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CATALOGAÇÃO NA FONTE

Comunicação, mídia e consumo

Sumário

Artigos

Advertising, Education, and Citizenship: Reflections from Educommunicative Practices with Children

Publicidade, educação e cidadania: reflexões a partir de prática educomunicativa com crianças

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Resumo: *Neste artigo, apresentamos análise sobre a possibilidade do uso da publicidade como suporte pedagógico para aprofundar habilidades de literacia publicitária de crianças ao (re)pensar a falta de diversidade social nos anúncios. Para alcançar tal objetivo, usamos pesquisa bibliográfica para discutir a perspectiva socioeducacional da publicidade, e mobilizamos pressupostos da pesquisa-ação para realizar oficina educomunicativa com crianças da cidade de Cuiabá-MT. A pesquisa demonstrou a importância da construção de canais de diálogo com crianças para que elas organizem, aprofundem e expressem o que pensam sobre temáticas que atravessam a comunicação publicitária. Além disso, evidenciou o potencial do uso da publicidade como suporte pedagógico para estimular suas habilidades de apropriação crítica, criativa e cidadã da publicidade.*

Palavras-chave: *publicidade; infâncias; literacia publicitária; educomunicação; cidadania*

Abstract: *In this article, we present an analysis of the feasibility of using advertising as a pedagogical tool to enhance children's advertising literacy skills while reconsidering the lack of social diversity in advertisements. To achieve this goal, we conducted a literature review to discuss the socio-educational perspective of advertising and applied action research assumptions to conduct an educommunicative workshop with children from the city of Cuiabá-MT. The research highlighted the importance of establishing channels of dialogue with children,*

allowing them to organize, deepen, and express their thoughts about advertising and the underlying themes in this type of communication. Furthermore, it underscored the potential use of advertising as a pedagogical support to foster critical, creative, and civic appropriation skills of advertising.

Palavras-chave: *advertising; childhood; advertising literacy; educommunication; citizenship*

Introduction

The centrality of media communication in the social world demands that we go beyond the notion of media as mere vehicles of messages and understand them as crucial elements in the process of culture communicability and its values. In this sense, it is important to comprehend the relationship between childhood and media culture (KELLNER, 2001) which, through a cultural pedagogy (STEINBERG; KINCHELOE, 2001), has played an important role in the formation of children. On a daily basis, media products – such as advertisements, movies, news, to name a few – communicate social representations that influence ways of being, thinking and existing in the world. In this process, they reproduce and implement relationships of power in the construction and dissemination of images that (in)visibilize certain social groups (GOMES BARBOSA; SOUZA, 2018).

In the specific case of Brazilian advertising, the lack of social diversity has been underscored by surveys such as the one carried out by the Todxs[1] research (UN, 2022). This study revealed, for example, that in 2001: only 27% of advertisements featured black women; LGBTQIAP+ appear in 0% of the ads; people with disabilities appeared in only 1.2% of ads; 62% of the protagonists in the advertisements were white, thin, curvy women with straight brown hair.

Given this context highlighted by the survey, we find it crucial to consider that this unrepresentative scenario reinforced by advertising communication affects not only adults but children too, influencing the construction of their subjectivities, as well as their social relationships. But we also understand that it is equally important to consider the potential of younger people as critical and participatory subjects of media culture (BUCKINGHAM, 2007). In this sense, it is necessary to take into account children's perspectivesa on the uses and appropriations that they make of advertising, understanding them as, in addition

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1 The study mapped Brazilian advertising on TV and on social network Facebook, in 2021.

to being consumers of media representations, as producers of meanings that negotiate and resignify such content.

Therefore, this work is included among Communication studies that understand children as agents of action in social reality conceived as citizens (TOMAZ, 2016). Thus, it is important for us to reflect on ways through which children can question and challenge stereotypes in the media, especially in advertising.

To critically observe the social place granted to minorities in advertising is a counter-hegemonic effort that needs to be articulated among younger people so that new spaces of representation can be constructed. Among the media texts, we highlight the advertising text, considering the perspective that, in addition to its marketing bias, it is focused on communicating social representations (many of them reinforcing stereotypes), therefore, potentially assuming a socio-educational character.

Based on this understanding of advertising, in this work we aim to analyze the possibility of its use as a pedagogical support in order to deepen children's advertising literacy skills by (re)thinking the lack of social diversity in advertisements. To reach our goal, based on the premises of action research (THIOLLENT, 2022), we carried out an educommunicative workshop with seven children[2] from the city of Cuiabá, in the state of Mato Grosso, Brazil.

The text addresses, in the first topic, a theoretical discussion about the relationship between advertising and socio-educational processes that substantiate the study. Then, it discusses the methodological contributions provided by the action research for the developed educommunicative proposal. Finally, it presents the findings of the research regarding the advertising literacy skills developed by the children, as well as their productions that challenge the hegemonic advertising model that is not socially representative.

2   We chose to use the term "children" throughout this article when referring to the reasearch participants, based on the Convention of the Rights of the Child, promulgated in Brazil by Decree No. 99,710 of November 21, 1990, which defines a child as any human being under eighteen years of age.

The potential of using advertising as a pedagogical support

Considering the relevance of communicative practices within the scope of educational processes is pertinent in a world in which communication has increasingly occupied a prominent place by influencing ways of being and new ways of being together (MELO; RIBEIRO, 2023). This is a perspective that is reinforced by Martín-Barbero (2008), who recognizes the important role played by the media in the conception of desires and forms of belonging of younger people, disputing the place that, for a long time, belonged exclusively to family, religious and school institutions.

Although school is often conceived as the only legitimate place of knowledge, having played this role for centuries (MARTÍN-BARBERO, 2014), it is necessary to pay attention to the role of the media as

> "A kind of 'parallel school' that is more interesting and more attractive than the school institution, in which children and teenagers not only learn new things, but also, and perhaps mainly, develop new cognitive skills, that is, "new ways of learning", more autonomous and collaborative, still ignored by teachers and specialists" (BÉVORT; BELLONI, 2009, pp. 1083-1084).

Therefore, it is necessary to value the educational-emancipatory potential of communication, by recognizing in the student the figure of someone who has the right to critically appropriate media content and to use the media to express his/her ideas and claim his/her social demands. In this way, moving away from the classic schemes of communication (sender-message-receiver) and education (teacher-subject-student), based on the paradigm of content transmission, and approaching the notion of communication and education as relational processes of knowledge appropriation (JACQUINOT, 1998).

By assuming this dialogic character as something inherent to communication and education, we are dealing with a critical and participatory use of the media, "based on a pedagogical and not merely technological

racionality, as means of communication and not of transmission, as generators of flows of interlocution". (KAPLÚN, 1997, p. 06).

Hoff (2007) reminds us that the priviledged place occupied by the media is not comparable to the place of school in the lives of younger people. If we consider a typical elementary school student who studies in the morning, we could assume that he or she would have approximately four hours of content hermetically defined by the educational policy of his/her school. Knowing that the cell phone is one of the main means of internet connection among Brazilian children and teenagers, in different social strata (CETIC, 2023), we would have to consider that this same student would not need to leave the school walls to have access to media content. Even if the use of the device was not allowed during classes, it would probably be used in breaks or on the way to school. In this imaginary scenario taken as an example, if textbooks did not cover the themes raised in conversations between the student and his/her colleagues, a quick internet search could easily be done with his/her cell phone.

The speed and volume of changes in educational dynamics evidenced in this hypothetical example can lead us to observe two situations that, according to Hoff (2007), should be avoided: the *uncritical adherence* to technology and *apocalyptic rejection* of the alienating effects of the media. In the first situation, the media would be treated as an invariable resource, an established reality that could not be acted upon. Dialoguing with the limited comprehension of "digital natives", who, by apparently demonstrating skills in using different media, would already be, for this very reason, equipped with the necessary references to deal with the information contained therein. In the second situation, the media is treated as a carrier of the great social ills experienced in the present time, and should be avoided in all possible ways. From this perspective, some even adopt a reactionary stance, criticizing a supposed media attempt to "ruin" the values of a society that, in other times, supposedly had already been perfect.

We agree with Hoff (2007) that both paths work with extremisms and hinder an emancipatory pedagogical proposal through communication. In this sense, it is essential to understand that the media is inserted "in the daily lives of students, serving as a reference to him/her for the practices of social interaction and affecting their subjectivation processes" (HOFF, 2007, p. 31). According to this reasoning, if we can not ignore the media phenomenom and its influence on educational processes, we can incorporate it, problematize it, use it as a pedagogical support.

Given its relevance "as a product of the cultural industry disseminated by the media" (DE BARROS FILHO, 2001) and the large space that it occupies in our daily lives, advertising has the potential to build a relationship between formal knowledge and the repertoire of experiences of the students. Easy access, simple language and harmony with the current worldviews are characteristics of the advertising text that, according to Hoff (2007), facilitate its use as a pedagogical support. Bringing advertising into the educational space not only broadens the perception of students but also encourages them to take a critical look beyond the classroom. Since it is not possible – nor desirable – to adhere in an acritical way to advertising communication, and much less to reject it in an apocalyptic way, reading it and writing it in a critical, creative and socially responsible way is presented as a possibility for students to deepen their skills to read the world.

One possibility that, in line with Fantin's (2011) perspective of media education, has the potential to work on skills in four dimensions: i) cultural: expanding the cultural repertoire through discussion os social topics that permeate advertising; ii) critical: competence in ethical and aesthetic evaluation of the advertising content; iii) creative: competence in expressing oneself and producing information in a critical and responsible way; iv) civic: competence in promoting social awareness and encouraging the use of media resources for the construction of narratives focused on transforming reality.

As Malmelin (2010) points out, the skills required for critical appropriation of advertising (that is, of advertising literacy) are different from

those necessary for other forms of media communication. According to the author, in order to recognize, evaluate and understand the persuasive intention of ads and other commercial messages, competences are mobilized in four dimensions: a) information literacy: analyzing the credibility and validity of the advertising discourse; b) asthetic/visual literacy: analyzing the aesthetic and artistic expression elements of the ad; c) rethorical literacy: identifying the multiple persuasive strategies used in advertising; and d) promotional literacy: understanding the forms of marketing communication in the contemporary scene of media convergence, resulting from commercial partnerships and collabrations between organizations.

Machado, Burrowes and Rett (2017) highlight that such skills are already, to a certain extent, present in the individuals inserted in the consumer society, and may vary according to age, instruction level, access to different media and, also, level of attention employed in several moments of daily exposure to advertising. In this sense, activities that use advertising as a pedagogical support could contribute to "concentrating and organizing dispersed knowledge, favoring its development and facilitating its sharing" (MACHADO, BURROWES, RETT, 2017).

Furthermore, by fostering advertising literacy, one has the potential to contribute to a formation in favor of a communicative citizenship (MATA, 2006). That is, a citizenship that stimulates participation in the field of public communication through raising awareness among subjects about the social world that is also permeated by advertising communication.

In short, from this perspective, we start from the use of advertising as an instrument to bring culture, education and citizenship closer together. This is a possibility that, in the example to be analyzed in this specific article, is mobilized in a pedagogical proposal that intends to promote children's reflection on the lack of social diversity in advertising.

Action research: methodological contributions for the proposal of advertising literacy among children

In the theoretical-methodological horizon of this research, the perspective of convergence between communication and education was contemplated as a transdisciplinary theoretical-practical field (FANTIN, 2011). In this regard, in addition to the bibliographic research (GIL, 2002) that helped us build a spectrum of relevant scientific literature on the relationship between advertising and education, we adopted premises of action research. This choice was based on the understanding that this theoretical-methodological approach offers support for research in the field of Communication that deals with the uses and appropriations that children make of advertising, enabling the social involvement of the researcher with the community participating in the study in a political proposal for the collective production of knowledge in favor of social transformation. Therefore, action research offered us an important contribution to construct a research *with* children, listening to them from their own perspective, understanding them as social actors (SARMEN-TO, 2008) and, above all, as partners in the investigative process.

Furthermore, the theoretical-methodological premises of action research provided us with support to establish a dialogical communication (FREIRE, 2001) between children and adults in a dynamic of knowledge production in a collective and cooperative way (THIOLLENT, 2022), in which everyone had the possibility to learn and transform (or be transformed). In this sense, "enabling the recognition of other types of knowledge in the ecology of knowledge beyond the one imbued by hegemonic scientific rationality" (SOUSA; OLIVEIRA, 2018, p. 59).

However, as highlighted by Lumárya Sousa and Thaiane Oliveira (2018), in this political proposal for transformation inherent to action research, it is important to take into account the structural aspects of the social system that limit the possibilities for change. Thus, the authors emphasize that it is necessary to keep in mind that, often, the transformations caused by action research will not occur through profound change in social reality, but rather through people's critical awareness.

In the case of our research, this transformative process took place by raising awareness among children through the development of an educommunicative workshop that invited them to reflect on the lack of social diversity in advertising, encouraging them to see themselves as agents capable of intervening in this reality.

Lead by the objective of encouraging reflection on advertising communication from a social perspective (GASTALDO, 2013) and using advertising as a pedagogical support in educommunicative activities, in June, 2023, we carried out a series of workshops[3] with children from a social project located in the city of Cuiabá-MT[4]. These workshops were designed, structured and conducted according to the advertising literacy model systematized in pedagogical files by OPSlab – Laboratory of Studies and Observation in Advertising, Communication and Society (CRAVEIRO; COUTO; TOLEDO, 2021).

In this article, aiming to analyze the possibilities of the use of advertising as a pedagogical support to reflect with children on the lack of social diversity in advertising communication, we will specifically discuss the workshop "What would I change in advertising? Reflections on representation and representativeness", held with seven chidren (aged between 11 to 13 years old), led by two undergraduate students in Advertising[5]. We took as the corpus of analysis: the pedagogical file (OPSLAB, 2023), the field notes from the authors of this article6 and the productions developed by the children during the workshops.

3   This series includes the following workshops: "Who are we based on what we consume?"; "What is advertising: its characteristics and strategies?"; "What would I change in advertising? Reflections on representation and representativeness"; "Using advertising to transform".
4   The realization of these workshops is part of the extention activities developed by professors, undergraduate and post-graduate students from the OPSlab – Laboratory of Studies and Observation in Advertising, Communication and Society from the Federal University of Mato Grosso.
5   Members of the research group OPSlab – Laboratory of Studies and Observation in Advertising, Communication and Society
6   The members of OPSlab are encouraged to register their impressions on the educommunicative workshops following this model: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1rVZthrmNr1UsVUmqtNuYK4_yWXSWx84P/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=110224325027711667371&rtpof=true&sd=true

What would I change in advertising? Educommunicative workshop with children

The workshop, which lasted for two and a half hours, consisted of three activities that mobilized strategies for dialogic communication such as group discussion, playful dynamics and practical exercise.

Figure 1 – Social profile construction
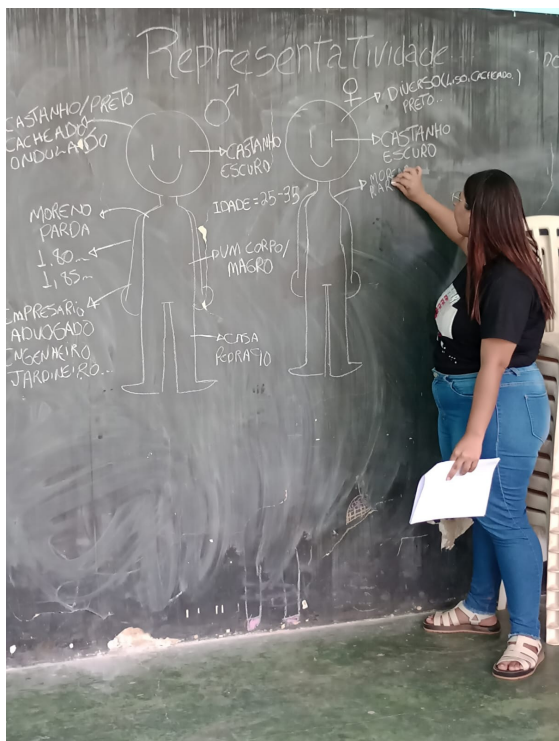
Source: OPSlab Archive

The first activity of the workshop consisted of a dynamic process to build the profile of a typical Brazilian. To do this, two figures were drawn on the wall, one of a male doll and one of a female doll, and then the children listed physical characteristics of the majority of Brazilans in their Opinion (Figure 1). To encourage participation, the educommunicators asked provocative questions such as: "What is the color of their

skin?; How tall are they?; What is the color of their eyes?; What is their age?; How does their hair look?; Where do they live? (in which city, in which neighborhood)?; What is their profession?" (OPSLAB, 2023). As the children began to speak, notes were made on the board, so that the characteristics were placed next to the dolls. With the main characteristics that represented Brazilians according to the workshop participants, a reflection on visibility in the media was started, based on the following question: "Do you see this Brazilian represented on TV, on magazine covers, in the movies, in soap operas, in advertisements?" (OPSLAB, 2023).

As the workshop's second activity, aiming to critically reflect on the influence of adverstising on ways of being, thinking and experiencing the world, a discussion about representation in the media was initiated. The educommunicators brought research data that showed how the charcateristics of the majority of the Brazilian population were not related to what appears in advertising. Raising provocations such as: "If the majority of the Brazilian population is made up of black women over 30 years old, why do women only star in 26% of advertisements and white people are seven times more represented than black people in advertising?" (OPSLAB, 2023).

Figure 2 – Ads for active observation

Source: OPSlab Archive

Next, an exercise of active observation of advertising was carried out, which consisted of comparing the non-diverse representations presented in two ads for the food market that reinforce a pattern of heteronormative white family (Figure 2). The children were encouraged to question the content of the ads by asking questions such as:

> What people are in these ads? What do they look like? [...] Do these ads show people that look like the ones you know? What groups of people are hihglighted in these ads? And what groups of people are invisibilized? How can this lack of diversity of people in the ads influence on the daily lives of Brazilian families? (OPSLAB, 2023).

The last activity proposed a systematization of the knowledge acquired in the workshop through a dynamic in which the children were invited to rebuild one of the previously analyzed ads, so that the Brazilian population was better represented.

Deepened advertising literacy skills among children

The activities developed in the workshop fostered media-educational skills among participants in the four dimensions proposed by Fantin (2011): cultural, critical, creative and civic. They contributed to expanding children's cultural repertoire, especially by raising reflections on the problem of stereotyping in advertising. Furthermore, they helped them exercise their critical thinking as they were invited to think about social

representations that are often used in advertisements and their possible influences through the exercise of reading the ads that had already been broadcast and creating pieces aimed at promoting awareness about the importance of diversity in advertising.

By analysing, together with the educommunicators who taught the workshop, advertisements for food brands (*Doriana* and *Seara*), the children were able to deepen their skills in advertising literacy (MALMELIN, 2010), as they noticed that both ads were carefully designed with the purpose of reaching specific people. Specifically, they developed their informational literacy skills when they recognized the persuasive intentions of the brands and when they questioned the validity of the information in the advertising pieces. When reflecting on the companies behind the ads they thought about the purpose of the brands when they presented messages about how Seara's ham stands out for having 50% less fat and 36% less sodium, and how the Doriana margerine is associated with a "movement for a better breakfast" due to its supposed higher quantity of milk and creaminess.

The children were also able to evaluate the choices made in the composition of the ads, thus stimulating visual/aesthetic literacy. This critical exercise was encouraged by the educommunicators as they highlighted elements such as the combination of colors with the brands' logos, the emphasis given to products, the textual composition emphasizing information products and the lack of diversity in the physical types of the people in the ads.

Furthermore, rhetorical literacy was developed among the children as they were encouraged to identify the persuasive strategy of the ads, analyzing the emotional appeal mobilized in the brands' choice to relate the consumption of the advertised products with the ideal of a happy family, as well as the discourse of authority reinforced by the choices to include famous people in the ads, such as TV hosts Fátima Bernardes and Rodrigo Faro. Although some children questioned the brands' choices for using this pattern with questions like: "What family is like that?", "This only exists on TV", "Nobody looks sleepy or in a bad

mood at this breakfast", at the same time, they recognized that such an approach had the potential to reach more people, precisely because it reinforces the white heteronormative family pattern in force in the society in which the pieces circulate.

In addition to this exercise of critical reading of advertising, the children were able to deepen their skills in advertising literacy (especially the aesthetic/visual and rhetorical types) by re(making) one of the ads discussed in the workshop. They chose to (re)create *Seara's* advertisement, with the mission of making it more socially representative. To this end, they were divided into three groups that, in addition to the knowledge acquired in the workshop, mobilized their prior knowledge about advertising practice and its tendency to trigger stereotypical social representations.

Figure 3- (re)created advertisement GROUP 1

Source: OPSlab archive

Figure 4 - (re)created advertisement GROUP 2
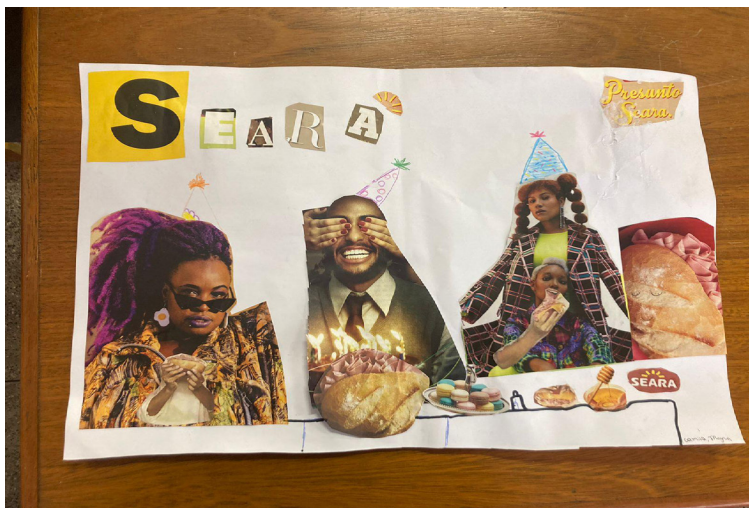
Source: OPSlab archive

Figure 5 - (re)created advertisement GROUP 3

Source: OPSlab archive

Within the scope of rhetorical literacy, the children demonstrated skills in recognizing persuasive strategies that mobilize both rational and emotional appeals. One of the groups (Figure 3), for example, in order to persuade the consumption of the fictitious products they created (the *Seara* Candy chocolate), underscored some of the qualities that differentiate it from its competitors (no sugar, no lactose, no trans fat, no cholesterol), while at the same time associating the advertised chocolate with feelings and experiences of kindness and delicacy through the slogan "Chocolate to sweeten your life". The other ads emphasize the emotional appeal by relating the advertised food products to the happiness experienced at gatherings of friends at a birthday party (Figure 4) and a barbecue (Figure 5).

Using magazine clippings and assembling them by gluing them onto cardboard, the children exercised aesthetic/visual litearcy skills, designing the layout of the elements they chose to include in their pieces.

Finally, the children were able to foster promotional literacy skills by relating the fictional images of happy families portrayed in the advertisements with the narratives shared by famous people (like the TV hosts who starred in the analyzed advertisements) on their digital social networks. Thus, becoming aware that, by sharing their daily lives permeated by products and brands, these celebrities were also producing promotional content, even if they did not always made that as clear as in the pieces analyzed.

Therefore, the workshop activities confirmed previous studies (CRAVEIRO, 2018) on the importance of building dialogue channels with children so that they organize, deepen and express what they think about advertising and the themes that permeate this type of communication. Experiences like this one emphasize the potential of the use of advertising as a pedagogical support to stimulate the critical appropriation of advertising, but also to foster creative and civic appropriation. By assuming, in one of the workshop's activities, the role of producers of advertising pieces, those children has the opportunity to rethink the lack of social diversity in advertisements and demand new perspectives and practices, as discussed in the next topic.

Producing and (re)thinking advertising practices with expectations of social transformation

Understanding advertising communication implies recognizing the media as an institution that massively (re)produces social representations, therefore holding the power to privilege somebodies (those who are allowed to speak, to have their social existence approved) and generate nobodies (those to whom the right to visibility and participation in the media are denied) (WOTTRICH, 2013). In this way, it encourages us to perceive and consider the relevance of advertising in the process of creating and legitimizing social representations, "which permeate most of our established relationships, the objects we produce or consume and the communications we establish" (MOSCOVICI, 1961/1976 apud MOSCOVICI, 2003, p. 10).

Critically evaluating the invisibility of social minorities in advertising can be a pertinent exercise for the construction of new possible places. It is an exercise that must be stimulated so that new spaces of representation can be considered and built. According to Bragaglia (2017, p. 133), critical consciousness acts "as a self-regulator of stereotypes", by confronting the generalizing narratives present in the mix of cultures and their social consequences. In her studies on ethics in advertising, the author points out that one of the contributions that advertising communication could offer to the dissolution of stereotypes is the use of counter-stereotypical alternatives. What Leite (2011, p. 223) calls counterintuitive advertising, understood as an advertising narrative that proposes "other perceptions and world views about the stereotypes inscribed on social minorities", by representing historically stigmatized groups in positions of social prestige, moving away from associations with need, subordination and social inferiority.

This is what the children did in the workshop's last activity when they faced the role of (re)creating ads that were not socially representative. Examples of counterintuitive advertising narratives (LEITE, 2011) are presented in the three ads that were created (figures 3, 4 and 5), since

they expose individuals from the black social category inserted in an aesthetic that avoids the image of subordination hegemonically reinforced by advertising. Using magazine clippings and collaged cardboard, the children focused on building pieces featuring almost only black people[7], most of them women, inserted in an aesthetic that avoids the invisibility and/or the limited representation of these social groups reinforced by the advertisements for *Seara* and *Doriana*, the brands analyzed in the workshop.

With the limited resources they had, the children had to think of strategies to overcome the stereotypical representations reinforced in the original *Seara* ad (figure 2). One of the groups, in the process of developing their advertisement, was bothered with the limited representations of black people in the magazines that were available for the activity. "Don't black people eat? They only appear in makeup ads", pointed out one child in this group. In order to be able to create an ad for a food brand which represented the majority of the Brazilian population, the group of children challenged the stereotyping practice of hegemonic advertising visible in those magazines, and created representations of black people eating by cutting out and pasting white people's body parts onto black people's bodies (figure 4). In this process, they practiced the exercise of thinking critically and creativelly about forms of media representations already crystallized in the social imagination (HALL, 2016), redefining them by allowing themselves to subvert them.

However, we must recognize that, by prioritizing bringing an invisibilzed group (the black population) to the center of the narrative in the three ads that were produced, the children chose representations that prioritize thin, young and non-disabled bodies. This demonstrates the importance of expanding and deepening reflections with children on the images reinforced by the media and their social influences. As demonstrated in this study, the use of advertising as a pedagogical support for this purpose presents itself as a possible way.

7   Only the ad shown in figure 5, in addition to black people, includes the representation of white people by presenting an image of a white man dressed as Santa Claus and a drawing of the same symbolic Christmas figure also represented as a white person.

Final considerations

In this article, we explored the feasibility of the use of advertising as a pedagogical support for improving children's advertising literacy skills, encouraging them, through an educommunicative workshop, to reflect on the lack of social diversity in advertisements.

Advertising literacy skills in the informational, aesthetic/visual, rhetorical and promotional dimensions (MALMELIN, 2011), fostered in the workshop, as well as the skills of critical, creative and civic appropriations of advertising (FANTIN, 2011), demonstrate the contributions of the approach between advertising communication and educational practices with children, with a social transformation bias. Educommunicative experiences like this one gain special relevance in a context of media profusion, in which the media plays a central role in children's socialization processes.

The workshop revealed the potential of using advertising as a pedagogical support for the construction of communicative citizenship (MATA, 2006) with children. By helping to deepen advertising appropriation skills, the workshop contributed to increasing children's awareness of the social inequalities reinforced by advertising communication, which frequently makes minority groups invisible. Furthermore, it stimulated the development of social practices demanding the right to visibility and participation in the media of these groups.

However, the study highlighted the need to explore more deeply the reflections on the meanings that children attribute to advertising and their perceptions around communication with expectations of social transformation. Although the ads recreated by the children highlighted minoritized groups, such as black people and women, they still reproduce patterns of social uniformity by mostly reinforcing representations of thin, young and non-disabled bodies.

Regarding the limitations of the study, it is important to emphasize that, although the results show the possibility of a critical and civic reading of advertising by children aged from 11 to 13, it is crucial to continue investigating the uses and appropriations of advertising by

children, expanding the scope of participants in the educommunicative experience reported in this article. This will contribute to understand whether these critical and civic readings of advertising communication are consolidating or wether they still need stronger stimuli to flourish.

We hope that these findings may contribute to strengthening the field of studies in the intersection between communication and education, with an emphasis on advertising, as well as highlighting the relevance of conducting research by listening to children, conceiving them as social actors who reflect on their surroundings and who wish to intervene in the reality that surrounds them.

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The impact of social markers on access to risk communication and tic by rural women in times of the Covid-19 pandemic

O impacto dos marcadores sociais no acesso à comunicação de risco e tic pelas mulheres rurais em tempos de pandemia da Covid-19

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Resumo: *O objetivo deste estudo é compreender como os marcadores sociais (gênero, território, raça e geração) influenciaram no acesso à comunicação digital dos riscos da covid-19 por mulheres rurais da Zona da Mata Mineira. Metodologicamente, utiliza-se a análise qualitativa interseccional para examinar os eixos de diversidade em que estão incluídas e dos quais são excluídas essas mulheres, analisando quais interseções e processos são mais significativos no contexto de desigualdades em que se inserem. Com base na abordagem teórica da comunicação de risco e da interseccionalidade, os resultados apontam que a sobreposição desses marcadores espelha uma realidade histórica de desigualdade, que comprometem o acesso à informação.*

Palavras-chave: *Comunicação de risco; Interseccionalidade; Mulheres rurais; TIC; Covid-19.*

Abstract: *The aim of this study is to understand how social markers (gender, territory, race and generation) have influenced access to digital communication of Covid-19 risks by rural women in the Zona da Mata Mineira. Methodologically, intersectional qualitative analysis is used to examine the axes of diversity in which these women are included and from which they are excluded, analyzing which*

intersections and processes are most significant in the context of inequalities in which they are inserted. Based on the theoretical approach of risk communication and intersectionality, the results show that the overlapping of these markers reflects a historical reality of inequality, which compromises access to information.

Keywords: *risk communication; intersectionality; rural women; ICT; Covid-19.*

ARTIGO

Introduction

Traditionally, women are responsible for care practices that demand attending to people and maintaining homes and other social environments essential for promoting health and well-being (IPEA, 2016). The practice of care is complex in rural areas, where 30 million Brazilians live (IBGE, 2018), because the combination of activities in the home and backyard, besides access to water and energy, demands more work and continuous organization of time (SOF, 2020). Furthermore, these women are the main characters in caring for and sorting family health issues, assessing the need to provide care to the family member or not; that is, the woman is an important "healing resource" (OLIVEIRA; MORAES, 2010).

The pandemic of the new coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2, first identified in China in 2019 and in Brazil on February 26 of the following year, exacerbated this scenario. The virus infected more than 37.6 million Brazilians, [1] leading to the deaths of more than 700,000, worsening the inequalities that exist in society and creating a situation that highlighted the vulnerable situation in which many rural populations found themselves. Care then began to involve everything from household chores (sanitizing masks, finding alternative sources of income, etc.) to seeking information on risk mitigation protocols.

Although it was a historic feat to develop, approve, and use several vaccines in less than a year after the first detected cases of COVID-19, it took a long time for vaccination to be available to everyone. Thus, due to the lack of vaccines, the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic relied on hygiene and social distancing protocols (PAHO, 2020). In this context, precise communication about the risks involved in the disease and the prevention methods became even more relevant for society to engage in this fight (WHO, 2018).

The Ministry of Health, the main body responsible for Brazilian public health, promoted campaigns to communicate the risk of

1 On 4 June 2023.

the pandemic to society. However, research indicates that these campaigns had a generalist emphasis, with no communication directed at the rural population, indigenous people, or traditional communities (RECUERO; SOARES, 2020; Author). The selective production of risk communication did not consider the dynamism and heterogeneity within rural areas, leaving underprivileged populations on the sidelines, especially amidst the pandemic.

Thus, since social media and government websites were the basis for risk communication, the 47 million disconnected Brazilians (Author) had limited access to such strategic information during a health crisis. Of these, 35% are Indigenous, and 29% are Black, besides the elders who do not have skills in Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), which means that, by opting mainly for digital communication, the government has further exposed vulnerable segments. Infocommunication inequality aggravates when crossed by the gender marker. Rural women, who historically have less access to land ownership, financing, or inputs, have been the group least connected to ICTs in most Latin American countries (ROTONDI et al., 2020).

Therefore, the new coronavirus pandemic has not affected all women equally. Besides gender, many variables interfere with the conditions that can promote health, such as the various markers of inequality (race, territory, generation, among others) and the products of their interactions, ratifying the interaction of disadvantages with preexisting vulnerabilities and producing different dimensions of risk exposure. For Abrams and Greenhawt (2020), risk is not objective and independent of the social context and can be aggravated by it.

Based on this context, this study aims to understand how social markers (gender, territory, race, and generation) influenced access to digital communication about the risks of COVID-19 by rural women in the Zona da Mata Mineira, including ten residents of the rural neighborhood of Palmital (Viçosa, MG) and ten from the settlement of the Landless Workers' Movement (MST) Olga Benário (Visconde do Rio Branco, MG). To this end, we use theoretical approaches to risk

communication and intersectionality to articulate the constraints imposed by social markers of difference on access to information about COVID-19 and to visualize preexisting structural vulnerabilities and reconfigurations in social organization strategies for the search for collective solutions by these women.

The right to COVID-19 risk communication

In health emergency scenarios, communication plays a fundamental role in mitigating contagion. In this sense, in the late 1960s, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) put forward cultural diversity and inequality guidelines to rethink information flows, recognizing communication as a central dimension in political and social life. From this understanding, communication became a broad right and a fundamental condition for exercising citizenship and for the development of human beings, including the "right to hear and be heard; to inform and be informed" (STEVANIM; MURTINHO, 2021). For Araújo and Cardoso (2014), one cannot separate communication from an ethical project of society, in which material and symbolic powers are (or should be) distributed equally. For Stevanim and Murtinho (2021), the complete health of a population is a part of its democracy as its right to communication.

Furthermore, the authors state that the right to communication depends on the democratization of communication, public policies that promote social participation and the confrontation of neoliberal models and practices. For these reasons, Araújo and Cordeiro (2014) state that the right to communication is unequally distributed and concentrated in the most privileged social classes. Hence, public communication neglects information regarding "diseases of poverty" that do not arouse the interest of research and pharmaceuticals production, as they affect social groups without economic significance.

Seeking to guide the actions of the Ministry of Health (MS) in responding to this public health emergency, the MS activated the Public Health Emergency Operations Center (COE-COVID-19) on January

22, 2020, under the coordination of the Health Surveillance Secretariat (SVS), which developed the National Contingency Plan for Human Infection by the new Coronavirus (COVID-19). The plan offered three levels of response (Alert, Imminent Danger, and Public Health Emergency) based on assessing the risk of the impact of COVID-19 in Brazil (BRASIL, 2020). However, the implementation of the protocols for dealing with the pandemic indicated by the World Health Organization (WHO) and scientific evidence met a significant obstacle to building a social consensus on the risks of COVID-19: the denialist stance of the President of the Republic Jair Bolsonaro (2019-2023) (CAPONI, 2020; SODRÉ, 2020; GRAMACHO, TURGEON, 2021).

Among other measures, the National Contingency Plan for Human Infection by the new coronavirus, proposed by the Ministry of Health, instructed the following in its Risk Communication (CR) topic.

> […] Inform the measures professionals from different areas and the general population should adopt. Prepare, together with the technical area, informative/educational materials about the new coronavirus and distribute them to the population, health professionals, journalists, and opinion makers. Make available advertising pieces for broadcast in different media outlets. Monitor social media to clarify rumors, gossip, and misinformation. Keep the new coronavirus website updated. Make informative/educational material available to specific audiences: managers, health professionals, travelers, and schools, among others. Establish partnerships with the public communication network (TVs, radios, and news agencies) to send messages with updated information […] (BRASIL, 2020, p. 20).

The CR promoted by the federal government strayed far from this plan. Strategies for Risk Communication, amidst a global health crisis, must consider whether all recipients of a risk message can understand the content of the message, including vulnerable populations. Moreover, it is necessary to convince recipients to seek new attitudes and behaviors about a given risk and to create conditions for developing discussions about risks and the effective participation of interested groups (SORIANO; HOFFMANN, 2015). The authors also highlight that information

corresponding to the risk does not always reach the vulnerable population group. These strategies also need to consider that risk experiences intersect with cultural, social, and psychological dimensions and may be individual or social for these interactions affect public perception and the behaviors associated with them (KASPERSON et al., 2016).

The communication largely produced by the Ministry of Health had largely an institutional and propaganda focus. 46.6% of the pieces published on the Ministry of Health's website between March and September 2020, when COVID-19 was on the rise in Brazil, had the aim of publicizing government actions, such as the federal government's response to the demands of Brazilian states and regions in assisting the population affected by COVID-19. The narratives emphasized the role of care, especially that of the federal government, which is responsible for distributing financial resources and equipment. However, media reports showed delays in the transfer of resources to create field hospitals and equip beds (Author).

Furthermore, government communication about COVID-19 had a digital emphasis in the first year of the pandemic. However, the efficiency of digital communication involves many factors, since not all online users can fight misinformation, using resources to verify the accuracy and credibility of health-related information. Therefore, during crises and disasters, the role of official health agencies becomes important not only to educate the public but also to dispel myths (MALIK et al., 2021).

The info-communication structure in Brazil is marked by chronic inequality, resulting from the national economic reality, which digital gaps in devices, connection, and literacy accentuate, since one in four Brazilians does not use the internet (LOPES; BASTOS; BARRETO, 2021; ROTONDO et al., 2020). Rural areas are an example of this inequality, where, according to the authors, info-communication access is more difficult and precarious. This factor increases the disparity in access to health promotion between rural and urban areas.

The intersectional perspective in Communication

Intersectionality is not the sum of inequalities but the association of multiple systems of subordination and power, which synergistically affect women's lives (COLLINS, 2017). Brazilian feminist authors from the 1970s and 1980s, such as Lélia Gonzalez and Beatriz Nascimento, already denounced the multiplicity of oppressions and their intersections in the lives of historically marginalized subjects, confronting race and gender with class divisions, such as antagonistic relations between bosses and domestic workers. However, these thinkers did not develop a term to name this theoretical stance (CASEMIRO; SILVA, 2021).

Crenshaw (2002) proposed the use of intersectionality as a methodology to be used to address the causes and effects of violence against women in black communities, as it addresses how specific actions and policies generate oppressions that "flow along these axes, constituting dynamic or active aspects of disempowerment." Within this understanding, we can reflect that, in several areas (education, basic sanitation, health, access to digital technologies, poverty), inequality is a striking factor in rural areas, especially when analyzing the reality of women in these contexts so that intersectionality is an appropriate approach to think about the situation of rural women.

According to Crenshaw (2002), the intersectional perspective seeks to understand the structural and dynamic consequences of the interaction between multiple axes of subordination since disadvantages interact with preexisting vulnerabilities, producing a different dimension of disempowerment. Research with this approach asks other questions about phenomena that have historically been studied from a neutral and impartial perspective, bringing to the debate the logic of oppression and the conditions of subjectivization, complexifying their analyses and perspectives (COLLINS, 2017).

Race as a concept marks inequality due to the hegemony of Western and universalist history, which drives the idea that Black people (Black and Brown, according to IBGE) are inferior and slaves by nature, so the stipulation of this category aims to naturalize yet another

type of domination (NASCIMENTO, 1982). Classification by race is not for scientific reasons but rather social ones, and for Filgueira and Silva (2019), this "Western invention culminated in binaries (white and black, white and Indian, civilized and savage, colonizer and colonized) that calcified the modern structure of labor exploitation, enabling domination determined by skin color," which we understand as racism.

The consequences of a process that imported a population and enslaved it for almost four centuries, with no compensation or access to land as reparation, resulted in poverty that has color, as stated by Sueli Carneiro (2011). By perpetuating these conditions, the capitalist system benefits from this exploitation by having cheap labor at its disposal (GONZALEZ; HASENBALG, 1982). This mechanism works linked to the practice of discrimination, which has generated and continues to generate racial inequalities. In this sense, according to Theodoro (2022), racism is the ideology that underpins social inequalities, shaping institutions that contribute to the naturalization of these inequalities, which allows a country like Brazil to grow and develop while keeping a large part of its Black population on the margins.

According to Gomes (2020), in Brazil, the White population receives higher incomes regardless of their level of education, while Black people represent 75.2% of the population with the lowest incomes. Moreover, the Black or Brown population is, to a greater extent, below the poverty line and lives in households with worse conditions and less access to goods and services than the White population (IBGE, 2019). As a result, amid the new coronavirus pandemic, health problems among Black women have been amplified due to disadvantaged positions within families, professions, and health institutions (PIRTLE; WRIGHT, 2021). In the case of rural women, the crossroads of social markers is still strongly permeated by the dynamics and constant negotiation between sex and generation, mainly due to the rural exodus of young people, so that the women who work the most on the farm are still the oldest, even receiving retirement pension (GERMINIANI; LORETO, 2017).

The territory can also be considered a significant social marker. For Santos and Silveira (2001), the territory represents the appropriated and used extension, encompassing everything from the implementation of infrastructures to the dynamism of the economy and society, including population movements, the distribution of agriculture, industry, services, the regulatory framework, civil, fiscal and financial legislation, and the scope and extension of citizenship. The territory is not the space but a production derived from its appropriation, a space transformed by the work contained therein, outlined by strategies of organization and control. Therefore, this appropriation is not a natural occurrence but a concrete fact of the human struggle for survival (RAFFESTIN, 1993).

The territory can link to social movements, like the Landless Workers' Movement (MST), a peasant social movement that is the result of an agricultural land issue that is structural and historical in Brazil and whose objective is to carry out agrarian reform, practice the production of ecological food, and improve living conditions in the countryside. The movement started in 1984, when rural workers, who led struggles for land and society democracy, met at the 1st National Meeting of Landless Rural Workers in the city of Cascavel, in Paraná, deciding to adopt land occupation as a form of struggle (CALDART, 2001).

Methodological Aspects

To fulfill the general objective of this research, which has an exploratory nature and qualitative aspects, and considering the heterogeneity that exists in rural areas, which is multiplied by the various intersections of different markers of inequality (CRENSHAW, 2002), this study seeks to take into account the plurality of rural women.

We conducted semi-structured interviews with 20 rural women from the Zona da Mata region of Minas Gerais, aged 18 to 73, ten of whom lived in the Palmital neighborhood (Viçosa-MG) and ten in the MST Olga Benário Settlement in Visconde do Rio Branco (MG). To guarantee the privacy of each participant, we protected their names, replacing them with codenames. We use the letter "P" to designate residents of the

Palmital neighborhood and "O" for the Olga Benário settlers. Thus, the group of residents of the Palmital neighborhood includes participants P1 to P10, and among the residents of the MST settlement are participants O1 to O10. Each codename appears with information on the race and age of the respective participants to ratify the intersectional perspective.

We processed the data manually using content analysis (BARDIN, 1977) and carrying out the step from an intersectional perspective, that is, through a critical analysis of the social markers of inequality in the phenomena under study (DÍAZ-BENÍTEZ; MATTOS, 2019). For an intersectional qualitative approach, one must define the categories, examine which axes of diversity are included and excluded, and seek their role in inequality, analyzing which intersections and processes are most significant in a given context (HUNTING, 2014). Thus, following a path still under construction in the intersectional methodologies field, we sought to systematize results, as far as possible, within frameworks called "Intersectional Perspective Frameworks." These frameworks attempt to present articulations between the markers of race, territory, and age group with different variables and aim to make visible some inequities that need to be exposed to be understood.

Results and Discussions

Table 1 below presents the profile data of the women research participants.

Table 1. Description of the participant group from the rural zone of the microregion of Viçosa and the Olga Benário Settlement

Participant	Age	Color	Schooling[2]	Monthly family income (in minimum wage)
P1	42	Black	None	1.5 wages
P2	26	Brown	Incomplete undergraduate studies	2 wages
P3	73	Brown	Fundamental Education I	2 wages
P4	37	White	Fundamental Education II	2 wages
P5	44	White	Fundamental Education I	2 wages
P6	46	Black	Fundamental Education I	1 wage
P7	58	White	Fundamental Education II	1.5 wage
P8	50	Black	Fundamental Education I	2 wages
P9	61	White	Fundamental Education I	2 wages
P10	38	Brown	Incomplete High School	2 wages
O1	38	Brown	Ensino Médio	0.5 wage
O2	28	Brown	Fundamental Education II	1 wage
O3	43	Brown	High School	0.5 wage
O4	38	Brown	Fundamental Education II	3 wages
O5	39	Brown	Fundamental Education I	2 wages
O6	30	White	High School	1 wage
O7	60	Brown	Fundamental Education I	2 wages
O8	26	Brown	Incomplete Undergraduate Education	2 wages
O9	62	Brown	High School	1.5 wage
O10	18	Black	High School	1 wage

Source: elaborated by the author, drawing from research data.

2   In Brazil, Basic Education comprises Children's Education (from 0 to 5 years old), Fundamental Education I (from 6 to 10 years old), Fundamental Education II (from 11 to 14), and High

According to the data above, 15 participants consider themselves Black (Black and Brown in the IBGE classification). Five say they are White. Regarding family income, ten participants (50%) stated that they lived on two minimum wages per month[3], three (15%) on one and a half wages, four (20%) on one wage, and two (10%) live on only half a wage. Only one interviewee said her family earns three minimum wages per month. It is important to note that participants' families have an average of 3.65 residents per house, varying between two and five members, so one can infer their income was low in the context of inflation in which Brazil found itself (the accumulated index in the 12 months of 2020 was 5.02%). Among the participants, only six (30%) stated they were enrolled in the Federal Government's cash transfer programs.

The significant Black women majority (75%) living with low income in the research field portrays an extremely unequal society that has historically marginalized and excluded Black people. According to Theodoro (2022), extreme and persistent inequality produces asymmetries in the occupation of spaces, leading to other social disparities that always disfavor the discriminated group.

Participants' schooling levels vary from two women enrolled in undergraduate courses at a public federal university to one who never went to school (Participant 1). In between them, seven participants studied up to Fundamental Education I, four up to Fundamental Education II, five completed High School, and one did not finish High School. To understand the low education level of some participants, it is worth noting the difficulties rural area residents face attending school, such as long distances and precarious transportation, besides a heavy work routine. The only illiterate participant is Black, which matches the data from a national survey, the Pesquisa Nacional por Amostra de Domicílios Contínua (Pnad). According to Pnad (IBGE 2019), illiteracy among Blacks triples compared to Whites.

School (from 15 to 17). Higher Education comprises undergraduate and postgraduate studies.
3   The minimum wage in Brazil in 2020 was R$ 1,039.00 or US$ 202.50.

Since protocols to fight the new coronavirus required social distancing, we asked participants how they learned about the risks of COVID-19 in the first phase of the pandemic (2020), when there was still no vaccine for immunization. Table 2 organizes the data to visualize the participants who used (or did not) ICT to access COVID-19 Risk Communication articulated with the following inequality markers: race, territory, and age group. This analytical perspective meets the objectives of this research, seeking to understand the influence of these markers on the comprehension of rural women of COVID-19 risks.

As Table 2 shows, we sought to understand this influence on access to CR through ICT. Each Wi-Fi symbol below represents one of the participants classified by race.

Table 2 – Participants and Internet in the access to Covid-19 RC
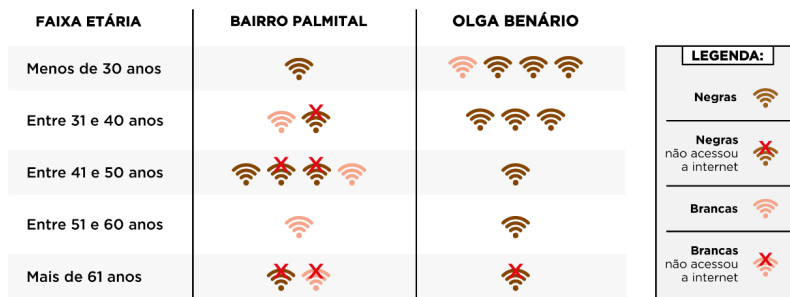
Source: Elaborated by the author from research data, 2022.

Table 02 shows the highest incidence of ICT use for COVID-19 RC was in the Olga Benário settlement, except for the oldest participant. The territory appears as a prominent marker in this approach, and we can infer that one of the factors that led the women settlers to use ICT to inform themselves was a territory linked to a social movement that enabled different sociabilities and connections.

Moreover, the MST promoted digital COVID-19 RC campaigns, which, in the absence of public authorities, served as an informational pillar besides stimulating access to ICT. It is worth highlighting that popular movements in Brazil faced a challenge in developing creative communication actions in their territories to help guide and protect their populations during the pandemic (SUZINA, 2022).

Among the participants who consulted the Internet as their primary source, O10 (Black, 18 years old), a resident of Olga Benário, accessed Google to get information, and O2 (Brown, 28 years old), also a settler, used WhatsApp because the MST promoted extensive communication about COVID-19 through groups on this application. Participant O2 also clarified that the MST held live broadcasts and posted videos on YouTube (as shown in the figure below) about the new coronavirus and, to make things easier, transformed this content into lighter audio files to make them more shareable through WhatsApp groups.

In the older age group (over 61 years old), no participant used the internet to seek this communication, which highlights the "age" marker more than "territory." Participant P9 (White, 61 years old) stated that "radio and television were more important" and, for O9 (Brown, 62 years old), "the internet was not important at all because I listened to everything on the radio." The "age" marker also intersects with race because all White participants, except the oldest (over 61 years old), used the internet to access the COVID-19 RC.

Among Black participants living in the Palmital neighborhood, only the youngest, a university student, used ICT to learn about the COVID-19 RC. Four other Black residents aged between 30 and 50 preferred mass media or information from family members. At this point, race is seen as a relevant marker of inequality, as Black women who did not have the support of the MST to learn about how to combat the pandemic did not have the autonomy (or interest) to seek more in-depth information or advice that not available on mass media, which disseminates more generic information.

Overall Considerations

During the social isolation imposed by the protocols to combat SARS-CoV-2, several practices needed changing, including communication practices. Access to information technologies was essential for consuming content about protection against the new coronavirus due to social isolation. Furthermore, care demanded more from those who exercised it since the unprecedented circumstance required getting used to new habits, such as wearing a mask, not hugging others, and not sneezing near others, among many other things.

Each of the women participants is at a point intersected by several markers of inequality. More than a result of the sums or products of the multiplications between these interactions, what we have with the overlapping of markers is a unique position occupied by each rural woman participant. Therefore, although all participants were women and lived in rural areas, some differences compromised their ability to protect themselves from risky situations during the pandemic. These markers of oppression still need some consideration. The race marker, historically associated with discrimination, affects situations of reduced access to health promotion, such as inadequate levels of basic sanitation and higher rates of chronic diseases, besides reduced access to ICT, which emerged as a fundamental tool for health communication. The age marker was relevant given that it limits access to technology and, thus, communication strategies.

Regarding the territory marker, structural inequalities plague the rural area as a whole. However, it presents nuances that impact its population differently. When comparing the territory of the Palmital neighborhood and the Olga Benário Settlement, the research notes that new perspectives can emerge in a territory transformed by social organization strategies, especially in the search for collective solutions. The MST's appropriation of WhatsApp to communicate the risk of the pandemic reveals possibilities for actions aimed at promoting citizenship in a rural environment that needs to be increasingly connected.

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Deconstructed male? Vídeo clip, gender issues and masculinities under tension

Macho desconstruído? Videoclipe, questões de gênero e masculinidades sob tensão

Juliana Gutmann
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Resumo: *Tomando o audiovisual em rede como dimensão comunicacional pela qual seria possível mapear disputas políticas, identitárias e culturais diversas, dentre as quais as relacionadas às questões de gênero, este artigo investiga os sentidos de masculinidades acionados em torno da imagem do "macho desconstruído", tendo como estudo de caso a rede de engajamentos identitários mobilizada no Instagram em torno do videoclipe "Masculinidade", de Tiago Iorc. O videoclipe é compreendido como forma audiovisual expandida, cuja experiência de consumo envolve comentários, memes, paródias etc. Com base em protocolo teórico-metodológico que articula as noções de performance e performatividade, mapeamos como as disputas sobre a masculinidade performada pelo cantor apontam para possibilidades de repensar as identidades de gênero.*

Palavras-chave: *masculinidades; audiovisual em rede; videoclipe; performance; performatividade*

Abstract: *Considering the audiovisual network as a communicational dimension through which it would be possible to map various political, identity and cultural disputes, including those related to gender issues, this article investigates the meanings of masculinities activated around the image of the "deconstructed male", using as a case study the network of identity engagements mobilised on Instagram around the music video "Masculinidade" by Tiago Iorc. The music video is understood as an expanded audiovisual form whose consumption experience involves comments, memes, parodies, etc. Based on a theoretical-methodological*

ARTIGO

protocol that articulates the notions of performance and performativity, we mapped out how the disputes over masculinity performed by the singer point to possibilities for rethinking gender identities.

Key words: *masculinities; networked audiovisual; music video; performance; performativity*

Introduction

Released on Novembrer 11, 2021, the music video *"Masculinidade"*, by Brazilian singer and composer Tiago Iorc quickly went viral. The video's circulation in digital environments triggered a network of engagements, involving comments, memes, reactions, parodies and criticisms about the way of living "masculinity" performed by the singer. In the video, Iorc incorporates the male figure related to the meanings of "deconstructed male", "sacred male", "sensitive man", terms often used to name "contemporary forms of experiencing the masculine" (GONÇALVES, 2021, p. 18), which, according to Gonçalves (2021), assumes a supposed opposition to the heteronormative patriarchal matrix and whose emergence is caused by the consolidation and expansion of feminist movements.

We start from the premise that the idea of masculinity performed in the video is constituted as a performance when understood in a way that is intertwined with the network of communicational expressions discharged around the audiovisual, which expand and strain the supposed "deconstruction" proposed by Iorc. In these terms, we question to what extent this network of engagements and identity disputes, which constitute our contemporary experience of consumption, points to the possibilities of rethinking gender in a transformative manner.

In a broader sense, this work takes the audiovisual media circulating on digital social networks as a communicational dimension of contemporaneity through which it would be possible to access and map different political, identity and cultural disputes, including the ones related to gender issues. Through this understanding, the music video is comprehended as a process which is configured in a network and generates disputes about ways of inhabiting the world.

In order to think about the disputes over masculinities that have taken place since Iorc's video, we start by understanding the category of man in impermanent terms. We understand gender identity as a cultural construction in constant change, subject to reconfigurations and shifts in sensibilities and meanings. Thus, we reject an essentialist conception that anchors the subject in biological attributes, thinking with Butler

(2015) in a variable and unstable construction of identities. Through this understanding, the idea of masculinity is comprehended as a regulatory system (BUTLER, 2015), resulting from a historical process that is related to what Segato (2018) calls the mandate of masculinity, a certain way of living the masculine that has the maintenance of hierarchies and privileges, in relation to the feminine, as a condition of existence.

In this investigation[1,] we sought to follow the audiovisual flow mobilized by the music video on Instagram, observing the processes of tension that involve the consumption of the song and allow access to identities as a cultural and political dimension. To this end, the music video communication form is conceived as a vector that triggers a plot of "flows of images, sounds, information, social practices and rituals that tell us about identities and their disputes" (GUTMANN, 2021, p. 71). The corpus of this analysis, described in detail below, is formed by the music video *"Masculinidade"* and 40 different posts (in the form of memes, parodies, video testimonials and comments), selected on Instagram after the release of the music video, specifically between 11/12/2021 and 01/31/2022.

In theoretical-methodological terms, we propose to access articulations between communication, performance and gender studies based on intersections between the concepts of performance (TAYLOR, 2013), a dimension that involves corporalities and scripts; of performativity (BUTLER, 2015, 2019), understood as a social process, a discursive practice capable of normalizing/regulating ways of expressing gender identity and sexuality; and the notion of networked audiovisual (GUTMANN, 2021), which refers to the communicational/expressive fabric (therefore, networked) that constitutes our experience with audiovisual in the digital context.

From a historically situated and politically engaged perspective, we are especially interested in the feminist perspectives that destabilized "deconstructed masculinity" in the music video by Iorc. Based on the analysis of the music video and of a set of audio-verbo-visual expressions

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that circulated on Instagram about the work, we found clues that suggest an undertanding of the masculine from a historically patriarchal perspective, with aesthetic reconfigurations that trigger binary atributes in relation to the feminine and that seem to reconfigurate games of power without actually indicating possible transformations.

Performativity, mandate of masculinity and the deconstructed male project

The notion of masculinities is not reduced to a mere attribute; it is related to a dimension of power in permanent tension (BUTLER, 2015; SEGATO, 2018; GONÇALVES, 2021), hence our insistence on the plural form. It is situated, therefore, within gender and power relations resulting from hystorical processes, which implies systems of hierarchy and disputes over hegemony. In this direction, we approach masculinities according to what Judith Butler understands as performativity: a process of socialization, a discursive practice, in a reference to Foucault (1987), produced in a regulatory system capable of normalizing ways of expressing gender identities and sexuality.

With Butler, we believe that the reality of gender is created through performativities that engender a regulated form of being. To think about gender from the perspective of performativity exposes the procedural relationship of construction, reaffirmation, re-elaboration and constant dispute over the meanings attributed to feminine and masculine. Gender identity is unveiled as a fiction that seeks support in the biological character of bodies, in a binary and coercive split that crosses corporalities in discursive formations about the feminine, the masculine, gender and sex. The idea of performativity is crucial to Butler's (2015) argument that the "feminine" and the "masculine" are a fiction, that is, that they do not exist outside of language. They are regulatory dimensions of the bodies that constitute senses of recognition and belonging based on hierarchies, subordinations and exclusions, having the matrix cisheteronormative as an imperative. Gender inequality, as a condition of

this system of power, will support the construction and maintenance of masculinities and their privileges in relation to the "other" (or to the "others").

Regarding this dynamic, Segato (2018) develops the concept of mandate of masculinity, defined as the first and permanent pedagogy of expropriation of value and male domination recognized and authorized through the relationships with peers. In this sense, masculinity, unlike femininity, is a "hierarchy of prestige, acquired as a title, and must be renewed and proven as such" (SEGATO, 2018, p. 40, our translation). The statute of the "male being" would thus depend on the ability to display masculinity as power. The author identifies six types of powers – not as fixed categories, but as articulable dynamics – that are permanently spectacularized by the subjects and their peers and endorsed by the positions constructed for the feminine: sexual, military, political, economic, intelectual and moral powers.

The mandate of masculinity is explored by Segato, in the field of anthropology, especially based on violent acts with a high degree of barbarity, such as the crime of rape and feminicide. Inspired by this approach, Gonçalves (2021) translates this mandate into the field of communication as a kind of lens through which it would be possible to understand media flows of masculinities that work on a daily basis from relations of oppression as a condition of existence and sovereignty of the "project of universal masculinity (white, cisgender, heterosexual, urban)" (GONÇALVES, 2021, p. 56). In this sense, the mandate of masculinity would be a powerful methodological key for interpreting the different forms of violence that constitute communicative acts.

Gonçalves addresses the statements of supposedly transformed masculinities that constitute figures of the masculine in contemporaneity through disidentification with traditional atributes of masculinity, such as virility, control, leadership, financial power, protection, moral authority. These new figures have been organized based on different themes, such as "active fatherhood, affective experiences, male spirituality (especially the sacred masculine), fluid sexualities, emotional freedom, racial and

class intersectional crossings, among other references" (GONÇALVES, 2021, p.18), and operate, in Brazil, under several different labels: "desconstructed male", "present father", "sacred masculine", "hell of a man". His hypothesis is that such projects of transformation of masculinities would be ways for the contemporary patriarchy to deal with a kind of discomfort in the face of the "image that they see reflected in the mirror revealed by the feminist movement" (GONÇALVES, 2021, p. 18).

Following the clues pointed out by Gonçalves, the music video by Tiago Iorc is here taken as a networked audiovisual (GUTMANN, 2021) and analyzed from the perspective of the notion of performance, by Diana Taylor (2013). We understand that the video promotes a communicative process that transcends the video and encompasses a web of multiple textualities through which we seek to identify the systems of gender regulation in action (BUTLER, 2015). Audiovisual media and the network of disputes that emerge around it therefore present themselves as ways of accessing processes of interaction on masculinities and their regulatory systems in digital environments, making us question: "Which performance will force us to reconsider the place and stability of the masculine and the feminine"? (BUTLER, 2015, p. 198).

Networked audiovisual and performance as an analytical locus of the music video

When Thiago Iorc, a renowned singer, instrumentalist and composer in Brazil, author of several hits and soap opera soundtracks, with international achievements such as the Latin Grammy and with a song in the top 10 lists in Japan and South Korea, released the music video "*Masculinidade*", he made visible, in addition to his almost autobiographical account, a web of textualities that illustrates how much our contemporary experience with audiovisual media is not reduced to an isolated phenomenon in the song, the video or the body of an artist. Obviously the music video is an allegory of a broader, denser and more complex phenomenon, which places communication at the center of the debate

as a material expression of the political, social and cultural arrangements from our time. In this sense, this debate is interested in the way in which *"Masculinidade"* makes us see a network of disputes about gender issues that expose power relations and their possible transformations. This network formed around the music video, which twists, frays and resignifies the meanings produced by the artist about his masculinity, constitutes the video as a networked audiovisual media (GUTMANN, 2021).

By networked audiovisual we mean the "audio-verbo-visual form (web of images, sounds and texts) that is articulated in a network through digital environments, intertwining platforms, bodies and subjects in different communicational expressions in a dynamic of production, circulation and consumption in flux" (GUTMANN, 2021, p. 12). This notion supports the composition of our analytical material, which uses the music video as a vector for tracking media expressions related to it. The idea of vector here, heavily inspired by Deleuze and Guattari's (1995) sense of "plateau", refers to the sense of a device that provokes action, movement. As a vector, the music video "triggers and mobilizes flows of images, sounds, information, social practices and rituals that tell us about identities and their disputes" (GUTMANN, 2021, p. 71). This flow configures the audiovisual in a broad, extended way, entangled with other expressions: comments, parodies, memes etc. Gutmann uses the conceptual metaphor of the rhizome, as developed by Deleuze and Guattari (1995), to illustrate this idea of "networked audio-verbo-visual expression."

In this study, the plot that defines *"Masculinidade"* as a networked audiovisual media is formed by a corpus that encompasses the music video *"Masculinidade"*, released on 11/11/2021, and 40 critical expressions connected to it and published on Instagram between 11/12/2021 and 01/31/2022. The sample was composed of posts selected, initially, after the release of the video (on November 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16, 2021), with a subsequent extention of the collection period until 01/31/2022, but the majority of the incidences collected (90%) were concentrated in the month of November, right after the video was released.

The mapping carried out was not based on a quantitative scraping of the platform, since the study does not aim to quantify the number of manifestations about the music video (whether favorable or not), but to identify and observe the network of affective engagements around the audiovisual media that reiterates the criticism of the construction (or deconstruction) of masculinity proposed by Iorc. Therefore, our procedure for constructing the analytical corpus was based on a navigational method that simulates the exploratory experience of an average user, in this case, the researchers themselves.

In the timeline of our feeds and stories, in the days after the release of the music video, we initially had access to six publications, all of them with critical references. One comment made on one of the posts mentioned the profile @newmemeseum, which published a carousel of 10 shares, including memes, parodies, and reactions related to the audiovisual media, of which we counted nine, since one of them reiterated a post already accessed. Instagram, as we know, combines computationally recommended content that ranges from the indication of posts associated with behaviors of profiles we do not follow to content filtered based on our followers. This attribute of the platform particularly interested us since it allows automatic access, based on behavioral patterns connected to the authors, to a set of profiles related to feminist networks.

After this first set of 15 selected posts, aiming to expand the data observed in this first sample accessed through navigation and to identify similar incidences, we conducted a search in the platform using the terms "masculinity" + "iorc", in a longer period between the months of November 2021 and January 2022, which allowed us to select 25 more manifestations related to the video whose contents reiterated the main arguments of the preliminary sample. Of the total of 40 different posts identified on Instagram for this purpose (indicated in Table 1), we selected five for a more detailed description in this article, which will be presented in the analysis bellow.

Table 1- listing of posts that make up the analysis corpus

INSTAGRAM PROFILE	LINK
Content accessed via spontaneous navigation (between November 12 and 16, 2021)	
@samyapascotto	https://www.instagram.com/p/CWTgWxrvlry/
@vitfalcao	Print of the stories made by the authors
@pedrocertezas	https://abrir.link/zXhej
@a.vida.de.tina	https://www.instagram.com/p/CWWnMGoDlSU/?hl=pt
@inutilidadesdagabi	https://www.instagram.com/p/CWTIEV-p-Cf/
@manuelaxavier	https://encurtador.com.br/8BLeq
@newmemeseum	https://www.instagram.com/p/CWV9-FyLgvt/
@newmemeseum	https://www.instagram.com/p/CWV9-FyLgvt/
@newmemeseum	https://www.instagram.com/p/CWV9-FyLgvt/
@newmemeseum	https://www.instagram.com/p/CWV9-FyLgvt/
@newmemeseum	https://www.instagram.com/p/CWV9-FyLgvt/
@newmemeseum	https://www.instagram.com/p/CWV9-FyLgvt/
@newmemeseum	https://www.instagram.com/p/CWV9-FyLgvt/
@newmemeseum	https://www.instagram.com/p/CWV9-FyLgvt/
@newmemeseum	https://www.instagram.com/p/CWV9-FyLgvt/
Content accessed via search (until 02.31.2022)	
@trilhafeminista	https://www.instagram.com/p/CWYKMoYrtcG/
@papodemachona	https://www.instagram.com/p/CWvOo-4DYhC/
@psistephanipinho	https://www.instagram.com/p/CWUEUi7tqml/
@paulacarvalhojoly	https://encurtador.com.br/6MS8x
@folhadespaulo	https://www.instagram.com/p/CXHH2BIo-3p/
@teamcomics	https://encurtador.com.br/OlDme
@luizcurcupsicologo	https://encurtador.com.br/krMK8
@inutilidadesdagabi	https://www.instagram.com/p/CWJ0df9g8f2/
@coletivo_feminista	https://www.instagram.com/p/CWYsmpfvqp4/
@manamalta	https://www.instagram.com/p/CWcA1HKsZ65/
@folhailustrada	https://www.instagram.com/p/CXJTrWSLfk1/
@omarcosernesto	https://www.instagram.com/p/CWLjkkCrVk1/
@wanderleygomes21	https://encurtador.com.br/Qnpjp
@mage__	https://encurtador.com.br/RbvbS
@folhailustrada	https://www.instagram.com/p/CXHczY_rQlp/
@psiquegheany	https://encurtador.com.br/gzoEq

Table 1- Continuation.

INSTAGRAM PROFILE	LINK
@salu.neuro	https://abrir.link/pcyyN
@iasmincarvalho.psi	https://abrir.link/amPef
@bragaricardooo	https://abrir.link/bbhxZ
@casa.do_sol	https://abrir.link/YGHBC
@giovanafagundes	https://encurtador.com.br/jsEFs
@homempaterno	https://www.instagram.com/p/CWLMJ5dLji3/
@odesencaixe	https://encurtador.com.br/Sl3h8
@camifernandesb	https://www.instagram.com/p/CW7ISwZDKm0/
@inutilidadesdagabi	https://www.instagram.com/p/CWWkbpLAf7x/

Source: table created by the authors.

The analytical study was based on the notion of performance (TAYLOR, 2013), which involves corporalities, scripts, reprtoires and archives. Taylor (2013) conceives performance as a tangible dimension of access to memories, knowledge and identities, emphasizing the process of embodied practices, which embrace temporalities, reiterations and ruptures. She takes performance not as a synonym for acting, but as a form of knowledge, a way of looking at phenomena. Performance is not limited to an acting body; it presupposes considering the interaction processes that this body activates with other bodies. These are communicative acts that imply the existence of an "other" (GUTMANN; CARDOSO FILHO, 2022) and through which we can identify the repetitions of patterns and their possible ruptures.

Performance positions the body (and incorporation processes) as a locus of communication, "a node of convergence that unites the individual with the collective, the private with the social, the diachronic with the synchronic, memory with knowledge" (TAYLOR, 2013, p. 127). From this perspective, the body is constituted by knowledge incorporated in articulation with the arrangements operated by relations of power over gender identity. "The bodies that participate in the transmission of knowledge and memory are [...] the product of certain taxonomic, disciplinary systems" (TAYLOR, 2013, p. 134). With this in mind, we

are interested not only in Iorc's audiovisual performance, but mainly in the interaction processes with other corporalities triggered by the music video.

According to Taylor, looking at events as performances implies seeking the scripts that shape relations of power and their disputes as possibilities of transformation. The script includes the scene as material/scenographic place and the corporalities of the social actors that make up this space; it always presupposes the consideration of the "other" on stage, which ratifies the recognition of the performance as an interaction process. The author also states that scripts are not carried out through mere imitation; they are transcultural actions that always leave room for inversion, rupture and change. Thus, as the scripts unfold with cumulative repetitions, they haunt the present in a kind of reenactment that can operate through the key of repetition, of re-elaboration, in a continuous dialogue between reinforcements of patterns and openings to multiplicity.

Networked "*Masculinidade*": disputes over Iorc's deconstructed male

Thinking about the music video *"Masculinidade"* as an entangled audiovisual media brought us the challenge of defining how we would position our lenses in relation to this phenomenon. As a vector, that is, an event that triggers a series of reactions in digital environments, the music video could indicate infinite possibilities. In the case of *"Masculinidade"*, this web of reactions pointed to the way in which the meaning of masculinity suggested by the artist was effectively produced and disputed beyond his intention. These are disputes that interest us in understanding the music video as a networked audiovisual media.

"Masculinidade" was written by five men. The song is a composition by the singer with Mateus Asato, Tomás Tróia and Lux Ferreira, and the music video was directed by Rafael Trindade and by Iorc himself. With an introspective atmosphere and autobiographical tone, the artist

proposes discussing "toxic masculinity" after one year of seclusion, when he was away from social networks and the mainstream media. In 2020, Iorc was the target of controversy due to public disputes over copyright with two female singers, his former musical partners, and due to leaks of initimate photos. That is why the national press reinforced his "return" in the coverage of his new work: "Tiago Iorc resurfaces with the new single 'Masculinidade'" (newspaper Estadão, November 11, 2021); "Tiago Iorc breaks hiatus, returns with a new look and releases song about masculinity" (newspaper *O Globo*, November 11, 2021).

The first image of the music video is a close-up of the profile of the singer's face, who has his head down and a melancholic expression. With a chorus of voices in a deep tone in the background, he says: "I was in a mood to disappear / Money, fame, evrything sorted out / I pretended not to, but I actually care / I thought I was so cool / I wanted to be unanimous / I wanted to prove my virility / I doubted my validity / In the virtual insanity". The proposal to challenge the status quo is evident in the lyrics of the song and in his body. The singer appears bare-chested, barefoot, with a shaved head and wearing red pants. The initial gestures simulate the fetal position and are followed by the proximity of the camera, which frames him in detail: head, mouth, eyes, arms placed over his face. He looks at his hands, caresses them, notices details as if he were redescovering his own body, while he sings: "Take care, my brother / Of your emotional health / Take care of what is real". Progressively, Tiago stands up while he states: "Fragile masculinity / a boy's thing / I was profane / Sex is divine / Of my intimacy / I was a murderer". Then he begins a more expansive choreography, immersed in a white scenario with an infinite background, framed by an open shot that shows his entire body. The minimalist setting highlights the singer dancing alone, in the center of the image, in the 6 minutes and 18 seconds of the video. The camera, in a sequence shot, follows Iorc's choreography, in continuous movements.

In constructing his proposition about "transformed" masculinity, however, Tiago Iorc reiterates scripts of the patriarchal and heteronormative

system that he insinuates to destabilize. Let us begin with the way in which he falls into the traps of compulsory binarism when understanding his masculinity in relation to femininity, reaffirming the assumption that there are only two expressions of gender and that both are opposites, in a game of power that disciplines bodies. The lyrics state sensitivity as a feminine atribute, slipping into the hegemonic understanding of gender identity based on stereotypes that reinforce the male/female binary, such as strength/sensitivity: "I learned that it was wrong to be sensitive / How naive I was / I was afraid of my femininity / I became a repressed man / Kind of soulless, kind of sleepy / a phalic, self-destructive act". Iorc's corporality reproduces the performative acts through a key that is also binary, moving between constructions of feminine images, such as the high-waisted pants that fit the body, and masculine images, such as the way in which he displays his arm muscles.

Figure 1 - Frame of *"Masculinidade"*, by Tiago Iorc
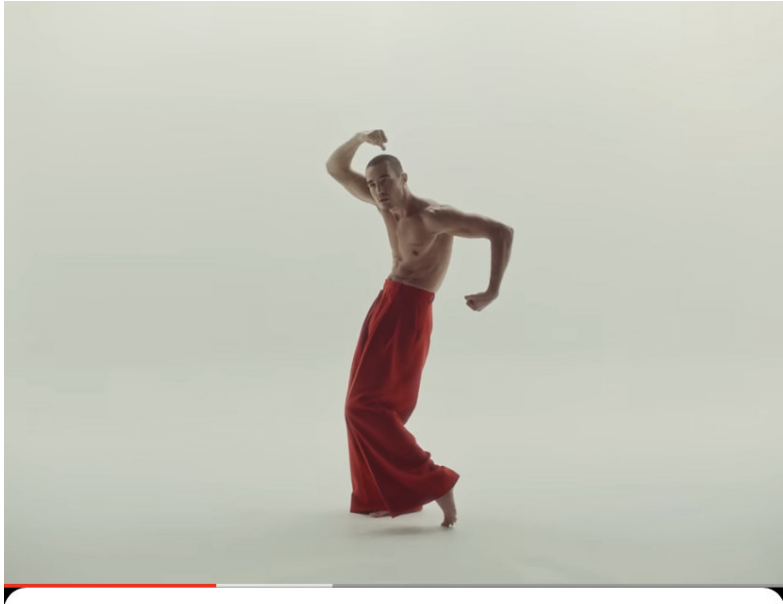
Source: YouTube (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V5GUxCQ8rl4)

The centrality of Iorc's image in the audiovisual piece also reiterates the protagonism of men, present in the song's lyrics. The entire music video revolves around his body, his movements, his voice, his facial expressions of pain, trance and power. Fragility appears on the scene with a dramatic tone, constituted from a strangeness about man's suffering. At one point, he repeats "What is it to be a man?", while he dances

in circular movements, his eyes shut, with a facial expression of suffer-
ing, followed by the camera spinning, as if he were entering a kind of
trance. Later on, he looks at the camera and talks to us: "Being a man
because you want to learn about yourself, every day / Mastering your-
self / Despite any phobia: respect / You must be brave / You must have
balls to love properly". In the last scene, with his hands on his hips, he
insinuates a twerk and says: "Being a man demands chosing, my brother
/ How about that?", while the camera slowly pulls away. In all of these
scenes, in which gender issues are reaffirmed from a male perspective,
underscoring the oppressive nature – for men – of gender as a cultural
construction, Iorc does not avoid an implication with the heterosexual
and binary matrix.

Like some kind of interpretative shell, performativity engenders cor-
poralities regulated by the dictates of the man/woman, male/female
binarism and their respective stereotypes, in what Judith Butler (2018)
calls fiction of gender. In "The Force of Nonviolence" (2021), the
author once again talks about the importance of fiction for building
experiences with reality. She states that fiction,

> [...] offers a counterfactual condition that allows us to examine the con-
> temporary situation; and just as science fiction presents a point of view
> through which we see, in the present, the specificity and contingence
> of the political organization of space and time, of passions and interests
> (BUTLER, 2021, p. 39)

If fiction is powerful, acting in many ways on the experience with
reality, beyond fiction of gender, individualism prevails as a fictional
aspect of the music video. Focused on the personal experience of Iroc,
a cis, white and upper-class man, the video reconstitutes the script of
his masculinity, highlighting "cumulative repetitions" (TAYLOR, 2013)
that reinforce a phallocentric and poorly contextualized social structure.
In other words: by erasing the relations of power that constitute him as
a male subject in the mandate of masculinity, in Segato's (2018) terms,
the discourse of "deconstruction" present in the music video ends up re-
inforcing the repetition of violence that translates into the normalization

of low empathy towards oppressed subjects, which the author calls the pedagogy of cruelty.

The lack of empathy would be essential for the maintenance of this "predatory enterprise": "the habitual cruelty is directly proportional to the forms of narcissistic and consumerist pleasure and to the isolation of citizens through their insensitivity towards the suffering of others" (SEGATO, 2018, p. 11). Therefore, the music video, by positioning the white, cis and rich man at the center of the debate based on his suffering as a "macho", without putting into perspective what makes him a macho in a heteronormative and patriarchal system, ends up reiterating the script of that same system.

This erasure, however, made visible a network of affective engagements that establish other scripts of masculinity under certain feminist perspectives. On the day of the video's release, the explosion of posts on social media websites caught our attention. On our Instagram timelines, the music video became the most recurring topic on that November 11, 2021. Female viewers of the video engaged in the debate, pointing out the mechanisms of reconfiguration of patriarchy that appear in *Masculinidade*". This audio-verbo-visual plot aligned with the expression of a political, cultural, theoretical and methodological position that allowed us, through the analytical exercise, to destabilize hegemonic notions about gender identity rooted in Iorc's "deconstruction".

The way in which the artist uses gender stereotypes is highlighted in a movement that mixes hegemonically feminine or masculine symbols, reproducing practices of the patriarchal system by placing the man at the center of the discussion about gender oppression only as the oppressed. In a post in the form of a comment (Fig. 1) actress Samya Pascotto calls for debate from the perspective of women who suffered from the betrayals and abusive attitudes that Iorc confesses in the song, observing that, at no point in the autobiographical song, does the singer show regret for his actions, and only talks about how he is a repressed man for falling into the incorporated memories of the male gender construction.

Figure 2 - Post by @samyapacotto

Source: Instagram (https://www.instagram.com/p/CWTgWxrvlry/?igsh=d213NDR3cXNtcjdw)
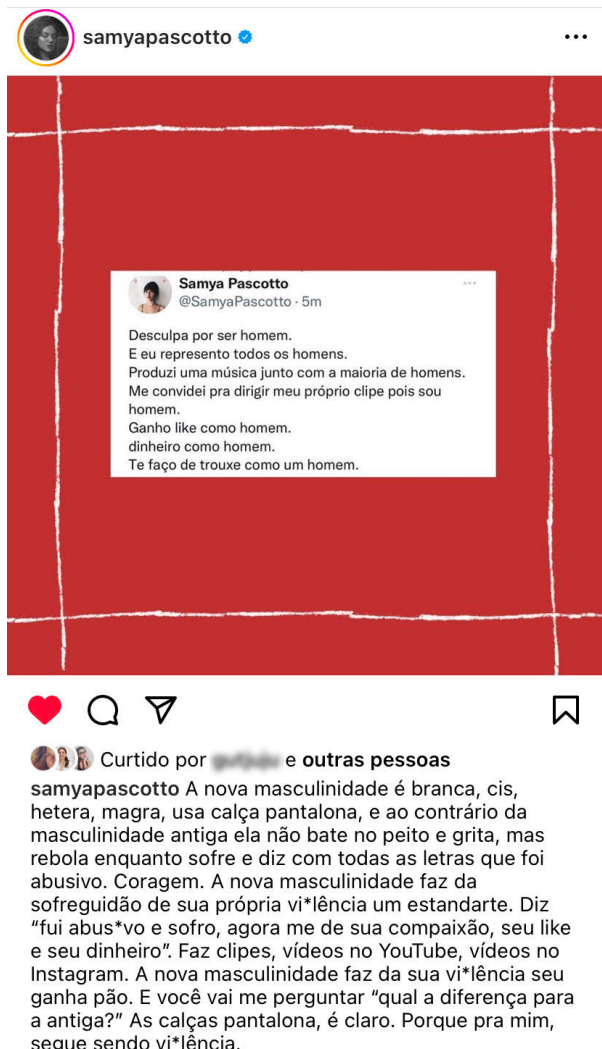
Gender is the locus of a struggle for life, and at the core of this discussion is the fight for equality. By not considering the hierarchical games that involve the masculine, the singer makes invisible the systems of power that demarcate the positions of oppressed/opressor from

the mandate of masculinity, reconfiguring the oppressive system with a supposedly more open-minded view of the body, but which reproduces the dynamics of domination of phallocentrism. As Butler (2021, p.39) points out, "where there are no other people to talk about, there are no problems of equality; but when other living human creatures come into the picture, the problem of equality and conflict immediately emerges".

The alleged opposition to the heteronormative patriarchal matrix by Iorc is also debated on the Instagram profile of the psychoanalyst, feminist and digital influencer @manuelaxavier, who published a video in which she says: "How about that music video by Tiago Iorc, huh guys? Was it good? Or not? Is it a manifesto of men's right to suffer and appropriate their oppressions or is it a big joke?". The video is a kind of teaser of her longer speech published on YouTube, in which she classifies the music video as a "disservice to the feminist movement and to the discussion about masculinity". The influencer points out that "when we include any other social issue within this same narrative, we see that it becomes dull. It's as if I, a white person, were saying: 'how sad my whiteness is, how I am oppressed to be a racist". And she goes on: "when we say that men are also victims of machismo, there is a great risk of placing men and women in the same position as victims of a system". The statement corroborates the argument that, although there is intragender violence, when, for example, men are forced to meet the expectations of a hegemonic notion of masculinity, this performativity is linked to prestige because, as Segato argues, "masculinity, unlike femininity, is a status, a hierarchy" (SEGATO, 2018, p. 40).

One point that stands out in the construction of this web of posts is the strong presence of critical humour in the publications associated with what has been closely linked to the term "leftist macho"[2]. A character who, by presenting himself with hegemonically feminine performative elements, such as skirts, dresses and painted nails, often accompanied by a progressive discourse, ends up increasing the gears of

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2   The term became popular when themes such as abusive relationships began to become more present on the internet, with campaigns such as #MeuAmigoSecreto, which encouraged women to denounce situations of violence on social media websites.

the re-elaboration of the patriarchy, in a kind of mandate of apparently deconstructed masculinity, in which it is necessary to prove himself as a sensitive man in order to, rhetorically, distance himself from the hegemonica image of "macho". This is just like the meme (Fig. 3) published on the profile of singer Vitória, from the duo Anavitória, supposedly as a provocation to Tiago Iorc after the release of *Masculinidade*. In the meme (Fig. 3), although he claims to have "painted his nails" and to be "ready to destroy his toxic masculinity", the man, represented by the image of British singer and actor Harry Styles, reiterates the superhero fantasy associated with the hegemonic masculine, with strength and power, in a low-angle shot that places him in a position of sovereignty.

Figure 3 - Meme in the stories of @vitfalcao's profile
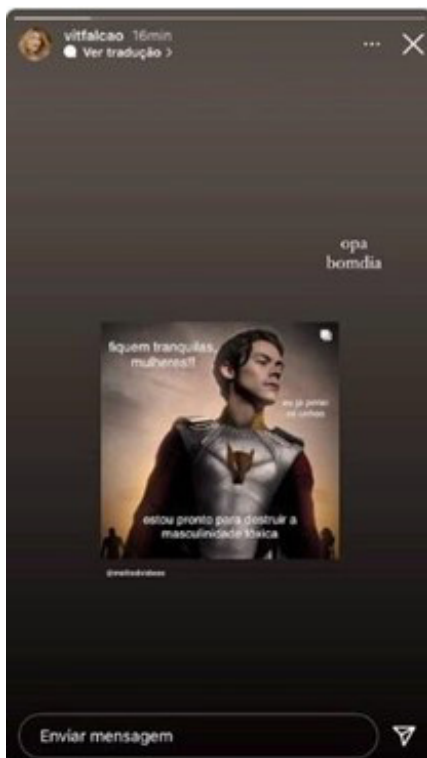
Source: Instagram (image printed by the authors)

Other corporalities were articulated in the music video through the use of parody, used as a strategy to produce criticism through laughing. The parody created by comedian @pedrocertezas (Fig. 4) came to us after it was shared by profiles of women engaged in the feminist movement who reposted the video on their Instagram stories with captions such as "Bring an Oscar to this perfect guy" and "There is no better performance synthesis". This was the only post that was repeated in the three search methods used in this study. Pedro has a large, hairy body, and a beard, and he wears black shorts and a t-shirt of Botafogo football team. His corporality is explicitly associated with hegemonic markers of masculinity (beard, football, hairy body) and he stages exaggerated moves, in a caricatured reiteration of Tiago Iorc's coreography. The lyrics of his version of *Masculinidade* say: "I'm sorry for being a man / Unfortunately I was born a man and I am a man / I'm sorry for everything men do / I take the blame for men / All men / Men do wrong things all the time / Men, I hate us / I beg you, please don't be a man / And men, please, stop doing manly things". The satirical tone of this composition is enhanced by the way in which the figure of the hegemonic male incorporates the so-called progressive discourse of the "deconstructed male". This apparent script shift causes laughter and mockery in relation to the way in which Iorc's masculinity is staged in the music video.

Although we can interpret this music video in other ways, recognizing, in its variety of meanings, a certain ironic tone in relation to the part of feminist discourses, we are interested in the way in which it was endorsed and reiterated with over 220 thousand likes and 19.9633 comments in this web of engagement around the music video. In the reactions present in the comments, we verified contradictions that reinforce this dispute. Women say "I do not forgive", "Even worse than being born a man is being born a Botafogo fan", when they do not recognize the satire of the "sacred masculine" and identify the irony as a sexist endorsement, and others reiterate the tone of satire of the

3   Data collected on 02.26.2024.

masculinity represented by Iorc, with laughter, emojis and comments such as "Guuuuys hahahahah! The only possible man!!!"

Figure 4 – Parody by @pedrocertezas
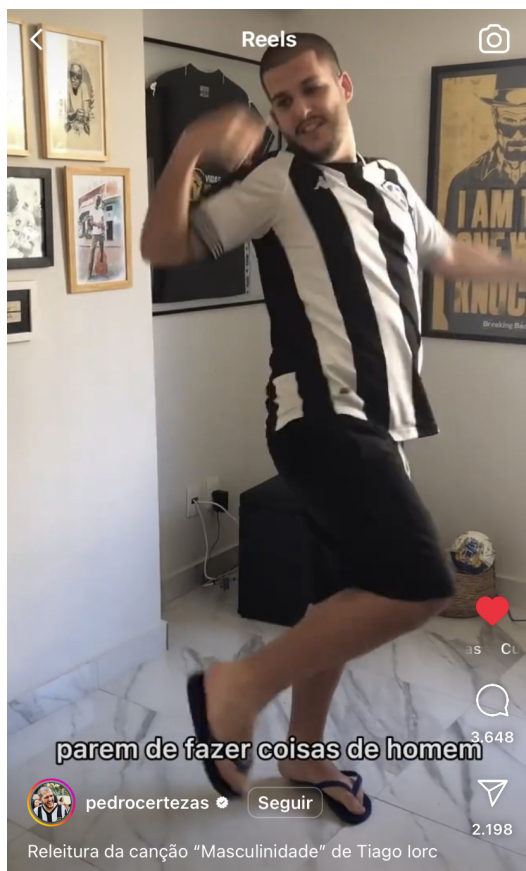
Also using the parody approach, the profile @a.vida.de.tina, known for publishing videos that satirize the lives of middle-class and left-wing young people, reacted to Iorc's music video. In the video (Fig. 5), accompanied by the hashtags #sourica, #minhavozimporta, #dançan-domeustraumas, Tina appears in a cropped top and black pants, red

lipstick, and performs body movements that resemble the singer's co-reography. She looks at her hands, her face expresses suffering, she contorts her body as she sings: "When I was a child I was called rich girl, as if it were a curse / I learned that it was wrong to be a heiress, so much suffering". Tina's performance also reveals, through its humorous and ironic tone, the class relationship translated from the perspective of the oppressor as a victim of these systems of power.

Figure 5 – Parody by @a.vida.de.tina

Source: Instagram (https://www.instagram.com/p/CWWnMGoDlSU/)

Observing the publication as a performance allows us to access the script of a broader story, based on Iorc's music video. It is a script with gender, age, race and class demarcations, of a youth that uses social media sites to express their experiences in videos, memes and photos.

Through the audiovisual media connected to the *"Masculinidade"* video, people present themselves and elaborate their perspectives on gender, but also on the world in an expanded way. The behavior appears in the criticisms of economic structures, the process of patriarchal and phallocentric hegemony, and their ways of life. What caught our attention in this mostly white feminist network, was the lack of tensions around race and identity issues that are not linked to cisgenderism, which involve the intersectional and denaturalized perspective of gender. White cisgenderism and heteronormativity are hegemonic in the video, as well as in the tensions around it.

Conclusion

Beyond a discussion about victims and culprits, which would repeatedly position gender problems in a binary way, we followed a path in search of contradictions and disputes that emerge from the audiovisual network built from the music video *"Masculinidade"*, in the relation to fiction of gender. The study highlights that the masculinities expressed in (and from) the music video update phallocentrism. This dynamic is observed in the article under the perspective of fiction of gender, based on the articulation between the different and potentially articulable notions of performance (TAYLOR, 2013) and performativity (BUTLER, 2015, 2019), which have proven fruitful for the discussions on gender identity in the field of communication and culture, as the authors have elaborated in other works (DIAS, 2021; DIAS; MOTA Jr; GUTMANN, 2022).

The construction of the audiovisual network, which is formed based on the reactions to the music video, points to a project of reworking masculinity with the activation of hegemonically feminine performative elements. However, Iorc's bodily freedom that flows in the video ends up reinforcing stereotypes that support fiction of gender, in an understanding circumscribed to binarism, and therefore limiting. The exploration of the madate of masculinity (SEGATO, 2018) underscored how the more palatable discursive appeals to the discussion on gender identity enhance the games of power, making them even harder to notice

(GONÇALVES, 2021). By presenting himself as a "deconstructed" man, Iorc does not review his privileges and reinforces the fiction of gender via binarism. In other words, even though he is aware of the normative dimension that the patriarchal system imposes on cisgender white men like him, this "coming to his senses" in the figure of the alleged "deconstructed" male is not accompanied by a transformation in the way that the sense of masculinity is operated in the music video.

The exploration of the mandate of masculinity (SEGATO, 2018), which hierarchizes gender in a dynamic of violence production, highlighted how the music video uses performativity in a movement to reconfigure this mandate. It is a reconfiguration that expands the expression of masculinity beyond some of its normativities, by activating hegemonically feminine performative elements, without rethinking its place of power that produces oppression and violence in relationships with other people.

Like Iorc, who appears alone, exposing his pains in relation to the madate of masculinity, the first fictional man, Robinson Crusoe, a character of the first serial novel, originally published in 1719 in the Daily Post newspaper, from the United Kingdom, also appeared alone. Interestingly, as pointed out by Butler (2021), Crusoe was presented as the world's first human in fiction, and he was not only categorized as a gender, but he also appears devoid of social relations in order to survive. The image of the original man is free of dependency; he appears already as an adult without ever needing anyone to learn from, to be nurtured, to develop. Man, so to speak, is enough for himself. And if fiction provides us with a possibility of discerning the structure, what does the music video provide to the imagination about possible masculinities? We might even ask: "if we want to understand this fantasy, we must ask ourselves what version of a human being and what version of gender it represents, which concealments are necessary for this version to work?" (BUTLER, 2021, p. 44).

In the audiovisual network that was created based on the music video *"Masculinidade"*, these concealments necessary for maintaining of

phallocentrism are revealed in critical reactions that appear in memes, videos, parodies and comments. What emerges from the experience of consuming the music video reworks phallocentrism, fostering the discussion about gender and, in a way, pointing to the power of transformation present in audiovisual flows in digital environments.

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Popular feminism and the pact of whiteness: the institutional role of YouTube in promoting networks on female discourses

Feminismo popular e pacto da branquitude: o papel institucional do YouTube na promoção de redes sobre discursos femininos

Simone Evangelista
Beatriz Polivanov

Resumo: *O artigo investiga campanhas institucionais da plataforma de vídeos YouTube para a formação de redes de discussões sobre direitos femininos. Parte-se de reflexões teóricas sobre a centralidade dos influenciadores digitais na cultura digital (KARHAWI, 2021) e suas práticas de influência, bem como o entendimento do YouTube como sistema cultural (BURGESS; GREEN, 2009). Foram analisadas qualitativamente, a partir da noção de "vetores" (GUTMANN, 2021), quatro campanhas (entre 2016 e 2018), subsequentes à chamada primavera feminista brasileira. Argumenta-se que tais esforços integram estratégias do YouTube para construir imaginários sobre a plataforma como espaço para pautas democráticas em contexto de "feminismo popular" (BANET-WEISER, 2018). Ademais, as campanhas fomentaram colaborações posteriores entre as participantes, indicando papel relevante institucional da plataforma no fortalecimento das redes. Contudo, a partir de olhar interseccional (COLLINS, 2015), destaca-se a preponderância de influenciadoras brancas, reforçando um lugar de privilégio da branquitude ao pautar tais questões.*

Palavras-chave: *YouTube; Feminismo; Influenciadores digitais; Redes de colaboração; Interseccionalidade.*

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Abstract: *The paper investigates institutional campaigns on the video plat-form YouTube aimed at forming networks of discussions on women's rights. The study begins with theoretical reflections on the centrality of digital influencers in digital culture (Karhawi, 2021), as well as an understanding of YouTube as a cultural system (Burgess; Green, 2009). Using the notion of "vectors" (Gutmann, 2021), four campaigns (from 2016 to 2018) were qualitatively analyzed, follow-ing the so-called Brazilian feminist spring. It is argued that these efforts are part of YouTube's strategies to construct imaginaries of the platform as a space for democratic agendas in the context of "popular feminism" (Banet-Weiser, 2018). Furthermore, the campaigns fostered subsequent collaborations among partic-ipants, indicating the platform's significant institutional role in strengthening these networks. However, from an intersectional perspective (Collins, 2015), the predominance of white influencers is highlighted, reinforcing a place of privilege for whiteness when discussing issues related to feminism.*

Keywords: *YouTube; feminism; digital influencers; collaboration networks; intersectionality.*

Introduction

While seeking to reinforce its existence as part of a process of democratization of communication facilitated by digital media (EVANGELISTA, 2019), YouTube faces criticism from various sectors of society regarding its alleged neutrality and the consequences of its action policy (BRYANT, 2020; GILLESPIE, 2010). In this article, we investigate the platform's institutional efforts to construct another image in which YouTube presents itself as a space for debates on relevant issues, especially identity-related ones. More specifically, we seek to understand how, by trying to consolidate an image of a socially relevant platform, YouTube may have contributed to strengthening a network of debates linked to feminism on the Brazilian internet.

To this end, we analyzed campaigns developed by the platform aimed at "women's empowerment"[1] in Brazil between 2016 and 2018, the years following the movement known as the "feminist spring" in the country (DUARTE; MELO, 2017), which brought together virtual and in-person protests for women's rights. We argue that there is little material on the institutional contribution of these environments, despite several studies on the importance of digital platforms for such aspects as the dissemination of feminist hashtags (ALMEIDA, 2020; FREIRE, 2016; REIS; NATANSOHN, 2017) or the formation of digital support networks (MARTINEZ, 2019; YAMAMOTO, 2021) at that time. While there are plenty of studies on the appropriation of digital platforms by "users" – in this case, women and feminist collectives – there is a lack of research that focuses on the role of these companies as institutions that mediate[2] such debates.

In a context of increasing intersections between the spheres of activism and consumption (EVANGELISTA, 2020), we surveyed campaigns

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1 Though problematic, we use the expression because YouTube and campaign participants adopted it. See Evangelista (2020) for a debate on issues related to empowerment in the analyzed context.
2 The notion of mediation refers to Martín-Barbero's proposal, appropriated by Gutmann, to reflect on the "mediation of technicalities," understanding "YouTube, Instagram (...) not only as platforms but as environments through which networks of articulations between bodies, images (...) tastes, etc. constitute themselves." (2021, p. 17).

promoted by YouTube in the period in the Brazilian context, arriving at four: #Criadoras [#Creators], #AVozDelaÉAMinhaVoz [#HerVoiceIsMyVoice], #PorQueMulher [#BecauseWoman], and #FalaMiga [#HeyFriend]. Supported by the reflections of Gutmann (2021), we understand these campaigns as "vectors" that trigger "audio-verbal-visual" content. Based on these vectors, we identified and sought to outline, through qualitative exploratory analysis, a profile of the influencers chosen to participate in the campaigns, paying attention to the networks of articulations between them.

The theoretical discussion that supports our survey proposes to reflect on the characteristic dynamics of YouTube (BURGESS; GREEN, 2009; GILLESPIE, 2010; PEREIRA DE SÁ, 2021) and digital influencers (KARHAWI, 2021; MARWICK, 2015; SENFT, 2013). Moreover, we bring debates on the "post" (GILL, 2016; McROBBIE, 2009) and "popular" (BANET-WEISER, 2018) feminist movements as part of branding strategies of various organizations (BANET-WEISER, 2012) to explore the relationship between consumption and the promotion of issues related to femininity. Finally, we seek to analyze such issues from intersectional perspectives (AKOTIRENE, 2019; CARRERA, 2021; COLLINS, 2015).

Coming out of the closet: dissemination of "serious" debates on YouTube

Thinking of YouTube as a cultural system (BURGESS; GREEN, 2009) means the platform disseminates productions that contribute to the resignification of different values over time. Contrary to what it suggests, the platform is not just a mediator where you can "broadcast yourself"[3] but a non-human actor that produces culture (PEREIRA DE SÁ, 2021). Almost 20 years after its launch, characteristics of what Burgess and Green called the "Youtubeness" of a video (2009), that is, those that make it identifiable as a cultural form native to YouTube, helped to

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3 "Broadcast yourself" was YouTube's first slogan.

shape the possibilities of aesthetic and cultural enjoyment of content on the internet.

In this sense, we highlight the emergence of first-person videos related to identity issues, such as gender, sexual orientation, and race. Moving between the fields of entertainment and information, these productions, often of an essayistic nature, became known for the dissemination of "serious" debates that helped foster discussions beyond the video platform. Part of a broader process of popularizing content about intimacy, which would be disseminated on the internet mainly by blogs in the mid-2000s, this movement found in YouTube's affordances[4] and policies a fertile environment to flourish.

One of the first signs of the potential for campaigns related to minorities on the platform occurred in October 2010, when columnist Dan Savage used YouTube to launch a campaign called "It Gets Better." The initiative aimed to send messages of hope to LGBTQIAPN+ youth who felt threatened because of their sexuality and, after going viral, counted with the participation of Barack Obama, then president of the United States. From then on, several YouTubers known for their entertainment-only videos transformed in the eyes of the public, using the platform to reveal their sexual orientation to their fans.

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4   The notion of "affordance" here refers to the "myriad possibilities" that the media allow (PEREIRA DE SÁ, 2021, p. 78). Aspects such as the use and appropriation of tools for interaction and video sharing should be subject to future study since the focus of this paper is on YouTube's institutional policies.

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Given the record audience figures for such "confessions," Vanity Fair columnist Richard Lawson asked: "Will every YouTuber eventually make a 'coming out' video?" In the article, published in 2015, Lawson stated that this "coming out" would not necessarily be about homosexuality but rather the opportunity to talk about some "deep and true" aspect, revealing more complex dimensions of oneself. That dynamic is not exactly new in the world of celebrities. However, we can reinterpret the practice in the context of microcelebrities/digital influencers, who maintain their bond with the audience by revealing strategic aspects of their intimacy (KARHAWI, 2021; MARWICK, 2015; SENFT, 2013).

As discussed in previous works (EVANGELISTA, 2019), this movement occurred amid an institutional effort by Google to consolidate YouTube's image as socially relevant for the democratization of

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5   More information at https://itgetsbetter.org/. Accessed on 10 January 2024.
6   The acronym encompasses Lesbian, Gay, Bi, Trans, Queer/Questioning, Intersex, Asexual/Aromantic/Agender, Pan/Poly, Non-Binary people, and more.

communication. Thus, starting in 2016, the video platform began to invest more incisively in initiatives to promote the visibility of marginalized social groups. Here, we focus specifically on campaigns linked to women. Amid the popularization of feminist debates in various contexts, YouTube followed a movement by organizations from different sectors, making the defense of issues related to women a significant component of its branding (BANET-WEISER, 2012). That year, the company launched the project "Global Program for Women" with the participation of five YouTubers of different nationalities. The project aimed at "continuing our efforts to empower female voices on YouTube" with two initiatives.[7] The first was the announcement that seven YouTubers from different parts of the world would be part of the "Ambassadors of Change" program, a partnership between the company and the United Nations to promote the organization's sustainable development and women's equality actions.[8] The second, more focused on developing content on the video platform, was the #Creators campaign, which we will describe in the next topic.[9]

Such campaigns have kept pace with the platform's audience. In 2017, Kate Stanford, YouTube's director of advertising marketing, stated that the visibility of videos related to empowerment, entrepreneurship, the economy, and services reflected changes in women's interests. According to Stanford, the audience for such productions tripled, contradicting stereotypes about women's consumption of beauty content (STANFORD, 2017).[10] However, although the company characterizes such movements as part of an organic movement, for which YouTube offers only a platform presented as neutral (GILLESPIE, 2010), its

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7 Available at: https://abre.ai/iZcT. Accessed on 20 February 2024.
8 The Brazilian YouTuber Tatiane Ferreira, ahead of the channel Acidez Feminina, was among the chosen ambassadors. The decision incited protests among feminist groups at the time since Ferreira clearly stated she did not consider herself a feminist (FERRARI, 2016).
9 Later, the platform launched the projects #OrgulhodeSer to promote LGBTQIAPN+ pride and #YouTubeNegro to give visibility to producers of content on racial issues.
10   Evidently, that does not mean we should reduce beauty videos to stereotypes of futility or alienation.

policies and strategies offer clues in another direction, contributing to the articulation of certain visibilities.

Recalling the role of consumption as a cultural marker capable of building a shared universe of values and practices (DOUGLAS; ISHERWOOD, 2009), we are interested in considering which issues and digital influencers linked to women gain space through the platform's direct endorsement in its campaigns □ and which are made invisible. This issue is part of the debate on the nuances of post-feminism (GILL, 2016; McRobbie, 2009) and popular feminism (BANET-WEISER, 2018) that emerge from the appropriation of feminine agendas (not necessarily feminist) by diverse organizations.

In the 1990s, the movement to make practices and products associated with "girl power" visible in the media grew, transforming the rhetoric of female emancipation into a normative one, as explained by Sarah Banet-Weiser (2018). Authors such as Rosalind Gill (2016) and Angela McRobbie (2009) characterized this phenomenon as post-feminism. Post-feminism is a set of ideologies, strategies, and practices related to liberal feminist discourses, such as freedom, choice, and independence. Unlike orthodox feminism, which criticizes the structural conditions of gender inequality, Gill (2007) describes post-feminism as a sensibility that includes self-discipline, self-monitoring, empowerment, and personal transformation; that is, a sensibility that would threaten feminism, as it leads to the maintenance of the conditions that sustain patriarchy.

Later, when observing the growing diffusion of debates related to feminism in commercial media, Banet-Weiser characterizes this movement as "popular feminism" (2018). The author observes that, although different, post-feminism and popular feminism share elements. Popular feminism, unlike post-feminism, recognizes gender inequality and female vulnerability, offering a critical vision that distances itself from the vague slogan "girl power" but still presents liberal solutions to the problems under discussion. In other words, the emphasis on aspects such as self-esteem to the detriment of more consolidated (and radical) proposals for structural changes still appears as one of the hallmarks of

manifestations of popular feminism. In this sense, echoing criticisms made by Black feminists since at least the 1970s, popular feminism is not very intersectional.

The notion of intersectionality is polysemic, but it is worth highlighting, in short, that it concerns the intersections between race, class, gender, sexuality, and age, among other identity markers that "operate not in a unique way, as mutually exclusive entities, but as phenomena that are mutually constructed and generate complex social inequalities" (COLLINS, 2015, p. 2, our translation). Racialized women, particularly Black feminists, have made its proposition and articulation (AKOTIRENE, 2019; CARRERA, 2021), generating relevant epistemological, methodological, and political praxis contributions in diverse fields.[11]

Creators and female engagement on YouTube

Based on Juliana Gutmann's (2021) reflection, we understand YouTube campaigns for the visibility of discussions related to feminism and female empowerment as

> audio-verbal-visual expressions that no longer fit into the definitions of meaning and text, however open they may be, nor into the idea of a product or video broadcast by a medium but are constituted as an entangled fabric; a rhizomatic form, a web of heterogeneous, connected, and multiple nodes (GUTMANN, 2021, p. 14-15).

In this sense, videos, channels, influencers, audience comments, hashtags, and debates on multiple platforms about feminism, among other content related to the campaigns observed here, make up this web of diverse nodes that interconnect through the "ambiance" of YouTube. That leads us to the question the author asks: "How can we analytically account for this audiovisual that (...) operates in a network and makes us see flows, aggregates and constitutes our bubbles, presupposes sharing and affective and identity dissonances?" (GUTMANN, 2021, p. 17). I

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11 American Kimberlé Crenshaw coined the concept of intersectionality. In the legal field in the 1980s, she denounced the oppression suffered by Black women (CARRERA, 2021).

In search of a methodological path, we relied on the author's insight into the notion of "vector" to understand the campaign videos that we selected in this work "as a possibility of tracking and mapping a specific entangled audio-verbal-visual set" (2021, p. 71) □ in our case, the discussions on female empowerment mediated by the YouTube platform between 2016 and 2018. Gutmann explains that "the idea of vector refers to an event that is no longer unitary and closed in itself but triggers and mobilizes flows of images, sounds, information, social practices, and rituals that tell us about identities and their disputes" (idem). Thus, we carried out an initial analytical move to map the campaigns carried out by YouTube during the period, understanding them as vectors that generated a network of articulation between influencers in Brazil.

In a second stage, we mapped the influencers invited by the platform to participate in the four campaigns through an exploratory qualitative analysis. We observed descriptions, cover images, and featured videos on the identified channels to delimit the themes the chosen participants addressed the most up until the campaign period. Finally, we analyzed the collaborations published on the channels of three YouTubers who appear centrally in the campaigns, Júlia Tolezano, Maíra Medeiros, and Nátaly Neri, during the same period as the survey. The objective was to understand collaboration networks formed from the institutional mediation of the platform – algorithmic mediation is beyond the scope of the work.

The #Criadoras campaign, launched on International Women's Day in 2016, was a global production from YouTube Spaces, the company's studios spread across different countries. Seven participants appear on the scene playing notable women in the video "100 Years of Incredible Women."[12] The production featured a Brazilian representative, Júlia Tolezano, who played the Brazilian writer, poet, journalist, and political activist Patrícia Galvão, known as Pagu. In just 2m55s, the video attempts to summarize the trajectories of notable women, emphasizing their ability to overcome challenges and inspirational messages taken

12   Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b0MouLJcG-Q. Accessed on 26 May 2024.

out of context □ in Pagu's case, the phrase chosen was "Dream. Even if you have nightmares, always dream." Far from proposing any change in the structures that perpetuate the difficulties experienced by women, the video invites the audience to fight for individual achievements, referring to post-feminism (GILL, 2016; McRobbie, 2009).

A trained journalist, Tolezano had gained prominence the previous year after publishing a video about abusive relationships entitled "Não tira o batom vermelho" ["Do not remove the red lipstick"] (TOLEZANO, 2015). Like the other participants in the campaign, the YouTuber welcomed guests from her country to collaborate on topics related to discoveries and challenges of the activity of "female creators" on YouTube, discussing issues such as racism, aging, and the fight against homophobia. The idea of the meetings with her Brazilian peers, as the YouTuber explained in an interview with the newspaper O Globo, was to "talk about what it is like to be a woman on YouTube." Recorded at YouTube Space São Paulo, the videos of the meetings aired on participants' channels and made available in a playlist on the channel "Jout Jout Prazer." Besides Jout Jout, 15 guests star in the series.

Image 1 – #Criadoras campaign influencer

	Influenciadora	Canal	Temáticas principais em 2016
1	Bruna Vieira	Bruna Vieira	Beleza, maquiagem e a passagem da adolescência para a vida adulta
2	Flavia Calina	Flavia Calina	Rotina familiar nos Estados Unidos e maternidade
3	Liliane Prata	Canal da Lili	Literatura e relacionamentos
4	Tatiana Feltrin	Tiny Little Things	Resenhas de livros em vídeo (booktuber)
5	Tatiany Leite	Vá ler um livro	
6	Malena	malena010102	Games
7	Nátaly Neri	Afros e afins	Moda, beleza e feminismo negro
8	Julia Petit	Petiscos	Moda e beleza
9	Ana de Cesaro	Ana	Temas do seu cotidiano e debates sobre feminismo e temas afins
10	Mandy Candy	Mandy para maiores	Processo de transição de gênero e o preconceito contra pessoas transgênero
11	Ana Lídia Lopes	Ana Lídia Lopes	Beleza, maquiagem e a passagem da adolescência para a vida adulta
12	Isa Lima (atual IZA)	Isa Lima	Covers de grandes nomes da música
13	Lorelay Fox	Para tudo	Maquiagem, universo das drag queens e, posteriormente, temas relacionados à luta contra a homofobia
14	Jéssica Tauane	Canal das Bee	Temas variados ligados ao universo LGBTQIA+
15	Debora Baldin		

Source: Elaborated by authors[13].

The heterogeneity of the channels involved in #Criadoras indicates an attempt to engage with diverse audiences through women with different interests and "identity avenues" (AKOTIRENE, 2019) in a perspective that seemingly embraces intersectional dimensions. Announcements and articles about the campaign do not specify the participant selection criteria. However, it is possible to note that some already presented a more "engaged" profile on their respective channels.

In 2017, Brazilian YouTubers stood out in YouTube projects to promote International Women's Day again. The first was the

13   Danilo Dabague interprets the YouTuber drag queen Lorely Foz.

#HerVoiceIsMyVoice campaign (#AVozDelaÉAMinhaVoz in Portuguese).[14] In the global promotional video for the initiative, two Brazilian women appear among other YouTubers from different parts of the world: Nátaly Neri (Afros e Afins) and the aforementioned Tatiane Ferreira (Acidez Feminina). Unlike Ferreira, who stated she did not consider herself a feminist, Neri had already produced videos related to Black feminism (besides engaging in broader Black movement debates).

However, like other YouTubers portrayed, Brazilian women do not have a voice in the campaign. We see only images of Ferreira and Neri on their respective channels while listening to a voiceover speech by Pakistani activist Malala Yousafzai about the importance of representing other women. Celebrities such as the former First Lady of the United States, Michelle Obama, and the American TV host Ellen DeGeneres also convey messages of female empowerment. In fact, DeGeneres appears emotional on the screen upon receiving an award and claims to have discovered a mission "that was not just about me," as seems to have happened with the other women who appear in sequence.

By framing the work of influencers in this context, the campaign suggests that YouTubers, public figures, and celebrities are on par since they all use the "spotlight" to become inspirations for other women. However, the enthusiasm of the women on camera seems limited to representation: at the end of the video, there is a call for the audience to share videos of "inspiring women" — an attitude that is more than convenient for YouTube. Recalling the discussions on post-feminism and popular feminism (BANET-WEISER, 2018), we can say the platform emphasizes the relevance of voices in favor of feminist discussions, as long as they are presented in an inoffensive and palatable way, preferably contributing to the increase of its audience.

Another initiative that brought together Brazilian YouTubers, this time for collaboration, was the #PorQueMulher campaign in 2017.[15]

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14 Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bdX55I9WHDw. Accessed on 25 May 2024.
15 The playlist with official campaign videos are available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d-nOo-k8pIAU&list=PLEIJP9n-xzZYqCug4nuF0_9R9CMhjrudv. Accessed on 25 February 2024.

In the form of sketches, eight videos recorded from YouTube Space São Paulo presented debates on taboos associated with women, such as the absence of women in history books, the need for hair removal, or wage inequality. Another rising feminist YouTuber, Maíra Medeiros, from the channel "Nunca te pede nada" ["Never ask you for anything"] was the "godmother" of the campaign. "Also known for sketches and parodies that provoke and raise awareness among her audience with themes about the female universe," explains a report on the website "Canal Tech," Medeiros was the only one to participate in all the videos recorded at YouTube Space and responsible for publishing them on her channel (CANAL TECH, 2017, online).

Unlike previous campaigns, #PorQueMulher was launched in partnership with Think Olga, a feminist NGO linked to significant feminist movements, especially on social media platforms. Possibly due to this involvement, many of the 17 YouTubers were already known for producing activist content or discussing issues related to representation.

Image 2 – Influencers in the #PorQueMulher campaign

	Influenciadora	Canal	Temáticas principais em 2017
1	Luiza Junqueira	Tá Querida	Gordofobia e movimento body positive
2	Alexandra Gurgel	Alexandrismos	
3	Jéssica Tauane[2]	Gorda de Boa	
4	Gabi Oliveira	De Pretas	Racismo e empoderamento da mulher negra
5	Nátaly Neri	Afros e Afins	
6	Maíra Azevedo	Tia Má	
7	Ana Paula Xongani	Ana Paula Xongani	
8	Amanda Mendes	Tô de Crespa	
9	Xan Ravelli	Soul Vaidosa	
10	Rosa Luz	Barraco da Rosa	
11	Mariana Torquato	Vai uma mãozinha aí?	Conteúdos sobre pessoas com deficiência
12	Mag Halat	Mag Halat	Rotina como muçulmana que utiliza véu no Brasil
13	Helen Ramos	Hel Mother	Desromantização da maternidade
14	Mari Nolasco	Mari Nolasco	Música
15	Haru	Canal da Haru	Games e cultura pop
16	Nathália Arcuri	Me poupe!	Educação financeira

Source: Elaborated by the author.

In 2018, a new campaign by the company focused on collaboration between YouTubers to promote issues related to the female universe. In

partnership with YouTube Space RJ in Brazil, the channel Whohaha and the American director Elizabeth Banks promoted the Women in Comedy initiative described as a "global project for female empowerment.". According to YouTube, over 100 creators received support in the form of film sets, coordination, and production resources for recordings in Los Angeles, London, Toronto, Mumbai, Berlin, Paris, and Rio de Janeiro.[16]

Named "#FalaMiga" in Brazil, the project this time was led by the creators of the channel DRelacionamentos, which specializes in the production of comic sketches, many of which have a feminist bias. Jackie Salomão, Nina Dutra, and Felipe Ventura ran the channel at the time (the male actor does not appear in the videos of the #FalaMiga campaign). Besides new sketches, the videos recorded in partnership with other YouTubers featured conversations on the same topics women are "tired of hearing about," such as job market demands or in relation to pregnancy. Among the 16 participants in the initiative's official videos (in addition to the members of DRelacionamentos), six had already participated in the 2016 and 2017 campaigns: Júlia Tolezano, Maíra Medeiros, Jéssica Tauane, Luiza Junqueira, Helen Ramos, and Malena. The NGO Think Olga once again worked on selecting the guests in partnership with the DRelacionamentos channel. The other guests produce content on various topics (Image 3).

16   We obtained information from the descriptions of project videos from Brazil. The complete list is available at https://bit.ly/2I8vu6q. Accessed on 10 January 2024.

Image 3 – Influencers in the #FalaMiga campaign

	Influenciadora	Canal	Temáticas principais em 2018
1	Carol Moreira	Carol Moreira	Cultura pop e cinema
2	Luisa Classen	Lully de Verdade	
3	Cátia Damasceno	Cátia Damasceno	Sexo e relacionamentos
4	Ellora Haone	Ellora Haone	Autoestima e saúde mental
5	Mariana Morena	Mariana Morena	Autoestima da mulher negra, beleza e
6	Luci Gonçalves	Luci Gonçalves	sexualidade LGBTQ+
7	Natália Abreu	Natália Abreu	
8	Lilian Melchert	Que Diabos!	Curiosidades, estilo de vida e autoajuda
9	Gabie Faddel	Gabie Faddel	
10	Karen Jonz	Karen Jonz	
11	Dafne Amaro	Saúde na rotina	Vida fitness
12	Adriana Cubas	Adriana Cubas	Mulheres e carreira

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

More than determining the role of each of these YouTubers in dis-seminating messages related to feminism, we sought to identify the formation of networks based on institutional campaigns linked to You-Tube, which we understand as vectors (GUTMANN, 2021). It is worth noting that the networks in question go beyond the guests listed since each campaign had a collaborative bias. By choosing to map only those who participated in the "official" campaign videos, we understand that the choice of certain YouTubers is part of legitimizing them as repre-sentatives of the type of "creators" that the company wants to promote. The direct involvement of a recognized feminist organization in Brazil in the articulation of two of the campaigns under analysis reinforces this legitimization.

On the other hand, an interesting qualitative fact for our research concerns the increase in videos related to ideas of female empowerment in the period between the campaigns. All channels whose authors pub-lished videos with a more militant profile emerged in mid-2015 or later. In many cases, the trajectories are also similar. Names such as Ellora Haone, Nátaly Neri, Luci Gonçalves, Júlia Tolezano, Maíra Medeiros, and Ana de Cesaro started on YouTube with videos that discussed fe-male roles that are widely popular on the platform, whether through content about fashion and beauty or through humor. Little by little, they began to publish videos more frequently that more explicitly mention the struggle of women/Black people/LGBTQIAPN+ people for social

equality. In this sense, one can think that integration with the market is a significant part of the dissemination of debates linked to popular feminism (and other identity-based issues), which in turn will contribute to the visibility and recognition of the digital influencers who promote them.

Another relevant point of the analysis concerns the categories of visibility articulated based on YouTube's institutional choices. Of the four campaigns mapped, only one focused on a Black woman, Nátaly Neri (who, even so, shared the spotlight of the initiative with a White woman, Tatiane Ferreira). The other channels that centralized the production of videos for the actions described were, at the time, run by White people. As we will see below, these decisions may have significantly impacted the networks of collaboration between feminist YouTubers established after the campaigns.

Fluctuating between market incentives and social engagement, we argue the platform favors identity-based issues in a restricted and segmented way, emphasizing discussions that refer to the notion of popular feminism and a specific social group. In this sense, we hypothesize the company encourages debate on female empowerment based on a logic that continues to privilege the pact of Whiteness (BENTO, 2022), even though it pays attention to the intersectional dimensions of the subjects.

Beyond campaigns: collaboration networks between feminist youtubers

From our survey of campaigns, we proposed to analyze the collaborations between three digital influencers that starred in the YouTube campaigns from 2016 to 2018: Júlia Tolezano, Maíra Medeiros, and Nátaly Neri. The goal was to understand a possible confluence of participants, indicating a strengthening of connections and interaction networks around activist content. Like in the above mapping, we sought to identify the focus areas of each YouTuber and the themes they approached in the examined collaborations.

Júlia Tolezano, the most popular among the three YouTubers, reached up to 2.9 million subscribers.[17] Maíra Medeiros, one of the most popular creators in that "segment," has 2 million subscribers. Nátaly Neri has a little over 810 thousand subscribers (a substantial figure, though considerably smaller than Tolenzano's and Medeiros') and recognition as an activist. In this case, we also considered her approach to Black feminist issues, which the other two women, White middle class, only marginally discuss in their productions.[18]

Over three years, besides participating in the #MulheresCriadoras and #FalaMiga campaigns, the Jout Jout Prazer channel published 12 collaboration videos with 14 other channels and recorded conversations with friends or personalities not included in our research because they did not identify as digital content producers at the time of their participation. Among the 12 videos, eight feature guests who participated in the YouTube campaigns listed above, often addressing debates related to women's experiences. This number becomes expressive if we consider the few collaborations recorded during the period.

Among the channels analyzed, Maíra Medeiros' was the one that published the most collaborations. In addition to the videos recorded for the #PorQueMulher campaign, the YouTuber published 54 productions with participants from other channels. Besides having more collaborations, her videos are more heterogeneous, although the guests often discuss issues related to feminism and LGBTQIAPN+ culture. In total, 16 channels participating in the YouTube-related campaigns collaborated with Medeiros on videos and the campaigns themselves (the DRelacionamentos channel appears in two videos). The collaborations recorded on Nátaly Neri's channel during the examined period point to more interaction with Black content producers. Known for addressing issues related to Blackness on her channel, the influencer published few collaborative videos with content producers in the abovementioned

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17 The journalist announced she was pausing her channel in 2019. She chose to finish it in 2022.
18 Despite its central position in the #FalaMiga campaign, we did not include DRelacionamentos in this phase because the channel posts fictional videos with diverse actors.

campaigns, marked by a greater participation of White women. We found six in a universe of 32 videos.[19]

The following image shows the correlation between the YouTubers who participated in the three selected channels and those who were part of the campaigns promoted by YouTube during the period under analysis. The highlighted names correspond to the YouTubers or channels in at least one of the campaigns described here. The figure also indicates that YouTubers were in two of the three channels analyzed during the period.

Image 4: Collaboration in the YouTube channels of Nátaly Neri, Júlia Tolezano, and Maíra Medeiros between 2016 and 2018

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

19   It is worth noting, however, that among the collaborations found, several names were part of two YouTube initiatives linked to Black influencers: Creators for Change, which brought together YouTubers from different countries at an event in London, and YouTube Negro [Black YouTube], in which Neri received Black personalities at YouTube Space SP.

The mapping indicates the YouTube campaigns functioned as vectors for disseminating specific visibilities related to feminism and female empowerment. As a cultural system (BURGESS; GREEN, 2009), the platform not only reflects contemporary disputes — such as the relevance of specific agendas — but also helps to construct them (PEREIRA DE SÁ, 2021). Analyzing the participation in the channels of the White influencers, Tolezano and Medeiros, and the recurrence of names that collaborated with more than one of the three channels, we can say that, during that period, the institutional campaigns had a relevant impact, strengthening a network of socially engaged YouTubers linked to feminism. Nátaly Nery, in turn, favors Black content producers, many of whom also appear in the platform's campaigns but specifically about Blackness. Still, the predominance of Whiteness in the networks formed indicates that white feminism continues, from suffragettes to influencers, leaving Black women behind, as BECK (2021) argues.

Final considerations: the articulation of feminist YouTuber networks

The microcosm described above did not intend to exhaust the network of meaning surrounding female protagonism formed by articulations between human and non-human actors on YouTube during the analyzed period (2016-2018). Among the various possible analytical trajectories, we chose to follow four campaigns promoted by the company, understood as vectors of audio-verbal-visual content (GUTMANN, 2021). In an exploratory manner, we categorized the profiles of the influencers' channels according to their themes, mapping articulations between them in the years that followed an intensification of feminist movements on the Brazilian internet (following a global trend).[20]

It is worth noting that it was not possible, within the limits of this work, to analyze the collaboration videos comprised in the four campaigns, a

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20 It is also worth remembering that the social context of the crisis that followed the coup against former president Dilma Rousseff and the rise of far-right politicians in Brazilian politics certainly contributed to this configuration.

task that remains for future research developments. However, drawing from our analysis, we argue that 1) YouTube sought, through its campaigns, to approach a social agenda that was very much in vogue at the time, possibly aiming to build a brand positioning that was considered "inclusive" and "democratic." 2) In doing so, the platform provoked the networking between influencers and the generation of more content about "female empowerment," promoting networks about feminism as an institution. 3) However, there was a preponderance of White women invited to participate in the campaigns, reinforcing a place of privilege for Whiteness when addressing issues related to female "empowerment."

By emphasizing these articulations, we seek to contribute to an interpretation of YouTube's role as a cultural system that guides discussions linked to "popular feminism" (BANET-WEISER, 2018), seeking to position itself in the platform market as a company concerned with social issues by encouraging the production of "serious" entertainment content. That is, of course, a business strategy anchored in strengthening discussions about identity issues in contemporary times and their articulation with instances of consumption. Still, the strategic side does not obscure the real effects of this visibility policy. Among a good part of the analyzed channels, there was a notable increase in publications discussing issues related to some form of social activism.

Years later, we can say there were significant changes in the universe of content producers related to social issues □ as mentioned previously, Júlia Tolezano announced the end of her YouTube channel. Nátaly Neri and Maíra Medeiros remain on the platform but with more modest numbers and fewer videos on topics related to feminism and Black feminism. YouTube seems to have chosen to invest in other issues □ the last campaign on women on the platform's official profile was #HerVoiceisMyVoice, in 2017.

In presenting this historical review, our objective was not to praise YouTube as a disseminator of socially engaged content. Differently, we sought to argue that, in a context strongly influenced by consumption, forms of digital activism can suffer the influence of institutional strategies

of the platforms, which, in turn, will also align with market demands. However, it is necessary to consider the complexities emerging from the characteristic dynamics of digital environments. On TikTok, a platform characterized by short videos, feminist digital influencers accumulate millions of views, indicating a possible migration of content production networks related to the topic – a hypothesis we intend to investigate in future analyses.

Finally, we emphasize that the company's actions in favor of "minorities" are also an important tool to counterbalance the accusations that YouTube faces for issues such as disrespecting copyright and promoting false and extremist content (BRYANT, 2020). Although the platform officially articulates the strengthening of feminist discourse, its algorithms increasingly drive networks of anti-feminist discourse, an issue that deserves in-depth analysis in future works.

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The institutionalization of imitation fashion consumption: a practice driven by consumers on TikTok

A institucionalização do consumo de moda de imitação: prática impulsionada por consumidores no TikTok

Alessandra Barros Marassi

Resumo: *O artigo analisa as práticas que institucionalizam o consumo de moda de imitação potencializadas pela produção de conteúdo dos consumidores presentes no TikTok. Partimos do pressuposto que o consumo de réplicas de marcas consolidadas é impulsionado não só pela atividade digital de quem consome, mas também pelas lógicas algorítmicas dos aplicativos de moda, como a Shein, que se apropriam dessa dinâmica em suas estratégias comerciais. Nosso objetivo é compreender as transformações no consumo desse tipo de mercadoria evidenciando o sentido de pertencimento numa lógica que institucionaliza a moda de imitação. O estudo sustenta-se na análise de conteúdos de consumidores no TikTok que adotam tais práticas.*

Palavras-chave: *Consumo; Moda de imitação; Institucionalização; TikTok.*

Abstract: *The article analyses the practices that institutionalize the consumption of imitation fashion, which are enhanced by the content produced by consumers on TikTok. We start from the assumption that the consumption of replicas of established brands is driven not only by the digital activity of those who consume, but also by the algorithmic logics of fashion apps, such as Shein, which appropriate this dynamic in their commercial strategies. Our aim is to understand the transformations in the consumption of this type of merchandise, highlighting the sense of belonging in a logic that institutionalizes imitation*

fashion. The study is based on an analysis of content from consumers on TikTok who adopt these practices.

Keywords: *Consumption. Imitation Fashion. Institutionalization. TikTok.*

Introduction

The relationship between data, consumer behavior, and the commercial interests of companies gets stronger when we observe that these aspects are the basis for the operation and expansion of companies – mainly e-commerce companies – that make their strategic decisions based on the result of constant monitoring of the digital interactivity of their consumers. This logic differs from what happened in the 1960s, a milestone in the consumer society (HOFF, 2008) when the rural exodus and industrialization occurred, and companies began facing the challenge of "discovering what their consumers think" to create strategies that lead to consumption.

The interweaving of technology in everyday life consolidates the idea that interactions on social media and shopping apps generate new consumption practices, especially among young people. The uses and responses offered through content indicate what will become a trend. An example is the emergence of brand stores on Instagram, which have begun to appear on a large scale, whether official or owned by individuals who sell various products. Content production by influencers and consumers has boosted fashion consumption in the digital environment by interweaving algorithms in everyday life, which continuously monitor people's desires through each activity recorded by algorithmic logic, especially in apps.

This triangulation between consumption, content production, and mediatization are elements that enhance the institutionalization of imitation fashion, making it a practice valued by young people who, in turn, are looking for new things and trends and do not want to pay the high prices adopted by established brands, such as Zara, Adidas, H&M, among others.

Based on this scenario, this article investigates consumption practices among young consumers of the Chinese store Shein, who produce and enhance content for goods similar to these brands, stimulating the consumption of imitation fashion supported by the discourse of "being fashionable while paying less." The study seeks to understand how the

interactions and actions of consumers of imitation fashion are decisive in the institutionalization of the consumption of replica goods and the process of circulation and mediatization of products in this segment, drawing from the understanding of mediatization as a structural process of influence of the media (mass culture and control of communication). In this way, we resort to the most recent perspective of mediatization as the actions that occur in digital media, identified as deep mediatization (COULDRY; HEPP, 2020).

Brazilian consumer participation in the process of mediatization and consumption of the brand in a chain of interactions that runs through brand-consumption-mediatization-brand is the "fuel" for Shein's visibility. This action is discussed by Trindade and Perez (2019) when they state:

> If we think about matters of participation, engagement, and modes of circulation beyond structures, we can evaluate the issues of gradients of participation and collaboration types with brand actions through mediatization, observing and analyzing strategies and tactics but returning, through cultural mediation, to a process in which the media/brand logic constitutes or participates in modeling realities and their subjects (TRINDADE, PEREZ, 2019).

The processes of the mediatization of consumption, encouraged by consumer subjects in their interactions, production, participation, and engagements, feed the datafication of the brand's digital platform that collects data from the digital traces recorded by users of the application and social media that Shein monitors as a source of information for its strategies.

We dare say that wearing similar merchandise from established brands is no longer seen as derogatory but rather something that allows you to be part of a society that values appearance, aesthetics, and keeping up with trends.

Fashion consumption and imitation fashion

Fashion consumption is a factor that allows for the interpretation of the world (SANT'ANNA, 2007), where the subject appropriates signs that make them capable of acting in modern society. In this sense, this subject-consumer of fashion can make decisions that offer paths for social interaction based on the way in which they present themselves aesthetically.

Fashion consumption flows occur from the launch of products through their promotion, use, and dissemination (in smaller groups), leading to mass production and then death, characterized by disuse. Then, a new cycle begins to generate new items, establishing a process of mass production and widespread advertising to increase consumption to higher levels.

Fashion production and consumption in the 19th century occurred at a slower pace than what we know today as fast fashion. Before, the presence of a stylist or fashion designer was decisive in classifying the item as an item of value. With the advancement of technology, this process of reproducibility (BENJAMIN, 1975) displaces the ritual function of the work of art, in which reproduction implies a change in value as a high-level object. Thus, the reproducibility of fashion goods fosters a mass culture in which discourses configure a collective formation of meanings.

Mara Rúbia Sant'Anna (2007), in her argument about the relationship between fashion and modernity, states that fashion is a system that constitutes society itself, going far beyond the fact of mobilizing ephemeral tastes that change at every moment.

Our interest here is not to revisit the history of fashion. However, we believe it is relevant to understand that fashion has been an indicator for differentiating social classes at various times. The status of the designer who signs the collection, the quality of the fabrics, the aesthetic and technological innovation of the pieces, and who wears them determines the fashion consumption of the wealthiest classes. For the classes with lower purchasing power, despite the desire to be "trendy" always, the

economic factor still determines the purchasing decision process, which leads them to seek alternative options, but with lower prices, that is, items that, due to this characteristic, are more accessible in fast fashion stores.

For Enrico Cietta (2019), the concept of fast fashion is very similar to the mechanism of fast food, in which there is an acceleration of consumption through the standardization of supply, focusing on an increasingly quicker turnover of products at the point of sale, eliminating stock, that is, what is available is everything that is in the store. When one item runs out, it makes room for another instantly. This speed establishes itself in the mind of the consumer, who, upon seeing a piece, knows that if they do not buy it at that moment, there is a significant chance that they will not find it again. This business model responds very well to the constant changes in the market (CIETTA, 2019), as it combines different consumer experiences, that is, the fashion content of luxury products with the affordable prices of basic products, knowing how to incorporate consumers' choice in the process of creating new products (CIETTA, 2019).

Imitation fashion refers to the practice of replicating designs, styles, and fashion trends established by renowned designers and luxury brands. This practice often involves the mass production of clothing items, accessories, and related products that resemble the original pieces but sell at more affordable prices. Imitation fashion can range from direct replicas to creative interpretations and adaptations of existing fashion concepts.

The purchase, dissemination, and use of goods like those produced by well-known and established brands in the market characterize the consumption of imitation fashion. Similar items that imitate designer pieces are often made with different fabrics of inferior quality and finish and sold at much lower prices.

As a well-known brand launches a new collection, it is not long before one can find replica pieces in other stores, street vendors, and the Internet. This occurs by monitoring trends for the instant production

that fuels imitation fashion. Various factors drive the imitation fashion consumption phenomenon, including the pursuit of social status, pressure to conform to prevailing aesthetic norms, and the search for affordable trends. Consumers are attracted to the idea of wearing items that resemble luxury products without paying the associated high cost. Moreover, the rapid dissemination of information and images through digital social media contributes to the rapid popularization of certain styles and designs, increasing the demand for more affordable versions.

This agile, low-cost, low-quality process, which enchants young people, erodes established brands (SHI; LIU; LEE; SRINIVASAN, 2021). There are other implications in the production of fashion and the generation of trends, such as the absence of a designer or stylist in imitation fashion. Consumers of imitation fashion disregard the low quality and short lifespan of products. For them, it does not matter if the piece will not last long since they paid a low price.

In this sense, Perez, Trindade, Fogaça, and Batista (2013) argue that pirated (imitation) products take on a distinct symbolic charge, offering alternative meanings and challenging the dominant narratives of consumption and identity. For the authors, piracy is a form of cultural resistance and a means of accessing culture and consumer goods for economically marginalized groups.

Platformization of fashion, algorithms and the modulation of consumer behavior

Digital social media and apps play a fundamental role in the consumption of imitation fashion. For the analysis of this article, we used both the Shein store app and the social media TikTok due to their interrelation in promoting consumption practices, advertising, and dissemination of imitation fashion on the internet.

Shein is an e-commerce company based in China known for offering a variety of clothing and fashion accessories at affordable prices. In Brazil, Shein has won over the Generation Z audience, causing a significant

transformation in fashion consumption. Regarding its method of operation, Shein uses a framework of algorithms to analyze users' browsing and purchasing behavior to understand people's desires in each of the countries in which it operates. Based on this information, it is possible to personalize users' experiences, suggesting products likely to interest each customer. The app does this through personalized recommendations on its home page, promotional emails, targeted ads, and discount coupon offers.

Tremarim (2022), in his master's dissertation, defended at the postgraduate program in communication at Universidade do Vale do Rio dos Sinos, presents the consumption and circulation scheme in the Shein process, as shown in Figure 1:

Figure 1 - Consumption and circulation scheme in the Shein process

O PÚBLICO DA SHEIN INTERAGE NAS REDES SOCIAIS DA MARCA E FAZ COMPRAS NO SITE

A MARCA COLETA OS DADOS E TRADUZ EM PRODUTOS

OS PRODUTOS SÃO COMPRADOS E POSTADOS PELO PÚBLICO EM SUAS REDES SOCIAIS
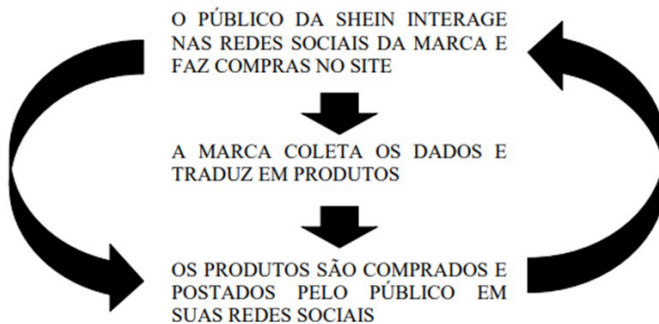
Source: TREMARIN (2022)

This strategic consumption mechanism supports the company's power to manipulate the interests of its audiences in each of the countries in which it operates, as Landoswki points out:

[...] if strategist-manipulators recognize what the other wants and, better yet, dedicate themselves to knowing it in depth, making it as transparent as possible, detecting its determinations, it is only to manipulate it with greater assurance, to gain more power over it, acting on its motivations and reasons, possibly the most secret ones (LANDOWSKI, 2014 p. 33).

The central phase of the scheme, when the brand collects data and translates it into products, materializes in how consumers find similar products on its app.

The idea of fashion platformization is constituted not only by the support of apps but also by constant monitoring (VAN DIJCK, 2017), which functions as informational fuel for tactics to modulate purchasing behavior (COUTINHO, 2021) and decisions about what will or will go into production, always focusing on the fleeting consumption of imitation fashion.

That strategy emerges in the practices adopted by Shein when we observe that Shein closely monitors fashion trends and uses algorithms to identify the latest tendencies and purchasing patterns quickly. This monitoring allows it to adjust its inventory and highlight the most popular products, ensuring its offers align with consumer preferences. Part of the information concerns which products consumers view, items they add to the cart, and which products reach the final purchase stage. These algorithms help identify customer behavior patterns and preferences. Another automated feature on the platform is the pricing of items available on the app. The algorithm can automatically adjust prices based on several factors, such as demand, available stock, and seasonality, including temporary discounts, personalized coupons, or special promotions to encourage consumption.

Based on the collection of various data sources, Shein employs recommendation algorithms to suggest products to customers, using collaborative filtering techniques, content analysis, and machine learning to identify products that are most likely to interest each customer in different countries, taking into account their purchase history, previously viewed products and current fashion trends. Thus, we understand that Shein's algorithmic process continuously promotes fashion consumption supported by personalization, dynamic pricing, trend tracking, influencer marketing, and customer feedback analysis.

But how does this operation work so effectively? In this analysis, we identified that Shein seeks information on the consumption behavior of

young people on the platform with the highest concentration of influencers, TikTok. Shein's great idea was to partner with influencers on the platform to understand consumption interests.

TikTok: consumers and the promotion of consumption by imitation fashion

The delimitation of this study involved a methodological organization divided into three stages. The first stage focused on a bibliographic review on the subject of fashion; the second focused on gathering information about the functionalities of the Shein app; the third researched consumer publications, especially on TikTok, based on hashtag searches, to gather content that promotes and institutionalizes the consumption of imitation fashion as a socially validated practice.

To collect research data, we established the following terms for the TikTok search: "zaraxshein", "diorxshein", adidasxshein, and #vansxshein.

Since the search system does not recognize more than one word at a time, the procedure was done by individually searching for each hashtag and selecting one or more publications that spotlight the discussion.

Thus, among the various profiles that appear as results, several present similar products and are available on Shein. We selected some publications to illustrate how this process has a high potential for publicity and engagement around imitation fashion.

As a result of the searches, we separated the publications into six figures. The first figure is a video in which the publication serves as a tutorial on how to find pieces similar to those from Zara in the Shein app. We sorted the other figures by brand - Zara, Dior, Adidas, and Vans.

Figure 2 - How to find (?)
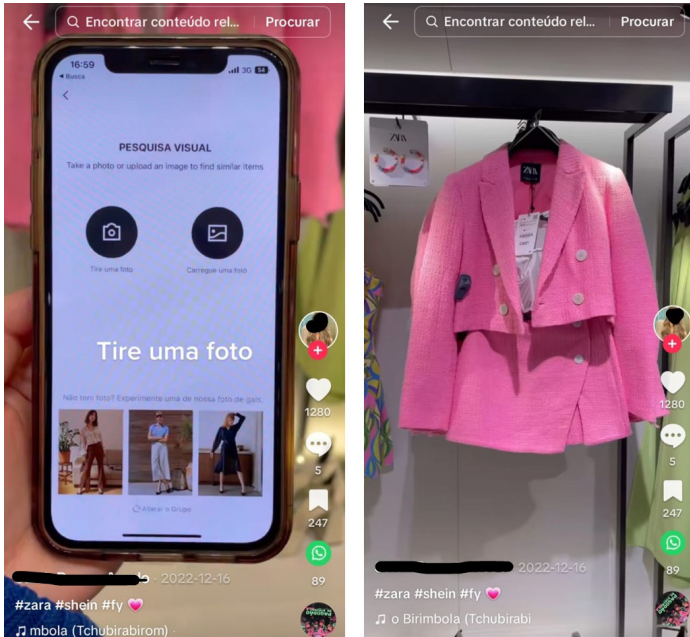
Source: TikTok: #zaraxshein.

The Shein app is full of merchandise, which makes it hard to find a specific item. You must spend a lot of time searching, which makes the process long and exhausting. For this reason, several consumer profiles on TikTok (we also identified this practice on Instagram) search for items and post them, providing their ID. In the case of Figure 1, the consumer shows how people can do this process themselves. All they need to do is go to a Zara store, open the Shein app, and take a photo of an item similar to the one they want to find.

Based on the image, the store's algorithm finds and presents an equivalent item at a much lower price. That shows that Shein has added a feature to its app to promote imitation fashion and collect information on the desire for items originating from luxury brands.

In the search for #zaraxshein, we selected the posts shown in Figures 3 and 4:

Figure 3 - Zara x Shein (a)
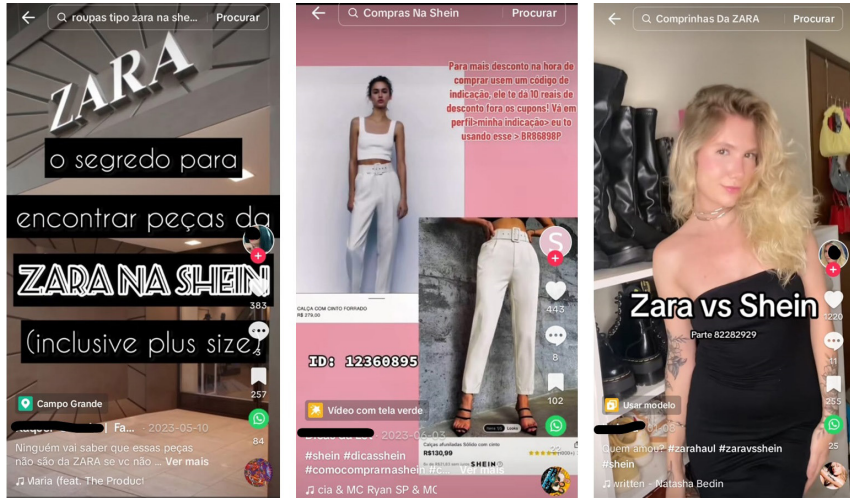
Source: TikTok: #zaraxshein.

Figure 4 - Zara x Shein (b)

Source: TikTok: #zaraxshein.

As Figure 4 shows, consumers act as disseminating agents of imitation fashion. The content produced has a "service provision" characteristic, helping others to find Zara-like items within the Shein app by always presenting its ID, as already mentioned. In some cases, there is also an exclusive discount coupon for the consumer who published the content.

Figure 5 - Dior x Shein
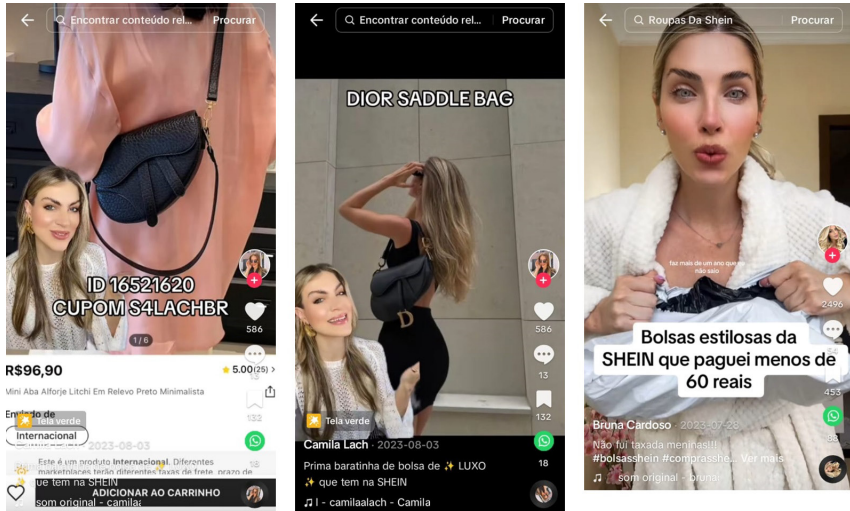
Source: TikTok: #diorxshein.

In the case of Dior, the consumer in Figure 4 presents, at the beginning of the post, the brand's Daddle Bag, which was wildly successful when it was launched, despite its price of R$6,000.00, becoming an object of desire. She then shows a similar piece on the Shein app for R$96.60. The speech uses language such as: "Look, if you love Dior and cannot afford a high investment like this, this bag is beautiful and could be a great option for you to rock."

Among other Dior replica products, one can find items such as lip gloss with metallic packaging almost identical to the original.

Finally, we present in Figure 5 an example of the Vans brand, which is a success among a younger public but whose prices are considered high.

Figure 6 - Vans x Shein
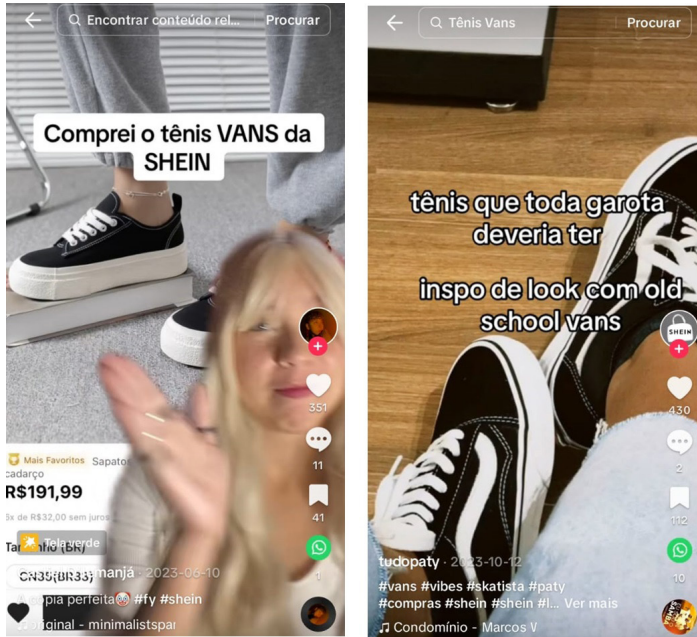
Source: TikTok: #vansxshein.

In this case, the consumer introduces her content with the phrase: "I bought Vans sneakers from Shein." In another publication, the call to action encourages other consumers, saying, "sneakers that every girl should have." Even though "Vans sneakers from Shein" are not so similar, given the brand is highly sought after and has launched a model with a higher sole, it becomes an alternative for temporary use.

From the examples presented, it is clear that Shein consumers produce and publish a large volume of content on the TikTok app to disseminate imitation products of desired original brands. This content production reinforces how consumers publicize imitation fashion themselves in an attempt not only to consume but also to obtain benefits such as progressive discounts on future purchases, visibility, and a false sense of "service provision" in the sense of showing that it is possible to consume fashion and trends from replica pieces at a lower cost. Here,

we adopt an interpretive stance on the statements in the publications, taking the author's subjectivity.

Therefore, TikTok has become a place for promoting replica products, mainly published by individuals with a high follower count. That said, we understand the data collected represents a small portion of the practice but can show how this phenomenon has been gaining ground in these environments.

The institutionalization of imitation fashion

Based on the results found in searches using the hashtags provided, we understand that the institutionalization of imitation fashion consumption occurs not only through the construction of meanings, especially that of belonging in the symbolic universe of piracy (PEREZ; TRINDADE, 2013), but also through interactions between users who act as true prospectors – first on the websites of established stores, such as Zara to identify trend pieces and then on the Shein app to find similar pieces as a way of "providing a service" to other consumers.

The consumption of imitation fashion reinforces new rituals and, therefore, the idea of consumption based on the production of desire (CURTIS, 2013) and places consumers in an even more complex network "that involves agents that arouse, instigate, and foster their desires," giving way to the production of intangible goods that bring with them a sense of belonging. In the same sense, the consumption of a brand that represents significant and mediatized values related to sustainability attributes to those who consume it its values and the status associated with then (TRINDADE; ZIMMERMANN; MEIRA, 2019).

In October 2023, an article published in *Estadão* reported a little about the behavior of some Shein and Shopee (a similar store) consumers. Through these people's reports, it is possible to identify the power of influence these stores have over their customers. For example, we present some phrases from people who say they are "addicted" to buying from these stores: "I couldn't sleep anymore." "When it arrived, I didn't even remember I had bought it." "I bought more when I was depressed."

"You start to see what it's like. You buy a cheap thing just to test it out, and it starts contaminating you." "There are special offers in the early morning hours. I've gone three days without sleeping" (CUNHA, 2023).

The practices of these stores, especially Shein, have reached the potential for recurring purchases. Adding new products to the app every week creates a feeling of novelty that people interpret as a must have. From this behavior, we resort to the question that Clotilde Perez (2020) asks in her work *Há limites para o consumo?* According to Perez (2020 p. 62):

> Contemporary brands have learned ways of seduction to appease the hedonistic dimension that we all have with their offers, and the moment of purchase in its ritualistic form is privileged. [...] People can be manipulated by the persuasive action of advertising and brands. However, they are capable of unimaginable appropriations by engineers, designers, or advertisers. It is in everyday life that consumer relations are truly established (PEREZ, 2020).

In this sense, we understand the consumption of imitation fashion, even when involved in algorithmic logic and the practices of companies and consumers, occurs due to the desire to belong to social groups in everyday interactions.

Considerations

Based on the analysis presented, we conclude that the institutionalization of imitation fashion, which occurs through the consumption of replicas of premium brands, is enhanced by Shein's *modus operandi*, which in turn is supported by algorithmic processes but is also accompanied by trends and low prices, most often driven by discount practices, influencers, and novelty. Thus, imitation products from a brand translate into status the same institutional rites as legitimate products from the same brand.

Consumers understand this practice as a benefit of helping each other, allowing them to find a piece easily at the time of purchase through

published content and, when purchasing the desired product, pay a lower price (due to Shein's policy and the discounts).

This phenomenon promotes the idea of personal prominence in the social environment using goods similar to those of premium brands. This fact differs from the previous processes of fashion consumption based on the differentiation of social classes (SANTAELLA, 2023).

Due to its characteristic of being a high-end but low-cost product, imitation favors the social inclusion of individuals who seek to be fashionable and within their means. In other words, "I didn't spend a fortune to be trendy."

The article shows that consumption practices embedded in the algorithmic logic of apps and consumer interactions constitute the institutionalization of imitation fashion consumption: "Use my coupon and get a discount!"

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The constructed and constructive experience: journalistic framing of the "day of fire" in the Amazon

A experiência construída e construtora: enquadramento jornalístico do "dia do fogo" na Amazônia

Thaís Braga
Sandra Marinho

Resumo: *Objetiva-se identificar quais foram os quadros de sentido (frames) construídos pelo discurso jornalístico sobre o "dia do fogo" na Amazônia, bem como compreender de que maneira a experiência dos jornalistas contribuiu para o processo de enquadramento (framing). Com base em Goffman (1974), entende-se que os quadros de sentido são os elementos básicos que os indivíduos conseguem identificar. A análise incidiu em 121 textos publicados pelos jornais Folha de S.Paulo (Brasil) e Público (Portugal). Os resultados mostraram que, em ambos os periódicos, foram construídos quadros de conflito, de responsabilidade, de interesse humano e de consequências econômicas. Ainda que, do ponto de vista editorial, o caso tenha sido tratado de forma "nacional" pela Folha de S. Paulo e de forma "internacional" pelo Público, os dois (estrangeiros à sua forma) evidenciaram as faltas do presidente Jair Bolsonaro na resolução do problema ambiental.*

Palavras-chave: *Construção jornalística; Análise de enquadramento; Amazônia; Folha de S.Paulo; Público.*

Abstract: *The article aims to identify which frames were constructed by the journalistic discourse about the "day of fire" in the Amazon, as well as to understand how the journalists' experience added to the framing. Based on Goffman*

(1974), it is understood that frames are the basic elements that individuals can identify. The analysis focused on 121 texts published by the newspapers Folha de S.Paulo (Brazil) and Público (Portugal). The results showed that both constructed frames of conflict, accountability, human interest, and economic consequences. Even though, from an editorial point of view, the case was handled in a "national" way by Folha de S. Paulo and in an "international" way by Público, both (foreign in their own way) highlighted the faults of President Jair Bolsonaro in solving the environmental problem.

Keywords: *Journalistic construction; Framing analysis; Amazon; Folha de S.Paulo; Público.*

Introduction

In August, 2019, images of the Amazon on fire circulated among the Portuguese-Brazilian society. Unlike the forest fires in Pedrógão Grande, Portugal (2017), or the fire season in Australia (2019-2020), the intentional nature of the fires and president Jair Bolsonaro's (2019-2022) apparent encouragement of deforestation in the Amazon have made the case unique – known as the "day of fire" (MAISONNAVE, 2019). Based on journalistic discourse, we intend to identify and discuss the construction process of the frames about the "day of fire", as well as to understand in which way the journalists' experience contributed to the framing.

In dialogue with Goffman (1974), it is possible to notice that this is a type of framing that overlays different objects and practices, fitting them into an ordered structure. In this way, the frames determine the reasonableness of the statements and communicative processes. Because of its communicative power, journalistic discourse allows us to examine not only the practices and routines of news production, but also the relationship between journalism and society, in addition to the powers that act in this relationship (CARLSON et al., 2018). Therefore, in an broader sense, we are interested in understanding the vision of the Portuguese-Brazilian society about the Amazon, considering the interests that permeate this undestanding.

We start from the notion that a given public event (which will be the object of public attention) results from a discursive construction by the media. The process takes place by means of an "operational network" (HILGARTNER; BOSK, 1988, cit. por NEVEU et al., 1997, p. 14), understood as "the means through which 'problems'are able to access the media and the consecration of the social status of the event [which is at the origin of the problem]". This implies the existence of "more or less institutionalized interelationships between specialists in a given type of problem (health, environment etc.) within different social arenas (journalism, government, associations, companies etc.)" (NEVEU et al.,

1997, p.14). Thus, rather than discussing the production of the frames based on an "event", we will discuss it based on a "public problem".

This perspective is articulated, in our view, with the idea of the news "as an inherently dynamic entity, shaped in a social environment" (PAUL; BERKOWITZ, 2019, p. 1). Therefore, "the formation and personal experience of a journalist, the organization of the workplace and the interactions with society in general during a period of time affect the construction of the news" (PAUL; BERKOWITIZ, 2019, p. 1).

We have chosen to analyze the "day of fire" through the newspapers *Folha de S.Paulo* (Brazil) and *Público* (Portugal). Despite their different socio-historic and political-institutional contexts, both claim to be committed to democracy, the rule of law and human rights (CARVALHO; DÁVILA, 2020). Furthermore, both newspapers are references in the daily publications segment in their respective countries; therefore, their discursive productions provide clues about Portuguese-Brazilian society.

The article begins with a theoretical-experimetal positioning regarding the framing process. Next, we explain the methodological procedures and, finally, we present and discuss the work's results. For media and journalism studies, the effective contribution of the analysis developed here consists of explaining the stages for discursive analysis. The criticism that the methods for finding the frames are illusory is valid, since they refer to a set of approaches of a deductive nature (VLIEGENTHART; VAN ZOONEN, 2011). However, the innovation lies in examining the construction of news considering the interests that permeate journalistic practices and routines, as well as the experience of professsionals involved in the case.

Furthermore, the framing provides clues about the transformations experienced by newspapers that traditionally produce print editions, as well as their strategies of news production – especially in the face of digital media. Even though the "day of fire" has been discussed in previous works, through the framing analysis, it is possible to add another layer of comprehension to the case, since the Amazon has strategic importance in curbing climate change and is the target of a symbolic international dispute.

The frames and the framing: a theoretical-experimental path

In sociological literature, the framing concept makes strong assumptions about the individual cognitive processes, that is, the structuring of cognitive representations and the theoretical orientation of information processing (PAN; KOSICKI, 1993). This understanding is useful to Communication Sciences, as it helps to understand in which way people interpret their life experiences and give meaning to the world around them (SCHEUFELE; TEWKSBURY, 2007).

França's (2002) definition of experience is recurrent – a word that, etymologically, comes from Latin (from the noun *experientia* and the verb *experire*). According to the author, the sense of experience highlights the nature of practice, action and experience, that is, a practice developed by someone, by a person who is in the world, that experiences the world, that lives it through senses. The process occurs not only from cognitive structures, but also by means of prior knowledge, of references – that which Goffman (1974) called frames, that is, the elaboration of situations according to the organization principles that govern social events and subjective engagement in them; the basic elements that one is able to identify; the organization of experience.

In the sociologist's definition, in order to efficiently process new information, individuals apply primary schemes to classify and interpret it in a meaningful way. The primary schemes of a given social group are the central elements of the culture. In other words, they are its beliefs, its "cosmology". Any situation that is not managed based on this traditional stock will cause public unrest. Therefore, language becomes the place where experience is realized.

Starting with Entman (1993), the frames began to be seen as a central idea that underlies and orients the construction of texts and, in short, the discursive construction of reality. For the author, the framing involves the selection of some aspects of a perceived reality in order to make these aspects more evident in a communication text. This means making information more perceptible, meaningful or memorable to the

public in order to promote the definition of a specific problem, the diagnosis of its cause, its moral evaluation and/or the reccomendation of solutions.

Journalists use their repertoire of frames to build a news story; therefore, organizational factors, external conditions and journalistic sources can influence the selection of a frame (VAN GORP, 2010). Each reconstructed frame is presented by a frame package, that is, by an integrated structure of framing devices. Thus, a logic chain of reasoning devices demonstrates how the frame represents a given problem.

Some examples of framing devices are metaphors, historic situations from which lessons are learned, catchphrases, visual representations and images, themes and subthemes, types of actors, actions and settings, lines of reasoning and causal connections, contrasts, lexical choices, information sources, quantifications and statistics, tables and graphs, and appeals (emotional, logical and ethical). Coleman (2010) adds that visual messages (photographs, moving images, maps, graphs, drawings and colors) and verbal messages (texts) take place at the same time in the media and the public processes them simultaneously. Therefore, framing also refers to the selection of a view, scene or angle when producing the image, cropping it, editing it or selecting it.

De Vreese (2005) states that the potential of framing resides in understanding how the frames emerge (or are constructed) and in defining these frames (the interaction between media frames and audience predispositions). In general, in Communication Sciences, framing analysis adopt two perspectives: that of the means of social communication (media frames) and/or that of the public/audience (audience frames). It is possible, according to Scheufele (1999), to encompass two dimensions: between-level, which define media framing at a macroscopic level and audience framing at a microscopic level, conjecturing potential relationships between them; and within-level, conceptualizing media framing and audience framing separately as independent and dependent variables. Often, one of these three processes is examined:

- frame-building, which highlights the factors that interfere in the structural quality of the news, such as social norms and values, organizational constraints and pressures, pressures from the groups of interest, journalistic routines and political-ideological orientations of journalists;
- frame-setting, which refers to the interaction between media framing (independent variable) and prior knowledge and the predispositions of individuals (dependent variable), admitting that news framing may affect learning, interpretation and evaluation of problems and events;
- individual-level consequences of framing, which can be observed in the change of attitude of an individual towards a problem, when exposed to a given media framing.

In line with the question that guides this article, which fits into the perspective of media framing, this study will be limited to observing and analyzing the construction of frames about the "day of fire" in the Amazon in order to perceive the understanding of Portuguese-Brazilian society about the case, as well as the interests underliying this vision.

Methodological procedures

Case studies are in-depth, comparative researches, that must be able to capture other elements of the larger context, without necessarily being representative of it (OROZCO; GONZÁLEZ, 2012). In this work, it is admitted that the "day of fire" represents a case that is illustrative of the journalistic production on an environmental problem, which is the deforestation of the world's greatest tropical forest, of transnational dimension. Although it is not possible to make generalizations, we expect to find clues regarding the power relations that permeate the social construction of the biome.

The choice of newspapers *Folha de S.Paulo* and *Público* is justified because it is understood that the Amazon represents the other, which is physically and temporally distant not only from Europe and Latin

America, but also from the political-economic Brazilian centers. In Paes Loureiro (1995), it is clear that the difficulty of accessing the Amazon, imposed by the rivers and the forest, has consolidated its two main social characteristics, which are isolation and identity (given the predominance of indigenous and caboclo peoples). Therefore, it is admitted that both periodicals characterize a foreign view.

Through a non-probabilistic sampling process for typical cases[1], we selected journalistic texts about the "day of fire" published on the websites of newspapers *Folha de S.Paulo* and *Público* between August 2019 and October 2020, which allowed the creation of a corpus with 60 texts from the Brazilian newspaper and 61 texts from the Portuguese newspaper. An analysis grid was applied, which allowed for the identification of the journalists who produced texts about the case under study. From then on, we created a sample of interviwees[2]: journalist Phillippe Watanabe and editorial secretary Vinícius Mota, from *Folha de S.Paulo*; journalist Ricardo Cabral Fernandes and the university professor and journalist Joaquim Fidalgo, who provided information about *Público*. With the four interviewees, we conducted semi-structured in-depth interviews via Skype (due to the limitations imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic). As a data collection technique, this type of interview allows us to understand social reality through discourse, considering a specific time and socio-historical context (FRASER; GONDIM, 2004).

In order to operationalize the framing analysis, we followed the guidelines of Linström and Marais (2012), which begin with the deductive selection of the typology of frames followed by precise descriptions that specify the phenomena of interest. The results were gathered after two readings of the journalistic texts (the first reading, to describe their

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1   It is important not to confuse the fact that the "day of fire" is characterized as a case study, as it represents a reality, and that newspapers *Folha de S.Paulo* and *Público* are typical cases of journalistic productions, as they allow us to analyze this case.
2   The content of these interviews was not subject to content analysis. The information provided by the journalists was useful because it helped to elucidate the process of constructing journalistic discourse and, consequently, of the framings. This is the reason why we first analyzed the news and then conducted the interviews.

discursive characteristics, according to the analysis grid; the second reading, to identify the frames).

The framings about the "day of fire" in the Amazon: results

In this study case, based on Valkenburg *et al.* (1999), four types of frames were recognized in the journalistic texts about the "day of fire" in the Amazon:

- conflict frames, which emphasized the disputes over power and meaning between people or institutions involved in the "day of fire";
- human interest frames, which presented an emotional or humanized angle of the Amazon forest fires, in order to personalize or dramatize the news;
- accountability frames, which highlighted the guilt or negligence of people or institutions regarding the "day of fire";
- economic consequences frame, which discussed the financial losses that Brazil and the world could suffer if the Amazon forest continued to be destroyed.

In *Folha de S.Paulo*, the conflict frames presented different points of view about the "day of fire". According to those responsible for the forest fires ("loggers, farmers and businessmen"), the initiative to burn part of the Amazon forest in one single day was a way of showing president Jair Bolsonaro that "they wanted to work". The discursive confrontation was established when this perspective was questioned by scientists. The conflict frames became more complex when they incoporated the accusations made by president Jair Bolsonaro and his supporters: that non-governmental organizations (NGOs), indigenous peoples and small producers were truly responsible for the fires in the forest; that the fires were natural, due to the "dry climate" in the Amazon; that the National Institute for Space Research (INPE) had released false data on

deforestation in the Amazon aiming to damage the government's image; and that foreigners had "dubious interests" in the Amazon – this last accusation resulted from the criticism made mainly by French president Emmanuel Macron (2017-present) and by American actor Leonardo DiCaprio.

The accountability frames highlighted the increase in the number of fire outbreaks in the Amazon, and also showed that the environmental monitoring agencies – the Brazilian Institute of Environment and Renewable Natural Resources (IBAMA) and the Chico Mendes Institute of Biodiversity Conservation (ICMBio) – had been weakened since the beginning of the Bolsonaro government. This made it impossible to prevent alleged environmental crimes and to hold those involved accountable. Furthermore, the invocation of the Guarantee of Law and Order (GLO), provided for in the Brazilian Constitution, and the fire moratorium, as the presidential decree number 9.992/2019 became known, which prohibited the use of fire in the Legal Amazon for 60 days, were president Jair Bolsonaro's responses to the "day of fire". However, actions were taken late, only by the end of August. In line with the presidential stance, Brazil's then Minister of Justice and Public Security, Sérgio Moro, ordered an investigation into the case by Brazilian institutions.

The human interest frames highlighted that Brazilian and international artists drew attention to the forest fires in the Amazon through the social media platforms Twitter (currently, X) and Instagram (even though, in some cases, the images published by them did not truly refer to the "day of fire"). Google and Twitter metrics corroborated the interest of users in Brazil and around the world in the case. Also in this frame, it was highlighted how the fires in the Amazon affected the rituals in the *Japuíra* village of the *myky* people, in the *Menku* Indigenous Land, in Brasnorte, in the state of Mato Grosso; as well as the life of journalist Adécio Piran, who had to leave the town of Novo Progresso, in the state of Pará. Piran had anticipated the intentions of the farmers involved in

the "day of fire" through the newspaper *Folha do Progresso*. As a result, he received threats.

Finally, the economic consequences frame showed that the forest fires had damaged the hotel sector in the Amazon jungle. Also, that the suspension of financial transfers to the Amazon Fund, by Germany and Norway, made it difficult to continue environmental conservation policies. It was possible to notice that foreign investors were demanding that the Brazilian government combat environmental crimes and, especially, deforestation in the Amazon. We also identified Bolsonaro's government point of view, defended by the then Chief of |Staff, Onyx Lorenzoni, that it was necessary to "develop" indigenous lands and, thus, guarantee "better living conditions" for that population. To this end, it was necessary to regulate mining activity on indigenous lands in the state of Amazonas.

Figure 1 – Framings about the "day of fire" produced by *Folha de S.Paulo*.

Conflito	Responsabilidade	Interesse humano	Consequências econômicas
"Dia do fogo" como resposta dos fazendeiros a Bolsonaro	Ibama e ICMBio fragilizados por Bolsonaro	Comoção de artistas brasileiros e estrangeiros	Prejuízo para os hotéis de selva
Bolsonaro nega o aumento do desmatamento na Amazônia	GLO e moratória do fogo são as ações do governo	Repercussão nos *media* sociais (*Twitter*, *Instagram* e *Google*)	Fundo Amazônia suspenso
Ataque de Bolsonaro ao Inpe, ONG, Macron e DiCaprio	Investigações a pedido de Sérgio Moro	Aldeia indígena afetada pelo fogo	Cobrança dos investidores estrangeiros
		Ameaça à vida do jornalista Adécio Piran	Mineração em terras indígenas

Source: Own elaboration.

In the newspaper *Público*, the conflict frames emphasized the idea that the fires were spreading through the Amazon forest with no control

at all by the Brazilian government. The discursive confrontation was established due to the divergence between the French and Brazilian presidents, Macron and Bolsonaro. The former was acting through G7 to combat the Amazon fires, while the latter not only refused the help, but also insulted his counterpart. To a large extent, the exchange of accusations between the two leaders occured on Twitter. On the national scene, the clash between the Brazilian President and the governors of Legal Amazon was highlighted, as the latter were receptive to international financial aid.

The accusations by Bolsonaro, endorsed by then-Vice President Hamilton Mourão, that the NGOs and the rural producers in the Amazon were accountable for the fires; the Brazilian president's aggressive speech at the 74th and 75th General Assemblies of the United Nations (UN); the scientific reports that attested to the gravity of the increase in carbon gas emissions for the planet; Brazilian scientific projects halted due to lack of funding; and the video campaign by the Articulation Association of Indigenous Peoples of Brazil, which directly questioned the Bolsonaro government and the stance of European leaders and consumers in the face of the fires in the Amazon, consolidated the conflict frames in *Público*.

The accountability frames demonstrated what could be done, within the scope of citizenship, in order to reduce forest fires in the Amazon: signing on-line petitions, contributing financially with NGOs, participating in protests, reducing paper and wood consumption, as well as non-certified soybean oil and beef. The action of the Brazilian military to combat the fire in the Amazon was highlighted, as well as the Greenpeace protest, which intervened in front of the European Parliament headquarters, in Brussels. The initiative demanded that European leaders be more incisive with president Jair Bolsonaro so that he would not only control the fires in the Amazon, but also develop his policies regarding the environment. President Macron's articulation during the G7 meeting, in Biarritz, reinforced the accountability frame, as the fires

spread to different countries in the Pan-Amazon region, also threatening the French Guiana (a French overseas territory).

The human interest frames were perceived in the illustrations produced by the readers of *Público* (figure 2), which revealed particular views on the "day of fire" in the Amazon, as well as in the official statement by Portuguese presidente Marcelo Rebelo de Souza (2016-present); in the manifestation of Portuguese and international artists via Twitter and Instagram (in some cases, with images that were not related to the "day of fire" in the Amazon); and in the protests that took place in Porto and Lisbon.

Figure 2 – Illustrations sent by the readers to *Público* about the "day of fire"
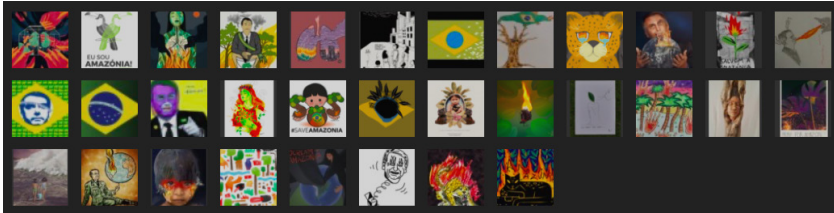
Source: *Público.*

Finally, the economic consequences frames warned of the possible non-conclusion of the trade agreement between the European Union (EU) and the Southern Common Market (Mercosul). Representatives from Finland, Ireland and France took advantage of the situation to demand clear guarantees that the Brazilian government was capable of controlling the fire in the Amazon, as well as showing respect for the independence of scientific-environmental agencies and indigenous peoples. However, part of this motivation aimed to protect domestic producers. Also highlighted was the possibility of transnational companies boycotting the purchase of Brazilian leather, because of its association with deforestation in the Amazon.

Figure 3 – Framings of the "day of fire" produced by *Público*.

Conflito	Responsabilidade	Interesse humano	Consequências econômicas
Fogos sem controle na Amazônia	Atuação cidadã	Ilustrações dos leitores	Acordo comercial entre UE e Mercosul sem conclusão
Divergências entre Bolsonaro e Macron, e entre Bolsonaro e os governadores brasileiros	Militares brasileiros na Amazônia	Pronunciamento de Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa	
Discurso agressivo de Bolsonaro na ONU e acusações contra os pequenos produtores	Cobrança da *Greenpeace* à Europa	Manifestação de artistas pelos *media* sociais (*Twitter* e *Instagram*)	Ameaça de boicote ao couro brasileiro
Alerta à Europa sobre o desmatamento na Amazônia	Articulação de Macron, por meio do G7	Protestos no Porto e em Lisboa	

Source: self-made.

Although the four types of frames were identified in both newspapers, it was noted that the conflict frames were predominant in *Folha de S. Paulo*, and the accountability frames predominated in *Público*. In the following section, we will discuss what these discursive constructions reveal about the "day of fire" and the power struggles in the Amazon.

Discussion of results

In the two selected periodicals the following frames of meaning were identified, according to the tipology proposed by Valkenburg *et al.* (1999): conflict frames, accountability frames, human interest frames and economic consequences frames. However, when comparing figure 1 and figure 3, it was noted that, in the Brazilian newspaper, the conflict frames were more elaborate, while in the Portuguese newspaper, accountability frames were priviledged. In line with our theoretical positioning, we believe that this difference can be understood based on the socio-historical and cultural environment in which each newspaper is inserted (DE VREESE, 2005; ENTMAN, 1993; SCHEUFELE,

1999; VAN GORP, 2010), as well as the experience of the journalists (FRANÇA, 2002; GOFFMAN, 1974) involved in the coverage of the "day of fire". Likewise, we assume that both newspapers reflect a "foreign" perspective (PAES LOUREIRO, 1995) on the theme under analysis – that is, they are geographically and emotionally distant, contrary to what could be expected from *Folha de S. Paulo* which, from the outset, would fulfill the news value of proximity.

As will be seen later, the difference between the frames of meaning can be elucidated based on a criterion according to which, for the Brazilian newspaper, the "day of fire" effectively highlighted (from an editorial point of view) a "national" issue, while for the Portuguese newspaper the issue was "international". It was understood that the conflict frame was predominant for *Folha de S. Paulo*, in the sense that this event/problem triggered, reinforced and prolonged the broader sociopolitical tension that permeated the country. This does not mean that the political dimension was absent from the accountability frame outlined by *Público*; however, it emerged associated with an international geopolitical context in which the Amazon is treated as a universal topic, which concerns everyone and which is everyone's responsibility. In other words, it is seen as a territory symbolically appropriated in a universal way.

Taking as a reference a merely quantitative indicator – the number of texts published by each newspaper – the discussion becomes more complex, since we have almost the same number (one more in *Público* – 61). This could mean, as discussed below, that the relevance given to Amazonian issues by the Brazilian newspaper is not superior or qualitatively different from the one given by the Portuguese newspaper – the same "foreign" perspective. On the other hand, one could argue that the numbers are close because issues related to the Amazon arouse international interest and, in Brazil's specific case, there is a particular interest on behalf of Portugal (this argument can be challanged, naturally, by bringing to comparison other newspapers from both countries and other geographic zones).

In this matter, we resort to Wu (2000) and Sakurai (2017), who identify economic and political power as systemic (external) determinants of the international flow of journalistic coverage: the greater the perceived political and economic power of a given country, the greater the probability of it being represented in the news production of another. Attesting to this possibility in the case under study would involve analyzing the economic interaction between Brazil and Portugal and determining how relevant this relationship is for the Portuguese. Nonetheless, the economy as a determinant does not limit itself to the trade balance: one must consider the cost of producing international news (WU, 2000) or geographically distant news (even when dealing with the same country). Therefore, it can be seen that news agencies (the size of their presence in each country) have emerged, for over 20 years, as the second biggest predictor, by making available certain themes and certain sources of information (WU, 2000).

The premise – to which we have already alluded – that Portuguese-Brazilian Society sees the Amazon as foreign, seemed to be confirmed, given the newspapers' practices and routines. At *Folha de S. Paulo*, Phillippe Watanabe was the journalist who produced the most articles about the case, however, he never visited the places affected by the forest fires. The Brazilian newspaper has a correspondent in the city of Manaus, journalist Fabiano Maisonnave – who was the author of the first text to be published about the case. In general, the information collected by Maisonnave was shared with the editorial headquarters, in São Paulo, and cross-referenced with data obtained from other sources, such as scientific institutions and INPE. The conflict frames were constructed based on a broader understanding of the national and international scenario. Due to the limitations of his activities (the journalist works with the investigation of raw information in the field, that is, he travels through the Amazon searching for data that the editorial office, in São Paulo, can not obtain), it is understood that Maisonnave was not the main journalist working on the case, although his contribution was decisive in *Folha de S. Paulo*'s framing.

The Brazilian newspaper's routine of journalistic production consolidated above all the conflict frames regarding the "day of fire", since, due to the emphasis on certain expressions ("the August fires", "international crisis" and "night in the city of São Paulo") and the recurring use of satellite images (which indicated the hot spots in the Amazon) and graphics (that annually recorded the total number of forest fires), it was possible to note that deforestation in the Amazon was being driven by anthropogenic factors – unlike what president Bolsonaro stated. However, the same dynamic corroborated the foreign perspective, since Watanabe, who has been working with scientific and environmental journalism since the beginning of his professional life, has never been to the Amazon. In fact, the journalist's experience is with scientific data on environmental issues, which is an essential background: interpreting data is very relevant, especially when dealing with scientific journalism. Nevertheless, contact with the physical world (a hallmark of journalistic reporting) is what brings numbers and scientific reports to life. According to Watanabe himself, he does not believe that it is necessary to leave São Paulo in order to understand the importance and the complexity of environmental problems, in addition to the fact that there is more security and infrastructure at the editorial headquarters.

Apparently, the Amazon rainforest is still seen as a territory to be explored – isolated and with its own identity (PAES LOUREIRO, 1995). According to editorial secretary Vinícius Mota (who admits that *Folha de S. Paulo*'s audience is not in the Amazon), the costs of practicing journalism in this part of Brazil are high. In order to reduce expenses, the newspaper tries to maintain correspondents throughout the country. In the case of the "day of fire", the correspondents' work was particularly reflected in the human interest frames, as it emphasized the consequences of the alleged environmental crime for indigenous peoples and for journalist Adécio Piran. In accordance with the "cost-benefit" logic, the Brazilian periodical tries to establish partnerships, especially for the acquisition of images. In the case under study, most of the photographs were provided by the *Reuters* news agency. Figure 4, for example, was

repeatedly used in texts. Among the possible meanings, the contrast between light and dark reinforces the conflict frame, that is, the opposition between the alleged criminals (supported by President Bolsonaro) and the defenders of the Amazon forest – as the fire invades a site that is not natural to it and does not stop until it burns everything, deep into the night.

Figure 4 – The *Reuters* agency provided most of the photographs on the "day of fire".

REUTERS/UESLEI MARCELINO

Source: *Folha de S.Paulo.*

At *Público*, although the newspaper had journalists specializing in environmental issues, the case was covered by the international editorial team, at the time called "Mundo", without calling them into action. Most of the texts about the "day of fire" were signed in a generic way ("*PÚBLICO*") and/or by the *Lusa* news agency, since *Público* did not send a journalist to the location of the event. According to journalist Ricardo Cabral Fernandes, who worked temporarily at the periodical between June 2019 and August 2020, this occured because many journalists were

on vacation during the time of the forest fires. In Cabral Fernandes' opinion, due to the lack of particular events in Portugal and the summer holidays, it was possible to cover the case from a distance, without the need to reorganize the team or to reallocate journalists specializing in the environment – which stregthened the construction of the account-ability and human interest frames. It should be noted that, during the same period, there were forest fires in Portugal, however, the scale and the alleged criminal bias of the "day of fire" may have been the rea-son why the Brazilian case was more extensively covered by *Público*. In other words, this was a process of news construction marked by the dependence on information from the agencies (WU, 2000) and, from the organizational point of view, by decisions to allocate resorces, in a context where they are scarce (KIM, 2003).

Although international news is important to *Público*, researcher and journalist Joaquim Fidalgo (who actively participated in the founding of the periodical) corroborates that, traditionally, there is no editorial orientation to pay special attention to what goes on in the former Por-tuguese colony, nor in the outskirts of Brazil, Where the Amazon forest is located. The newspaper is more interested in what is happening in the other European centers and in the USA. The increasing Brazilian immigration[3] to Portugal certainly leads the periodical to report more in Brazilian contemporary times, but still without a socio-historical understanding.

This analysis seems to meet the perspective of Sakurai (2017), who recognizes the relevance of cultural aspects in the flow of international news – namely the sharing of a "language" and "colonial ties"; howev-er, he argues that these dimensions end up being diluted by the most important determinants: economic interest, the political factor and the interests of the news agencies. This may explain the perception that *Público* is more interested in the European context. Furthermore, "the

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3   Dados de 2022 do Serviço de Estrangeiros e Fronteiras apontam que, dos 781.915 imigran-tes regulares em Portugal, os brasileiros representam a maior comunidade: 239.774 pessoas (30,7% do total de estrangeiros). Ver: https://www.sef.pt/pt/Documents/RIFA2022%20vF2a.pdf.

dominance of the 'Big Four' news agencies [AP, UPI, AFP and Reuters] allows the United States, France and Great Britain to establish their hegemonic spheres of international influence (SAKURAI, 2017, p. 4).

The lack of in-depth reporting was noted in the case of *Público* due to generic repetitions, such as "The Amazon is the largest tropical rainforest in the world and has the greatest biodiversity recorded in a single area of the planet" (*LUSA; PÚBLICO*, 2019), as well as misunderstandings, such as the metaphor of the Amazon as the "lungs of the world". According to Oliveira (1991), the origin of this erroneous view goes back to an interview given by German biologist Harald Sioli, in 1971, in which the reporter changed the symbol for carbon dioxide (CO_2) for the symbol of oxygen (O_2). What should have been absorption of the latter was understood as absortion of the ladder. Thus, the Amazon became the "lungs of the world", but the forest's potential is to fix carbon dioxide, so the correct association should have been "filter of the world". The perspective of a specialized journalist would certainly have helped to avoid the spread of less precise understandings, from a scientific point of view.

Each in their own way, *Folha de S. Paulo* and *Público* recognized the importance of the Amazon in curbing climate change, but the efforts to understand the biome beyond its natural characteristics were hampered by financial costs. It is important to highlight the unequal forces that act in the social construction of environmental problems. The voice of the "other", which is physically and temporally distant from the major poltical-economic centers of Brazil and Europe has less visibility in the social dialogue, that is, it is not the center of the issue. In this case study, it was noted that the social side of the Amazon (that is, the people who live there and who are probably the most vulnerable to environmental crimes) were presented through "human interest", that is, by the most peripheral places, from the framing point of view.

Conclusions

This article aimed to identify the frames regarding the "day of fire" constructed by two newspapers from different geographies – *Público* and

Folha de S. Paulo – and to understand in which way the journalists' experience contributed to the framing process. This was done to reach a broader understanding of the Portuguese-Brazilian perspective (with due limitations and without generalizations) on the Amazon. In both newspapers we noted conflict frames, accountability frames, human interest frames and economic consequence frames. The practices and work routines, as well as the journalists' involvement in the case, contributed to the consolidation of two foreign perspectives on the Amazon – even though, from an editorial point of view, the case was treated in a "national" way by *Folha de S. Paulo* and in an "international" way by *Público*.

For the Brazilian newspaper, correspondents and partners (such as news agencies) were strategic in order to reduce expenses of journalistic production in this part of Brazil, in the same way that the experience of the main journalist involved in the "day of fire" (Watanabe) contributed to the revelation of the political and economic – not just environmental – and international tension triggered by the Bolsonaro government. For the Portuguese newspaper, the news agencies were equally essential (*Lusa* above all), given the lack of resources to send reporters to the Amazon. However, some editorial organization would be required in order to understand the political-economic and social nuances surrounding the Amazon forest – which could avoid the repetition of traditional mistakes, such as the metaphor of the "lungs of the world".

In concrete terms, this work contributes to media and journalism studies in three aspects. The first one refers to the professional field, since it was noted that the production of news, especially those that involve hard-to-reach places, such as the Amazon, is directly related to organizational determinants (internal to the periodicals). However, there is a differential regarding the experience of journalists – so much so that *Público* was able to draw attention to the "day of fire" although it seemed to be more limited (in terms of human resources) than *Folha de S. Paulo*. This shows that public problems tend to be better investigated and communicated when the professionals are better trained – which

implies not only better qualification (initial, but also in service), but also better gross pay and adequate financial resources (which translates into time to investigate, funds for travelling etc.). The issue is beyond the scope of this work, but it is a subject for future researches.

The second aspect resides in the theoretical-methodological sphere, since the applicability of framing as a discursive technique in the comprehension of complex empirical phenomena was demonstrated. It is possible to use it separately, as in this study, or together with other qualitative techniques, such as the narrative analysis. From this second aspect comes the third contribution of this work, which is a social one. When identifying the frames of meaning surrounding the "day of fire", as well as understanding the framing processes by newspapers *Folha de S. Paulo* and *Público*, the serious problems in the management of the Amazon were highlighted – both from the internal point of view, and as a universally appropriated territory.

For the Portuguese-Brazilian Society, the issues of the biome are not restricted to Brazil, especially because carbon dioxide emissions (due to deforestation) affect the entire planet. Therefore, there is an expectation – particularly from the international community – that the top leader of the country that is home to much of the largest tropical rainforest in the world will adopt positions and policies that are consistent with such responsibility, not only in controlling an environmental crisis, but above all in a real commitment to sustainable development. By highlighting how the performance by President Jair Bolsonaro (in the case of the "day of fire") not only failed to meet that expectation but also positioned him in a conflict frame, this work reinforces the role of journalism as a pillar of democracy (only informed citizens will be able to make informed and free choices), as a watchdog, and guarantor of accountability on the part of political power.

Authors' contributions

The authors participated equally in the conception and design stages of the work; data acquisition, analysis or interpretation; writing of the manuscript and critical revision of the intellectual content.

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A R T I G O

El placer de la agencia. Nuevos motivos visuales de la protesta juvenil en Chile 2012-2015[1]

The pleasure of agency. New visual motifs of the youth protest in Chile 2012-2015

Oscar Aguilera
Marcela Saa Espinoza

Resumen: *La visualidad de la protesta juvenil chilena es analizada a partir de fotografías ganadoras del concurso FOTOPRENSA que premia las mejores imágenes de cada año. Desde ellas sostenemos que asistimos al surgimiento de un énfasis emocional en las imágenes de la protesta que va a involucrar a actores sociales diversos: activistas juveniles, productores de imágenes y analistas socio-culturales. Esto va a decantar en un énfasis narrativo y motivo visual específico: el goce, disfrute y placer que constituye la protesta y las luchas sociales. Este giro visual, del canon épico-heroico al placer de la agencia, es resultado tanto de los cambios en los repertorios de protesta juvenil como de las propias prácticas fotoperiodísticas: unos y otros agentes, movimientos sociales y reporteros gráficos, elaboran en interacción un marco narrativo y cultural desde el cual pensar las protestas sociales contemporáneas.*

Palabras Claves: *Movimientos juveniles; fotoperiodismo; motivos visuales*

Introducción

El papel que tienen los más jóvenes en la sociedad está íntimamente vinculado a la representación visual que se hace de ellos. En este artículo reflexionamos sobre la función que tienen las imágenes fotográficas en la producción de la visibilidad de la protesta juvenil, a partir del análisis de los motivos visuales de la protesta en Chile y de las transformaciones que se vislumbran en las nuevas prácticas de producción fotoperiodística. Para cumplir este objetivo, estudiamos tres fotografías ganadoras de los premios de fotoperiodismo en Chile entre los años 2012-2015.

El Salón Nacional de Fotoperiodismo, conocido actualmente como *Fotoprensa*, es organizado desde 1950 por la Unión de Reporteros Gráficos y Camarógrafos. Se trata del certamen de fotografía periodística más antiguo de Sudamérica, y uno de los más longevos a nivel mundial, y en el que los propios pares eligen las mejores fotografías de cada año en un conjunto diverso de categorías. De allí que hemos optado por analizar las fotografías ganadoras de la categoría prensa entre los años 2012-2015, marco temporal del ciclo de movilización y protesta que remeció al país y que tuvo como características principales ampliar las dimensiones simbólicas, visuales y comunicacionales de las luchas sociales. Se trata de tres fotografías que circularon ampliamente por medios de comunicación masiva, tanto en versiones impresas como online para redes sociales, y fueron tomadas por fotoperiodistas que trabajan en medios de comunicación, agencias internacionales y plataformas alternativas de periodismo.

Como antecedente visual, es importante entender la práctica de la visualidad de la protesta juvenil en un espectro histórico más amplio. Si en la primera mitad del siglo XX los movimientos juveniles y la vinculación de la juventud con la política no van a contar con una visualidad propia que les acompañe, a partir de los años 60 observaremos una transformación importante (AGUILERA; SAA, 2022). En el caso específico de Chile, surgirá una importante visualidad sobre la juventud inscrita en medios de comunicación tradicionales y asociativos cuya principal forma iconológica se inscribió en una narrativa de militancia

y compromiso sociopolítico marcada por la heroicidad y la épica del sufrimiento. Estas imágenes, por su peso representacional, constituirán el *primer giro visual* de la protesta juvenil en Chile (AGUILERA, 2018).

El desarrollo de esta visualidad propia, anclada en un régimen de discurso vinculado al heroísmo, tendrá como figura central al militante (masculino) entregado cien por cien a la causa (y por tanto, alejado de las distracciones cotidianas) y donde los afectos y emociones no aparecen como marca visual. A partir de las imágenes que se analizan en este artículo, observamos indicios de transformaciones en el campo de la visualidad y los motivos visuales, la práctica profesional del fotoperiodismo y respecto a la propia agencia de los movimientos juveniles. Sostenemos que las fotografías seleccionadas constituyen una posibilidad narrativa alternativa al encuadre clásico sobre la protesta estudiantil y permiten ir más allá del cliché representacional de la protesta como enfrentamiento entre actores claramente identificados. Asimismo, escapa a la imagen panorámica de una multitud en movimiento, para concentrarse en detalles y tiene como resultado un lenguaje propio de parte de sus autores en un nuevo contexto cultural de relevancia de la imagen para los movimientos sociales.

I. Perspectiva histórica y conceptual

I.1. Ciclo de movilización y protesta juvenil en Chile

El año 2006 se produjo en Chile una masiva movilización estudiantil que sacudió las estructuras políticas y sociales, fue nombrada *la revolución pingüina* y tuvo como protagonistas a estudiantes de enseñanza secundaria y una cantidad importante de estudiantes de primaria: niños, niñas y jóvenes que en términos de edad se encontraban entre los 11 y 18 años. Los antecedentes de este proceso de movilización se encuentran en la reconfiguración del movimiento estudiantil secundario, por una parte, y la despolitización general y progresiva que se produjo en la sociedad chilena desde el retorno a la democracia (1990).

Detenernos en este hito es fundamental, pues aquí se configuró una generación (MANNHEIM, 1993), es decir, un conjunto de jóvenes que experimentan un intenso proceso de activismo y socialización política, y a partir del cual se proyectarán hacia el futuro. Son estos *jóvenes pingüinos* quienes protagonizarán años más tarde otro momento agudo de movilización social conocido como *la primavera chilena*; esta vez, estudiantes universitarios que mantuvieron paralizadas y ocupadas las Universidades públicas todo el año académico 2011. A su vez, será este mismo conjunto generacional el que estará, mayoritariamente, tras las movilizaciones del mayo feminista el 2018 y el estallido social de octubre de 2019.

En síntesis, se trata de un período inscrito en lo que hemos denominado un ciclo de movilización y politización (AGUILERA, 2012, MUÑOZ & DURAN, 2021). Al calor de este proceso, se fueron socializando políticamente sucesivas cohortes de edad y no tan solo jóvenes, se ensayaron y probaron nuevas formas de visibilizar el conflicto y construir narrativamente su legitimidad, dinamizando un proceso de reconfiguración de la subjetividad política en el contexto de una sociedad altamente neoliberalizada y con una fuerte presencia de sectores conservadores.

I.2. Repertorios de movilización juvenil

Una de las dimensiones más relevadas de este ciclo de movilización hayan sido las formas de visibilizar y expresar la protesta. Los estudios de los movimientos sociales y las formas de acción colectiva han insistido desde hace décadas en que lo expresivo, la forma en que aparece ante nosotros una colectividad contenciosa, las estéticas que condensan pertenencias y modos de vincularse desde el movimiento con la sociedad, y las batallas por controlar la narrativa, es decir, lo que se dice a propósito de ellos y sus acciones, son elementos centrales del estudio de la política y la protesta (MELUCCI, 1999; KLANDERMANS,1994; entre otros). Para el caso de Chile, tal importancia ha sido relevada previamente (CARDENAS, 2016; PAREDES et al, 2018; ORTIZ, 2019), pero aquí quisiéramos detenernos más específicamente en el papel que

la comunicación y su sistema de flujos, intercambios y medios, tiene en la configuración y visibilización de la protesta

Desde el abordaje específico que proponemos -la visualidad de la protesta-, extendemos la noción de repertorio al campo de la comunicación y sus luchas y con ello ampliamos su potencia analítica hacia los modos de disputar que se ponen en marcha. La noción de repertorios de protesta alude a "un conjunto limitado de rutinas aprendidas, compartidas y actuadas a través de un proceso de elección relativamente deliberado" (TILLY, 2002, p.31). No se trata de otra área de conflicto, sino de incorporar centralmente a la analítica contenciosa la disputa de la imagen y la posibilidad de incidir en la narrativa. Esto supone politizar la comunicación y mediatizar el conflicto. Tal como sostiene CARDENAS (2016), esta operación implica,

> (…) avanzar a través de dos constructos teóricos: desde los repertorios de acción política a los repertorios de interacción comunicativa. Dicho transito sugiere, al menos como tentativa inicial, un subsecuente desplazamiento desde las estructuras de oportunidades políticas a las estructuras de oportunidades mediáticas. (p.96)

Ya desde el 2006 los analistas de la comunicación comenzaron a vislumbrar el papel que las nuevas tecnologías de la información tendrían en la producción, sostenibilidad y comunicabilidad de la *revolución pingüina* y posteriormente de *la primavera chilena* del 2011 (CABALIN, 2014; SHERMAN et al., 2013), y es que los movimientos juveniles del siglo XXI surgen en este ecosistema mediático y tecnológico, se incorporan a la vida social y sus conflictos desde esas coordenadas subjetivas. Por lo tanto, narrar, documentar, fotografiar, como operaciones culturales de esta época, devienen prácticas de lucha que (re) crean unas oportunidades mediáticas para los propios movimientos y sus protestas.

I.3. Agencia, juventud e imágenes

Concebir la comunicación y la visualidad como repertorios del movimiento juvenil tensiona el modo en que hemos considerado a la

comunicación, sus procesos y sus medios, visibilizando las imágenes y representaciones como dimensiones específicas. De allí que para comprender las imágenes y particularmente las fotografías de la protesta juvenil recurramos a la perspectiva de MITCHELL (2009) para quien la «propia representación es un actor más» (p. 362). No se trata solamente de la voluntad del fotógrafo y el retratado, existe una trama tecnológica-económica que sostiene estas imágenes y saberes y prácticas profesionales a la base, así como cánones representacionales disponibles para épocas y contextos que conllevan estéticas y límites a la propia representación.

Diferentes imágenes, y no solo fotográficas han acompañado la visualidad de la juventud y los movimientos sociales durante el siglo XX. Una de ellas son las provenientes del fotoperiodismo y que desde sus orígenes despliega un tipo de mensaje que *busca conmover y evocar algo más* a su espectador:

> (…) Detrás de las verdaderas historias del fotoperiodismo se esconde la noción de que, por lo menos algunas fotografías periodísticas, son poderosas. (…) Esas fotos, si bien no son el día a día de la profesión, permanecen como sus símbolos y corresponden a las cualidades convencionalmente tenidas por deseables en las fotografías de noticias. (DOMENECH, 2014, p. 40).

Ahora bien, estas *fotografías poderosas* lo serán, fundamentalmente, por la subjetividad desplegada en su producción. Es decir, la comunidad a la que refiere, las y los actores involucrados, el clima de época en que se inscribe, la apropiación de tecnologías y la subversión de las representaciones dominantes de cada momento. Así, el fotoperiodismo ofrece la posibilidad de aproximarse a todo aquello que queda en los bordes del canon de época, lo que probablemente anticipa un momento visual y cultural, y condensa, metafóricamente, un orden social en proceso de cuestionamiento y/o transformación. Por tratarse de imágenes que son portadoras de su propia memoria y al considerarlas con capacidad de agencia, podemos rastrear sus diálogos e inscripciones con la cultura visual de su época pero también con sus predecesoras, así como

reivindicar la importancia de un lenguaje visual que, ante todo, nos conmueve e interpela emocionalmente. Para ello, resulta clave el análisis de los motivos visuales y su excedente emocional.

Los motivos visuales refieren a la memoria de las imágenes y la historia de sus formas, y que de manera persistente repercuten en la historia de la representación (SALVADO & BALLO, 2023). El estudio de los motivos visuales tiene su propia tradición en el campo de la Historia del Arte, y de allí derivan un conjunto de preocupaciones por los elementos formales, las convenciones representacionales y sus usos en contextos mediáticos específicos. Por su parte, la noción de excedente emocional (AGUILERA, 2016a) enfatiza en aquello que se dirige centralmente a la disputa por semantizar y fijar los significados flotantes en contextos de conflicto. Se trata de la comunicación que los actores y movimientos sociales elaboran y diversifican en interacción con el contexto mediático, sus agentes y sus formas. Estas interacciones movilizan emociones, generando un excedente en su doble acepción: superan lo racional y es un resultado adicional no previsto. Exceden lo político, lo amplían y superan, en sus fundamentos, lenguajes y operaciones.

I.4. La práctica del fotoperiodismo

En la producción periodística actual, la fotografía es un elemento de suma importancia y la calidad de la misma es un aspecto no menor. La fotografía que se publica en los medios de comunicación en Chile proviene principalmente de dos fuentes: del propio medio, y de las agencias noticiosas nacionales e internacionales. Utilizar una u otra varía de acuerdo a los recursos económicos con que cuenten los medios:. a más recursos, más opciones y diversidad de fuentes. Únicamente los medios de comunicación más consolidados y tradicionales tienen la opción de contar con fotógrafos propios y éstos son los que trabajan con editores especializados que, en la gran mayoría de los casos, también son fotógrafos. Estos medios además contratan los servicios de las distintas agencias de noticias.

En cuanto a los fotoperiodistas, además de imágenes de índole informativa también se dedican a otro tipo de fotografía más elaborada, con más contenido, que indaga en las causas y busca explicaciones. Este tipo de fotografía se acerca más a la fotografía documental tiene a menudo un carácter social y etnográfico y tiene una larga tradición en la historia del fotoperiodismo (AMAR, 2000): aquí el fotógrafo desempeña un papel de testigo y de observador, investigador de las situaciones políticas, económicas y sociales de un pueblo o de un país. Los fotoperiodistas de medios y agencias también realizan este tipo de registros y algunas de ellas son publicados en los medios tradicionales y/o alternativos. Estas fotografías serán luego seleccionadas por los propios autores para postularlas a algún premio o directamente por el jurado que las selecciona para un certamen.

II. Discusión y análisis.

La visualidad de la protesta juvenil en Chile tuvo cambios importantes a partir del siglo XXI. Es un cambio que resulta de una interacción entre fotoperiodistas y movimientos juveniles, concebidos ambos como actores sociales. Las fotografías analizadas ponen al cuerpo joven al centro de la imagen y desde ellos se despliegan emociones y pasiones alegres. Son cuerpos que remecen la estructura simbólica de toda una sociedad, recordándonos simplemente todo lo que pueden los cuerpos (SERRES, 2011). Esos cuerpos movilizan operaciones fundantes de la vida en sociedad: la verdad, el amor y la imaginación. Esta idea nos permite trazar un hilo invisible que vincula a las imágenes (su producción), la protesta y el placer de la agencia

II.1. El lugar del fotoperiodismo en la nueva visualidad de la protesta.

En su ejercicio profesional, los fotoperiodistas han ido aprendiendo de imágenes mirando otras imágenes y en ese sentido, han sometido su ojo a un disciplinamiento constante. Este modelamiento -prácticamente

global-, está basado en un consenso respecto a la estandarización implícita de las imágenes. Es decir, sobre el tipo de imágenes que es posible captar en una determinada circunstancia, aun cuando cada fotógrafo tenga su propio sello y sea reconocido por sus pares.

La imagen debe acompañar los contenidos del relato, teniendo criterios periodísticos informativos generales y sin privilegiar ninguna posición. Sus imaginarios acerca de los conflictos parten de la premisa de que en un conflicto hay varios actores en pugna y que se trata de temas que son importantes para los participantes y para la sociedad, por lo cual los catalogan como "temas sensibles" y son abordados de esa manera, intentando no privilegiar a una opción sobre otra. Es el razonamiento tras la idea de equilibrar la cobertura. Ese es un acuerdo tácito entre fotoperiodistas, editores fotográficos y los medios de comunicación.

Los conflictos sociales son tratados visualmente de manera bastante similar, es decir, centrándose en el acontecimiento, en los sujetos involucrados si es que no pudieron registrar el hecho, o en los lugares o instituciones relacionadas. Al fotografiar las manifestaciones, protestas o marchas se buscan los elementos más llamativos evitando imágenes ambiguas o abstractas. En resumen, las fotografías sobre conflictos sociales que se publican en la prensa están altamente estandarizadas porque provienen de las mismas fuentes y porque responden a criterios periodísticos ya establecidos y aprendidos en la práctica. En ese sentido son parte de una rutina de producción casi inmutable a pesar del avance tecnológico de la última década (ANTEZANA & LAGOS, 2017)

En ese marco general de desarrollo de su profesión, los fotoperiodistas ganadores del concurso *Fotoprensa* se constituyen precursores de un *giro visual* en el fotoperiodismo chileno en tanto sus fotografías se alejan del canon descrito previamente, y profundizan en la posibilidad de construir una narrativa propia que les permita profundizar la historia que sus imágenes relatan. En modo alguno habría que entender esto como una situación enfrentada a la industria de medios e imágenes, pues como hemos referido anteriormente, los fotógrafos premiados también colaboran para los medios y/agencias y sus imágenes circulan en

dichos circuitos. Su actuar permite una pluralidad visual al tiempo que la elaboración de otra narrativa cultural de los movimientos sociales y juveniles en específico.

Un punto de partida compartido por los fotógrafo, remite a las limitaciones de la industria foto periodística para sus apuestas personales. En el caso de Tomás Fernández (Ganador Fotoprensa 2012), se trata de ir construyendo lo que denomina como fotografía documental y en la que influye su formación profesional como periodista:

> (…) In my opinion, documentary photography does what mass media can't do because mass media is too busy with the day-by-day deadlines and coverage. Namely, documentary photography allows the photographer to go deeper in their approach and create something more personal since the photographer can invest more time and reflection in order to create a visual product with an identity. Something less disposable, with different influences beyond photojournalism: more artistic, introspective, contemporary, you name it. (Fernández, 2018)

La idea de profundizar un enfoque personal se vincula directamente con el punto de vista en su doble acepción, desde el posicionamiento técnico y de foco de una imagen, y también desde el propio compromiso sociopolítico del fotógrafo que realiza la imagen. Esta idea es compartida por los fotógrafos y queda expresada en estos términos por Diego Figueroa (Ganador de Fotoprensa15):

> En los medios se disputa el poder, se disputa el sentido común, la opinión estándar de la gente. El rol de los jóvenes comunicadores es generar cuestionamiento, generar reflexión, generar dudas. Ya están todos los medios que nos manejan la opinión desde la derecha, pero los comunicadores tienen que dar espacio a la crítica. Hay que disputar los medios, la imagen hoy muestra la realidad y eso es política. (Figueroa, 2015)

Ahora bien, con los matices respectivos, todos han ido elaborando dicho punto de vista en el marco de su propia actuación como fotógrafos, desde el compromiso con los movimientos sociales y las luchas que han desplegado. Por cierto, existen situaciones de orden biográfico que acompañan y ubican estas decisiones profesionales, como el exilio

familiar de Fernández o el involucramiento en espacios juveniles auto-gestionados de Figueroa, pasando por el compromiso de clase de Ruiz. En todos ellos, sus fotografías quieren ir más allá de la instantánea y aportar a una construcción más amplia aunque esto no sea efecto directo de su trabajo fotográfico. El propio Mario Ruiz (ganador de Fotoprensa 2013) lo explica en esos términos:

> Acá los cabros[2] llevan doce años peleando por el mismo tema y no pasa nada. ¿Crees que mi foto va a hacer que la educación sea gratis? Son imágenes y detrás hay grandes poderes. (Ruiz, 2013)

De allí que consideremos que estas prácticas y productos fotográficos deben ser entendidas también en su dimensión de narrativa cultural de los movimientos juveniles, y los fotógrafos como actores sociales que aportan a dicha construcción desde el compromiso, vinculo cotidiano y sensibilidad específica para aprender y apropiarse de las propias innovaciones de los repertorios de protesta que se despliegan en la protesta juvenil.

II.2. Agencia Juvenil y nuevas prácticas de movilización y de visualización

Las imágenes analizadas se inscriben en un segundo giro visual que va a tener a las emociones y la subjetividad como sensibilidades de producción de la narrativa de la protesta juvenil. Como sostuvimos introductoriamente, desde el año 2006 en adelante los movimientos estudiantiles modificaron sus repertorios de protesta, y aquellos fotógrafos sensibles y comprometidos con estos procesos comenzaron a modificar sus enfoques y puntos de vista con los cuales se venía representando la protesta juvenil. De esta forma, la noción de repertorios de comunicación (MATTONI, 2013) nos permite visibilizar la interacción que se da entre la protesta y su representación así como el papel agente que

2   Cabros: chilenismo referido a la adolescencia.

tendrán tanto los fotógrafos como las propias obras que se ponen en circulación.

Hasta los años 2000, la comunicación de la protesta había sido construida narrativa y visualmente a partir de una hegemonía adultocéntrica que deslegitimaba la acción juvenil. Como consecuencia, el peso representacional recaía en la confrontación directa entre antagonistas y desde allí se construía la visualidad. La antropóloga Rossana Reguillo va acuñar la noción de "rehenes de la fotografía" (2004 p.20) para caracterizar, precisamente, la dificultad de construir una narrativa distinta a la ofertada por los medios de comunicación. Desde el 2006 en adelante las y los estudiantes chilenos pusieron en marcha una política de la visibilidad (AGUILERA, 2016a) que poco a poco fisuró el canon de representación hegemónico y permitió la emergencia de otras formas visuales de la protesta. Es así como el año 2011, la propia diversidad de repertorios de movilización, más lúdicos, expresivos, y profundamente conectados con la cultura visual del momento3, se trasladaron a las fotografías y representaciones de la protesta juvenil (Fig.1).

De esta forma, identificamos un nuevo giro visual en la puesta en escena del protagonismo juvenil. Si en los 60 la figura del dirigente estudiantil (varón), liderando batallas y enfrentamientos multitudinarios, se tradujo en la figura épica del héroe trágico con sus respectivos íconos globales (Che Guevara para América Latina, Malcom X para Norteamérica, Daniel Cohen Bendit para Europa), el siglo XXI desplazará esas imágenes por otras donde emerge la alegría, la singularidad de los protagonistas, a veces el anonimato o la propia desaparición y metaforización del conflicto en espacios, atmósferas o sensaciones.

3   Para conocer más sobre las distintas obras y expresiones visuales creadas por estudiantes durante el año 2011, se recomienda la Página Web: https://movimientoestudiantil2011.com

Imagen 1. Thriller masivo por la educación. Santiago de Chile (2011).

Fuente: Google Imágenes.

Reconocemos entonces unas imágenes que se constituirán en motivos visuales, y particularmente identificamos el placer de la agencia, la alegría, los juegos, el disfrute y la felicidad como emociones fundamentales del movimiento juvenil y la protesta. Si bien estos signos ya estaban presentes, hasta el 2011 no habían tenido mayor centralidad ni significancia en la fotografía sobre manifestaciones y protestas.

II..3. Giro Visual: el placer de la agencia

Las emociones no son algo ajeno al estudio de los movimientos sociales, ni tampoco el que las imágenes las condensen y movilicen. La particularidad es que la posibilidad de encontrar en la visualidad los cambios representacionales y la impugnación a las narrativas hegemónicas no se produce en una temporalidad lineal, están hechas de anacronismos:

salir del propio tiempo de la imagen es la condición de posibilidad para ver lo que allí se muestra.

En la primera imagen analizada, de Tomás Fernández (Fig.2) y que obtuvo el Primer lugar FOTOPRENSA 2012, observamos una sala de clases invertida cuya foto fue tomada en noviembre de 2011 y reproducida por el diario *El Mercurio de Valparaíso*. Las sillas están en el techo, el escrito de la pizarra al fondo está al revés, y pareciera que lo único en su lugar es el hombre que, de espaldas a nosotros, observa ese espectáculo. Si existe una institución moderna, directamente vinculada al mundo juvenil y donde la verdad aparece presentada como un hecho positivo, resultado de la acumulación de siglos y siglos de saberes, es la institución educativa. Así también, es el lugar que históricamente ha contribuido a institucionalizar la subordinación y menorización de la juventud bajo pretexto de "estar en preparación" o en moratoria psicosocial como la han caracterizado los saberes de base biomédica en la modernidad.

Pero allí lo que se nos muestra es un cuerpo interrogado, cuestionado por una verdad dicha en voz baja: *en un mundo realmente invertido, lo verdadero es un momento de lo falso.* La cita es conocida, forma parte de *La sociedad del espectáculo* (DEBORD, 1995 p.10). Aquello es lo que, a lo lejos, se observa en esa pizarra y escrito al revés, otro juego visual para performar precisamente la interrogación sobre dónde está lo verdadero en un proceso de movilización como el que desplegaron los estudiantes universitarios chilenos el año 2011.

Imagen 2. Foto del Año, 1° Lugar Prensa FOTOPRENSA 2012.

Autor: Tomás Fernández.

Esta imagen de una sala de clases de la Pontificia Universidad Ca-
tólica de Valparaíso deviene un recurso espectacular para desnudar lo
aparente de nuestra sociedad y tratar de aproximarnos a todo aquello
que ha sido negado, invisibilizado, menorizado. En ese acercarnos, la
imagen quema nuestros cuerpos y nos obliga a re-encarnarnos nueva-
mente, pero esta vez porque hemos sido capaces de salir de lo aparente
y pensar por nosotros mismos, y no hay mayor alegría que descubrirnos
capaces de aquello.

Por su parte, la segunda fotografía analizada nos ofrenda una imagen
de amor (Fig.3), pero también de violencia contenida como lo reconoce
el propio fotoperiodista cuando la nombra:

> *Esta foto es como mi vida, amor violento la denomino yo. Es la educación
> y es Chile. El uniforme de la niña es Chile: azul, blanco y rojo. Es amor, el
> amor de estos últimos veintitrés años de mi vida. Mis amores y desamores.*
> (Ruiz, 2013).

Imagem 3. Foto del año, 1° Lugar Prensa FOTOPRENSA 2013.

Autor: Mario Ruiz

Esta fotografía obtuvo el Primer Lugar FOTOPRENSA13 y fue tomada el año 2012. El amor está ahí, pero debemos atrevernos a verle. No está en la apariencia, aunque en ella reconozcamos algunos indicios. El más evidente, y que funciona como *punctum* (BARTHES, 2003) son las manos entrelazadas, quizás el gesto romántico por definición. Esas manos rompen con el cuadro completo, nos sacan la totalidad agresiva y violenta de las capuchas, las piedras, y las otras manos devenidas armas con sus respectivos proyectiles. Esas manos entrelazadas nos impactan, nos afectan. Producen un gesto incomodo: qué hace el amor ahí en esa escena, y entonces debemos acercarnos, y poco a poco retirar la capucha, eliminar las piedras, recordar nuestros noviazgos juveniles y traer al presente esos momentos en que el futuro estaba ahí para nosotros y debíamos disputarlo. Esa serenidad del caminar de la mano, esa confianza en que juntos podemos abrazar el porvenir. El amor como dimensión fundamental de las luchas por la emancipación, y como interacción base de todo movimiento social (ALBERONI, 1980).

Esta imagen es una triple ofrenda: de la pareja de jóvenes que elabora un posado en acción al fotógrafo que está siguiendo sus pasos a gran distancia y con un teleobjetivo, del fotógrafo que en su trayectoria acompaña y nos cuenta la historia de estos jóvenes como metáfora de un país al que se le ama pero también se le teme por su violencia y con quienes se encontrará años más tarde para una nueva secuencia de fotos, y finalmente de nosotros mismos los espectadores que nos regalamos la posibilidad de pensar lo social (las protestas, la política) más allá de dicotomías y los pesos de la representación (TAGG, 2005).

La tercera imagen analizada (Fig.4), la fotografía de Diego Figueroa, ganadora de Foto del Año y Primer lugar FOTOPRENSA15 se tomó en junio de 2014 y nos ofrece un cuerpo que se abre a la creatividad, aquella contenida en la imagen pero también la que los espectadores pueden desatar al observarla. La atmosfera expresa, con el humo, los contrastes entre luz y sombra, las múltiples tonalidades de lo oscuro, y el cuerpo en movimiento, una escena que bien podría ser de una película, una pintura o una obra de teatro.

Aquí, la imaginación ocupa el lugar de la herramienta fundamental para enhebrar un vínculo entre esta imagen y otras que funcionan tal vez como procedencias y extiende su sensibilidad hacia el propio trabajo interpretativo a través del montaje. Entonces aparece Goya y su cuadro *3 de mayo en Madrid* (1814), donde las luces y sombras dominan el retrato de la lucha española contra la dominación francesa y que se inscriben como dominio técnico en el desarrollo de sus aguafuertes titulados *Los desastres de la guerra (1810-1815)*. Pero en lugar del horror *goyesco*, la delicadeza de un paso de baile, de ballet tal vez, se encarga de reubicar en un régimen emocional diferente las luchas estudiantiles. Así, este cuerpo en movimiento deviene coreografía, como aquella que despliega, años después y en medio de las protestas parisinas, la tecnoactivista Mathilde Caillard. Así, por medio de este montaje que superpone técnicas de la imagen diversas, usos de luces y sombras y colores distintos, anacronismos y geografías múltiples, recuperamos el cuerpo, imaginamos otra protesta, actuamos otras resistencias.

Imagen 4. Foto del año, 1° Lugar Prensa FOTOPRENSA 2015.

Autor: Diego Figueroa

III. Conclusión

Estas imágenes se vuelven significativas para una comprensión de los repertorios de protesta, sus cambios y continuidades, y a su vez, permiten superar la dicotomía entre lo expresivo y la agencia, en tanto concebimos a las imágenes con capacidad para modificar y transformar la mirada. De allí que hoy no sea posible pensar las protestas juveniles por fuera del propio repertorio visual en el que se inscriben, las citas visuales a las que recurren, los lugares por los cuales circulan y los usos y apropiaciones que hacemos de ello. Esa es la importancia de detenernos en estas imágenes de protesta ganadoras de los concursos de *Fotoprensa* en Chile.

Estas fotografías son el resultado de una comprensión visual de la protesta, que tiene sus propias tradiciones y cánones, y que generacionalmente se han venido problematizando y actualizando. El giro visual del canon épico al placer de la agencia, es resultado tanto de los cambios

en los repertorios de protesta juvenil como de las propias prácticas foto-periodísticas: unos y otros agentes, movimientos sociales y reporteros gráficos, elaboran en interacción un marco narrativo y cultural desde el cual pensar las protestas sociales.

Desde ese punto de vista, a partir del año 2011 asistimos al surgimiento de un énfasis emocional en las imágenes de la protesta que va a involucrar a actores sociales diversos: activistas juveniles, productores de imágenes y analistas socioculturales. Este giro emocional va a decantar en un énfasis narrativo y motivo visual específico: el goce, disfrute y placer que constituye la protesta y las luchas sociales. Se actualiza así la vieja consigna atribuida a Emma Goldmann "*si no puedo bailar, esta no es mi revolución*", y que en el tiempo presente ha convocado múltiples acciones tendientes a relevar estas dimensiones del placer en la militancia y el compromiso sociopolítico juvenil.

El canon de representación hegemónico no ha pedido eficacia narrativa, por cierto. El cambio de la cultura visual y las políticas de la imagen y la mirada, que como hemos visto operan a escala global, no son resultado de unos pocos años ni de esfuerzos individuales que mecánicamente inauguran un nuevo sensorium (BENJAMIN,1987). El vínculo, uso, disfrute e inauguración de nuevos repertorios visuales, de la protesta entre ellos, son el resultado de un cotidiano trabajo de aproximarnos a las imágenes, las huellas que trazan, las prácticas que movilizan, y fundamentalmente a su propia sobrevivencia. Quizás un análisis a la sobrevida de las imágenes, su uso y resignificación extendida en el tiempo, pueda ayudarnos a perfilar mejor lo que aquí, a través de este análisis y de modo indiciario, hemos denominado el giro visual de la protesta y la transformación de la narrativa cultural que enmarca a los movimientos juveniles.

Las imágenes analizadas, ganadoras de *Fotoprensa*, fueron "capturadas" hace una década o poco más. En su momento, fueron fotografías de protesta, que abrieron posibilidades visuales allí donde no las habían. Con el pasar del tiempo, se transformaron en un momento anticipatorio de lo que sería el giro narrativo-visual que tendrá la fotografía y las

imágenes de la protesta que inundaron las redes sociales y los medios de comunicación impresos y audiovisuales para el estallido social chileno en 2019. Tanto así que se ha desplegado toda una línea y objeto de estudio que articula arte-política y que habla, justamente, de un estallido visual (RIQUELME, 2023; ARAVENA, 2023).

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Climate Change and Social networks: The use of Instagram and TikTok among secondary-school students in relation to sustainability

Laia Palos Rey
Miriam Diez Bosch
Verónica Israel Turim

Abstract: *Climate change has been identified as the greatest challenge facing humanity. In this research we sought to find out the extent to which teenagers use social media to stay informed about the climate emergency and sustainability. We studied the case of 98 teenagers, examining what types of content they view on Instagram and Tik Tok, and which accounts they follow. The main results of this research indicate that these teenagers do not use the analysed platforms to consume content on climate emergency and sustainability, highlighting the need for further educational intervention as a way to promote interest in these issues.*

Keywords: *Climate Change, Social media, Tik Tok, Instagram, Teenagers.*

Introduction

Social networks are established as a double-edged sword in relation to people's beliefs (Amanda Lenhart et al., 2007), and since adolescence is a critical time of identity formation, the impact of what they see on social networks can be much more intense than in other life periods (Amy Orben, 2020). For this reason, the influence of social networks content should not be obviated (Alexandra V. Fedotova, 2019).

According to Vandana Shiva (2019), the economic and political system that we have built, and that accompanies us today, is not compatible with life. The climate emergency is a reality (Yayo Herrera, 2022); it constitutes a current and future problem (Alicia Puleo, 2019), and if it is not stopped or reversed the effects can be devastating. Reason why several experts express that to guarantee the survival of the human species on the planet it is necessary to work on a decarbonization of the system (Jorge Riechmann, 2012). Lately, we have seen young people raising their voices on environmental issues (Greta Thunberg, 2022), even creating activist groups such as Fridays for Future (Hannah Wallis, Laura S. Loy, 2021).

Therefore, in this research we want to analyse if the massive use of social media is impacting teenagers on improving climate change awareness, and if the content consumed shows an ideal way of life in which individuals reduce their consumption and, consequently, their impact on the environment.

It is true, however, that there is an ongoing debate on this issue (Karen Yeung, 2017). On the one hand, there are those researchers who consider that social media platforms promote ideas and send specific messages (Felipe González, 2019), and those who consider that, by working with the algorithm, they actually only reaffirm the beliefs that subjects already hold, isolating them from other opinions (Jaeho Cho et al. , 2020). Be that as it may, in this research we focus on the content shown to this sample in order to analyse whether the message that is reaching future generations corresponds to environmental awareness. For this reason, in

this case study, we want to analyse who this sample of teenagers follows and what type of content they follow on social networks.

Previous research has delved into climate change and social media (Stephan Lewandowsky et al. ,2016). Other studies have focused on the relationship between climate emergency and education (UNFCCC, 2022; Mark Lieberman, 2022; Arianna Prothero, 2022; Stefan Ellerbeck, 2022). However, we are specifically interested in reviewing the content that teenagers view and follow on social networks directly related to ecological ethics and their sustainable habits.

Research methodology, design and development

Methodology

The methodology, in this ex post facto research, chosen to answer the questions proposed in this particular case study is a mixed method between quantitative (Franklin, C., 2009) and qualitative (Hignett, S., & McDermott, H., 2015) techniques inspired by different previous studies (Edwards, G., 2010 & Hossain, D. M., 2012 & Mayring, P., 2007). Demonstrating the feasibility of both variables in social media (Debreceny, R., & Wang, T., 2019) and education (Rumberrger, R., & Palardy, G., 2004) contexts. If we focus on the first type of methodology, we have opted for the quantitative method, specifically the questionnaire tool.

As for the qualitative methodology, we have decided to use it also as a complement to the quantitative one since we believe it is important to talk to the sample about the profiles and contents they usually visualise in order to achieve the most reliable and concrete results possible. We have achieved this by conducting two focus groups.

Therefore, we have combined both methodologies in order to answer the following questions:

Q1: What are the most viewed contents by teenagers on Instagram and TikTok?

Q2: Who are the people most followed by teenagers on Instagram and TikTok?

Q3: Do teenagers consume content on social networks related to sustainability?

Q4: Do teenagers follow environmental activists on social networks?

To answer question number one from the data provided by the teens in the quiz, we were able to classify the type of content most consumed by the sample to detect the ten most viewed topics. From the questionnaire, we obtained the necessary information to find out which are the favourite influencers of the sample and to evaluate the content they share to classify this content them various categories such as fashion, lifestyle, video games, makeup, etc., as can be seen in the analysis of the results.

Focusing on objective number two of the survey, we asked the teenagers which were the influencers and micro-influencers (see table 1) that they followed to establish a ranking of the most followed profiles in order to later be able to take advantage of this database not only to know who they follow but also the current trends in social networks. In the same way that we asked about the sample's favourite influencers, we were able to draw up a list of the 10 most-followed profiles in order to analyse what type of influencers they were.

Table 1: Influencers category

| Influencer Category	Number of Followers
Non-Influencers	<1000
Micro-Influencers	1001–10,000
Mid-Influencers	10,001–100,000
Macro-Influencers	100,001–1,000,000
Icon-Influencers	>1,000,000

Source: (Israel-Turim et al. 2021)

Looking at it from another perspective, question number 3 has been studied to discern which contents are included within the concept of environmental awareness and which are not, for the purpose of establishing whether or not the sample is interested in this type of content. So the information extracted from the focus group has been used, where the sample was asked if they consciously consume sustainability posts and videos.

Finally, if we consider the last objective, we use the information collected in the focus group in the same way as in the previous question to be able to assess in the same way if the students know some influencers who are dedicated to environmental activism, if they follow them, and what image they have about this type of climate activism.

Sample

The sample used for this research is a non probabilistic sample with a total of 98 teenagers studying first of *bachillerato* at La Salle Montcada High School in Barcelona -Spain-. The gender ratio is almost equal: 50% men, 45% women, and 5% who chose others (see figure 1) and ranging in age from 16 to 18 years old.

Figure 1: Gender ratio

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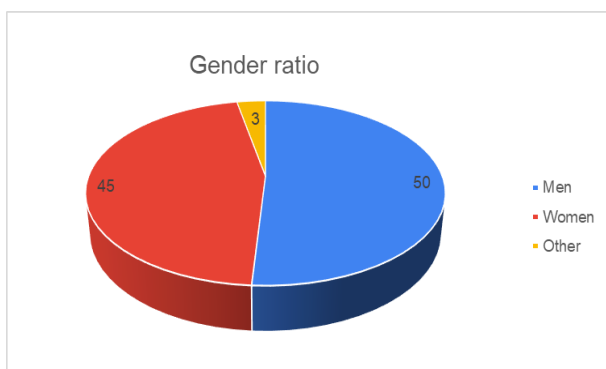
Data collection technique

Based on these questions and objectives, the research was conducted using the questionari tool within the survey methodology, taking as a model the proposals of Nandakumar, R., and Ackerman, T. (2004). According to some experts, such as Creswell, J., and Plano, V. (2017), this hybrid technique is more effective than using only a quantitative or qualitative methodology in this specific research (Martínez, A., 2013, and Rodríguez, R., 2001).

Questionnaire

The technique used in this research is the survey, specifically the questionnaire tool that includes open, closed, opinion and factual questions, following the examples of previous studies (Nalan Demircioglu Hasan Yilmaz, Metin Demir and Süleyman Toy, 2011; Olga María Luque-Alcaraz et al, 2022; Lenny Prastiwi, Diana Vivanti Sigit, Rizhal Hendi Ristanto,2019). In this case, it has been divided into four sections (see table 2). First, demographic data on the sample. Then, two sections have been introduced that aim to collect information on the profiles and content viewed by teenagers, one focusing on Instagram and the second on Tik Tok. They were asked to indicate the profiles of the last posts they had liked, the profiles of the last posts they had saved and, finally, to mark the type of content they consume according to the information they had previously collected. The last and fourth section consisted of a series of dichotomous and nominal questions of a scalar type where they were asked about issues that relate social networks to sustainability.

Table 2: Questionnaire sections

Section	Description
Section 1	Personal and demographic data
Section 2	Profiles and content viewed on Tik-Tok
Section 3	Profiles and content viewed on Instagram
Section 4	Social media and sustainability question study

2.3.2 Focus group

We conducted two focus groups of ten students each, where we were able to talk face-to-face and directly with the teenagers and get a more concrete idea of what interests they share, what profiles they spend the most time on, what they think of that content, and what image they have of environmental activists on social media. We prepared a list of topics to talk about the uses of social media and their perception of the impact of sustainability through social media on themselves, and we also gave the sample a grid of questions to start the conversation and guide the discussion following the academia guidance (Holly Edmunds, 1999).

Results

Descriptive results of the sample trends

The first result we obtained justifies why we chose these two social media platforms for the study, was the proportional amount of the sample that claims to use Instagram and/or Tik Tok (see figure 2 and 3). We obtained that Instagram was used by 97% of the sample and Tik Tok by 89% of them, and the average daily hours of use of all platforms is approximately 5 hours per day, including the cases of teenagers who have an average of 11 hours of use per day.
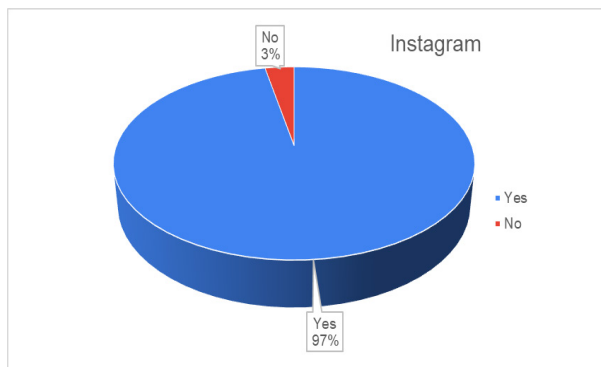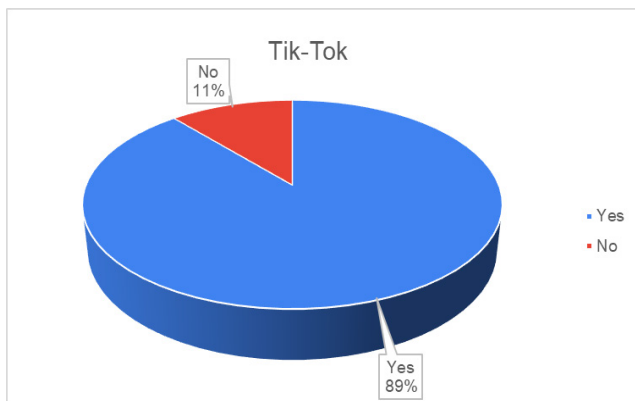
Figure 2: Instagram usage

Figure 3: TikTok usage

Profiles they follow.

Another of the main questions we wanted to study in this research was who the students follow, that is, if there is any kind of pattern in which we see that they follow the same influencers. To do this we used the data obtained in sections 2 and 3, specifically when we asked them to indicate the profiles of the three most recent posts they had liked and three profiles of the three most recent posts they had saved. To our surprise, we were not able to detect any profile that was mostly followed, the only ones that coincided and not in the majority were two profiles; one of the football club Barcelona - the account of the most popular team in the province where the study was carried out - and the account of the Isla de las Tentaciones - the profile of a very famous reality show programme in Spain at the time-. On the other hand, we wanted to complement these results with the focus group and they confirmed what was mentioned above. They do not follow specific influencers- No Climate Change activist either- but rather these teenagers prefer to view the content that the algorithm of both platforms proposes and therefore the results that the accounts followed by the teenagers are so random that we cannot establish a pattern between them in terms of who they follow.

Content they consume

Contrary to the previous section regarding the type of content that adolescents follow, we were able to establish some common patterns. We were able to establish a usage pattern highlighting three categories: sports, fashion and lifestyle. We saw the large consumption by these teenagers of fast fashion clothing as well as cosmetics and makeup products, where they state that they do not consume them out of necessity but on a whim or for pleasure. As for the lifestyle section, we were able to see different videos that they themselves indicated in the profile, where the life of people with high purchasing power is shown and where they launch a clear message of positive consumerism, an issue that clashes with the fight for the climate emergency. In fact, regarding the item that directly asked for sustainability content, we found that 0% of the total sample checked this box (see Figure 4). Therefore, in this section, the information obtained through the questionnaire and the focus group indicated that teenagers are not interested in consuming content linked to sustainability, that the algorithm does not recommend this type of content to them. In the focus group, they themselves said that thanks to answering the questionnaire they have become more aware of what they consume on the networks and thus consider that what they see on the different accounts proposed for them encourages their consumption of products, and also consider that they do not receive any messages linked to the climate emergency.

Figure 4: Type of content
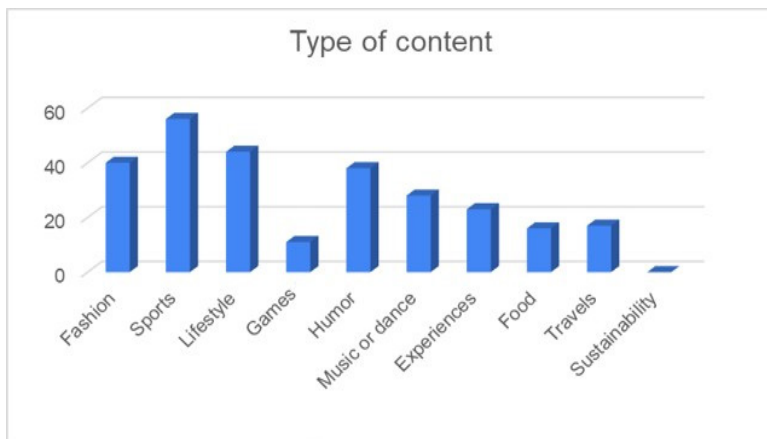
Social networks and sustainability

Having analysed the questions more focused on the type of content and profiles followed by the sample, we have focused on those questions that relate climate change and how it is communicated on social networks with this profile we are studying. We found that out of 47 students out of 98, they rate with a 3 or more on the scale of 5 the life of the profiles they see on social networks and see them as their ideal life. In addition, only 18 out of 98 have scored 3 or more on the importance and frequency of the profiles they follow on sustainability and environment. One of the data we found most relevant was the difference we found between knowing and following profiles about sustainability on social networks. Given that almost 60% of the sample knows profiles of content creators that deal with the environment (see Figure 8), but only 22% follow these profiles on networks (see Figure 7), this indicates that there is no interest on the part of adolescents or tendency to follow this type of content. Furthermore, in the focus group we talked to the students and they told us that they did not remember the algorithm ever recommending any content related to environmentalism.
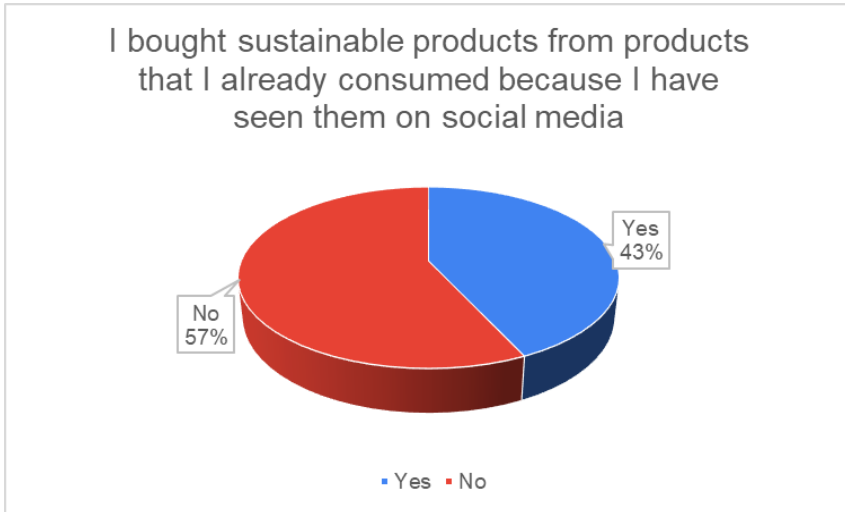
Figure 5: Perception questions
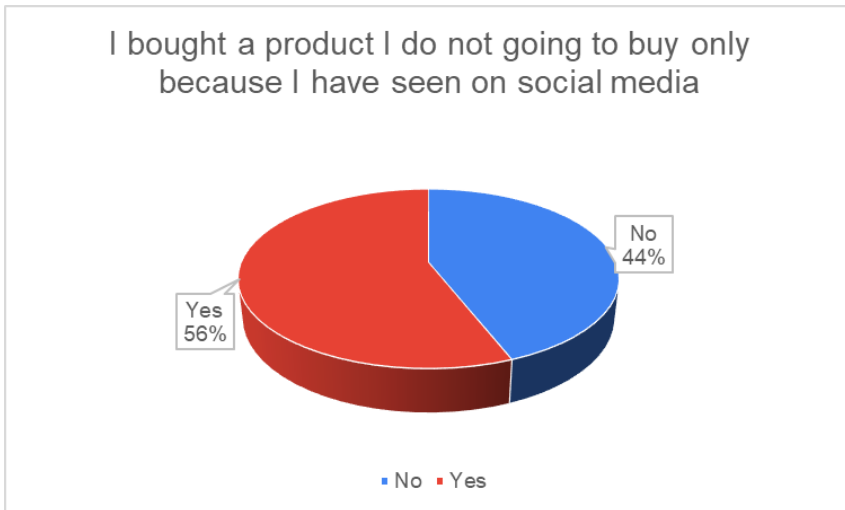

Figure 6: Perception questions
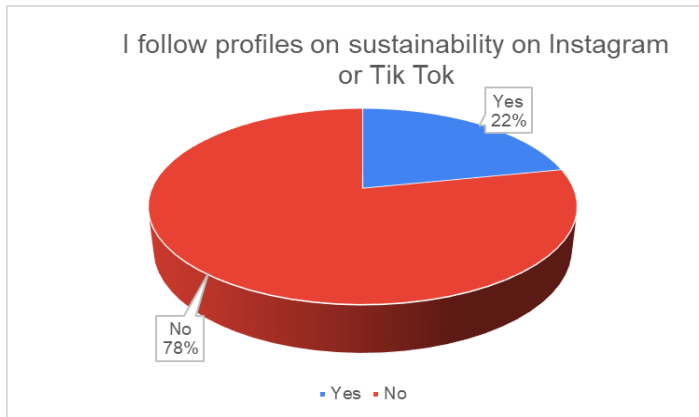
Figure 7: Followed profiles

I follow profiles on sustainability on Instagram or Tik Tok

Yes 22%

No 78%

Yes No

Figure 8: Known profiles

I know profiles on Instagram or Tik Tok on sustainability

No 43%

Yes 57%

Yes No
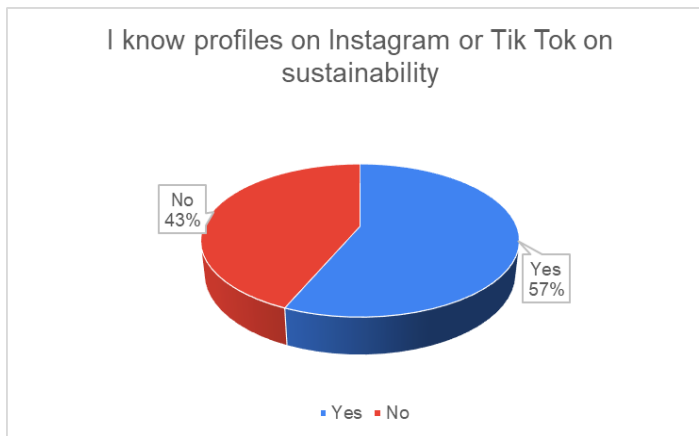
56% of the sample considered that they were aware that they had bought products because they had seen them on social networks, and that the desire to buy had generated them (see Figure 6). In the focus group, some subjects told us that they sometimes buy compulsively because they have seen a recommended product and then do not use it. Less than half also consider that they have bought products from their usual use of more sustainable brands (see Figure 5), and almost 90% say that by looking at the lifestyles shown in the networks, they have not felt

motivated to buy. For example, reducing meat consumption and thus reducing their carbon footprint (see figure 9). It was practically unanimous that social networks do not make them more or less sustainable; however, they almost unanimously considered that they had realised that because of what they see on social networks, they were adopting habits that were more against climate change than in favour of its mitigation or adaptation (see figure 10).

Figure 9: Perception questions

Figure 10: Perception questions
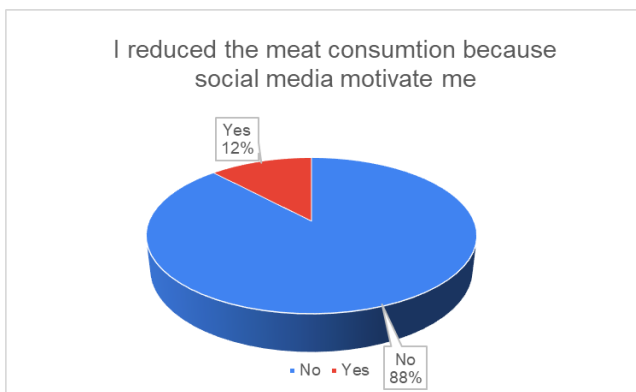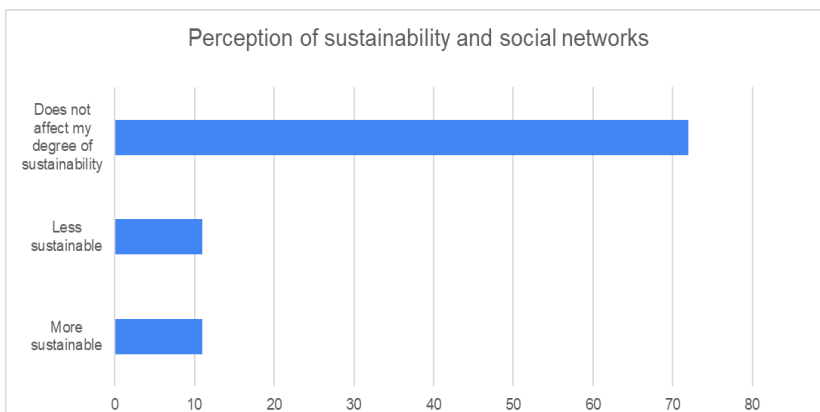
Discussion and conclusions

The climate emergency represents the greatest social, political and economic challenge ever imagined for humanity according to several authors (Jorge Richmann, 2012 and Vandana Shiva, 2019). For many others (Alicia Puleo, 2019 & Yayo Herrero, 2022), the next generation is the tipping point that will determine the future of humankind. So studying the type of content and who teenagers follow on social media was pertinent and relevant research, as they spend many hours a day on these platforms (Vasanth, Rahul, and Seema Swamy, 2013 & Al-Sabti, Duaa Ali et al., 2017). The aim was to determine if the use by these future generations is in accordance with the necessity to improve their knowledge and awareness of Climate Change.

This study carried out with 98 students from La Salle Montcada secondary school - Barcelona, Spain - aged between 16 and 18 years old on how they use social networks, who they follow, what content they follow and whether this content is related to environmental issues has provided us with data that allowed us to learn more about the objectives we set, including determining what kind of content these adolescents see on social media, who they follow and whether we can establish any links to sustainability.

First, the most unexpected data obtained in this study was that when we studied the profiles they follow, we realised thanks to the questionari tool that we could not establish any pattern contrary to what has been seen in similar research in other countries (José Luis Rodriguez & Francesc Martinez & Cristina Galván, 2019). Also, talking to them in the focus groups, they themselves told us that they don't look at who they follow, they don't pay much attention to the profile, they care about the content. For this reason we realise that for this sample the algorithm is crucial because it determines the content they see, and therefore what messages they see on social networks (Cotter, Kelley, 2019), being precisely the question of algorithms in social networks a controversial issue (Harriger, Jennifer, et al., 2022) and an open debate in today's society, something that other research has apparently found was not the case for

previous generations (Ulas Akkukuk, 2016 & Paul Carr, 2021). Thus, we consider that this information may open up new lines of research to investigate how young people interact with the algorithm.

On the one hand, we can think that this could be a positive conclusion, as it may provide an opportunity to generate more interest in environmental issues among adolescents, and if they search for this type of content they will quickly start to see content that sends this message of sustainability, further promoting their environmental awareness. But on the other hand, if these teenagers are not interested, the algorithm will never show them content linked to climate change and they can completely ignore this problem.

On the other hand, we have detected a pattern in the type of content shown in the sample. The three most consumed categories are sports, fashion and lifestyle. A priori, sports do not provide us with anything significant, but in the case of the other two categories, they do. In the focus group, we were able to dig a little deeper, and the subjects told us that when they checked the fashion box, they were mainly referring to watching videos of people buying clothes in fast fashion stores, and they all agreed that at least once, but usually, they themselves ended up buying those clothes they had seen recommended in the video. Therefore, it is a big problem considering the need to promote degrowth and not consumerism (Elisabetta Mocca, 2019), since fast fashion is a trend that arises in the opposite direction and generates many pollution problems. Regarding the third category that we have named as lifestyle, we were also told that this type of videos always showed the life of the content creators and their daily routine, where they mentioned that the standard of living was very high and that it showed a highly consumerist life that once again is not sending the right message if what we are looking for is a greater awareness of future generations about the climate emergency as has already been pointed out from the marketing field (Elena Santamaría de la Piedra & Rufino J. Meana, 2018).

Another idea we put forward is that, initially, the analyzed teenagers do not have a natural interest in the climate issue. In fact, we can verify

this when they comment that only 22% of the sample follows some kind of content linked to sustainability, and in the questions on the scale of habits, we do not find any sustainable pattern; rather, we find habits quite linked to unsustainable consumption. In the focus group, they themselves commented that the algorithm rarely shows environmental content, and in part they related this to the fact that by not showing interest -low interest and training in environmental education among adolescents as shown by previous studies (Irene Coalla, 2022)- the algorithm does not detect that it should propose content related to this topic.

As a general conclusion, the results of the present study indicate that in no case can we say that the selected sample is nourished by a strong message about the importance of creating a sustainable future. At least for this particular case, we can observe these adolescents do not use social platforms to consume content on Climate Change that could help them to improve their awareness and sustainable habits. That is why we believe that it is necessary to open up a new line of research to determine whether, with quality educational intervention, we can promote environmental awareness (Alicia Puleo, 2019 & Yayo Herrero 2022). Perhaps, once this interest has been generated through education, social media can be complementary, as their interest in the topic will likely lead to algorithms showing them more related content. Therefore, we believe it is of the essence to deepen the line of research on the impact that the introduction of ecological ethics as academic course content can have, and we hope that this same study can be replicated on a larger scale to study whether the data obtained are relevant to a particular case or not.

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Couples' mental health and increased Instagram consumption

Swaleha Khanam
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Abstract: *This study looks at how Instagram affects couples' mental health in the digital age, highlighting both its benefits and drawbacks. Instagram has one billion active users per month, making it the most popular platform for sharing content that involves images. It talks about the possible negative effects of using Instagram, such as low self-esteem, cyberbullying, and social comparison. The study advises couples to set reasonable limits, use Instagram with awareness, and be open and honest about their online relationships. To support couples in navigating the digital world while placing a high priority on their mental health, mental health professionals should include discussions on digital dynamics in couple's therapy sessions. Instagram may have a detrimental effect on a couple's mental health by encouraging social comparison, jealousy, problems with trust, and excessive social media use. It can foster understanding and bring up pleasant memories, but it can also result in miscommunication and emotional distance. Although there is little data linking Instagram use to mental health, research has indicated that using the platform to browse Instagram might lessen loneliness while influencers' popular practice of broadcasting on the platform can make people feel more alone. Instagram and other picture-based platforms can help users establish a more robust social presence, which increases their effectiveness in reducing loneliness. The study identifies methodological difficulties in examining the mental health of spouses and makes recommendations for further research. It also covers relationship growth, social comparison dynamics, communication styles, and privacy concerns, as well as the ramifications for couples and therapists. It calls for more research and professional development to address the evolving digital couple's therapy landscape. The present study concludes by examining the impact of Instagram on mental health in a range of age groups*

and highlighting areas that require more investigation or development to alleviate the negative impacts of social media use on mental health.

Keywords: *Social media, Consumption, Modern relationship, Miscommunication, Mental health*

Introduction

There has been some variation in the research findings about the relationship between couples' mental health and Instagram use. Not to mention that relationship dynamics, personality characteristics, and the type of information seen can all have an impact on how Instagram use affects mental health. Instagram's effect on the mental health of couples and its applicability in the current digital era is covered in this paper. This research paper gives a general summary of Instagram's broad use and the growing worries about its potential implications on the mental health of couples. The paper's aims are delineated in the possible hazards linked to Instagram usage, comprehension of the fundamental workings, and discourse on tactics to encourage positive interactions on the internet. The probable harms of Instagram to the mental health of couples are discussed here. It addresses several elements that might lead to psychological suffering, including poor self-perception, cyberbullying, and social comparison. The paper includes pertinent studies and data demonstrating the links between Instagram use and mental health issues of couples including depression, anxiety, and poor self-esteem.

With one billion active users per month, Instagram is the most widely used platform for sharing image-based material with commentary. Teenagers, young adults and couples who regularly check their accounts are especially fond of it. The consequences of Instagram use on a couple's mental health and general well-being have drawn the attention of researchers, and there is a growing body of literature on this subject [1]. To identify important psychological characteristics and summarise the present state of growing research on the association between Instagram usage intensity and mental health, this study will be conducted. Dissatisfaction with one's physique and look is frequently the outcome of social comparison, in which people assess their appearance by contrasting themselves with media standards. For people who struggle with mental health concerns or anxiety related to their body image, this can be very detrimental. Depression is frequently the result of the urge to evaluate oneself on Instagram and compare oneself to others. Depression has

been linked to social comparison and jealousy, as people use Instagram to compare and seek acceptance from others. Instagram affects a couple's life greatly overall, which emphasises the significance of tackling Instagram's detrimental impacts on mental health [].

This paper examines how Instagram has affected modern society, emphasising how it has shaped people's behaviours, interpersonal connections, and cultural dynamics. The development of Instagram, self-presentation, social relationships, and cultural trends are all examined. Additionally, the study looks at how it promotes digital communities, shapes social norms, and aids in communication and expression. In addition to criticising Instagram's possible detrimental effects on mental health, body image, self-esteem, cyberbullying, social comparison, and unattainable beauty standards; it also recognises Instagram's beneficial contributions to society, such as activism and social good []. In addition, privacy issues and social media companies' obligations to protect user privacy are covered in the paper. It also foresees upcoming developments and difficulties in the constantly changing social media environment. It looks at how social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn help people start relationships, keep them going over time, affect how people communicate, and mould intimacy and sharing. It also looks at the development of online communities, the phenomena of social comparison, and relationship satisfaction. But it also talks about issues including possible misconceptions, privacy problems, and cyberbullying. The research underscores the necessity of responsible digital involvement by projecting future trends and repercussions at the nexus of social media and interpersonal connections. The significance of ethical digital involvement is emphasised in the study's conclusion.

What defines Instagram?

Instagram is a mobile location-based social network software that lets users upload images and videos with digital effects applied. The software, originally named Burbn, was created in San Francisco, California, by Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger with the goal of fusing the

functionality of well-known social networking platforms like Foursquare []. Instagram is a hybrid of "instant camera" and "telegram," enabling users to digitally recapture the nostalgia of the instant photos made popular by Kodak Instamatic and Polaroid. In addition to allowing users to "like" and comment on images, follow other users' feeds, and link their Instagram accounts to other social media platforms, the app includes 20 filters that alter the lighting and tone of photos. Due to Instagram's contentious terms of service, some users have migrated to other photo-sharing platforms, such as Pheed and Flickr. The platform fosters widespread cooperation by means of user-generated content, advancing value via topic communities and connections between users [].

Instagram has a complicated and wide-ranging effect on couples' mental health. It can increase a feeling of nostalgia and belonging by promoting connection, fostering shared interests, and offering a virtual scrapbook of memories. However, it can also result in unreasonable expectations, communication difficulties, social comparison, and privacy issues. It is recommended that couples use Instagram with awareness, establish appropriate boundaries, and be transparent about their digital contacts. Mental health practitioners should incorporate conversations on digital dynamics into their couple's treatment to enable couples to effectively traverse obstacles and make beneficial use of social media []. Longitudinal research, cultural factors, and focused interventions to encourage responsible Instagram usage are some of the next topics to be pursued. In conclusion, in order for couples to manage the digital world while putting their mental health first, it is imperative that they comprehend the link between couples and Instagram's influence.

1. **Social Comparison and Self-Esteem:** Users frequently post well chosen and idealised photos of their life on Instagram. Regular exposure to these romanticised portrayals may cause social comparison, which may have an adverse effect on one's self-esteem. If couples believe other relationships are more glamorous or successful than their own, they may feel inadequate or unsatisfied.

2. **Jealousy and Trust:** Relationship problems with jealousy and trust may be exacerbated by Instagram. Feelings of uneasiness might arise when one observes their spouse interacting with others, like or commenting on images. If one spouse is worried about the other's internet activities, there may be a breakdown in trust and communication.

3. **Time Spent on Social Media:** Neglecting in-person interactions due to spending too much time on Instagram or social media in general might lower the quality of time spent with others. An over-dependence on digital communication might result in emotions of emotional detachment or loneliness inside the partnership.

4. **Benefits:** On the plus side, couples may use Instagram to preserve a sense of connection, share happy memories, and deepen their relationship—especially in distance relationships. Experiences and activities that are shared can be enhanced by following relationship-focused accounts and having similar interests.

5. **Miscommunication and misunderstandings:** On Instagram, unclear postings or conversations might lead to misunderstandings. Relationship disputes may arise from a lack of context or incorrect interpretation of likes and comments.

6. **Celebrating Relationship Milestones with Instagram:** Creating a feeling of shared history and happy recollections, some couples utilise Instagram to celebrate and record significant moments in their relationship.

It is essential to acknowledge that the influence of Instagram on the mental well-being of couples is extremely contextualised. While some couples can experience difficulties, others could feel that the platform improves their relationship. Positivity may be increased via open communication, building trust, and establishing sensible limits on social media use. Researchers are still delving into the complex correlations that exist between social media usage and mental health, and more

recent research may shed light on the specifics of Instagram use in romantic relationships [].

Mental Health

A persistently depressed state or lack of interest in activities are hallmarks of depression, a mental disease that has a substantial negative impact on life. The symptoms might come on suddenly or over a period of time []. They can include exhaustion, lack of interest, angry outbursts, decreased appetite, and in certain cases, suicidal thoughts. Anxiety disorder is a mental illness characterised by strong feelings of fear, worry, or anxiety that make it difficult to go about daily tasks. Elevated heart rate, hyperventilation, a sense of impending danger, an inability to control worry, and a strong desire to cease going through worrisome circumstances are all signs of anxiety disorders []. Anxiety episodes are extremely difficult to control and can escalate to a peak in a matter of minutes. Stress is a feeling of mental or physical tension that can be brought on by any thought or circumstance that makes you feel uneasy, angry, or disappointed. It can affect not just feelings or mood but also physical health, resulting in headaches, fatigue, loss of energy, and even the use of drugs or alcohol. Stress that is mild or momentary usually passes quickly, while chronic stress lasts for a long time. The subset of psychological well-being known as self-esteem comprises an individual's positive and negative self-perceptions. Both good and negative societal and personal factors can have an impact on one's sense of self-worth. A person's self-esteem can be high or low, positive or negative, depending on their emotional state, self-perception, and thoughts about their connections with others [].

Instagram and Mental Health

On the social media platform Instagram, individuals may share photos from their daily lives. Nonetheless, little research has been done on the relationship between Instagram use and mental health. A 2016 research

looked at the association between individuals in a partnership that used Instagram, loneliness, and social comparison. According to the study, Instagram browsing was linked to lower levels of loneliness, whereas influencers' activity, broadcasting, was linked to higher levels of loneliness []. More loneliness was indicated by those who engaged in upward social comparison.

In contrast to text-based platforms, picture-based ones like Instagram—create a stronger social presence, which makes them more effective in preventing loneliness, according to a 2018 research. According to research, there was a correlation between reduced degrees of loneliness and the use of image-based sites like Instagram. The forms of Instagram use and their connection to depressive moods in teenagers were the main topics of a 2020 longitudinal research. After using Instagram twice a day, participants were prompted to complete the survey. Based on the results, it appears that those who used Instagram for the first time throughout the day had higher levels of depression than those who used it twice. Instagram use may boost teenager's psychological health and a study discovered that teenagers' self-acceptance increased when they received likes on uploaded images []. However, when Instagram photographs don't get the necessary amount of "likes," self-acceptance can decline just as quickly as it can soar.

Conceptual Framework

Key Concept:
- Utilising Instagram (Independent Variable)
- Dependent variable: Mental Health of Couples
- Mediating Factors (such as impulses towards comparison and communication habits)
- Moderating factors (personal mental health, relationship satisfaction, etc.)

Hypotheses:

- **H1:** There is a negative correlation between couples' mental health and increased Instagram use.
- **Expected:** The mental health of couples who use Instagram more frequently will be worse.

Data Collection:

Data Collection Method	Sample Size	Duration
Surveys (Quantitative)	30 couples	10 days

Variables and Measurements:

S. No.	Instagram Use	Relationship Satisfaction	Number of Respondents
1	1-2 hours/ day	Good	8
2	3-5 hours/ day	Average	13
3	More than hours/ day	Bad	9

Data Analysis:

The study examined relationship satisfaction and Instagram usage statistics. The most popular usage, which varied depending on the responder, fell into the 3-5 hours per day group. With a fairly balanced distribution between the "Good" and "Bad" categories, a sizable majority of respondents stated that their relationship satisfaction was average. The categories that contributed to the connection were determined by analysing the data. Considering the significant level of the sample's relationship satisfaction with Instagram use was the study's last step. Recognising the study's shortcomings and taking any biases in the data into account was critical.

Discussion:

30 couples participated in the study, which looked at the connection between relationship happiness and Instagram use. The utilisation pattern was modest, and the satisfaction ratings were not all the same. The results corroborate other research on the connection between relationship happiness and social media use. Adapting treatments and counselling techniques for couples experiencing difficulties with Instagram use is one way to address the practical issues. Future studies should examine certain facets of Instagram usage and take self-reporting bias into account.

The impact's underlying mechanisms

In order to better understand how Instagram affects the mental health of couples, this study will concentrate on social interactions, self-presentation, and carefully constructed online personas. It also covers the effects of Instagram use on the mental health of couples and how addicting it can be. Digital well-being practices, mindfulness, media literacy, and cultivating supportive online networks are some of the strategies that support improved mental health outcomes []. In controlling Instagram use, the paper places a strong emphasis on personal accountability, digital self-care, and setting appropriate limits. It also covers moral issues including user empowerment, transparency, content control, privacy, and data usage. The paper's conclusion emphasises the necessity of user knowledge, Instagram usage that is responsible, and group efforts by users, platforms, and legislators to develop a more positive digital environment that promotes psychological well-being. The study emphasises the intricate connection between Instagram use and the mental health of couples and the necessity of coordinated actions by users, platforms, and legislators.

Digital Context for Couples Relationships

Significant parts of life, frequently greater than job or financial possessions, are couple connections. From evolutionary, communicational, and economic viewpoints, among others, they are examined. In a couple's love relationships, there are discernible stages, and as these phases shift, new requirements arise. An increasing number of couples relationships, particularly those of young adults are formed, maintained, and ended via online platforms []. While Instagram platforms offer quick and simple communication channels for couples to share joys and keep the lines of communication open even after their relationship ends, dating services offer a virtual environment for beginning a relationship. But using Instagram may also lead to conflict, especially when there are unfavourable circumstances involved, like envy. With a frequent selfie post linked to bad relationship results and envy from followers' too-flattering responses, Instagram plays a significant yet unfavourable role in romantic relationships as well. As a result of the potential for heightened tension and envy between partners, the significance of online communication tends to diminish in committed relationships []. It's important to think about how Instagram could affect love relationships and how having an extensive online presence could affect them.

Positive Influences

Couples may use Instagram as a forum to promote shared interests, commemorate and share important life events, and compile an online scrapbook of memories. By maintaining closeness and contact through comments, direct messages, and shared information, enhances communication. Instagram also helps to build a community that is conducive to relationships by encouraging thankfulness and admiration through affirmations posted in public []. Real-time communication and visual updates can assist in bridging the gap in long-distance relationships by creating a sense of presence even while physically separated. However, there are obstacles to overcome, such as privacy concerns and

comparison traps. Recognising possible issues, recognising potential hurdles, and learning to strike a healthy balance are strategies for getting over roadblocks and maintaining equilibrium when using social media in pairs [].

Negative Influences

This paper examines how social media, especially Instagram, affects modern relationships and the possible harm it may do to a pair. It talks about how social comparison, unattainable beauty standards, trust difficulties, and the possibility of misinterpreting online behaviour to cause conflict in real life may all be caused by Instagram's carefully selected material []. There is also discussion of communication issues, such as the possibility that significant in-person encounters might be replaced by digital communication, which would lower the relationship's overall communication quality. Concerns about privacy are covered, along with the possible negative effects of revealing too much information and the need to set personal limits. Expectations of unrealistic relationships are examined, with the possibility of disappointment when actual relationships do not live up to the idealised representations []. Along with the psychological effects of unfavourable encounters and public confrontations on relationship well-being, cyberbullying and internet harassment are also covered. Spending too much time on Instagram might cause one to miss in-person conversations, which can impede spending meaningful time with others. Setting limits, developing resilience, and having open communication are all effective coping mechanisms for couples dealing with unfavourable influences on Instagram []. In order to minimise possible problems, the text's conclusion emphasises the need to take a thoughtful approach to using social media, encouraging communication, and establishing healthy limits.

Individual Differences and Moderating Factors

A number of variables to determine how Instagram affects mental health look at coping strategies, digital literacy, personality features, attachment types, communication patterns, reasons for using Instagram, cultural and social factors, and the implications for support and intervention []. Extraversion, introversion, neuroticism, and openness are some of the personality factors that affect how people use Instagram and how susceptible they are to social comparison and emotional reactions. Different attachment patterns, including avoidant, anxious, and secure, have an influence on how people use Instagram and how that use affects their mental health. Self-expression, obtaining information, and fostering social connections are among the reasons people use Instagram []. In order to moderate the association between Instagram use and outcomes related to mental health, coping strategies are vital. Additionally influential are media and digital literacy

People's interpretation of material on Instagram is also influenced by their level of digital and media literacy, and the ability to use critical thinking skills is essential for navigating the platform and removing dangerous content. Individual views of Instagram usage are shaped by cultural and socioeconomic factors, with cultural expectations and conventions reducing the influence of Instagram on mental health across a variety of demographics. Recognising individual variations can help develop tailored support systems and treatments, resulting in more individualised approaches to mental health promotion. As a result, this study adds to our understanding of Instagram's effects on mental health and emphasises the need for more research to examine the relationship between user characteristics and Instagram use [].

Methodological Challenges and Future Research Directions of Couples Mental Health

The difficulties in studying couples' mental health are covered in this paper, along with sample strategies, measurement problems, technology,

long-term studies, diversity and inclusion, intervention research, qualitative approaches, and cooperative research. It examines the shortcomings of cross-sectional studies, emphasises the need of validated instruments, longitudinal studies, and technology in research, and stresses the need of taking socioeconomic, cultural, and interpersonal structures into account []. The promise of digital tools and interventions is also covered in the article, although privacy and ethical issues are also emphasised. In closing, the report highlights methodological issues with couples' mental health research and suggests creative avenues for further investigation. This will assist researchers in enhancing the calibre and relevance of their results, which will ultimately result in couples' support systems and successful therapies [].

Instagram Implications for Couples and Therapists

How Instagram affects couples and therapists, with a particular emphasis on relationship development, social comparison dynamics, communication styles, and privacy issues. It also covers how therapists may help couples dealing with issues linked to Instagram usage during couples therapy, the value of integrating digital literacy, how to create appropriate limits, and coping mechanisms for couples experiencing difficulties with Instagram use []. The paper urges more study and professional growth to handle the changing digital dynamics of couple's therapy. In the ever-changing digital world, therapists and couples may promote healthy, communicative relationships by incorporating digital literacy into therapy practice and carefully exploring Instagram [].

Social Media and Its Repercussions

As of July 2012, there were around 172 million users of social media, a 5% increase in users over the previous year []. Nonetheless, there has been a rise in interest in research on participants' mental health. Researchers came to the conclusion that social media users have greater levels of anxiety and despair. Participants in a previous research of young

adults in the US who utilised seven or more social media sites showed higher levels of anxiety and despair.

In a different study, Lin et al. (2016) discovered that those with regular social media usage had higher depressive symptoms than those with infrequent use. Various writers have proposed distinct explanations for the correlation between social media and anxiety and depression, such as age and its link to self-worths. Women scored higher than males on studies by Andreassen et al. (2017) and Hardy and Castonguay (2018) about addictive social media usage, however this tendency was more prevalent in young individuals than in older adults. An examination of the relationship between social media and wellbeing that was released in 2017 used a different methodology. According to the writers, depending on how it's utilised, social media may have a good or bad effect. Social media usage and well-being are positively correlated when it comes to higher levels of connection, and negatively correlated when it comes to actions that don't satisfy users' approval requirements [].

Users of Instagram, a phrase used to refer to websites and applications that emphasise collaboration, content sharing, communication, and engagement, have increased. But it has been shown that this has a detrimental effect on users' mental health. Instagram usage has been linked to poor mental health in the past, with a study that intends to investigate the disparate ways have encountered Instagram. The project intends to investigate possible impacts and long-term implications as well as fill in research gaps regarding the influence of Instagram on cohort mental health. Future investigations into how Instagram affects mental health across a range of age groups will be aided by the results.

Instagram now plays a big role in people's lives and affects their mental health in a lot of different ways, such as personal, behavioural, and economic. Due to Instagram's growing popularity and influence over a wide range of spheres of life, there is, nevertheless, a dearth of studies on the effects of Instagram uses on mental health [2]. In addition to comparing the levels of stress, anxiety, depression, and self-esteem, this study intends to investigate the wider effects of Instagram. Due to their

upbringing in the heyday of Instagram and the internet, it is anticipated that Generation Z will report higher rates of poor mental health.

Conclusion

A study's conclusion should reiterate important findings, highlight major discoveries, and discuss how these findings affect the goals of the investigation. It should also include a summary of the goals of the study and a discussion of how those goals have been met. Practical suggestions for the next interventions or activities, together with detailed methods or approaches to deal with the concerns brought up, have to be given in light of the findings. Stakeholders, practitioners, and legislators should take these results' consequences into account. The study should highlight opportunities for improvement or more research to address these shortcomings as well as recognise them.

Although social media and mental health are generally associated negatively, some research points to possible positive interactions. Depending on why people use social media and how they use it, there are different effects on mental health. For results to be more broadly applicable, future research should concentrate on a variety of age groups. This study fills in the gaps in the literature by evaluating the ages taken into account and cohort differences on the impact of social media on individual mental health.

Instagram has become a more potent tool for isolating us from others than for fostering social connections, particularly in the year of quarantine when the majority of human interaction has been facilitated by complex virtual social networks. Online connections frequently have an unsettlingly close sense to them while also feeling manufactured. According to futurologist Marshall McLuhan's well-known dictum, "the medium is the message," any media's effects on society and on an individual basis or couples stem from the additional dimensions that each technological advancement or personal extension of ourselves brings into our lives. As evidenced by Dunbar's Number theory, which holds that people can only appreciate and recognise a certain number of other

people, the internet can lead to a terrible sense of isolation. Studies of comments left on far-right Instagram sites have shown that this feeling of isolation and dehumanisation may reach catastrophic heights. Our social intelligence may short circuit due to the tension between empathy and hatred on the internet, creating unhealthy interactions that we are ill-prepared to handle. The actual effects of social networking on our relationships and mental health remain a mystery to modern psychology.

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