Representation of femicide according to online newspapers in Bolivia

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Abstract
This thesis is going to present how online newspapers address femicide in Bolivia. Femicide is an increasing problem in a global context but according to “Small Arms Survey Study”, Bolivia is within the 25 countries listed, where the problem is widespread and is affecting more and more women every year.

The context in Bolivia is highlighted by a patriarchal culture and high alcohol consumption in general. Women are suffering different kinds of violence: physical, emotional, economical, discrimination and even femicide which means “murder of women due to the fact that they are women”. In this sense the current government enacted the law number 348 protecting women from violence in Bolivia.

Analyzing the representation of femicide is highly important in a society where the number of cases have increased and even more important in a society where media plays an important role, because mass media is the reference of reality, facts and ideas that are present, in this case, in a Bolivian context and the daily life of its inhabitants.

The theoretical framework is almost entirely focused on representation, which in the words of Stuart Hall means: “Representation is the production of the meaning of the concepts in our minds through language” (1997:17). Representation of femicide which in a Bolivian context could be identified and understood by its inhabitants as a positive or negative phenomenon.

This study is conducted through a content analysis of 370 online articles, which were found in the website archives of three mayor newspaper in Bolivia; with in a period from January 2012 to May 2016.

In this sense, this study analyses articles that developed some background about the crime, not articles which tackles political reports, international reports, law, and police reports and so forth. These articles mostly show statistics or even worse; presents some femicide cases as “one more case” or “another woman is dead” as part of a common and daily thing, normalizing the violence against women in Bolivia.

This thesis describes the main results but also describes how the process of data collection was conducted. The material is analyzed from different perspectives. The thesis further develops and shows examples of the reality of how mass media represents femicide in Bolivia and contributes to the normalization of violence against women.

The thesis describes how online newspaper represent femicide in Bolivia through the content analysis of 370 articles, published in three mayor newspapers, between 2012 to 2016.

Key words: Femicide, Bolivia, Online newspaper, representation, women, love.
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Introduction

Femicide is a large global problem and is increasing in some countries where more and more women are dying every day. Women are being murdered due to the fact that they are women, globally. This may happen in relation to rape, to domestic abuse or honorary killings. In Latin America, the term “feminicidio” or “femicido” is used to describe this phenomenon. Femicide has increased notably in Latin America, and in Bolivia specifically.

Bolivia is facing an increasing number of femicide acts and violence against women, even though a few years ago a new law was approved punishing violence against women.

“Violent emotion” and “honor reasons” were juridical figures to reduce convictions for femicide in Bolivia. But in 2013 the government of Bolivia approved the law 348 to guarantee a life free of violence for women in Bolivia.

According to PNUD and UN, Bolivia is one of the 8 countries where most femicide cases happened in recent years, increasing also violence against children and LGBT community.

Culture plays an important role in the context of the Bolivian society. The culture is highly influenced by a patriarchal system in which women are expected to stay at home and follow the husband’s rules. On the other hand, a dangerous combination of culture and alcohol is a common factor for increasing femicide cases in different occasions of the year, as Carnival, religious festivities, Christmas, New Year to name a few.

In addition, the Bolivian society sometimes understands that violence and love are connected in some way, particularly, on the countryside. For instance, there is a famous and traditional phrase “he hits me because he loves me”. Some women in Bolivia used to believe that violence is part of the love relationship. Nowadays, this way to understand love has changed, but still there are some people that believe that love, jealousy and violence have to be part of their relationship.

In this context it is interesting to analyze how newspapers tackle femicide in Bolivia and which representation they convey to the society, using 370 online articles from 3 major newspapers from La Paz, Cochabamba and Santa Cruz de la Sierra, the largest cities in Bolivia. These articles were published between 2012 and 2016.

This study is going to present the result of a content analysis which shows that Bolivian media/society still have some problems of tackling femicide in Bolivia. Being an important aspect when the Bolivian society understands that the problem of violence and femicide is in part due to the high alcohol consumerism in Bolivia.

Furthermore, this study is going to reveal other aspects that were not taken into account for the same, but that later became recommendations for future investigations about femicide in a Latin American context.

The aim of this thesis is to investigate the representations of femicide in Bolivian newspapers. This is necessary because femicide is an increasing problem in the country and the mass media consumption is very high. Therefore, my research questions are the following:
- How do online newspapers represent femicide in Bolivia?
- Do these representations follow the recommendations of international organizations when reporting?
**Context**

Femicide is a global problem, understood as the most extreme way of violence against women. In words of Russell (2006:76) femicide is: “The killing of a woman because she is a woman”. It has a chauvinist connotation that is addressed through hate towards women. In this sense, gender is understood as men being better and taking control over women.

In several countries of Latin America, the number of femicide cases has increased continuously. According to the webpage www.smallarmssurvey.org, 13 Latin American countries are within 25 countries ranking with the highest levels of femicide: El Salvador, Jamaica, Belize, the Dominican Republic, Bahamas, Guatemala, Honduras, Colombia, Bolivia, Venezuela, Brazil, Ecuador and Guyana. Bolivia got the position number 11, reaching a very high level in this global study (Nowak, 3:2012).

Bolivia is a country located in South America, it entails 9 departments and has a population of about 10,389.913 according to the Statistics National Institute (Instituto Nacional de Estadística) and its form of government is democracy. In 2013 the government of Evo Morales enacted the law 348 against violence towards women changing from penal code phrases as “violent emotion” and “honor reasons” which were juridical figures of reducing convictions for homicide in Bolivia. It also created the judicial figure of femicide with the major penalty of 30 years’ imprisonment without the right to pardon. (Law N° 348, art 254, 252 bis: 2013).

There are no official statistics of femicide in Bolivia because only a few perpetrators have been convicted. It also important to note that there is a type of underreporting which made it even more difficult to have a real number of femicide cases. For instance, the case of Marco Ramirez who was convicted for femicide to 30 years of imprisonment for killing his former girlfriend, and a while after being incarcerated, his wife at the moment went to visit him at the Palmasol-prison in Bolivia, where Marco Ramirez eventually killed her during her visit, making her his second femicide victim. That same day, with help of another prisoner, they buried the dead woman’s body inside the jail. Authorities had not realized these events and reported this woman as missing for almost a year, until the accomplice talked to the police about the body. [http://nuevaya.com.ni/reo-boliviano-mata-a-su-esposa-y-la-entierra-en-su-celda/](http://nuevaya.com.ni/reo-boliviano-mata-a-su-esposa-y-la-entierra-en-su-celda/) (Review, 26-04-2016)

Nevertheless, CIDEM (Centro de Información y Desarrollo de la Mujer Manuela Gandarillas) is a non-governmental organization which collects data of femicide in Bolivia. Their reports show 441 cases of femicide from January 2012 to February 2016. Even under the new law, cases of femicide have been occurring anyway in several cities of Bolivia ([www.cidem.org.bo](http://www.cidem.org.bo), review, 03-04-2016).

The Bolivian society is highly religious. Religious and cultural traditions are often mixed with alcohol, which have proven to be the cases in which femicide happens most often. Therefore, it is also important to understand what culture is in Bolivian society.

Violence is present structurally in the society, according to the ombudsman in Bolivia, Rolando Villena: “Violence is normalizing”. The current generation of parents and
grandparents have full experience of violence which was conveyed from generation to generation. Even some women believed that violence was part of their relationship arguing “if he hits me, it is because he loves me”. Nowadays, there are still women who argue with this phrase when they are facing violence in their relationships.

“He hits me because he loves me”

The cartoon show how violence and love is understood, in certain cases in Bolivia.

Source: www.cidem.org.bo (review, 07-04-2016)
Theoretical Framework

As said by the founding father of cultural studies Stuart Hall “Culture is about shared meaning. Language is the privileged medium in which we make sense of things, in which meaning is produced and meaning can only be shared through our common access to language” (1997:1). In other words, language is the most important element for meaning and culture within a society, which share culture, values and meanings. In this thesis, I decided to make an analysis of culture, in order to understand the representation of femicide in Bolivia because this country have a deep root culture connected with religion and traditions, these elements are important at the moment to contextualize articles published in online newspapers.

Circuit of Culture

![Circuit of Culture Diagram](https://mediatexthack.files.wordpress.com/2013/12/circuit_culture.jpg)

According to Du Gay et al (1997) circuit of culture has five elements:

- **Representation**: production of the meaning of concept in our minds through language. We give things meaning by how we represent them, the words we use about them, the stories we tell about them, the images of them we produce, the emotions we associate with them, the ways we classify and conceptualize them, the values we place on them.

- **Identity**: meaning gives us a sense of identity of who we are and with whom we belong to, how culture is used to mark out and maintain identity within and difference between groups.

- **Production**: meaning is constantly produced and exchanged in every personal and social interaction in which we take part. It is also produced in a variety of different media, these
days, in the modern mass media in a global scale which circulate meanings between different cultures on a scale and with a speed hitherto unknown in history.

**Consumption:** meaning is produced whenever we express ourselves in, make use of, consume or appropriate cultural things

**Regulation:** meaning regulates and organizes our behavior and practices; they help to set the rules, norms and conventions by which social life is ordered and governed (Du Gay, in Hall. 1997:1).

To be able to answer my research question I will take different authors in account in order to properly understand what representations means. In this sense, in words of Höijer “Social representations theory specifies how collective cognitions are produced and transformed through communication with a focus on the socio-cognitive processes or mechanisms involved” (2001:6). This is seen in two ways as human interaction and individual and groups social interaction with communication, which produces representations. I will focus on the interaction between society and communication taking in account online newspaper, which are public and available to many people in Bolivia. In other words, how society understand some fact through social relationships between individuals and mass media.

Representations in words of Stuart Hall means “using language to say something meaningful about, or to represent the world meaningfully to other people” (Hall, 1997:15). Representation is a vital part of the process in which meaning is produced and shared between inhabitants of a culture. It takes in account the use of language, songs, images and sound; hence, it represents things for the people involved.

On the other side, Rose et al. argues that “the theory of social representations' understanding of the interaction between the media and lay thinkers has the potential to provide a sense both power of the media, and of the creativity of its audience” (1995:5). Within the research it is important to highlight and understand that representations are built within both sides of on-line newspapers in Bolivia and people, which are audience of this mass media. Nevertheless, I am only going take in account representations made by media.

Stuart Hall also considered that, “Representation is the production of the meaning of the concepts in our minds through language. It is the link between concepts and language which enables us to refer to either the real world of objects, people and events” (Hall, 1997:17).

Furthermore, representations in words of Moñivas are the knowledge of a society which works as theory of common sense about the whole aspects of life. (1994:411)

Language is vital to consider when we are talking about representation because a group, a community and society has to share a common language in order to have the same understanding of what a text or pictures, for instance, represent. According to Stuart hall “a shared conceptual map is not enough. We must also be able to represent or exchange meanings and concepts, and we can only do that when we also have access to a shared language”. (Hall, 1997:19)
Stuart Hall claims, “Only the people who belong to the same culture must share a broadly similar conceptual map, so they must also share the same way of interpreting the sign of a language, for only in this way can meanings be effectively exchanged between people” (Hall, 1997:19).

On the other hand, the process of representation is also the association between “things, concepts and signs” because it lies at the heart of the production of meaning in language. In words of Hall “The process which links these three elements together is what we call representation” (1997:19).

Sharing codes is relevant at the moment of analyzing representation “the meaning is not in the object or person or thing, nor is it in the word. It is who fix the meaning so firmly that, after a while, it comes to seem natural and inevitable. The meaning is constructed by the system of representation. It is constructed and fixed by the code, which sets up the correlation between our conceptual system and our language system” (Hall, 1997:21).

According to Stuart Hall, codes are used to understand the relationship between concepts and signs. Codes settle meaning within diverse cultures and language. It also let us use specific words to convey some idea. But the opposite is possible as well, codes let us understand which concept is being referred to when we face different signs (Hall, 1997:21).

Codes make it possible for us to speak and to hear intelligibly, and establish the translatability between our concepts which enable meaning to pass from speaker to hearer and be effectively communicated within a culture. This translatability is not given by nature or fixed by the gods. It is the result of a set of social conventions (Hall, 1997:22).

Moscovici suggest that "Representations assume a configuration where concepts and images can coexist without any attempt at uniformity, where uncertainty as well as misunderstandings are tolerated, so that discussion can go on and thoughts circulate." (1988:233). This phenomenon helps to understand the importance about how misunderstandings about femicide, chauvinism, violence and so forth, could influence Bolivia’s society and its increasing levels of violence against women and even femicide.

**Three approaches to the understanding of how representation works**

Stuart Hall (1997) divides theories of representation into three approaches.

**Reflexive approach**

The reflective approach according to Hall implies that, “meaning is thought to lie in the object, person, idea or even in the real world and language functions like a mirror, to reflect the true meaning as it already exists in the world” (1997:25). It refers that diverse staff could mean something according itself, not taking in account other factors that are included between meaning, codes, language and so on.

**Intentional approach**

The intentional approach to meaning in representation argues the opposite case. In words of Stuart Hall “It holds that it is the speaker, the author, who imposes his or her unique meaning on the world through language. Words mean what the author intends they should
mean” (1997:25). In this sense, the author is the most important element at the time to convey meaning. But there are also different elements that could interfere the convey of meaning from the author to the audience, hence this approach has difficulties as well.

**Constructionist approach**

The third approach is called, in words of Hall, “constructionist” because we construct meaning, through use of representational system of concepts and signs. Recognizing language as a social and a collective feature, therefore it is not possible that things or individuals fix meaning by themselves, (1997:25).

In this sense, “constructivists do not deny the existence of the material world. However, it is not the material world which conveys meaning: it is the language system or whatever system we are using to represent our concepts” (Hall, 1997:25).

**Theoretical standpoint of the thesis**

This thesis is going to use the constructionist approach as the way to understand representations. Societies, language, cultures, different ways of understanding the world are going to be stabilized through a public construction, which means how societies construct different meanings about facts which are related to each society. In this sense, it is possible to say that online newspapers settle down which representation of femicide is conveyed to the Bolivian society. Also taking in account culture, language, and so on. Being a social construction of this phenomenon, which has different aspects to analyze.

Representation is a practice, a kind of work, which uses material objects and effects. But the meaning depends not on the material quality of the sign, but on its symbolic function. It is because a particular sound or word stands for, symbolizes or represents a concept that it can function, in language, as a sign and convey meaning or, as constructionists say, signify. Stuart Hall (1997:26).

Hence, for the constructionist approach meaning or indication of some representation is determined by a symbolic function of a sign. Different aspects are important at the time to understand how a representation works.

The concept Arbitrary is a component of signs because there is no natural relationship between the sign and its meaning.

According to the constructionist, Stuart Hall suggest that signs cannot fix meaning themselves. But on its relation between signs and concepts, furthermore is presented by a code. So meaning is relational (1997:27).

Identification is another concept that will be used in this paper. But identification turns out to be one of the least understood concepts. It is drawing meanings from both the discursive and the psychoanalytic repertoire, it also is linked to the self-recognition.

Identification is composing one sort of a recognition of some similar origin or share features with another concept of person, staff or abstract idea.
On the other hand, it is important to understand the concept of femicide, which is a phenomenon generally understood to involve the intentional murder of women because they are women. This is different to homicide because it does not include a gender-dimension for the perpetrator at the time to commit the crime.

Femicide is usually perpetrated by men, but sometimes family members may be involved. Femicide differs from male homicide in specific ways. For example, most cases of femicide are committed by partners or ex-partners, and involving ongoing abuse at home, threats or intimidation, sexual violence or situations where women have less power or fewer resources than their partner.

The importance of this study is based on the increasing connection of people with new technologies which is increasing around the world, nowadays the accessibility to internet connection it’s easier every day. Hence the consumption of digital newspapers in Bolivia have increased the last years.

Previous research on Femicide

Femicide is a large topic within gender studies; furthermore, it is also part of the media studies field. But, particularly in Bolivia there are few investigations regarding the issue. In this sense, in terms of comparing my research with other papers I found some academic works from other countries but similar features about how they settle down femicide representations in mass media.

Paula Godoy, made an investigation of femicide in Guatemala. This study shows that organizations use mass media to set up the local agenda, as Godoy refers: “staff of women’s organizations, such as the director of Fuerzas, effectively use the media- through press conferences and interviews to newspapers and news channels- to communicate their denunciations of crimes against women”, (2002:100). The results of this research help me to understand that the problem of femicide is similar in Bolivia and Guatemala, both have similar characteristics in terms of culture, religion, language and so on.

Another study made by Chiara Gius and Pina Lalli, in Italy shows that “narrative of romantic love and loss of control were extensively employed in the Italian newspapers to represent intimate partner homicides” (2014:68). The use of these articles “contribute to organize the representation of femicide as unpredictable isolated acts of love preservation or as the result of an irrational rage, rather than as the outcome of an asymmetrical relationship in which a man acted violently to maintain control over the object of his love” Ibid. This research was made in Italy, but also has the same characteristics as “kill for love”, for example tolerant words towards perpetrators. Religion and culture are common features in the diverse researches that I found.

This study, “I loved her so much, but I killed her. Romantic love as representational frame for intimate partner femicide in three Italian newspapers”, also shows that the reality about representation on femicide in Italy have similitudes with Guatemala and Bolivia, reproducing the same mistakes contributing the idea of kill for love, or blame the victim.
Methodology

In this chapter, I will present the methodology of the study which is being described through data collection and content analysis on 370 articles about femicide in three major online newspapers in Bolivia.

Data collection

The first step in this research, was to conduct the data collection, in which 370 online articles were found from the webpage archives of three major newspapers in Bolivia: La Razón from La Paz, Los Tiempos from Cochabamba and El Deber from Santa Cruz de La Sierra. Then, this information was divided into four variables:

- the variable with a statistical perspective,
- the variable which blame the victim in some way,
- the variable which was permissive or having tolerant words towards to the perpetrator
- and the variable regarding the “kill for love” perspective. It is important to mention that articles which addresses femicide in a statistic way are separated for an extra analysis.

In this sense, from the 370 articles, the content analysis only takes into account the articles which had some background about the fact of femicide, not articles which talked about femicide in an international context, legislation, police report or statistical reports.

Content analysis

The content analysis is going to characterize the content and meaning of the content of online newspapers in Bolivia in a systematic and quantitative way. According to Krippendorff “content analysis is the statistical semantics of political discourse, content analysis aims at statistical formulations, directed toward empirical problems. Its statistical character is one of the most distinctive attributes” (2009:248).

According to Weber “a central idea in a content analysis is that many words of the text are classify into much fewer content categories. Each category may consist of one, several, or many words. Words, phrases or other units of text classify in the same category presumed to have similar meanings” (1990:12). The idea of content analysis is basically the same for different authors, which can be showed by these two quotes.

Content analysis according to Neuendorf is “a summarizing quantitative analysis of messages of relies on the scientific method ... and is not limited as to the types of variables that may be measured or the context in which the messages are created or presented” (2002:10)
According to Berger content analysis is a research technique that is based on measuring the amount of something (violence, negative portrayals of women, or whatever it might be) in a representative sampling of some mass-mediated popular art form (1991:125). In this sense, I will measure the amount of femicide representation in different categories within large number of articles published in online newspapers in Bolivia.

The basic idea of content analysis is that the large numbers of words contained in a piece of texts are classified into content categories of interest. This requires the development of a coding scheme a system for classifying text designed to achieve the objectives of a particular study. The coding scheme is the heart of any content analysis (Krippendorff 2009:248).

Different authors have many similitudes when they conceptualize content analysis as quantitative technique to understand some art and its context as well. I will apply Krippendorff’s method in my content analysis about femicide in Bolivia, because I got a lot of information which need to be classify into content variables which is this case.

The first step in the words of Krippendorff in developing a coding scheme is to define the content categories (Ibid.). The content categories of this study are: articles with statistical perspective, articles which blame the victim in some way, articles which was permissive or having tolerant words towards to the perpetrator and articles tackled on the “kill for love” perspective.

A second step for the author in developing a coding scheme is to define the basic unit of text to be classified. Individual words and phrases, sentences, paragraphs, and the whole texts may be used as unit of text for analysis (Ibid).

In this study, each variable had some key words which let us understand how these articles are fixed in that category. Words or phrases as: “she wanted to die”, “she was drunk”, “certain kind of clothing”, “he was drunk, so he does not even remember”, “he is a good person”, “I killed her because of jealousy”, “he is a military”, “he is a police officer” and so on.

The third step according to Krippendorff, “is to develop a list of words and phrases dictionaries in the nomenclature of content analysis associated with each of the content categories. These words and phrases serve as indicators of the concepts of interest” (2009:284).

The dictionary enables us to indirectly observe and qualify expressions of femicide, and other expressions to understand the meaning. Further it is going to conceptualize diverse words and meaning when it comes to analysis.

The next step in Krippendorff’s method is “examining the use of the words and phrases in our data base of text was crucial in refining the value dictionaries and ensuring their validity” (2009:285). The phrases which are going to be analyzed are important elements, but it is vital to make a complete analysis within the Bolivian context, taking in mind, other aspects as culture, social environments, economy, gender, place of residence and so forth. As Krippendorff said, “a content analysis variable is valid to the extent that it measures the construct the investigator intends it to measure” (Ibid.).
From quantitative accounts, we will proceed to qualitative considerations. We will have to study the stylization of newspapers the way the same problems are discussed inside and outside of the newspaper, the apparent repression of the emotions in the newspapers, which always provides the basis of their ability to exist and pursue things. (Krippendorff, 2009:11)

The present research analyzed three mayor online newspapers from Bolivia in order to compare differences and similitudes, taking three newspapers from: La Paz, Cochabamba and Santa Cruz de la Sierra, which are the most populated cities in Bolivia. The main reason for choose online newspaper is because use of Internet has increased considerately. At the first instance, the idea was to analyze other newspapers as “Extra” and “Gente” which presents articles in a different way. But these newspapers do not have an electronic version of its articles. In this sense, this will be a recommendation for future studies on femicide.

Quantitative assertions presuppose units of enumeration. Even qualitative content analysts who avoid counting and measuring, they cannot bypass issues of unitization for example, when sampling textual matter for inclusion in a study, selecting relevant features of text for attention, or coding and sorting pieces of text into interpretable categories, (Krippendorff, 2009:43).

The content analysis in words of Krippendorff, “cannot sample the texts created by institutions without understanding their institutional roles” (Idem). This means understanding properly the different institutions, context, culture, and so on. In this case it is related to understanding how newspapers work as an institution.

It has been taken as a general principle in the construction of the set of categories that all of the categories included should assume essentially the same time span; that is, they should all refer to single acts of communication or expression. This is not to deny that there are significant categories of analysis, which require longer contexts for application, (Krippendorff, 2009:79).

The unit for comparing newspaper to newspaper was the period of data collection which was collected from January 2012, to May 2016; the main reason for choosing this period is because in 2013 the government of Evo Morales enacted the Law number 348, convicting to 30 years’ imprisonment for femicide crime, but also against all types of violence towards women in Bolivia.

The unit to be scored is the smallest discriminable segment of verbal or nonverbal behavior to which the observer, using the present set of categories after appropriate training, can assign a classification under conditions of continuous serial scoring. This unit may be called an act, or more properly, a single interaction. (Krippendorff, 2009:79).

Talking about difficulties of this method as Krippendorff recognized, “in such fields as propaganda analysis, content analysis is often used as a diagnostic tool for making causal interpretations about a single goal oriented communication” (2009:147). The main objective within this research is to determine how online newspapers in Bolivia represent femicide. In this sense is difficult to make deep interpretations of the Bolivian reality, but this information could be the foundation for future investigations on the same topic.
Qualitative content analysis is, in the first instance, a statistical technique for obtaining descriptive data on content variables. Its value in this respect is that it offers the possibility of obtaining more precise, objective, and reliable observations about the frequency with which given content characteristics occur either singly or in conjunction with one another. In other words, the quantitative approach substitutes controlled observations and systematic counting for impressionistic ways of observing frequencies of occurrence. The term qualitative on the other hand, has been used to refer to a number different aspects of research. (Krippendorff, 2009:145).

These aspects according Krippendorff are:

- The preliminary reading of communications material for purposes of hypothesis formation and discovery of new relationships as against systematic content analysis for purposes of testing hypotheses.
- An impressionistic procedure for making observations about content characteristics as against a systematic procedure for obtaining precise objective and reliable data.
- Dichotomous attributes (attributes which can be predicated only as belonging or not belonging to an object) as against attributes which permit exact measurement (the true quantitative variable) or rank ordering
- A flexible procedure for making contend descriptive observations or coding judgments as against a rigid procedure for doing the same.

Krippendorff, define quantitative content analysis, “in concerned with the frequency of occurrence of given content characteristics: that is the investigator’s duty with the frequency of occurrence of certain content characteristics”, (2009:145). In this sense, the occurrence of online newspapers related with some variable that is taken in account in this thesis which are the main element to study in this research.

Handling the Data

The data is based on 370 articles that are the main content of analysis of this thesis. I found 370 articles on the online archives of the three major newspapers in Bolivia, then I divide four different variables, but, It’s important to mention that some of these articles (132 articles in total) had not enough content related to femicide stories, or tackled in a different perspective as an international news, police report or local legislation, in this sense those articles are not taken in account for this analysis. The content analysis takes in account 238 articles which has one or more of the follow variables:

- first variable: statistical
- second variable: blame the victim in some way
- third variable: permissive or tolerant words towards to the perpetrator
- forth variable: “kill for love” perspective.
In this sense, each article could have more than one variable, for instance; “Dictan detención preventive para acusado de feminicidio, La Razón, 2015-09-16” This article has three different variables because talk about statistics, use nice words referring to perpetrator beside affirm that all cases of femicide are connected to jealousy and alcohol. In this sense, this article belongs to three different variables using each phrase for corresponding variable.

In order to understand how I calculate the percent of the content analysis I should explain that, 370 articles are 100 % of the information, on the other hand the number of variables will be the percentage considering the total of articles (370=100%), each article could have more than one variable that’s why the number of variables and the number of articles are different. For example, I found 130 articles that have the variable statistics which represent 35,1%.

Total 370 articles = 100%
Variable of statistic 130 articles =35,1%

Research Limitations

One of the biggest limitations of this study was the lack of information in online newspapers, in certain years, which made it more difficult to get the whole picture and the possibility to compare year by year of how media represents femicide in Bolivia.

It would also have been beneficial for this study to have some voices of audience to understand properly the whole process of representation of femicide in Bolivia.

Ethical Considerations

This thesis took in account various ethical considerations to contribute to the communication studies concerns regarding this ethical issue. The information collected from three mayor online-newspaper in Bolivia was public, so data was available in their respective webpages.

My thesis did not entail crossing any ethical boundaries, all authors are properly mentioned and I did not use confidential information.

According to Krippendorff, “in order to identify and explore some of the special problems that arise in the type of content analysis, or other communication analyses which operate within the framework of an instrumental model, may encounter similar problems”, (2009:147).

I found 370 online articles which is a big sample, even though I took a lot of time coding those articles it is possible that I took some irrelevant content for my research. On the other hand, technology for mass media is sort of new in Bolivia, in this sense, online newspapers are not completely updated, so I could lose some relevant information in that way. Besides these issues, this study did follow all ethical research considerations and recommendations.
Data Presentation

The three most popular online newspapers from the cities with the largest population in Bolivia: La Paz, Cochabamba and Santa Cruz de la Sierra are part of this study. There are different reasons for this, because within these cities the major number of population are concentrated, this newspaper are references in a Bolivian context; La Razón in La Paz, Los Tiempos in Cochabamba and El Deber in Santa Cruz de la Sierra. Furthermore, these newspapers have diverse audience but their readers are mainly constituted by middle to upper-class readers with a substantially higher level of economic stability.

These three newspapers are private companies and three of them have worked on a national level for a long time. However, each one them also targets a more local audience. In order to understand how mass media, work in a legally framework, it is important to mention that in Bolivia there is a law for mass media, that was established a long time ago. It is within this legal normative framework in which journalists should work. But this legal frame does not mention anything about femicide and how to deal with this topic within mass media.

Other newspapers are very popular within the poorer or lower income population; these newspapers convey news in a different manner and even they are enabled to show blood, dead people or terrible headlines with pictures in the same way. As a researcher, I strongly recommend doing a study on these newspapers in Bolivia. Unfortunately, while I was doing the research I did not have access to this material nor did they have websites either. It is also interesting to mention that nowadays the consummation of online mass media has increased.

During the period between 2012 until February 2016, the non-governmental organization CIDEM registered 441 cases of femicide in Bolivia. On the other hand, during the period between 2012 till May 2016 I found 370 articles that tackled the issue of femicide in three major’s online newspapers in Bolivia.

Between these 370 articles there is a variety of approaches and different manners to tackle femicide. Also note that the subjective view of journalists was diverse as well at the time of writing articles on femicide in Bolivia. Certain features were taken in mind to determine which articles were included in this investigation, so this content analysis has 5 segments or units where articles had to fit in the respective distribution:

In this section, I will present the quantitative data but also some qualitative information that I found in my research. To understand the follow information is important to mention that I took some words from different articles which refers to femicide in certain perspective which help me to divided in diverse categories.
Variable: Articles with a statistics perspective

The percentage of articles which tackled femicide through statistics is 35%. Being more than I expected at the very beginning of the study, these articles were not considered, but I made some analysis presented below.

Statistics in this thesis refers to percentages, numbers of femicide cases, the relation of years with the number of cases, within the articles I found this sort of words as “increased the number of femicide cases”, “one more case of femicide in Cochabamba”, “new femicide in Santa Cruz increased the number of cases this year” “there are only 38 convictions for femicide in Bolivia”.

Variable: Articles which blame the victim in some way

“No one asked how my aggressor were dressed - Stop blaming the victim”

Articles which were permissive or having tolerant words towards the perpetrator

In a patriarchal society as Bolivia, it is common to find words that are tolerant for men as “he doesn’t need to learn to cook, because he is man” in a compassionate tone, furthermore, sometimes using the word man in diminutive manner that in Spanish is “hombrecito” which could have a connotation of toleration or justification in a friendly way.

This study found a variety of words and phrases in the analyzed articles that was written in order to reduce the culpability of perpetrator where for instance, stand out some activity of the perpetrator, as a professional, a good person, or that he was drunk when he killed her, as a cause of his crime.

Variable: Articles tackled on the “kill for love” perspective

According the organization CIDEM (Centro de Información y Desarrollo de la Mujer Manuela Gandarillas), the crime of femicide is committed most of the times through intimate partners, boyfriends, ex-boyfriends, husbands, ex-husbands or lovers where, in some cases, rape is a common aspect of femicide (www.cidem.org.bo). This study has considered a
number of articles where words or phrases were found that refers to the justification of the crime because of love.

Justification of femicide is increasing the possibilities of new crimes in the same context. Even more, if this is due to reasons of love, because it is conveyed the idea of killing for love, jealousy, infidelity or others, could create the identification of a relationship with violence when it does not follow men’s rules.

There is a strong word in Spanish that in many cases people use as textual one, “she is MY wife”. In this sense, in a Latin context this has a connotation of property, belonging, hence the phrase, that is normal to hear from mass media when they were reporting some crime of femicide. “You are mine. If you are not mine, you will not be for anyone else”.

Table 1. Number of femicide in Bolivia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Victims</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Femicide cases in 2012</td>
<td>99 victims</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Femicide cases in 2013</td>
<td>115 victims</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Femicide cases in 2014</td>
<td>114 victims</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Femicide cases in 2015</td>
<td>93 victims</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Femicide cases in January and February 2016</td>
<td>20 victims</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: www.cidem.org.bo

Table 1 presents the estimated number of cases of femicide in Bolivia according to CIDEM. There are no government statistics because of the confusion between femicide and homicide and there is a considerable under-registered number of cases of femicide.

Table 2. Number of articles found.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Articles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 presents information about how many articles that were found in online newspapers: La Razon, Los Tiempos and El Deber in Bolivia. Data collection was made in May 2016. The period of analysis is from January 2012 to May 2016.
Table 3. Number of articles per year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Articles with a statistical perspective</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8.5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>22.3 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>46.1 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>20.7 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>100 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table number 3 shows that within 370 articles (100%), 131 articles (35.3 %) had some relation with statistics, diverse ways and phrases of referring to femicide through numbers were found in online articles as: “Catalina is another victim of femicide”, “every month there are 10 new cases of femicide registered”, “Bolivia report 115 cases of femicide but only 15 convicted” and so forth.

Table 4. Number of articles, which are tackled with the “blame the victim” approach

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Articles which blame the victim in some way</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7.5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>52.5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>25 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 presents the number of articles in which the victim is blamed in some way, 40 articles, a total of 10.8 % of the 370 articles. Different words or expressions were found in various articles as: “He wanted money because he was unemployed and she did not give it to him, that’s why he hit her”, “She was drunk”, “Sabina wanted to die”, “Certain types of clothing, women who are drunk (...) will be most likely attacked obviously, and will commit crimes with them, said the politician Ciro Zabala”, etc.

Table 5. Articles which was permissive or having tolerant words towards to the perpetrator
Table 5 presents a number of articles, 56 in total which constitutes 15.1% of the total amount of articles. These articles use words or phrases that help the perpetrator to have a positive connotation in a context of the investigation, creation of collective agenda, or talking about representation of perpetrator. As it was already mentioned, the Bolivian society is highly tolerant towards violence against women. It is reflected in some articles in which journalists refer to perpetrators using permissive words or even phrases that could reduce the culpability even when they have confessed as authors of the crime. “He was drunk and don’t even remember what happened” “he was a military” “rather, the perpetrator was never violent with her, he had a perfect conduct” said, Angela Ramirez who was wife of a femicide convict which killed her later on. This sort of affirmations describes the way femicide is depicted in online articles in Bolivia.

Table 6 presents information about 52 articles (14% of the total 370 articles), which tackled the “kill for love” perspective. In most of the cases of femicide, the perpetrator had some relationship with the victim as husband, ex-husband, boyfriend, ex-boyfriend, lover or ex-lover but in some cases perpetrators are part of the family as fathers, stepfather, brother or cousins. In some articles words or phrases were found as: “I killed her on a jealous rage”,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Articles tackled on kill for love perspective</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11,3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>18,9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>47,1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>22,6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“if I want, I can kill her, you will not find out” said the perpetrator to the family of the victim before he committed the crime, “passionate reasons”.

**Table 7. Summarization of different articles which was taken in account for this thesis.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year – number of articles taken in account</th>
<th>Variable blame the victim in some way</th>
<th>Variable permissive or having tolerant words towards to the perpetrator</th>
<th>Variable tackled on kill for love perspective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013 = 14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014 = 21</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015 = 71</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016 = 42</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total = 148</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This analysis is based in different variables:

1. Articles which blame the victim in some way.
2. Articles which was permissive or have tolerant words towards to the perpetrator.
3. Articles tackled on kill for love perspective.
4. Articles tackled on statistic perspective.
5. Others (170 articles)

Since I decided to take in account articles which involve some stories about how femicide occurred I did not consider other articles which mainly was related to international laws, organizations and some general analysis of the problem, neither articles related to statistics but, I decided to make a less extensive analysis of them.
Analysis of Research Results

This study is important to find elements, which might help journalists in Bolivia to improve their way to refer to femicide when they are facing this theme and demonstrate how they through their work could contribute to avoid more femicide in Bolivia or at least reduce violence against women.

Comparing the previous research with the results I found within the studied articles were words which has the same meaning at the time to tackle on femicide, even though, having the same representation as the previous researches in Italy “I kill her because I love her” and in Guatemala “Another woman, femicide and representation”

In table 8 I found an interesting result; in 2015 there was a larger number of online articles published regarding femicide in the three major newspaper in Bolivia; El Diario in La Paz, Los Tiempos in Cochabamba and El Deber in Santa Cruz de la Sierra. Furthermore, in the same year the number of femicide cases have decreased. So, it is possible to suggest that the more articles published in mass media - the less femicide occurred, at least in 2015. Within this period femicide were in mass media agenda because of Andrea’s case which I will explain further later on.

Table 8 Comparison between number of femicide and number of femicide articles.

Table 8 presents cross information about the number of femicide registered by CIDEM (Centro de Información y Desarrollo de la Mujer Manuela Gandarillas) and the number of articles published in online newspapers in Bolivia. Furthermore, I am going to analyze the period between 2014-2016 because of the data between 2012 to 2013 there were not any available articles in some of the online newspapers archives.

In this sense, I observed that within the period from 2014 to 2015 the number of femicide cases decreased but the number of articles published related to femicide in Bolivia increased. So, it is possible to conclude that a major number of articles could lead to less
cases of femicide. This is only a preliminary conclusion because we need more information to determine if this affirmation is correct or not.

During the period of 2015 the number of femicide cases have decreased but it is important to mention one case: “Andrea”. She was daughter of a prestigious journalist in La Paz and the articles about this case informed that she was killed after a party by her ex-boyfriend, who is the owner of various companies in Bolivia. When that happened, her mother used her influences to settle this fact in the mass media agenda, so this was the case with major attention received in different mass media channels in Bolivia. Her ex-boyfriend was convicted almost immediately because of the movement in different cities in the country.

These articles and its consequences show that even though the ex-boyfriend refused this argument, media has enough power to make the justice system act in a short time, given the fact that this is not usual in Bolivia. It was obvious, judging from the information I found, that the number of femicide cases are more than the number of articles found regarding these cases. This is because mass media had saturated information, for instance, in the first 8 days of January 2016 there were 8 femicide cases, one woman was killed daily, while mass media did not cover the whole number of cases, in some of them they are just mentioned as a number added to the statistics, as “another femicide”.

It's relevant to mention “Andrea’s” case because as I mentioned above her mother is a recognized journalist in Bolivia, henceforth, this case had a large coverage by different mass media outlets. Every day she did something in order to prevent more femicide and pushing for that the perpetrator, which was Andrea’s ex-boyfriend, was convicted guilty as femicide perpetrator and not as homicide because it gives the option of reducing the years of imprisonment, while femicide crime should condemn with 30 years of prison without the right of pardon. (Law N° 348, art 254, 252 bis: 2013). Hence, this case conveys other kind of representation for society, because it had a large number of people in different demonstrations against violence in Bolivia.

Conference press, demonstrations, interviews, that case had media controversial attention, so different mass media outlets had publications against femicide following the recommendations of different international organizations to describe and write articles on femicide, with, perhaps a coincident result that the same year there were less cases of femicide in Bolivia. All these facts entitled that mass media put more attention in the topics and femicide was discussed between a big part of inhabitants in Bolivia. Hence, this topic was more discussed among the population.

Along the following section I will analyze the data founded with the help of Du Gay’s Circuit of Culture-model and I will take some examples from each section that I will do a closer reading of to go deeper with the qualitative analysis and compare my research with other ones.

**Variable: with a statistical perspective**
The percentage of articles written with a statistical perspective is 35.1% of the total of articles (370), found in the data collection process. All these articles have some element which refers to statistics on femicide, words or phrases that immediately send our attention into numbers. This could be taken as a single problem within the major or global problem that victims are facing in this moment. But on the other hand, there are articles that focuses its attention more in the numbers letting the victim become an element in “second hand”, in some cases victims are only numbers in the articles counting as a goods not as a human being, nor as a woman, as a mother, as a sister, as a wife, as a daughter, as a grandmother, as a neighbor, as a class mate, as a colleague, as a professional, as an important part of her family, social group, community or society.

The fact that femicide is represented as a number is dangerous because it leads to a process of normalizing this phenomenon and might increase violence against women. Phrases like “20 cases of femicide in Bolivia”, “in two months, killed 20 women”, “every month 10 cases of femicide are registered”, “Another case of femicide occurs in El Alto”, “57,773 cases of violence against women and 68 cases of femicide between 2013 and 2015 in Bolivia”, “Bolivia close 2015 with processes femicide”, “only 15 judgments of 115 femicide in the country”, “in two years there were 115 femicide cases”, “brutally murdered 66 women in eight months”, “the first conviction of femicide in 2015” “Police sees it as normal - 261 attacks on women in four days of Carnival”, “in Oruro 11 femicides were registered this year” “87 femicides recorded until October”, “Since 2013 there were 206 murders of women, femicide, in Bolivia, but only 8 sentences” “Women, are the 90 % of the victims in El Alto”.

Let us look closer into the phrase “another femicide occur in El Alto”: it might mean that it is “just one more case, that is almost normal that it is happening, besides it gives the appearance that it happens far from a reader’s environment”, this phrase doesn’t give the relevance that a femicide should have in any context, even though this is happening daily. Every single day there are families destroyed, orphans, emotional consequences that could affect in the future of children, for instance; different ways of approaching femicide in mass media convey education, information towards to the elimination of new cases of femicide, contributing to reduce violence against women, not only as one more case, that it seems like a fairy tale, not from a real phenomenon that is occurring in our society nowadays. Here it is possible to contrast with the investigation of Godoy not just “Another woman” because in both they have the same connotation.

Furthermore, the phrase “Police sees it as normal - 261 attacks on women in four days of Carnival”. During the period of carnival there are a combination of culture, rituals and excessive alcohol consumption that in many cases leads to violence, discussions and murders or femicides, as well. In this sense journalism should describe some particular cases giving examples like how to react when a woman or child is facing violent reactions. The high number of 261 cases of violence against women is seen as “normal” according the police forces, talking about this issue as just one number within the carnival. But the audience could understand that “violence in carnival against women is usual, so it has to
happen anyway”, because the governmental institution as the police national office think that a high number of violence cases against women are normal because of carnival. When this information is published the audience is facing a formal source, hence this formal source constructs the “truth” and the audience could identify the central meaning and affirm that the carnival period must have attacks towards women otherwise it is not carnival. Additionally, this representation, describes a traditional festival involving violence as normal part of this festivity.

In order to understand how the circuit of culture theory of Du Gay (1997) is applicable to the reality, I choose different parts of articles which I develop and analyze comparing with five steps of circuit of culture: representation, identification, production, consumption, regulation. As I understand the circuit of culture it helps me to settle down how words and phrases are important at the moment to create common meaning in a society because according to Hall in a “constructionist” approach we construct meaning, through use of representational system of concepts and sing, (1997:25).

Comparing the theory of Du Gay and Hall I analyze follow phases which are part of online articles published in Bolivia.

“Police sees it as normal - 261 attacks on women in four days of Carnival”

Representation

- Police: governmental institution whose work is to protect the population from crimes and keep the public order, to have a pacific coexistence within a society, “we should call them when we have some problems” is what one learn during childhood. 110, in this case is the number to the police that all children learn so, national police should have credibility in some way (we believe what they said because they are taking care of us).

- Normally: this word has some connotation that something is usual and is inside of the framework of the rules. Hence, we should follow the rules in order to be part of a group, community or society.

- 261 attacks on women: this phrase have a connotation of a large number of attacks towards women, so “many people do that”, violence towards women because men have the power, or they were drunk “they did not know what they were doing”, if we only see it as a “number”, the situation feels really far from my environment and community.

- Four days in carnival: carnival is one of the biggest celebration in Bolivia. It involves happiness, celebration, tradition, culture, party, color, dance, religion, holidays, sharing moments with family, friends or couple as well.

Identity: is present within this article, when mentioning the carnival because it has a positive connotation and is also a sort of proudness of Bolivians because it is denominated by The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization UNESCO as a
Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity, in this sense there is a big identification with the content of the article.

**Production:** is what the whole content of the article has in itself but also, the publication in a physical newspaper, online newspaper and maybe some TV or local radios could have this information as source. Producing not only language but meaning in this case about violence against woman, even worse - femicide.

**Consumption:** of mass media in Bolivia is very high, in terms that it has a big power and inhabitants follow divers mass media as TV, radio, newspaper and on-line newspapers as well, so the audience is diverse and huge.

**Regulation:** in words of Du Gay regulation refers to how we organize our conduct and practices. The regulation helps to set the rules in which social life is ordered. Hence, the regulation convey in this article is “in carnival, violence against women is normal according to the police, consequently there is a large number of violence reports”. In many cases, in Bolivia, people get identification with the situation, in certain way is possible that some individuals understand as “normal to hit or even kill a woman, actually many people do that”.

In this sense, we analyze how dangerous the results of an article that do not follow the recommendations of international organizations to tackle femicide in mass media, particularly in Bolivia could be.

**Variable: blame the victim in some way**

Victim blaming as a phenomena might be hard to comprehend but there are still people thinking that victims are guilty because they provoked their perpetrators in different ways. In Bolivia gender roles are highly remarkable, social constructions of male and female roles are imposed to children in a familiar environment when they are growing up. Constructions in which the male role is more valuable than the female one. Even when a couple have their first child “It’s better if it is male” to keep the man’s legacy, in some cases when couples only have female children, they are mocked by their surrounding and society.

This notable difference makes the daily life for women more difficult. Even from a young age girls have to learn to cook, to clean the house, take care of other siblings, but male children have to study, play football or help the father in order to learn something that could give him money in a future.

In this context, blaming the victim because of her gender is something that occurs a lot. In this research, I found a variety of words or expressions that have the connotation for blaming the victim “because she is a homeless woman” “lack of self-esteem on the part of the victim” “the victim agreed to meet the ritual to be part of the gang, but lost her life.” “We had discussions because my wife was not serving me well, neither my children”, “she was really drunk”, “man beating his partner because she was consuming alcoholic beverages” “If you don’t obey me. I will kill you.” “He wanted the money because he was
unemployed and she did not give him, that is the reason he hit her” “a drunk man is forgiven, a drunk woman, if she was drunk, is not forgiven.” “Sabina wanted to die” “What will my children think if they know that it is my fault if his father goes to jail?” “Certain types of clothing, people who are drunk (...) will obviously be more likely to be attacked, and will commit crimes with them" and so forth.

Furthermore, the denotation and connotation of this words and phrases are highly important in this case, to analyze the meaning through language. As Stuart Hall suggests “codes make it possible for us to speak and to hear intelligibly, and establish the translatability between our concepts” (Hall, 1997:22) this process is the result of social events, in this case the connection that exist between the online newspapers and the audience that received the message.

In an article I found the phrase “she wanted to die” which could implicate the connotation that this woman was aware of the soon-to-be femicide and she decided to be murdered by her partner, also, she desired to die, therefore it was her fault. This article had some content problem because another girl said this phrase at the funeral of the victim and the journalist who wrote it even putted this phrase “she wanted to die” in a bold, highlighting these specific words. Maybe it was an editorial mistake, however the consequences of some articles being published are irreversible. Audience in some cases understood that this girl was aware, furthermore, wanted to die.

On the other hand, I found an article in which a recognized doctor, a university professor in Cochabamba and politician said that: “Certain types of clothing, people who are drunk (...) will be obviously more likely, attacked, and one will commit crimes against them”.

The representation of an affirmation coming from a doctor could have other sorts of interpretations. Because a doctor has a high credibility, so some people could identify this phrase as true, due to the fact that it comes from a doctor, which affirm that women which “use certain types of clothing” or are “drunk”, are guilty for receiving violence or even worst, femicide”

The follow analysis takes in mind the same structure as above.

“Certain types of clothing, people who are drunk (...) will be obviously more likely, attacked, and will commit crimes with them"

Representation

- Certain types of clothing: he refers in a derogatory manner towards girls which use skirts, tight clothing, make up, high heels or just follow some fashion styles that do not follow the traditional way of clothing in Bolivia that actually is highly conservative.

- People who are drunk: refers to people who drink alcohol in a high quantity, it has a bad connotation but since this individual was talking about femicide this phrase is connected to the idea of women who are drunk.
More likely attacked: is describing a way to try to hurt or defeat one using violence. In this sense, it is vital to understand what violence means in Bolivia. Hence, for receiving violence which according to the dictionary is referring to behavior or treatment in which physical force is exerted for the purpose of causing damage or injury. Violence has a special connotation in Bolivia because there was a traditional practice that include violence between inhabitants to get power in some rural communities. Nowadays this practice turned into a national traditional dance “Tinku”, where dancers pretending to conduct movements of hits and violence, trying to show superiority among the group. Where the strongest man has the power to be the leader and a representative of his community. On the other hand, violence has a bad connotation, because children or women suffer violence in different levels and nowadays it is something seen as bad in most parts of the country. In this context, laws against violence and discrimination have been enacted.

Education plays an important role in the understanding of violence, nevertheless there is violence in different social groups or communities in Bolivia, regardless socio-economic position, level of education, work, ethnicity, language, place of residence and so on.

Will commit crimes against them: crime is understood according to the dictionary as an action or an instance of negligence that is deemed injurious to the public welfare or morals or to the interests of the state and that is legally prohibited.

Identity: is reflected when this phrase refers to women which dress “with certain types of clothing” “drunk” and linked it with: “obviously more likely, attacked”, are phrases that could be linked in two directions: the first is that there is an identification with girls which like to use this “certain types of clothing” disparagement women because of clothes, make-up or fashion style. The other conception could be related to describe or identify the victim of a crime in a sense of blaming her because she was dressed in “certain types of clothing” or if she was drunk, being the main reason because they were killed. Since representation is reflected by language, using these words in mass media is how femicide is represented in these articles.

The phrase “certain types of clothing” is trying to refer to, for instance to sex workers, women of a lower social class or even farmers. So, the identification in this case is addressed to identify who these women are, that this “doctor” is talking about.

The production: of this information was broadcasted in different mass media outlets in Bolivia, national TV, radio, newspapers and online media. So here the question is how this were to be approached, if an important person said something like that, the recommendations said that is crucial that if there is some person who said something like that affirmation, journalist should look to other sources that said something different, in order to have both criteria. In this case the article had the element that permits to have other information from other perspectives, refusing the words which blame the victim of violence. In this case mass media give a lot of coverage to this information especially the
religious mass media that imposes the idea of clothing as a reason for committing the crime of femicide, or provoke violence against women because of clothing.

The consumption: The declaration that we analyze was broadly covered by a large part of mass media and this topic was in the public agenda setting for some days. In some cases people refuse this affirmation but other people agree with this politician on blaming the victims of crimes because of clothing.

The regulation: The declaration of this doctor about femicide because of clothing was a social regulation supported by different individuals, religious groups and conservative media. The idea of blame victims of violence because of their clothes is still a regulation within certain part of population in the current society of Bolivia.

Different organizations of women in Bolivia presented a formal complain to this politician, but there were no legal consequences, nor did he apologize. This sort of declaration could be controversial as journalists should use caution when they are facing this sort of declarations, thus contributing to reduce or eliminate the cases of violence and femicide in Bolivia.

Variable: permissive or having tolerant words towards to the perpetrator

Gender roles in Bolivia are highly marked and have been more permissive for men than women. In this sense, to reduce the guilt or being more tolerant towards men, is a common practice in Bolivia, in this case, journalists are referring to the perpetrators of femicide with tolerant words.

For instance, when men consume alcohol it is more social acceptable but when women consume alcohol it is seen as a very bad thing for society. Within the process of data collection, I found some articles that use some words or phrases which have tolerance towards perpetrators highlighting his work position, profession, previous conduct or good behavior. This concept could be easily identifying for many people and take it as regulation for their daily life.

In a culture, where it is usual for men to “take control” over women, especially on an economic level and for that reason often regard women as property. Mothers convey this through gender roles from generation to generation, creating an environment where it is more permissive and tolerant for men than women in different aspects of the daily life.

Words and phrases as: “he doesn’t remember anything”, “he has a car”, “he is a sergeant of air forces”, “Rather, he said he was never violent with her and had an unblemished conduct.”, “The man suffers from a terminal illness.”, “Freedom for economic solvency.”, “he said during the trial to be innocent.”, “The husband was drunk”, “He said, it was only a blow, not more....”, “The father of the victim, Jovana Q. about 25 years old, said he cannot judge anyone, and only God knows what’s happened that day”, “I am totally innocent, I do not regret anything. The only thing that makes me sad is to use this case to make activism”, “The accused continues working as a school teacher at Cotahuma community”, “thanks to the data provided in his confession”, “aggressor is delegate to the congress”, “men consider
owner of women’s life and also about their daily life”, “The entrepreneur”, “murder by violent emotion”, “the mister”, “The president of entity”, “The physician and columnist for a local newspaper”, “a cop who had a lover, which was another officer of the police office”

When highlighting the occupation of the perpetrator there are some risks that people could identify as professional, having a good connotation, so if he is professional with a high-status job this diminishes the crime he has committed.

The follow analysis takes in mind the same structure as above.

“Rather, he said he was never violent with her and had an unblemished conduct.”

**Representation**

- He was never violent with her: this phrase has a denotation which he is a good person because NEVER means that he always had a perfect behavior, this have a positive connotation of the perpetrator, reinforcing the idea of victim blaming, because if he was a good person, the dichotomy would suggest that the victim was bad person?

- Had an unblemished conduct: this phrase has even more positive connotation towards the perpetrator because according the dictionary unblemished means “not blemished or tarnished in any way”, “have a perfect manner of behavior”. Hence if a person is unblemished it’s hard to believe that he is a murder, so will have the credibility and pardon of society in some way, even if he is a murder, because he is an “unblemished man”.

**Identity:** men that are not violent could identify themselves in this article because they also are unblemished men. But also, when journalist use professions as “police kill his wife” or “an entrepreneur hits his wife” could create identifications with the same occupation in a bad way. On one hand, other men with the same profession could act in the same way, because somebody else committed that crime, having tolerant attitude in mass media towards perpetrators. On the other hand, society could generalize the whole group with the same profession as perpetrators or violent people.

**Production:** the production of this article is related to convey the idea of been permissive even having tolerant words creating a very high positive image of the perpetrator converting to the perpetrator as victim.

**Consumption:** at the time to consume this news, the connotation of this phrase keeps the attention, because the articles talk about the perpetrator in the sense of having tolerant words creating a good image of him, forgetting totally about the victim.

**Regulation:** The articles which use tolerant or permissive words towards perpetrators change the perspective of a femicide, because using a common sense, “if a man who killed his wife or girlfriend is a good person, then the victim had some fault to it”. Thus, the regulation could be in the wrong understand of femicide. Contributing the idea that femicide could happen anytime because the perpetrator could be a good person not a
criminal. In this sense, articles which use tolerant or permissive words towards perpetrators could have bad or wrong representations of femicide, even having fatal consequences in the society.

**Variable: tackled with a perspective of “kill because of love”**
The fact that somebody kill another person that he/she really loves, it’s hard to understand. Nevertheless, this is an actual phenomenon around the world. This practice is reflected in mass media, even though international organizations recommends to not address femicide in a love perspective because this is a sort of excuse or justification of murder.

This investigation found different articles that writes about femicide in some sort of love perspective, it means that in some cases, articles has some words or phrases that refers how couple loves each other, but in others, perpetrator loves the victim to much.

Love according to the Oxford Dictionary is a strong feeling of affection, but when somebody is falling in love they usually take care of the person, show emotional affection, use wonderful words in other to get more in love, not the opposite; hit, shout, or kill because of love, jealousy, or economic problems. In different cases, the fact that women having a relationship with other men, is only in the mind of the male partners, because in some declaration of perpetrators they use the word its seems that she was with other men which means that they were not a hundred percent sure about that fact.

Male chauvinism in Bolivia is characteristically for man taking control over the woman because she is HIS wife, so she is, sort of “property” which he has to take care of. Other typical phrase in these cases is “if she is not mine then she won’t be for nobody else”.

Globally, about 40 percent of all female murder victims (and just six percent of male murder victims) die at the hands of a former or present spouse or lover. Home becomes a dangerous place for women (as well as for children). Whereas almost all cases of homicides committed by males against their female partners occurred after the female ended the relationship or announced her intention to do so, most of the homicides committed by females against their male partners were reactions to severe male domestic violence. Nearly all male murderers claim that (a) they committed the murder out of love, and (b) it was a result of loving too much. We accept (a) and reject (b). Wife murder does not express profound love; rather, it is an abusive type of the problematic fusion model of love. (https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/in-the-name-love/201409/why-do-some-men-murder-the-wives-they-love)

The most important results are part of a long data collection through diverse online newspapers. In which I analyze how in some articles the idea of male chauvinism is reinforced, keeping the patriarchal system in the society with the following phrases found in articles about femicide in Bolivia:
“Killed her because a jealous rage”, “He addressed to his former partner in the kitchen of his mother trying to kiss her by force”, “She wanted to end their relationship”, “passion circumstances”, “same-sex couples, have jealous, over control, and abusive obsession”, “they held a problematic relationship”, “the accused suffers from jealousy”, “his wife being unfaithful”, “denounced for beating his emotional partner”, “it is because she was wrong, she was with other men, I repeatedly found her drinking (...) I wanted her. I did it because of jealousy, I did it alone and unaided”, “the subject in its proxy statement, said that his wife was having a relation with other man, even gave the name”, “because the girl had new boyfriend”, “in a small story he indicated that the victim resisted to access certain propositions that he would like have done”, “all the cases are related to jealousy and consumption of alcoholic beverages”, “he did not accept the broke of relationship, he waited for his victim around Circunvalacion avenue of Tarija in order to talk about their relationship”, “he stabbed a knife in her back, because of jealousy, they were drinking alcoholic beverages in a district of Quillacollo”, “The investigation of the prosecutor determined that each of these stories are the result of a mixture of jealousy and alcoholic beverages”, “love relationship”, “after she get over the relationship”, “he promised to marry her and form a family”, “the perpetrator had confessed the crime to the police with details about planned to kill the woman who claimed to love her and their babies as well. The problem seems to be jealousy and maintenance”, “a jealous and desperate man killed his wife”, “they had a sentimental link”, “the cause of the problem was because sentimental reasons”, “They have died at the hands of those who once swore to love them”, “supposedly motivated by jealousy, attacked his wife with a knife until he killed her”, “two women were killed by jealousy who in a jealous rage hit, stabbed five times in front of their two children”, “sentimental link, you are mine”, “70 percent of them were killed by their partners, men dominated by jealousy”, “The prosecution of El Alto (Bolivia) found that in four of five femicide registered in 2013 the murder was preceded by alcohol intake, and that the five were jealous”, “supposed because passion reasons”, “a woman was brutally beaten by her former partner, who in a rage of jealous, kicked her and punched in the stomach, legs, head and back”, “while there was no alcohol in between, yes there was a discussion of jealousy”, “supposedly sent by her lover”, “jealousy led him to kill shocking her”

Among these articles I have found also, some phrases that contains a peculiar approach to femicide. For instance, “sentimental link, you are mine” or “you are MY girlfriend or wife”, reinforcing the idea of “women as property” and therefore establishing an unequal power relationship between the woman and the man.

The follow analysis takes in mind the same structure as above.

“the perpetrator had confessed the crime to the police with details about planning to kill the woman who claimed to love her and their babies as well. The problem seemed to be jealousy and maintenance”
- “Perpetrator” meaning according to Oxford dictionary is “a person who perpetrates, or commits, an illegal, criminal or evil act”, the perpetrator of a crime must be found and punished.
- “Had confessed the crime”: means that the person who have committed some crime, have accepted themselves as responsible of that illegal act, in some cases this benefits according the legislation because they help to the justice. According the Law 348 against violence in Bolivia this benefit does not apply for femicide crimes.
- “To the police”: in this case the police refer to the institution which helps the society to keep the order amount the inhabitants.
- “With details about planned to kill the woman”: this phrase confirm that the crime was premeditated and very well planned.
- “Who claimed to love her and their babies as well:” the perpetrator claimed love his wife and babies, as I exposed above love means take care of, feel comfortable with, so it’s difficult to link the love with the idea of killing.
- “The problem was because of jealousy and maintenance”: this phrase has the denotation that jealousy is the main reason for committing this crime. On the other hand, maintenance also refers to economical conflicts.

Identification: the issue of jealousy in a relationship is normal among every couples, so most people have felt jealousy in some way. On the other hand, economic problems are situations that are also common, so it is not difficult to identify with both cases. In the case of jealousy, the article does not describe the level of jealousy indicating that a high level of jealousy amount to sickness.

Production: this article has different elements which have the same mistakes than articles founded in other research on femicide in diverse countries.

Consumption: the audience is going to receive this message and created the representation of femicide linked with a sentimental reason.

Regulation: this article conveys the representation of femicide because of love. Killing for love could be understood by the audience as the main reason for femicide crimes, creating a stage for possible new cases of femicide, because some men who identifies with jealousy or economic problems might act in the same way because they also love their wives and children. This sort of articles which addresses femicide because of love causes much more problems at the time to convey wrong representation of what femicide means in the reality, because a man which loves his partner will not be violent within his relationship. Tackling femicide news from a love-perspective don’t follow the recommendations of international organizations as “UN Women” and have very bad consequences for women and children as well.
Discussion
Mass media is as non-formal way of education; hence some part of population learn and accept the content of mass media as true facts. Bolivia does not have a self-production of telenovelas (Latin American drama series) but consumes telenovelas from other countries with the Mexican telenovelas being the most popular ones. According to Medina, “Mexican traditional culture, based on religion, language, national character, and history, is now mixed with new elements to reach a globalized audience. It conveys a greater American influence in the contents and focuses of the most recent telenovelas. In detail, the crisis of values, unstable families, and sex scenes are more present, as well as themes related to violence and control exercised by men (2011:128). These telenovelas convey representations of violence but also it shows how Latin America face chauvinism and violence against women in their daily life.

In this sense, according to the study of Latin America telenovelas on a global scale, Mercedes Medina take in account words of Martin Barbero who says that: “telenovelas constitute an enclave for television production in Latin America, not only because of the impact it has on the audiovisual market, but also for the role that they play in the representation of cultural values of their local audiences” (2011:127).

The mass media convey information, through news, articles, reports about what is happening in the world. It is also a way to understand the reality of the world. In the process of communication, identification is part of this process, through representations that mass media convey to people who receives images, news, sounds, feelings, thoughts, emotions, ways to understand the world, behaviors, etc. This cultural phenomenon let people constitute and represent their identities and their identification, representation and meaning of violence against women that in case of Mexican telenovelas violence is understood as men’s power and control over women in order to express their masculinity.

According to Popaa and Gavrilub “The way gender is represented in the media have an influence on how we perceive gender roles. Certain gender specific features can strengthen the image of what a man and a woman are, and how they should behave in relation to each other. The analysis of women’s and men’s representation in media usually refers exclusively to news reporting, headlines, radio or television news when it comes to prime-time newspapers (with a high impact of visualizations)” (2014:2)

It is important to take in account some aspects regarding gender and what women and men think about their selves “the public mass media transported content and significances to the readers, viewers, and listeners which contribute to educate the public in the sense of observing, trace some inequalities perpetuated by media” (Ibid.)

When we talk about femicide, mass media convey more than news, mass media convey representation through images, sound, text, language in order to describe a reality of the world. Hence, society constructs its conception of reality on femicide in the same way as media present it to them. In this sense, it is possible to say that media representation of femicide is how society understand this phenomenon, even more if a big part of the
population which have mass media as non-formal way of getting education and information.

These newspapers La Razon in La Paz, Los Tiempos in Cochabamba and El Deber in Santa Cruz de la Sierra are mostly consumed by workers, medium social class and upper social class, in other words, to the medium and high-income sector. There are other newspapers which are mostly consumed by low income sector which also cover femicide with other features hence, I strongly recommend another analysis of those newspapers.

Newspapers in Bolivia are conducting the daily public agenda setting, in other mass media as television, radio, magazine and online media. Hence, applying this study in other mass media is totally acceptable to find similitudes or differences between mass media at the time to report on femicide. It is also highly important to understand how audience receive and use this information or even try to find out which media use perpetrators and if this media create representations, identification or had some sort of influence to establish rules to behave for these individuals, facing a violent situation against women. If this supposition has interesting results it is possible to propose alternative and new regulations to the government regarding mass media.

The idea of this study on femicide in mass media is establishing how newspapers represented femicide in Bolivia, therefore, this study reflects that a large part of articles has some words or phrases which contribute to construct a flawed way to understand the phenomenon of femicide or did not follow the recommendations that international organizations give to mass media to approach the topic of femicide.

Other studies about femicide reveals similar results in different countries. According to Paula Godoy, “media often plays a depoliticizing role in representing the phenomenon of femicide, it has the potential to move the story of femicide beyond body counts or “simple facts”, (2002:99). Some fact about this study is that organizations use mass media to set up the local agenda, as Godoy refers: “staff of women’s organizations, such as the director of Fuerzas, effectively use the media through press conferences and interviews to newspapers and news channels to communicate their denunciations of crimes against women” (2002:100).

Repeating the words found in articles of Guatemalan newspapers as “crime of passion”, “she was wearing a mini skirt and heels” are blaming the victim, showing the same characteristics as articles written in Bolivia.

On the other hand, the study of Chiara Gius and Pina Lalli, in Italy shows that “narrative of romantic love and loss of control were extensively employed in the Italian newspapers to represent intimate partner homicides”, (2014:68). The use of this articles “contribute to organize the representation of femicide as unpredictable isolated acts of love preservation or as the result of an irrational rage, rather than as the outcome of an asymmetrical relationship in which a man acted violently to maintain control over the object of his love” (Ibid.).
This study, “I loved her so much, but I killed her. Romantic love as representational frame for intimate partner femicide in three Italian newspapers”, also shows that the reality about representation on femicide in Italy have similitudes with Guatemala and Bolivia, reproducing the same mistakes contributing the aide of kill for love, or victim blaming.

The present research, shows that the online newspapers La Razón, Los Tiempos and El Deber convey representation of femicide in some cases, related to kill for love, blame the victim or reducing perpetrator’s culpability. Reinforcing the Bolivian patriarchal and chauvinist system. It is important to mention that there are some articles which follow the recommendations of international organizations at the time to tackle on femicide and contributes to the reduction of new femicides or violence against women in Bolivia.

This research intends to be a reference for Bolivian journalist but also for the society and professionals in communication in general, in order to contribute and reduce the violence and new cases of femicide. Communication and information plays an important role in this struggle, it does not consider specific societies or languages, that is why this specific is study is relevant.

Conclusion
The main result of this investigation shows that recognized newspapers still have problems at the time to address femicide in an objective and neutral way because most of the times they do not follow the general recommendations that international organizations give to mass media when tackling this topic, in order to contribute to the reduction or elimination of this problem in our societies.

Difficulties of finding official information from the government or police offices in Bolivia were present; statistics are only managed by non-governmental organizations, such as CIDEM (Centro de Información y Desarrollo de la Mujer Manuela Gandarillas) or the Ombudsman. Even when there is already a law which protects women from any kind of violence in Bolivia and a sentence of 30 years of imprisonment for conducting femicide, the number of convictions are very few compared to the number of femicide cases.

Mass media plays an important role in Latin America in a general context. Bolivia, for instance, is a society where newspapers impose agenda for local mass media and it is also well known that non-formal education and information through mass media in Bolivia is highly common among major part of its inhabitants. In this sense, it is possible to claim that mass media manages the public discourse and at the same time manages different representations between them, femicide, violence against women, culture identification, chauvinism reproduction, which affects the whole phenomenon of violence against women in different levels.

In this sense, the most important results reveal that the representation of femicide is based on victim blaming, “kill for love”-stories, statistic approaches and the use of tolerant words towards perpetrators. This fact suggests that mass media in Bolivia do not follow the recommendations of international organizations at the time to tackle on femicide.

Stuart Hall considers that, “representation is the production of the meaning of the concepts in our minds through language. It is the link between concepts and language which enables us to refer to either the real world of objects, people and events” (1997:17).

Representation of femicide in online newspapers in Bolivia are based on different characteristics, but are mainly highlighted from a “kill for love”-perspective, this connection between love and violence against women stems from cultural and chauvinist roots in the Bolivian society in which mass media reinforce the idea of gender differences, giving more importance to men rather than women. In this sense, mass media also blame the victim of femicide and use statistics that could be understood as normalizing the phenomenon of femicide.

The present research is based in a data collection of 370 articles which tackled on femicide from three mayor on-line newspapers in Bolivia: La Razón in La Paz, Los Tiempos in Cochabamba and El Deber in Santa Cruz de la Sierra. Furthermore, I did a content analysis, separating information in different variables: statistical perspective, which blame the victim in some way, which was permissive or having tolerant words towards to the perpetrator, which tackled on kill for love perspective and other topics.
Additionally, a qualitative analysis on different phrases have revealed important information about how online newspapers represent femicide in Bolivia. The most common phrases were related to kill for love: “She wanted to end their relationship”, “they held a problematic relationship”, “Is because she was wrong, she was with other men”, “I did it perhaps for jealousy”, “because the girl had a new boyfriend”, “love relationship”, “in a jealousy desperate, man kill his wife”, “sentimental link, you are mine”, “supposed because of passion reasons”, and many others.

The results of this investigation are connecting to the idea that other investigations have found in other countries, as Italy and Guatemala in which mass media convey the idea of “killing for love”, victim blaming and using tolerant words towards perpetrators, reinforcing the idea of chauvinism with the consequence of reproducing the same behaviors of violence against other women.

The articles which used a statistical approach when addressing femicide, conduct the idea of normalizing violence against women even worse when new femicide cases occur. Because mass media convey the idea that these femicide cases are isolated cases, far from the reality of the audience, highlighting the number as “another femicide case”, “one more woman was killed by her husband”, “Police sees it as normal - 261 attacks on women in four days of Carnival”, and so on.

The goal of this research is to make a reflection to journalists in Bolivia in particular but it also wants to reach out to communication workers and society in a general, about how femicide is represented in mass media and contribute to the discussion of its consequences. Not all femicide cases are covered by mass media or are taking as statistical number contributing to the normalization of violence against women.

The United Nations and other international organizations which have studied this phenomenon more deeply has made various recommendations to mass media regarding the way of communicating on femicide because the importance to supply the right information in a way that contributes to reduce, eliminate violence against women or even better - avoid new femicide cases.

The discussion is on the table, there are new challenges in the communication research camp, for instance, investigate which effects have these representations have in the audiences, or which uses or gratifications had perpetrators with mass media before and after the crime.

The final recommendations for journalist is to follow the features which help women in certain circumstances of violence and also to review international and local legislation about media and violent representation

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**Pictures**

“Violence because of love”

“He hits me because he loves me”
Source: [www.cidem.org.bo](http://www.cidem.org.bo) (review, 07-04-2016)

“Circuit of culture”
Source: [https://mediatexthack.files.wordpress.com/2013/12/circuit_culture.jpg](https://mediatexthack.files.wordpress.com/2013/12/circuit_culture.jpg)

**Web sites**


**Appendix**

Table of content of 370 articles with the whole information and details for the content analysis.