

Rethinking De-Westernization in Communication Studies: The Ibero-American Movement in International Publishing

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This study joins the emerging de-Westernization discourse within communication studies and empirically compares the diversity of Ibero-American, Western, and regional journals at three different levels: authorship, editorial board membership, and citations. Our findings show that through low geopolitical diversity and high regional shares in authorship, editorial board membership, and citations, the Ibero-American region uses its structural, linguistic, and cultural resources to offer an alternative universe to mainstream English-based communication research. The article argues that the process of trailblazing the pathways to de-Westernizing communication scholarship is best accomplished when it is actively led by peripheral regions.

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In recent decades, internationalization has become a trending topic in communication studies (Wiedemann & Meyen, 2016). Research shows that internationalization has mainly contributed to a wider involvement of the Western-type, English-speaking scientific communities and that academic domains with different linguistic and cultural traditions have not been involved to a significant extent (Demeter, 2020). Accordingly, it has been argued that English-based, international science (produced by, mainly, scholars located in North America, the United Kingdom, Western Europe, and Australia) lacks geopolitical diversity at all important levels of analysis, and this includes, inextricably, editorial boards (EBs), citation patterns, and authorship trends. However, few studies have examined how the process of contestation from noncore regions unfolds at the practical level.

Ibero-America, a group of countries sharing cultural and linguistic features that comprises Spain, Portugal, and Latin America, is one of such noncore regions. This study focuses on the Ibero-American case through an analysis of its international contribution to communication scholarship. Based on the theoretical framework of de-Westernization (Waisbord & Mellado, 2014), this study examines the course of de-Westernization, contrasting some of the structural patterns of communication journals in the Ibero-American region alongside comparable Western and regional journals. Specifically, as a unique approach for the analysis of the structural features of a given academic field, it compares diversity at three different levels (authorship, EBs, and citation patterns), and shows that Ibero-American journals are less diverse than both Western and regional journals. Although diversity in academic knowledge production may be related to multiple and complex traits, such as race, gender, class, language, institutional affiliation, or geographical location (Chakravartty, Kuo, Grubbs, & McIlwain, 2018; Demeter & Goyanes, 2021), in this study it is understood as the relative level of endogamy or exogamy in networks established at three levels: EBs, citation patterns, and authorship trends. Accordingly, EBs, authorships and citation patterns are more diverse if scholars from many different geographic backgrounds participate in them. While this is a limited understanding of diversity, this approach is not unique in communication studies (Demeter, 2019; Lauf, 2005).

Besides uncovering lower diversity in general, we also found that the internal share of Ibero-American authors, EB members, and citations is significantly higher than the internal share values of regional journals. The concept of "internal share value" relates to the share of internal items in each set. For example, the internal share value of Ibero-American EBs is higher if there are more Ibero-American EB members, the internal share value of a regional journal's authorship is higher if the proportion of regional authors is higher, and the internal share value of a regional journal's citation pattern is higher if there are more regional citations for the journal's articles.

This relative lack of diversity is complemented with a wider variety of languages of publication and a unique open-access policy. We argue that all these features serve as academic resources that help the Ibero-American region develop an alternative scholarship to mainstream English-based communication research. Our findings also imply that, because of the growing presence of Scopus-indexed Ibero-American journals, the institutions of those scholars that tend to publish in Ibero-American journals now have better

chances to publish in Scopus. As the number of Scopus-indexed articles is an important factor in university rankings (Érdi, 2019), the contribution of Scopus-indexed Ibero-American journals might contribute to the de-Westernization of higher education as well, and it can help to raise the global visibility of Ibero-American higher education institutions and research (HEI) in the long run. As a set of distinguished scholars expressed it recently in an international manifesto, increasing diversity promotes inclusion, decentralizes knowledge production, and significantly contributes to the de-Westernization of a discipline in terms of languages, approaches, publications, and research policies (Navarro et al., 2022).

The de-Westernization of Communication Research

Western dominance in communication studies may be explained by several historical facts. Communication studies consolidated as an academic discipline in the decades after the Second World War and initially, its agenda was associated with the military, intelligence, and foreign policy agencies, with financial support provided by U.S. foundations (Albuquerque & Lycarião, 2018). As Pooley and Park (2013) claim, media studies started with propaganda research in the United States, and most of the early renowned scholars of the discipline were affiliated with American institutions. Western dominance in communication education can also be explained by historical facts, since the first higher education institutions that offered communication courses were located in Western countries.

However, in the past few decades, many communication scholars have criticized the Western domination of the field. Scholars from different world regions have analyzed the nature of the unbalanced field from Latin America (Perez, 1990), from Africa (Asante, 1988), Asia (Miike, 2014), the Middle East (Al-Ghazzi, 2014), and Eastern Europe (Demeter, 2018). Scholars also argued that it is not enough to criticize Western-centrism—non-Western regions should also provide alternative knowledge (Asante, Miike, & Yin, 2013).

Besides authors from emerging world regions who have called for cultural essentialism and non-Western metatheories in communication research, Western-based scholars, too, have started to criticize Western domination (Gunaratne, 2010; Waisbord, 2019; Wang, 2011). Waisbord and Mellado (2014) argue that the concept of de-Westernization lacks a formal and universally accepted definition. For Western scholars, it refers to a “shift in academic knowledge to broaden the analysis by considering experiences, research findings, and theoretical frameworks developed in the rest of the world,” while outside the West, “de-Westernization is viewed as a necessary shift to reorient intellectual work against academic Eurocentrism” (Waisbord & Mellado, 2014, p. 362). Accordingly, de-Westernization can refer either to the development of a more inclusive discipline within the so-called international—that is, the Eurocentrist—framework, or to a more revolutionary attempt to make the unipolar universe field of communication studies a “multipolar pluriverse” (Reiter, 2018), in which different geopolitical locations coexist and contribute equally to knowledge-making.

The topicality of the de-Westernization narrative has been recently affirmed by an intersectional discourse with a focus on a lack of racial and gender diversity in communication studies (Chakravartty et al., 2018). Scholars found that even in countries like Canada, where society is thought to be more inclusive than elsewhere, racial diversity in the field is relatively low (Hirji, Jiwani, & McAllister, 2020). Thus, while our study is limited to the analysis of national diversity of communication journals, our results can contribute

to a narrower discussion about the diversity and inclusiveness of the discipline (Goyanes, Demeter, Grané, Albarrán-Lozano, & Gil de Zúñiga, 2021).

Different Aspects and Implications of de-Westernization

De-Westernization is a complex process with several features of global knowledge production (Demeter, 2020), including not just the growing presence of non-Western academic journals, institutions, and authors but also a geographically more balanced presence of ontologies, perspectives, methodologies, and research subjects (Waisbord & Mellado, 2014). However, these different levels of knowledge production are tightly interwoven, and each aspect has an influence on the others. Researchers found evidence of the national diversity of journal authors and EB members (Goyanes & Demeter, 2020), and the interconnectedness of authorship and citations is obvious (Gelman & Gibleman, 1999). In past studies, national diversity is measured by the country of scholars' affiliation, and a given body, such as an EB, is more diverse if it has board members that are affiliated with institutions in different countries (Goyanes & Demeter, 2020; Lauf, 2005). Research also found that by guiding the type of research (topics, methodologies, perspectives) that can be published, EB members set the standards of scholarly publishing in a subject field (Pan & Zhang, 2014). Finally, university rankings and international funding bodies work with scientific databases when assessing the performance of both individual scholars and academic institutions (Érdi, 2019; Goyanes & Demeter, 2021). For example, two of the most popular international university rankings, the Times Higher Education Ranking (THE) and the Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World University Ranking, calculate scholarly performance from Scopus data (Krauskopf, 2018; Stack, 2021). Therefore, the national diversity of EBs, journal authorship, research topics, approaches, and the international visibility of both individual researchers and institutions are interrelated and, in theory, significant changes in one aspect can contribute to changes in other related features of academic knowledge production. Thus, while the focus of our article is limited to a quantitative analysis of journal EBs, authorship, and citation networks, we argue that it is reasonable to assume that a quantitatively measurable de-Westernization of the field might have implications on other aspects such as the visibility of non-Western approaches and perspectives, as well as the visibility of non-Western institutions in the long run.

Ibero-America in Communication Research

There is extensive historical research on the development of communication studies in Ibero-America (Beltrán Salmón, 2000). However, in most cases, only national histories of communication research have been analyzed, without considering the wider regional context, and, consequently, these studies lack a coherent Ibero-American focus (Mellado, 2012).

The origins of the professional academic field in Latin America are linked to organizations such as the Centro Internacional de Estudios Superiores de Comunicación para América Latina (CIESPAL), created in 1959 following a recommendation issued at UNESCO's 10th General Conference. Although CIESPAL was a contribution in terms of shaping the field of communication in Latin America, it negatively influenced the social sense of the profession through an ambiguous conceptualization of the activity assimilated in a distorted form of the American model of the School of Mass Communication (Marques de Melo, 1988). Because of the absence of an adequate number of scholars who, before the 1970s, devoted themselves to

the systematic study of communication in most Latin American countries, the region was much more exposed to the implementation and reception of the CIESPAL foreign model than other areas were. In contrast, opportunities for the “natural” growth of the Latin American perspective of communication were limited from the beginning (Mellado, 2010).

Communication studies as an academic discipline is relatively young in Spain as well, with approximately five decades of history (Martínez-Nicolás, 2008). As Fernández-Quijada and Masip (2013) noted, the first communication faculties opened in the early 1970s in Madrid, Barcelona, and Navarra, and they mainly trained journalists and advertising and audiovisual professionals. The expansion of the discipline happened only around the early 1990s (Martínez-Nicolás & Saperas-Lapierda, 2016) and it led to an exponential growth in both the number of faculties that offered communication degrees and the number of publications (Masip, 2005).

We have only limited knowledge of the history of Portuguese communication scholarship, but there are studies dealing with communication subdisciplines such as public relations or intercultural communication (Nobre & Filimon, 2017). Gonçalves and colleagues (2013) point out that the first courses that contained elements of communication scholarship started in the 1960s, and—a decade earlier than in Spain—Portugal experienced a boom in journalism and communication studies in the 1980s. The visibility of the discipline was further increased by the Communication and Society Research Center, founded in 2002, which aimed to strengthen communication sciences beyond the Portuguese context, with a particular emphasis on Portuguese- and Spanish-speaking regions.

Despite the efforts to improve the level of research participation and visibility, Ibero-America is still in a peripheral position within the world-system of knowledge production. Extant research has documented the most salient structural factors that account for the region’s underrepresentation. Prior studies have suggested that unequal access to resources that would allow Ibero-American scholars to participate in expensive international conferences, acquire current literature, or pay for academic services such as proofreading and translation impose a serious burden on scholars working in the region. Also, the expansion of English as the sole academic lingua franca further disadvantages Ibero-American scholars since most countries in the region do not use English as an official language (Lillis, Hewings, Vladimirou, & Curry, 2010). As Barranquero (2011) argues, the historical and epistemological marginalization of Ibero-America and its character of “subalternity” with respect to Western regions have also resulted in disadvantages. Moreover, some of the salient topics of Ibero-American communication scholarship (communication for development, media education) are not pressing concerns on the Western agenda (Freelon, 2013).

Ibero-American Communication Studies in the Publishing System

Despite the serious obstacles to the international visibility of Ibero-American scholarship, the last decade has brought some changes. The number of Scopus-indexed Ibero-American journals has increased from zero to 45 over the past 20 years, and the share of Ibero-American communication journals in Scopus is now slightly more than 10%. As Table 1 shows, the pace of the growth of Ibero-American journals is considerably faster than the overall growth of the discipline. Moreover, researchers found that, besides an

exceptional growth in journal publishing, the Ibero-American region is a flagship of open-access publishing (Demeter, Major, & Jele, 2021).

Table 1. Number of Communication Journals Between 2000 and 2019 and the Share of Ibero-American Periodicals in Scimago.

Year	Journals (N)	Ibero-American journals (N)	Ibero-American share (%)
2019	445	45	10
2015	399	24	6
2010	233	9	4
2005	150	1	1
2000	233	0	0

The university and research systems show many common aspects in Ibero-America . Brazil, Spain, Mexico, and Argentina have a long tradition of public research free-access universities, and their university system is linked to a myriad of university-based, open-access, nonprofit scientific journals that make room for publication in languages other than English (Table 2).

Table 2. Open Access Ratio of Communication Journals Indexed in Scimago by Region (2020).

Region	Journals (N)	Open access (%)	Nonopen access (%)
Africa	4	25	75
Asia	15	40	60
EU 28	284	22	78
Middle East	4	50	50
Northern America	174	5	95
Ibero-America	46	87	13

On the level of publications, some countries in the region such as Brazil or Argentina have a history of developing accountability systems for journals and publications that are an official, state-funded alternative to English-focused, for-profit, impact-factor-based databases. Despite the fact that the region has unique regional databases such as Scielo (2018), many journals have decided to expand their international reach and promote indexing criteria to become indexed in Scopus. Thus, the number of indexed Ibero-American journals is growing quickly, and, we can assume that as a consequence of the calculations behind Scopus/Scimago rankings, the higher share of Ibero-American journals will result in higher positions on these lists if at least two interconnected conditions are met. First, since former research has found that EB national diversity has a significant effect on the national diversity of authors (Goyanes & Demeter, 2020), there are strong reasons to expect that if journal EBs of Scopus-indexed Ibero-American journals are less diverse and typically include Ibero-American EB members, they will most likely publish articles from Ibero-American authors.

Second, to be indexed in Scopus, journals must have a significant number of citations from other Scopus-indexed journals. To satisfy this requirement, journals aim to have as many readers as possible.

Consequently, they are typically published in languages that are spoken by many scholars, that is, mostly in English. The only exceptions are those journals that are written in Spanish or Portuguese since these two languages are spoken by hundreds of millions of potential readers, and, consequently, can receive a significant number of citations, which enable them to be indexed in Scopus. This linguistic characteristic also explains why Ibero-American countries typically collaborate with each other in international research, and there is empirical evidence that this is especially true in communication studies (Segado-Boj, Prieto-Gutiérrez, & Díaz-Campo, 2021). However, since the number of countries where the academic language is either Spanish or Portuguese is limited, the network of journal EBs, authors, and citations should be denser than that in either Western or other regional journals to get the necessary number of citations. Thus, we pose the following hypothesis:

H1: There are significant differences among Ibero-American, Western, and regional journals in terms of (a) authors, (b) citations, and (c) EB diversity.

To get better positions on international rankings, journals should be frequently cited. Ibero-America has two main languages across most countries: Portuguese and Spanish, which show structural and lexical similarities as both are romance languages. This common linguistic feature is linked to geographical, cultural, historical, and social commonalities. This context makes it natural that, for instance, an Argentinian scholar publishes in a Spanish or Chilean journal, or vice versa. According to Scopus, about 60% of the articles published in Scopus-indexed Ibero-American journals in communication are written in Spanish, 15% in Portuguese, and only 25% in English. Therefore, there are strong reasons to expect that the 75% of articles will be read and cited by people who speak one of the two main Ibero-American languages. Accordingly, we surmise that the citation networks of Scopus-indexed Ibero-American journals will be regionally focused and will show a low international diversity. The same holds for the share of Ibero-American authors and EB members, since they must be familiar with at least one of the two Ibero-American languages, which allows them to either write or review the submitted articles. Since neither Western journals nor regional journals have these restrictions, we hypothesize that:

H2: There are significant differences among Ibero-American, Western, and regional journals in terms of (a) author internal share (AIS), (b) citation internal share (CIS), and (c) EB internal share (EBIS).

Methods

Sample and Coding

To compare the diversity levels of (1) Ibero-American, (2) Western, and (3) regional journals, we extracted a random sample of communication journals indexed in Scimago in 2019 ($N = 445$). We considered as "regional" those journals that were published outside the Western world apart from Ibero-America. Thus, regional journals of our sample are published in the Middle East, Eastern Europe, Africa, or the Asiatic region. Western journals are those that are published in the Western world: in North America, the United Kingdom, Western Europe, and Australia. In accordance with the categorization of Scopus, we use the category "Ibero-American" to include all the Latin American countries, extended to include Spain and Portugal. This region shares several cultural, historical, social, institutional, geographical, and linguistic bonds (Cifuentes-Madrid, Couture, &

Llinàs-Audet, 2015) despite local contrasts. Accordingly, Elsevier's Scopus uses this category to distinguish the specific body of knowledge published in the region. In communication research, the following countries are listed in 2020 as Ibero-American countries in Scopus: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Jamaica, Mexico, Peru, Portugal, Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

Data were based on a random sample. In total, there were 455 Scopus-indexed communication journals published in 2019: 50 regional, 45 Ibero-American, and 350 Western journals. For each category, we randomly selected 35 journals for further analysis. We did not distinguish the journals' languages of publication when selecting the sample. In the case of the Western journals, we considered the SJR values as well. Similar to the well-known Impact Factor of the Web of Science, Scopus's Scimago Journal Rank (SJR) values refer to the impact of a given journal, basically measured by the number of citations for the published articles. Among the top-ranked journals with SJR values more than 1.1, there are no Ibero-American and regional journals. Thus, to be able to compare journals with similar ranks, the maximum SJR number for each category was established in 1.1. With this, we were able to use SJR numbers as a unique covariate in analysis.

The categorization was made in accordance with former research on diversities within communication and media studies (Goyanes & Demeter, 2021; Lauf, 2005). Data were collected by implementing a content analysis (see Appendix for the codebook and intercoder reliability). For measuring diversity, we categorized data on EBs, journal contents, and citations as per the aforementioned categorization. The distribution of the items was measured by Simpson's Reciprocal Index (Lauf, 2005). Following previous methodologies (Lauf, 2005), EB members were categorized by the geographic location of their current affiliation, without considering their origin or nationality. In accordance with Scopus, content and citations were categorized by the current affiliation (in the case of multiple affiliations: the first affiliation) of the first author and by the affiliation of the citing author. The categorization scheme of Scopus and, consequently, of our current research followed a geographical logic so, for example, those satellite American universities that were affiliated beyond the United States were categorized by the host country. The reason behind considering current affiliation—and not nationality or geography of the field where scholars do their research—was that this alone provided the public data by which not just researchers but also readers could develop their perceptions on national diversity.

Diversity was measured identically in all three groups (Ibero-American, Western, and regional), but the variables for the shares were measured differently to have a meaningful comparison. In the case of the Ibero-American group, we measured the share of Ibero-American content, citations, and EB members, but in the case of the regional group, we did not measure the Ibero-American, but the corresponding regional share. Thus, for example, in the case of an Eastern European journal, the regional share index for EBs measures the share of Eastern European EB members, the regional share index for journal content measures the share of Eastern European content, and so on. We did not apply sharing categories for the Western hub since we did not need this for our hypotheses. Citations (in both share and diversity) were measured as in-cites (citations to a given journal), therefore they refer to the location of the articles that cite the corresponding journals.

The results of the diversity calculations for each group can be seen as an online Appendix (Demeter, 2022). Diversity indices were calculated using the reciprocal Simpson's Diversity Index, which ranges from 0 to 1, where values closer to 0 indicate lower diversity. Share indices are represented by percentages. Thus, when, for example, Table A in the online appendix (Demeter, 2022) shows that the Ibero-American share in a journal's EB is 88, it means that 88% of the EB members of the corresponding journals are from the Ibero-American region.

Research Design and Analysis

To test our hypotheses, we ran six series of one-way analysis of covariance (ANCOVA). We introduced author diversity, citation diversity, EB diversity (calculated by Simpson's Reciprocal Diversity/Dominance Index), EBIS, CIS, and AIS as dependent variables, and the SJR value as a unique covariate. Finally, the journal geopolitical position was introduced as a fixed factor. We decided to run six series of one-way ANCOVA instead of two series of one-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) because there were no strong theoretical reasons to consider our dependent variables (diversity and internal share) as underlying constructs. In addition, we were interested in examining the effect of each dependent variable separately and not their effect as a whole. Data were unadjusted mean (M) \pm standard deviation (SD), unless otherwise stated.

Results

An ANCOVA was run to determine the effect of journal geopolitical position on author diversity after controlling for journal SJR value. The results show that Ibero-American journals were less diverse (0.21 ± 0.16 diverse) than regional (0.46 ± 0.29 diverse) and Western journals (0.63 ± 0.24 diverse). After adjustment for SJR impact factor, there was a statistically significant difference in author diversity in journal geopolitical position, $F(2, 101) = 25.318, p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .334$. Author diversity was statistically significantly lower in Ibero-American journals than in regional journals ($M_{diff} = -0.255$, 95% CI $[-0.398, -0.113]$, $p < .001$) and Western journals ($M_{diff} = -0.413$, 95% CI $[-0.155, -0.270]$, $p < .001$). Author diversity was also statistically significantly lower in regional than in Western journals ($M_{diff} = -0.157$, 95% CI $[-0.301, -0.014]$, $p < .001$).

H1b was also strongly supported by our data. Ibero-American journals turned out to be less diverse (0.28 ± 0.23 diverse) than regional (0.48 ± 0.32 diverse) and Western journals (0.69 ± 0.24 diverse). After adjustment for SJR value, there was a statistically significant difference in citation diversity in journal geopolitical position, $F(2, 98) = 18.867, p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .278$. Citation diversity was statistically significantly lower in Ibero-American journals than in regional journals ($M_{diff} = -0.206$, 95% CI $[-0.364, -0.473]$, $p < .001$) and Western journals ($M_{diff} = -0.391$, 95% CI $[-0.546, -0.236]$, $p < .001$). Citation diversity was also statistically significantly lower in regional than in Western journals ($M_{diff} = -0.185$, 95% CI $[-0.345, -0.026]$, $p < .05$).

In terms of EB diversity, Ibero-American journals were less diverse (0.28 ± 0.21 diverse) than regional (0.58 ± 0.24 diverse) and Western journals (0.61 ± 0.25 diverse). After adjustment for SJR value, there was a statistically significant difference in EB in journal geopolitical position, $F(2, 101) = 20.297, p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .287$. EB diversity was statistically significantly lower in Ibero-American journals versus

regional journals ($M_{diff} = -0.293$, 95% CI $[-0.432, -0.154]$, $p < .001$) and Western journals ($M_{diff} = -0.332$, 95% CI $[-0.471, -0.193]$, $p < .001$). There was no statistically significant difference in EB diversity between the adjusted means of Western and regional journals ($M_{diff} = -0.039$, 95% CI $[-0.179, 0.100]$, $p < .05$). Thus, H1c was supported.

Regarding the presence of AIS, CIS, and EBIS, our data revealed that after adjustment for SJR impact factor, there was a statistically significant difference in AIS $F(2, 101) = 167.800$, $p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .769$, in CIS $F(2, 98) = 75.922$, $p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .608$, and in EBIS $F(2, 101) = 214.929$, $p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .810$ in journal geopolitical position. Ibero-American journals showed a greater AIS (87.62 ± 10.19 diverse) than regional (59.31 ± 31.49 diverse) journals; a greater CIS (75.14 ± 27.42 diverse) than regional (55.46 ± 32.34 diverse) journals; and a greater EBIS (81.97 ± 15.56 diverse) than regional (56.60 ± 22.90 diverse) journals. Thus, H2 was supported.

Discussion and Conclusions

In accordance with former positions (Ganter & Ortega, 2019; Waisbord, 2014) we hypothesized that the Ibero-American region promotes de-Westernization as a *hybrid* accommodation: on the one hand, Ibero-American journals are increasingly indexed in international databases such as Scopus (new structural features); on the other hand, they offer alternative ways for scientific engagement that promote regional participation: open-access articles published in languages other than English, edited by nonprofit institutions, and indexed in regional databases (preexisting structural features). We called this alternative system "hybrid," since it uses both the mainstream international norms, such as being indexed in international databases, as well as certain norms that are not characteristic of the mainstream (the significant predominance of open-access publishing models, bilingual or multilingual publications, and an insignificant share of international publishing houses).

International visibility can be acquired by publication output and citation measures (Freelon, 2013), and through their participation in the review process as reviewers and their influence on the final decision on submitted manuscripts (Dhanani & Jones, 2017), EB members are gatekeepers of publication success (Demeter, 2019; Lauf, 2005; Youk & Park, 2019). Accordingly, we assumed that Ibero-American would perform well in all three of these segments. Thus, to de-Westernize communication studies, Ibero-American scholars must develop a significant number of internationally recognized journals, publish scholarly articles in indexed journals, frequently cite other Ibero-American scholars, and occupy as many EB positions as they can.

Accordingly, we hypothesized that Ibero-American journals would be less diverse than Western and peripheral journals in terms of authors, citations, and EBs, and that these journals would have a greater AIS, a greater CIS, and a greater EBIS than peripheral ones. Lower diversity in each segment goes with regionalization, which means that the authorship, the EB, and the citing articles are concentrated in each regional location. We had to extend the original hypothesis with the analysis of the share of the given geopolitical location to show that low diversity means regionalization and not a concentration on another world region. It is conceivable that a regional journal could publish many Western articles, have Western EB members and, consequently, Western citations, perhaps because the journal wants to raise its visibility (and its international recognition) through a process of Westernization. Thus, we had to demonstrate that the

analyzed Ibero-American journals had both low diversity indices and a high concentration on their own geopolitical location, as expressed by high internal share values.

Results showed that Ibero-American journals were significantly less diverse than both the analyzed Western and regional journals, which can be explained by linguistic features, since about 75% of the published articles were written in either Spanish or Portuguese, and it is most likely that Ibero-American authors would publish in these languages while authors from other parts of the world would favor English. Also, linguistic factors can explain the dominance of Ibero-American EB members, since it is most likely that reviewers would be selected from among the EB members (Youk & Park, 2019), and that they should know the language of the submitted articles. Another explanation may be related to the shared cultural, epistemic, and intellectual traditions that could lead to the shares of Ibero-American EB members, publishing authors, and citing authors being significantly higher in Ibero-American journals than the same shares in other regional journals. Shared cultural heritage and language result in extensive cooperation (Segado-Boj et al., 2021), and it can help a world region to get more visibility on the map of global knowledge production. To this end, the region must sustain these cultural and linguistic characteristics, and use them to its advantage. In the case of Ibero-America, all the low-diversity indices strengthen one another's impact on the overall operation of the world-system. We found that the number of Ibero-American communication journals in Scopus grew at a considerably faster pace than the number of other journals in the same category. Together with this fact, the citation trends that favor Ibero-American journals will show higher numbers, since Scopus only counts citations from Scopus-indexed journals. Thus, with the emergence of the number of Scopus-indexed Ibero-American journals, the number of citations to other Ibero-American journals will increase disproportionately, which will result in higher positions for the cited periodicals.

The present study contributes in various ways to the ongoing discussion on the de-Westernization of communication and media studies. We provide a fresh empirical analysis of scientific indicators of the field in three clusters: We show diversity indices for communication journals at the Western, regional, and Ibero-American levels. It helps communication scholars to further analyze national diversities in different segments and in different geopolitical regions and to address new research hypotheses about the ongoing process of de-Westernization. Likewise, this is the first attempt in communication studies that deals with Ibero-America as a unique geopolitical region. While Ibero-America, as it is represented in the classification schema of Scopus and Scimago, has appeared in scientometrics and scientific assessments, the scientific contribution of this specific location has not yet been analyzed within communication research. We argued that—despite the existing differences—the shared cultural, historical, epistemological, and linguistic features provide sufficient grounds for considering Ibero-America as a unique world region when analyzing patterns of global knowledge production.

Most importantly, we discussed theoretically and showed empirically how a non-Western region can promote de-Westernization in practice. As we argued, de-Westernization can be imagined in at least three ways. The first is isolation, when a world region (or a country) is mainly concerned with its own language and culture, remaining closed to the international community. While these efforts may be interpreted as a resistance to Western hegemony, their ability to engage with, influence, or confront international knowledge production may be limited. The second is assimilation, when agents beyond the Western world go to the West, participate in Western science, and follow Western norms. The path of this type of de-Westernization goes through publishing

in Western periodicals, citing Western authors, and having EB membership in Western journals. This kind of de-Westernization results in an even stronger Western hegemony, where often a limited group of talented regional scholars is hired by Western institutions to gain more international recognition. Although this type of de-Westernization benefits the individual, it does not reduce—on the contrary, it may even increase—systemic inequalities. Finally, the Ibero-American way of de-Westernization shows a hybrid accommodation. By establishing, preserving, and multiplying its specific agencies such as EBs, journals, languages, and citation networks, Ibero-America not only remains on the map of international communication research, but even gains greater visibility without either assimilation or isolation.

The implications might go beyond the publishing field as journals, EBs, and citation networks are parts of the narrower HEI system. As funding bodies and global university rankings work with Scopus data (Stack, 2021), the increased presence of Scopus-indexed Ibero-American journals and publications from scholars with Ibero-American affiliations will have a considerable effect on the representation of Ibero-American HEI on a global scale. As universities are primary agents of knowledge production (Demeter, 2020), and the ranking position of universities influences educational choices of international students (Érdi, 2019), we assume that the greater presence of other than Western universities also helps to de-Westernize scholarship. It is important to note that, through international databases such as Scopus or the Web of Science, and global university rankings such as THE or QS, world regions and individual countries participate in a common world-system of knowledge production. Being indexed in Scopus is not automatic: it is initiated by the journals, and—based on several quality factors—Scopus decides whether the journal can be indexed (Krauskopf, 2018). Consequently, we can assume that the growing participation of Ibero-American journals in Scopus is strategic, and through indexation, journals aim to raise their international visibility, which can enhance international funding and better positions for Ibero-American universities.

The Ibero-American hybrid accommodation model might offer some lessons for a viable approach to the de-Westernization of scientific knowledge-making engagement and dissemination: it opens the door to languages other than English, to authors and topics that might be rejected in Western journals, and to readers who might not have the means to pay for journal subscriptions—all while achieving indexation in mainstream scientific databases.

The scholarly advantage of Western communication scholarship is, at least partially, based on the English-based academic culture and on the hegemony of English, which favors native English countries (Lillis et al., 2010). This can be reduced by the extensive representation of Ibero-American cultures and languages on an international level, which favors countries with native Spanish or Portuguese speakers. As Kraidy (2009) points out, offering non-English-only publications is one of the ways to de-Westernize communication studies. While publishing articles written in languages other than English constitutes only a “weak internationalization,” it is nevertheless a prerequisite for a strong internationalization that “require[s] the integration of theoretical ideas and historical experiences from the non-West in knowledge production not only in the West but also about the West, with corresponding linguistic and cultural competences” (Kraidy, 2009, p. 88). The role of this alternative knowledge-making center can be further strengthened by such structural features as developing EBs and citation networks that favor Ibero-American scholars, in the same way that the EBs and citation networks of the Western center favor native English scholars (Goyanes & Demeter, 2020; Lauf, 2005). While this kind of strategic cooperation among Ibero-American countries,

especially in terms of citations, was not always typical (Chaffee, Gomez-Palacio, & Rogers, 1990), our present study shows that this region is now less dependent on Western scholarship and has a denser citation network that favors the region. With these structural features, the Ibero-Americanization of communication and media studies might—even without directly intending to do so—contribute to a smooth de-Westernization of the discipline.

Limitations

Our study has several limitations that should be stated. First, as our analysis is quantitative and we used only public databases, our study is restricted to available data. Thus, we could focus only on those aspects of diversity that could be measured. For authors, and for journal EB lists, one can see only the affiliations (but not the nationality or the origin of researchers). Consequently, a more nuanced analysis that, on a narrower sample, analyzes the career trajectories of authors and EB members can show another level of diversity that, instead of affiliations, calculates with the nationalities or the country of origin of the analyzed scholars.

Second, further studies may explore to what extent this alternative knowledge-making center has fostered the visibility and influence of non-Western approaches, perspectives, and institutions in the field. A qualitative analysis should investigate whether the “strong internationalization” (Kraidy, 2009) with de-Westernizing communication theory and episteme can be achieved through the Ibero-Americanization of scholarship as presented in our article.

Third, we focused on the representation of different world regions only among EB members and authors. However, the scholarly impact of different countries as it is manifested in citations was not considered, so further research should analyze how Ibero-American authors perform in this factor of global knowledge production.

Finally, in several categories we have a limited number of journals only, so we had to restrict the pool of analyzed journals in the case of Western journals to run the statistics on sets of the same size. We also decided to control for journal prestige as expressed by SJR values thus we aimed to compare journals with similar SJR. For this end, it is impossible to pick top journals as, among Western journals, we have dozens of journals with very high SJR numbers, while in other world regions, even the top journals have low SJR values (as contrasted with their Western counterparts). Thus, we decided that the statistics would be the most solid if we compared journals with similar SJR. However, further studies should explore whether journal prestige, measured in SJR values, influences the diversity of authorship and editorship.

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Appendix

Independent and Dependent Variables (Codebook)

General Identification of the Unit of Analysis for EBs, Citations, and Research Articles

This initial section consists of data relating to the number of the unit of analysis, name of journals ($N = 105$), and date on which the coding was made.

SJR

Journals' SJR values were taken from the Scopus ranking in the category of "communication" in 2019 ($M = 0.21$; $\max = 1.116$; $\min = 0.00$).

Founding Year of the Publication

This variable was measured by the first year in which the journal was published. If a journal had changed its name during its evolution, we took the first year of publication of the original journal as reference ($M = 2002$; $SD = 19.78$; $\max = 2017$; $\min = 1947$).

Geographical Position of EB Members

This section analyzed the geographical origin of EBs. The nationality of EBs was coded according to the country in which EB members had their current academic affiliation, following previous studies on

EBs' diversity (Goyanes & Demeter, 2020). The geographical categories were as follows: 1 = Ibero-America; 2 = North America + Israel; 3 = The United Kingdom; 4 = Western European Union; 5 = Australia and New Zealand; 6 = developed Asia; 7 = Eastern Europe; 8 = Middle East; 9 = Africa; 10 = developing Asia.

Geographical Position of First Author

This section analyzed the geographical origin of the first author of the article. The coding and rationale for their geographical classification were the same as in EB national diversity.

Geographical Position of Citations

This section analyzed the geographical origin of the author who cited an article in a corresponding journal as it was reported in Scopus's Cite Score Tracker. We used data from 2019. In this case, citations were calculated in the period from 2016 to 2019. The coding and rationale of the geographical classification of citations were the same as in EB national diversity.

Control Variables

To control for potential confounds, our statistical models also included various variables that could possibly explain relationships between the variables of interest. Specifically, we included four controls: number of articles published ($M = 67$; max = 122; min = 6) number of EB members ($M = 25.39$; max = 114; min = 4), editor gender (female = 36%; male = 64%), and editor origin (as per the categorization of geopolitical origin in the case of EB geopolitical diversity).

Measurements

EB Diversity Index

As previously outlined, we first collected data on all the EB members ($N = 2,666$) of the Scopus journals analyzed and categorized them by the geopolitical region of their current affiliations. Based on this data, we calculated Simpson's Reciprocal Index of Diversity for each journal (Hill, 1973). Diversity was calculated by the geographical locations of the individual EB members of a given journal. The range of this variable was between 1 and 0, where numbers closer to 1 signified greater international diversity in EBs, and values closer to 0 indicated less ($M = 0.47$; max = 0.89; min = 0). The formula (i) deals with the total number of elements in a given category (n) and with the total numbers of all elements (N), so the diversity index (D) measures the distribution of the elements from proportional distribution (values closer to 1) to disproportional distribution (values closer to 0).

$$i. \quad D = \frac{\sum n(n-1)}{\sum N(N-1)}$$

Research Article Diversity Index

This variable measured the geographic diversity of the first author's affiliation. We coded the selected articles using the same categories as for EB diversity, and we used Simpson's Reciprocal Index of Diversity as a model throughout ($M = 0.42$; $\max = 0.92$; $\min = 0$).

Citation Diversity Index

This variable measured the geographic diversity of the affiliations of first authors who cited a given article that was published in the corresponding journal. We coded citations using the same categories as for EB diversity, and we used Simpson's Reciprocal Index of Diversity as a model throughout ($M = 0.43$; $\max = 0.91$; $\min = 0$).

Journal EBIS

This variable measured the share of the Ibero-American/regional region in journal EB in percentages ($M = 69.7$; $\max = 100$; $\min = 7$). We measured the Ibero-American share in the case of both the Ibero-American and the Western journals, and we measured the regional content in the case of the regional journals. The rationale of this decision was that we measured the interregional cooperation patterns when comparing regional and Ibero-American journals. The Ibero-American share calculations in Western journals were not used in our tests since we did not need them to test our hypotheses.

Journal AIS

This variable measured the share of the Ibero-American/regional region in journal content in percentages ($M = 74.88$; $\max = 100$; $\min = 0$). We measured the Ibero-American share in the case of both the Ibero-American and the Western journals, and we measured the regional content in the case of the regional journals. The rationale of this decision is the same as for the EB share.

Journal CIS

This variable measured the share of the Ibero-American/regional region in journal citations ($M = 67.51$; $\max = 100$; $\min = 0$). We measured the Ibero-American share in the case of both the Ibero-American and the Western journals, and we measured the regional content in the case of the regional journals. The rationale of this decision is the same as for the EB share.