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Feminist hashtag activism in Spain: measuring the degree of politicisation of online discourse on #YoSíTeCreo, #HermanaYoSíTeCreo, #Cuéntalo y #NoEstásSola

Abstract

The use of Twitter as a tool for mobilisation has made digital social and political activism a growing area of interest in communication research. Scholars have underscored the effectiveness of Twitter in galvanising the opinion of broad sectors of the public and expressing the indignation of average citizens on issues of social concern (Bruns *et al*., 2015; Martínez, 2017). The rise of feminist social media activism has prompted a number of studies on the feminist movement's use of hashtags to foster online conversations on specific issues (Jinsook, 2017; Turley & Fisher, 2018; etc.). This article examines the correlation between the degree of ideological commitment amongst social media users and the nature of their Twitter conversations on a given issue. The analysis focuses on Twitter conversations generated by feminists, influencers, journalists and politicians in reaction to the controversial sentencing of the Wolf Pack (*La Manada*) –a gang of men involved in a sexual assault perpetrated during the San Fermín festival in Pamplona. Big data techniques were used to explore the nature of messages containing four highly charged hashtags central to feminist discourse on this issue: #YoSiTeCreo (Yes, I believe you), #HermanaYoSíTeCreo (Yes, sister, I believe you), #Cuéntalo (Talk about it) and #NoEstásSola (You are not alone). Our findings indicate that the levels of ideological commitment of Twitter users participating in what was essentially a feminist conversation varied to an extent that impeded serious interaction amongst them, either online or offline. From the perspective of communication strategy, feminist hashtag activism would appear to be an intermediate step in a longer process of creating a higher consciousness regarding gender equality issues in Spain.

Keywords
Hashtag activism, feminism, Twitter, politicisation, digital conversation, big data.

1. Introduction

1.1. *The feminist movement in the public communication space*

Feminism is a social movement that incorporates women's collective expression in their determination to overcome situations of gender discrimination and political, social and cultural inequality. This collective struggle in favour of equality has proved decisive in promoting many of the transformations that have taken place in modern societies since the mid-21st century (Nash, 2005).

Since its emergence the feminist movement has placed great importance on making itself visible in society, hence this action-based movement has historically made an effort to spread its message and raise the population's awareness of the problems affecting women. This social and political interest in feminist demands became evident during the first wave of suffragism in the early 20th century and the second wave of the 1960s and 1970s, symbolised by the Women's Liberation Movement (WLM). In both periods journalistic booms were generated that extolled feminism as a "trendy issue" (Bradley, 2003; Cancian & Ross, 1981; Downing et al., 2001; Gamson & Wolfsfeld, 1993; Huddy, 1997; Larrondo, 2017). Over the course of the last century, the feminist movement thus managed to normalise the presence of women's demands in public and social discourse, including the discourse of the mass media (Ergas, 1993, p. 539 and ff.).

At present feminism is experiencing one of those periods of effervescence in the public and communicative space thanks to technological progress. The emergence of the Web in the early 1990s provided the movement with new energies and a new expression in communication spaces outside the empire of the traditional mass media. This Web-mediated visibility became an instrument for articulation and egalitarian struggle (Thompson, 2005, p. 29), placing previously unknown expressive potentials within the reach of the feminist movement. This new meaning of collective communication that made women into authors, transmitters and receivers of information contributed to laying the foundations for the development of so-called "cyberfeminism" (Wilding, 1998; Reverter, 2001). The first feminist spaces on the Web (communities, blogs, etc.) and the use of the first dialogical resources (forums, chats, email and distribution lists, newsgroups, etc.) (Larrondo, 2005) are understood to have formed the precursor of feminism's spread into digital spaces and platforms like Twitter, and of its highest expression in so-called "hashtag feminism." This serves as a reaffirmation of how, since the emergence of the Web, feminism has pursued a constant search for discursive strategies to "obtain new terrains of expression and assertion" (García & Silva, 2017, p. 281).

1.2. *Hashtag feminism*

The microblogging network Twitter favours the creation of "ideological frames of reference that are effective for mobilisation" (Arroyas, Martínez & Berná, 2018). Thanks to its communicative characteristics –immediacy, mobilisation, media impact and simplification of the message– this network stands because of its capacity to spread messages, open debates and create communities of ideologically like-minded users (Arroyas-Langa *et al.*, 2018).

The academic literature has recently examined important feminist campaigns on Twitter based on certain hashtags –#Metoo, #TimesUp, #iamafeminist, #WomensMarch, etc. (Jinsook, 2017; Turley & Fisher, 2018). Some of these studies, focused on determining the true effectiveness of this technologized communicative form, adopt a critical position, pointing to the high component of individualism on Twitter and, consequently, its scant usefulness for promoting strong and deep collectives (Zafra, 2010; Rendueles, 2013; Fotopoulou, 2014; Caro, 2015). Following the metaphor provided by Mann (2013: 7, *apud* Caro, 2015), it seems that with Twitter women are "paddling" in different swimming pools at the same time, rather than struggling together to "make waves." However, the majority of studies take a more positive

view of the issue and coincide in noting that this social media platform is effective in the political field, for example, where it creates leadership, consolidates political brands and connects political formations with the electorate.

Setting out from Twitter's usefulness as a tool of social analysis, it is worth recalling that these investigations prioritised the content analysis of tweets in which certain keywords were present, as well the discussion these tweets encouraged, systematised on the basis of the use hashtags, generally with the aim of determining the capacity of influence and dissemination or viralization of the messages. In any case, feminist and gender studies endeavour to advance and analyse parameters that go beyond this influence measured by number of followers and retweets, because in a hyperconnected and interactive world social activism is above all "conversation" or "dialogue." In this context, the present article focuses on the digital conversation via hashtags linked to the Wolf Pack (*La Manada*) case. It aims to contribute to advancing the studies on social and feminist movements around Twitter, a need underscored by some of the most outstanding recent contributions (Baer, 2016; Mendes, Ringrose & Keller, 2018; Stubbs-Richardson, Rader & Cosby, 2018; Turley & Fisher, 2018; etc.).

In Spain concretely, the importance of Twitter for feminist activism became evident beginning with the feminist strike on International Working Women's Day on March 8, 2018 (henceforth 8-M). This was an unprecedented mobilisation that signalled a turning point in the history of the egalitarian struggle and in its forms as well, thanks to the use of hashtags that became a trending topic: #8deMarzoHuelgaFeminista, #Huelga8Marzo, #Nosotras Paramos, #MásFeminismoQueNunca and #Manifestación8M.

The polemical ruling in the well-known case of the Wolf Pack proved decisive for promoting this "hashtag feminism" in Spain –which has hardly been studied to date– based on discursive slogans like those we examine in this article: #YoSiTeCreo (Yes, I believe you), #HermanaYoSíTeCreo (Yes, sister, I believe you), #Cuéntalo (Talk about it) and #NoEstásSola (You are not alone). Furthermore, 8-M made clear that there was a differential factor in Spain, which has been attributed to diverse factors, amongst them the sexual aggression by a gang of five men against a young woman in the San Fermín festival (Pamplona)[1] in the year 2016.

2. Justification and interest of the study

This research is framed in a broader project on the contribution of social media to the new paradigm of social and communication media. In this respect, hashtag activism functions as a spur and is fomenting reflections in the academy of considerable depth in terms of their usefulness to the social movements. In light of that, this article enquires into the usefulness of hashtag activism in fomenting digital conversation around the polemical Wolf Pack case, with "digital conversation" understood to be dialogical interactions (tweets, retweets, answers and mentions) generated around feminist hashtags that are representative of that debate, such as #YoSiTeCreo, #HermanaYoSíTeCreo, #Cuéntalo and #NoEstásSola. This digital conversation through hashtags symbolises a context of dialogical relations that are of interest and relevance for specifying and gaining a deeper understanding of the relations established between the feminist movement and other relevant agents, like political parties.

Twitter is posited as an environment for dialogical interaction in which feminisms, feminists, the political parties and their leaders relate to each other. In this respect, it is worth bearing in mind, on the one hand, the following and interest that any communication emitted by the political parties and their leaders holds for today's movement. On the other, it is worth considering the feminist tradition in Spain, which is polarised around two currents: one with

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[1] The Provincial Court of Navarre issued its ruling on April 26th, 2018, sentencing the five accused to nine years in prison for "sexual abuse," which gave rise to considerable opposition from diverse public opinion actors that considered the attack to be "rape." Moreover, the ruling absolved the accused of other related crimes, such as mobile phone recordings and robbery with intimidation. The feminist outrage expressed due to the Wolf Pack case, was also fed by other factors, such as the continued social indignation facing the incessant cases of gender violence in Spain.

a political-institutional character, nourished and promoted by political organisations and parties; and the other with a more autonomous and revolutionary character. The foundations of both currents were laid with the birth of the first organised feminist movement in Spain: the feminism of the Transition of the late 1970s (1976-1979) (Larumbre, 2002). With the end of the Transition, the movement began to be represented in the public space as a necessarily conjunctural one, which in the 1980s was to enter a phase of latency as a political and subversive movement (Larrondo, 2017).

In light of the above, this study asks whether it is possible to characterise feminism on the basis of phenomena like feminist hashtag activism and the latter's degree of politicisation. In this sense, the general aim guiding this analysis is to determine whether, in the framework of collective action fomented by hashtag activism, the more traditional labels (politicised and apolitical feminisms) continue to be accurate or whether they have become blurred to re-emerge in the form of feminisms with a much more plural and diverse character. This principal aim is concretised in the following research question: does feminism, materialised or symbolised on the basis of diverse hashtags having a high impact or public-social interest, follow the pattern of "low" and "high" politicisation on Twitter through cluster formation.

The concept of politicisation is a broad and complex one, and has given rise to numerous reflections in the Social Sciences concerning the effect it has on science itself (Olesen, 2016; Von Storch & Bray, 2010), on identity and ethnicity (Weber, Hiers & Flesken, 2016) and even, although this might seem redundant, on political decision-making (Hooghe & Marks, 2012; Tsouvalis & Waterton, 2012). In any case, this article employs a simplified notion of the term, relating to the degree to which a user fits into a party structure.

As its general starting premise, our analysis posits the existence of a feminist current with a high degree of politicisation and another much less politicised current that corresponds to sensibilities that go beyond the labelled feminisms (political, revolutionary or radical, lesbofeminism, etc.). This contrast also leads us to pose the following secondary question: is hashtag activism a means by which less politicised individuals can access positions, thoughts and reflections of a feminist character?

To examine the degree of politicisation of feminism around feminist hashtags linked to the Wolf Pack case, an empirical approach is employed based on the analysis of the interactions established on the basis of these hashtags. This is a double approach, inductive and deductive, based on techniques that are exploratory (Analysis of Networks) and inferential statistical (T-Test and predictive modelling). As we explain in greater detail in the methodological section, this pattern proves interesting when examined on the basis of the perspective of diverse social movements and groups, although the study argues that, applied to the feminist movement, the analysis of the degree of politicisation becomes particularly relevant, since this movement presents particular characteristics. This is not surprising since, as noted above, this movement permits participations and struggles based on individual and group autonomy, and also participations based on the ideological dynamics of the diverse political currents and groups of the left, centre and right. Moreover, it has been shown that while the political parties use social media to complete their official discourse and disseminate it by alternative routes, this use modifies the parameters of traditional political interaction (Arroyas, Martínez & Berná, 2018).

This analysis thus seeks to complete the portrait that the academy is currently constructing of the feminist movement, as well to permit a deeper understanding of the impact and specific consequences at the political, social and cultural levels of the movement's effective presence on social media platforms like Twitter.

3. Methodology

3.1. *Obtaining and treating the data*

This study examined a total of 290,989 tweets published by 168,014 unique users of the hashtags #Cuéntalo, #HermanaYoSíTeCreo, #NoEstasSola y #YoSiTeCreo between April 26th 2018 –the date of the first judicial ruling on the Wolf Pack case– and August 30th of the same year –the date established intentionally by the researchers to close a representative period of data capture lasting several months, in this case four. Regarding the number of impacts (tweets) per hashtag in this period, the hashtag #YoSiTeCreo is by far the most prolific of the period, surpassing 238,000 captured tweets, retweets and answers (238,667 tweets), followed byt #Cuéntalo, with 27,136 tweets, #HermanaYoSíTeCreo, with 17,728 tweets, and #NoEstasSola, with 14,251 tweets. The figure of 290,989 captured tweets is thus exceeded, since 6,793 tweets used more than one hashtag. In addition, 1,110,836 interactional relations of 1,298 users were obtained for generating additional attributes of these users.

To obtain these analytical data we monitored the flow of interactions on the social media platform Twitter, using the Twitter Capture and Analysis Toolset, developed by Digital Methods Initiative (DMI-TCAT) at the University of Amsterdam (Borra & Rieder, 2014). Based on the application of this tool, the study proposed an exclusive methodological design, developed *ad hoc* to examine the specific problem of this investigation.

All of these collected data are treated and examined using Social Media Analysis techniques. In this respect, DMI-TCAT makes it possible to synthesise network graphs, in which each actor or node represents a participant in the conversation, and each connection or edge an interaction involving a mention on Twitter: a retweet, a direct answer or a question within a regular tweet. Subsequently, metrics were generated using Pajek software (Batagelj & Mrvar, 1998) and these graphs were visualised with Gephi (Bastian *et al.*, 2009).

3.2. *Generation of variables and techniques of analysis*

The empirical proposal of this research is developed in two stages, the first, exploratory and descriptive, and the second, hypothetical–deductive. In the first phase, the following metrics were synthesised on the basis of relations established between the users in the conversation:

Community of belonging: community assigned by means of the Louvain multilevel refinement community detection algorithm (Blondel *et al.,* 2008).

Input degree: number of mentions received by the other nodes on the network, whether by direct allusions, answers or retweets.

Input degree centralisation: level of inequality in the figures on input degree in a network (0 = total decentralisation, 1 = total centralisation), applying this measure to each community[2].

According to the original calculation of *Degree Centralisation* postulated by Freeman (1978), the number of connections of each node of the network must be placed in relation to the number of connections of the most connected node, as well as the highest sum of the differences of connections between actors on the network. In this way, a figure is obtained, oscillating between 0 and 1, which shows this particular characteristic of a network's morphology.

Thus, on the graph of interactions, 3,764 different communities with a modularity number of 0.74 (very high) have been detected, which gives the community structure great mathematical significance. Twelve of these communities alone accumulate more than 2% of the actors of the network. Among them, these 12 communities bring together 51.12% of the actors of the network. We are therefore facing a very fragmented conversation, without absolute leaderships.

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[2] Those differences can be observed in the image accessible at http://xurl.es/figures (Graphic 1). In the first network a single node receives all the connections (centralisation of 1 or 100%), while in the second network there is only one node that is more weakly connected in comparison to the rest (centralisation of 0.02 or 2%).

After calculating the figures for the input degree that constitute attributes of the actors, the figures for the degree of centralisation were calculated and the attributes of the communities were constituted. That is, we calculated how equally or unequally the reception of mentions in each community is distributed. Those communities with a centralisation above 50% are considered to have "high centralisation" (typically, they respond to behaviours involving retweeting one or a few actors, that is, a few are mentioned by many). Conversely, the communities with a centralisation below 50% are considered to have "low centralisation" (these are communities with diverse protagonists in which interactions tend to occur involving more than one actor, that is, communities where many are mentioned by many). All these measurements can be seen on the following table (Table 1.)

Table 1: Graph Metrics.

COMMUNITY	ACTORS (N)	PERCENTAGE (N)	INDEGREE CENTRALISATION	TYPE OF COMMUNITY
13 (SANDRA SABATÉS, EL INTERMEDIO-LA SEXTA)	11,633	7.58%	97.76%	High centralisation
3 (CLOSE TO PODEMOS)	11,390	7.42%	14.10%	Low centralisation
50 (MOBILISATION IN BILBAO)	10,255	6.68%	95.34%	High centralisation
129 (#CUÉNTALO)	8,336	5.43%	91.26%	High centralisation
4 (INDEPENDENTISM)	8,151	5.31%	52.81%	High centralisation
5 (COMIC)	5.883	3.83%	54.65%	High centralisation
15 (FEMINIST MOVEMENT)	5,089	3.32%	18.08%	Low centralisation
55 (MÓNICA RINCÓN, CNN CHILE)	4,344	2.83%	94.89%	High centralisation
51 (ALT-RIGHT)	3,991	2.60%	16.36%	Low centralisation
74 (CHILEAN FEMINISTS)	3,885	2.53%	39.42%	Low centralisation
17 (LETICIA DOLERA, FEMINISTA HASHTAG ACTIVIST, AND FILM DIRECTOR)	3,734	2.43%	68.24%	High centralisation
6 (PSOE)	3,311	2.16%	12.08%	Low centralisation

The number of communities was randomly assigned by the algorithm and should not be interpreted ordinally. The communities were given names by the authors according to their characteristics and actors. Source: Own elaboration using metrics elaborated with the Pajek computer program. Note: Table 1 and 2 in the web http://xurl.es/figures specify the most mentioned accounts and the most shared contents in each high and low centralisation communities. The shared contents in communities with low centralisation are much more diverse than in communities with high centralisation.

Belonging to a community with a "high" or "low" centralisation must be understood as a behavioural feature of an actor on Twitter. In political conversations, our premise is that this is a behaviour related to the degree or level of an individual's politicisation. While more politicised individuals will tend to participate in more complex and multipolar conversations in communities with low centralisation (thus feeding their high level of politicisation), those who are less politicised will participate less or will do so making use of resources of the "follower" or "main leader" type, often limiting themselves to spreading big opinion prescribers and reproducing the latter's opinions, for example, retweeting them (generally placing themselves in communities with high centralisation). Moreover, there is evidence for asserting that the type of message (more or less emotional or more or less intense) is also related to this phenomenon.

The second phase of empirical analysis traced a relation between the behaviour observed on the network (belonging to a cluster with low or high centralisation) and the concept of

politicisation mentioned above, understood as an interest in and conscious involvement with one or several ideas or political ideologies. The study sets out from the idea that the concept of politicisation is a broad, complex, polysemic one, and that it cannot be reduced to a mere question of degree or level, given that there are also forms and ways of being politicised. Therefore, the parameterisation that is carried out in this study does not aim to annul alternative perspectives on the phenomenon, but instead to provide a form of explaining digital behaviour in political conversations on the basis of a measurable and repeatable category.

Even so, to approach the degree of each actor's politicisation we take as an indicator the number of accounts followed amongst the four big state-level parties (Ciudadanos, Podemos, PP and PSOE) and their current leaders (Albert Rivera, Pablo Iglesias, Pablo Casado and Pedro Sánchez, respectively). We thus consider that a person who follows more political accounts will consequently be someone more exposed to political messages, or more politicised.

For the empirical analysis each user selected was awarded a score from 0 to 8 on a scale (0 = does not follow any party or leader; 8 = follows all the parties and leaders). After synthesising all the variables, we tried to establish a link between the variable that was outside the network and related to the concept of politicisation (the number of followings of 8 political accounts selected by each user) and the reticular variable of indegree centralisation. In the belief that analysis referring to the degree of politicisation on Twitter might contribute to defining and characterising the contemporary feminist movement, we undertook to verify the following three specific hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1. There are differences between the degree of politicisation of the users of clusters with high and low indegree centralisation.

Hypothesis 2. Users belonging to clusters with low indegree centralisation will tend to be more politicised.

Hypothesis 3. The degree of politicisation of a user has a predictive capacity with respect to the type of cluster of which they form part.

To verify the hypotheses outlined above we obtained the lists of interactional relations of several users, randomly selected through a fixed sample size (1,500) by means of Orange software, with the aim of guaranteeing that the sample should have the highest representativeness. Half (750) formed part of clusters with high indegree centralisation; the other half formed part of clusters with low indegree centralisation. Out of these, 1,298 users proved to be valid (not cancelled or not protected): 694 were related to clusters with high centralisation and 604 were related to clusters with low centralisation. Subsequently, we obtained the accounts followed by these 1,298 users and identified the followings of: @ppopular, @psoe, @ahorapodemos, @ciudadanoscs, @pablocasado_, @sanchezcastejon, @albert_rivera and @pablo_iglesias. Similarly, we established a scale of politicisation according to the number of accounts followed amongst the foregoing, as indicated previously (min=0, max=8).

The first hypothesis was verified on R (Fox, 2005) by means of the T-Test method for the two independent samples, taking the cluster of belonging (dichotomous categorical variable: high or low centralisation) as the independent variable and the degree of politicisation (variable from 0 to 8) as the dependent one. To verify the second hypothesis, we synthesised a box-and-whisker graph with Excel. This makes it possible to observe the differences in the two distributions. Finally, we used three different Machine Learning techniques with Orange Data Mining (Demsar *et al.*, 2013) (Tree, Random Forest and Logistic Regression) to evaluate the capacity of the predictive model, taking the degree of politicisation as the independent variable and the cluster of belonging as the dependent one.

4. Results: exploratory analysis

In the graph synthesised on the basis of conversation established on the hashtags #Cuéntalo, #HermanaYoSíTeCreo, #NoEstasSola and #YoSiTeCreo, two types of community stand out, those with a high level of indegree centralisation, and those with low centralisation. The different communities can be identified in the image accompanying this section (Figure 1).

Similarly, this section includes two graphs (Figures 1 and 2–3) that illustrate the relevance of the hashtags present in the selected interactions, according to the importance of each in the cited communities with low and high centralisation. No great differences can be observed between the two images: in both cases the two hashtags with the greatest presence are #YoSiTeCreo and #LaManada. However, there are slight differences that could lead one to think that in the communities with high centralisation (lower degree of politicisation) certain hashtags stand out slightly that are related to more personal or emotional allusions, for example, #Cuéntalo (an invitation to develop personal narratives in the first person). For their part, in the communities with low centralisation there is a greater presence of hashtags with more "political" connotations (for example, #JusticiaPatriarcal). We will now explore the contents that are most shared in the communities, and then proceed to articulate the explanatory model.

Figure 1: Descriptive graph of the communities as a whole.
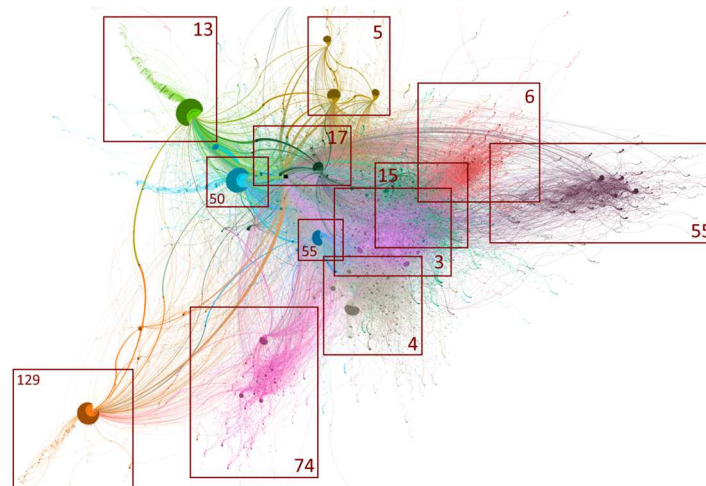
Source: Own elaboration using the Gephi tool.

Figures 2 and 3: Comparison of hashtags present in the clusters with high centralisation (left) and low centralisation (right).
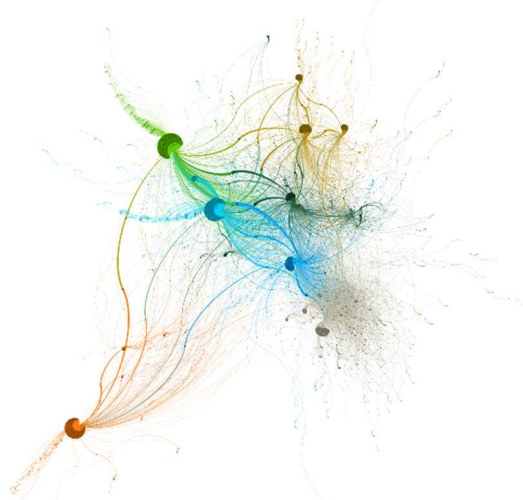

Source: Own elaboration using the Gephi tool.

4.1. *Communities with high centralisation*

The communities with high indegree centralisation are characterised by having a lot of people retweeting to very few (Figure 4). In this way, the receipt of mentions is centralised (input degree) through Twitter's own retweet mechanism. Neither debate, nor discussion predominate on these networks; in the majority of cases a specific content is spread.

**Figure 4**: Descriptive graph isolating the communities with high centralisation.

Source: Own elaboration using the Gephi tool.

It can thus be seen that in general the messages forming this cluster with high centralisation contain elements like videos, images, references to graphic documents, etc. These are elements that summarise, in a brief document or a small space, the states of mind and the emotions that arose after the ruling was announced. This confirms that the actors present on these nodes take recourse to sharing easily understood contents and to the simple act of sharing certain contents.

4.2. *Communities with low centralisation*

The characteristics of the communities with low indegree centralisation could in many cases represent the opposite of what was described in the previous clusters. These are groups with multiple "intra-community" leaderships – leaderships that are more spread out and have more horizontal structures – in which the potential for questioning or interacting is therefore greater. Stated differently, these are nodes that do not exclusively depend on a unique content or even on a few contents. It could be said that they involve spread out or "tangled" leaderships (Figure 5). The comparison of the two graphs of the isolated communities provides a graphic explanation of this. In the graph illustrating this section there are numerous heads or predominant points, as the graph in Figure 5 shows. We could liken the graph in the previous figure (Figure 4) to a picture painted with broad brushstrokes that leaves several drops or stains on the canvas. On the contrary, the graph that illustrates these communities is represented by thousands of much more tenuous lines that could have been made by a fine paintbrush.

Figure 5: Descriptive graph isolating the communities with low centralisation.
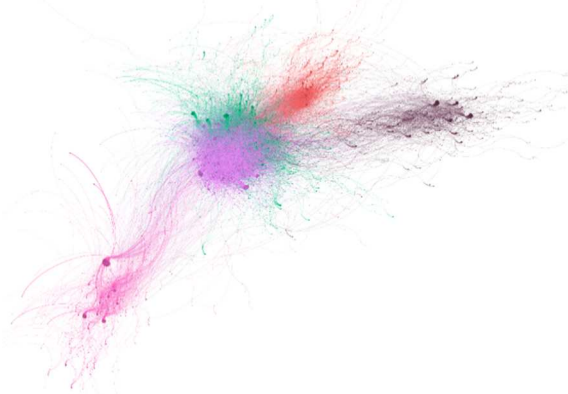
Source: Own elaboration using the Gephi tool.

4.3. *Deductive hypothetical statistical analysis*

According to what the first hypothesis envisioned, "there are differences between the degree of politicisation of the users of clusters with high and low indegree centralisation." The Levene test suggests heteroscedasticity or inequality of variances ($p < 0.001$). This conditions the T–Test function employing the R statistical procedure, which must be applied assuming unequal variances, applying the Welch test for two independent samples. The Welch test suggests that there are significant differences between the two samples with respect to their degree of politicisation ($p < 0.001$). It therefore cannot be assumed that both populations have equal medians (the null hypothesis), but instead we should assume that there are differences (the alternative hypothesis). Hypothesis 1 is therefore validated: There are differences between the degree of politicisation of the users of clusters with high and low indegree centralisation.

The second hypothesis states that users belonging to clusters with low indegree centralisation will tend to be more politicised[3]. The second hypothesis is therefore confirmed: users belonging to clusters with low indegree centralisation will tend to be more politicised, according to the meaning given to the concept in this study.

The third hypothesis reflects the idea that the differences found are sufficiently important as to be able to predict the behaviour of a user based on their interactional relations. This involves a causal logic, from which is derived that the degree of a user's politicisation, reflected in certain interactional relations, is capable of explaining their behaviour on social media: the less politicised will tend to participate less and do so with logics that are more "continuist," while the more politicised will tend to participate more and form part of circles in which information circulates more easily.

To verify the third hypothesis, we tested the predictive capacity of the variables synthesised based on interactional relations in the cluster of belonging by using three Learning Machine algorithms: Tree (for example, with a minimum of 2 cases per leaf, maximum depth of 100, binary trees); Random Forest (for example, 10 trees of unlimited depth and a maximum of 5 cases); and Logistical Regression (for example, Ridge L2, C=1). The baseline of the operation is the constant learner (AUC = 0.5) which, in classificatory models, predicts the majority result. The models were tested with Orange Data Mining (2013).

The three methods implemented indicate an adequate fit (for example, AUCs equal to or over 0.67), although it could be improved. It suggests that, in spite of the predictive strength

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[3] To verify this we observed the distribution of both categories by means of a box-and-whisker diagram accessible at http://xurl.es/figures (Graphic 2). The box-and-whisker diagram shows that the values different from 0 are anomalous (values outside the range) in the cluster with high centralisation, given that their members do not tend to follow the selected parties and leaders. Conversely, following 1 or 2 selected accounts is a normal characteristic for 75% (the third quartile) of the users of the cluster with low centralisation.

of the model being important, it could in all likelihood be enriched with more elements (variables relative to the total number of followers, a specific interest in feminism, etc.)[4]. The model with the best fit (Logistical Regression, AUC = 0.674) was able to correctly predict 597 users belonging to clusters with high indegree centralisation, that is, 63.5%, and 261 users of clusters with low centralisation, that is, 72.9%. The model shows a predictive preference of 72.4% towards clusters with high indegree centralisation, probably due to the lower variability of the category (when a user follows 0 selected accounts, they will tend to be categorised as belonging to a cluster with high centralisation, although that value is not something abnormal in clusters with low centralisation).

Hypothesis 3 is therefore validated: the degree of politicisation of a user has a predictive capacity with respect to the type of cluster of which they form part. Even so, while this predictive model is acceptable and confirms the third hypothesis, it also invites consideration of additional factors, related or unrelated to the concept of politicisation sketched previously, to predict the conduct of users in social debates on Twitter.

5. Conclusions and discussion

Politicisation, understood in the terms defined in this study, is one of the main variables to consider when characterising the communities that integrate the Twitter social media platform and relate to each other dialogically. Consequently, politicisation is also a useful variable for examining the communicative and dialogical advantages offered by the phenomenon of hashtag activism on Twitter. This contribution proves essential in the current context of online communication strategy, insofar as it enables the identification of groups of users according to their characteristics and interests in order to send certain types of messages.

According to the analysis, a low degree of politicisation is associated with participation in more hierarchized clusters, distinguished by integrating a multitude of users (nodes) related and organised on the basis of their linkage (mentions) to a principal node or leading user, responsible for energising the participation of the users, generally in the form of retweets of messages from the principal node. There are diverse conditioning factors that encourage this engagement within the cluster, such as the use of visual resources (videos, photographs, etc.) It is not for nothing that these clusters with high centralisation show positions that are apparently more vehement and tightly linked to the popular feminist sentiment that irrupted on the days when the ruling on the "Wolf Pack" case became known. Following this line of argument, a deep debate could be opened on the extent to which networked feminisms should have recourse to attention-grabbing or more fanatical actions in search of engagement and viralisation, leaving in the background the space for dialogue intended for deliberation favouring the movement's strategic evolution.

In contrast, the profiles grouped in the space reserved for more politicised actors appear linked to a greater dialogical capacity for participating in online debate, on the basis of more active attitudes and more listening amongst users, as well as between users and political leaders, the majority of them left-wing. A greater degree of politicisation therefore implies participation in clusters or nodes of less hierarchized, dialogical relations, distinguished by greater dispersion, which is identified with a wider and enriched debate, not only in terms of users and central nodes, but also in terms of the type of actions and dialogical participation, as the latter is more distant from the mere act of retweeting what third-party actors have posted on this social media platform.

The degree of politicisation is directly related to the type of use of hashtags. While in both cases the online debate was transmitted through two main hashtags –#YoSíTeCreo and

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[4] The Confusion Matrix accessible at http://xurl.es/figures reflects the successes and mistakes of the most satisfactory model, the one based on the Logistical Regression method.

#LaManada– in those clusters with a low level of politicisation, the users showed a greater predisposition to foment dialogical relations around hashtags. These less politicised clusters prioritised the use of hashtags with a more symbolic component in terms of appealing to and fomenting sisterhood (sorority) (#LaManadaSomosTodas, #YoSíTeCreoHermana, #Cuéntalo…). In a certain way, these hashtags manage to translate the historical feminist slogan "the personal is political" into the language of Twitter. In this sense, these hashtags manage to remain more distant from the interests of the political parties that participate in the debate, from their leaders and followers. For their part, the hashtags linked to a discourse politicised by the feminist movements are the ones preferred by the clusters with low centralisation or greater politicisation.

The success of the communities with high centralisation-less politicisation thus opens the way for considering the incremental importance of a "banal" type of feminism –to borrow the term from the social psychologist Michael Billig, who applies it to nationalism (Billig, 1995)– that is characterised by an ideological and theoretical load apparently lighter than its predecessors in Spain (political-institutional feminism and autonomous-revolutionary feminism). Banal feminism, far from presenting itself as a consistent and identifiable ideological body, aims to present itself in a naturalised manner residing in so-called "common sense." In this way, and thanks to hashtag activism, new subjects are –virtually– shaped in accordance with feminism, subjects that are not necessarily characterised by a greater identitarian complexity (intersectionality) but instead by a greater conventionality and adjustment to hegemonic norms, as well as by a greater rejection of politics itself, understood as participation in standard tasks.

Rather than a limitation when it comes to activating certain frames of interpreting reality (the goal pursued by many social movements), Twitter provides an opportunity for exploration. In the case analysed, for example, it would be essential to invert the presence of users in the clusters with high centralisation (not very politicised) and low centralisation (politicised). That is, there should be a commitment to placing more profiles in clusters with low centralisation, where the exchange of opinions and the degree of depth in the dialogue (with evident limitations) is greater. In any case, even the mere fact of belonging to communities where the principal action has been to retweet striking content, this could be a prior step to advancing towards other communities with a higher degree of politicisation (or consciousness) and activation around feminism.

Our investigation thus corroborates Twitter's particular potential for fomenting more spontaneous formulas and styles, resting on dialogical relations around issues that are of concern to public opinion and offer an image of politics that is more horizontal and therefore, one wold expect, more democratic (Bruns *et al.*, 2015). From the point of view of communication mediated with a feminist perspective, the study reveals the value of hashtag activism for giving new visibility to the feminist cause (Thompson, 2005), and it thus joins the studies realised to date on the advantages of Twitter for supporting certain causes or social struggles (Earl & Kimport 2011; Bruns *et al.*, 2015; Martínez, 2017; Turley & Fisher, 2018). It is worth recalling here that this political–public, social and media visualisation has been a prime objective for the feminist movement ever since its emergence as a suffragist movement and its subsequent expansion as a liberation movement (Cancian, Ross & Bonnie, 1981).

Beyond that, the study does not allow the conclusion to be drawn that this hashtag activism in itself contributes to the feminist cause. As set out above, precisely with respect to hashtags with a greater feminist sensibility, there are groups of users with a low degree of politicisation and a less critical socio-political predisposition or perspective. Furthermore, the study reveals that there is an evident tension between the rapid transmission of hashtags and the careful attention required for a critical evaluation of comments and causes, prior to supporting them. Perhaps that is why Twitter, as a reflection or metaphor of the social and political dynamics of the non-virtual world, has become one of the main arenas in which to

express the specific internal tensions that characterise the feminist movement as doctrine, theory and action. On the one hand, Twitter makes it possible to democratise the feminist struggle by spreading and normalising it, which is why some authors recommend that it should be considered a useful discursive and rhetorical platform (Vie, 2014); on the other, this network entails risks deriving from opinions that are at times superfluous or barely critical (Dadas, 2017).

Concerning this debate on Twitter's usefulness for fomenting more horizontal dialogical networks, it is also worth considering other aspects for reflection on the feminist movement. For example, the fact that the younger generations, who are the main users of social media, tend to disconnect feminism from its foundational slogans and its origins, identifying it less and less as a political movement and as organised activism. Feminism today provides identifications that are marked by greater freedom, which opens the way to definitions made from increasingly personal postulates and perspectives. Moreover, this ties in suitably with the philosophy that underlies the social media (Kelly, 2005; Kendal, 2012; Munro, 2013). Beyond hashtags and labels, it could be said that the new generations believe in feminist ideals (social, political and economic equality). This is of special interest from a political-communication perspective, and also from a feminist communication perspective, because of the evident advantages entailed in spreading and generalising the social and political struggle beyond organisational structures (Earl & Kimport, 2011; Turley & Fisher, 2018).

In summary, as an analytical frame, hashtag activism is of great interest for knowing which variables (politicisation, etc.) determine the new expression that social activist movements like feminism are acquiring in an increasingly hyper-connected and interactive world. In practice, it could be a valid tool for this movement, as an intermediate step towards activating and raising awareness to a higher level.

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