

Citizen news content creation: Perceptions about professional journalists and the additive double moderating role of social and traditional media

Manuel Goyanes; Homero Gil de Zúñiga

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Manuel Goyanes ✉
<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6537-9777>

Universidad Carlos III de Madrid, Spain
Departamento de Comunicación
mgoyanes@hum.uc3m.es

Universidad de Salamanca, Spain
Democracy Research Unit (DRU)
dru@usal.es



Homero Gil de Zúñiga
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4187-3604>

Universidad de Salamanca (DRU), Spain
hgzn@usal.es

Pennsylvania State University, EUA
hgzn@psu.edu

Universidad Diego Portales, Chile
homerogildezuniga@mail.udp.cl

Abstract

Since the emergence and growing popularity of digital technologies and social media platforms, the relationship between professional and citizen journalism has been challenging. In recent years, however, this critical relationship has de-escalated due to a growing collaboration in shaping a complementary news repertoire. This study examines how social and traditional news use and users' perceptions on professional journalism affect citizens' news content creation. Based on survey data from Spain, we first find that social media use for news and users' positive perceptions on professional journalism predict citizens' news production behavior. Second, social media use for news and traditional media consumption are explored as additive moderators over the relationship of users' perceptions on professional journalism on citizens' news content creation, showing a positive significant effect. This study contributes to current conversations on the potential symbiotic association between professional and citizen journalism, arguing that citizens' perceptual appraisals on professional journalism are key in fostering public's participation through news content creation.

Keywords

Journalism; Citizen journalism; Professional journalism; News content creation; Perception; Social media use.

1. Introduction

In recent years, the craft of journalism has experienced a substantial shift due to a panoply of technological and professional innovations (Túñez-López; Toural-Bran; Cacheiro-Requeijo, 2018) which have disrupted the identities and practices of most news-workers worldwide (Goyanes, 2018). Traditionally, journalists were the central nexus between facts and audiences, the key to informing citizens about public affairs and politics (Berganza; Lavín; Piñeiro-Naval, 2017). However, with the emergence and popularization of digital technologies, personal blogs, and social media services, many users have been empowered to create, and disseminate their views and perspectives in valuable news contents (Suárez-Villegas, 2017). In this context, citizens' news content creation or "citizen journalism", has challenged and/or complemented the traditional ethos of professional journalism, amplifying its boundaries, scope, and roots (Paulussen et al., 2007).

Normative discussions around professional and citizen journalism have flourished with the emergence of the internet, but their level of significance has arguably peaked due to the popularization of digital platforms for news sharing, consumption and distribution (Masip, 2016). In this regard, there is ample evidence suggesting that professional journalism has been traditionally reluctant to accept the basic tenets and practices of citizen journalism (Cruz-Álvarez; Suárez-Villagas, 2017). On the opposite side, citizen journalism has severely criticized the lack of product innovation of traditional journalism and the neglect of non-Western geographies in their coverages. However, despite the initial challenging relationship, both citizen and professional journalism end up diligently cooperating (Picone; Courtois; Paulussen, 2015).

Despite that extant research has provided insightful evidence accounting for citizens' news production patterns (Lindner, 2016), and offered important theoretical contributions on the normative foundations of the craft (Kim; Lowrey, 2015), scant attention has been paid to the potential media antecedents or motivations of citizens' content creations (Holton; Coddington; Gil de Zúñiga, 2013). We argue that citizens' perceptions on professional journalism may be a determinant perceptual factor in explaining their likelihood of engaging in news production. In short, to what extent citizens' perceptions on professional journalism and their practices explain and, therefore, foster their willingness to create news contents? Are such effects ubiquitous or contingent upon individual levels of traditional and social media news use?

Triggered by these gaps in the literature, this study seeks to advance an empirical model that theoretically accounts for the connection between citizens' perceptions and their potential behavior germane to the journalism field. We argue that examining the relationship between citizens' perceptions of professional journalism (and their practices) and citizens' news content creation is important for several reasons. First, our empirical analysis may serve to debunk and challenge traditionally theorizations on the lack of normative connections between the two strands. In short, citizens' perceptions on professional journalism, if positive, may serve as incentive or motivation for citizens' participation through news content creation. Second, although extant research on the normative discussions between citizen and professional journalism has made durable efforts to divide them, we could test empirically, if such efforts, in citizens' views, hinder or foster their participation through news production. Third, and finally, our analysis indirectly tests whether professional practice may serve as stimulus or motivation for citizens' content creation and, therefore, the role of journalists' practice in triggering citizen journalism.

Drawing on survey data from Spain, we tested these relationships in a regression model that includes demographic information and political predispositions such as political interest as control variables. Our results indicate that holding positive perceptions on professional journalism and a higher levels of social media news led to increased news content creation. We also tested for group differences, in levels of citizens' perceptions on professional journalism between those who have a low, moderate and high social and traditional media use, showing a positive, additive moderation effect. Our study contributes to the growing discussions on the normative ideals of both professional and citizens journalism, arguing that journalists' performance appraisals play an important role in fostering citizens' participation through news content creation.

2. Professional and citizen journalism: normative discussions around their practices and foundations

Citizen journalism is a fuzzy term (Wall, 2015). Despite the fact that a single definition has never been agreed upon, many different terms have been used interchangeably, three fundamentally: user-generated content, participatory journalism and citizen journalism. Holton, Coddington, and Gil de Zúñiga (2013), provide a conceptual diagram to make sense of their differences.

- First, user generated content refers to all news contents produced by citizens, but not limited to solely journalistic tasks.
- Second, citizen journalism refers to citizens' news making process, typically pondered as an activity outside the traditional structures of media companies (Paulussen *et al.*, 2007).
- Last, participatory journalism draws on the contribution of citizens in professional journalism news production process, whether by giving voices to certain issues or by direct collaboration (Scott; Millard; Leonard, 2015). In this study, we conceptualize citizen journalism as any contribution to make sense of social reality, whether in the form of an opinion piece, a reporting, a chronicle, simple information or a post published in a blog or personal social media account (Nah *et al.*, 2015). Therefore, this definition also accounts for

“citizens follow-up participation in the news process, such as social media posting, re-posting, linking, tagging, commenting and rating” (Kim; Lowrey, 2015, p. 7).

Since its emergence, citizen journalism has experienced a significant growth. This growing popularization, specially through social media, have triggered the emergence of scholarly debates around the normative foundations of both professional and citizen journalism. In this logic, a large body of work have established the main distinctions between them, underscoring the structural, practical and formal education that shape their morphology. First, according to extant research, professional and citizen journalism fundamentally differ in the organizational structure for news production and the qualifications needed for developing such activities (Greewood; Thomas, 2015). Professional journalism is typically a supervised craft, paid and made by news-workers (Kim; Lowrey, 2015). When it comes to professional practices,

professional journalists typically work within well-ingrained journalistic norms and routines, guided by values of news objectivity, autonomy and accuracy. Likewise, professional journalists have a clear orientation to serve the public, acting as a watchdog of powerful institutions (Kim; Lowrey, 2015).

In contrast to professional journalism, citizen journalism does not have a central media company controlling the information flow (Nah *et al.*, 2015). As non-professionals that engage in news creation, citizen journalists have the power of selecting and deciding how and what information should be covered (Lindner, 2016), but the associated practices for news reporting tend to be unsystematic, as they lack widely agreed-upon principles and guidelines (Kim; Lowrey, 2015). As result, professional journalists typically consider citizen journalism as an unethical and untrustworthy activity with poor technical quality (Pantti; Bakker, 2009).

Interestingly, and in contrast to traditional normative considerations, a growing number of scholars have started to theorize citizen journalism as a counterpart of professional journalism. In this logic, some scholars suggest that citizen journalism may serve to break the rigid structures of well-established news organizations, using sources beyond the elites usually consulted by professional news-workers, and covering risky or alternative social phenomena (Wall, 2015). Fruit of these theoretical discussions, a score of studies has emphasized that beyond the news making practices associated to the basic tenets of both citizen and professional journalism, what really substantiates professional journalism's critical response is their reluctance to share their social capital as opinion leaders (Singer; Ashman, 2009).

In summary, while the initial routes of both approaches were sometimes conflicting or divergent, the growing use of social media for news and the innovative spaces enabled by new media, opened up new domains of collaboration, creating as a result "pockets of collaborative journalism" (Canter, 2013, p. 1106). It is in this context that the interactions between citizen and professional journalism became much more naturalized and, in some occasions, the former was seen as a source of renewal and complementary symbiosis, boosting the paths to civic life (Deuze; Bruns; Neuberger, 2007). Such interactions between both, may foster citizens perceptions on the role of journalism and journalists in society, triggering citizens' disposition to produce news contents and emulate their professional practices.

3. Citizens' professional journalism perceptions and citizens' content creation

A sizable literature has problematized the roots and tenets that sustain both professional and citizen journalism (Deuze; Bruns; Neuberger, 2007). There is also considerable amount of research on the potential interactions between both strands of journalism (Canter, 2013), aiming at shedding light on the normative implications of such collaborations. However, until date, there is a surprising lack of empirical studies on how citizens' perceptions of professional journalism may foster or hinder citizens' news content creation. It could be argued that professional journalists may play an important role in invigorating citizens' content creation if their professional practices are positively appraised. In fact, as suggested by the Theory of planned behavior (Madden; Ellen; Ajzen, 1992), citizens' appraisals or attitudes toward a certain behavior is fundamentally determined by their beliefs and expectations about such behavior. In this case: A belief is the subjective probability that such behavior produces an expected outcome (i.e. producing news contents and be publicly acknowledged for that).

Extant studies on audience research has also provide empirical evidence to the potential connection between citizens' perceptions about journalism and their media behavior. For instance, according to Fletcher & Park (2017), when citizens report higher levels of trust in journalists they also consume more news. Likewise, Gil de Zúñiga and Hinsley (2013) showed that holding positive perceptions about journalists and their professional practices positively influenced citizens' news consumption habits. Therefore, how people cognitively appraise journalists, their practices, and their performance in society explains to a great extent citizens' potential news behavior. One such behavior may relate to news content creation. In this logic, a positive perception on professional journalists and their role in society might lead to higher chances of public participation via news production. However, in a context of job losses and market turbulence, why do citizens may positively appraise journalists' performance and their associated practices?

Despite the growing scholarly and political voices that alert about the erosion on the craft of journalism, the underpinnings and associated practices of the field are still robust. Journalism plays a fundamental role in the accountability of liberal democracies and, in a context of massive misinformation and fake news across social media, the news industry (including public service media) plays a fundamental role in providing trustful information to society at large. According to recent market research (*Digital news report*, 2018), four out of ten Spaniards express a general trust in the news. Trust is naturally higher for the news sources citizens regularly turn to, while news exposure via social media and found through search engines are significantly less trusted. In terms of brands trust scores, the most known ones (including private and public television broadcasts, legacy newspapers and native online newspapers), are between 5.57 and 6.37 if citizens have heard about them and between 6.84 and 7.06 if they use them regularly (in a 0-10 scale). In addition, Spaniards' average trust score of their news diets is 6.02, ranked fourth in all countries covered by the *Digital news report*. All in all, and despite all economic and structural challenges that face Spanish journalism, citizens' trust in journalism and their role in shaping an informed society is relatively high.

In summary, and as suggested by extant research, how citizens appraise journalists may impact on how citizens' shape their behavior. Citizens that perceive that journalists are correctly performing their role as watchdogs may be because they appraise

the positive influence of journalists in fostering civic values and a better democracy. By positively appraising journalists' performance (for instance in informing about hidden phenomena or finding the truth and presenting it to the public), citizens' may be motivated to participate and emulate professional journalism and thus sharing the positive social capital as opinion leaders/setters (**Singer; Ashman**, 2009). Accordingly, we may expect that such perceptions towards journalism and their performance may affect Spaniards likelihood of engaging in news content creation. In a more formal hypothesis:

H1) Citizens' positive perceptions on professional journalism are positively related to citizens' content creation.

4. News consumption and citizens' content creation

Extant research on political communication has provide strong correlational and experimental evidence regarding the connection between media consumption and citizens' participation. Whether by means of traditional or new digital services, research on political communication shows that news use facilitates participation in many different ways: increasing knowledge about public affair and politics, providing mobilizing information, and energizing partisan involvement (**Delli-Carpini; Keeter**, 1996; **Lemert**, 1992). In this regard, there is a vast body of research demonstrating that news exposure through the internet, traditional media, and social media platforms are positive predictors of online and offline political participation and civic engagement (**Bakker; De-Vreese**, 2011).

However, individual or collective activities related to civic engagement or political participation not only include traditional manifestations like attending town hall meetings, donating to charities or working in a community project. As extant research has shown, civic participation activities also include meeting the responsibilities of a dutiful citizen (**Bennett; Wells; Rank**, 2009). Accordingly, different social, political or cultural activities (such as voting, joining interest groups, follow the news, etc.) may enlarge citizens' participatory repertoires and thus enrich the public discourse. One of these prosocial activities may be also related to citizens' content creation, a specific form of participation that encompasses the creation of news pieces accounting for certain aspects of the political, social, cultural or economic reality.

In this sense, Prior literature showcased robust empirical evidence on the main individual motivations to engage in such activities. Some of the most central motivations include self-expression and willingness to communicate citizens' views about mainstream news contents (**Bruns**, 2008), or the identification of hidden phenomena not covered by online and traditional media (**Wall**, 2015). As addressed by extant research on political communication and citizen journalism, active users of social media and who have more political knowledge are more likely to create their own news contents. Moreover, there is robust evidence that highly active political users tend to be deliberative, discuss politics and exert many other democratic skills (**Kim; Lowrey**, 2015). Thus, we would expect that a stronger social media and traditional news use will positively correlate with increased levels of citizens' content creation. Based on these findings and theoretical explanations, the following hypotheses are given:

H2) Social media use for news will be positively related to citizens' content creation.

H3) Traditional media consumption will be positively related to citizens' content creation

In order to account for the boundary conditions by which social media news use and traditional media use may (additively) explain the relationship between citizens' perceptions of professional journalists and citizens' content creation, a theoretical framework must be first outlined. We argue that the media repertoire approach to news consumption may be an appropriate set of analytical tools to theoretically explain how and why the different modes of news consumption may shape citizens' media perceptions and behavior.

Previous studies on media use have tried to explore changes in news consumption patterns in several ways, both qualitatively and quantitatively in order to establish empirical claims about what current news consumption looks like (**Swart; Peters; Broersma**, 2016). On the one hand, traditional studies on media use focuses on the use of single media types, genres or products (**Hasebrink; Domeyer**, 2012), neglecting as a result the interrelations and uses amongst these different media. On the other hand, a second strand of research considers the multiple and small subsets or "repertoires" of users' preferred news media (**Van-Damme et al.**, 2015). This second perspective offers a holistic view to investigate the combination of different news sources, rather than looking at which single source or medium may be potentially eclipsing the other (**Van-Damme et al.**, 2015). In general terms, the media repertoire refers to the entirety of media a user regularly uses (**Hasebrink; Domeyer**, 2012).

In a context of digital transformation, the repertoire approach has gained important scholarly attention as it assumes that news consumption is not "a simple choice between traditional and new media" (**Van-Damme et al.**, 2015, p. 197). Audiences are thus empowered to create, compose and select different news sources into complex patterns of media use. As **Van Damme et al.**, (2015, p. 197), suggest, users may "compose a diet surpassing the dichotomy "traditional versus new" news media, both on the level of technology (newspaper vs. tablet) and content (established news brands vs. new market players". Recent qualitative and quantitative research have applied this approach to the study of news consumption, identifying different types of news users based on the repertoires they have (**Picone; Courtois; Paulussen**, 2015; **Van-Damme et al.**, 2015; **Swart; Peter; Broersma**, 2016).

For instance, **Swart, Peter and Broersma** (2016), analyzing the value of different platforms, genres and practices found five distinct news media repertoires, suggesting that users do not always use what they prefer, nor do they prefer what

they use. In the same vein, **Van-Damme et al.** (2015), examining the impact of mobile news consumption on news media repertoires, found three types of news consumers, arguing that news readers fundamentally rely on traditional outlets, only to supplement with online mobile services at specific circumstances.

Following the media repertoire approach, we also expect that both social media use for news and traditional news consumption will positively and additively moderate the relationship between citizens' perceptions on professional journalism and citizens' content creation. We argue that the myriad of news consumption modes and affordances that enable social media platforms may permeate new boundary conditions to examine the effects of citizens' perceptions and behavior. In fact, there is a considerable body of work detailing the contingent role of social media use and traditional media use in accounting citizens' political and social behavior in different settings (**Holton et al.**, 2015). Accordingly, it might be expected that traditional and media use may also play an additive role in accounting for the relationship between citizens' perceptions on journalists' performance and content creation.

Specifically, both social media and traditional media news use become complementary sources of news consumption, enriching the overall information ecosystem. According to the media repertoire approach, sheer exposure to more sources or media platforms would provide an additive possibility for citizens to learn about public affairs and politics (**Van-Damme et al.**, 2015), enriching the news diversity and public discourse. For the most part, citizens do not solely rely on one single news source but rather on a combination of media sources or information platforms to be fully informed (**Hasebrink; Domeyer**, 2012; **Van-Damme et al.**, 2015). Assuming the central role of social and traditional media news use in the media repertoire of most citizens (**Schröder**, 2015), such news consumption may amplify citizens' perceptions on the role of journalists in society. In fact, citizens that trust news and news-workers and therefore have better perceptions on their role and practices, consume more news through different sources (**Fletcher; Park**, 2017). In the digital realm, social media became a fundamental source of intentional or accidental information, shaping readers' knowledge about current events and politics (**Masip et al.**, 2015). In short, both traditional and social media news for news, shape citizens' modes of news consumption, and represent fundamental stimulus for citizens' appraisals of journalists' performance.

As suggested by the theory of planned behavior, if appraisals of journalists' performance are positive, such perceptions may influence citizens behavior towards journalism, increasing the likelihood of engaging in news production. Accordingly, considering the role of social and traditional media in informing citizens and the extent to which these modes of consumption permeate citizens' cognitive appraisals on journalists' performance and their practices, it stands to reason that both may positively and additively moderate the relationship between citizens perceptions and their likelihood of create news contents. In a more formal hypothesis.

H4) Social and traditional media news use additively moderate the relationship between citizens' perceptions on journalist performance and citizens' content creation.

5. Methods

5.1. Sample

Data for this study comes from an online survey. The survey was performed from September 14-24, 2015 and administered by *Niel-sen* using stratified quota sampling techniques to create a sample with demographics that match official census numbers as closely as possible. Therefore, we did not calculate response rates (*Aapor*, 2011), but cooperation rates (average 77% across the panel). In the case of Spain, 1,020 respondents were included in the final sample (see Table 1 for the demographic breakdown).

5.2. Independent and dependent variables

This study had two main objectives.

- First, we wanted to explore the lineal relationship between citizens' perceptions on journalists' performance and citizens' news production.
- Second, we examined if this relationship is moderated by two additive moderators: social media use for news and traditional news use.

Thus, our model includes citizens' news production as independent variable (*X*), citizens' news production as dependent variable (*Y*) and two additive moderators, social media use for news (*W*) and traditional news use (*Z*). Accordingly, the paper includes a series of measures of these constructs, considered as key variables as well as some demographics as controls.

Table 1. Demographic breakdown by age, gender, education, homeownership and marital status. Note. Census data reported in parenthesis, based on official estimates.

Age	
18-24	11.7 (7.4)
25-34	21.9 (14.9)
35-44	26.4 (16.6)
45-64	28.6 (34.3)
65+	2.5 (15.6)
Gender	
Female	51.7 (50.6)
Male	46.5 (49.3)
Education	
High school or less	18.6 (46)
Some college	44.1 (22.1)
College degree +	37 (31.9)
Graduate degree +	-
Homeownership	
Own	77.7 (79.7)
Rent	21.4 (20.3)
Marital status	
Married	62.4 (54.6)
Divorced	6.4 (5.2)
Single	29.6 (32.4)
Widowed	1.3 (7.6)

5.3. Variables of interest

Citizens' perceptions on professional journalism

Four items asked respondents how well they think journalist “function as the watchdog for the public”, “perform in verifying facts”, “perform in being objective” and “do in covering stories that should be covered” (four-item averaged scale, 1 = not at all to 7 = completely; Cronbach's $\alpha = .88$; $M = 3.63$; $SD = 0.16$).

Citizens' content creation

Four items asked respondents how often they ‘take part in posting or sharing photos, videos, memes, or gifs created by [them] that relate to current events or politics’, ‘create and upload [thei]r own videos’, ‘upload [thei]r own photos (to services like *Instagram*, *Pinterest*, or *Facebook*)’, and ‘write posts on [thei]r own blog’ (four-item averaged scale, 1 = never to 7 = all the time; Cronbach's $\alpha = .81$; $M = 3.08$; $SD = 0.84$).

Social media use for news

Respondents were asked questions related to news consumption on social media, including *Facebook*, *Twitter*, *Google+*, *Pinterest*, *Instagram*, *Tumblr*, and *Reddit*. Specifically, three items asked respondents how often they use social media “to stay informed about current events and public affairs”, “to stay informed about my local community” and “to get news from professional news services” (three-item averaged scale, 1 = never to 7 = always, Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.90$; mean = 4.17, $SD = 0.20$).

Traditional media use

Respondents were asked questions related to news consumption on traditional media, including TV, radio and newspapers (three-item averaged scale, 1 = never to 7 = all the time, Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.75$; mean = 4.7, $SD = 0.65$).

5.4. Control variables

In order to control for potential confounders, our statistical models a variety of variables that may explain relationships between the variables of interest. The first set of controls includes socio-demographic variables: age (mean = 40.94 $SD = 12.62$), gender (46.6 percent males), income, and race. Finally, we controlled for political interest (two items asked respondents “how closely do they pay attention to information about what's going on in politics and public affairs” and “how interested are they in information about what's going on in politics and public affairs” (two-item averaged scale, 1 = not at all to 7 = a great deal, Spearman Brown coefficient = 0.94; mean = 4.7, $SD = 0.65$).

5.5. Statistical analysis

In order to test our hypotheses, we conducted a hierarchical OLS regression analysis with citizen news production as dependent variable. The independent variables were introduced in four different blocks. The first block of variables comprised the set of demographics, the second included social antecedents, and the third comprised our variables of interest: citizens' perceptions on journalists' performance, social media use for news and traditional media use. Finally, we tested the additive moderation effects of social and traditional media news use on the relationship between citizens' perceptions on professional journalism and citizens' content creation, using the *Process* macro in *SPSS* (Hayes, 2013; Model 2; 5.000 bootstrap samples).

6. Results

The first hypothesis (H1) proposed that citizens that reported higher perceptions on professional journalist will be more prone to create news contents. The regression analysis, depicted in table 2, shows that, according to H1, citizens that perceive that journalist are performing well their craft, are more likely to create their own contents ($\beta = .075$, $p < 0.05$). Male ($\beta = -.020$, $p < .01$), white ($\beta = -.776$, $p < .01$), younger adults ($\beta = -.368$, $p < .01$) and interest in politics ($\beta = .266$, $p < .01$) were also likely to answer that they created their own news contents. H2 and H3 predicted that users that reported higher use of social and traditional media news use are more prone to create their own news contents. Corresponding with H3, a higher use of social media for news predicts citizens content creation ($\beta = .443$, $p < .01$). However, this is not meet for traditional media consumption. Therefore, H2 was supported, while H3 was not.

H4 predicted and additive moderation. Specifically, this model was tested to examine the collective (or additive) moderating effects of social and traditional media news use on the relationship between citizens' perceptions on professional journalism and citizens' news creation. Table 2 shows a positive, statistically significant additive moderation effect of both moderators (social media news use: $\beta = .067$, $p < .01$; traditional media use: $\beta = .0701$, $p < .05$).

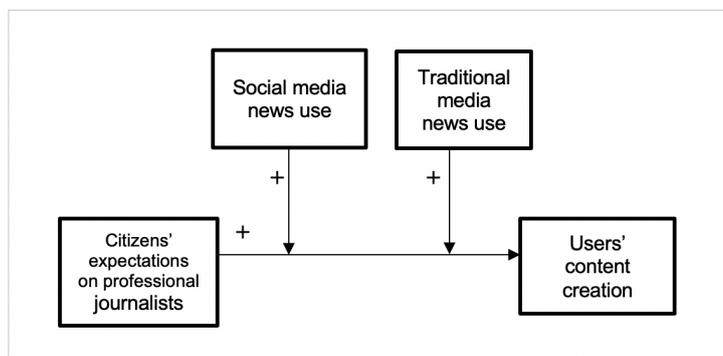


Figure 1. Additive moderation model of social media use for news and traditional media use

Table 2. Zero order correlations

	Mean	SD	Age	Income	Political interest	Journalists performance	Social media news use	Traditional media use	Citizen news production
Age	40.94	12.62	-						
Income	2.97	1.08	.071*	-					
Political Interest	4.60	1.40	.208**	.199**	-				
Journalism Performance	3.63	1.12	.001	.008	.079*	-			
Social Media News Use	4.17	1.55	-.128	-.022	.171**	.189**	-		
Traditional Media Use	4.73	1.24	.209**	.224**	.340**	.154**	.186**	-	
Citizens' Content Creation	2.78	1.49	-.165**	.034	.157**	.159**	.500**	.146**	-

Table 3. Hierarchical regression predicting users' content creation

	Citizens' news content creation	
	Main effects	Interaction terms
Block 1: Demographics		
Age	-.165**	-.016**
Gender (male)	-.122**	-.401**
Income	.046	.032
Race (white)	-.100**	-.669*
ΔR ² (%)	5.0%	
Block 2: Social antecedents		
Political interest	.246**	.129**
ΔR ² (%)	10.4%	
Block 3: Variables of interests		
Citizens' perceptions on professional journalism	.065*	.059
Social media use for news	.457**	.442**
Traditional media use	.033	.051
ΔR ² (%)	31.1%	
Block 4: Interaction terms		
Citizens' perceptions on professional journalism * Social media use for news	-	.067**
Citizens' perceptions on professional journalism * Traditional media use	-	.070*
Additive effect (ΔR ²)	-	1.4%*
Total R ² (%)	32.0%	

Cell entries are final-entry OLS standardized coefficients. *p < .05, **p < .01

As can be seen from figure 1, the effect of citizens' perceptions on journalists' performance on citizens' news creation varies depending on the level social and traditional media news use. Therefore, the effect is not stagnant at all levels. Specifically, it is apparent from figure 1, that the effect of citizens' perceptions on professional journalism on citizens' news creation is larger for higher social media use for news at all levels of traditional news use. However, when the level of social media use for news is moderate, and the levels of traditional media use is low, the relationship between citizens' perceptions on professional journalism and citizens' content creation is negative. Similar patterns can be observed for low and moderate levels of social media news use at low and moderate levels of traditional media news use. On the contrary, low and moderate use of social media for news at high levels of traditional media use positively affects the relationship between our independent and dependent variable. In short, higher use of both social and traditional media for news, additively moderate the relationship between citizens' perceptions on professional journalism and citizens' content creation.

7. Discussion

With the growing consolidation of digital technologies and social media platforms for news distribution and consumption, the boundaries of professional journalism have partially been diluted. Citizens' political participation, civic discussions and news content creation on social media, have challenged the unidirectionality and traditional roles of professional journalism (Kim; Lowrey, 2015), triggering new pockets of collaboration in which both professional and citizen journalism interact to enrich the diversity of citizens' news repertoires (Canter, 2013). Based on representative survey data from

Spain, this study seeks to advance our understanding on the potential effects of citizens' perceptions on their media-related behavior. Specifically, this study seeks to delve deeper on how citizens' perceptions on professional journalism and media use (i.e. social and traditional media news use) may explain citizens' news production. Our study contributes to current normative discussions on the relationship between professional and citizens journalism, providing three inter-related insights to this line of inquiry.

First, the empirical testing of our theoretical model indicates that citizens' positive perceptions on professional journalism lead to higher chances of producing news contents. Our findings thus illustrate the crucial role of citizens' perceptions about journalism in explaining their behavior. As suggested by the theory of planned behavior (Madden; Ellen; Ajzen, 1992), perceptions and attitudes towards an activity crucially determine citizens' behavior. In the case of journalism, citizens that hold a positive perception on the role performance of Spanish journalists, are more inclined to provide their individual perspectives through new-related contents. It could be argued that positive perceptions on the central role of journalists in informing society and the cognitive appraisals on such performance may stimulate or motivate citizens to engage in the news production. Moreover, as citizens' perceptions led to media related behavior, the normative disconnection between citizens and professional journalism could be indirectly challenged.

Interestingly, what explains citizens' content creation is their positive perceptions of journalists' performance, not the negative ones. According to prior works (Bruns, 2008), determinant motivators to engage in news production include not only internal factors related to personal self-expression or exert political influence, but also negative appraisals on how citizens perceive journalists are covering social reality (Wall, 2015). Therefore, what our findings illustrate is the potential normative connection between professional and citizens journalism, as a crucial motivator to create news contents is citizens' positive cognitive appraisals of journalists' performance. However, the nature of our data precludes us to establish further theoretical implications germane to how these perceptions are practically implemented in the news produced. Therefore, future studies may consider, for instance, whether professional journalists are considered as role models and the extent to which citizens are willing to follow the norms and values that shape professional journalism. As far as our study is concerned, our findings provide initial empirical evidence on the relationship between citizens' perceptions and news content production.

Second, our study empirically tests how traditional and social media use for news affect citizens' content creation. A good deal of research has empirically shown the positive effects that media consumption (including traditional and social media) exerts on different forms of participation by increasing knowledge about public affairs and politics (De-lli-Carpini; Keeter, 1996; Lemert, 1992). However, the potential connection between media consumption and citizens' content creations has been overlooked, remaining blurred the media effects at the level of journalism production. Our study contributes to this line of inquiry empirically showing that despite the growing role of different media platforms in shaping citizens' media consumption habits, only high levels of social media use for news (and not traditional news consumption) affect citizens' level of news content creation directly. Therefore, our results point to the crucial role of social media platforms accounting for citizens' media behavior and, specifically, their levels of news content creation. In this logic, we argue that as social media use for news will increase, their potential power to encourage or to empower citizens to produce news contents through these platforms will positively correlate.

However, although we expected a positive relationship between traditional media news use and citizens' content creation, the regression analysis revealed a statistically non-significant relation. This may be consequence of the changing patterns of news consumers, in which the robustness of traditional media is being displaced and challenged by new digital platforms that articulate a complementary news repertoire (Van-Damme *et al.*, 2015). In this sense, scholars on audience research have shown the declining role of traditional media in shaping citizens consumption habits, which may explain why such media yields a non-significant effect on citizens' content creation.

Third, and finally, our study underscores the boundary conditions in which citizens' perceptions on journalism performance affect citizens' content creations. Specifically, we show how social and traditional media news use help to further

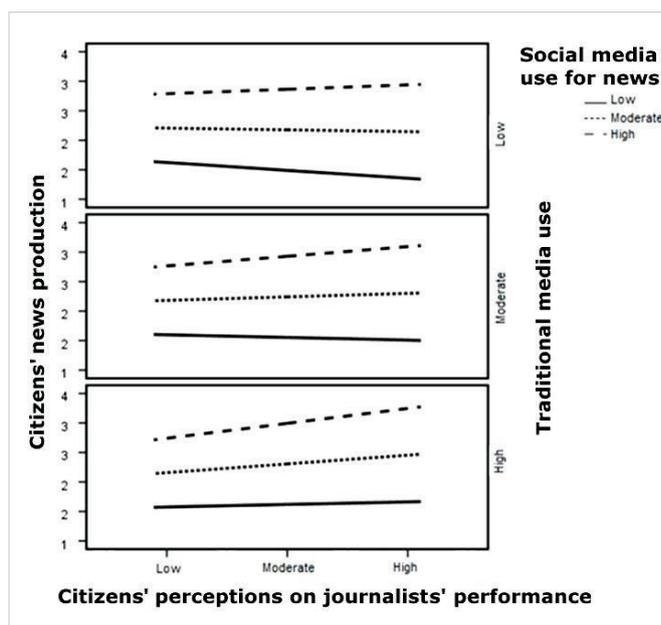


Figure 2. The figure shows the additive interaction term of social media use for news (moderator 1) and traditional media use (moderator 2) on the relationship between citizens' perceptions on journalist performance and citizens' news production.

Note. Group differences in social media use for news, traditional media use and citizens' perceptions on journalist performance are the mean and ± 1 SD from the mean.

explain this relationship, positively moderating the effect of citizens' perceptions over news content creation in an "additive way". Simply put, the effect of citizens' perceptions on professional journalism over citizens' news creation is larger for higher social media use for news at all levels of traditional news use. Therefore, both traditional and social media for news serve to amplify citizens' cognitive appraisals of journalists' performance, significantly and additively affecting citizens' news content creation. In short, our study demonstrates that consumption matters when explaining perceptions on journalism and individual behavior.

We argue that this additive effect is product of the complementary role of both social and traditional new use in shaping a media repertoire (Schröder, 2015), as they are key to keep many citizens informed about current events and politics and crucial in how citizens cognitively appraise journalist's performance and their associated practices. Therefore, consistent with previous studies on the media repertoire approach (Swart; Peter; Broersma, 2016), this article shows how this literature is a relevant framework to study potential associations between citizens' perceptions on journalism and their potential behavior.

Several limitations of the current analysis are also noteworthy. First, the cross-sectional nature of the survey data does not allow us to identify with certainty the direction of the causal patterns underlying the correlations that we found. Therefore, we cannot rule out the possibility that the causal orders are reversed. More robust causal claims would be warranted by longitudinal or experimental studies, rather than cross-sectional survey data. All in all, more work is needed to disentangle the causal mechanisms behind the correlations presented here. Thus, the relationships theorized in this paper should be interpreted with caution. Future research may adopt a longitudinal design to draw causal inferences with greater confidence. Second, although the robustness and representativeness of our data is warranted, data was collected in 2015, limiting the contemporaneity of our findings. Therefore, future studies may examine the relationships here presented with more recent survey data.

Finally, at the level of practice, this study represents a stimulus for professional journalists' role in society, as their "good" performance is a crucial path to civic involvement in the news making process. Beyond the critical voices inside and outside the journalistic field that emphasize the lost in news trust and journalists' declining role as opinion leaders, our findings address that their practices, performance and professional work matter when it comes to foster participation in terms of content creations.

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The image shows a computer monitor displaying the Dialnet website. At the top left, the Dialnet logo is visible, consisting of a red square with a white circle and a red dot inside. To the right of the logo, the text "Dialnet" is written in a large, white, sans-serif font. Further to the right, the tagline "Visibilidad para la producción científica en español" is written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font. Below the logo and tagline, the website interface is shown. It includes a search bar with the text "Buscar documentos" and a "Buscar" button. There are also sections for "Buscar revistas" and "Buscar documentos". The interface is clean and modern, with a white background and red accents. At the bottom of the monitor, the URL "dialnet.unirioja.es" is displayed in a large, white, sans-serif font. In the bottom right corner of the monitor, the logos for "Fundación Dialnet" and "UNIVERSIDAD DE LA RIOJA" are visible.