

Internships in Journalism education: the differences between media outlets and PR companies

Las prácticas en empresas de los estudiantes de Periodismo en España: diferencias entre medios y gabinetes de comunicación

Estágios em empresas dos estudantes de Jornalismo na Espanha: diferenças entre meios de comunicação e gabinetes de comunicação

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ABSTRACT | All over the world, journalism programs have steadily incorporated internships as a priority route for the professional socialization of future graduates. Via this learning stays, students acquire the skills and knowledge that they will apply throughout their career. This paper analyzes the experience of journalism students doing their internships in media outlets and those in PR companies, comparing both groups in terms of working conditions, professional routines, and satisfaction levels. The fieldwork is based on a questionnaire sent to Spanish undergraduates who had conducted their internships in the universities of Málaga and Complutense of Madrid (n=208). The results show that PR company internships tend to be characterized by a higher remuneration, reduced working hours, fewer news pieces produced per day and a greater time availability to develop each of them, among other findings. Furthermore, contacts with the company's tutor and supervision of texts are both more frequent in PR companies, while ethical dilemmas and pressures from the higher-ups and advertisers are less common. Hence, the level of satisfaction is higher than in media outlets, in spite of the fact that only a few students show real interest to pursue a career in the field of corporate communications.

KEYWORDS: media internships; media routines; PR departments; media; journalism.

HOW TO CITE

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RESUMEN | *En todo el mundo, la formación universitaria en Periodismo suele incorporar prácticas curriculares o extracurriculares como vía prioritaria de socialización profesional de los futuros egresados. A través de ellas, los alumnos adquieren destrezas y conocimientos que aplicarán a lo largo de toda su carrera. En esta investigación se analiza la experiencia de los estudiantes de Periodismo que realizan prácticas en medios y en gabinetes de comunicación, contraponiendo ambos sectores en cuanto a condiciones de trabajo, rutinas profesionales y nivel de satisfacción de los alumnos. El trabajo de campo se basa en un cuestionario realizado a estudiantes de las universidades españolas de Málaga y Complutense de Madrid (n=208) que habían realizado prácticas durante el último año. Los resultados muestran que las prácticas en gabinetes suelen caracterizarse por una mayor remuneración, jornadas más reducidas y menor número de tareas diarias, entre otras constataciones. Asimismo, son más frecuentes en los departamentos de comunicación los contactos con el tutor de empresa y las correcciones de textos, en tanto que no resultan tan habituales los dilemas éticos ni las presiones por parte de superiores, instituciones o anunciantes. De ahí que el nivel de satisfacción de los alumnos resulte mayor en este sector que en el de los medios, pese a lo cual son pocos los que muestran la determinación de dedicarse en el futuro al ámbito de la comunicación corporativa.*

PALABRAS CLAVE: *prácticas en empresas; rutinas profesionales; gabinetes; medios de comunicación; periodismo.*

RESUMO | *Em todo o mundo, a formação universitária em Jornalismo tende a incorporar práticas curriculares ou extracurriculares como forma prioritária de socialização profissional para futuros graduados. Por meio delas, os alunos adquirem habilidades e conhecimentos que aplicarão ao longo de sua carreira. Este artigo analisa a experiência de estudantes de Jornalismo que realizam estágios na mídia e nos gabinetes de comunicação, contrastando ambos setores com respeito a condições de trabalho, rotinas profissionais e nível de satisfação dos alunos. O trabalho de campo é baseado em um questionário realizado para estudantes das universidades espanholas de Málaga e Complutense de Madrid (n=208) que concluíram estágios no último ano. Os resultados mostram que os estágios em gabinetes geralmente são caracterizados por uma maior remuneração, jornadas mais curtas e menos tarefas por dia, entre outras constatações. Além disso, são mais frequentes nos departamentos de comunicação os contatos com o tutor da empresa e as correções de texto, enquanto pressões exercidas pelos superiores, instituições ou anunciantes e dilemas éticos não são tão comuns. Portanto, o nível de satisfação do aluno é maior neste setor do que na mídia, apesar de poucos mostrarem a determinação de se dedicar no futuro ao campo da comunicação corporativa.*

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *estágios de mídia; rotinas de mídia; departamentos de relações públicas; mídia; Jornalismo.*

INTRODUCTION

In most countries where it is a university degree, higher education in Journalism tends to incorporate extracurricular internships in the media and PR companies. This activity plays a key role in the professional socialization of future journalists (Gravengaard & Rimestad, 2011, 2014), since it allows them to enter a community whose original members transfer routines, values, and knowledge to them, which they will apply throughout their entire career.

Internships confer technical skills, but they also shape the vision that students have about the profession (Cotter, 2010; Pestano, Rodríguez Wangüemert, & Del Ponti, 2011), functioning as a laboratory where they confront the content assimilated in class and the skills they have with the demands of the labor world (García-Borrego & Gómez-Calderón, 2018).

They are also –needless to say– one of the preferred routes of access to the labor market: not surprisingly, in Spain, most media writers have done internships prior to their first contract (Asociación de la Prensa de Madrid, 2018).

Proof of the fundamental role that internships play in the training of Journalism students is their progressive inclusion in the study plans of the degree in the form of optional or compulsory subjects depending on the case (Royal Decree 1393/2007, of October 29).

In recent years, the possibility of doing internships in PR companies has increased, in quantitative terms, to the point that in universities such as the Complutense de Madrid, these types of entities offer the greatest number of places for students, above traditional media such as the press, radio or television (Pérez-Serrano, Rodríguez-Barba, & Rodríguez-Pallares, 2015).

In this research, the authors propose to delve into the different routines and conditions that characterize the internships in the media or in PR companies, based on the experience of Journalism students from the Spanish universities of Malaga (UMA) and Complutense de Madrid (UCM) during the 2017-2018 academic year.

STATE OF THE ART

The internship system in the Journalism degree

Internships in companies, despite being a generalized activity, have different characteristics in each country. In Spain, they are regulated by Royal Decree 592/2014, of July 11, which expands the first regulations approved in this regard by the Royal Decree 1497/1981, of June 19, and establishes the minimum precepts from which the universities subsequently develop their agreements with collaborating entities. In a generic way, the internships are conducted during the last two years of

the degree, once 50% of the degree credits have been met, and they have, in the case of Journalism, a minimum duration of three months, with the possibility of successive extensions. As for working conditions, the Royal Decree is imprecise: in the section referring to schedules, it states that “it will be ensured that [the internships] are compatible with the students’ academic, training, and representation activities” (article 5) (Real Decreto 592/2014, 2014), without such compatibility implying an imposition for the companies. Likewise, the norm says nothing about the students’ remuneration, leaving its regulation to the discretion of each university. This implies that very few universities stipulate anything in this regard: of the 38 that teach Journalism in Spain, only five –Pompeu Fabra, Autònoma de Barcelona, Carlos III de Madrid, Málaga and Sevilla– establish precise financial requirements.

Depending on the geographical area studied, internships are located at a different point in the career and are prolonged in different ways: for example, in Sweden and Norway they tend to happen in the last years and last up to six months (Willig, 2016), while in Denmark the duration is one year or year and a half, and they occur halfway through the degree (Gravengaard & Rimestad, 2014). In Germany, they begin once university studies are completed and are called *voluntariat*, lasting up to 24 months (Fröhlich & Holtz-Bacha, 2009).

In addition, internships do not present a homogeneous pattern in terms of remuneration: this one is high in the Nordic countries (for example, Danish *novice journalists* earn USD\$2,700 per month, equivalent to 60% of the national average salary), scarce in Germany, and nonexistent, to give an example, in Canada, although this aspect differs from one province to another (Salamon, 2015).

There are also countries –particularly, the United Kingdom and the United States– where internships, despite being linked to the degree, lack specific regulations, making it difficult to generically determine the conditions under which they are developed (Willig, 2016).

Something similar occurs in Latin America, where internships are part of the curriculum of most of Journalism faculties, but it is the students themselves who must contact the companies and agree on the terms of their collaboration; thus, the conditions differ markedly from one center to another. This is how Del-Arco (2015) documents it in universities, both public and private, in Mexico, Peru, Nicaragua, Ecuador and Chile.

A feature shared by all the internship systems integrated in the Journalism training, regardless of the geographic area, is its academic rather than labor nature, meaning that those who conduct their internships in the media or communication departments lack any type of coverage beyond student insurance (Gollmitzer, 2014).

Paradoxically, this precarious situation tends to go hand in hand with another feature common to all the cases analyzed: the high level of demand to which the students are subjected, who frequently conduct tasks typical of hired personnel, and for the same number of hours; this is shown by Lamuedra (2007), Standing (2011), Segarra, Páramo, and Puebla (2012), García-Borrego and Roses (2016), and García-Madariaga and Arasanz-Esteban (2019), among others.

Generic approaches to the object of study

In recent years, it has been possible to see an increase in the interest of researchers in the study of extracurricular internships associated with the Journalism degree. Even so, the number of works available is limited and, in general, they either do not discriminate between the different types of companies or focus on experience in the media, without analyzing the divergent features that the performance in PR companies can offer to students.

In Spain, a first approach to the internships field was conducted, almost two decades ago, by Cantalapiedra, Coca, and Bezunartea (2000). Their conclusions already revealed a characteristic that seems intrinsic to the system: the performance by students of tasks typical of staff journalists, even if, in most cases, internships were unpaid. In the companies analyzed –all based in the Basque Country– there was evidence of an excessive volume of students, which led the authors to consider the possibility that the labor market would enter a recessive spiral, as the media could refrain from hiring new professionals if their tasks were assumed, without any type of economic remuneration, by the personnel in training.

Later, Blanco (2005), based on a survey applied to 40 students of the Universidad de Málaga, warned about another particularity that unfortunately seems widespread in this area: the excessive length of the working days, which systematically violates the schedules agreed on. This circumstance, along with the fact that in 35% of the cases they had not received remuneration, did not prevent Blanco's interviewees from showing a high rate of satisfaction with the internships (90% of positive scores), since they considered that they were the ideal way to get a contract, in the short or medium term, thus reinforcing the condition of preferential way of labor insertion that we previously attributed to this activity.

In addition to external internships –the most common– there are others called curricular, which are part of the study plans of Spanish degrees, and usually occur in the last year of the degree. Lamuedra (2007) studied these, in an analysis of 100 reports of students from the Universidad Carlos III de Madrid, that shows few surprises: although this modality of initiation to the profession is subject to more demanding controls than extracurricular practices, the author identifies

the same problems, i.e., excessively long hours and a volume of tasks similar to that of the hired personnel.

The agreements' conditions, however, generally do not allow us to intuit these dysfunctions. This is evident in the works of Ortiz-Sobrino, Peinado-Miguel, and Zapata-Palacios (2014), and Pérez-Serrano et al. (2015), who, based on the study of 1,396 internship offers convened by the Universidad Complutense de Madrid, conclude that the average working day for students is 5.3 hours –a reasonable figure, although it may seem unrealistic. Beyond the official conditions, the authors denounce as the system's main deficiency the fact that there are no controls that prevent the disguised substitution of workers, something that seems frequent in the analyzed autonomous region.

The remuneration-hours relationship has been addressed in two recent publications, signed by García-Borrego and Roses (2016) and García-Borrego, Roses, and Farias (2017). Taking as a starting point a questionnaire made to media and PR companies students based in Malaga (n=33), the authors offer some objective parameters that show a clear gap between the work entrusted and the financial compensation received during the internship: most of those interviewed (63.7%) earn between 301 and 400 euros per month, but their hours reach levels close to those of any staff professional (6.6 hours on average). Perhaps because of this, the assessment of the internships' conditions is overall low –it does not reach the approved in 30% of the cases–, although the overall satisfaction expressed by the students, as in Blanco (2005), is much higher.

Beyond the Spanish scope, training internships in PR companies have not had the continuous attention of the academy, as warned by Gollmitzer (2014) and Salamon (2015), although, in all the countries studied, Journalism training is not conceived without an extracurricular internship period during which students perfect the knowledge and skills acquired in the classroom.

Nevertheless, perhaps due to its definitive institutionalization, in recent years there have been international approaches with a descriptive purpose (Fröhlich & Holtz-Bacha, 2009; Standing, 2011; Willig, 2016), very useful when establishing comparative models, along with others that focus their attention on the impact that internships have on students, especially in how they internalize professional routines –after all, the basis of journalistic work. In this same vein, Gravengaard & Rimestad (2014) state that a good part of the teaching-learning process takes place tacitly, i.e., the future journalists assimilate the work guidelines without an explicit transmission from the staff.

The values and aspirations of the students who do internships, as well as their evolution over the years, have also been addressed. Regarding both questions, Bjørnsen, Hovden, and Ottosen (2007) conclude that students, as they accumulate experience, tend to go from an idealistic conception of the profession to a more pragmatic one, stripping away some of the principles that animated their initial vocation.

MEDIA VS. PR COMPANIES: A LITTLE-EXPLORED COMPARISON

Until now, little attention has been paid to the differences that, from the labor point of view, separate work in the media from that conducted in PR companies, neither from the point of view of staff professionals nor, much less, trainees. The analyzes that include workers from both fields in their sample, moreover, do not usually make distinctions among them, and treat the data aggregately, preventing gauging the divergences that may occur depending on the nature of the entities.

However, in the last decade, in Spain there has been research that, tangentially, allow the detection of conflicting features in the conditions and routines that govern the work in each of these segments.

Thus, a study sponsored by the Andalusian Labor Relations Council (Rodríguez-Piñero, Cruz, & De Soto, 2008) found differentiated patterns in the regional communication sector: while the predominant global remuneration oscillated between 1000 and 1500 euros, the largest group of professionals employed in PR companies (36%) declared higher monthly income, between 1500 and 2000 euros. By type of company, it was also the latter who showed the highest level of satisfaction as a place to work (7.3 points out of 10), compared to those who worked in the media.

Similarly, in a study on the consequences of the crisis based on a thousand surveys conducted among members of the Spanish Press Associations Federation (FAPE, by its Spanish acronym) Roses (2011) detected that PR companies' employees were, along with those working on television, those who had the best salary, far above those of digital press, radio, and magazines.

Based on a survey of journalists located in Galicia (n=673), Túniz & Martínez-Solana (2014) highlighted that all professionals, except those who worked in PR companies and on television, produced five or more news pieces a day. Nevertheless, even between these two groups there were notable differences: while in the television networks the majority used to produce between three and four pieces a day, in PR companies the figure dropped to between one and two.

This apparently more uncongested routine also had its counterpart in terms of professional satisfaction. Thus, in seven-items questionnaire, PR companies' employees were the most satisfied in terms of future expectations, work climate, recognition within the company, available resources, and working conditions. In activity and in salary they occupied the second position, surpassed, respectively, by digital journalists and television journalists.

In the field of extracurricular internships, García-Borrego and Gómez-Calderón (2018) concluded, according to a questionnaire answered by students from the Universidad de Málaga, that students who conduct their internships in the media dedicate more hours per day to them than their colleagues in PR companies (6.6 as opposed to 5.1), they produce more pieces (4.6 versus 3) and have less time for each of them (about 50 minutes, and 75 for the other segment). Likewise, in communication departments, students seem to suffer to a lesser extent from pressure from their bosses, the need to be productive, lack of time and material resources, and ignorance of the issues addressed. Consequently, their satisfaction is higher in almost all the aspects considered by the authors: remuneration, stability, hours, workload, company policy, and relationship with colleagues or superiors.

METHODOLOGY

Considering the academic contributions available, this research was designed to delve into the differences between the internships conducted in the media and in PR companies, based on the experience of the Journalism students in Spain. As the first specific objective (O1), we proposed to determine to what extent the general conditions faced by students in one group and in the other differ, specifically in terms of schedules and remuneration. Secondly (O2), it was interesting to detect the professional routines applied more frequently in the media and in PR companies, with special attention to those habits or situations that could collide with the deontological principles of the profession. Finally, we saw it pertinent to inquire about the level of satisfaction expressed by the students of both sectors with the way in which internships are developed and the gains they extract from them (O3).

As a research method, we considered that the most appropriate was the survey by means of a questionnaire. This would be distributed in two Spanish universities, the Complutense de Madrid (UCM) and the one of Málaga (UMA), to increase the scope of the universe regarding other studies. In addition to meeting convenience criteria, both institutions were interesting because they presented well-differentiated features in terms of the number of new students (660 in Madrid, compared to 130 in Malaga), geographical location (south-central part of the country), and how long has the degree existed (the UCM's Faculty of

Information Sciences started in 1972; that of the UMA, twenty years later). By focusing our attention on two different academic realities, we sought to give the sample greater consistency.

To elaborate the questionnaire, we used as reference publications on internships in PR companies (Blanco, 2005; Lamuedra, 2007; Gollmitzer, 2014; Gravengaard & Rimestad, 2014; Salamon, 2015, among others) and works related to professional routines and working conditions in the field of communication (Weaver & Willnat, 2012; Túniz & Martínez-Solana, 2014; Suárez-Villegas, 2015; Asociación de Prensa de Madrid, 2018). The final model consisted of 29 questions of different types –open, closed, multiple response, and articulated through Likert scales– distributed in four thematic axes: a) registration information (gender, age, university of origin, total duration of the internships, last internships conducted, company in which they have been carried out, and estimated size of the newsroom); b) internship's conditions (period of completion, informative section assigned in the case of the media, and remuneration); c) professional routines (hours worked per day, average number of pieces produced per day, time available for writing each text, contacts with the company tutor and academic tutor, intervention in the approach to pieces, corrections and changes imposed by superiors, and pressures suffered), and d) level of satisfaction, measured from a selection of ten items. The universe was made up of students who conducted internships during the 2017-2018 academic year, a figure that in the case of the Universidad Complutense de Madrid was 630 individuals and, in the UMA, reached 89, according to data provided by the employability services of each institution. The questionnaire was sent to email to the students of the last three promotions of the degree in Journalism of the aforementioned universities in two waves; the first, sent on October 15, 2018 and the second, a week later, on the 22nd. Finally, a month after the first wave, the questionnaire was closed with a total of 227 responses; after debugging errors and duplications, 208 remained.

Sample description

65.9% of those surveyed were women (table 1), a figure that corresponds to the rate of enrollment in the Journalism degrees taught in Spain. The average age was 22.9 years (SD=1.97), with maximums of 34 and minimums of 22, although the bulk of the sample ranged between 21 and 24 (82.4% of the total). Fourth year students were the majority (45.7%), followed by third year students (22.6%), those who only had individual credits pending (15.4%), those who claimed to have completed their studies (11, 5%), and those enrolled in master's degrees (4.8%). More than half (58.7%) had worked in small companies –from one to twenty employees– while the rest had worked in medium-sized (23.3%) and large (18%) entities.

		PR companies	Media
N		62 (29.8%)	146 (70.2%)
Female		69.4%	64.4%
Age	Average (SD)	22.6 (1.67)	23 (2.08)
	Median and mode	22	23
Year	Third	22.6%	22.6%
	Fourth	51.6%	43.2%
	Individual credits	8.1%	18.5%
UCM		69.4%	73.3%
Size	Small (1-20)	88.7%	45.8%
	Medium (21-99)	8.1%	29.9%
	Large (100 or more)	3.2%	24.3%
During summer		59.7%	71.9%

Table 1. Sample description*Source: Own elaboration.*

By sectors, media internships represented 70.2% of the total; the most common sections in which these had been conducted were Local (20.7% of cases), Culture (15.4%), National (13.5%), and Society (13%).

RESULTS

Registration data

The media seems slightly more inclined than the PR companies to recruit men and veteran students. The latter is observed not so much in the small differences registered by the average age or median and the mode (23 years versus 22), but in the courses of origin of the respondents: in the media, students who have finished most of their studies but keep their files open with remaining individual credits are much more frequent, to the point that almost one in five declares to be in this situation.

Regarding the companies' size, it is observed that the vast majority of students who conduct internships in PR companies do so in small corporations (88.7%), while in the media there is a greater proportion of medium and large entities (combined, they add up to 54.2% of the total). Institutions with more than a hundred employees are concentrated in the UCM, while in Malaga those of intermediate size are more common, something logical if we consider the dimensions of the communication sector in the province of affiliation of each university.

On the other hand, internships in PR companies are more widespread at the UMA than at the UCM, and in the former they show a more balanced distribution throughout the year: 40.3% take place between October and June, twelve points above the rate achieved in the media segment.

Internship conditions

Students who conduct internships in PR companies receive 8% more remuneration than their peers in the media, 315.05 euros (SD=173.00) compared to 291.73 (SD=137.84). The median and mode are also higher in this area, with a difference of 60 euros in both cases.

The economic variable shows a high dispersion. Hence, the second most frequent record in the remuneration section is the one at the lower end of the scale, the equivalent of zero euros, which is what 10.5% of students from PR companies and 11% of the media declare to receive (all of them from the UCM, where there is no minimum salary established by agreement). Figure 1 shows how, in the tranches ranging from 351 to 750 euros, the majority are PR companies' students, while the media students are distributed to a greater extent in the range between 151 to 350 euros. However, there is an appreciable percentage of students of PR companies who receive between 1 and 150 euros (12.3% of the total), something not detected in the other segment.

Regarding the hours worked per day and the number of pieces produced per day, the differences are even more consistent (table 2): thus, overall, the hours of those who do their internships in the media exceed 65 minutes those of PR companies, without any appreciable differences depending on the university of origin of the respondents. Students from PR companies are more frequently located in the section that goes from three to five hours a day, while it is more common to find their colleagues from the media in the range above six hours.

One of the reasons for this divergence may lie in the type of schedules. Continuous shifts predominate in both sectors -morning or afternoon-, but split shifts are much more frequent in the media (27.4%) than in PR companies (3.2%), leading to an unbalance in the overall count.

In general, students who conduct internships in the media usually produce 1.35 more pieces a day than their colleagues dedicated to corporate communication. Given that the average in the latter is three texts, we would have 45% more material produced in the newsrooms than in the other segment, a phenomenon common to the two universities analyzed.

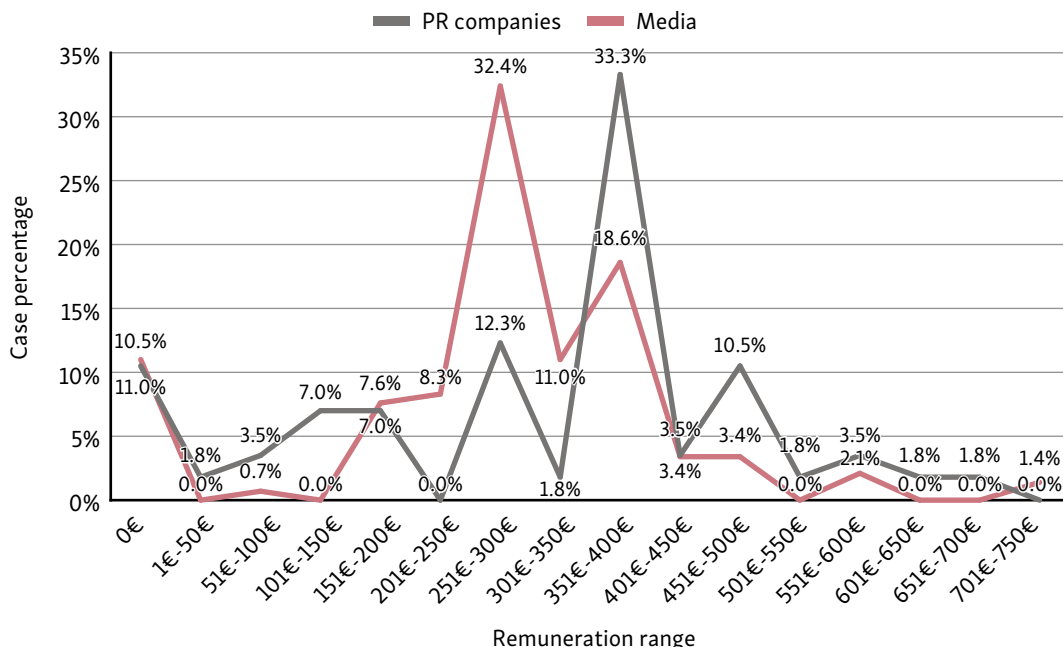


Figure 1. Internships' remuneration

Source: Own elaboration.

		PR companies	Media
Daily hours	Average	5h 05m (SD=0h 55m)	6h 11m (SD=1h 41m)
	Median	5h 00m	6h 00m
	Mode	5h 00m	5h 00m
Daily pieces	Average	3,01 (SD=3.18)	4,36 (SD=3.47)
	Median	2	4
	Mode	1	2

Table 2. Internships' conditions in media and PR companies

Source: Own elaboration.

Professional routines

Around a quarter of the surveyed students always propose the topics on which they are going to work. Nevertheless, in PR companies there is a higher proportion of students who never do it (14.5% compared to 9%) or only rarely (27.4% versus 20.7%), which shows a work dynamic initially more autonomous in the media that, however, does not seem to be transferred to other phases of content development, since 13.7% of those surveyed in the sector affirm that they never comment on the approaches (14.5% in PR companies).

	PR companies	Media
Reduce bias	3.4%	2.2%
Increase bias	11.9%	6.5%
Capture the audience's interest	20.3%	27.3%
Provide precision	49.2%	43.9%
Style/spelling/grammar	44.1%	54.7%

Table 3. Reasons for correcting news pieces

Source: Own elaboration.

Among the professional routines that come into play in internships, the guiding work of those who are entrusted with tutoring tasks, or even by fellow staff members, is of crucial importance since effective learning depends on it in many cases. This usually results in the revision of the pieces made by the students, which according to the results of the questionnaire is done less frequently in the media than in PR companies. The reasons for correcting the students' pieces also differ (table 3): while in newsrooms they are usually aimed at capturing the audience's interest or focusing on issues of style, spelling, and grammar, in PR companies the edition it is more common to increase the bias of the pieces or to give them greater precision.

In the same way, there are divergences regarding the contact of the students with their two tutors, the professional –appointed by the company and in charge of the daily monitoring of the work carried out during the internships– and the academic –the person in charge selected by the university. According to the respondents, it is the professional tutor who maintains a more fluid relationship with them, but the differences are obvious depending on the nature of the company: thus, in PR companies, most of the students turn to him daily (53.2%, more than double that in the media), while in newsrooms those who have never dealt with their tutor predominate (27.4%, compared to 8.1% in PR companies) (table 4).

The academic head, on the other hand, plays a subsidiary role in both cases, since 93.6% of the PR companies' students do not know him or have never contacted him, a figure that reaches 95.2% in the other segment analyzed.

As for the ethical dilemmas faced by students during their internships (figure 2), the questionnaire reveals that more than half of those who work in the media (57.5%) have signed a text that they did not like due to the changes imposed to the original, and of them, 41.7% have done so always or regularly. In PR companies, these figures drop to 47.5% in the first case and 24.2% in the second.

	Professional tutor		Academic tutor	
	PR companies	Media	PR companies	Media
Does not know him	4.8%	11.6%	46.8%	45.2%
Never	8.1%	27.4%	46.8%	50%
Once a month	3.2%	14.4%	3.2%	4.1%
Several times a month	6.5%	7.5%	1.6%	0%
Once a week	1.6%	4.1%	0%	0.7%
Several times a week	22.6%	11%	0%	0%
Daily	53.2%	24%	1.6%	0%

Table 4. Frequency of consultations with tutors

Source: Own elaboration.

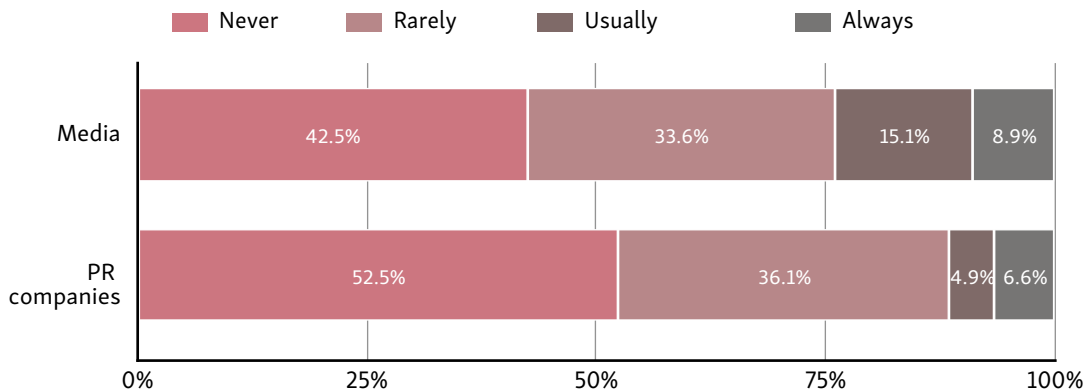


Figure 2. Has signed something he/she dislikes due to the changes to the original

Source: Own elaboration.

As for other ethical questions, the results are more even, which is observed in the rate of students who have conducted tasks contrary to their ethics (50% in the media, 41.9% in PR companies) or in that of those who, in addition, have done it regularly (13% versus 9.7%). Faced with this type of situation, students from PR companies seem more inclined to argue their position with company managers (72% of cases compared to 68.6%), and also to seek support from their colleagues (50%, versus 39.1%).

Internship satisfaction

Of the ten items that made up the scale of satisfaction with the internships collected in the questionnaire ($\alpha=0.840$), the students of the PR companies are more satisfied in five, while those of the media clearly stand out only in one variable. In the rest, the distances seem insufficient if a minimum threshold of 10% is established (table 5).

	PR companies	Media	Diff.
Satisfaction with the company tutor	3.46	2.81	▲ +23.1%
Satisfaction with the academic tutor	1.78	1.66	▲ +7.2%
Satisfaction with the company's workers	3.8	4.03	▼ -5.7%
Satisfaction with other interns	3.48	3.95	▼ -11.9%
Satisfaction with superiors	3.25	3.29	▼ -1.2%
Satisfaction with schedules	3.87	3.25	▲ +19.1%
Satisfaction with the internship stability	3.08	2.63	▲ +17.1%
Satisfaction with the workload	3.44	3.09	▲ +11.3%
Satisfaction with promotion opportunities	2.17	2.32	▼ -6.5%
Satisfaction with remuneration	2.48	2.01	▲ +23.4%

Table 5. Average satisfaction in PR companies and the media

Source: Own elaboration.

Thus, those who have worked in PR companies state that they feel more satisfied with the work of the company tutor (23.1% more on average), with the hours (+19.1%), with the stability of their position (+17.1%), with the workload (+11.3%), and with the remuneration received (+23.4%). Media students value better only the relationships maintained with the rest of the members of the newsroom, both those in the same category and the most veteran.

Despite everything, the latter show a greater feeling of belonging to the sector in which they have conducted the internship: only 5.5% would like to make the leap to institutional communication, while one in four PR companies' students would prefer to change and continue their career in the media. In addition, those who work in newsrooms are very clear regarding that they want to continue doing this type of work: this is stated by 67.1% of them, compared to a much lower rate of PR companies' students who would remain in their segment (32, 8%). In this group, in fact, uncertainty predominates –almost a quarter are not clear about what to do in the future; on the contrary, in the media, the most common position is that of wanting to change companies but developing functions similar to those performed during internships (table 6).

	PR companies	Media
Wants to stay in the company	14.8%	21.9%
Wants to change company but not sector (media/PR companies)	18%	45.2%
Wants to change sectors (from media to PR companies or vice versa)	23%	5.5%
Not clear	37.7%	22.6%
Wants to leave the communication field	6.6%	4.8%

Table 6. Future expectations of interns

Source: Own elaboration.

CONCLUSIONS

The analysis of the questionnaire's variables has made it possible to establish numerous divergences in the Journalism students' internships depending if they are conducted in the media or in PR companies. The general impression is that one type of entity and another provide students with very different professional experiences, and although the corporate information sector exhibits, overall, more positive indicators, with the consequent increase in the level of student satisfaction, this does not seem to influence the expectations for the future expressed by those surveyed.

Our first objective (O1) focused on confronting the basic working conditions of internships in the media and in PR companies. Following a constant pattern, the latter present better averages in all the aspects analyzed: higher pay, shorter and more concentrated hours in the morning or afternoon, and fewer daily tasks. All of this is in line with the antecedents found in the scientific literature, according to which PR companies provide a more satisfactory work environment than any other type of company linked to journalism (Rodríguez-Piñero et al., 2008; Roses, 2011; Túniz & Martínez- Solana, 2014), apparently also in the field of internships.

The reality is that the students who join the media are forced, according to the results of our analysis, to do almost the same work as the staff journalists, which is hardly in the vein of the internships' training purposes, as has been denounced in Spain and in other countries for decades.

There are also clear differences regarding the second research objective (O2), referred to professional routines. In principle, the media seem to encourage more the student's initiative, who can propose news topics, but it is in PR companies where they can intervene with greater freedom in the approach of the content they produce, and where the tutoring work inherent to internships, by bosses

or fellow employees, occurs more frequently. In the same way, in PR companies the contact between student and company tutor seems closer, perhaps due to the lower workload detected in them, with the consequent increase in availability of those who have the mission of instructing students.

Even in deontological matters, and despite the corporate interest of PR companies, the media are perceived as the most damaging institutions, with more frequent collisions between the students' criteria and the interests of the company. This could be due both to greater effective coercion within the newsrooms and to a more pronounced sensitivity among students to any attempt to mediate their work when they produce purely informative content. Be that as it may, it would be advisable to delve into this aspect in further research since, if the imbalance in favor of the PR companies in the field of ethics is confirmed, it would be necessary to reconsider some common places that are widespread among journalism professionals.

Finally, we tried to find differences in the level of satisfaction shown by students according to whether they had done their internship in the media or in PR companies (O3). In line with all the above, those who have done so in the latter give better scores to most of the items analyzed: remuneration, workload, schedules, work of the tutors, and stability.

The balance of the stay in one type of company and in another seems uneven. But the paradox of the results is that, despite the more favorable working conditions, few students show the determination to dedicate themselves in the future to the field of corporate communication, or to remain in it if they have already been in the sector, compared to the majority desire detected among the media students to remain in it. This points to an initial disaffection, probably related to the vocational component of journalism and the advertising dimension of the work of PR companies, which not even a rewarding experience in the framework of internships seems capable of alleviating.

It should be noted that there were not significant divergences between the responses to none of the variables of the questionnaire from Malaga students and those from the UCM. This means that the patterns presented here may be valid, beyond the geographic context of the respondents, on a national scale, which reinforces, in our opinion, their scientific scope. It remains for future research to confront these findings with the predominant uses in other countries and regions.

Internships in journalistic companies represent a crucial component in the acquisition of knowledge and skills by university students. At present, in Western Europe and Latin America, and in a less regulated way in Anglo-Saxon countries, they have become an essential requirement to complete the training

of future graduates. The conditions vary depending on the case, and the level of institutionalization differs from one territory to another. In the same way, as the results of our work have shown, the benefit that the students obtain from the internships depends in many cases on the nature of the entity that welcomes them, with a clear contrast between media and PR companies.

Perhaps it would be advisable to establish better defined regulatory frameworks, which could reduce the discretion observed by Del-Arco (2015) and Willig (2016) and guarantee the effectiveness of the learning process inherent to professional practices. In this regard, recently graduated journalists would face their immersion in the labor market with greater guarantees of success.

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