and non-structuring aspect of their argumentations.

Gender subjectivation processes in studied papers are taken from a Foucaultian perspective, adopted by Butler, from which, although each historical time produces some types of possible subjects, supported by different discursive formations, such subjects are in constant conflict with these same norms that precede and exceed subject. Thus, although individuals are formed from the coercive effects of disciplinary devices, there is still a reflexivity in relation to norms that result in different forms of agency.

Poststructuralism is a predominant theoretical framework in articles, which can be observed from other frequently cited authors: Gilles Deleuze (5 bibliographic entries), Roland

Barthes (3) and Felix Guattari (3). Gender, from a poststructuralist perspective, rejects the notion of a universal subject and understands that subject is constructed from cultural meanings marked by power relations. Generic binarism, in these terms, gives way to pluralities and diversities. The study interface between Communication and Gender based on this understanding analyses practices, institutions and discourses that shape masculinities records at the same time that shape new ways of being. The prevailing approach of studied papers refers to subjectivations forms and its discursiveness. The discussion about identity as a process, therefore, is also highlighted in studies. Reflections on identity issues are added to gender discussion, especially based on Stuart Hall, with 8 bibliographic entries.

Corporeality is also an important thematic axis in papers, so that this discussion is present in 33% of texts. The debate on corporeality, as well as that of gender, is addressed through the bias of language and discourse. In addition to language authors already mentioned, the reiteration of Iuri Lottman's ideas is remarkable, with 4 bibliographic entries, which highlights the fact that the understandings about gender and body are woven into processes of signs encoding, decoding, translation, permanence, transmission and exclusion, in texts and images from communicational environments.

Another researcher often cited in discussions about corporeality is Paula Sibilia, with 4 bibliographic entries. Her most cited text in the studied papers is "O corpo velho como uma imagem com falhas". According to her, "in the 'body cult' and 'society spectacularization' era, provoked to convert themselves into images with well-defined contours, human bodies are disenchanted from their symbolic powers beyond the codes of 'good appearance'" (SIBILIA, 2012, p. 83). In other words, author understands corporeality built in communicational ambiences as a code and as a symbolic power, in a perspective aligned with studied papers.

Other authors most cited in the axis of gender discussions are: Ronaldo Henn (16 entries), Guacira Lopes Louro (10), Paul B. Preciado (6), Joan Scott (4) and Édison Gastaldo (3). These authors corroborate the notion that gender is both culturally and performatively constructed, aligned with the proposal that subjects negotiate with gender normativities in agency exercises. They are also authors who articulate proposals on power relations that are articulated to gender representations.

According to Louro (2008, p. 17), for example, in one of the most cited texts in studied papers, the learning process and the practices that build genre have multiplied "and their dictates are often distinct. In this cultural clash, it is necessary to observe ways in which the normality and the difference positions are constructed and reconstructed, as well as the meanings attributed to them". Preciado (2014) will think about the ways in which economic and political power structures influence subjective experiences of gender and the way in which body is lived, as well as the various forms of performativity beyond generic binary build. Also for Scott (1995, p. 84), "we need a rejection of the fixed and permanent character of binary opposition, a genuine historicization and deconstruction of the terms of sexual difference", so that "if we use Jacques Derrida's definition of deconstructing, this critique means analyzing" the way in which

"any binary opposition operates, reversing and displacing its hierarchical construction, instead of accepting it as real or self-evident or as part of the nature of things". In other words, they are all references that understand binarism and its power structures deconstructions as central in their argumentative and research concerns.

Queer theory is also an important interface for reflections on masculinities in studied papers and stands out references to Richard Miskolci (6), Adrienne Rich (5), Leandro Colling (3), Larissa Pelúcio (3) e Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick (3). These are also references in which gender binarism is refuted and discursive and power instances of sexualities definition in social sphere is in analysis foreground. These are theorizations whose instance of resistance to power mechanisms are highlighted.

For Miskolci (2012, s.p.), for example, "sexuality, understood as an apparatus, allowed State and institutions to control us through what Foucault called 'pedagogization of sex" and queer proposal is to overcome these instances "and transform the position of education no longer as subservient to state and biopolitical interests, but much more committed to civil society demands". For Pelúcio (2014, p. 21), queer theory "is invented from specific questions related to our marginal experience", so that "the construction of abject subjects is marked by power discourses in which exclusion experiences are linked to historical processes that mark subjectivities". Also in Sedgwick (2007, p. 26), it is possible to read that "the closet is the defining structure of gay oppression in the 20th century", even though "cognition, sexuality and transgression itself have always been ready in Western culture to be magnetized in a resistant alignment, although not without cracks" (SEDGWICK, 2007, p. 26).

Observe published papers not from their particularities, but from what they share in their arguments is interesting because it reveals important points of qualified production in Communication and masculinities. The intersection between the main theoretical-methodological contributions alluded by authors reveals that research in Communication on masculinities is articulated from a point of view that emphasizes communicational resistances in relation to normative gender structures.

If we divide analyzed papers in two categories - (1) those that study communicational mechanisms that mediate relations of gender hegemony and (2) those that mediate actions of resistance to hegemonic gender patterns - we will observe that the first axis (hegemonies study) is a frame adopted by 40% of articles; the second (hegemonies resistance) is a thematic frame proposed by 60% of them. The attention to resistance in relation to hegemonic masculinities is an approach adopted by most texts, with less attention to a description of communicational mechanisms from which traditional stereotypical masculinities are based. And, even among these articles, such masculinities are observed under a critical bias, which seeks to describe traditional structures with the proposal of problematizing their naturalization.

The resistance perspective is clear in following excerpts, taken from analyzed articles. In "K.O.: O nocaute remix da drag Pabllo Vittar", Rocha and Postinguel (2017, p. 02) describe that, in Vittar's presentations, "her pop performance, a seductive lasciviousness

that confronts and invites, operates, from the terrain of in-between and entertainment, frontal and astute questioning of male and masculine domination" and also "denounces the gaze itself as a domination instrument". For this reason, Vittar "runs away from 'condominiums" by "breaking up with modernity legacies and locating in indeterminacy the focus and pole of possible subjectivation". In "Todos nascemos nus e o resto é drag", Henn, Machado and Gonzatti (2019, p. 218) affirm that television show RuPaul's Drag Race transposes heteronormativity boundaries in a complex articulation of codes, in which "performances of self can be constituted in flows of multiple possibilities" and "engender what we call semiodiversity (...), that is the coexistence of a vast diversity of cultural signs of selfexpression" (HENN; MACHADO; GONZATTI, 2019, p. 218). Also Gutman, Mota Junior and Silva (2019, p. 76) observe that mediatized body can be a "reflection device on masculinities, femininities and their transits". Therefore "through the recognition of interlocutor itself" an 'energy' of mediation is created "(interactions, discussions, identity causes support, sharing, engagement)" that "as affective landscapes" give visibility to bodies that "are engaged and politically materialized, reaffirming other possibilities for identities expressions" (GUTMAN; MOTA JUNIOR; SILVA, 2019, p. 76).

Even in articles that focus on hegemonic masculinities, change and resistance's perspectives is present. In "A construção de sentidos sobre a homossexualidade na mídia brasileira", although Darde (2008, p. 233) attests that representations of gay couples still "takes place in a perspective that tends to frame them into a norm, the heteronormativity, capable of giving them legitimacy to be portrayed by media", the author also points out possibilities for changes in these configurations by suggesting that "the search for social recognition, supported by a conquest of citizenship discourse, will be successful when the press" re-signifies "the arbitrary character of dominant culture in Brazilian society in parallel cultures understood as diversity".

The articulation of a gender understanding from a relational, non-binary, culturally and performatively marked agency perspective also implies a specific approach to communication. Media are understood, in most of these articles, as an instance in which resistance to hegemonic patterns is possible, in which other visibilities can be articulated and pluralization of ways of life can be valued. Communication technologies are explained from the clashes of forces that articulate productions and, therefore, as a struggle space for identities representation and modulation. It is, after all, a hopeful vision of social role of mass media that, in addition to materializing hegemonic bias, can enable plural forms of masculinities expression too.

Final considerations

Analyzed corpus allows us to observe an increase in articles publication in qualified journals that study communication and masculinities interfaces, especially in the last three

years (2017-2019), with a much more expressive production than in the previous period (2000-2017). It is also possible to observe a concentration of publications in institutional affiliations in South and Southeast Brazil. Regarding themes, papers interfaces with different fields of Communication, with an audiovisual field predominance and, in most of them, it is possible to observe concerns with LGBT+ recognition issues, visibility policies, representational matters, body performances and performativities and mediatized corporeality, as discussions that are repeated in papers that compose corpus. The post-structuralist theoretical bias in relation to forms of subjectivation based on gender is predominant in analyzes and discursive studies provide methodological framework for most of the articles.

The intersection between most cited bibliographic references in these texts provides relevant data about this area research, as it shows that dissenting study objects are privileged in analysis, based on a posture of resistance to binary and hegemonic gender patterns. Media, in these studies, are not only seen as an instance from which ideals of hegemonic or toxic masculinity are mediated, but as a field of discursive struggle in which plural masculinities forms can emerge and be consolidated. For a long time, Communication studies privileged theoretical views from which mass media, when not openly malicious and manipulative, was seen as an instance that mediated power relations of hegemonic field, with little room for resistance or for worldviews plurality. In most recent studies on masculinities in Communication, this approach is in the background and it gain primacy studies that not only understand gender in a plural way, but also communication itself is understood as an open, problematic, diffuse space with different social actors in conflict.

As in gender, communication is seen as a field that cannot be separated from social normativities, but which, at the same time, also does not give in completely to these hegemonic normativities. In most analyzed texts, mass media establish a complex relationship with cultural and social environment, as it deliberates with norms, which leads to a critical understanding of social genesis of communication and its collective meanings. Media, in this theoretical perspective adopted by analyzed papers, dialogue with forms of truth that frame the ways of being that will or will not be recognizable (as important reference points that govern media productions), but, at the same time, such normativities are proposed as performative and constantly changing. As in Butler (2017, p. 37), the norms by which recognition "function to the extent that they are social, exceeding every dyadic exchange that they condition". And, thus, their sociability is not "a structuralist totality nor a transcendental or quasi-transcendental invariability". Communication is seen as an important actor in social dialogue with these normative horizons and in the conditions of legitimation of truth regimes.

Gender studies, therefore, add not only a relevant theme for Communication research, but also a theoretical point of view about media that can add important elements to communication area, understanding normativities that structure the field as performative, unfinished and plural.

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Conflict of interest

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