

## AUDIOVISUAL NARRATIVES IN LATIN AMERICA IN RESPONSE TO INSECURITY Bogotá, Guayaquil and San Salvador on Digital Platforms

PATRICIO BARRAZUETA (PBARRAZUETA@UTPL.EDU.EC)<sup>1</sup>

JUAN PABLO ARROBO (JPARROBO1@UTPL.EDU.EC)<sup>1</sup>

ABEL SUING (ARSUING@UTPL.EDU.EC)<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Universidad Técnica Particular de Loja, Ecuador

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### KEYWORDS

*Image*  
*Audiovisual Narratives*  
*Podcast*  
*Social Media*  
*Security*

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### ABSTRACT

*Latin American cities have experienced a transformation in their urban narratives through digital media. This study compares the narratives conveyed through photojournalistic reports and podcasts in the cities of Bogotá, Guayaquil and San Salvador, published on the most widely viewed social media platforms between January 2024 and June 2025. The research is grounded in the hypothesis that contemporary audiovisual formats reconfigure representations of urban creativity, generating new paradigms that reflect the cultural identities, social challenges and creative potential of each metropolitan context. The aim is to identify how these productions contribute resources and strategies for addressing social difficulties and proposing responses to the risks associated with public insecurity.*

*A mixed-methods approach is employed, combining interviews and content analysis. Photojournalistic reports provide specialised visual coverage, while podcasts offer a more immersive experience. Understanding these differences enables content creators and researchers to make more effective use of the strengths of each medium for communication purposes.*

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Received: 16 / 04 / 2026

Accepted: 20 / 07 / 2026

## 1. Introduction

Latin America faces persistent problems of crime linked to economic inequality, unemployment and drug trafficking, a phenomenon that has intensified since the second decade of the twenty-first century. The region is currently experiencing “a period of sharp growth in insecurity and violence driven by structural and historical causes, as well as by the increasing presence of organised crime and drug trafficking” (Malamud & Núñez, 2024, p. 1). As a result, Latin America remains one of the most violent regions in the world, with insecurity affecting both affluent and disadvantaged communities in different ways.

Urban violence in Latin America is complex and cannot be fully understood solely through homicide rates, since both real and perceived violence continue to shape everyday life in significant ways. This complexity is crucial for understanding the implications for local communities (Doyle, 2019). At the same time, and somewhat paradoxically, Latin America is also one of the world’s most digitally connected regions. Governments and civil society organisations are therefore increasingly using information and communication technologies (ICTs) to map and mitigate insecurity, while also strengthening civic participation and institutional capacities (Muggah & Diniz, 2013).

The lived reality of millions of citizens is reflected in narratives circulating through the media and social networks. Media coverage of insecurity in Latin American newspapers significantly influences public perception. Issues related to crime generate widespread public concern, and the ways in which they are represented in the media shape citizens’ perceptions of risk (Zunino & Focás, 2018). Unfortunately, many print media outlets portray violence through processes of normalisation and commodify it as spectacle (Montiel & Martin, 2021).

Digital platforms, for their part, frequently explore the legacy of drug trafficking, particularly in countries such as Colombia and Mexico. This includes the aestheticisation of drug traffickers and the normalisation of narco-culture through user-generated content (Guerrero-Sierra et al., 2025). Netflix, in particular, exerts a degree of influence on the Latin American audiovisual landscape, although unevenly; some countries, such as Ecuador, have only limited visibility on the platform (Ordóñez et al., 2018). Fictional narratives may reflect social realities, but they can also exaggerate them. This relationship tends to intensify conflict and undermine the ability of political leaders to govern effectively (Rubio, 2025). The expansion of drug trafficking, in some ways inspired by narco-series, has contributed to growing risks manifested in criminal activity and the proliferation of organised gangs (Pino-Urbe et al., 2025).

Narratives circulating on social media allow marginalised young people to become protagonists of their own stories, challenging dominant conventions and offering alternative perspectives on social inequalities (Bonilla et al., 2024). Some of these narratives revolve around violence, emphasising distrust in institutions and legitimising forms of everyday violence (Berents & ten Have, 2017). Media narratives surrounding violence in Colombia often present events in fragmented and sensationalist ways, combining information without contextualisation and thereby generating alarmist perceptions among the public (Cruz, n.d.). Meanwhile, Instagram’s visual content and immediacy create a heightened sense of proximity to danger (Mullo, 2023). Although most academic research has focused on Facebook and Twitter, the growing popularity of Instagram and the increasing use of podcasts to circulate testimonies raise important questions about their impact on the construction of collective imaginaries (Morales, 2023).

Audiovisual fiction also influences public trust in security institutions and democratic systems. The series *La Casa de Papel*, for example, projects a form of political optimism mediated through belief in a just world (González-González & Igartua, 2024). For this reason, the aestheticisation of drug trafficking in films and series such as *Loving Pablo* and *Narcos* is particularly sensitive, since these productions reinterpret historical events while simultaneously shaping public perceptions (Blanco, 2020) and reproducing inequalities in audiovisual consumption (Bárcenas, 2022). In Mexico, these dynamics are likewise reflected in social media narratives that express low levels of trust in the state (Berents & ten Have, 2017).

Looking ahead, there is a clear need for further research into audiovisual narratives, given the still limited body of findings in this field and the need for ethically sensitive protocols adapted to digital storytelling (Ascuez-Valero & Turriate-Guzmán, 2022). The development of digital skills and media literacy is essential for empowering audiences in regions affected by organised crime, including through new strategies aimed at strengthening civic participation (Grijalva-Verdugo & Moreno-Candil, 2017). In light of the above, the guiding research question of this study is: do social media platforms — specifically Instagram and podcasts — address the issue of citizen insecurity derived from violence, while also offering proposals or suggestions for overcoming the crisis?

This study seeks to examine the narratives projected through emerging formats circulating on social media. Podcasts, for example, can function as a form of public pedagogy, contributing to education and awareness regarding social issues such as urban violence (Carrillo & Mendez, 2019). Podcasts are also increasingly used in educational contexts to address topics such as gender-based violence, providing platforms for disseminating knowledge and facilitating debate on complex social issues in accessible and engaging ways (Arense-Gómez et al., 2024; Huento, 2024).

Regarding visual dissemination, Instagram is one of the most widely used social media platforms, and numerous studies have explored its dynamics and forms of appropriation (Bard & Magallanes, 2021). It therefore lends itself to social and cultural analyses of photographic and video-based content (Manovich, 2017; Muñoz, 2010). Instagram is positively valued as a tool for generating social connections, particularly among young people (Staniewski & Awruk, 2022), which explains its relevance for examining representations of violence. At the same time, podcasts such as *El Hilo* (2024) document testimonies from teachers, students and journalists in Guayaquil describing how organised violence and drug trafficking affect everyday life, generating fear and widespread insecurity. Other podcasts, such as those featuring José Cherrez (2024), analyse shortcomings within security forces and deficiencies in preparedness, as well as the ways in which these limitations intensify perceptions of violence.

This research focuses on comparing the cases of Ecuador, Colombia and El Salvador due to their high homicide rates, recent historical trajectories and ongoing efforts to restore peace. Ecuador, in particular, has become severely affected by violence. “Between 2020 and 2023, the country moved from a homicide rate of 7.84 per 100,000 inhabitants to more than 47.28 per 100,000 inhabitants. This sudden increase made it the second most violent country in the world” (Carrión, 2024). By 2025, the Ecuadorian Observatory of Organised Crime (2025) had recorded more than 4,600 homicides during the first half of the year, representing a 47% increase compared with the previous year. In El Salvador, social media also functions as a channel for circulating content related to violence. Some posts reflect changing perceptions of security through reports and visual material concerning the state of exception and its effects on society. Instagram, together with traditional media outlets, disseminates news, images and rumours about violence among the population. Overexposure to violent content contributes to heightened states of hypervigilance and social stress.

## 2. Methodology

This study employs a mixed-methods approach with a descriptive scope, combining qualitative and quantitative methodologies. The research instruments used were semi-structured interviews and content analysis. Both semi-structured interviews and the systematisation of content analysis have previously been employed in studies examining violence and security-related issues. Examples include research into forensic patients’ perceptions of the risk of violence and the detection of intimate partner violence (IPV) by family physicians (Kopčavar et al., 2016; Levin et al., 2022).

Qualitative methodologies, particularly semi-structured interviews and content analysis, are effective tools for exploring complex issues related to violence and insecurity. These methods provide in-depth insights into participants’ experiences and perceptions, thereby contributing to

the development of more effective interventions and policies (Hardesty et al., 2019; Nathan et al., 2019).

The analytical matrix used to examine the podcasts was based on approaches previously applied in studies of podcasts as cultural and academic resources. Kulkov et al. (2024) propose a seven-step framework structured around dimensions of credibility, relevance and ethics. Ding (2023), meanwhile, establishes evaluation criteria focused on narrative and sound-related aspects. Likewise, authors such as Perdomo (2025) and Barbarino et al. (2022) emphasise methods aimed at addressing the representation of soundscapes and the analysis of urban and community dimensions. Content analyses were conducted on ten podcasts (Ecuador–Guayaquil, Colombia–Bogotá and El Salvador–San Salvador) hosted on Spotify, YouTube and Apple Podcasts between January 2024 and June 2025. The descriptive design was particularly suited to mapping narrative and sound patterns (Kulkov et al., 2024).

For the analysis, a coding sheet consisting of 50 questions was developed. The study combined thematic analysis procedures with ethical and sound-based evaluation criteria in order to ensure a rigorous and in-depth interpretation. The podcasts were transcribed using automatic speech recognition (speech-to-text) tools, and the transcriptions were subsequently checked manually to ensure linguistic accuracy. To complement the analysis, natural language processing techniques were also applied, enabling the identification of emotional polarities (Dumbach et al., 2024). The research was conducted in accordance with ethical standards in communication and social sciences research. Only open-access content was used. No sensitive data were included, and no personal identities were exposed. The principle of “do no harm” was also applied, particularly in episodes dealing with social violence (Kulkov et al., 2024).

Since social media platforms are constantly updated by users, it is impossible to undertake a fully comprehensive analysis. In the case of Instagram, the months of June 2024 and June 2025 were analysed through a non-comparative analytical-descriptive design considered as a cross-sectional sample.

The semi-structured interviews were conducted with five academic leaders and professionals specialising in digital communication in the region. Interviews took place via Zoom between 1 and 15 August 2025. The profiles of the interviewees were as follows:

- Interviewee 1: Television news presenter
- Interviewee 2: Member of the National Citizen Observatory
- Interviewee 3: Professor specialising in security studies
- Interviewee 4: News director
- Interviewee 5: Social media analyst

Declaration on the Use of Generative AI and AI-Assisted Technologies in the Writing Process

Declaration: During the preparation of this work, the author(s) used Qwen and ChatGPT GPT-5 large language model for the purposes of conducting bibliographic searches, improving the drafting of specific sections of the text, and generating graphs based on the data obtained. Following the use of these tools and services, the author(s) reviewed and edited the content as necessary and assume full responsibility for the content of the published article.

### 3. Results

The analysis of podcast productions in Colombia, Ecuador and El Salvador between January 2024 and June 2025 (Table 1) reveals a diverse panorama in terms of narratives, platforms and sound-based approaches. Nevertheless, a common thread can be identified across the three countries: the representation of violence and the social effects that stem from it. The quantitative and qualitative findings demonstrate how podcasts address urban and security-related issues through both linear and non-linear narratives, while foregrounding sound styles shaped by environmental and ethical dimensions. Local stories are thus expanded to broader audiences within the digital sphere through dominant platforms such as Spotify and YouTube.

The processing of data through narrative, ethical, sound-related and emotional variables, using the analytical coding sheet together with natural language processing techniques, made it possible to identify both shared and divergent patterns across the Latin American podcasts analysed. In Ecuador, for example, particular emphasis is placed on everyday life and the ways in which it is disrupted by armed violence and organised crime. In Colombia, the narratives adopt a historical perspective on the armed conflict and violence that the country has experienced for decades. In El Salvador, by contrast, the focus lies on how violence has transformed the lives of many people and on the transition from a violent country to a more peaceful one.

**Table1** Matrix of podcasts analysed in Latin America

| ID | City                     | Programme name                                                             | Title                                                                                            | Platform                  |
|----|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1  | Guayaquil Ecuador        | / El Hilo (Radio Ambulante Studios)                                        | Ecuador: Growing Up Amidst the Bullets (the impact of violence on children and teenagers)        | <a href="#">Spotify</a>   |
| 2  | Guayaquil Ecuador        | / Let's Talk Politics (podcast + academic event).                          | The escalation of violence in Ecuador. What do we know? What can we do?                          | <a href="#">Spotify</a>   |
| 3  | Guayaquil Ecuador        | / El Hilo (Radio Ambulante Studios)                                        | Ecuador: a chronology of chaos                                                                   | <a href="#">Spotify</a>   |
| 4  | Guayaquil Ecuador        | / Today in EL PAÍS (podcast)                                               | How Ecuador went from being a model of peace to a country at war                                 | <a href="#">(podcast)</a> |
| 5  | Bogotá Colombia          | / Criminal Behaviour                                                       | My daughter escaped from her ex: he searched ALL OVER BOGOTÁ for her and found her on a SITP bus | <a href="#">YouTube</a>   |
| 6  | Bogotá Colombia          | / The Origins of Violence in Colombia                                      | Podcast Chapter I - The Origins of Violence in Colombia: An In-Depth Look                        | <a href="#">YouTube</a>   |
| 7  | Bogotá Colombia          | / Faces and Territories                                                    | Podcast Chapter 2 - Faces and Territories: Memories of the Armed Conflict in Colombia            | <a href="#">YouTube</a>   |
| 8  | San Salvador El Salvador | / The non-violent struggle for the disappeared in El Salvador   Podcast 37 | The non-violent struggle for the disappeared in El Salvador   Podcast 37                         | <a href="#">YouTube</a>   |
| 9  | San Salvador El Salvador | / EL SALVADOR and NAYIB BUKELE: A New Country?                             | EL SALVADOR and NAYIB BUKELE: A New Country?                                                     | <a href="#">YouTube</a>   |
| 10 | San Salvador El Salvador | / Podcast - Causes and consequences of femicides in El Salvador            | Podcast - Causes and consequences of femicide in El Salvador                                     | <a href="#">YouTube</a>   |

Sources: Own elaboration, 2025.

Table 2 presents a comparative analysis by country, highlighting three central aspects of the audio productions addressing themes of violence and urban life. Ecuador, for example, which accounts for the largest number of productions (4), focuses its narratives on everyday neighbourhood life and the ways violence has affected younger populations. These productions tend to employ more linear narrative structures, accompanied by relatively neutral sound elements, such as background music or limited immersive resources. They also demonstrate a more consistent ethical treatment, assessed as either “good” or “exemplary”.

Colombia, by contrast, presents productions with a stronger historical orientation, focusing on the persistence of conflict across different regions of the country. The narratives tend to be structurally more complex, without clearly defined linear or non-linear formats, since testimonies are interwoven with analytical reflections on lived events. These podcasts incorporate a greater diversity of voices, broadening the understanding of violence through the lens of social memory and revisiting the experiences endured by the country over time. El Salvador, meanwhile, presents a different thematic focus, centred more strongly on public policy and state control, emphasising the pressure exerted by government measures in response to violence and crime, largely framed

through media discourse. Greater homogeneity can be observed in these productions, together with an ethical treatment assessed as “appropriate”.

Taken together, the three countries share a common narrative axis centred on violence, although each approaches the issue differently in response to its own social and historical realities. Ecuador, for instance, constructs its narratives through a more immediate and testimonial perspective, foregrounding the experiences of communities affected by insecurity. Colombia frames its narratives through collective and historical memory, connecting past and present experiences of violence. In El Salvador, the narratives place public security at the centre of the discussion, emphasising social control and state intervention in response to crime and violence.

**Table 2.** Comparative table by country

| Country     | Episodes | Audio quality                      | Sound immersion                        | Ethical treatment                      |
|-------------|----------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Colombia    | 3        | 3 – Acceptable                     | 2 – Poor<br>4 – Rich / full-bodied,    | 4 – Good                               |
| Ecuador     | 4        | 5 – Excellent / crisp,<br>4 – Good | 2 – Poor,<br>3 – Moderate / acceptable | 5 – Excellent / exemplary,<br>4 – Good |
| El Salvador | 3        | 3 – Acceptable,<br>4 – Good        | 2 – Poor,<br>3 – Moderate / acceptable | 4 – Good,<br>5 – Excellent / exemplary |

Sources: Own elaboration, 2025.

The node network presented in Figure 1 illustrates how each episode functions as a connecting bridge, linking national contexts with different axes of violence. In Ecuador, the most representative keywords are associated with contract killings, extortion, shootings, criminal gangs and drug trafficking, reflecting the urban violence currently affecting the country. In Colombia, the most frequently occurring terms include threats, violent death, displacement, armed conflict and guerrilla groups, thereby revealing the country’s long-standing conflict-ridden memory. El Salvador, meanwhile, is more strongly associated with terms such as disappearances, state control, femicide, prisons and social fear, while also reflecting a discourse of security framed as a governmental response.



photography and Colombian music in the international market; (6) History and Memory; (7) Philosophy and Technology; and (8) Journalistic Formats.

In El Salvador, by contrast, the content focused more heavily on reporting completed events, organisational activities and institutional initiatives, without moving beyond issues directly related to the organisation's mission. In Guayaquil, the most frequent themes were: (1) Domestic Politics, dealing with legal and judicial decisions in Ecuador; (2) Insecurity and Violence, including assaults, robberies, kidnappings, contract killings and crime; and (3) Society, encompassing routine police activity, urban vandalism and obituary-related news.

The ways in which these accounts construct their posts reveal clear differences. @cerosetenta presents a more elaborated editorial approach, relying on text-based design, infographics, halftone-style photographic editing, and combinations of images and text or animations and text, resembling the visual language of infographics and print journalism. By contrast, @glasswingsv mainly publishes still photographs, either individually or in carousel format, together with a limited number of illustrations. In Ecuador, @luisantonio\_ruizv frequently uses footage from surveillance cameras, police recordings and amateur videos.

The immediacy of photography is well suited to social media platforms such as Instagram, although it demonstrates limited creative potential, except in carousel posts where sequentiality creates a more narrative structure. Text-based design and infographics, on the other hand, reflect greater production work on the part of content creators. The use of video appears direct and explicit, particularly where there is little or no editing and where the faces of both victims and perpetrators remain visible. Only in videos involving fatalities or suspects are faces blurred, in compliance with Ecuadorian legislation. Nevertheless, no evident manipulation of effects or screen timing can be detected by the naked eye. The journalistic approach is markedly more violent, since it displays assaults (or attempted assaults), kidnappings, murders and crime-related news, unlike the accounts with social or academic orientations. This reinforces the McLuhanian principle that the form of communication is as important as its content.

The posts analysed do not merely fulfil an informative function; they also reveal diverse ways of seeing and interpreting social reality. The circulation of content on social media is unpredictable and extremely difficult to measure in terms of reproduction, responses and audience engagement. In this sense, such content shapes users' dialogues and interactions. The material examined presents reality through everyday experiences, crises, denunciations and serious problems of insecurity. Violence is portrayed as a common feature of citizens' daily lives. Although some contributions attempt to propose solutions, these remain isolated and have limited impact. At the same time, the discourses appeal to reflection, motivation and emotional responses capable of encouraging collective vigilance.

Following Martín-Barbero (1987), it is important not to forget that Latin American communication acquires meaning through its context. It may therefore be argued that these publications form part of a broader network of values whose overall meaning exceeds the sum of its individual components. Although they can be studied through temporal or thematic sections, they gain greater significance when understood in all their dimensions. This explains the creative resources employed to stimulate dialogue and debate. Likewise, the transmedia possibilities inherent in social networks (Scolari, 2013) enable the involvement of actors who recreate and renew content, thereby strengthening emerging voices in opposition to hegemonic discourses.

The growth and vast quantity of content circulating on social networks demand new technical and narrative alternatives. Text-based design, infographics, photography, montage and video can all be reinterpreted in both form and content in order to optimise engagement with social media audiences. The cases analysed reveal different facets of the Latin American context. On the one hand, videos depicting violence appear to contribute to insecurity and reinforce fear; on the other, design strategies and political-ethical reflections nurture hope through constructive critical thinking. Instagram is thus confirmed as a shared communicative space in which creative richness contributes to a far more sophisticated form of communication than mere ornamental rhetoric.

Regarding the interviews conducted, the testimonies converge in indicating that perceptions of insecurity constitute a complex social construct influenced by both objective factors, such as direct victimisation, and subjective factors, including media coverage and indirect experience. These perceptions have tangible consequences for quality of life, the economy and social cohesion, regardless of whether they correspond to official crime statistics. All interviewees agreed that perceptions of security are not direct reflections of criminality but are instead shaped by multiple factors. Interviewee 5 stated this clearly: “the perception of security has certain causes and also certain consequences (...) the main factors are victimisation, vulnerability, indirect experience and environmental conditions”.

Two of the experts reinforced this idea by referring to the “subjective experience” of insecurity and explaining how events such as the 9/11 attacks multiplied fear in the United States without a proportional increase in crime. Distrust in official statistics and governmental narratives was also highlighted. A broad critical consensus emerged regarding official figures and the ways in which authorities communicate them. According to Interviewee 3, “official data should not be trusted because they are neither reliable nor valid”, arguing that they are presented “in misleading ways”, although without directly criticising governments themselves. Interviewee 5 added that the need to overcome the limitations of surveys — “having a survey every six months is useless to us” — has driven the search for alternative and real-time sources capable of measuring phenomena that traditional metrics fail to capture with sufficient precision or speed.

All interviewees stressed that perceptions of insecurity, regardless of their objective basis, have real and harmful effects. Interviewee 5 stated that they affect “quality of life”, generating “social isolation” and “mental illness”, as well as producing a broader “socioeconomic impact” in urban contexts. Other experts went further, describing how insecurity has transformed lifestyles: “people are becoming more pessimistic”, “they begin to change their habits”, and even mentioning extreme phenomena such as “lynchings” and armed self-defence, ultimately leading to a state resembling “the law of the jungle”.

Likewise, there was broad agreement that security policies have historically been reactive, poorly coordinated and, in many cases, ineffective. The design of data analysis models and tools enabling “decision-makers” to formulate strategies based on real-time data was viewed positively. However, interviewees criticised the “lack of leadership”, the absence of a genuine “strategy” — claiming that there are only “programmes” — and the mythical “coordination” that never truly materialises. They emphasised the need to “share information in real time and create protocols of inter-agency trust”.

Citizen perception was therefore placed at the centre of the debate, recognised as a political and social indicator as important as crime statistics themselves. The statement that “three out of every four people say they do not feel safe” constitutes a highly significant political fact. The testimonies point towards a profound crisis of legitimacy. When the State cannot guarantee personal and material security, its structural foundations are weakened. As Interviewee 1 observed, this situation may lead to the emergence of “failed” or at least “weakened” states.

In line with the data analysis approach, Interviewee 5 emphasised that one particularly innovative and crucial aspect is the use of big data and natural language processing (NLP) techniques to measure complex social phenomena. Their approach to the “quantification of sentiment” on social media offers a promising methodology for obtaining more dynamic and nuanced measurements. At the same time, a vicious circle was identified in which violence, corruption and impunity mutually reinforce one another, eroding the social fabric and driving populations towards hopelessness and extra-legal solutions.

The interviews also revealed several contradictions, the principal one being the tension between official discourse and citizen/academic discourse. Authorities tend to use statistics to project an image of control or improvement — an “official narrative”. By contrast, citizens, academics and analysts perceive a much more severe reality and distrust official data, arguing that they are manipulated, incomplete or disconnected from everyday experience. Another contradiction emerges in political practice itself. While experts advocate preventive policies and

the reconstruction of the social fabric, governments continue to rely on “reactive” and “hard-line” strategies, which analysts regard as ineffective and counterproductive in the long term. As one interviewee noted, “preventive policies are politically less visible”, which explains why they are frequently abandoned.

From a future-oriented perspective, the testimonies point in several directions. Future developments will involve refining these models through the incorporation of irony and sarcasm analysis, integrating data from multiple social media platforms, and combining perception analysis with crime prediction in order to facilitate more proactive responses. In the longer term, strengthening State institutions will be essential, not only in terms of operational capacity, but also through transparency and accountability. It is necessary to “create institutions that function” and that “respond to citizens”. Faced with State inaction, the role of civil society becomes increasingly important. Security is described as “a neighbourhood issue”, and citizens are encouraged to organise themselves — whether through residents’ associations or collective initiatives — in order to demand responses and protect themselves. Another concerning future scenario identified is the warning that growing public hopelessness may lead to increased support for authoritarian solutions. As one interviewee observed, “hard-line initiatives become addictive”.

The final message conveyed is one of urgency. Interviewees warned that society cannot “start again from zero” and that it is imperative to break the current “vicious circle”. The future depends on whether society and government are capable of articulating a comprehensive response that addresses the root causes of violence rather than merely its symptoms. The key question that remains is therefore: “Do we have a future regarding insecurity?”. The experts’ answer is conditional: “of course we do”, but only if action is taken in a different and coordinated manner.

## 4. Conclusions

Based on the evidence presented, the research question can be answered affirmatively. Both Instagram and podcasts in Latin America actively address citizen insecurity derived from violence, although through different approaches, formats and narrative purposes. The podcasts analysed — produced in Bogotá, Guayaquil and San Salvador between January 2024 and June 2025 — construct narratives that go beyond immediate denunciation by offering contextualised analyses, intimate testimonies and, in some cases, concrete proposals for addressing the security crisis.

In the case of podcasts, narrative approaches vary according to the national context. In Ecuador, emphasis is placed on everyday neighbourhood life disrupted by urban violence and organised crime. In Colombia, the narratives present a historical perspective on armed conflict through the lens of collective memory. In El Salvador, the dominant discourse focuses on policies of state control and processes of pacification. The podcasts analysed function as tools of public pedagogy, contributing to education and awareness regarding urban violence, although the solutions proposed tend to be limited and are primarily oriented towards critical reflection rather than concrete action.

Instagram, meanwhile, operates as a space for the immediate and emotional visualisation of insecurity. The profiles analysed — @cerosetenta (Bogotá), @glasswingsv (San Salvador) and @luisantonio\_ruizv (Guayaquil) — reflect distinct academic, social and journalistic logics, respectively. While the journalistic approach tends to reproduce explicit images of violence that may reinforce fear, the academic and socially oriented accounts employ more elaborate visual resources that encourage ethical reflection and public debate. Taken together, both platforms contribute to shaping collective imaginaries surrounding insecurity, albeit with different levels of depth and narrative responsibility.

The research confirms that these audiovisual formats reconfigure representations of urban violence but also reveals a tendency to turn violence into spectacle and to normalise it, rather than to construct genuinely constructive alternatives. The dominant narratives reinforce perceptions of insecurity and fear, while contributions offering practical solutions remain isolated and of limited impact.

However, certain limitations should be acknowledged. The corpus analysed establishes a baseline for future expansion towards broader regional comparisons. In addition, the Instagram analysis was based on profiles selected according to criteria of thematic representativeness, although future research could also incorporate the impact and reach of publications themselves. Likewise, subsequent studies could extend the analysis to comparisons with traditional media in order to contrast hegemonic and emerging narratives.

The findings open new avenues for deepening knowledge concerning audiovisual narratives and violence in Latin America. One priority line of research would be the development of longitudinal studies capable of evaluating the evolution of these narratives during periods of greater social stability, thereby contrasting them with the findings obtained during the current crisis of violence. Further research is also needed into the reception and appropriation of these contents by audiences, employing digital ethnographic methodologies and reception studies in order to understand how users interpret, reinterpret and incorporate these narratives into their everyday lives. Of particular relevance would be the analysis of whether correlations exist between the consumption of such content and changes in perceptions of security or self-protection behaviours.

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