

The curricular internship in journalism in the context of the platformization of work

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Abstract: In recent years, with the establishment of big tech monopolies, there has been a reorganization of the work of communication professionals, which has been incorporated into the training process of students. New functions and production logics are implemented based on the business models of organizations known as platforms. In this article, we seek

Resumo: Nos últimos anos, com a constituição dos monopólios das big techs, observa-se uma reorganização do trabalho dos profissionais da comunicação, que tem sido incorporada ao processo de formação dos estudantes. Novas funções e lógicas produtivas são implementadas a partir dos modelos de negócios das organizações denominadas como plataformas. Neste artigo,

1 HABEMAS, Jürgen. **Mudança estrutural da esfera pública**: Investigações sobre uma categoria da sociedade burguesa. São Paulo: Unesp, 2014. Cf. também: TRAQUINA, Nelson. **Teorias do jornalismo**: Porque as notícias são como são. Florianópolis: Insular, 2005.

2 FIGARO, Roseli et al. As relações de comunicação e as condições de produção no trabalho de jornalistas em arranjos econômicos alternativos às corporações de mídia. In: 17º Encontro Nacional de Pesquisadores em Jornalismo. **Anais** [...]. Goiânia: Escola de Comunicações e Artes, Universidade de São Paulo, 2019.

3 FIGARO, Roseli et al. **Relatório da pesquisa - Como trabalham os comunicadores no contexto de um ano da pandemia de Covid-19**: ...1 ano e 500 mil mortes depois. São Paulo: ECA-USP; Centro de Pesquisa em Comunicação e Trabalho, 2021. Available at: https://comunicacaoetrabalho.eca.usp.br/publicacoes_cpct/como-trabalham-os-comunicadores-no-contexto-de-um-ano-da-pandemia-de-covid-19-1-ano-e-500-mil-mortes/. Accessed in: 28 May 2025.

4 LIMA, Samuel et al. **Perfil do Jornalista Brasileiro 2021**: características sociodemográficas, políticas, de saúde e do trabalho. Florianópolis: Quórum Comunicações, 2022. Available at: <https://perfildojornalista.paginas.ufsc.br/files/2022/06/RelatorioPesquisaPerfilJornalistas2022x2.pdf>. Accessed in: 18 Feb. 2025.

5 SILVA, Naiana Rodrigues da. **As relações de comunicação e de trabalho de jovens jornalistas cearenses**: um estudo sobre as dramáticas do uso de si, o ethos e a deontologia profissionais. 2022. Thesis (Doctorate in Communication Sciences) – Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, 2022.

to analyze the internship in journalism experienced by students in the context of the platformization of work. To this end, we present data from the analysis of internship reports, which, when categorized, reveal new functions and activities performed by young journalists for their professional performance.

Keywords: internship; journalism; world of work; platforms; communication.

buscamos analisar o estágio no jornalismo vivido por estudantes no contexto da plataformização do trabalho. Para tanto, apresentamos dados de análise de relatórios de estágio, que, categorizados, revelam novas funções e atividades feitos por jovens jornalistas para sua atuação profissional.

Palavras-chave: estágio; jornalismo; mundo do trabalho; plataformas; comunicação.

1. INTRODUCTION

The curricular internship for undergraduate Journalism programs became mandatory following CNE/CES Resolution No. 1, dated September 27, 2013, and aims to consolidate professional performance practices inherent to the graduate profile. Students are expected to experience the productive routines associated with journalistic activities during their training. The resolution stipulates that internships may take place in various organizations—public, private, or nongovernmental—and recognizes as journalistic activities those directly related to news production within media companies, as well as activities linked to organizations' interactions with media companies, such as communication advisory and press office functions. Therefore, the internship encompasses a set of professional practices including information gathering, fact verification, production of informational material, and its dissemination.

Journalistic activity, developed within an advanced industrial sector, became consolidated throughout the nineteenth century, especially in its latter half, as a consequence of the evolution of capitalist productive forces¹. This activity bears the mark of the type of organization from which it emerged—newspapers. Since the advent of the internet and its impact across multiple spheres of production and reproduction of social life, however, there have been significant changes in the business models of media companies—parallel to the transformations of productive forces—and, consequently, in the professional activity of journalists.

Mass layoffs have driven news workers to create alternative professional opportunities. Some have leveraged contemporary information and communication tools to establish their own alternative and/or independent journalistic arrangements²; others have taken on roles not directly connected to traditional journalistic practices but still operating in the communication field, as indicated by research such as Roseli Figaro's³ study on professional practice during the pandemic, Samuel Lima's⁴ work resulting in the *Perfil do Jornalista Brasileiro*, and Naiana Silva's study on young journalists in Ceará⁵.

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Although journalists still work within media companies—both traditional and alternative/independent—they are increasingly being hired by organizations unrelated to the specific journalistic activities for which they were trained, such as advertising, communication, and marketing agencies. While the work in these organizations may not involve direct news production for public opinion or strict public-interest advocacy, the skills developed during journalistic training are nonetheless activated in the performance of various activities within the communication sector.

In addition to the studies mentioned above, reports from young students, gathered during internship supervision meetings in the Journalism program at the State University of Minas Gerais (UEMG), Divinópolis campus—which form the *corpus* of analysis for this text—also reveal a set of new activities and functions being carried out by interns in both media companies and other types of organizations⁶. Content production (and related tasks) has emerged as a new role for communication professionals, including journalism graduates⁷. This phenomenon is a result of the historical development of capitalism and, with it, of the means of communication and production⁸, which enabled the rise of so-called platform companies. These companies are now central to social and labor relations: organizations that are digital infrastructures, fueled by data, organized by algorithms, and formalized through proprietary relations⁹.

Due to their infrastructure and operational dynamics, platforms have come to mediate social relations and have become indispensable for work. As Grohmann emphasizes:

The most diverse work activities—plumber, cleaner, designer, and programmer—are increasingly dependent on digital infrastructures and their logics, so that platformization tends to generalize across all work activities, whether remotely or in urban settings more broadly. Hence the term platformization of work¹⁰.

Some researchers go further and argue that there is an expanded process of platform logic permeating the entire World Wide Web. Anne Helmond, for instance, in her study of what she terms social media platforms, highlights the platformization of the web, where social dynamics become mediated by these organizations, which process data, incorporate it into the configuration of the platforms, and modulate the relational dynamics that occur online. According to Helmond, platforms are:

systems of data flows that configure data channels, enabling data flows with third parties. These data flows not only configure channels for data to move between social media platforms and third parties, but also function as data channels that prepare external data for platform configuration¹¹.

In this process, organizations assume centrality in the production, distribution, circulation, and consumption processes online. In the field of communication, platforms have been integrated into the everyday productive process. They are used both in communication within the workplace, in management

6 MOLIANI, João Augusto. Hibridismo profissional e a nova categoria de trabalhadores nas agências de comunicação. *In: 45° INTERCOM Congresso Brasileiro de Ciências da Comunicação*, 2022, João Pessoa. **Anais INTERCOM**. São Paulo, 2022. Available at: <https://portalintercom.org.br/anais/nacional2022/resumo/0809202211542662-f275221b38b.pdf>. Accessed in: 9 Apr. 2025.

7 BARROS, Janaina Visibeli; FILHO RASLAN, Gilson Soares. Novas funções da comunicação no contexto de plataformação do trabalho. *Revista Latinoamericana de Ciencias de la Comunicación*, São Paulo, v. 23, n. 46, 2024. <https://doi.org/10.55738/alaic.v23i46.1122>

8 WILLIAMS, Raymond. *Cultura e materialismo*. São Paulo: Editora Unesp, 2011.

9 VAN DIJCK, José; POELL, Thomas; DE WAAL, Martijn. *The Platform Society*. New York: Oxford, 2018.

10 GROHMANN, Rafael. Trabalho digital: o papel organizador da Comunicação. *Revista Comun. Mídia Consumo*, São Paulo, v. 18, n. 51, p. 166-185, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.18568/cm.v18i51.2279>

11 HELMOND, Anne. A plataformação da web. *In: OMENA, Janna Joceli (org.). Métodos digitais: teoria, prática, crítica*. Lisboa: Instituto de Comunicação da Nova, 2019. p. 50.

and process control, and for the circulation of communicative products. Being corporations governed by their own logics, these logics have modified the communication production process, affecting both organizations operating in the sector and the professionals themselves.

Every technical and technological development triggers transformation in production methods, alters productive processes and activity prescriptions, demands professional readaptation, and prompts the emergence of new roles. These changes are not confined to any specific age group but impact all active workers across different productive sectors. In the communication sector, there is currently a strong demand for professionals working in activities related to digital social network management and the communicative content circulating on online social media. This process requires a mobilization of labor to meet market demand, forcing workers to adapt to maintain their livelihoods.

Unsurprisingly, young journalism students experience this phenomenon during their professional training—and in a dual condition. As they are in the process of formation, students must learn the techniques specific to a given activity, its set of prescriptions and languages, and its deontological and ethical aspects. At the same time, they are called upon, as part of the workforce, to update these prescriptions and languages according to professional demands from the labor market and ongoing transformations. In this context, they are prone to perform activities not necessarily aligned with their formal training, but which require academic knowledge in the communication field in general, and journalism specifically. Being a recent phenomenon, little is known about this process of work transformation and even less about how young journalists experience these changes, making research with this population both timely and necessary.

As a generation born into the media environment of communication platforms, these young people appear more open to discovering new ways of working and to normalizing contemporary work practices in the context of platforms. Observing these students during their training may provide insights into the ongoing transformations in communication labor and potential strategies for advocating decent work.

Given this scenario, we ask: what is the reality of the journalism labor market, in the context of the platformization of work, as experienced by journalism interns? To address this question, since October 2022, a study has been conducted focusing empirically on internships completed by young journalism students at the State University of Minas Gerais (UEMG), Divinópolis campus, fulfilling their mandatory curricular internships. This is an exploratory study¹² aimed at gaining a deeper understanding of the platformization of communication work—an ongoing process—and its implications for journalistic activity. The study was designed in two stages.

The first stage, conducted from October 2022 to September 2023¹³, analyzed the mandatory internship reports submitted by students enrolled in the 2021 internship program. These reports were examined to categorize internship fields,

12 GIL, Antonio Carlos. **Métodos e Técnicas de Pesquisa Social**. São Paulo: Atlas, 2008.

13 According to Edital No. 08/2022 PIBIC/FAPEMIG to which the project is linked.

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activities, functions, and other relevant findings. In this article, we present a brief discussion on the role of the internship in forming professional journalists, the methodological approach of the study, and the preliminary results obtained in the first stage of this ongoing research.

2. INTERNSHIP IN THE JOURNALIST TRAINING PROCESS

The training process for a journalist's *know-how* and *professional identity* is composed of a reflection on reality, which requires formalized understandings of culture, history, and economic, political, social, and environmental relations by the professional. There are multiple ways to learn a profession, and critical, reflective thinking can be developed through different training processes. As Kuenzer discusses¹⁴, however, it is accelerated by formalized learning—learning that takes place within the educational practices of academic institutions and allows for the cognitive development of individuals. Regarding the journalism profession, it comprises a set of knowledge and competencies that define the profession deontologically. Despite the reduced requirement for a degree, studies coordinated by Lima¹⁵ and Figaro¹⁶ show that academic training continues to be a criterion for hiring professionals when a journalism diploma is required. This phenomenon reinforces Kuenzer's thesis about the role of the school in the development of language, thought, and professional behavior.

The need to handle factual truth through information verification, to defend public interests, and to uphold objectivity deontologically marks the profession. It may be prudent to briefly reflect on the current state of the profession's deontological foundations. Debates have gained traction in journalism studies regarding a possible anachronism of fundamental categories, highlighting the deep epistemological, philosophical, and social crisis the profession faces at all stages, from training to practice. For example, one argument concerns the alleged anachronism of the category of objectivity. This critique seems to target what Wilson Gomes¹⁷ called "*naïve realism*." Yet, it would be equally naïve to dismiss objectivity as an ontological category, which, as Adelmo Genro Filho¹⁸ noted in his theory of journalism, has no relation to abandoning another ontological category—toward which the so-called "naïve perspectivists" appear to lean: subjectivity.

For a profession that undoubtedly deals with factuality, categories such as accuracy and impartiality require training in objectivity. To achieve deontological foundations, professionals employ techniques that enable them to observe, collect, process, and qualify the material they produce, which will later form the basis for shaping public imaginaries. Accordingly, in higher education, journalism courses combine theoretical and practical activities to mature the techniques that will allow professionals to practice journalism in a deontologically oriented manner.

14 ZENEIDA KUENZER, Acacia. Conhecimento e competências no trabalho e na escola. **Boletim Técnico do Senac**, v. 28, n. 2, p. 2-11, 2002. Available at: <https://www.bts.senac.br/bts/article/view/539>. Accessed in: 18 Feb. 2025.

15 LIMA *op. cit.*

16 FIGARO *et al.*, 2021.

17 GOMES, Wilson. **Jornalismo, fatos e interesse**. Ensaios de teoria do jornalismo. Florianópolis: Insular, 2009.

Internships are mandatory in journalism programs and are sometimes mistakenly considered merely one component of the courses' practical activities. This is inaccurate because the internship, as an epistemological field of knowledge¹⁹, should serve as a space for reflection on professional practice, occurring before students formally enter the labor market.

According to Pimenta and Lima²⁰, there is a recent theoretical movement regarding the concept of internships that seeks to overcome the dichotomy between theoretical and practical activity. In this sense, internships are understood in terms of their purpose: to provide students with an approximation of the reality in which they will operate. Achieving this requires a new approach to internships, one that emphasizes reflection based on real-world experiences. However, such reflection demands engagement, involvement, and intentionality, and the authors caution that:

the majority of bureaucratized internships, burdened with observation forms, are myopic, indicating the need for a deeper conceptual understanding of the internship and the activities conducted therein. Internship supervisors must collectively engage with their peers and students in appropriating reality, analyzing it, and critically questioning it in light of theory. This conceptual pathway will undoubtedly serve as a foundation for proposing new experiences²¹.

The authors advocate for internships as theoretical activities that serve as instruments for professional praxis. We concur with this perspective. Journalism internships, particularly curricular internships, should be understood as opportunities for critical engagement with reality, given that they take place within social relations, from which the products of professional practice emerge.

The development of techniques and mastery of tools constitute an important aspect of *know-how*, but this aspect is limited, as the mere application of techniques does not allow professionals to resolve the diverse problems encountered in different situations and contexts. What is crucial, therefore, is that professionals not only master techniques but also adapt them to the various work situations and social contexts they face. Achieving this requires a command of knowledge and reflections on reality, grounded in a theoretical framework. This framework provides the instruments and schemas for analyzing and observing reality. Internships constitute an important *locus* for this exercise, as they enable the practical application of professional knowledge and techniques while confronting real situations that require reflection to guide action.

Within internship settings, students have the opportunity to assume different responsibilities by engaging with production processes specific to each organization. At this stage, they are challenged to mobilize the practical and theoretical knowledge they have accumulated during their training to carry out their tasks. Internship supervision, provided by academic advisors, should facilitate collective reflection on professional practice, supporting the development of new knowledge and the creation of new techniques that contribute to the formation of the professional identity.

18 GENRO FILHO, Adelmo. O segredo da pirâmide: por uma teoria marxista do jornalismo. Porto Alegre: Tchê, 1987

19 PIMENTA, Selma Garrido; LIMA, Maria Socorro Lucena. Estágio e Docência. São Paulo: Cortez, 2017.

20 Ibid.

21 PIMENTA; LIMA, op. cit., p. 36.

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It is therefore essential that internships are not isolated from the course content experienced during the training process. On the contrary, internships allow the integration of theoretical and practical knowledge present in the pedagogical design of the program, as highlighted by Pimenta and Lima²². Accordingly, internships should be approached as both practical and theoretical activities.

Specifically for journalism programs, internships function not only as professional training activities but also as opportunities for market insertion, since many organizations require internships as a prerequisite for hiring young professionals. In this sense, the curricular internship both educates and introduces graduates to the labor market.

Beyond being a learning space where theory is applied in practice, internships are also important research *locus*. Examining internships allows us to understand how students experience their training and incorporate the changes affecting journalistic activity within the context of work platformization. Thus, taking journalism internships as a subject of study enables us to observe the extent to which these internships fulfill their mission of preparing students for professional praxis.

3. METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH TO ANALYSIS

Given the changes experienced by the communication production sector and the dynamics through which these changes are lived, according to Figaro *et al.*²³, researchers in the field need greater openness and sensitivity in selecting methodological approaches. This is due to the fact that communicators are not always physically located within a company for a predetermined work period. In the current historical context, they work from various locations, activating collaborative networks and employing different languages and technical equipment to perform their tasks.

This constitutes a shifting territory, subject to unforeseen and profound alterations resulting from instabilities in macroeconomic and political systems. In this sense, to explore the terrain and construct an initial mapping of the phenomenon, an exploratory research²⁴ approach was adopted, allowing fieldwork to collect information that would help define the research problems and guiding hypotheses.

In exploratory research, any element encountered may be relevant for the continuation of the investigation. However, what ultimately determines the relevance of what should be investigated is the research problem. In this case, the objective is to understand the reality of journalism work in the context of work platformization, as experienced by journalism interns during their professional training. Exploratory research allows for the investigation of concepts, techniques, and hypotheses, providing a framework for reflection that enables the refinement of results obtained during the study.

22 Ibid.

23 FIGARO *et al.*, 2019.

24 GIL, 2008.

To initiate contact with the interns, the sample for this research began with the internship reports submitted by students from the Journalism program at the State University of Minas Gerais (UEMG), Divinópolis campus, in 2021, for the mandatory curricular internship courses—a total of 36 reports.

The internship reports are composed of two documents: a form completed by the student, indicating the activity performed and the hours spent on daily internship tasks, and an expanded summary, in which the intern provides a theoretically grounded critical analysis of the role of the internship in their development as a journalist. This analysis is informed by readings, debates, and reflections carried out during the supervision process conducted by faculty advisors.

With the material in hand, the initial effort in analysis and organization involved understanding the nature of each document and the information they contained, in order to identify the functions, competencies, and production processes experienced by the interns.

It was observed that the form detailing hours and functions best indicated the student's activities during the mandatory curricular internship. Nevertheless, the form was generic and did not allow for the analysis of the specific tasks carried out by the interns. The expanded summary sometimes provided supplementary information to the form, but, in isolation, it offered limited insight into the students' activities. In certain cases, however, it could enrich the information provided by the form. Therefore, it was understood that the analysis needed to integrate readings of both documents, which were complementary.

Subsequently, document analysis was conducted to identify the type of organization in which the student completed the internship, and the nature of the activities performed. This allowed for comparisons and categorization of the data.

Based on the information regarding activities and internship sites, the reports were grouped into three internship fields: (1) media outlets; (2) communication agencies/social media; and (3) communication/press advisory services.

After this initial categorization, the reports were read and analyzed to identify the interns' functions, their fields of activity, the work prescriptions, whether the internship was within journalism, the broader field of communication, or outside these areas; whether it was possible to identify the competencies required to perform the activities; and indications of the students' adaptation processes to the tasks assigned.

For the organization of this analysis, a spreadsheet was created containing the internship field and site, the function performed, and the skills mobilized by the function the students were carrying out. To classify the functions performed, the following categories were considered:

- Within the field of journalism: the function described by the intern bears deontological markers of journalism.

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- Within the field of communication: the function described by the intern belongs to the communication field, although it does not display indications of journalistic deontology.
- Outside the scope of communication: the function is unrelated to either communication or journalism, thus falling outside the objectives of the internship training.

During the initial analysis of the reports, a lack of detail regarding the tasks performed by the interns was observed. It was expected that the materials would provide descriptions of what the interns did, how they performed their tasks, the difficulties encountered, the strategies developed to overcome these difficulties, and how this process contributed—or not—to their professional formation. However, this was not the case. On the contrary, the documents presented generalized accounts of activities, offering preliminary indications about functions and competencies, but were insufficient to achieve the proposed objectives of the investigation.

Consequently, it was decided to observe the functions performed using the nomenclature provided by the interns themselves in the internship forms. The few descriptions of functions appearing in the “Expanded Summary” were disregarded, as they were either too ambiguous or open to broad interpretive variation regarding the actual tasks executed.

4. LOCAL CONTEXT AND INTERNSHIP OFFERINGS

The UEMG is located in the municipality of Divinópolis, a regional hub for communication in the Central-West of Minas Gerais²⁵. The medium-sized city has over 230,000 inhabitants and is a reference point for higher education in the region, hosting three public universities and three private universities offering courses across different fields of knowledge. The Journalism program has been offered by the institution since 2001 and has graduated twenty-two cohorts to date.

The municipality hosts three TV studios producing local content for the entire region, including two commercial broadcasters (one affiliated with the Globo Group and another linked to the Diários Associados Group) and one educational TV channel. There are ten radio stations, nine commercial and one educational, and five news portals: G1 Centro-Oeste, linked to the Globo Group; two independent portals without affiliation to any media conglomerate; one portal linked to a radio conglomerate; and a fifth portal associated with the city’s only print media outlet, in operation for over thirty years.

Despite the diversity of communication outlets, these organizations operate with limited resources, small workforces, and financial dependence on advertisers. In the case of broadcasting, management is often family-run by the

25 BARROS, Janaina Visibeli; FILHO RASLAN, Gilson. *Distante do “Passaralho”*: trabalho da comunicação no interior de Minas Gerais. In: **Anais 15° Encontro Nacional de Pesquisadores em Jornalismo**. São Paulo: SBPJor, 2017.

license holders, who are not always prepared for the administrative demands of running a media outlet²⁶.

In addition to media outlets, public agencies, companies, and non-governmental organizations offer internship positions for journalism students to work in communication and press advisory roles. The city also hosts numerous communication, marketing, and advertising agencies that hire journalism interns.

Within this environment, internship opportunities in journalism exist across different types of organizations and production routines. The search for an internship placement is an active process on the part of the student. To undertake the curricular internship, the student must be enrolled in the internship course and may seek paid positions offered by organizations. For this, the organization must have a supervisor with a degree in journalism, a formal agreement must be established with the educational institution and the employer, and subsequently, an internship contract must be signed among the three parties: the student, the educational institution, and the hiring organization. Students who do not secure paid internships participate in the internship course through placements offered by the Journalism program, either in press or communication advisory roles or within media outlets, based on partnerships or internship agreements with the course.

Students are grouped according to internship fields and are supervised by a journalism-trained faculty member during meetings held throughout the semester. These group meetings aim to discuss journalistic practice and to monitor students' internship activities.

5. INSIGHTS FROM THE INTERNSHIP REPORTS

Initially, document analysis revealed that the materials included in the reports do not fulfill the pedagogical objectives proposed for evaluating the students' stage of professional formation. Both documents were found to be deficient and problematic. This weakness indicated that the internship evaluation instrument required revision, as it did not allow for subsequent assessment of the process, and its design often led students to errors in completing the forms.

The form documenting functions and working hours is generic, and interns typically fill it with repetitive keywords throughout. As a result, it does not provide a clear description of what the students actually do during the internship or the production process to which they are assigned. Without this information, it is impossible to determine the type of work prescriptions provided to students, the competencies required to perform the activities, or whether the activities fulfill their role in professional training, including the challenges encountered and the learning achieved.

The expanded summary also fails to meet its objective as an evaluation instrument, despite attempts to encourage students to reflect theoretically on the activity. This document often becomes a text that the student can later

26 BARROS, Janaina Visibelli. **Conglomerados midiáticos regionais: os meios de comunicação como meios de produção na territorialização do capital.** 2019. Thesis (Doctorate in Communication Sciences) – Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, 2019.

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develop and submit to academic events in the field of communication—which is beneficial for the student’s professional development and reinforces the need to treat the internship as a theoretical/practical space. However, as an evaluation tool, reading the summaries reveals that most of them do not focus on the internship itself. They tend to resemble reviews of the bibliographic references used to support the internship rather than descriptions of the tasks performed, the learning outcomes, the challenges encountered, and the discoveries made.

These conclusions—essentially, the weaknesses identified—have already been shared with the internship coordination team of the Journalism program, which has revised the documentation. A new internship report template was developed collaboratively with internship supervisors and the project team to enable the identification of functions, production processes, work prescriptions, challenges, and the extent to which the internship aligns with the professional fields of Journalism or Communication.

6. ON FUNCTIONS, WORK PRESCRIPTIONS, AND COMPETENCIES

To understand the skills developed by these interns while performing their tasks, the research initially aimed to rely on detailed descriptions of the activities carried out by the interns. However, since such detailed accounts were absent in the reports, this objective could not be fully achieved during the analysis process. The alternative approach was to categorize the functions and activities indicated by the students in the forms using keywords and to seek, in the expanded summaries, additional information that could qualify the data presented in the forms.

This categorization enabled an initial mapping of the primary activities performed by the interns, providing indications of the competencies mobilized in carrying out these tasks (Table 1).

Table 1: Compilation of Keywords for Functions Performed by 2021 Journalism Interns

N°	Keywords for the positions	Area or location	Field of work
1	Checking messages, text production, caption writing, artwork creation, webwriting.	Marketing/Advertising/ Communication Agency	Within the Field of Communication
2	Artwork production, press release preparation, digital content publishing.	Communication Consulting	Within the Field of Communication
3	Text writing, editing, recording audiovisual products.	Communication Consulting	Within the Field of Communication

4	Card production, caption production, Reels production, didactic text production.	Communication Consulting	Within the Field of Communication
5	Editorial selection.	Communication Consulting	Within the Field of Communication
6	Journalistic material production, preparation and dissemination of press releases, client contact, post scheduling.	Communication Media	Within the Field of Journalism
7	Responding to direct messages, replying to comments, creating captions.	Marketing/Advertising/Communication Agency	Outside the Field of Communication
8	Content production.	Communication Consulting	Within the Field of Communication
9	Bulletin preparation, news production.	Communication Consulting	Within the Field of Communication
10	Artwork development, post production.	Marketing/Advertising/Communication Agency	Within the Field of Communication
11	Posting artwork, responding to directs, feed, and timeline comments.	Communication Consulting	Within the Field of Communication
12	Graphic design, Instagram Stories, text + Stories.	Press Office	Within the Field of Communication
13	Copywriting, script development, copy creation.	Marketing/Advertising/Communication Agency	Within the Field of Communication
14	Text adjustment.	Marketing/Advertising/Communication Agency	Within the Field of Communication
15	Text drafting.	Marketing/Advertising/Communication Agency	Within the Field of Communication
16	Client profile interaction, customer service, replying to comments and messages.	Marketing/Advertising/Communication Agency	Outside the Field of Communication
17	Text drafting, editorial planning.	Press Office	Within the Field of Communication
18	Agency.	Marketing/Advertising/Communication Agency	Within the Field of Communication
19	Text production, social media management, copywriting, Stories production.	Marketing/Advertising/Communication Agency	Within the Field of Communication

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20	Press release production.	Press Office	Within the Field of Journalism
21	Editorial planning.	Press Office	Within the Field of Journalism
22	Article production, design production, content production.	Press Office	Within the Field of Communication
23	Editorial planning, script creation, report development.	Press Office	Within the Field of Journalism
24	Clipping production, mailing list updating, graphic artwork production.	Press Office	Within the Field of Communication
25	Research and live presentation, editorial planning, fact-checking, news article creation, voice-over recording, posting articles on the website.	Communication Media	Within the Field of Journalism
26	Editorial writing, research, fact-checking, revision.	Communication Media	Within the Field of Journalism
27	Content monitoring and selection, content production.	Communication Media	Within the Field of Journalism
28	Live presentation, editorial planning, fact-checking, news article creation.	Communication Media	Within the Field of Journalism
29	Text production, article production, text layout, editorial planning.	Communication Media	Within the Field of Journalism
30	Research and fact-checking, editorial writing.	Communication Media	Within the Field of Journalism
31	Newspaper layout.	Communication Media	Within the Field of Journalism
32	Note production, interview scheduling.	Communication Media	Within the Field of Journalism
33	Research, interviewing, and recording material.	Communication Media	Within the Field of Journalism
34	Fact-checking, content monitoring.	Communication Media	Within the Field of Journalism
35	Text production, blog writing.	Marketing/Advertising/Communication Agency	Within the Field of Communication
36	Editorial selection.	Communication Consulting	Within the Field of Journalism

Source: prepared by the researchers.

The diversity of keywords presented in Table 1 indicates that the internship is not restricted to the field of journalistic practice. As can be observed, some activities performed by interns are not recognized—at least not yet—within the deontological scope of journalism, such as “design,” “post creation,” “copywriting,”

“copy creation,” “social media,” “Stories production,” “webwriting,” “Reels production,” and “card production,” among others.

Students also employ generic expressions to characterize their work, which does not always allow for an understanding of the specific activities performed in the field. The term “content production,” for example, is one such generalization. It appears in the description of tasks in internship reports 8, 22, and 27, and may be carried out across all internship fields, encompassing both journalistic content and content for social media profiles.

The term “caption production” is also recurrent in student reports. Strictly speaking, this is not a new journalistic activity; what is new is how it has been appropriated within the context of platforms, particularly social media. Captions accompany images posted on Instagram, and their formatting aligns with the production and consumption logics of this medium.

Other terms, such as “mailing update,” “clipping production,” “press release production,” and “bulletin production,” reflect work within communication or press offices—forms of communication labor that remain part of journalistic activities.

Journalistic tasks such as “live presentation,” “interviewing,” “story planning,” “fact-checking,” “investigation,” and “voice-over of reports” are examples found in the reports that bear the deontological marks of the profession.

7. THE VALUE OF INTERNSHIPS IN JOURNALISM

The demand for communication professionals, which has increasingly directed journalists away from media outlets and toward communication agencies and press offices, is perceived by the students themselves and is reflected in their internship reports. For example, the subject of report number 16 notes that this shift offers new opportunities: “today, however, he has the possibility to explore other paths within the communication field, placing journalism in the background to focus on content production for the internet.” The notion of “journalism in the background”—using the skills acquired in their training in other areas of communication—was also observed in other reports from interns working in agencies and press offices. In some cases, interns working in communication agencies omitted references to journalism in their expanded summaries, and the absence of the term suggests a lack of recognition of the internship’s value in professional journalistic training. Our hypothesis is that, for these students, the primary concern is obtaining employment, regardless of whether it is as a journalist, a general communication professional, or any role where they can be employed.

To contribute to the understanding of the emergence of functions and the ways in which they are named by interns, a word cloud was produced. In constructing the cloud, we opted not to remove connectors such as “and” or “of,” nor words with similar meanings, as these reveal connections with other terms²⁷.

27 Due to the translation of keywords from Portuguese to English, the frequency and position of terms in the word cloud varied slightly from the original Portuguese version. However, these changes did not impact the intended representation of the cloud.

page ranking in search engines, such as Google SEO—a ranking algorithm frequently mentioned by interns in communication agencies.

The phenomenon is repeated with “production” of “Stories,” “production” of “Reels,” “postings,” “posts,” and terms like “Instagram” and “Stories,” revealing new modes of material production within communication, dictated by platform production models. “Content production” in the reports refers to products aimed at social media, such as graphic design or textual content (e.g., post captions).

Meanwhile, words such as “article,” “editorial planning,” “monitoring,” “fact-checking,” and “journalistic” also appear in the word cloud. However, they do not have the same prominence in terms of mentions, appearing more in the background, and are particularly associated with work carried out in media outlets—radio, TV, portals, and print. These are the work environments where the recognized deontological markers of journalism are most evident, according to the cross-referencing of workplace and activity information presented in the reports.

8. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

With regard to the internship as a theoretical and practical activity, the fragility of the reports as evaluation instruments indicates that the methodology of the internship requires revision, so that this stage of student life may be assumed as a space of professional praxis and research on the training of journalists. In this sense, internship evaluation instruments should serve as tools for collecting and analyzing the observed reality, rather than merely bureaucratic documents completed to fulfill institutional formalities.

As the data analyzed reveal, the platformization of communication and journalism labor was evident across all internship fields. All the reports analyzed indicate that, whether working for media outlets, communication/advertising/marketing agencies, or press and communication offices, both journalists and interns are engaged in activities directed toward social media, using platforms to perform these functions. What remains unclear, however, is the type of competencies being required. The reports show a variety of prescriptions located within a diffuse field, oscillating between narrative construction and strictly rhetorical formulations, which are commonly associated with advertising copywriting. Nor is there clarity regarding the prescriptions for executing such actions—yet little or nothing resembles the practices traditionally attributed to journalism by its professional deontology. In other words, the requirements emerging in the internship field for journalism students show limited dialogue with the core practices of journalism as structured in the learning trajectory of the profession. Increasingly, there seems to be a prevalence of work in which the intern is tasked with following, liking, or commenting on social media profiles in order to simulate organic client engagement—activities associated with so-called microwork²⁸.

28 VIANNA, Matheus. Heteromação e microtrabalho no Brasil. *Sociologias*, Porto Alegre, v. 23, n. 57, p. 134-172, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.1590/15174522-111017>

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Another relevant finding from the reading and analysis of the reports was the absence of the terms “communication” and “journalism” in several of them. We also identified documents in which there was no mention whatsoever of the process of professional training in journalism in relation to the internship, raising questions about the nature of the internships being undertaken and the extent to which they contribute to students’ professional formation.

In one report, for example, the description of the internship revealed that the student’s activities were entirely unrelated to the field of communication and journalism. The intern was working in Customer Service (SAC), handling complaints submitted via messaging applications such as WhatsApp or through social media platforms such as Facebook Messenger. Although this work environment involved platforms and the monitoring of an organization’s commercial relationships with its clients, the activity in fact misrepresented the internship field of communication, and it must be concluded that it did not contribute to the professional training of journalists, their qualification, or their integration into the labor market. On the contrary, it placed the student in a context of exploiting internship labor as a precarious workforce.

In light of these findings, it is evident that the analysis of the reports raises new research questions, both concerning the work of journalists and the role of the internship in professional training. To address these and other questions, the second stage of the research will adopt a qualitative approach, gathering students’ perspectives. We expect that the data will provide insights into professional profiles, the competencies required during internships, the dilemmas faced by students, the learning processes related to the profession, and the transformations in journalistic activity that could not be fully captured through the documentary analysis of internship reports.

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