

Challenging Mainstream Media Systems Through Social Media: A Comparative Study of the Facebook Profiles of Two Latin American Student Movements

LÁZARO M. BACALLAO-PINO

University of Chile, Santiago, Chile

Abstract: This article analyzes social movements' appropriations of social media for challenging mainstream media systems. The study includes two recent Latin American student movements: the Mexican movement #YoSoy132 and the Chilean student movement. A quantitative-qualitative methodology was used to compare their appropriations of social media, which included a statistical analysis of the Facebook profiles of both movements during a selected period of time and Fairclough's critical discourse analysis of the contents posted and interviews with participants. The findings indicate that there are some relevant specific trends in the appropriation of social media for this specific purpose, mediated by dimensions such as the demands, goals, political communication context, online or offline nature of the mobilization, and organizational characteristics of the movement.

Keywords: social media, collective action, mainstream media, Latin American student movements, Chile, Mexico

Introduction

The role of social media as resources for collective action has become an increasing topic of research, particularly for recent mobilizations such as the Arab Spring, the Spanish Indignados, Occupy Wall Street, the Taksim Square occupation in Istanbul, the Mexican #YoSoy132 movement, and the Chilean student movement. Previous studies have analyzed the structural and dynamic patterns of social media as part of collective action (Borge-Holthoefer et al., 2011), the (re)configuration of political identity based on these digital platforms (Gülşen, 2014), their uses as resources for communicative democratization by citizens (Gómez García & Treré, 2014), and their impact on the logics of collective action, configuring a new logic of aggregation (Juris, 2012).

There has been long-term research interest in the interrelationships between information and communication technologies (ICTs) and collective action, from early positions that considered ICTs as resources for making offline action visible (Ayres, 1999) to subsequent, more complex perspectives that underlined the emergence of specific cyber-repertoires of action (Van Laer & Van Aelst, 2009). However, despite the rising number of analyses on social media and collective action, to the best of my knowledge, there are no comparative studies particularly centered on the appropriations of these Web 2.0 platforms as resources for challenging the mainstream communication system. Understood in general terms as an objective-subjective articulation (Dussel, 1985), appropriation describes here the articulation of certain uses of social media and the meanings of these uses for the participants in social mobilizations. This perspective of analysis, on the one hand, allows a comparative approach of the tendencies observed in two social movements and, on the other hand, implies a specific communication-centered perspective because the analysis focuses on the Facebook profiles of two social movements and is mainly concerned with their counter-hegemonic communicational objective through these digital spaces. From a general perspective, this objective is associated with social movements' development of spaces of counter-hegemonic communication (Downing, 2002), understood as practices of collective media that, in a simultaneously structured and spontaneous way, are developed on the margins of the political and journalistic fields (Hanke, 2005), becoming a challenge to the mainstream media by providing autonomous visibility of the collective action.

The study will provide an outlook on the particularities of the appropriation of social media—specifically Facebook—as part of collective action in a comparative analysis of its communication-focused use by two social movements in relation to their respective national media systems and sociopolitical contexts. I will not analyze the real impact of these appropriations—to do so would require an examination of the mainstream media systems—but the uses of social media focused on this communicative challenge and the senses participants in the collective action configure for these uses, including the meanings built through social media itself.

The Two Cases

The study presented here deals with two recent Latin American student movements: the Mexican #YoSoy132 and the Chilean student movement. Youth is an important collective for the analysis of social

media because, according to the Pew Research Center (2014), 89% of Internet users between 18 and 29 years old use social networking sites. Besides this, the analysis will focus on Facebook, currently the dominant social networking platform (Duggan & Smith, 2013). The comparison of the two movements included in the analysis is also relevant, given their respective characteristics.

The #YoSoy132 movement is a communication-focused movement that emerged during the 2012 Mexican election campaign. On May 11, 2012, students from the Universidad Iberoamericana at Mexico City protested against the visit of Enrique Peña Nieto, the presidential nominee of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (Spanish: Partido Revolucionario Institucional, PRI). Some Mexican mainstream media reported that the protesters were not students, so 131 students uploaded a video to YouTube identifying themselves with their university ID cards. People then showed their support by stating, mainly on Twitter, that they were the “132nd student,” thus giving birth to the movement. Media democratization is situated at the center of #YoSoy132 (Gómez García & Treré, 2014), so it “makes the right to information and the right to free expression to become our main demand” (#YoSoy132, May 28, 2012). Previous analyses have underlined the spontaneity and complexity of the movement, defined “as an apparently decentralized expression, without a clear and formal organizational structure” (Plancarte Escobar, 2013, p. 1), based on the principles of inclusiveness, plurality, and diversity, and highlighted it as a horizontal organization without the acknowledgement of any kind of personal leadership.

The most important objective of the Chilean student movement is the reform of the national educational system (Segovia & Gamboa, 2012), with the goals of “free education, end of the profit in education, democratization, end of the indebtedness in education as well as self-financing and egalitarian access to it” (CONFECH, 2011). Despite its education-focused emergence, the movement soon evolved into a clear challenge to the authoritarian nature of political institutions, but unlike other recent episodes of mobilization, protests were not organized through small groups coordinated by loose networks but were fueled by traditional Chilean student organizations and resembled classical forms of contention (Guzmán-Concha, 2012). However, as have other recent protests worldwide, the movement has also made important use of social media (Valenzuela, Arriagada, & Scherman, 2012).

Finally, given the Chilean and the Mexican mainstream media contexts, the relationships between them and the social movements become an important dimension. On the one hand, Chile is considered “a laboratory case” for its influence of the market rules in the mainstream media system, to the extent that it blocks the democratic dynamics of media (Mönckeberg, 2011), resulting in what has been described as an ideological monopoly (Sunkel & Geoffroy, 2001). On the other hand, in the Mexican case, authors agree on underlining the high level of complicity and strong links between the mainstream media and the hegemonic political groups—mainly the PRI—to the extent that media owners have the possibility to influence legislative processes regarding media (Fernández Christlieb, 2000; Trejo Delarbre, 2012).

At the same time, in both national contexts, the ownership of free-to-air television channels is highly concentrated. For example, Televisa and TV Azteca are owners of 89% of the Mexican channels (Huerta-Wong & Gómez García, 2013), whereas five of the seven Chilean national free-to-air television channels are owned by private groups (Albavisión, Turner Broadcasting System Latin America, Grupo Luksic, and Grupo Bethia), with one remaining channel being public and the other owned by a university (Julio, 2013). This is a relevant circumstance because both movements are mainly focused on television as part of the challenge to their respective mainstream media systems.

Social Media, Collective Action, and Media Systems

Social media are regarded as resources that promote civic engagement and collective action (Obar, Zube, & Lampe, 2012) and through which people can express their political identities (Gülşen, 2014). The uses of social media as part of collective action have been associated with the emergence of a new logic of aggregation in collective action by processes of assembling masses of individuals from diverse backgrounds within physical spaces in a relatively short period of time (Juris, 2012). They configure a

“logic of connective action based on personalized content sharing across media networks” (Bennett & Segerberg, 2012, p. 739) that, according to these authors, gives rise to a personalization of collective action and to digitally networked politics.

The analysis of their impact on contentious politics requires one to take into account how social media are infused in specific protest ecologies, “recognizing that traces of these media may reflect larger organizational schemes” (Segerberg & Bennett, 2011, p. 197), such as the emergence of particular organizational dynamics where “communication becomes a prominent part of organizational structure” (Bennett & Segerberg, 2012, p. 739). But other authors highlight that social media have become not only relevant resources for the organization of social mobilization but also an important informative resource for collective action, even producing a reformulation of the resource mobilization theory (Eltantawy & Wiest, 2011).

Previous analyses have highlighted that the potential of social media tools for collective action “lies mainly in their support of civil society and the public sphere” (Shirky, 2011). Valenzuela, Arriagada, and Scherman (2012) underline the use of social networking sites for news and socializing as part of collective action. These online spaces provide new sources of information—particularly in the context of authoritarian regimes—and become a crucial dimension in shaping how citizens decide about their participation in protests (Tufekci & Wilson, 2012) and a trigger of significant processes in political culture and media systems, such as the democratization of mainstream media and the fostering of pluralism (Gómez García & Treré, 2014). In that regard, some studies have examined the impact of social mobilizations—such as the Spanish 15M—in the agenda of the mainstream media and in the processes of news production and distribution (Casero-Ripollés & Feenstra, 2012).

However, at the same time, other authors have argued that this emphasis on the positive role of social media becomes “a new fetishism of technology” (Fuchs, 2012). Following this argument, and regarding the use of social media to challenge mainstream media systems, previous studies, although “acknowledging its disruptive value for challenging traditional interests and modes of communicative power,” have suggested “a more cautious approach” to their potential (Loader & Mercea, 2011, p. 757). This is a core aspect for the analysis of social media as “alternative media” developed by participants in collective action, with an understanding of this notion as a certain type of “media production that challenges, at least implicitly, actual concentrations of media power” (Couldry & Curran, 2003, p. 7).

Other notions from studies on the strategies for contesting media power that allow us to understand the possible interactions between mainstream media and social media are “radical media” and “citizen media.” The former underlines the role of nonmainstream media in contesting dominant power blocs from a perspective of wider social emancipation (Downing, 2001), and the latter proposes a more politicized approach by highlighting the interrelationships between nonmainstream communication and processes of citizenship empowerment (Rodríguez, 2001). However, the notion of alternative media would be more appropriate for our analysis because it “involves no judgments about the empowering effects of the media practices analyzed” (Couldry & Curran, 2003, p. 7), and making such judgments would require the study of the actual impact of social media appropriation on mainstream media, a goal that goes beyond the objectives of this study.

Precisely, the development of communicational alternatives is, according to Rucht (2004), one of four possible strategies social movements follow regarding mass media. However, social movements do not always create their own autonomous media. Rucht (2004) also identified other trends in the complex relationships between social movements and mainstream media. Tendencies range from abstention, an explicit withdrawal from attempts to influence the mass media, to direct attacks on established media, through criticism or even violence, and to a less radical strategy of adaption, through which these

collective agents accept and try to exploit mainstream media's rules and principles in order to positively influence their coverage about collective action.

In this complex relational map of interactions that ranges from negotiating strategies to radical opposition or the attempt of autonomy, the emergence of social media, as a technological resource for social movements and for mainstream media, brings a new scenario for the analysis of these relationships. In that regard, some dimensions underlined by previous analyses are relevant for the specific understanding of the use of social media as resources for challenging mainstream media: For instance, the pervasiveness of hierarchical structures and flows of information when social media are used as part of contentious politics (Borge-Holthoefer et al., 2011), their multiple possible uses as part of collective action—to obtain information, to mobilize supporters, to highlight achievements, and to indicate the opponents of collective action (Cabalín-Quijada, 2014)—the online or offline tensions (Harlow & Harp, 2012), and the individual or collective conflict associated with the logic of aggregation (Juris, 2012).

The mediation of these dimensions—and other aspects, such as the nature of the specific demands of collective action and the particularities of each social movement—will be analyzed as part of the study. Consequently, this article proposes a complex perspective of the above-mentioned theories on social media, social mobilization, and media systems by assuming that the uses of these technological resources focused on the communicative dimension (i.e., the mainstream media system) as part of collective action—such as the uses indicated by Cabalín-Quijada (2014) or the consequences described by Gómez García and Treré (2014)—are inherently articulated with the general impact of social media in the logic of the collective action, as suggested by other authors (Bennett & Segerberg, 2012; Juris, 2012).

Method

The proposed analysis requires the examination of (a) the uses of social media for challenging the mainstream media system and (b) the senses associated with these uses for this specific media-focused objective. These two dimensions will be analyzed by using a quantitative-qualitative methodology through the study of two Facebook profiles associated with #YoSoy132 and the Chilean movement, respectively.

Whereas #YoSoy132 has an official profile, the Chilean movement does not, in a general sense.

The Confederation of Chilean Students (Spanish: Confederación de Estudiantes de Chile, CONFECH), a student organization that congregates the federations of Chilean university students, has a Facebook profile, but it is outdated. Consequently, in the case of the Chilean movement, I analyze the Facebook profile of a particular university student organization: the University of Chile Student Federation (Spanish: Federación de Estudiantes de la Universidad de Chile, FECH). Previous studies of the Chilean student movement (Cabalín-Quijada, 2014; Valenzuela, Arriagada, & Scherman, 2012) have also focused on FECH, given its importance within the Chilean student social movement. Although the inclusion of two different types of profiles is a limitation of the study, it also provides a relevant source of comparison that is in line with the above-mentioned particularities of each movement: the horizontality and absence of representative leaderships in #YoSoy132, and the importance of student organizations and their leaders in the Chilean movement.

The period of analysis, which includes the first two months of social mobilization of each movement, has been intentionally selected. The FECH profile was analyzed from May 12, 2011, when the first national march of the movement took place, until July 14, 2011, when a march against governmental measures took place, despite Santiago de Chile's local government ban on marching throughout La Alameda, the main avenue of the city. The #YoSoy132 profile was analyzed from May 16, 2012, when it was created and two days before a manifestation against the information blackout took place, and July 18, 2012, three days after a national convention against what was qualified as the imposition of PRI's candidate, Enrique Peña Nieto, took place.

The quantitative analysis was conducted through a general counting of the following four categories: (a) posts, (b) number of likes for each post, (c) number of shares of each post, and (d) number of comments on each post. Based on this counting, the averages of likes, shares, and comments were calculated for the analyzed period. Previous studies on the use of Facebook by social movements are based on the quantification of likes, shares, and comments (see Cabalín-Quijada, 2014). However, because it is generally assumed that Web 2.0 sites provide a higher interactivity rate than other websites (Yang, 2011), we propose to calculate a general interactivity rate for each Facebook profiles following our own formula. Facebook's metric "People talking about this" cannot be used in this case because it allows a limited time perspective, as it refers to the number of users that have created a story about the profile within the seven days prior to the date when the profile is visited.

The general interactivity rate (Ir) was calculated for each Facebook profile by using the following formula of the weighted average divided by 100:

$$Ir = (MI \times 0.25) + (Ms \times 0.25) + (Mc \times 0.50)/100$$
, where MI refers to the average of likes, Ms to the average of shares, and Mc to the average of comments.

This formula gives major weight (50%) to the comments as expressions of interactivity in Facebook when compared to the weight given to the likes and shares" (25%, respectively) because I consider comments to have a greater load of meaning than likes and shares, given that comments may be both quantitatively and qualitatively analyzed. The same formula was used to calculate the interactivity rate for the posts that specifically refer to the media systems during the period.

After this, the qualitative analysis was conducted through a discourse analysis applied to both the posts and comments related to the mainstream media system and applied to other texts from both The interviews were conducted by the author in different periods of fieldwork from 2012 to 2015.

Discourse analysis has become a significant method for understanding social movements, particularly their culture and the cultural dimension of mobilization (Taylor & Whittier, 2004). According to Melucci (2004), discourse analytical approaches to social movements are increasingly concerned with meaning construction; "aware of this complexity," they "try to creatively approach the multiplicity of levels implied in a collective discourse" (p. 57), and they tend to focus on movement-related texts in the effort to identify patterns, linkages, and structures of ideas related to those collective agents (Jonhston, 2002). There are multiple approaches in the field of discourse analysis, even some particularly applied to the online discourse, such as the computer-mediated discourse analysis (Herring, 2004) and critical discourse analysis (CDA) (Fairclough, 1995). Given the goal of this study and the particular interest in the analysis of the relationship between the discourses mobilized through social media and the mainstream media system, we have chosen CDA. It precisely provides an analytical framework for unraveling opaque relationships between discourse and society by examining the discursive participants' choices of words and metaphors in relation to their relational, experiential, and expressive values (Fairclough, 1995), based on a view of the discourses as a facet of social life in interaction with other social dimensions and, ultimately, as a social practice (Fairclough, 2003).

In that regard, Franzosi (1998) proposes a relevant perspective of discourse analysis that suggests focusing on the narrative dimension, which enables a better understanding of the processes of meaning construction. This approach transcends the focus on the search for the meaningful—that is, in those words supposedly more loaded with meaning (such as adjectives)—and moves on to the meanings contained in the structure and narrative sequences of texts in what is described as a transition "from variables to actors, away from regression-based statistical models to networks, and away from a variable-based conception of casualty to narrative sequences" (p. 527). Following this perspective, this discourse analysis focuses on the following dimensions: (a) references to social media and the autonomous visibility of the movement based on the use of these technologies, (b) denouncements and criticisms of the coverage about collective action provided by the mainstream media system, and (c) the presence of the

social movement in the mainstream media. The following section discusses the quantitative and qualitative results for each question that this analysis focuses on.

Results

The General Use of Facebook and the Mainstream Media System—Focused Use of It

I identified 11 main types of content in the posts. Both profiles contained posts about (a) the online collective action; (b) the offline collective action; (c) the movement; (d) the media coverage of social mobilizations; (e) relevant contents shared (including pictures of the protests, information, and declarations); (f) social media; (g) expressions of support and solidarity with the movement; (h) denouncements to governments, politicians, and other institutions; (i) emotional contents; (j) leaders; and (k) the presence of participants and leaders of the movement in the mainstream media (which differs from media coverage because it does not refer to a report by a journalist but, for instance, to the participation of some leader in a television debate). Contents also included the creation of events (two in the #YoSoy132 profile and three in the FECH profile) and surveys (six in the former profile and none in the latter). The number of posts about each type of content, expressed as a percentage of all posts published in each profile during the analyzed period, is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Percentage of Posts About Each Type of Content by All Posts Published in Each Profile During the Period.

Type of Content	Percentage of the Total Number of Posts Published	
	#YoSoy132's profile	FECH's profile
Online collective action	10.99	1.55
Offline collective action	10.99	24.81
The movement	13.19	1.55
Media coverage	9.89	12.40
Contents shared	9.89	31.78
Social media	1.10	2.33
Support and solidarity	14.29	4.65
Denouncements	17.58	6.20
Emotional contents	10.99	3.10
Leaders	0.00	0.78
Presence on mainstream media	1.10	10.85
TOTAL	100	100

Source: Own elaboration based on the data collected.

There are relevant differences between the two profiles. Whereas #YoSoy132's shows a balance among posts on online and offline collective action, FECH's shows a significantly greater presence of posts on offline collective action. This trend is in line with the presence in the Mexican movement of individuals who only participated online, demonstrating the importance given to this dimension of collective action:

I mainly participated in the movement by posting and sharing contents through social networks. . . . Social media give us a voice; it is an opportunity of being heard, if not by politicians or by the mainstream media, at least we are heard by other students and by the people. (ARD, #YoSoy132, Mexico City, June 2013).

On the other hand, members of the Chilean movement consider that "we used social media mainly for achieving the inclusion of the movement in the agenda of the mainstream media" (FF, Chilean movement, Santiago, January 2015). So, in this case, these Web 2.0 platforms were not regarded as a dimension for collective action itself at all. These different perspectives also explain the Mexican movement's greater use of the Facebook profile as a resource for surveys, versus the Chilean movement's

strategy of posting the results of surveys on the movement by mainstream media or by consulting enterprises (FECH's profile, July 2, 5, 7, 2011).

The different number of post on media coverage and on presence in mainstream media is also significant. The greater number of posts on media coverage in the Chilean case is in line with a strategy of communication that "was to be in the media, mainly on the television. We knew that it was an essential goal, and we used social media for it" (CB, Chilean movement, Santiago, January 2015). At the same time, for the Chilean movement, most of the posts linked to the presence in the media referred to the presence of its leaders (e.g., FECH's profile, June 6, 9, 2011), whereas the only one post on this issue for #YoSoy132 mentioned a collective action: having obliged Televisa to transmit the image of a giant #YoSoy132 flag during the live transmission of a football game (#YoSoy132's profile, June 9, 2012). This focus on the presence of individual leaders in the agenda of the mainstream media in the case of the Chilean movement is associated with its more personal kind of leadership, as opposed to the horizontal and collective structure of #YoSoy132. Whereas in the Chilean case "there were a number of leaders . . . with a strong presence in the media, who were the spokespersons of the different student federation" (MS, Chilean movement, Santiago, March 2015), #YoSoy132 was defined as "a nonpartisan movement, with no leaders or ringleaders, a horizontal one" (AS, #YoSoy132, Mexico City, June 2013).

In that regard, for the participants in #YoSoy132, social media have meant "that now we do not depend on nothing nor nobody for communicating between us, as citizens" (Comment, #YoSoy132's profile, June 3, 2012). However, they also recognize some risks of this horizontal appropriation of social media for collective action, to the extent that they've qualified it as "a double-edged sword" because it "made it possible the emergence of a movement as we had never seen before in our country" but also "allowed political parties to reach its black hands for its own benefit, by creating false accounts and paying twitters" (CC, #YoSoy132, Mexico City, June 2013).

Another relevant difference is also observed in the content posted regarding the movements themselves. Only 1.55% of the posts were published on the Chilean movement's profile on this topic, but on #YoSoy132's profile, this topic appeared in 13.99% of all posts published. This trend in the second case is in line with a movement that was born in social media, so these technological platforms would have a greater role in its processes of identity building, and the presence of content about the movement in the profile would be an expression of that identity.

These different trends in the types of content posted by each movement are also in line with the diverse nature of these groups' respective main demands. In the context of an election campaign, #YoSoy132 "makes the right to information and the right to free expression to become our main demand" (#YoSoy132, May 28, 2012), whereas the Chilean movement's demands were the goals of "free education, end of the profit in education, democratization, end of the indebtedness in education as well as self-financing and egalitarian access to it" (CONFECH, 2011).

In the light of this difference, the weight of the posts directly focused on the mainstream media system—those associated with media coverage and the presence in these media—can be analyzed in the total number of posts. In the case of #YoSoy132, during the period analyzed, 10.99% of the posts were centered on mainstream media, while in FECH's case, the number of posts on this topic reached 23.26% of the total. At the same time, there were other posts with a particular communicative purpose—those that centered on the online dimension, shared some content, and made a denouncement—since they are associated with the visibility of the movement through social media. Although these posts indirectly challenge the mainstream media system too, they are more focused on each movement's development of autonomous visibility. In this case, 51.64% of the posts on #YoSoy132's profile were associated with these topics, while only 41.09% of the posts in the FECH's profile referred to these subjects. These figures show that although #YoSoy132 had a greater percentage of posts focused on

autonomous visibility, the Chilean movement's percentage of posts focused on mainstream media was more than twice that of the Mexican movement. Besides, the interactivity rate of these posts directly associated with the challenge to the mainstream media are 6.24 and 0.95 for #YoSoy132 and FECH, respectively. Although this rate is slightly lower than the general interactivity rate (-0.19) in the Mexican movement, in the Chilean movement, the rate of these mainstream media system—centered posts is 2.88 times the general interactivity rate of the profile during the period analyzed. These trends reinforce the idea of the greater importance of this type of content on the Chilean movement's Facebook profile.

Challenging Mainstream Media System Through Social Media: Autonomous Visibility, Denouncement, and Criticism to Media Coverage

As mentioned, the emergence of #YoSoy132 was inherently linked to social media, and this group's main demand was the democratization of the Mexican media system. Its participants regard social media as the direct cause of social mobilization, proving that "the increasing strengthen of digital social networks both at national and international level, to the extent that a new social movement that questions all the bases of the traditional institutional politics, has emerged from these technological resources" (IL, #YoSoy132, Mexico City, October 2013). These Web 2.0 platforms are considered an opportunity "for the diffusion and the organization of this important and authentic movement" (Comment, #YoSoy132's Facebook, May 20, 2012), "a great tool of communication that made it possible to inform people beyond the national mainstream media corporations" (IL, #YoSoy132, Mexico City, October 2013), and a tool "to provide real information against the manipulated one offered by the mainstream media" (CC, #YoSoy132, Mexico City, June 2013).

On the other hand, in the Chilean movement, social media are considered as "communicative platforms we used for stating our demands and also visibilizing our motivations" (FF, Chilean movement, Santiago, January 2015) and "a source of information, for instance, through the permanent updated Twitter accounts of the different student organizations" (FA, Chilean movement, Santiago, March 2015). It is recognized that "via Facebook we could access all the information about the mobilizations, published by ourselves, as well as share videos of the occupations and make our demands visible" (CB, Chilean movement, Santiago, January 2015). In line with this, FECH's Facebook profile was defined as "a means of communication for all the people who are currently fighting for recovering public education" and through which "we can debate" (Post, FECH's profile, July 13, 2011). It is considered, in summary, a space for "comments about the student movement and everything related to education and the FECH" (Comment, FECH's profile, July 7, 2011).

Although the Mexican movement puts more emphasis on social media as enabling resources for the emergence of collective action, both Facebook profiles include comments denouncing mainstream media coverage. Participants defined mainstream media as "a system whose intention has been to lie and make us idiots, distorting history and manipulating thought" (Comment, FECH's profile, July 12, 2011) and denounced that "all the media are under the control of the right" (Comment, FECH's profile, June 17, 2011). Censorship of collective actions is also condemned:

It is a pity that the bastards of the television channels will not transmit it [the citizen debate with the presidential candidates planned by #YoSoy132]; it would be interesting to know what they are really proposing to the people. (Comment, #YoSoy32's profile, June 19, 2012)

In particular, mainstream media distortions and manipulations about the movements were denounced in both cases. One user demanded that "caution should be exercised, so the media could not manipulate the information" (Comment, FECH's profile, July 2, 2011), and another highlighted that "mass media will try to pervert the movement" (Comment, #YoSoy132's profile, July 6, 2012). Two aspects of the media coverage of collective action that were frequently criticized in the posts and comments were the presumed number of participants in the protests and the violent image of the mobilizations provided

by the mainstream media. For instance, one comment stated that “between 200 and 400 thousand people protested and the televisions spent half an hour on the disorders provoked by a group of a few infiltrated people” (Comment, FECH’s profile, July 11, 2011).

Participants of both movements also criticize the superficial media coverage of the collective action, underlining that media “does not inform absolutely anything about the background of the mobilizations, it only reports the superficial and entertaining aspects” (Comment, FECH’s profile, July 14, 2011). Against this hegemonic tendency of the media, participants declare that “we made courageous use of these technological tools, as a response to the lack of veracity of the mainstream Mexican media and the complicity between the television groups and the political ones” (CC, #YoSoy132, Mexico City, June 2013).

Both profiles featured frequent calls to “be informed, to denounce, to document” (Post, #YoSoy132’s profile, July 1, 2012), with the most radical being “to boycott Televisa and TV Azteca [the two main Mexican television groups], to turn off the television and turn on the social networks, to share [the content] with everybody” (Comment, #YoSoy132’s profile, July 2, 2012). Social media were considered resources for “online manifestations, so we have to flood the Internet with comments” (Comment, #YoSoy132’s profile, June 27, 2012), and a technological resource through which “we should other people” (Comment, #YoSoy132’s profile, June 27, 2012).

Because social media are regarded as a space where citizens can express themselves and reply to the discourses of the mainstream media, participants were asked, for instance, to share their reasons for not voting for the PRI on #YoSoy132’s profile: “write it here [on Facebook], in your Twitter account, upload a video. . . . [L]et’s communicate it, so everybody who has access to social networks understands the risk of voting for the PRI” (Post, #YoSoy132’s profile, June 29, 2012). Participants in the Mexican movement underline the importance of the “publication of user generated content in the social networks, revealing certain information that mainstream media had censored” (TL, #YoSoy132, Mexico City, October 2013), while interviewees from the Chilean movement refer to the “use of Facebook for the diffusion and coordination of the mobilization, as well as for sharing the experiences of the collective action by the participants” (FF, Chilean movement, Santiago, January 2015).

The relevance of autonomous visibility through social media in the case of #YoSoy132 is in line with the importance it gave to the spaces of alternative communication as part of collective action. The Mexican movement considered alternative communication a main dimension of the process of communicative democratization because these spaces pay attention “to the less favored voices of the society, bringing them information that responds to their necessities,” becoming “an excellent tool that allows communities to exercise their right to information and free expression” (#YoSoy132, September 1, 2012).

Instead of this importance of social media as resources for autonomous visibility that responds to mainstream media coverage, the Chilean movement’s profile featured a significant number of posts about the presence of its leaders—the spokespersons of the university student federations—in the mainstream media, particularly the Chilean TV channels. For instance, their participation in TV programs was announced through the profile, calling for members to watch them, and there were numerous posts and comments about these appearances during and after them. However, despite this frequent use of the profile for announcing and commenting on the presence of leaders in mainstream media, there were no comments on the Facebook profile that explicitly referred to the role of social media for this purpose, so this kind of use would associated more with the kind of leadership of the Chilean movement than with a specific understanding of Web 2.0 platforms.

Some comments on FECH’s profile made suggestions about the participation of the leaders in spaces of the mainstream media system: “she [Camila Vallejo, one of the leaders of the Chilean movement] should make it clear our demands and the subterfuges of the government” (Comment, FECH’s profile, July 7, 2011). Other comments evaluate their discourses: “he [Giorgio Jackson, one of the leaders

of the Chilean movement] did it excellent, with a solid and wide discourse that can reach more people” (Comment, FECH’s profile, July 4, 2011). But I also found voices that condemn this kind of presence on mainstream media because “what they only do is to present a monologue among the panelists” (Comment, FECH’s profile, July 4, 2011) and underline the necessity of collective action instead of a mainstream media—focused repertoire of collective action: “Let’s go to the streets! Media will not change” (Comment, FECH’s profile, July 4, 2011).

From a general perspective, these debates show the tensions surrounding the use of social media in collective action for challenging mainstream media. In that regard, some interviewees from the Chilean movement declared that there was a more formal communication strategy, “developed by an agency of communication that helped us in this” (CB, Chilean movement, Santiago, January 2015), so the use of social media as resources for forcing mainstream media to include the collective action in their agendas may be considered part of an explicit communicational objective. Some participants in this movement recognized that “our main purpose was to break the censorship of the mainstream media . . . and to force it to include the mobilizations and our demands in their agenda” (FF, Chilean movement, Santiago, January 2015).

This more instrumental articulation of social media within collective action in the Chilean movement is mainly explicit in the high percentage of posts offline collective action in general, and certain offline communicational actions, such as the presence of its leaders in spaces of mainstream media, in particular. To some extent, this instrumental view was confirmed by some comments about the limits of collective action that takes place only through social media, questioning that “here [on Facebook] everything is criticized but I would like to know what is done for the movement by all who are commenting here” (Comment, FECH’s profile, July 12, 2011) or affirming that “an opinion in the Internet can do little for a social movement . . . This is just a Facebook profile, so let’s continue working, out of our houses, for the development of the movement” (Comment, FECH’s profile, July 12, 2011).

Similar references to the limits of social media were also present in #YoSoy132’s profile.

However, in this case, these limits are associated with the digital divide in general: “We must take into account that, unfortunately, few people have access to the Internet, so each one of us must replicate and spread all that we comment here among the people” (Comment, #YoSoy132’s profile, June 10, 2012). Coherently, there were calls to “create informative groups that bring all that we know and share here on social networks to those people that only see Televisa” (Comment, #YoSoy132’s profile, May 19, 2012), in such a way that “the people who only have access to television . . . can realize what is happening on Twitter and social networks” (Comment, #YoSoy132’s profile, June 22, 2012).

On the other hand, the Mexican movement specifically questioned the real impact of social media as the only resource for replying to the media coverage of collective action, suggesting that “we have to go out to the streets, squares, restaurants, and all available places, and hand out leaflets” (Comment, #YoSoy132’s profile, May 27, 2012). Offline communicative actions do not include, in this case, an autonomous presence in mainstream media but other practices of alternative communication. This is in line with a movement that proposes a less instrumental perspective of social media for collective action and a more complex appropriation of it—as demonstrated by the balanced presence of posts on offline and online collective action on #YoSoy132’s profile—and whose offline relationship with mainstream media is expressed in radical actions against them, such as the campaign “Turn off the TV, turn on your mind,” which called people to spend a whole weekend, from May 26–27, 2012, with the TV turned off, and the 24-hour blockade to the Televisa studios at Chapultepec, Mexico City, that took place on July 26–27, 2012.

Conclusion

The study shows some relevant tendencies in the appropriations of social media (in particular, Facebook) by social movements for challenging the mainstream media system. The differences in both the

percentage of posts on each type of content published by the two analyzed Facebook profiles and the levels of interactivity rates shed light on some relevant dimensions mediating the use of social media for this purpose as part of collective action.

From a general perspective, FECH's profile featured a greater number of posts with a lower interactivity rate, and #YoSoy132's profile featured a smaller number of posts with a greater interactivity rate. While the latter is in line with collective action focused on the democratization of communication and the change of the communicational paradigm from a hierarchical and concentrated one toward a horizontal and participatory one, the former is coherent with a greater importance on impacting the agenda of mainstream media and collective action focused on a dimension other than communication—education.

The percentage of posts specifically focused on challenging the mainstream media system and the interactivity rate associated with these posts confirm the mediation of the main demands and goals and the context and particularities of the collective action in the appropriations of these Web 2.0 platforms as resources for this particular purpose.

On the one hand, the greater percentage of posts associated with the mainstream media on FECH's profile and the increase of the interactivity rate for these specific posts are in line with a movement whose participants underline the importance of placing their demands on the agenda of the mainstream media system. The movement aims to put itself on the mainstream media agenda and uses social media as part of a negotiation strategy. There is a certain instrumental perspective in this appropriation of social media as tools for making the mainstream media include the movement and its demands on their agenda and for replicating what are considered achievements of this goal.

At the same time, the posts linked to movement leaders' presence in mainstream media are consistent with a Facebook profile that belongs to a formal student organization and with a movement characterized by a more personality-driven leadership as a result. This is also consistent with a negotiation strategy that must be adapted to the logic of the mainstream media, which focus on individuals more than on processes or actions such as, for instance, collective action.

On the other hand, #YoSoy132's profile points to a more radical appropriation of social media expressed in a higher interactivity rate and a balanced number of post about online and offline collective action. This pattern points to a no-negotiation strategy in challenging mainstream media that finds its expression in a greater percentage of posts focused on autonomous visibility and a lower percentage of posts focused on media coverage. Given #YoSoy132's particularities (horizontal and collective organization with no representative leadership), it is not interested in the presence of leaders in the mainstream media.

From this strategic perspective, the challenge to the mainstream media system comes from the outside and is based on the development of autonomous and democratized practices of alternative communication and self-visibility. This strategy is based upon a radical criticism of mainstream media and on a certain pessimism regarding the possibilities of changing those media only through a social media—based alternative communication. It seems like participants are aware that given the highly concentrated Mexican media system and its deep complicity with the hegemonic political groups, changing that system would require more time than the period of an election campaign. In that regard, particularly in a movement that was born in social media, the Mexican movement also states an explicit and recurring concern about the limits of social media for challenging mainstream media. Although one can find a similar concern in the Chilean case, #YoSoy132 has a more explicit emphasis on the necessity of a transition from social media—based communicative actions into offline actions, particularly in response to the digital divide present in Mexican society.

In summary, this study shows that although both groups view mainstream media systems as sharing some similar characteristics (concentration, manipulation, strong economic and political ties with

the dominant social groups), the particularities of each movement (for example, its specific demands and goals or its organizational and leadership structure) and certain dimensions of its interrelationships between collective action and social media (for instance, the online-offline and visibility-articulating tensions) mediate the movement's general appropriation of social media, including its radicalness, interactivity rate, and types of content posted, and its specific strategies for appropriating social media resources for challenging mainstream media systems.

References

- Ayres, J. M. (1999). From the streets to the Internet: The cyber-diffusion of contention. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 566(1), 132–143.
doi:10.1177/000271629956600111
- Bennett, W. L., & Segerberg, A. (2012). The logic of connective action: Digital media and the personalization of contentious politics. *Information, Communication & Society*, 15(5), 739–768.
doi:10.1080/1369118X.2012.670661
- Borge-Holthoefer, J., Rivero, A., García, I., Cauhé, E., Ferrer, A., Ferrer, D., . . . Morena, Y. (2011). Structural and dynamical patterns on online social networks: The Spanish May 15th movement as a case study. *PLoS ONE*, 6(8), e23883. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0023883
- Cabalín-Quijada, C. (2014). Online and mobilized students: The use of Facebook in the Chilean student protests. *Comunicar*, 22(43). doi:10.3916/C43-2014-02
- Casero-Ripollés, A., & Feenstra, R. A. (2012). The 15M Movement and the new media: A case study of how new themes were introduced into Spanish political discourse. *MIA: Media International Australia*, 144, 68–76.
- CONFECH. (2011). Petitorio CONFECH [CONFECH's demands]. Retrieved from <http://fech.cl/blog/2011/07/28/compilado-documentos-de-interes-movilizaciones-2011-2/petitorio-confech/>
- Couldry, N., & Curran, J. (2003). The paradox of media power. In N. Couldry & J. Curran (Eds.), *Contesting media power: Alternative media in a networked world* (pp. 3–16). Oxford, UK: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Downing, J. (2001). *Radical media*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Downing, J. (2002). The indymedia phenomenon: Space-place-democracy and the new independent media centers. Retrieved from <http://www.er.uqam.ca/nobel/gricis/actes/bogues/Downing.pdf>
- Duggan, M., & Smith, A. (2013). Social media update 2013. Pew Research Center website. Retrieved from <http://www.pewinternet.org/2013/12/30/social-media-update-2013>
- Dussel, E. (1985). *La producción teórica de Marx [The theoretical production of Marx]*. Mexico: Siglo XXI Editores.
- Eltantawy, N., & Wiest, J. (2011). Social media in the Egyptian revolution: Reconsidering resource mobilization theory. *International Journal of Communication*, 5, 1207–1224. Retrieved from <http://ijoc.org/index.php/ijoc/article/view/1242>
- Fairclough, N. (1995). *Critical discourse analysis: The critical study of language*. Harlow, UK: Longman.
- Fairclough, N. (2003). *Analyzing discourse: Textual analysis for social research*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Fernández Christlieb, F. (2000). Impacto de la concentración de medios: El caso de México [The impact of media concentration: The Mexican case]. In S. Leree (Ed.), *Los medios públicos de comunicación en el marco de la reforma del estado en México [Public media in the context of the state reform in Mexico]* (pp. 119–126). Mexico: Fundación Konrad Adenauer/UNESCO/CONEICC/UIA/FELAFACS/UAM/AMEDI.
- Franzosi, R. (1998). *Narrative analysis: Or why (and how) sociologists should be interested in narrative*.

Annual Review of Sociology, 24, 517–554. doi:10.1146/annurev.soc.24.1.517

Fuchs, C. (2012). Social media, riots, and revolutions. *Capital & Class*, 36, 383–391.

doi:10.1177/0309816812453613

Gómez García, R., & Treré, E. (2014, July 20). The #YoSoy132 movement and the struggle for media democratisation in Mexico. *Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies*. doi:10.1177/1354856514541744

Gülşen, T. T. (2014). Turkish youth's (re)construction of their political identity in social media, before "Resistanbul." In D. Hickey & J. Essid (Eds.), *Identity and leadership in virtual communities:*

Establishing credibility and influence (pp. 1–22). Hershey, PA: Information Science Reference.

doi:10.4018/978-1-4666-5150-0.ch001

Guzmán-Concha, C. (2012). The students' rebellion in Chile: Occupy protest or classic social movement?

Social Movements Studies: Journal of Social, Cultural and Political Protest, 11(3–4), 408–415.

doi:10.1080/14742837.2012.710748

Hanke, B. (2005). For a political economy of indymedia practice. *Canadian Journal of Communication*, 30(1). Retrieved from

<http://www.cjc-online.ca/index.php/journal/article/view/1479>

Harlow, S., & Harp, D. (2012). Collective action on the Web: A cross-cultural study of social networking sites and online and offline activism in the United States and Latin America. *Information,*

Communication & Society, 15(2), 196–216. doi:10.1080/1369118X.2011.591411

Herring, S. (2004). Computer-mediated discourse analysis: An approach to researching online behavior.

In S. Barab, R. Kling, & J. Gray (Eds.), *Designing for virtual communities in the service of*

learning (pp. 338–376). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Huerta-Wong, J. E., & Gómez García, R. (2013). Concentración y diversidad de los medios de comunicación y las telecomunicaciones en México [Concentration and diversity of media and

telecommunications in Mexico]. *Comunicación y sociedad*, 19, 113–152. Retrieved from

[http://www.scielo.org.mx/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S0188-](http://www.scielo.org.mx/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S0188-252X2013000100006&lng=es&tng=es)

[252X2013000100006&lng=es&tng=es](http://www.scielo.org.mx/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S0188-252X2013000100006&lng=es&tng=es)

Jonhston, H. (2002). Verification and proof in frame and discourse analysis. In B. Klandermans & S.

Staggenborg (Eds.), *Methods of social movement research* (pp. 61–91). Minneapolis, MN:

University of Minnesota Press.

Julio, P. (2013). Televisiónabierto y de pago en Chile [Free-to-air and pay TV in Chile]. In V. Fuenzilda & J.

Whittle (Eds.), *Panorama audiovisual chileno* (pp. 36–46). Santiago, Chile: Pontificia Universidad

Católica de Chile.

Juris, J. S. (2012). Reflections on #occupy everywhere: Social media, public space, and emerging logics of aggregation. *American Ethnologist*, 39, 259–279. doi:10.1111/j.1548-1425.2012.01362.x

Loader, B. D., & Mercea, D. (2011). Networking democracy? Social media innovations and participatory politics. *Information, Communication & Society*, 14(6), 757–769.

doi:10.1080/1369118X.2011.592648

Melucci, A. (2004). The process of collective identity. In H. Jonhston & B. Klandermans (Eds.), *Social movements and culture* (pp. 41–63). Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Mönckeberg, M. O. (2011). Los magnates de la prensa: Concentración de los medios de comunicación

Obar, J. A., Zube, P., & Lampe, C. (2012). Advocacy 2.0: An analysis of how advocacy groups in the United States perceive and use social media as tools for facilitating civic engagement and

collective action. *Journal of Information Policy*, 2, 1–25. doi:10.5325/jinfopoli.2.2012.0001

Pew Research Center. (2014). Social networking fact sheet. Washington, DC: Pew Research Center. Retrieved from <http://www.pewinternet.org/fact-sheets/social-networking-fact-sheet>

Plancarte Escobar, R. (2013). Son avesque no asustan: Razones y poderes en el movimiento #YoSoy132 [They are birds that do not scare: Reasons and powers in the movement #YoSoy132] (Master's thesis). Universidad Autónoma de Querétaro, Mexico. Retrieved from ri.uaq.mx/bitstream/123456789/1305/RI000831.pdf

Rodriguez, C. (2001). Fissures in the mediascape. New York, NY: Hampton Press.

Rucht, D. (2004). The quadruple "A." Media strategies of protest movements since the 1960s. In W. Van de Donk & D. Rucht (Eds.), *Cyber protest: New media, citizens, and social movements* (pp. 25—48). New York, NY: Routledge.

Segerberg, A., & Bennett, W. L. (2011). Social media and the organization of collective action: Using Twitter to explore the ecologies of two climate change protests. *The Communication Review*, 14(3), 197—215. doi:10.1080/10714421.2011.597250

Segovia, C., & Gamboa, R. (2012). Chile: El año en quesalimos a la calle [Chile: The year we took the streets]. *Revista de Ciencia Política (Santiago)*, 32(1), 65—85. doi:10.4067/S0718-090X2012000100004

Shirky, C. (2011). The political power of social media: Technology, the public sphere, and political change. *Foreign Affairs*, 90(1), 28—41.

Sunkel, G., & Geoffroy, E. (2001). *Concentración económica de los medios de comunicación [Economic concentration of mass media]*. Santiago, Chile: LOM.

Taylor, V., & Whittier, N. (2004). Analytical approaches to social movements culture: The culture of the women's movement. In H. Jonhston & B. Klandermans (Eds.), *Social movements and culture* (pp. 163—187). Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Trejo Delarbre, R. (2012). México: Medios, política y ciudadanos en la era de la convergencia digital [Mexico: Media, politics and citizens in the era of digital convergence]. In B. Sorj (Ed.), *Democracia y medios de comunicación: Más allá del estado y el mercado [Democracy and media: Beyond the state and the market]* (pp. 191—221). Buenos Aires, Argentina: Catálogos.

Tufekci, Z., & Wilson, C. (2012) Social media and the decision to participate in political protest: Observations from Tahrir Square. *Journal of Communication*, 62(2), 363—379. doi:10.1111/j.1460-2466.2012.01629.x

Valenzuela, S., Arriagada, A., & Scherman, A. (2012). The social media basis of youth protest behavior: The case of Chile. *Journal of Communication*, 62(2), 299—314. doi:10.1111/j.1460-2466.2012.01635.x

Van Laer, J., & Van Aelst, P. (2009). Cyber-protest and civil society: The Internet and action repertoires in social movements. In Y. Jewkes & M. Yar (Eds.), *Handbook on Internet crime* (pp. 230—254). Portland, OR: Willan.

Yang, K. (2011). Online campaigning: Web 2.0 and the Australian federal election. *Journal of Digital Research and Publishing*, Semester 1, 47—51.

#YoSoy132. (2012, May 28). Manifiesto del #YoSoy132 [Manifesto of the #YoSoy132]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=igxPudJF6nU>

#YoSoy132. (2012, September 1). Contrainformepresidencial [Presidential counter-address]. Retrieved from <http://www.sinembargo.mx/01-09-2012/352855>

