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Femicide media coverage and violence reporting behavior

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"El impacto de la cobertura mediática de los femicidios sobre los reportes de violencia"

Resumen

Este artículo analiza el efecto de la cobertura mediática de los femicidios sobre el comportamiento de denuncia de las mujeres víctimas de violencia. Argumento que la probabilidad de denunciar al agresor depende de si la víctima reside en una provincia que recibe cobertura mediática sobre femicidios. El análisis empírico utiliza los informes de violencia registrados por los Centros de Emergencia Mujer (CEM) en Perú y una base de datos única que incluye la fecha exacta de los femicidios y su publicación en los medios de comunicación entre 2017 y 2018. Aprovecho la variación espacial de la cobertura mediática, así como la variabilidad en las fechas de publicación de los femicidios para medir el impacto sobre la cantidad de denuncias de violencia. Los resultados indican un efecto significativo de las noticias de femicidios sobre el comportamiento de denuncia. En particular, la publicación de al menos un femicidio en los medios aumenta el número de denuncias de violencia física en un 11,5% sobre la media muestral. La dinámica de la relación entre la cobertura mediática de los femicidios y el número de reportes de violencia muestra que la divulgación de femicidios en los medios aumenta los reportes en la misma semana de su publicación, pero no tiene ningún efecto en las semanas siguientes. Estos resultados son robustos a una variedad de especificaciones y contrastes de robustez. En base a esta evidencia, sostengo que los medios de comunicación pueden tener un impacto social considerable en el comportamiento de denuncia al (i) mostrar información relevante de los CEM o la policía y (ii) promover señales de advertencia negativas que aumentan la demanda de las mujeres por servicios de justicia.

Palabras clave: violencia de género, femicidios, noticias, Perú

"Femicide media coverage and violence reporting behavior"

Abstract

This paper explores the effect of publicizing femicide cases on the media upon the violence reporting behavior of female victims. I hypothesize that the probability of reporting the aggressor depends on whether the victim resides in a province that receives media coverage of femicides. The empirical analysis uses violence reports registered by the All-women justice centers in Peru and a unique dataset that includes the exact date of femicides and its publication on the media between 2017 and 2018. I exploit the spatial variation of media coverage as well as the differences in the timing of publication of femicides to measure the impact on the number of violence reports. I find a significant effect of femicide news coverage on the reporting behavior.

In particular, the publication of at least one femicide on the media increases the number of physical violence reports by 11.5% over the sample mean. The dynamics of the relationship between femicide media coverage and the number of violence reports depict that femicide coverage increases the reports on the week of publication but has no effect on the number of reports in subsequent weeks. My results are robust to a variety of alternative specifications. Based on this evidence, I argue that the media can have a sizeable social impact on the reporting behavior by (i) depicting relevant information of the justice centers or police and (ii) galvanizing negative warning cues that raise women's demand for justice services.

Keywords: gender-based violence, femicides, news, Peru

Códigos JEL: D91, J12, J16, L82

Contents

I Introduction 2

II Modeling the Effect of the Media and Violence Reporting Behavior. 7

III Data 10

III.A Femicides Data 10

III.B Violence Reports 11

III.C Media Coverage Data 12

IV Econometric Model and Main Estimation Results 13

IV.A Econometric Model. 13

IV.B The Effect of Femicide Media Coverage. 15

IV.C Forms of Gender-based Violence 15

IV.D Heterogeneous Effects. 18

V Robustness Checks 21

V.A Placebo Regressions: The Effect of Non-media Femicides and "Future" Femicides on the Media 21

V.B Impact of Femicide Media Coverage on Male Reports 25

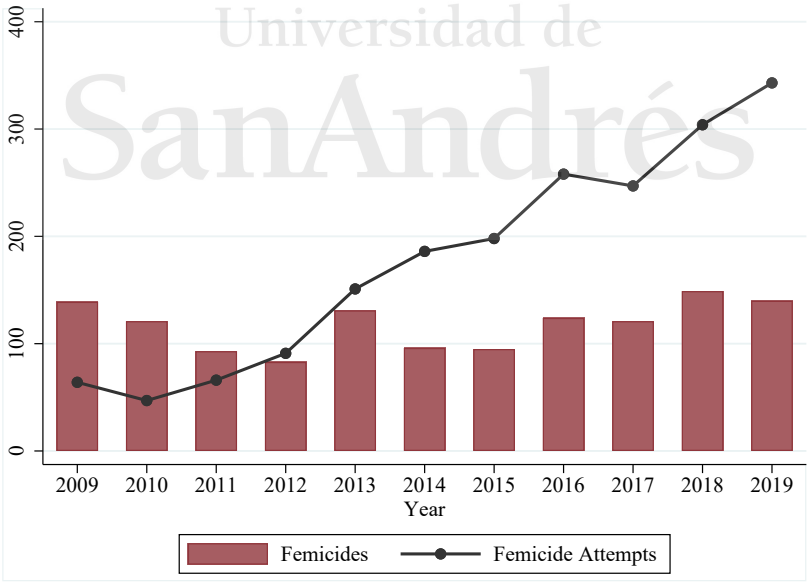
VI Conclusion 25

I Introduction

The gender-based murder of a woman or girl by a man conceptualizes the term *femicide* (Russell, 2008). This crime represents the final chapter in the life of a woman who had been a victim of several episodes of violence: rape, torture, psychological violence, sexual harassment (Radford and Russell, 1994). Indeed, femicides are often preceded by chronic abuse which, over time, increases the victim's risk of death (Smith et al., 1998).

Gender-based violence persists as a global social problem that affects 30% of women each year (WHO, 2013). In Peru, six out of ten women have been subject to intimate partner violence at some point in their lives (INEI, 2018). From January 2009 to October 2019, there were 1,292 femicides and 1,955 cases of attempted femicides. This situation does not seem to improve: in 2019, 140 femicides were reported, while in 2009, there were 139 femicides. Moreover, the number of attempted femicides has followed an increasing trend: it increased from 64 cases in 2009 to 343 in 2019 (see Figure 1).

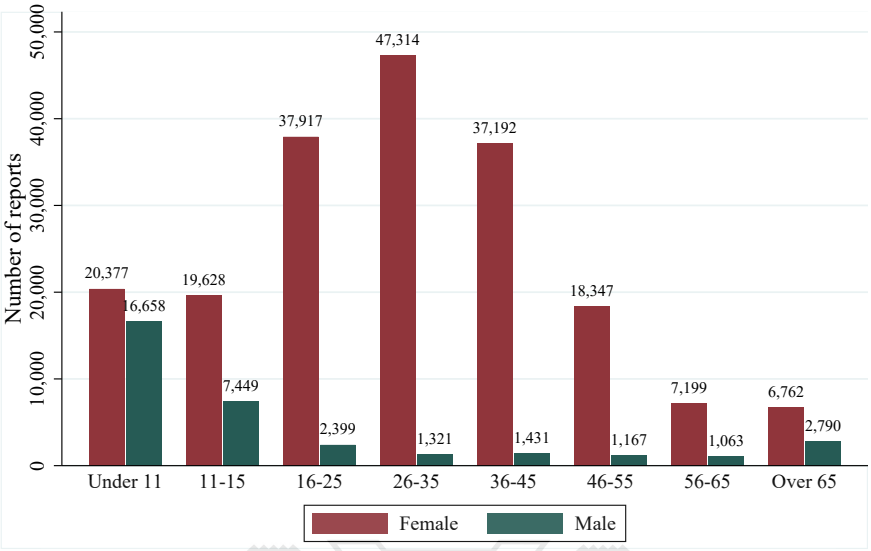
Figure 1: Number of femicides and attempted femicides.
Peru: 2009-2019



Source: National Program Against Family and Sexual Violence.
Author's elaboration

Due to the devoid of access to justice and law enforcement concerning gender-based violence, in 2015, Peru boarded on a new legislative strategy to fight violence against women with the

Figure 2: Average number of violence reports, by sex and age group.
Peru: 2017-2018



Source: All-Women Justice Centers.
Author's elaboration

enactment of the Law to Prevent, Punish and Eradicate Violence against Women and Family Members (Law 30364). This law acknowledged for the first time the concept of gender-based violence against women in the legal arena. Figure 2 illustrates the importance of legislating gender issues, elucidating the significant asymmetry in the number of violence episodes reported by men and women by age group.

One year later after the enactment of Law 30364, one of the largest national mobilizations in the history of Peru (more than half a million people in the streets) was held to protest against violence towards women and femicides. Since then, femicides and cases of gender-based violence have been a trend in the media; news that did not have this coverage eight years ago.

Taking into consideration the role of media as a mass communicator, one question that inevitably arises is whether femicide media coverage affects the behavior of the victims of violence. This is a major concern for both policy and scientific research. Studies suggest that the media has the distinctive power to entice the attention of news consumers and shape public opinion on important social issues such as crime and violence (Richards et al., 2014; Gillespie et al., 2013). In particular, media coverage of violence against women (including cases of femicides and attempted femicides) fosters the recognition of this issue as a shared social problem and

leads to public and individual action (Richards et al., 2011; Clark, 2012; Haydari and Kara, 2015; Easteal et al., 2015). Accordingly, recent increases in media reports of femicides in Peru may have an unintended positive effect of encouraging women to report their batterer.

This article provides causal evidence on the short-run effect of media coverage of femicides on the victims' demand for justice and support services. I exploit the natural experiment induced by the spatial and time variation in the media coverage of femicide cases in Peru.

I use a unique database that includes the exact date of femicides between 2017 and 2018 in Peru, the date of its publication in the media, and the name of the media wherein the cases were published. I link the femicides data with the database of domestic violence reports registered by the All-women justice centers (WJC)[1].

Using the news coverage of femicides and information of violence reports of women who have suffered violence for at least six months, I construct a weekly panel dataset at the province level that allows for the identification of the effect of the publicized femicides incidents on the demand for justice and support services. The identification strategy relies on the as-good-as-random date of publication of femicides in the media. Although the news selection process is based on what reporters and editors consider to be newsworthy –and the level of newsworthiness assigned to a story affects how, where and to what extent it will be depicted in the media (Chermak, 1995; Meyers, 1995; Pritchard and Hughes, 1997)– I provide supporting evidence showing that the characteristics of published femicides are not statistically different from the characteristics of non-published femicides.

Given this setting, I exploit the variation created by the differential timing in the publication of femicides and the spatial variation in the exposure of a province to femicide media coverage. To eliminate potential bias from province area-specific unobservables as well as time (week-month) shocks, I include province and time fixed effects in the estimations. I find that the publication of femicides in the media significantly fosters the increase of violence reports to WJC and law enforcement during the week of its publication. In particular, reports on physical violence. The dynamics of the relationship between femicide media coverage and violence reports show that

[1]The WJC offer free, integral and multidisciplinary public services to victims of violence. The services consist of social assistance, legal orientation, judicial defense and psychological counseling, among others (MIMP, 2019).

femicide news increase reports on the week of publication but have no effect on the number of reports in subsequent weeks.

Next, I analyze whether there are heterogeneous effects in terms of coverage of different sorts of media (television, radio, newspapers, web). The estimated effect of media coverage is statistically significant when the femicide is published on television: television coverage of femicides increases the number of violence reports to WJC by approximately 9.2% over the sample mean, whereas it increases the number of violence reports to law enforcement agencies by approximately 14.4% over the sample mean. Conversely, when a femicide case is publicized on newspapers, radio, or social media (web), I detect no statistically significant effect on violence reports.

The main threat to the identification strategy is time-varying unobservables that are correlated to both the timing of publication of femicides on the media and changes in reporting behavior. To ensure that the results are not driven by selection or time-varying unobservables, I estimate a variety of alternative specifications and perform falsification and placebo tests. The results are robust to the inclusion of week and year/month fixed effects and also to controlling for holidays and the number of reports registered the previous week. Additional estimates using variation in the timing of nonpublished femicides and male violence reports as outcome variable provide further evidence that the main results are not simply the consequence of spurious correlations.

To interpret the results, I develop a simple model where utility-maximizing individuals choose between watching the news and an alternative leisure activity. The model provides two main insights. First, the reduced form implied by the model suggests that the estimates of femicide media coverage capture the impact for the victims at large, not merely media-consumer victims. Second, the reduced-form estimates indicate that the media with a greater audience entails a more significant effect on the demand for justice services. Two possible mechanisms explain the latter results: (i) the media depicts relevant information of the justice centers or police where the victim can press charges, and (ii) the content portrayed in the media galvanizes negative emotional cues that influence the assessment of risk and raise women's demand for justice services.

This study adds to the literature in economics on the effect of the media. Different media channels such as films, television, radio, newspapers and web have been shown to affect crime

perceptions (Velásquez et al., 2020; Ardanaz et al., 2014; Mastrorocco and Minale, 2018), political outcomes (DellaVigna and Kaplan, 2007; Enikolopov et al., 2011; Ferraz and Finan, 2008), violence (Card and Dahl, 2011; Dahl and DellaVigna (2009)), fertility choices (La Ferrara et al., 2012), and women's status (Jensen and Oster, 2009). My article investigates the role of media in the context of femicides and reporting behavior. I contribute to understanding the importance of femicide media coverage in explaining the victims' behavior (women who have been victims of violence for at least six months) towards justice and support services. As far as I am concerned, this article is the first to take this approach, which I believe is informative of the role of the media in shaping social behavior.

My article also complements the evidence on the role of the media in shaping a variety of behaviors, attitudes, and perceptions. Significant research efforts in the communication and criminology literature have focused on studying how media entice the attention of news consumers and endorse the recognition of gender-based violence as a shared social problem (Richards et al., 2014; Gillespie et al., 2013; Richards et al., 2011; Clark, 2012; Easteal et al., 2015). Another strand of empirical research has focused on how individuals understand the information from crime news and the role of the perceived realism (Chiricos et al., 1997; Gross and Aday, 2003; Chiricos et al., 2000; Potter, 1986). My research then adds to this literature by providing another case wherein media play an important role, influencing the victim's assessment of risk and fear and allowing her to choose a course of action.

Finally, this article is related to the psychological evidence on the impact of emotional states such as fear on the preferences for different goods or actions (Ariely and Loewenstein, 2005; Read and van Leeuwen, 1998; Loewenstein et al., 2001; Gilbert et al., 2002).

The remainder of this paper is organized as follows. Section II presents a simple model of the choice of watching the news and its effect on the reporting behavior. Section III describes the data. Section IV portrays the econometric model and main estimation results. Section V depicts the results of the robustness checks. Section VI concludes.

II Modeling the Effect of the Media and Violence Reporting Behavior

Do media affect the behavior of the victims of violence? In this section, I model the choice to watch the news and the resulting impact of the media on the level of violence reports after media coverage of a femicide case. This framework outlines (i) the importance of being aware of the news and (ii) the effect of femicides published in the media. The key hypothesis is that femicide media coverage generates emotional cues that affect the probability of pressing charges against the aggressor. I consider two alternative mechanisms through which cues impact on violence reporting. The first builds on the media power to entice the attention of news consumers (Richards et al., 2014; Gillespie et al., 2013) and to shape women's opinion on reporting their aggressor. I assume that media empowers women through the pertinent information they portray in the news (e.g., information on location and phone numbers of the justice centers). The second relates to the victims' preferences in the context of violent relationships wherein women value the relationship less when they are fearful of being a victim of femicide (especially if the victim has suffered physical violence), and women's demand for justice services raises after a negative cue.

Women choose the utility-maximizing activity among two mutually exclusive options: watching the news (α^N) or engaging in an alternative leisure activity (α^O). Following Dahl and DellaVigna (2009), I assume a standard binomial choice model: any choice model implies probabilistic demand functions for watching the news $P(\alpha^N)$ and for the alternative activity $P(\alpha^O)$. Demand $P(\alpha^N)$ varies based on the quality of television, radio, newspaper or web content, the preferences towards media services, and the media's credibility.

The decision of reporting or pressing polices charges against the batterer, which does not enter women's utility functions, depends on whether the victim is aware of the news or watches the media that publish a femicide case. Consider a woman who has been a victim of violence, with some probability $h \geq 0$ she reports her aggressor. The likelihood of reporting is influenced by the demand for watching the news and by the emotional cues associated with the information

depicted in the media regarding femicides (s)[2]. I assume that

$$h = h^0 + \gamma P(\alpha^N) \cdot s \tag{1}$$

where s is binary, $s = 1$ indicates media coverage of femicide and $s = 0$ indicates absence of femicide media coverage.

I model the victims' aggregate demand for justice and support services in terms of the total number of violence reports as the probability of reporting violence (h) multiplied by the number of victims (V)

$$R = h^0 V + \gamma P(\alpha^N) V \cdot s \tag{2}$$

where $P(\alpha^N)V$ is simply the aggregate demand for news. Hence, $\gamma P(\alpha^N)V$ captures the effect on violence reports from watching news of femicides: *ceteris paribus*, the publication of femicides on the media increases the demand for justice and support services in $\gamma P(\alpha^N)V$ units.

Because specific data on news audience is not available (i.e., the aggregate demand for news is unknown), the estimating equation I use in Section IV exploits spatial and time variation in media coverage (i.e., the coverage of the supply of news content) on femicides at province level and assess the direct effect of publicized femicide incidents on the number of violence reports

$$R = \beta_0 + \beta^F \, 1[s = 1] + \varepsilon \tag{3}$$

where ε is the error term. The parameter β^F captures the net effect of femicide media coverage on violence reports at province level. Comparing equation (2) and (3), we can write the coefficient β^F as

$$\beta^F = \gamma P(\alpha^N) V \tag{4}$$

Notice that parameter β^F rises and falls proportionately with the aggregate demand for news. In what follows, I assume that this is approximately the case, that is, the greater the preferences towards media services, the more significant the effect of femicide media coverage on violence

[2]For simplicity, I assume that the probabilistic demand for other leisure activities does not affect h.

reports.

I allow for heterogeneity in the media coverage. I examine which sort of media has the most significant effect when assessing the impact on violence reports. I classify the media in four categories: television t, radio r, newspaper p, and other z (e.g., social media or news published on the web). Within each group, the fraction choosing media j is denoted as $P(\alpha^j)$ for $j = t, r, p, z$. The victims' aggregate demand functions for each media are simply these probabilities multiplied by group size (audience) V_j. I assume that the four activities are mutually exclusive options

$$P(\alpha^N)V = P(\alpha^t)V_t + P(\alpha^r)V_r + P(\alpha^p)V_p + P(\alpha^z)V_z \tag{5}$$

Following equation (3), in Section IV, I evaluate the heterogeneous effects on violence reports according to the sort of media

$$R = \beta_0 + \sum_{j=t,r,p,z} \beta^j \, 1[j = 1] + \varepsilon \tag{6}$$

where $j = 1$ indicates that the media j publishes a femicide case. The parameter β^j captures the effect on the number of violence reports from publicizing a femicide case on j[3].

Expressions (4) and (5) illustrate that the impact of the publication of femicides on violence reports depends on the proportion of victims who are aware of the news published on the media. Media has been shown to influence a variety of behaviors (Dahl and DellaVigna, 2009; Jensen and Oster, 2009; La Ferrara et al., 2012), and to shape individuals' opinion (Richards et al., 2014; Gillespie et al., 2013). Thus, the media with a greater audience may entail a more significant effect on the demand for justice services by (i) depicting relevant information of the justice centers or police and by (ii) galvanizing negative emotional cues that undermine the value of the relationship and raise women's demand for justice services.

[3]Similar to equation (4), we can write the coefficient $\beta^j = \gamma P(\alpha^j)V_j$.

III Data

In order to identify the causal effect of femicide news coverage on the number of violence reports, I exploit temporal and spatial variability of media coverage of femicide cases in Peru. To address this question, I gather data from three databases that contain exhaustive information on femicides for the period 2017-2018, nationwide reports of domestic violence in 2017 and 2018 registered by the WJC, and data on the geographic scope and media coverage (radio, newspapers, television and web).

III.A Femicides Data

The database on femicides was obtained from the Statistical Web Portal of the National Program Against Family and Sexual Violence[4] and includes information of 262 femicide cases that took place between 2017 and 2018 in Peru. This database contains information of the victim, place and date of femicide, and information regarding the aggressor and homicide (e.g. *modus operandi*, motivation). A key feature of the database is that it covers information about the publication of femicides in the media, i.e. it indicates whether it was published on the radio, newspaper, television or web, the name of the media, and date of publication.

The descriptive statistics are presented in Table 1.

The results in Table 1 provide evidence in favor of the randomness in the selection of the media coverage of femicide cases. In fact, no statistically significant differences are found between the characteristics of the femicides that appeared in the media and those that did not (except for the age of the victim, which is 5 years).

Femicide news coverage comprises 194 femicides. The most frequent type of media is newspaper (either physical or online): 6 out of 10 femicide news appeared in newspapers. The average number of days from femicide date to media coverage date is 3.5 days. It should be noted that 49.09% of femicides with media coverage were published at least 3 days after the incident. The histogram is shown in Figure 3.

[4] See https://portalestadistico.pe/

Table 1: Femicides and Media Coverage

	Femicides with Media Coverage ($N = 194$)	Femicides without Media Coverage ($N = 68$)	Difference
Average age (victim)	28.340	33.676	-5.336***
	(0.716)	(1.883)	(2.022)
% Stabbed, beaten, or suffocated	0.686	0.662	0.024
	(0.030)	(0.065)	(0.066)
% Suffer physical abuse	0.433	0.382	0.051
	(0.032)	(0.051)	(0.061)
% Suffer psychological abuse	0.505	0.500	0.005
	(0.031)	(0.054)	(0.065)
% Suffer sexual abuse	0.046	0.044	0.002
	(0.015)	(0.021)	(0.028)
% Murdered by a partner	0.567	0.456	0.111*
	(0.036)	(0.063)	(0.065)
Average age (aggressor)	33.337	34.088	-0.751
	(0.705)	(1.639)	(1.663)
% Aggressor under alcoholic influence	0.215	0.302	-0.088
	(0.037)	(0.062)	(0.073)
% Premeditated femicide	0.402	0.397	0.005
	(0.034)	(0.090)	(0.104)
% Urban cities	0.641	0.545	0.096
	(0.080)	(0.093)	(0.072)
% First half of the year	0.268	0.221	0.047
	(0.028)	(0.064)	(0.073)

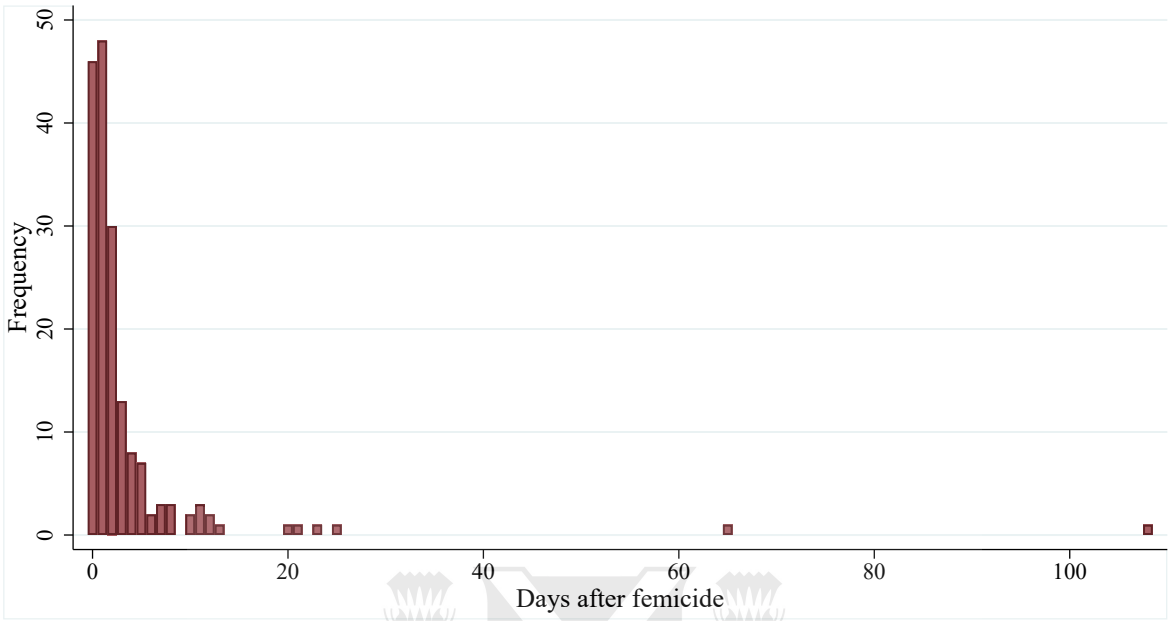
Notes: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Standard errors are clustered at province level.

III.B Violence Reports

The information on domestic violence and police reports comes from the WJC. I focus on the period 2017 to 2018. The WJC archive file records of violence reports. Records include socioeconomic and demographic information of the victim and the aggressor, type of violence and past episodes of violence. It also contains information about the place and date of more than 170,000 women victims of violence who report their cases.

This data allows for the construction of a province-level database that includes daily information on the number of violence reports and the number of women who reported to WJC or law enforcement. I focus on female victims between 15 and 65 years old. In particular, I construct

Figure 3: Histogram for the Number of Days from Femicide Date to Media Coverage Date



a unified database at the province level that comprises weekly information on the number of reports of women (15-65 age group) who have suffered violence for at least six months, including physical, sexual, psychological, and economic violence records[5].

There is an average of six violence reports per week in each province from women who have suffered episodes of violence for at least six months. The two most frequent types of violence are psychological and physical. There are approximately five psychological violence reports per week, whereas there are three physical violence reports per week. Summary statistics of weekly violence reports at province level are shown in Table 2.

III.C Media Coverage Data

The data on the coverage and geographical reach of the media (i.e. radio, television, newspapers, and web) is gathered from each media website, as well as from CONCORTV[6]. It should be noted that, in the case of the femicide news published on the web, only those provinces in which at least 25% of its population has internet access are considered within the media coverage[7]. Likewise,

[5]The database includes the information from 196 Peruvian provinces during the 104 weeks of the 2017-2018 period.

[6]It is an autonomous entity that provides information on the main indicators of radio and television in Peru.

[7]Information on internet access was obtained from the 2017 Peruvian census.

Table 2: Summary statistics of weekly violence reports
(at province level)

	Observations	Mean	Standard deviation	Min	Max
Violence reports to WJC	20,384	6.277	23.396	0	471
Violence reports to Law Enforcement	20,384	4.084	17.756	0	396
Physical violence reports	20,384	2.808	10.006	0	211
Psychological violence reports	20,384	5.366	20.330	0	427
Economic violence reports	20,384	0.610	2.428	0	54
Sexual violence reports	20,384	0.416	2.140	0	61
Other	20,384	0.208	1.430	0	39

I determine the geographic scope of television (radio), depending on the channel (station) that broadcasted the femicide.

According to CONCORTV, the media with the largest audience is television: 98% of the adult population watches television. Whereas 86%, 72% and 66% of the population get to know the news by listening to the radio, reading newspapers and magazines, and surfing in the web, respectively. Additionally, the average daily hours that Peruvian adults watch television (3:04 hours) is greater than the time they spend listening to the radio (2:35 hours), reading newspapers and magazines (1:25 hours) and surfing in the web (2:59 hours) (CONCORTV, 2018).

IV Econometric Model and Main Estimation Results

IV.A Econometric Model

The main purpose of this article is to investigate the impact of the mediatization of femicides on the violence reporting behavior in Peru. To address this question, I exploit spatial and temporal variation in media coverage of femicides. The identification strategy relies on the comparison of (i) the number of reports between provinces and (ii) the number of reports between weeks with femicide media coverage and weeks without media coverage.

Formally, I estimate the following equation:

$$Reports_{it} = \alpha + \beta Media_{it} + \varphi X_{it} + \gamma_i + \lambda_t + \varepsilon_{it} \tag{7}$$

where $Reports_{it}$ is the total number of reports recorded in week t in province i, $Media_{it}$ indicates whether a femicide was published by the media in province i during the week t, X_{it} is a set of controls that includes the number of holidays during the week and the number of reports registered in province i the previous week, γ_i are province fixed effects, λ_t are week fixed effects, and ε_{it} is the error term. My identification assumption is that the reporting behavior (or the number of reports) during weeks with and without femicide media coverage would have been similar in the absence of femicide news. Although any fixed province characteristic that determines the media access/coverage will be absorbed by the fixed effects, to account for any possible differential trend in the outcome by these factors, I also include in the regressions separate linear time trends (weekly and monthly trends) for each province. Standard errors are adjusted for clustering at the province level.

My primary interest is the effect of media coverage of femicides, controlling for province and time fixed effects. Assuming that the publication of femicide cases by media is "as good as random" when I control for the latter fixed effects, specification (7) yields unbiased estimates of the causal effect of femicide media coverage on the violence reporting behavior of women who have suffered violence for at least six months. It is worth mentioning that, since not all the victims get to know the news, this estimate understates the causal effect of actually watching a femicide case on the news.

Women victims of violence may self-select or not into watching/reading/listening to media, in general, depending on their content, access, and coverage. This is not an issue in my specification as my variable of interest is defined in a broader sense. The estimated effect does not compare coverage shocks among media audiences; instead, I include both media consumers and non-media consumers as the media-treatment variable is defined at the province level. In other words, I am estimating an intention-to-treat effect (ITT).

Additionally, I test for the presence of heterogeneous effects on the impact of femicide coverage according to the sort of media and estimate the following specification

$$Reports_{it} = \alpha + \beta^r Radio_{it} + \beta^t Television_{it} + \beta^p Newspaper_{it} + \beta^z Other_{it} + \varphi X_{it} + \gamma_i + \lambda_t + \varepsilon_{it} \tag{8}$$

where $Radio_{it}$, $Television_{it}$, $Newspaper_{it}$ and $Other_{it}$ indicate whether a femicide was published

on the radio, television, newspapers and web, respectively, in province i during week t.

IV.B The Effect of Femicide Media Coverage

Table 3 shows the effect on the reporting behavior of publicizing femicides on the media, presenting the results of estimating equation (7). I document the impact on reports to both (i) all-women justice centers and (ii) law enforcement agencies. The latter includes violence reports to the police stations, prosecutors' offices and courts. The basic model in columns (1) and (4) of Table 3 include the media coverage dummy and a set of time and province fixed effects, as well as an intra-province weekly trend. Columns (2-3) and (5-6) add in two time-varying covariates: the number of holidays during the week and the number of violence reports registered the previous week.

The coefficients associated with femicide media coverage are quite stable across specifications. The most conservative specification estimates (columns 2 and 5) show that the effect of publicizing femicides on the media is positive and significant, suggesting that media affects the reporting behavior of women victims of violence. Conditional on province fixed effects, week fixed effects and time-varying controls, publicizing femicides on the media increases the number of weekly reports of violence to WJC by 9.2% over the sample mean, while increasing the number of weekly reports to law enforcement agencies by 14.4% over the sample mean.

In Table 4, I explore the dynamics of femicides coverage shocks. I assess various structures of lags (from $t-1$ to $t-4$) and, in all cases, the publication of femicides on the media is not related to violence reports the following weeks, indicating that the correlation between femicides coverages shocks and the number of violence reports is significant only during the week of publication of femicide cases. The coefficient of media coverage during the same week of femicide publications remains unchanged when adding time-varying covariates at the province level.

IV.C Forms of Gender-based Violence

The evidence above suggests that the number of violence reports increases in response to media coverage of femicides. To give a clearer interpretation of the effect of femicide media coverage on the reporting behavior, I analyze its effect on the four forms of violence addressed by the WJC: physical, psychological, sexual and economic. From estimating equation (7), Table 5

Table 3: Effect of Femicide Media Coverage on Female Reports

	Violence reports to WJC			Violence reports to Law enforcement		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Femicide media coverage	0.579*	0.578*	0.755**	0.586**	0.588**	0.733***
	(0.344)	(0.338)	(0.372)	(0.246)	(0.240)	(0.256)
Observations	20,384	20,188	20,188	20,384	20,188	20,188
R-squared	0.688	0.684	0.683	0.698	0.697	0.698
Trend	Intra-province weekly trend	Intra-province weekly trend	Intra-province monthly trend	Intra-province weekly trend	Intra-province weekly trend	Intra-province monthly trend
Controls	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes

Notes: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Robust standard errors in parentheses. Standard errors are clustered at province level. All regressions include province and week FE. The set of controls includes the number of reports registered the previous week and the number of holidays during the week.

Table 4: Dynamics

	Violence reports to WJC			Violence reports to Law enforcement		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Femicide media coverage	0.676*	0.677*	0.853**	0.674***	0.676***	0.821***
	(0.347)	(0.349)	(0.402)	(0.238)	(0.240)	(0.277)
Femicide media coverage $t-1$	0.122	0.098	0.095	-0.092	-0.154	-0.151
	(0.418)	(0.466)	(0.469)	(0.292)	(0.331)	(0.338)
Femicide media coverage $t-2$	1.990	1.991	1.878	1.304	1.306	1.214
	(1.395)	(1.399)	(1.332)	(0.948)	(0.953)	(0.898)
Femicide media coverage $t-3$	0.625	0.626	0.681	0.360	0.363	0.411
	(0.532)	(0.537)	(0.559)	(0.297)	(0.302)	(0.318)
Femicide media coverage $t-4$	-0.047	-0.049	0.047	-0.207	-0.211	-0.133
	(0.393)	(0.395)	(0.389)	(0.380)	(0.385)	(0.362)
Observations	19,600	19,600	19,600	19,600	19,600	19,600
R-squared	0.681	0.681	0.681	0.700	0.700	0.701
Trend	Intra-province weekly trend	Intra-province weekly trend	Intra-province monthly trend	Intra-province weekly trend	Intra-province weekly trend	Intra-province monthly trend
Controls	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes

Notes: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Robust standard errors in parentheses. Standard errors are clustered at province level. All regressions include province and week FE. The set of controls includes the number of reports registered the previous week and the number of holidays during the week.

shows that media coverage of femicides significantly increases the number of weekly reports of physical violence. The publication of at least one femicide on the media increases physical violence reports by 11.5% over the sample mean. While the magnitude of the coefficient is not minor with respect to the number of reports of physical violence, I find no effect on the reporting behavior concerning the other forms of violence (sexual, psychological and economic) as noted in Tables 5 and 6.

These findings suggest that the overall estimated effect of femicide media coverage on the reporting behavior is driven by the significant increase in the number of reports of physical violence following the publication of femicides. Publicizing femicides in the media galvanizes negative emotional cues that particularly affect women who have suffered physical violence. It seems that the threat of a femicide is more credible and summons more fear when the victim has experienced physical violence episodes, compared to women who suffered psychological, sexual or economic violence. Consistently, media shape women's opinion and reporting behavior to the extent the victims feel relatable to the content portrayed on the news. Moreover, media raise women's demand for justice services by rousing negative "warning" cues when they have been victims of physical assaults.

IV.D Heterogeneous Effects

Do media with a larger audience have a more significant effect on the reporting behavior? I analyze the possibility that the effects of publicizing femicides on the media may be *heterogeneous* depending on the sort of media: television, radio, newspapers and web. Table 7 shows the results of estimating equation (8). I find a significant increase in the number of weekly reports of violence after broadcasting news about femicides on television, compared to the number of reports registered during weeks without television coverage. Television coverage of femicides increases the number of weekly reports of violence to WJC by 12.5% over the sample mean, while raising the number of weekly reports to law enforcement agencies by 14.1% over the sample mean. The coefficients associated with newspapers, radio and web coverage of femicides are not statistically significant, suggesting that only television significantly impacts on the reporting behavior.

The empirical evidence presented is consistent with the violence reporting model in Section II:

Table 5: Effect of Femicide Media Coverage on Physical and Sexual Violence Reports

	Physical violence reports			Sexual violence reports		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Femicide media coverage	0.325*	0.322*	0.406**	-0.006	-0.007	0.008
	(0.178)	(0.176)	(0.186)	(0.054)	(0.054)	(0.057)
Observations	20,384	20,188	20,188	20,384	20,188	20,188
R-squared	0.619	0.613	0.613	0.291	0.286	0.286
Trend	Intra-province weekly trend	Intra-province weekly trend	Intra-province monthly trend	Intra-province weekly trend	Intra-province weekly trend	Intra-province monthly trend
Controls	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes

Notes: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Robust standard errors in parentheses. Standard errors are clustered at province level. All regressions include province and week FE. The set of controls includes the number of reports registered the previous week and the number of holidays during the week.

Table 6: Effect of Femicide Media Coverage Psychological and Economic Violence Reports

	Psychological violence reports			Economic violence reports		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Femicide media coverage	-0.031	-0.034	0.174	0.057	0.054	0.080
	(0.518)	(0.520)	(0.423)	(0.077)	(0.076)	(0.083)
Observations	20,384	20,188	20,188	20,384	20,188	20,188
R-squared	0.781	0.779	0.778	0.460	0.449	0.448
Trend	Intra-province weekly trend	Intra-province weekly trend	Intra-province monthly trend	Intra-province weekly trend	Intra-province weekly trend	Intra-province monthly trend
Controls	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes

Notes: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Robust standard errors in parentheses. Standard errors are clustered at province level. All regressions include province and week FE. The set of controls includes the number of reports registered the previous week and the number of holidays during the week.

media with greater scope and audience have a more significant effect on the reporting behavior. In Peru, individuals prefer to watch television than other media, and spend more time watching television than listening to the radio, reading newspapers and magazines, or surfing in the web (CONCORTV, 2018). Given the proportion of the population who watches television (98%), publicizing femicide cases on television is more effective in changing the reporting behavior of the victims of violence than other sorts of media.

V Robustness Checks

A possible concern with the estimated effects of femicide media coverage on the reporting behavior in my model is that they may reflect the effect of some unobservable variable that is correlated with the timing of publication of femicides on the media and changes in the number of violence reports. To ensure that the results indeed have a causal interpretation, I present four robustness tests that support the validity of the identification strategy of the paper.

V.A Placebo Regressions: The Effect of Non-media Femicides and "Future" Femicides on the Media

I examine the robustness of the main results to alternative ways of coding the independent variable (the media indicator). In the first exercise, I correlate the number of violence reports in a given week with the indicator of femicide media coverage in the following week. Table 8 shows the estimates of the effect of publicizing femicides in $t+1$ on the present reporting behavior. As expected, I find no significant association between the number of violence reports and future media coverage of femicides. The results are similar for the specifications that consider reports of violence to WJC and reports of violence to law enforcement agencies as dependent variables.

Second, I exploit the exact timing of femicides that were not published in the media. This approach allows to test whether changes in the reporting behavior occur in correspondence with the occurrence of femicides in the respective province, or if it is indeed fostered by the publication of femicide cases on the media. The estimates of the effect of femicides on the number of violence reports during weeks without media coverage are displayed in Table 9. The coefficients associated with the occurrence of femicides are not statistically different from zero, suggesting that there are no significant effects of non-published femicides on the violence reporting behavior.

Table 7: Heterogeneous Effects of Femicide Media Coverage

	Violence reports to WJC			Violence reports to Law enforcement		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Newspapers	0.063	0.063	0.038	0.022	0.018	-0.009
	(0.695)	(0.697)	(0.693)	(0.524)	(0.531)	(0.529)
Radio	2.884	2.889	3.058	1.722	1.740	1.865
	(2.965)	(2.962)	(3.119)	(1.819)	(1.830)	(1.960)
Television	0.723**	0.787**	0.831**	0.636**	0.576**	0.614**
	(0.325)	(0.366)	(0.363)	(0.256)	(0.245)	(0.248)
Other	0.382	0.367	0.434	0.465	0.466	0.521
	(0.429)	(0.422)	(0.450)	(0.405)	(0.401)	(0.429)
Observations	20,384	20,188	20,188	20,384	20,188	20,188
R-squared	0.688	0.684	0.683	0.698	0.697	0.698
Trend	Intra-province weekly trend	Intra-province weekly trend	Intra-province monthly trend	Intra-province weekly trend	Intra-province weekly trend	Intra-province monthly trend
Controls	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes

Notes: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Robust standard errors in parentheses. Standard errors are clustered at province level. All regressions include province and week FE. The set of controls includes the number of reports registered the previous week and the number of holidays during the week.

Table 8: Effect of Femicide Media Coverage on Female Reports in $t+1$

	Violence reports to WJC			Violence reports to Law enforcement		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Femicide media coverage $t+1$	0.684	0.652	0.706	0.386	0.353	0.398
	(0.438)	(0.426)	(0.434)	(0.291)	(0.285)	(0.290)
Observations	7,730	7,730	7,730	7,730	7,730	7,730
R-squared	0.696	0.696	0.696	0.706	0.706	0.707
Trend	Intra-province weekly trend	Intra-province weekly trend	Intra-province monthly trend	Intra-province weekly trend	Intra-province weekly trend	Intra-province monthly trend
Controls	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes

Notes: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Robust standard errors in parentheses. Standard errors are clustered at province level. All regressions include province and week FE. The set of controls includes the number of reports registered the previous week and the number of holidays during the week.

Table 9: Effect of Femicides on Female Reports During Weeks without Femicide Media Coverage

	Violence reports to WJC			Violence reports to Law enforcement		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Femicide	-0.987	-0.995	-0.901	-0.911	-0.921	-0.844
	(2.292)	(2.301)	(2.239)	(1.836)	(1.844)	(1.793)
Observations	7,908	7,908	7,908	7,908	7,908	7,908
R-squared	0.694	0.694	0.694	0.704	0.704	0.705
Trend	Intra-province weekly trend	Intra-province weekly trend	Intra-province monthly trend	Intra-province weekly trend	Intra-province weekly trend	Intra-province monthly trend
Controls	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes

Notes: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Robust standard errors in parentheses. Standard errors are clustered at province level. All regressions include province and week FE. The set of controls includes the number of reports registered the previous week and the number of holidays during the week.

To provide further evidence on the effect of femicide news on the reporting behavior, I estimate a regression that excludes all the weeks with zero violence reports and includes both dummies: published femicides on the news and non-published femicide cases. If the effect is indeed driven by media coverage, we should expect a zero coefficient on non-published femicide cases and a (significant) positive coefficient on published femicide cases. Table 10 shows that the publication of femicide cases on the news significantly increases the number of weekly reports to law enforcement agencies[8]. I detect no statistically significant effect on violence reports from non-published femicide cases.

V.B Impact of Femicide Media Coverage on Male Reports

I also assess the robustness of the results to an alternative dependent variable: the number of violence reports wherein the victim is male. A main concern in my identification strategy is that the observed increment in the number of female violence reports may just be reflecting an overall increase in the level of violence perpetrated by men. I address this question by evaluating whether media coverage of femicides leads to changes in the reporting behavior of male victims. To do so, I estimate the baseline specification (7). Table 11 depicts the results. Note that there are no significant changes in the number of male violence reports to WJC and law enforcement agencies. These results reduce concerns about whether the change in the violence reporting behavior of women following the publication of femicide cases on the news is driven by an overall increase in the level of violence.

VI Conclusion

This paper studies the impact of publicizing femicide cases on the media upon the violence reporting behavior of female victims. I exploit the spatial variation of media coverage as well as the differences in the timing of publication of femicide cases on the news between 2017 and 2018.

I find a significant effect of femicide news coverage on the reporting behavior. Publicizing femicides on the media increases the number of weekly reports of violence to WJC by 9.2% over

[8]The coefficients on published femicide cases when considering the number of weekly reports to WJC are statistically equal to zero. This might be explained by the smaller sample size.

Table 10: Effect of Femicides on Female Reports

	Violence reports to WJC			Violence reports to Law enforcement		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Femicide media coverage	0.538	0.536	0.727*	0.554**	0.558**	0.713***
	(0.365)	(0.358)	(0.387)	(0.263)	(0.257)	(0.265)
Femicides w/o media coverage	-1.814	-1.825	-1.779	-1.080	-1.115	-1.082
	(2.705)	(2.707)	(2.708)	(1.566)	(1.585)	(1.591)
Observations	17,072	16,921	16,921	17,072	16,921	16,921
R-squared	0.698	0.694	0.693	0.704	0.703	0.704
Trend	Intra-province weekly trend	Intra-province weekly trend	Intra-province monthly trend	Intra-province weekly trend	Intra-province weekly trend	Intra-province monthly trend
Controls	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes

Notes: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Robust standard errors in parentheses. Standard errors are clustered at province level. All regressions include province and week FE. The set of controls includes the number of reports registered the previous week and the number of holidays during the week.

Table 11: Effect of Femicide Media Coverage on Male Reports

	Violence reports to WJC			Violence reports to Law enforcement		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Femicide media coverage	0.084	0.085	0.090	0.091	0.092	0.096
	(0.116)	(0.115)	(0.118)	(0.090)	(0.090)	(0.092)
Observations	20,072	19,879	19,879	20,072	19,879	19,879
R-squared	0.137	0.129	0.128	0.115	0.108	0.106
Trend	Intra-province weekly trend	Intra-province weekly trend	Intra-province monthly trend	Intra-province weekly trend	Intra-province weekly trend	Intra-province monthly trend
Controls	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes

Notes: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Robust standard errors in parentheses. Standard errors are clustered at province level. All regressions include province and week FE. The set of controls includes the number of reports registered the previous week and the number of holidays during the week.

the sample mean, whilst increasing the number of weekly reports to law enforcement agencies by 14.4% over the sample mean. In particular, the publication of at least one femicide on the media increases the number of physical violence reports by 11.5% over the sample mean. The dynamics of the relationship between femicide media coverage and the number of violence reports depict that femicide coverage increases the reports on the week of publication but has no effect on the number of reports in subsequent weeks. My results are robust to a variety of alternative specifications.

Based on this evidence, I estimate that the effect of publicizing femicides on the media may be heterogeneous depending on the sort of media: television, radio, newspapers and web. I find that television coverage of femicides increases the number of weekly reports of violence to WJC by 12.5% over the sample mean, and raises the number of weekly reports to law enforcement agencies by 14.1% over the sample mean. I detect no statistically significant effect on violence reports when femicide cases are publicized on newspapers, radio or the web. These results suggest that the media with a greater audience (television) can have a sizeable social impact on the reporting behavior, compared to other media, by (i) depicting relevant information of the justice centers or police, or by (ii) galvanizing negative warning cues that raise women's demand for justice services.

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