
Special issue
Credibility

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Twitter, partisan use and institutional use: Comparative analysis between the profiles of Moncloa, Madrid City Council and their ruling parties

Abstract

This paper seeks to compare and analyse the differences in the use of Twitter that, Partido Popular, as a traditional political party, and Ahora Madrid, as a new political party, make of the institutional channels for the public institutions that they administer. In addition, the present study analyses three different periods in the electoral process: the pre-campaign, campaign and post-campaign during the Spanish general elections of December 20th, 2015 in order to see if the election periods caused changes in their communications on Twitter. The sample consists of four cases divided into two groups for content analysis. On one hand, the Government's Twitter profile (@desdelamoncloa) and of its ruling party, Partido Popular (@ppopular), comprise the old political group, while the Madrid City Council (@Madrid) and its ruling party, Ahora Madrid (@AhoraMadrid), are integrated into the new political group. Additionally, word clouds provide a visual representation of the main terms used by each group. The study results show which group uses and better leverages Twitter's potential, in that Partido Popular and Moncloa have clearer differences between party and institutional channels, while Ahora Madrid and the Madrid City Council do not seem to be as clear about the difference between the two concepts and use the party channel as the city council channel. However, the results demonstrate that the new political profile leverages Twitter's potential more.

Keywords

Partido Popular, Moncloa, Ahora Madrid, Madrid City Council, Twitter, new politics, old politics.

1. Introduction

The growing presence of the Internet in all areas of our lives has led to what has been called the “network society”, defined as a society where social structures and key activities are organized around digital networks (Castells & Cardoso, 2005). In 2016, the data recorded by the Spanish National Institute of Statistics show that 81.9% of homes in Spain had internet connection and 76.5% of respondents were frequent internet

users (Instituto Nacional de Estadística, 2016). This data place Spain first in Europe in optical fiber deployment, as well as in its efforts to achieve expanded 4G mobile coverage (Fundación Telefónica, 2016).

If the Internet is the element that is transforming society in recent years, social networks are one of the tools that have accelerated this process with billions of users around the world. Since Mark Zuckerberg created Facebook in 2004, social networks have increased their presence in both variety and quantity. With around 1.35 billion worldwide, Facebook was the principle one in 2015, followed by YouTube with one billion profiles, while the social messaging network WhatsApp totalled 700 million users (iRedes, 2015). In addition to this, Twitter, created more than a decade ago by Jack Dorsey, is based on the publication of small messages with a maximum of 140 characters and has been growing exponentially since its founding, reaching 313 million of active users per month (Twitter, 2017).

Faced with this new scenario of online communication, politics has long been adapting progressively to continuous innovations and communication possibilities that technology and the internet provide. As explained by Alonso and Adell (2011), a new context has appeared with numerous changes in political communication processes where political preparation and validation is demanded from politicians and where the personal figure is more valued than the political party. López-Rabadán, López-Meri and Doménech-Fabregat (2016) highlight the diffusion of a leader's image on Twitter as a central element in the use of social networks in political communication, which has been closely followed by numerous authors as a tool for instant information and relationships management for opinion leaders (Fernández & Arceo, 2012; García & Zugasti, 2014; Moya, 2015), despite the fact that its intense use by Spanish politicians is eminently unidirectional and propagandistic (Segado-Boj, Díaz-Campo & Lloves-Sobrado, 2016). Beyond its purely instrumental nature, some authors such as Abejón, Sastre and Linares (2012) have pointed out that politics in social networks should try to open participation opportunities in order to create a citizen agenda that includes the excluded. They add:

The challenge is to get citizens to break this inertia of distancing from the political class, and networks are an excellent element to achieve it. [...] Politics goes through a crisis of delegitimization that can only be faced if it is described again, and more clearly, as a special area for the public gathering of ideas and proposals for action. In this context, social networks are essential (p. 158).

Parallel to this technological modernization process, traditional politics faces two additional challenges: recover the confidence lost in recent years and adapt to an unprecedented scenario from which new political actors have emerged. The lack of confidence is a global trend which is confirmed by Spain in the data from the Center for Sociological Research. In its Barometer of December 2015 (Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas, 2015), when the research field work was carried out, 35.1% of the respondents considered that the political situation in Spain was 'bad' and 28% of them said that the situation was 'very bad'. The low confidence in the political class is reflected in the fact that 35.6% of the respondents believed that the situation would not improve in a year, and even 12.3% thought it would get worse.

New political actors are also a global phenomenon resulting from the disenchantment of traditional politics, especially among the younger ones, which has led to populist and anti-system approaches with levels of popularity that have not been seen for a long time. For example, in 2015 in France, the National Front achieved its best results in recent years; in the United Kingdom, Euroscepticism has triumphed, and in the United States the controversial businessman Donald Trump was proclaimed President of the country. In Spain, the general elections of December 2015 were the most equal in Spanish democracy, with four political parties each totalling over 40 seats in Congress. For the first time, the traditional

bipartisanship broke down with the emergence of parties such as Podemos and Ciudadanos at the national level, and Ahora Madrid and Guanyem Barcelona at the local level which upset the status quo of what some have called the “old politics,” that is, the two major parties that have dominated the Spanish political scene in the last decades, Partido Popular and PSOE.

This paper analyses, in this new era of Spanish politics, the use of online communication through Twitter by the Spanish executive and its ruling party as representatives of the old political group and compares it with the Madrid City Council and Ahora Madrid as one of the most outstanding examples of access to the most important entities of the new political parties. The analysis also intends to determine if differences can be established between the traditional party and new party while taking into account the institutional nature of their communications by considering as a starting hypothesis that the institutions and the parties make clearly differentiated use of their communication in their social profiles.

In the recent history of political communication in Spain, however, as noted by Soengas and Rodríguez (2015), there are palpable cases in the opposite behaviour that show the use of public media for the benefit of the government party as exemplified by Radio Televisión Española. The authors conclude that “there is a coincidence between the approach that is made in the newscast of most news related to management and government action and the positions and theses held by the Executive and the party that supports it, which shows that there is a permanent alignment of TVE with official criteria” (Soengas & Rodríguez, 2015, p. 1237).

Therefore, we consider it useful and necessary to study whether the Government and public administrations carry out party communications through their online institutional channels beyond the traditional media. Thus, the purpose of this work is to compare the communication between an administration ruled by old political party and an institution ruled by a new political party made through one of the various tools that have been growing so much in recent years, the Twitter social network.

The working hypotheses of the investigation were the following: the management of the party and government Twitter profiles of Partido Popular and Ahora Madrid follow different patterns. Partido Popular manages profile content as a party and as the Government of the nation on Twitter while respecting the institutional space between both entities while Ahora Madrid manages the party profile and the Madrid City Council profile in a similar way, without respecting the institutional space between both entities.

2. Methodology

To study the use that political parties and institutions make of social networks and to establish whether an adequate use of institutional channels is made, this work used the technique of content analysis. Regarding the classification of the content analysis carried out, and according to the criteria that Piñuel establishes to categorize this technique, the method used is defined as follows: according to the objectives pursued, the presented model is a verifiable and explanatory content analysis because it seeks to establish “inferences about the origin, nature, functioning and effects of communication products” (Piñuel, 2002, p. 9). In this case, it focuses on the nature and function of the communicative products (tweets) analysed. In addition, inductive inferences are made, because from a particular content, the analysed in the sample presented later, is intended to extrapolate to more general cases. Accordingly, the object of study in the research was a horizontal, or extensive content analysis, because it had an extensive documentary corpus from which a sample of 801 tweets was chosen. According to the measurement parameters, the content analysis is considered qualitative and frequential, because first, it considers qualitative elements within each unit of analysis, and, second, it counts the number of occurrences of each indicator or established category.

The social network Twitter was chosen as a scope and study tool for being a real-time communicative reference and for being an open and accessible tool for users and for external

analysis. This growing social network is based on the publication of small messages with a maximum of 140 characters. More than 50% of Internet users have profiles on Twitter (GlobalWebIndex, 2015) which translates into 313 million active accounts per month (Twitter, 2017). In addition, this social network has an especially significant use by opinion leaders.

The institutional and party channel comparisons used and analysed were, on one hand, the tweets of the Twitter profile of the government of Spain (@desdelamoncloa) and those of the ruling party, Partido Popular (@ppopular), and on the other hand, the messages issued by the Madrid City Council (@Madrid) and by its ruling party, Ahora Madrid (@AhoraMadrid). In addition to, and to enrich the comparison, the analysis was carried out in three different periods in an electoral process: the pre-campaign, the campaign and the post-campaign.

The selection process for the 801 tweets was based on contributions by Wimmer and Dominick (1996) on content analysis. A three-stage sampling was carried out: in the first phase, the sampling of the material sources from the Twitter profiles mentioned earlier were chosen for the analysis; in the second phase, for the sampling of dates, there was a stratification based on the electoral period. Three analysis days were selected for each phase of the campaign during the pre-campaign, campaign and post-campaign periods (as established by the constitution of the Cortes on January 13th, 2016). Finally, the third phase included the analysis units; for Partido Popular, a systematic random sampling was carried out because of the large number of messages issued (Wimmer & Dominick, 1996, p. 74) by choosing one-fourth of all tweets published by the party, a sample total of 209 tweets. For the three remaining sources, all the messages sent during the defined time periods were analysed. Their total figures were similar to that of Partido Popular's 209; 212 from Moncloa, 222 from Ahora Madrid and 158 from the Madrid City Council.





In addition, a word cloud was produced from each to delimit the most frequent content in their publications. Gómez-Aguilar, García-Peñalvo and Therón (2014) explain that word clouds "provide a way for users to form a general impression of the set of content and the essence of what is involved" (p. 240). With the help of the digital tool Wordle (<http://www.wordle.net/>), word clouds were created with the most repeated ideas throughout each period. As such, the most common terms were established between content and profile with greater precision.

3. Results

3.1. Anagraphic data and formal typology

Table 1 shows the number of tweets analysed for each of the four profiles, as well as the formal typology of the 801 messages submitted to the analysis.

Table 1: Quantity and formal typology of the tweets published during the analysis period.

				
Proactive post	119	61	158	86
Answer	0	0	25	58
Retweet	90	151	38	14
Inquiry	0	0	1	0
Total	209	212	222	158

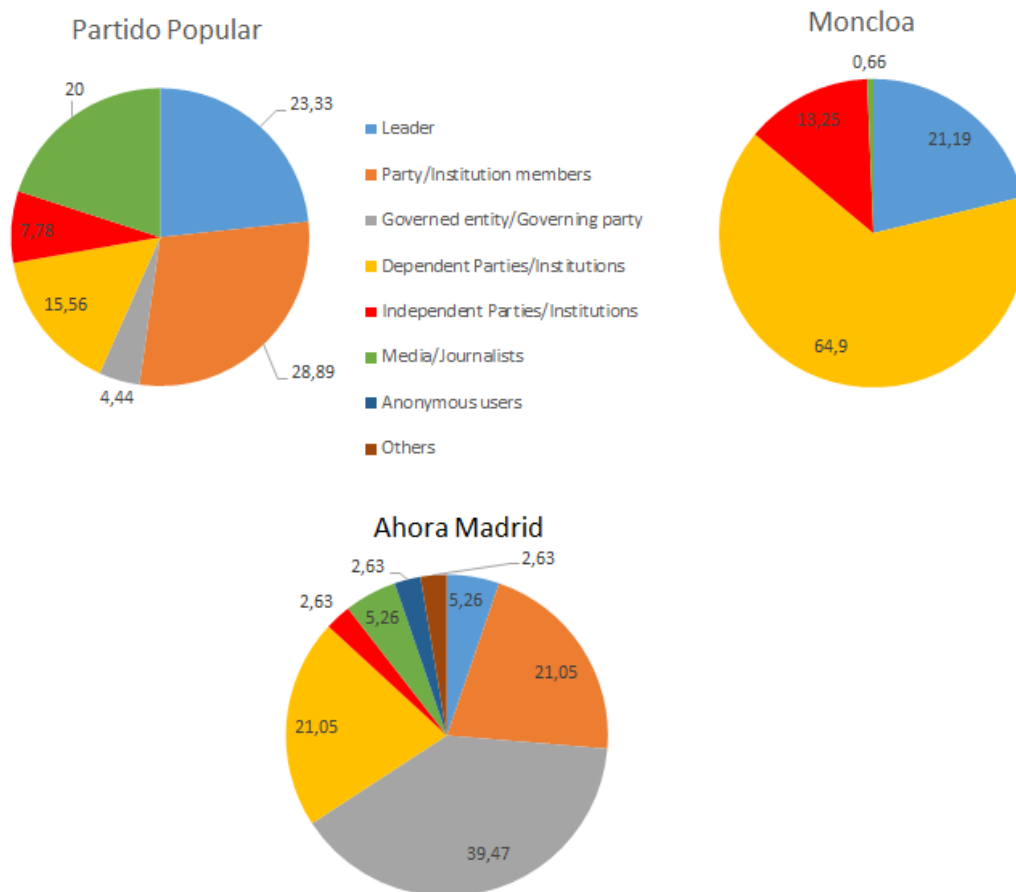
Source: Own elaboration.

The greater number of proactive Twitter posts of the political parties (Partido Popular and Ahora Madrid) stand out over that of the institutions (Moncloa and Madrid City Council) showing a prioritization of posting activity above the rest. Comparing the results between the old and the new political groups, it is observed that Ahora Madrid and the City Council are similar in their infrequent use of the retweet as well as in the interaction with social network users and followers.

With regard to the data relating to the retweeted accounts, there is a predominant presence of the related accounts or dependents of both the party and the institution.

While almost three quarters, 72.22% of the Partido Popular retweets, belong to related accounts (leader, party members, Moncloa or party affiliates and government-dependent agencies), this figure increases to 86.09% for Moncloa (leader and dependent organizations).

Figure 1: Percentage of accounts retweeted by Partido Popular, Moncloa and Ahora Madrid.



Source: Own elaboration.





Ahora Madrid, despite having a high number of retweets to related accounts (86.83% of the leader, party and City Council members, the City Council itself and parties or bodies dependent on the municipal government) has a greater variety of retweeted accounts with even anonymous users appearing among their retweets.

However, this variety in Ahora Madrid is not the same as for the ruling institution, since the 14 retweets made by the City Council correspond to the category of “dependent organisms,” such as the Municipal Transport Company and the Citizen Participation Government Area of the Madrid City Council.

3.2. Formal elements

There are a greater number of images and videos in the profiles that correspond to Partido Popular and Ahora Madrid. However, this figure decreases if we look at the data presented by Moncloa and Madrid City Council:

Table 2: Amount of formal elements accounted for during the analysis period.

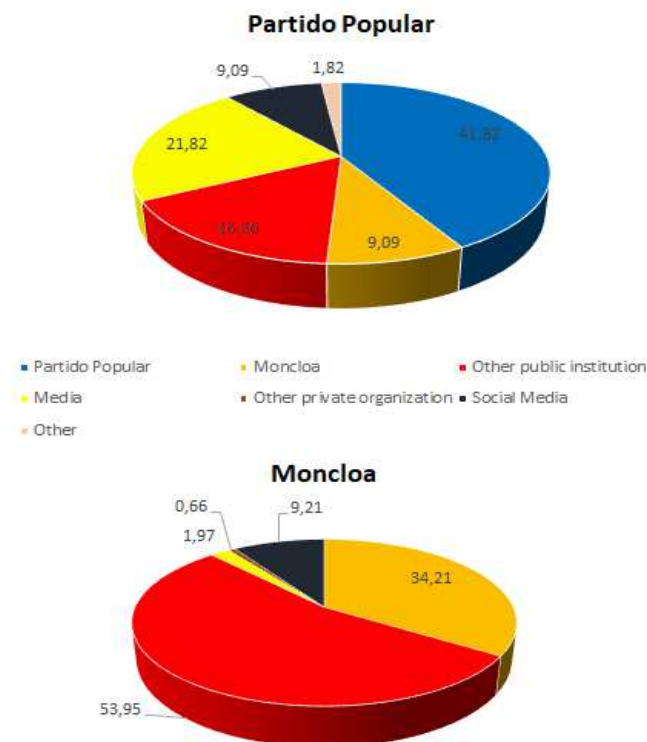
				
Images	111	65	121	60
Videos	39	11	21	12
Hashtags	214	258	116	59
Hyperlinks	55	150	85	92

Source: Own elaboration.

The figures relating to the use of hashtags do show significant differences between the old and new political groups. While both Partido Popular and Moncloa use this resource on 214 and 258 occasions respectively by incorporating more than one hashtag per tweet, the figures of Ahora Madrid and Madrid City Council are only 116 and 59 hashtags each.

Finally, the use of hyperlinks increases for government institutions; Moncloa used 150 links, and 92 were used by the Madrid City Council. This figure drops to 55 hyperlinks for Partido Popular and 85 for Ahora Madrid.

Figure 2: Percentages of the origin of the hyperlinks included in the tweets of Partido Popular and Moncloa.

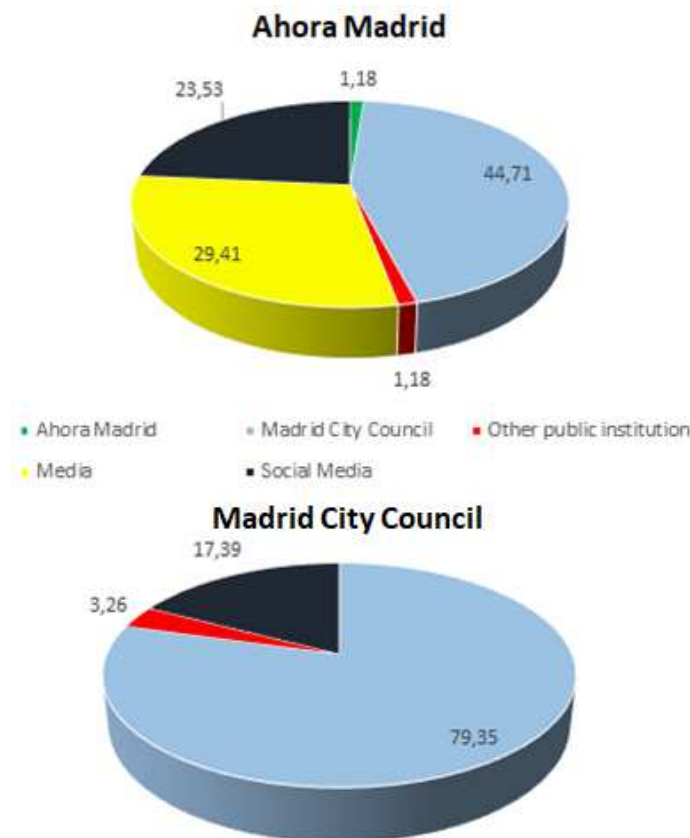


Source: Own elaboration.

Figure 2 presents data related to the origin of the hyperlinks shared by the profiles of the old political group. It highlights the variety of hyperlinks that are provided, differentiating six different types in the case of the party and five in the Government data. Partido Popular resorts mainly to links managed by the party itself (41.82%), Moncloa (9.09%) and public institutions (16.36%) such as ministries and secretaries of state. This tendency to include hyperlinks of their own origin is accentuated in the case of the Government, where in 88.16% of the cases (links of Moncloa and public institutions) presented links to pages managed by the Executive or by the various ministries and secretaries of state dependent on it.

In addition, another difference is observed in the use of hyperlinks to social networks (9.09% in the case of the Partido Popular and 9.21% in the case of Moncloa) that are primarily directed towards YouTube and other tweets. However, the difference is significant in terms of the use of media links as Partido Popular presents 21.82%, while in the Moncloa profile, this figure drops to a low of 1.97%.

Figure 3: Percentages of the origin of the hyperlinks included in the tweets of Ahora Madrid and Madrid City Council by percentage.



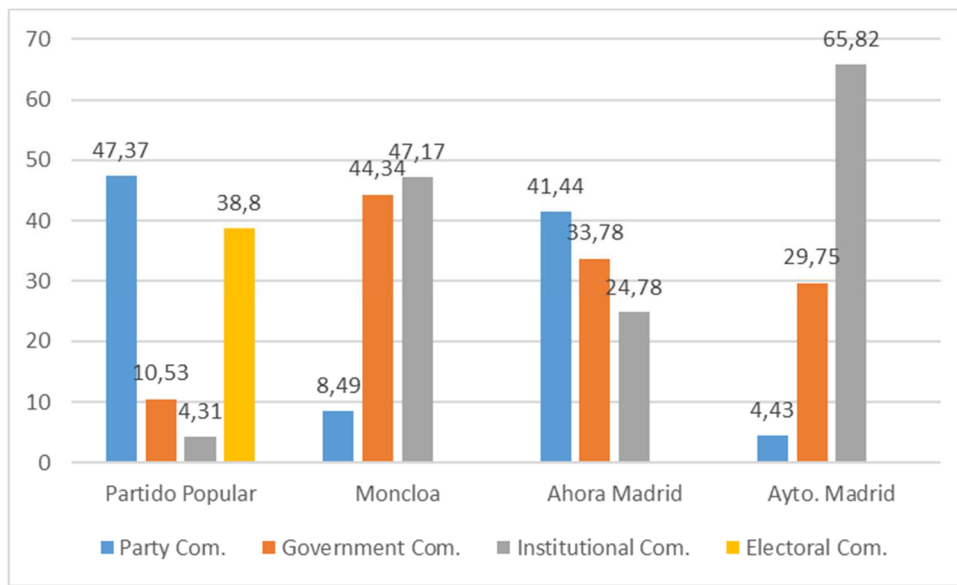
Source: Own elaboration.

Figure 3 reflects the same data, but refers to the new political group where it can be seen that while Ahora Madrid has a variety of links similar to the old political accounts, the Madrid City Council has a lower diversity of links with just three different sources (City Council, other institutions and social networks). The predominant presence of the Madrid City Council stands out from the links included in the tweets of Ahora Madrid with 44.71% of the cases and of the Council where it amounts to 79.35%. This data is more significant in the case of the party, where only 1.18% of the hyperlinks are from the party itself.

3.3. Type of content

Firstly, it is observed in Figure 4 how party communication predominates in the Partido Popular profile (47.37% of the cases) and Ahora Madrid (41.44%), being the type with the most number of publications, and something that should, *a priori*, be logical. However, this type of communication is also used in institutional profiles (8.49% of cases in Moncloa and 4.43% in the City Council).

Figure 4: Percentages of types of communication made by the profiles analysed.



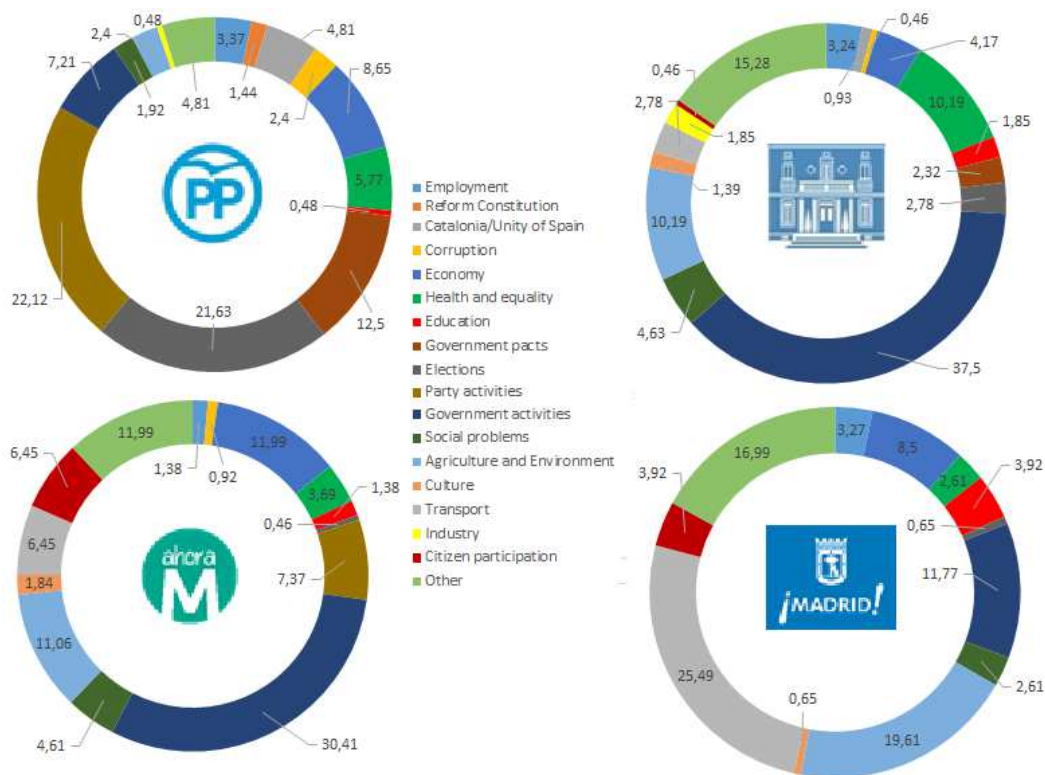
Source: Own elaboration.

Secondly, regarding government communications, Moncloa most frequently uses this type of content (44.34% of all communications), followed by Ahora Madrid, and not by the City Council. Ahora Madrid carries out Government Communication in 33.78% of its communications, surpassing the Madrid City Council (29.75% of the tweets) while carrying out a greater number of communications of the town council's actions than the municipal entity's own channel.

3.4. Thematic areas

Figure 5 summarizes data about the subject of the publications of the analysed profiles. In the case of Partido Popular, despite having a wide variety of topics (up to 15 different thematic areas) there are three main issues: party activities with 22.12% tweets, elections with 21.63% tweets and government pacts with 12.5%. Elections are, of course, very important for the party, and both the activities of the party (rallies and other events) and the government agreements and promises (especially after the elections) are related to this issue.

Ilustración 5: Percentage of thematic areas covered in the profiles analysed.



Source: Own elaboration.

In contrast, Moncloa does not have many similarities with what is reflected by Partido Popular’s data. Moncloa has a greater variety of issues than the ruling party (16 different areas). Tweets with content related to Government activity stand out, present in up to 37.5% of the cases, which places it as the subject most often dealt with by Moncloa. After those subjects, health and equality, and agriculture and environment appear in 10.19% of the tweets, and social problems and employment in 4.63% and 4.17% respectively.

As for the new political group, their tweets are centred on thematic areas that have similarities. Ahora Madrid presents up to 14 different themes in its publications, highlighting the large presence of content related to government activity in 30.41% of the time and is the subject most addressed by Ahora Madrid. This figure contrasts with party activities at 7.37% of their tweets.

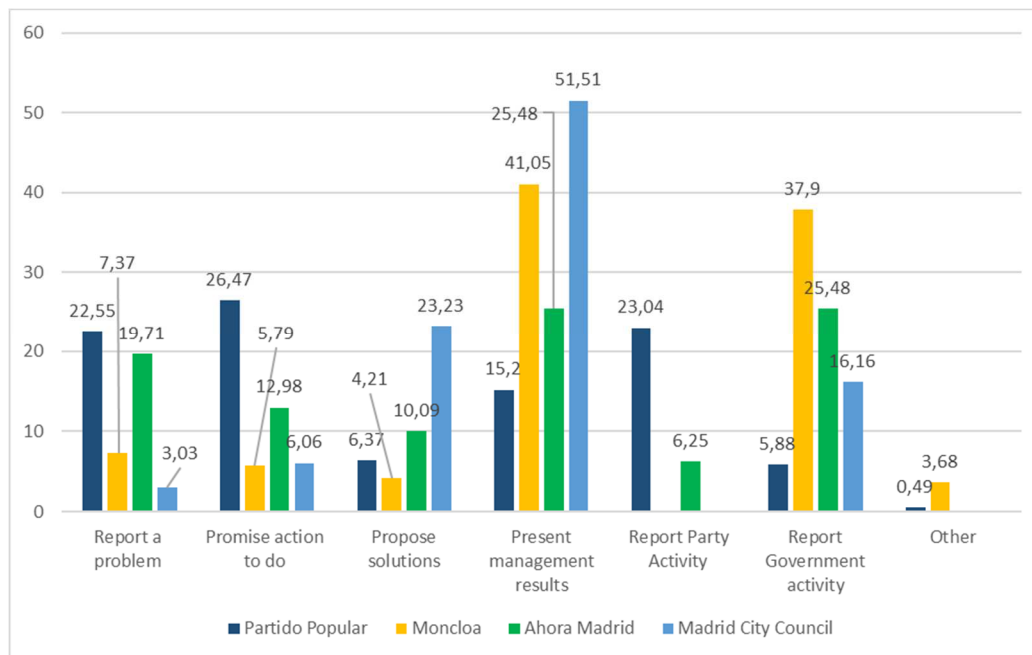
The management of Ahora Madrid’s Twitter profile is consistent with what has been seen thus far as explained above in the sections on hyperlinks and the type of communications. The Madrid City Council is very present in Ahora Madrid’s Twitter account, and even more than the city hall which accounts for 11.77% of publications.

Finally, the Madrid City Council has a smaller variety of content in its publications with 12 different areas. However, the large presence of tweets related to transport (25.49%) stands out. Environmental (19.61% of the tweets) and economic issues (8.5% of the tweets) are other main topics, a fact that coincides with Ahora Madrid, indicating areas of common importance to these two new political groups.

3.5. Political action

As might be expected, there was a greater presence of Partido Popular and Ahora Madrid in communications related to the activities of each party, such as reporting a problem and announcing an action that would take place. The political parties carry out these actions the most, although with differences between both study profiles, specifically in the case of Partido Popular at 23% and Ahora Madrid only in 6.25% of their tweets.

Figure 6: Percentages of political activities carried out by the profiles analysed.



Source: Own elaboration.

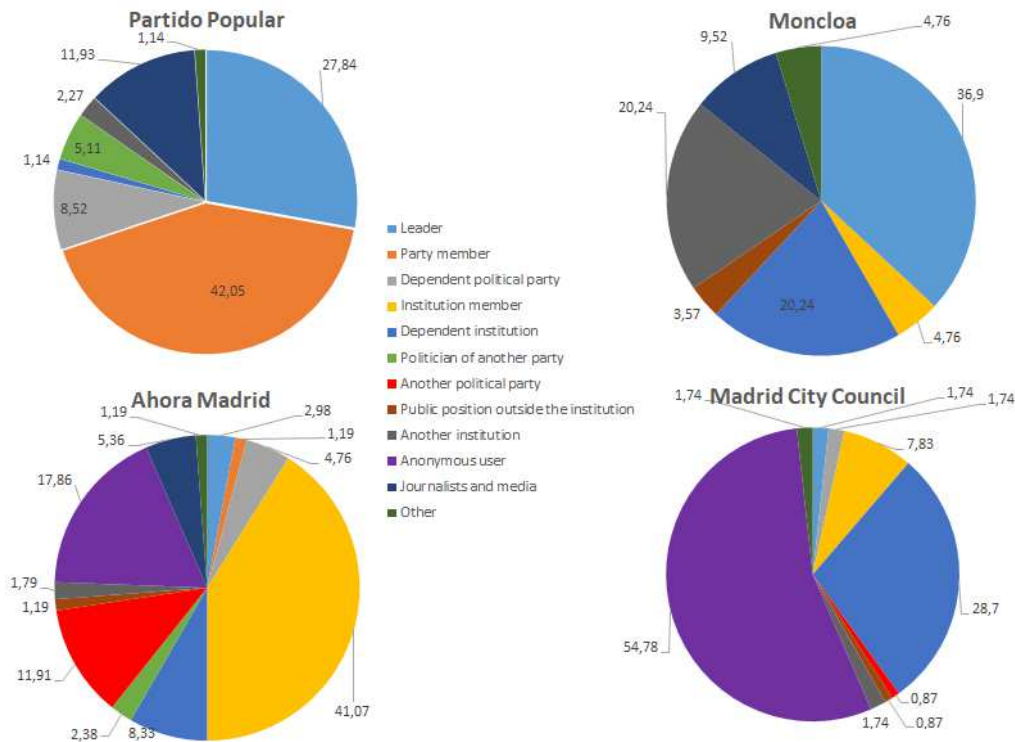
However, if the previous actions were associated specifically with the party communications, it would also be possible to consider that presenting management results and reporting on government activity is more typical of institutional channels such as in Moncloa and the City Council. However, that does not always happen. Moncloa presents more management results and reports than Partido Popular (41.05% and 15.2% respectively), as well as more on government activity than the party (37.9% and 5.88%), all of which reflects on a different behaviour in the new political scene. In the presentation of management results, the Madrid City Council has 51.51%, while Ahora Madrid is also quite high with 25.48%, 10 percentage points higher than Partido Popular in the same category.

This fact is accentuated with regards to informative publications on government activity. While the profile of the Madrid City Council presents this political action in only 16.16% of the cases, Ahora Madrid's publications reaches 25.48% for this activity in the institutions that they govern.

3.6. Mentions to other profiles

We observed earlier that Partido Popular references its own sources and accounts. Mariano Rajoy, the party leader's profile on Twitter, is present in 27.84% of the tweets, and the number of references to party members amounts to 42.05% of the total. Likewise, Moncloa tends to mention similar profiles on more occasions with 60% of cases, less than the party.

Figure 7: Percentage of mentions made by the profiles analysed.



Source: Own elaboration.

On the other hand, as seen in Figure 7, Ahora Madrid stands out with their numerous mentions of City Council members with 41.07%. They mention various councillors of the municipal entity who perform activities as public officials and not as party members.

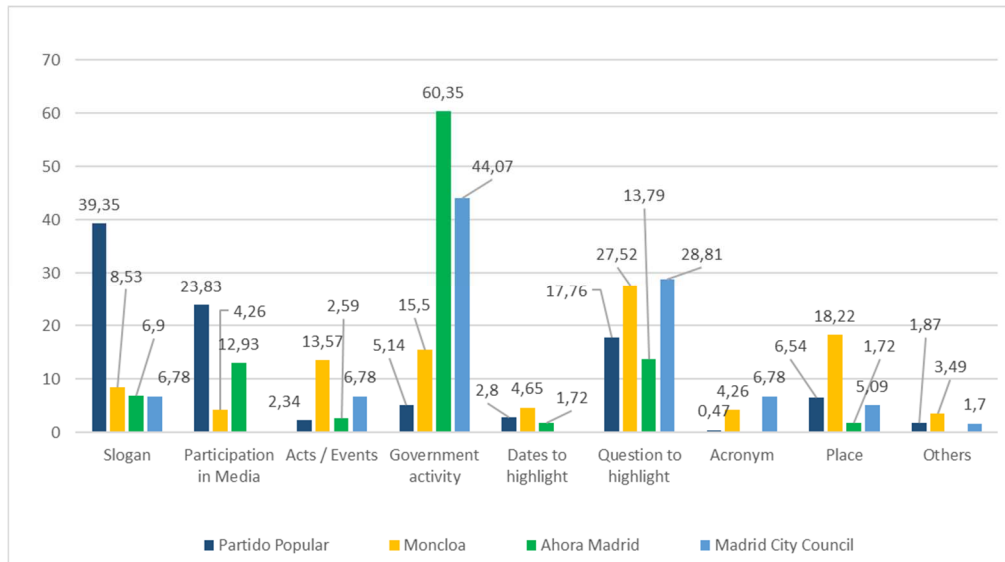
In addition, Ahora Madrid and the City Council have a large number of responses and mentions to anonymous people (17.86% for Ahora Madrid; 54.78% for City Council), in which the political party focused on justifying and arguing their political activities, while City Council is more of an informative nature for the city.

The chart also highlights that the third group most mentioned by Ahora Madrid are those of other political parties, where 11.91% mention other political groups within the City Council, demonstrating a plurality of content that considered views of the citizens not appreciable in the Partido Popular data.

3.7. Types of hashtags

Partido Popular's use of hashtags that constitute slogans and hashtags to follow its members participation in media appear in 39.35% of the cases in the first section and a 23.83% in the second. This difference may be due to the fact that the party was in the electoral campaign, while Ahora Madrid was not.

Figure 8: Percentages of types of hashtags used by the sample profiles.



Source: Own elaboration.

The above chart highlights the large number of hashtags used by Moncloa, with 258. There are a large number of hashtags related to the Government's work, not only pertaining to their daily activities which reaches 15.5%, but also for events in which Government members participate (13.57%).





These figures contrast with the low hashtag use that Madrid City Council of which only 59 appeared, with government activities being the most frequent in 44.07% of the cases.

Finally, regarding Ahora Madrid's use of hashtags, the use of the party channel as an institutional channel is significant as the hashtags relate to the government activities in 60.35% of cases, much higher than the 44.07% registered by the City Council and the 15.5% by Moncloa.

3.8. Variations during campaign periods

Regarding the variations in the profile's Twitter activity according to the electoral campaign periods (pre-campaign, campaign and post-campaign) as shown in Table 3, there are different time-related quantities of publication.

Table 3: Evolution of tweets published by the profiles during the period analysed.

				
Pre-Campaign	55	99	115	49
Campaign	97	65	41	81
Post-Campaign	57	48	66	28

Source: Own elaboration.

Partido Popular increased their activity from 55 to 97 publications during the electoral period, but later descended to 57 tweets in the post-campaign period. Additionally, during the pre-campaign there was an increase in the number of retweets to party members' profiles (including Mariano Rajoy) and hyperlinks to the party itself.

In terms of content, electoral communication became the most used type during the campaign period, reaching 62 cases, and widely surpassing the other types; party communication: 27 cases; Government communication: 2 cases; institutional communication: 1 case. There was also an increase in tweets related to topics such as the unity of Spain (6 tweets), corruption (5 tweets) and the economy (10 tweets).

As for Moncloa, its activity decreased as the electoral phases advanced, publishing 99 tweets in the pre-campaign, but falling to 65 during the campaign and to 48 after the elections. From the analysis of the government data, two aspects stand out: the first is that before the electoral period Mariano Rajoy was retweeted 20 times, while during the campaign and post-campaign this figure drops to 5 and 7 tweets respectively. The second highlights data regarding their political activities, specifically, management results: 35 and 31 cases in pre-campaign and campaign activities respectively, while this figure falls to 12 after the elections.

Regarding the new political group, it should be noted that, since it was not involved during the electoral period, the variations observed (Table 3) may be due to issues unrelated to the elections. The peak registered during that period by Ahora Madrid was due to the follow-up that the party account made of the municipal plenary sessions. This fact is reflected by the increase of the 39 tweets whose subjects are Government activities, as well as 29 mention members of the institution, as well as the high number of hashtags, totalling 57 related to the City Council activities, most of them being #PlenoMadrid.

On the other hand, the 97 tweets from the Madrid City Council during the electoral campaign are explained as being the result of the episode of pollution that the city experienced during those dates in which they were forced to activate a special protocol. As a result, there was an increase in tweets that are responses to users asking questions about the protocol measures. This event caused 40 interactions during that period, which increased the total to 48 mentions to anonymous users.

3.9. Word clouds

Finally, to enrich the results obtained in the content analysis, two word clouds were produced with the most used terms by each profile. Figure 9 illustrates the words most used in Partido Popular and Moncloa's tweets.

Figure 9: Word cloud of Partido Popular and Moncloa.



Source: www.wordle.net based on study data.

Starting with the common ideas that stand out in both illustrations, both “@marianorajoy”, the account of the leader and candidate, and “España” are most outstanding. The most common term between Partido Popular and Moncloa is the importance that is given to the figure of Mariano Rajoy, both in the number of mentions and retweets made to the President of the Government and as candidate for the elections. In addition, while in Moncloa's case it may seem natural that “España” is one of the most cited terms since it is its sphere of management and responsibility, it is also present in Partido Popular's profile as it demonstrates the importance that it has for the party.

At a smaller level, words and phrases like “EspañaEnSerio”, “VamosPP” and “7DElDebateDecisivo” reflects the importance they had for Partido Popular during the election period. While all three concepts correspond to slogans used by the party during the electoral campaign, the third, a hashtag, was used during the broadcast of the main electoral debate made on Antena 3 on December 7th, 2015.

To summarize, in the word clouds of both groups, there are similarities in the first level of importance terms. However, it is in the second level where a greater independence of content with totally different themes between Partido Popular and Moncloa is present than between Ahora Madrid and the City Council, with several concepts repeated in the new political cases.

4. Conclusions and discussion

The results described in detail in the previous sections show different strategies and uses by the profiles which allow us to reach significant conclusions about the communication of these political actors.

From the analysis of Partido Popular and Moncloa tweets, we can conclude that both profiles maintain a majority of formally independent content strategies on Twitter. Aspects such as the differences in activities between one and the other, a greater concern by Partido Popular for visual content (images, graphics and videos), hyperlinks and hashtags present in the Moncloa profile, the different topics dealt with by both profiles throughout the period and all the influence that the campaign had on the party profile and not on Moncloa, suggest that both cases have, as is logical *a priori*, independent Twitter management.

This different use between the party channel and the institutional channel must be contextualized by taking into account the fact that Partido Popular is a party with more experience in government and management of external communication than Ahora Madrid. Since 1996, when it won the general elections for the first time, they have managed both party and government communications in a differentiated manner while being aware of what should be used by the party and what must be used by the Government regardless of the communication tools used. This is demonstrated by the present analysis of their Twitter usage according to the results reflected by the content analysis which shows not only different numbers of tweets and topics, but also through a series of activities in which there are no behaviours that follow similar patterns, such as the greater variety of retweeted accounts by Partido Popular, the greater number of thematic areas that Moncloa publishes and the differences in the political activities presented by the tweets.

However, we must clarify that it is a majority behaviour, but not absolute. Despite the differences in sections that may be as relevant as the amount or the theme of the tweets, there are coincidences that require reducing the perception of independence of the communication strategies discussed above.

Firstly, there is a presence of the leader who follows similar patterns in both profiles, Mariano Rajoy, as leader of Partido Popular and as President of the Government. This fact is clear in retweets and mentions by both the party and the Government. Partido Popular retweets Mariano Rajoy in 23.33% of all cases, while Moncloa does so with mentions at 21.19%, and in the party's communications, he appears in 27.84% of the tweets. In the Government's profile, Rajoy is mentioned in 36.9% of cases. Regarding word clouds, Mariano Rajoy also appears as the most common in both profiles. The use of the leader figure in both accounts appears as an important similarity.

Secondly, similar behaviours are also observed when including content not managed by the profile that publishes them. According to the retweets made, the origin of the hyperlinks added and the mentions made, both Partido Popular and Moncloa are in favour of presenting aspects of their management, either directly (such as retweets to party/institution members or hyperlinks from pages managed by them) or indirectly (such as retweets or hyperlinks of related profiles or institutions dependent on the Government). That this fact occurs with Partido Popular should not be unexpected, since it only issues content related to its ideological approaches. But in the case of Moncloa, it is true that, by representing an independent, neutral and public institution, the number of aspects managed by them it is quite high.

Finally, on what is presupposed as a party or institutional communication, attention should be paid to the data on the type of communication and on their political activities. While Partido Popular greatly values the party's and its electoral communications, Moncloa does the same with the government and institutional communication, both also have communications that are not assumed in one or another profile. In the Partido Popular up to 10.5% of tweets are observed as government communication, and 4.3% are institutional communication, something that may not pose problems considering that it is the ruling party. However, for Moncloa there is an 8.5% of tweets for the party in which there is a non-neutral and non-institutional content that reduces the independence of the Government's Twitter profile to 91.5%.

If there were differences in Partido Popular and Moncloa that, despite the similarities mentioned, suggest differentiated strategies of a majority nature between both profiles, Ahora Madrid and the City Council's data reflect not very different strategies. In Ahora Madrid's Twitter profile, it can be said that it is far from being an independent channel of the activities of the City Council and that, in a few occasions, there are behaviours that denote connected entities in terms of communication on Twitter. As confirmed by the results, Ahora Madrid has many characteristics that makes one think of its Twitter profile as a City Council channel with all the aspects analysed, that is, the type of communication carried out, the political actions presented, and the topics and mentions in the tweets stand out. In the party results, Ahora Madrid's Twitter profile accounts for up to 33.8% of government communication and 24.8% of institutional communication, which are not only high percentages, but also exceed government communication, as shown in the data registered by the City Council (24.8%).

In addition, 25.5% of Ahora Madrid's tweets inform the public about City Council activities. These activities, together with the presentation of management results, indicate the profile of the party that are more typical of a government channel.

On the other hand, the mentions of members of the municipal body add up to 41.1% of the tweets and are considered in this section because they act as councillors and not as members of the party and, again, being more appropriate in the City Council channel and not in the party, even while being party members too.

Finally, the 60.3% use of hashtags that inform us of the day-to-day activities of the City Council (especially with the hashtag #PlenoMadrid) stands out. While Ahora Madrid, to a certain extent, performs as the institutional channel of the City Council on government issues, the City Council profile has a more public and informative service character, focusing not so much on the measures taken by the plenary, but on reporting day-to-day issues of the city, such as when the pollution protocols activated, and issues pertaining to the management of public transportation. This fact is reflected in data such as the answers given, the type of mentions, the type of communication carried out and the main issues dealt with during the analysed period. The City Council has 36.7% of responses and is the profile that responds most to other users compared to the other three profiles that make up the sample. In addition, among the numbers of the mentions, it is noteworthy that the municipal entity mentions anonymous people 54.78% of the time who, for the most part, ask questions about topics managed by the consistory.

The Ahora Madrid and City Council reports denote the willful intention to be transparent and to bring the institution closer to the public. However, while in the first case this was done through a party channel, in the case of the City Council, there is no doubt that it is done through the appropriate and responsible profile of the information that is issued, with content that affect all Madrid citizens.

In addition to this, another important conclusion can be provided, such as the fact that Ahora Madrid and the City Hall ask, listen and respond to citizens in a way that stands out more prominently than Partido Popular and Moncloa, who are more resistant to a plurality of content in their profiles. A certain endogamic character was observed in the old political

group in those sections in which a greater plurality should be presented, such as retweets to other accounts, mentions of other users and the inclusion of hyperlinks of external management.

Regarding the new political group, as analysed through the profiles of Ahora Madrid and the Madrid City Council, it is much more participatory and plural. The results reflect how both the party and the Council are concerned with interacting with users by responding their doubts, retweeting profiles with interesting content for their followers and even asking the users about their opinion about certain topics. This concern for interaction and transparency shows an interest which earns the confidence of citizens by taking advantage of the possibilities of dialogue interactive capacity Twitter has in its communications with its followers.

Considering the contribution made by other authors about interaction with users and its benefits (Moya and Herrera, 2015; Rodríguez and Ureña, 2011; Pearson and O'Connell, 2010), it can be concluded that the two new political profiles analysed use the possibilities and potentialities of Twitter as a conversational tool in their communicative activity, while Partido Popular and Moncloa, in spite of making a good use of images, hyperlinks and hashtags, and even with the benefits it provides (Mancera and Pano, 2013; Pearson and O'Connell, 2010), do not take advantage of the interactive capacity of Twitter, but send messages in a more traditional way.

Finally, with the aim of defending the informative transparency, ethics and rigor in the behaviour of the ruling parties and institutions, the need to increase the commitment to independence of communication strategies and the neutrality of the institutional online channels is emphasized. We hope that the present work serves as a practical orientation for the managers of parties and institutions who use Twitter. With the present study, we have also intended to contribute to a greater knowledge in this area so that future research can continued such that best practices are followed in these types of communication for the benefit of better understanding between organizations and citizens.

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