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## “Voices against Silence”: a case study of the social impact of journalism

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### ABSTRACT

Gender-based violence affects 1 in 3 women worldwide and is the leading cause of death among women. Journalism has a duty to provide fair and coherent information and has a huge effect on peoples' perceptions. This study examines how one excellent journalism practice contributes to social impact and overcomes sexual harassment. Social impact is considered a crucial factor for evaluating the impact of science. This concept is used to evaluate journalism practice, while the contribution is made through an analysis of the social impact achieved following the RTVE documentary “Voices against Silence” (Golden Globe Award at the 2018 World Media Festival, Hamburg). Implementing the social impact of social media (SISM) methodology and additional interviews (14), this study examines evidence of this documentary's social impact by exploring citizens' voices through social media (Twitter and Facebook) and interviews with people whose lives have been impacted by watching this documentary. The evidence collected is linked to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 5 to overcome sexual harassment. The results indicate this documentary had a social impact by contributing to overcoming sexual harassment and improving trust in journalism as well as providing a reputation for journalistic coverage, which also leads to social impact.

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Second order of sexual harassment; sexual harassment; survivors; journalism; social impact; social media

## Introduction

Gender-based violence and sexual harassment are currently the leading causes of death for women aged 24–44, as these phenomena affect 1 in 3 women and girls worldwide (WHO 2021). The media plays a crucial role in contributing to the prevention of gender violence and the challenge of overcoming sexual harassment. Women deserve rigorous journalistic practices that support survivors and not media coverage that promotes their revictimization. Therefore, it is necessary to address journalism's current challenge of being trusted (Katherine Fink 2019; Tien-Tsung Lee 2018). This is also a crucial issue according to Margaret Abraham, who said, “The press has a particularly important role and responsibility to report accurately and with rigor”

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(Margaret Abraham 2019, 251). Various journalists and scholars have reflected on how to recover journalism quality and identify ways to improve it (Niv Mor and Zvi Reich 2018). Journalism's original purpose relates to a public service mission (Matthew Powers 2018) to contribute to a better society. Feminists have faced several challenges throughout history, and feminist works have contributed to overcoming them (bell Hooks 1984). Feminist analysis has shown the importance of journalism in making women's struggle visible (Antonio Pineda, Elena Bellido-Pérez and Sánchez-Gutiérrez Bianca 2020). Similarly, the social impact of science needs to follow the social improvement mission and be properly evaluated so it can be transferred to other contexts with this same purpose (Emanuela Reale, Emanuela Reale, et al. 2017).

This paper applies the concept of social impact in evaluating journalist practice through a case study that contributes to overcoming sexual harassment. This contribution is illustrated with a social impact assessment of the RTVE (Spanish Public Television) documentary, "Voices against Silence",<sup>1</sup> which was awarded a Golden Globe award<sup>2</sup> at the 2018 World Media Festival celebrated in the city of Hamburg. This documentary aims to shed light on the problem of sexual violence in Spain. It shows violence occurring in different contexts (street, family, nightlife, etc.) and does so through victims' voices. Among all the testimonies of women explaining sexual harassment situations, three stand out, with one of them talking about sexual harassment in the university context. It is about the first collective complainant of a full professor at a Spanish University. Her testimony describes the revictimization suffered when she decided to report the facts. Additionally, this case reports the second order of sexual harassment suffered by professors who decided to support her and other survivors.

This research paper poses the following 3 research questions: (RQ1) Is there evidence of social impact from the documentary "Voices against Silence"?; (RQ2) If so, is this evidence exhibited by citizens using social media?; and (RQ3) Does this social impact contribute to trust in journalism. In addition, this article aims to provide knowledge and show positive examples of this documentary to contribute to overcoming sexual violence and the Second Order of Sexual Harassment (SOSH), defined as negative consequences for those who support survivors. The first section briefly describes the social impact of journalism, social impact indicators used to evaluate this documentary and the questions that guide this research. The second section presents the methodology and data collection used, which is followed by a third section raising the main results of this study, which shows that the documentary has achieved social impact through its contributions to overcoming sexual harassment. The last section concludes with a discussion on the study's most relevant contributions.

### ***The social impact of journalism in overcoming sexual harassment***

Scholars and research organization bodies have focused on social impact as a crucial concept for evaluating the impact of research. The European Commission uses it as an important indicator to evaluate research projects' impacts (Gisela Redondo-Sama, Gisela Redondo-Sama, et al. 2020). Social impact is achieved when research results adopted by society (citizens, institutions, etc.) help fulfill official social goals, such as the UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNDP 2017).

In this article, this concept is applied in relation to journalism. A documentary is considered a kind of journalism as a material disseminated through media platforms and social media (Kirby Dick and Amy Ziering 2016). To evaluate the social impact of news coverage, documentaries or other audio-visual materials, it is fruitful to distinguish which form ensures quality and responds to social goals. The social impact of audio-visual materials has been defined (Ramon Flecha and Cristina Pulido 2018) based on previous definitions of this concept, as follows: Audio-visual materials achieve social impact when, after having reached citizens (dissemination) and been used by them (transfer), social improvements concerning societal-defined objectives are achieved (e.g., in terms of the SDGs). In this vein, journalism's social impact is accomplished when some media content improves someone's life.

### ***Social impact indicators***

One of the first steps in evaluating the social impact of audio-visual material involves identifying a societal goal. Once such a goal is identified, the next step is to define social impact indicators that define the improvements needed to reach this goal. We conduct a case study of the documentary "Voices against Silence" to illustrate this concept. This documentary covers the sexual harassment suffered by several women through their own voices, which is accomplished through high professional standards and ethical criteria on journalism practices.

Watching "Voices against Silence" contributes to UN Sustainable Development Goal 5 on Gender Equality, which includes goal 5.2: Eliminate all forms of violence against women (UN 2017). This specific goal is a key indicator of social impact contributing to gender equality. The scientific literature has identified sexual harassment (Adam Bernstein 2018; Alan Gross, Alan Gross, et al. 2006), revictimization and the Second Order of Sexual Harassment (SOSH) (Ana Vidu, Ana Vidu, et al. 2017) as particularly important forms. Thus, 3 social impact indicators are defined to help discourage sexual harassment: (1) consideration of survivors' voices, (2) addressing revictimization and (3) tackling SOSH.

### ***Consideration of survivors' voices***

Scientific research has shown that one social impact indicator involves giving a voice to survivors, and it is crucial to include a diversity of voices (Verity Trott 2020). Their narratives create a reality from which personal stories lead to collective actions to overcome victims' fears of not being believed (Marshall Ganz 2011). The press and social media have the power to raise awareness about sexual violence, not merely by covering cases but also in how they do so (Alison Crossley 2015). When media publications are based on clear facts and strong proof, the effect they have on the public is much stronger (Estelle Freedman 2013).

The examined documentary shows survivors' voices, unlike other audiovisual materials that substitute their voices for those of specialists who sometimes focus on scientific evidence, while others focus on occurrences. The documentary, which has spurred dissemination, transferability and social impact, consists of a piece with one survivor who is both a complainant and international researcher on the subject and has contributed to the most recent scientific evidence against sexual violence. Indeed, the qualitative work

conducted for this study shows that audiences have a multiplier effect in terms of social impact. From the testimonies collected, survivors' voices and scientific evidence appear to multiply rather than diminish this documentary's effects.

### ***Overcoming revictimization and the Second Order of Sexual Harassment***

Scientific research has shown that overcoming revictimization and second order of sexual harassment are indicators of social impact. This documentary was not the only one to counteract both the revictimization suffered by sexual harassment survivors at Spanish universities and the SOSH against professors who supported survivors (Lidia Puigvert, Lidia Puigvert, et al. 2019). Relevant Spanish media outlets, such as *Agencia SINC*, *Cadena SER*, *El País* and *Diario.es*, pursued this goal. However, "Voices against Silence" deepened and extended such impacts. As mentioned, one of the documentary testimonies describes the consequences of denouncing sexual harassment from a university professor who had harassed students with impunity, institutional silence<sup>3</sup> and feudal constraints over decades (Mar Joanpere and Morlà Teresa 2019). University professors and researchers who supported the survivor were subjected to SOSH. Nevertheless, they transformed the situation to ensure a stronger commitment against sexual harassment through the promotion of solidarity networks. The documentary studied established a turning point, while a few journalists who used to practice what is known as "yellow journalism" (the so-called "Red Top journalism", in English) allied with harasser lobbies in a defamation campaign toward direct and second-order survivors. Once the documentary achieved great success, "yellow" journalists had to definitively backtrack due to concerns related to gender violence found in different environments in Spain. This contributes to preventing the development of the Fake Harassing News<sup>4</sup> that revictimizes survivors. In the last XVI Forum Against Gender Violence, held on November 2020 and organized by the Platform against Gender Violence<sup>5</sup> one of the sessions was dedicated to present the documentary "Voices against Silence" as a non-sexist journalism model.

As sexual harassment is a community-related problem, support networks have been shown to be key in overcoming revictimization (Jodi Gold and Susan Villari 2000). Research has demonstrated that most assaulted women share their experiences with a friend or with someone who they trust (Adam Reid and Lauren Dundes 2017). Indeed, sexual harassment should be overcome while also addressing SOSH. This reality was first identified by Billie Dziech and Linda Weiner 1990, who recognized attacks and reprisals suffered by those who support survivors as preventing victims from speaking up. In reference to the Spanish context of sexual harassment in academia, the concept was embraced in 2017 by Vidu and colleagues. It claims that some people, groups and institutions might be subjected to violence due to accompanying victims in the reporting process or defending them from revictimization, as a form of coercion against such support. While bystander intervention (V L. Banyard, V L. Banyard, et al. 2005) is considered one of the most efficient mechanisms for addressing harassment (Ann Coker, Ann Coker, et al. 2016), by being on the victim's side, bystanders can suffer retaliations, identified as bystander harassment (Christopher O'Connor 1999). Thus, protection for those who support survivors is a priority in order to eradicate GBV.

Following on previous contributions, our research questions are as follows: RQ1: Is there evidence of social impact from the documentary “Voices against Silence”? RQ2: If so, is this evidence evident from social media users? RQ3: Does such social impact contribute to trust in journalism?

## Methods and data presentation

The present work applies data collection and a corresponding analysis. First, we use the social impact of social media (SISM) methodology (Cristina Pulido, Cristina Pulido, et al. 2018) to identify whether there is evidence of social impact of the selected “Voices against Silence” documentary, according to the social media data collected. Second, to complement the SISM methodology, we conducted 14 interviews with people who watched the documentary to determine whether the documentary achieved social impact through analyzing their contributions. This section presents data collected and interview analyses following the social impact of social media methodology.

### *SISM data collection*

To develop this study, the first step involved selecting suitable keywords referring to social media data on the “Voices against Silence” documentary posted on Twitter and Facebook. The following criteria were applied:

Criteria 1. Selection of keywords. For Twitter data, we selected the hashtag #violenciasexualDTV (this hashtag was used during the documentary broadcast on RTVE) and the key terms “Voces contra el silencio” and “Voces contra el silencio Documentos TV”. Although the two latter key terms are similar, we found that different results were obtained for each one; therefore, we decided to keep both. For Facebook data, the same keywords were used, except for “Voces contra el Silencio” because in this case, the results obtained did not correspond with the topic covered. Instead, we conducted an analysis of a public Facebook post related to the documentary available on the program’s Facebook page.

Criteria 2. Data period. We selected data published between May 24 2017, and December 2 2018. Two periods included a larger number of tweets: May 2017, the month in which the documentary was broadcast for the first time, and May 2018, the month in which the documentary was broadcast a second time upon being awarded a Golden Globe at the Hamburg World Media Festival on May 16 2018. For Facebook data, we collected only public posts with the Facebook search tool and public comments related to the documentary.

Table 1 summarizes data obtained from the different social media sources and the keywords used. From the Twitter data, we analyzed 1,174 tweets, and we examined 75 Facebook posts and 44 comments made on public Facebook posts about the documentary (119 FB/posts/com).

### *SISM data analysis*

First, we analyzed all tweets and Facebook posts collected (1,174 tweets and 119 Fb/posts/com) to calculate the ratio of social media data with the evidence of social impact in relation to the total amount of social media data extracted. We used a combination of

**Table 1.** Data collected from Twitter and Facebook.

Keywords	Twitter			
	Tweets	Favorites	Retweets	Replies
#ViolenciasexualDTV	466	3045	3045	162
Voces contra el Silencio Documentos TV	257	1962	1477	72
Voces contra el silencio	451	3286	2397	111
<b>Total</b>	<b>1174</b>	<b>8293</b>	<b>6919</b>	<b>345</b>

Keywords	Facebook			
	Fb/posts	Likes	Shares	Comments
#ViolenciasexualDTV	42	253	40	15
Voces contra el Silencio Documentos TV	33	507	371	44
Comments posted on the Fb/post that contain the Documentary		163	599	<b>44</b>
	<b>75</b>	<b>923</b>	<b>1010</b>	<b>103</b>

software programs for our data collection and analysis (Python, NVivo and SPSS). This first step involved answering RQ1: Is there evidence of social impact from the documentary “Voices against Silence”? and RQ2: If so, is this evidence exhibited by citizens using social media? To determine whether there was any social evidence, we conducted a content analysis of tweets and Facebook posts collected and then analyzed through the social impact coverage ratio (SICOR) (Pulido et al. 2018) adapted to this study.

Finally, to determine if such social impact contributes to trust in journalism (RQ3), we analyzed citizens’ views about this documentary and whether this is evidence of their trust in this type of journalism.

### **Analytical categories and codebook**

Researchers conducting this study’s analysis are specialists on the social impact of research on social media. The construction of analytical categories is classified into three types. 1) By the type of sender, which classifies data published by involved citizens, organizations and journalists or the program itself; 2) By the type of content, which identifies the message published; and 3) The third refers to Indicators of Social Impact (ISIR). For this last category, we define 3 indicators according to the literature review: considering survivors’ voices, addressing revictimization and tackling SOSH. Table 2 shows the codebook employed.

### **Interrater reliability (kappa)**

The analysis of the sample selected was first classified for the type of content and type of sender, according to the codebook. The sample used includes 1,174 tweets, 75 Fb/posts and 44 public Fb comments. The second analysis was conducted following a content analysis method in which reliability was based on a peer review process. Each tweet and Facebook post were analyzed to identify whether they contained indicators of social impact (ISIR). The first step was to deliver the codebook a priori to the researchers in charge of the analysis. To calculate the reliability of the analysis, we used interrater reliability to examine the level of agreement between the two raters through Cohen’s kappa. The Cohen’s kappa calculator was used for this coefficient. There were 9 messages

**Table 2.** Codebook.

Category	Code	Element	Description
Type of sender	SCI	Citizens	Tweets and Fb/posts published by individual persons/citizens
	SOR	Organizations	Tweets and Fb/posts published by organizations or institutions
	SPR	Program/Journalists	Tweets and Fb/posts published on the program's account or Tweets and Fb/posts published by individual persons/ citizens or journalists involved in the documentary selected
Type of content	CQD	Direct quotes from the documentary	Tweets and Fb/posts publishing direct quotes from the documentary to highlight contributions.
	CD	Dissemination	Tweets and Fb/posts publishing a message disseminating the program with a subjective opinion
	CR	Reflection	Tweets and Fb/posts publishing a reflexive opinion on the content of the documentary
	CP	Prestige	Tweets and Fb/posts publishing a positive evaluation of the documentary, ascribing it prestige or a strong reputation.
	CSC	Sexist content	Tweets and Fb/posts publishing a message with sexist content
	CSP	Spam	Tweets and Fb/posts publishing spam content such as advertisements not related to the program.
Type of Indicators of Social Impact (ISIR)	ISSV	Voices of Survivors	Tweets and Fb/posts publishing direct quotes taken from survivors' testimonies
	ISSOR	Overcoming Revictimization	Tweets and Fb/posts publishing messages that address revictimization (e.g., overcoming blaming discourses, stating that survivors are brave, or enhancing the reputation of the documentary to help to prevent sexual harassment).
	ISSOS	Overcoming Second Order Sexual Harassment	Tweets and Fb/posts publishing messages that identify second order of sexual harassment and the importance for addressing this issue.

coded with different values. The result obtained is 0.98%. By interpreting this number according to the Cohen's kappa coefficient, our level of agreement is reliable, according to Richard Landis and Gary Koch (1977).

## Interviews

The studied documentary had an important impact on the lives of many people. Its television premiere in May 2017 spurred a first wave of direct contact with the *Solidarity Network of Victims of Gender Violence in Universities*, which appears in the documentary, and with one of its characters. After the documentary was awarded a Golden Globe Award at the World Media Festival, RTVE broadcast the documentary again in May 2018. We conducted interviews with people who watched the documentary in both periods. Our interviewees varied in background, age and profession. It is also worth noting that we interviewed people from different Spanish-speaking countries (Spain and Mexico), the language in which the documentary was released (though it includes English subtitles). The interviews were conducted in Spanish and transcribed in Spanish, but translated into English for this article.

## Data collection

We conducted 14 interviews with people from different backgrounds who, after seeing the documentary, contacted the *Solidarity Network of Victims of Gender Violence in Universities* to share their views. Table 3 shows the profiles of those interviewed.



**Table 3.** Interviewee profiles.

Anonymized code (Interviewees)	Job title	Gender/Age Range	Date (2018)
Marta	University postdoctoral researcher and teacher's assistant who viewed the documentary in her university class.	Woman, 30–35	December 18
Sara	University doctoral researcher. She saw the documentary with friends. North of Spain.	Woman, 20–25	December 20
Alex	Primary school teacher.	Man, 25–20	December 16
Maria	Primary school teacher. She saw the documentary with her colleagues and lead a discussion on the film with primary school teachers in a training session.	Woman, 35–40	December 20
Elena	University student. She decided to become involved in the struggle against university sexual harassment after viewing the documentary.	Woman, 18–22	December 22
Laura	University professor. Mexico. She uses the documentary as a teaching tool in class.	Woman, 45–50	December 17
Teresa	University professor. Spain. She saw the documentary by herself. Northern Spain.	Woman, 55–60	November 27
Eva	University postdoctoral researcher. She participated in several debates with stakeholders and associations for gender equality. Eastern Spain.	Woman, 25–30	December 19
Olivia	Unemployed woman who watched the documentary on TV and contacted one of its characters. Eastern Spain.	Woman, 50–55	December 17
Diana	University professor. Southern Spain. She uses the documentary as a teaching tool in class.	Woman, 40–45	December 22
Carolina	Secondary school teacher. Northern Spain. She decided to write her dissertation on the victim's stories.	Woman, 30–35	December 23
Carmen	Former university student. After the documentary's release, she decided to share her experience with the network of survivors appearing in the film.	Woman, 20–25	December 15
Rosa	University student. She decided to write her undergraduate final thesis on sexual harassment at universities upon the documentary approach.	Woman, 20–25	January 8
Claudia	University professor. Mexico. She got inspired by the documentary to break the silence and support other survivors at her university.	Woman, 35–40	January 10

### **Data analysis**

In this case, the data analysis focuses on social impact indicators defined in the codebook: including of survivors' voices, overcoming revictimization and overcoming second order of sexual harassment.

### **Ethical issues**

The present research adheres to international ethical criteria related to social media collection and corresponding analyses. Interview data were appropriately coded and anonymized. Participants were asked for consent. Both sets of data have been secured, saved and stored.

### **Results**

The results are classified into two types of findings: A) findings extracted through the application of the social impact of social media methodology and social impact coverage ratio and B) findings drawn from the interviews. In the following section, we present the

findings of the social media analysis. According to this first part of the study conducted, three findings related to the research questions have been found: (1) relevant percentage of the Social Impact Coverage Ration, (2) high levels of interaction and citizen participation, and (3) increasing trust developed through social media's reputation among citizens.

### (1) Relevant percentage of Social Impact Coverage Ration

According to how social impact is defined and understood by the European Commission and other international mechanisms, based on the improvement of people's lives, social impact relevance in this article is noteworthy from the perspective of several concrete aspects, considering the methodology implemented. This article does not pretend to show a broad impact of the documentary in society, rather an impact on those analyzed cases. For RQ1 (on whether some evidence of social impact could be gathered) and for RQ2 (in case of existing social impact evidence that is shared through social media), the relevant percentage of social impact coverage with more coverage in Twitter than in Facebook is shown, as Table 4 indicates.

The number of indicators of social impact tweets is the sum of tweets, including one of the three defined indicators of social impact (*survivors' voices*, *overcoming revictimization* and *overcoming second order of sexual harassment*). The keyword generating the largest social impact coverage ratio is #violenciasexualDTV. This hashtag was active during the documentary broadcast and achieved more coverage on Twitter (43.3%) than Facebook (21.43%). This result denotes a relevant percentage of social impact and confirms that the documentary achieved this impact throughout its broadcasting and mostly through interactions among citizens. The other two keywords also represent relevant percentages (33.07% and 37.02%) in the case of Twitter data. Facebook data used the keyword "Voces contra el silencio" (27.27%) more often. For indicators of social impact tweets, we found different results for Twitter and Facebook, but both cover the three forms of this type of indicator, ISIR, as defined in Table 5.

The most frequently used indicator of social impact is *overcoming revictimization* for Twitter (72%), which helps to address sexual harassment by mainly considering blaming discourse as one of the worst obstacles survivors face. The documentary helps overcome this obstacle by creating a safer space for complaining about sexual harassment. People used the word "brave" to describe the victims' testimonies, implying that a real change has been made. *Survivors' voices* are the indicators of social impact referenced most in the

**Table 4.** Social impact coverage ratio.

Keywords (Twitter)	Total number of tweets	Total number of tweets with ISIR	Social impact coverage ratio (%)
#ViolenciasexualDTV	466	201	43,13
Voces contra el Silencio Documentos TV	257	85	33,07
Voces contra el silencio	451	171	37,92
Keywords (Facebook)	Total number of Fb/posts	Total number of Fb/posts with ISIR	Social impact coverage ratio (%)
#ViolenciasexualDTV	42	9	21,43
Voces contra el Silencio Documentos TV	33	9	27,27
Comments posted on the Fb/post that contain the Documentary—YouTube	44	0	0,00

**Table 5.** Coverage ratio of tweets with indicators of social impact.

Type of ISIR (Indicator of Social Impact (Twitter))	Total number of tweets	Coverage ratio (100%)
ISSV (ISS Voices of Victims)	97	21,23
ISSOR (ISS Overcoming Revictimization)	320	70,02
ISSOS (ISS Overcoming Second Order Sexual Harassment)	40	8,75
Type of ISIR (Indicator of Social Impact (Facebook))	Total number of Fb/posts	Coverage ratio (100%)
ISSV (ISS Voices of Survivors)	10	55,56
ISSOR (ISS Overcoming Revictimization)	7	38,89
ISSOS (ISS Overcoming Second Order Sexual Harassment)	1	5,56

Facebook data (55.56%). Finally, the percentage of messages addressing SOSH on Twitter (8.75%) and Facebook (5.56%) is significant considering that this concept is used only in one testimony in the documentary.

## **(2) High interaction and citizen participation**

Considering the number of tweets collected (1174), interaction levels were found to be high (8293 favorites and 6919 retweets). The same result was found for FB/post/com data collected (119) (923 likes, 1010 shares, 103 comments). Both interactions demonstrate relevant levels of engagement. We also find that citizens published more tweets about the documentary than any other mechanism, as shown in [Table 6](#).

Citizens have the strongest presence (Twitter 60.05% and Facebook 75.63%) in actively disseminating the documentary, quoting survivors' voices, and contributing with reflections on ways to overcome revictimization and second order of sexual harassment, as a way of expressing trust in this documentary and applauding the journalists in charge of this work. Therefore, regarding whether citizens share views on the documentary in social media (RQ2), the answer is affirmative.

## **(3) Trust developed through reputation given by citizens**

Regarding RQ3 on whether social impact contributes to improving trust in journalism, the answer is affirmative. Content with the second largest coverage ratio includes tweets (22.06%) and FB/posts/comments (14.29%) with messages in which citizens applaud the journalists involved or the documentary, as [Table 7](#) indicates. These results show how social impact, whose positive effects on people's lives, helps recover and improve higher trust in journalism as a public service through citizen participation. This result is gathered

**Table 6.** Type of sender.

Type of Sender (Twitter)	Total number of tweets	Coverage ratio (100%)
SCI (Citizens)	705	60,05
SPR (Program or journalists involved)	261	22,23
SOR (Organizations or institutions)	208	17,72
Type of Sender (Facebook)	Total number Fb/posts/com	Coverage ratio (100%)
SCI (Citizens)	90	75,63
SPR (Program or journalists involved)	2	1,68
SOR (Organizations or institutions)	27	22,69

**Table 7.** Coverage ratios of types of content.

Type of content (Twitter)	Total number of tweets	Coverage ratio (100%)
CD (Dissemination)	570	48,55
CP (Prestige, trust, positive reputation)	259	22,06
CQD (Direct quotes from the documentary)	176	14,99
CR (Reflections)	162	13,80
CSC (Sexist content)	2	0,17
CSP (Spam)	5	0,43
Type of content (Facebook)	Total number of Fb/posts	Coverage ratio (100%)
CD (Dissemination)	45	37,82
CP (Prestige, trust, positive reputation)	17	14,29
CQD (Direct quotes from the documentary)	8	6,72
CR (Reflections)	45	37,82
CSC (Sexist content)	4	3,36
CSP (Spam)	0	0,00

from the analysis of this documentary and is valid in relation to it as a unique case. Nevertheless, it is helpful to express not only an example of ethical and coherent journalism, but also a successful case, which might be transferred to other contexts.

All the quantitative data gathered showed several important outcomes. (1) First, the three research questions formulated have an affirmative answer. (2) Second, for social impact according to the indicators *survivors' voices*, *overcoming revictimization* and *overcoming second order of sexual harassment*, Twitter gathered almost double the coverage of Facebook. (3) The citizens' role in disseminating the documentary contents and its positive messages was noteworthy, as they were doing more coverage than organizations and even the program itself. (4). From these previous conclusions, society's positive response and active implications for spreading this documentary content may imply peoples' positive feelings about its content and the strongest social reaction and sexual violence, while it improves confidence in this type of journalism.

## Interview findings

While narratives described in the documentary are shocking, they help "normalize" gender violence. They raise new questions and debates that benefit to further addressing the issue and, above all, help acknowledge such cases. Since watching the documentary, many girls have dared to describe situations they have lived or know, creating new spaces for dialogue and solidarity.

### *Survivors' voices*

Its capacity to break the silence and provoke empowerment constitutes one of the most important impacts of this documentary. Survivors have always sought a means through which to speak without being blamed, where the problem lies in public debate, so that they only need to say "me too" without providing more explanations because people already understand them. "Voices against Silence" demonstrates the creation of such context, empowering many to share their stories. This is the case for Sara, who, upon watching the documentary, realizes what happened to her and decides to share it and continue reflecting on it.

I think watching the documentary made me think that the situation that I lived through with my uncle was unfair. It was abuse, harassment, persecution and an attack against my privacy and my freedom. (...) It helped me to share this more; I told my mother the next day. I remember experiencing feelings of anger after watching the documentary. (...) That feeling of a shadow approaching me is a fear that I still have. (Sara)

Survivors highlight stories, such as those from universities, from which the image of the victim is triumphant by force. The success of those who have broken the silence has been what has most directly helped others break their silence.

I remember the image of Ana in the documentary making a list of things that constitute harassment. What she says is not from fear and rather from the other side, from what is not fear, from security, from trust, and I think that by telling the story in such a way, she reaches others better. (Sara)

Meeting Ana is the most powerful thing that could have happened to me. (...) She has supported the salvation of many women. (Sara)

Thanks to Ana, because she fights for all, she gives us a voice. (Olivia)

The following female victim also identifies with the story of the university and victims' well-being. Maria affirms that what caught her attention was that the university case is made with the aim of preventing such abuse from happening to any other woman, and this is described from a position of success.

Additionally, in the case of universities, it is apparent that there is success and that victims are coping better. You are well, and you see her doing well as an attractive, intelligent, successful girl and everything (Maria)

Survivors are encouraged to move forward and feel empowered. Sara notes that before the interview, she had not thought of officially denouncing the facts, but what she truly recognizes is that she does not want it to affect her life. Therefore, she will do whatever it takes.

I still have the feeling that there must be justice. Just today before this conversation, I even thought about denouncing him. (Sara)

Although I knew previously of the existence of harassers at university, the retransmission of the documentary had an impact on my academic career and on a personal level. (Rosa)

In this vein, one of the strongest social impacts of the documentary found in this analysis is its formation of a dialogic gathering group in a small town in northern Spain. As the moderator, Carolina tells us, eight young girls living in a residential area protected by the government decided to break the silence on the aggression they had been subjected to and meet with one another monthly to change the course of their lives. This is illustrated by a documentary screening with two people appearing in the documentary. From this historical moment and from changes that this has continued to spur in these minor women, the moderator herself decided to change the topic of her doctoral dissertation to help the life trajectories of these girls. She notes:

... This desire begins to take shape on June 1 2018, when some of them attended the screening of the documentary winning a Golden Globe at the World Media Festival in Hamburg. (Carolina)

The event (...), was a historic moment in our country because for the first time, a Spanish university organized an institutional day on which the silence was broken about GBV and sexual harassment in Spanish universities. (...) Among those who spoke out were minor girls who for the first time publicly denounced the different forms of violence and harassment they had suffered. (Carolina)

From the documentary, many other survivors have dared to break their silence and share their stories, especially in university environments, to recognize similar patterns and forms of silence and institutional cover-up.

I have suffered harassment at the university too, for a long period of two and a half years, until I ended up deranged and they admitted me to a psychiatric hospital for having a psychotic breakdown. I saw the documentary last night, and I completely identified with the girl who had suffered harassment at her university. Everything was just like that. (Carmen)

As the documentary addresses not only university cases but also those affecting other social areas, other professions are granted the opportunity to tell their stories.

I was there for 34 years. He made me a puppet in his hands and submissive. I experienced fear and shame, and I was not conscious of this until I suffered health problems (...) As a victim I am triggered by news, movies, and TV shows addressing the issue (...) I identified with the victims telling their own experience and even now I cannot get it out of my mind (Olivia).

### **Overcoming revictimization**

Many of those interviewed shared that the documentary had helped raise awareness of this problem, facilitated dialogue on what was happening, and created space to openly reject such abuse and protect survivors.

I remember two instances when we screened the documentary. (...) On both occasions it had a strong impact, they were very quiet after the screening and thoughtful. (Marta)

Something that until a few years before, from the institution's university, had been hidden and denied, now it is openly denounced on Spanish public television. Without any doubt, the broadcast of "Voices against Silence" supposed a turning point, and it was no longer possible to turn away from the problem and ignore it. (Rosa)

Viewers allowed themselves to overcome their sense of guilt, and they not only spoke once but several times in further debates, multiplying the film's effect in spurring personal change.

Afterward, which is the first phase of opening the box, all conversations that come afterwards are added because we are then able to think more deeply after watching the documentary, which helps open the box of memories and ongoing thought. (Sara)

Some survivors are empowered by the altruism with which the survivors tell their life experiences to not allow such abuse to happen to anyone else. This is the case for Maria, who, since experiencing an abusive relationship for many years upon viewing the documentary, dares tell her story to others and change her life.

I think that it helped me a lot. I identified with the documentary, with the cases, and with what happens to victims. To help other people but above all prevent such abuse, the documentary makes clear it is necessary to ensure that other people do not suffer what happened to those girls. (Maria)

Maria also recognizes how the documentary prevents victimization itself.

Since there is a lot of silence, it seems that you are the only person to whom this has happened. (...) I remember thinking about who to tell based on their potential reaction, and the documentary empowers in that sense (Maria).

Regarding transference and dissemination, the documentary has a certain unknown impact, as the following teacher, who uses the material for her university classes, notes:

In addition, the documentary served as part of the material that I gave this year in class and that I will use for the Master of Gender Violence program. Thank you (to Ana) very much for still being there (...), but I assure Ana that at least in my case and in my students' case, it helped us to overcome personal resistances. At least now, we know that it is possible to take them away from us. (Diana)

In Mexico, viewers have dared, as a result of the documentary, to sensitize and break the silence, as one teacher expresses in video content.

### ***Overcoming the second order of sexual harassment***

There are many ways to overcome second order of sexual harassment, which can affect people who support it. Therefore, addressing it is instrumental to overcoming it.

Documentary viewers also identify why victims sometimes do not receive help or support, even from those who believe them.

There are certain spaces that allow SOSH to occur, such as at universities as Ana notes, but also in houses and in families. My mother is not going to confront my uncle because she knows that they will have a fight at home, and she lives with him and he cannot leave the household either. (Sara)

When Ana and Ramón appear in the documentary and when Ana speaks about support, about the importance of their support and how much they defend her. I think that from May 2017 to December 2018, I have been much better off because I have found support because I have found friends and because Ana is real. (...) Today, I have smiled very little. (Sara)

Overcoming gender violence and SOSH has always been carried out through men and women fighting together. In the same way, it has been women and men who have prevented this struggle. This is what Eva says in an interview held after a documentary viewing.

The debate and questions began to divert slightly towards what she said, and then I spoke about the case of the Spanish University described in the documentary by saying this is a case that shows that the problem is not men, but the harassers. Indeed, the case set forth by Ana shows that it was thanks to the intervention of a man that she was saved from that situation. (Eva)

The documentary has also had an impact on other Spanish-speaking countries. The following teacher from Mexico shares how the real and courageous content of the documentary sensitizes and inspires us and strengthens the continued fight.

We analyzed “Voices against Silence” in a training course on equity for teachers and professors given at a private university in Mexico. (...) When we finished seeing the participants, they began to tell of their own experiences with harassment in different work, institutional and mainly family environments. (Laura)

The documentary is creating a movement of people who wish to break the silence, who denounce harassment, who dare to say enough, who defend what they want, and who defend each other to feel more supported than ever. In short, this is a movement for betterment and success.

## Conclusion

Sexual violence is still a huge challenge in our society. Different areas are approaching this issue to find ways to overcome it. Journalism and the way GBV are publicly treated have important effects on people’s perceptions. In this vein, the application of social impact to the evaluation of journalistic coverage is suitable. The case study of the documentary “Voices against Silence” has illustrated how audio-visual material can be evaluated to determine whether it achieves social impact. Showing how this documentary brings visibility to the issue of sexual violence, giving a voice to survivors, has a positive impact on citizens who recognize it, both through social media and interviews. This contribution also serves as an example of improving the quality of journalism in line with previous work (Niv Mor and Zvi Reich 2018), which already ask for improving journalism and its link to social change.

The definition of social impact indicators related to selected societal goals also constitutes an important step forward. As a key contribution of this study, the definition of indicators is evidence-based, following previous recommendations to overcome violence perception in society. The use of the social impact of social media in conducting social media data analysis and the improvement of data extracted from interviews helped to broaden social impact evidence. Our results demonstrate that “Voices against Silence” has helped address revictimization and the Second Order of Sexual Harassment. Future research may compare the social impact of different forms of journalistic coverage to rate the evaluation results obtained. For RQ1, relevant percentage of Social Impact Coverage Ratio has been shown and the data confirms that the documentary achieved this impact (according to these indicators: *survivors’ voices, overcoming revictimization and overcoming second order of sexual harassment*). Similarly, as for RQ2, high levels of interaction and citizen participation have been reached through the analysis conducted, based on Twitter and FB interaction among people (number of likes, favorites, retweets, comments ...), disseminating the documentary and quotations from the survivors. Regarding the RQ3, social impact contributed to improving trust in journalism through social media’s reputation among citizens.

Considering previous contributions (Katherine Fink 2019; Tien-Tsung Lee 2018), journalistic coverage that achieves social impact helps recover trust in journalism, improving society in view of corresponding societal goals. Our case study of “Voices against Silence” shows that this documentary achieved social impact. The results confirm its contribution to the elimination of sexual harassment through considering survivors’ voices and overcoming revictimization and SOSH.



## Notes

1. RTVE Documentary, *Voices Against Silence*, available with English subtitles at: <http://www.rtve.es/alcarta/videos/documentos-tv/documentos-tv-voces-contra-silencio-subtitulado-ingles/4072140/>.
2. The documentary *Voices Against Silence* was awarded a Golden Globe at the World Media Festival in Hamburg in 2018. Available at: <https://eldiariofeminista.info/2018/04/16/globo-de-oro-para-voces-contra-el-silencio/#english>.
3. News coverage on a court ruling confirming a professor's sexual harassment of 14 students, who was not sentenced due to the statute of limitation. Available at: [https://elpais.com/ccaa/2014/01/24/catalunya/1390590922\\_692112.html](https://elpais.com/ccaa/2014/01/24/catalunya/1390590922_692112.html).
4. Fake Harassment News is fake news that discredits, blames and defames victims of sexual harassment (including victims of second order sexual harassment).
5. Program of the XVI Forum Against Gender Violence available here: [http://www.violenciadegenero.org/sites/default/files/2020/Programa\\_XVI\\_Forum\\_ENG-20201102.pdf](http://www.violenciadegenero.org/sites/default/files/2020/Programa_XVI_Forum_ENG-20201102.pdf).

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