





Feminist discourses of Spanish digital influencers: An analysis of their activity on social media

Discursos feministas de las *influencers* digitales españolas: Análisis de su actividad en redes sociales

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ABSTRACT With the rise of digital feminism, this article explores the role of Spanish digital influencers considered as feminist referents and the topics addressed by them on social networks from a gender perspective. An online survey was used to create a ranking of the twelve most popular influencers by social media users. Firstly, an analysis of their professional and sociodemographic profiles was made. Secondly, a cross-platform content analysis of the posts published by these influencers on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram was undertaken. The results show the homogenous profile of the most popular feminist influencers. The main topics addressed in their social networks are linked to gender violence, especially on Twitter, which is the social network where they publish the largest number of posts with a gender perspective despite having more followers on Instagram. Finally, the study concludes that online feminist discourses replicate the issues in the traditional media agenda and omit other topics that involve women belonging to minorities or related to the private sphere.

KEYWORDS feminism; social media; influencers; digital activism

RESUMEN Este artículo explora el rol de las *influencers* digitales españolas consideradas referentes feministas y los temas que abordan con perspectiva de género en sus redes sociales. A partir de la realización de una encuesta, se ha establecido un *ranking* con las doce *influencers* digitales más populares consideradas feministas. En primer lugar, se analizaron sus perfiles sociodemográficos junto con su actividad profesional. En segundo lugar, se llevó a cabo un análisis de contenido de sus publicaciones en Facebook, Twitter e Instagram. Los resultados muestran una homogeneidad de los perfiles de las *influencers* feministas más populares. Los principales temas abordados en sus redes sociales están vinculados a la violencia de género, siendo Twitter la red social donde publican mayor cantidad de *posts* con perspectiva de género, a pesar de que en Instagram tienen más seguidores. Finalmente, el estudio concluye que los discursos feministas *online* replican los temas y asuntos de la agenda de los medios tradicionales y dejan de lado otros temas de la agenda feminista que implican a mujeres que pertenecen a minorías y temas relacionados con la esfera privada.

PALABRAS CLAVE feminismo; redes sociales; *influencers*; activismo digital

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1. Introduction

Over the last decade, Spain has experienced a period of mobilization by different social segments such as pensioners, the health sector, educational workers or, at the core of this paper, the feminist movement. The global economic crisis of 2008 greatly damaged the economy and successive governments have responded with public cuts that continue to be questioned and protested against by a significant portion of Spanish society.

The increased presence of feminism in the international and national public spheres is undeniable. In recent years, there have been significant mobilizations in Spain particularly illustrated by the first feminist labour strike on March the 8th 2018, which coincided with International Women's Day. There have also been large demonstrations against judicial rulings considered to be part of a patriarchal system such as the trial known as "La Manada" [The Pack in English] (Navarro and Coromina, 2020).

Social networks are currently one of the spaces where popular culture is more visible and have facilitated the spread of feminism within the public sphere. The rise of hashtag feminism internationally is one example of this (Myles, 2019). From this perspective, the hashtags: #YesAllWomen in the US and Germany (Baer, 2015), #EverydaySexism in the UK (Bowles Eagle, 2015) or #Niunamenos [#Notoneless in English] in Latin America (Giraldo-Luque et al., 2018) are clear examples of the interest in analysing how these movements are presented and the impact that they have. The importance of this new way of commenting on, debating and organizing the movement has even been considered as the fourth wave of the feminist movement (Baumgardner, 2011; Zimmerman, 2017).

One of the main aspects praised about hashtag feminism is the possibility of creating a community from the individual experiences and opinions of Twitter users (Thrift, 2014; Myles, 2019). However, the role of influencers is also key for the diffusion of feminism online. In general, we can define influencers as individuals who have the potential "to lead others to engage in a certain act" (Cha et al., 2010: 2). Therefore, the activity of the feminist influencers is important when understanding the evolution of feminism in popular culture.

The objective of this paper is to determine the Spanish feminist influencers on social networks, to describe their profile and to map the issues related to feminism or from the gender perspective that they discuss according to the social network on which they publish: Twitter, Facebook or Instagram. In addition, the role that these feminist influencers have in creating new topics beyond the agenda setting of traditional media is investigated and how these topics correlate to the interests of social media users. Regarding the methodology, firstly, a ranking of the most popular Spanish influencers

was created through a survey of 743 participants that has allowed, in the second part of our analysis, the creation of a cross-platform content analysis of social networks to establish the current feminist discourses in the Spanish digital sphere.

In this paper, first of all in the theoretical framework, we discuss the concept and evolution of digital feminism and its consolidation on social media. Afterwards, the different aspects of the implementation of the survey and the content analysis of social media posts are explained in the methodology section. The results are divided into three sections focusing on the results of the survey, the profile of the Spanish feminist influencers and their presence on social media. To conclude, a discussion of the results contextualizing them within different theoretical paradigms is conducted to close the main conclusions.

2. Theoretical framework

2.1. Digital Feminism

The popularization of feminism has had a major impact on the digital sphere (Caro-Castaño, 2015; Hogsnes and Steenbjerg Hansen, 2018). In fact, the 4th wave of feminism has been defined as the spread of the 3rd wave into cyberspace (Zimmerman, 2017). Authors who support this idea argue that young women can find a space on the internet where they can express their experiences and views with more freedom (Munroe, 2013). Thus, the 4th wave is characterized as being sex-positive, trans-accepting and body-positive (Baumgardner, 2011). Furthermore, this wave has a strong influence on companies and their commercial strategies (Hogsnes and Steenbjerg Hansen, 2018).

The pervasiveness of feminism into cyberspace has been observed from different perspectives. Cyberfeminism claims that the Internet offers the possibility of creating new identities and relationships out of gender dichotomy. Also, cyberfeminism believes that new technologies can help to reduce gender inequality through online activism and by spreading global connections around the world (Paasonen, 2011). Consequently, cyberfeminism authors affirm that social media platforms movements such as #MeToo or #Niunamenos or first feminist strike on March the 8th illustrate how social networks can give visibility and support women's struggle across the whole world and in a transversal way. Thus, from a utopian and optimistic point of view, the Information and Communications Technologies (ITC) encourage broader feminist strategies and promotes activist discourse from the public digital sphere (Núñez-Puente et al., 2016).

On the other hand, more negative perspectives state that the patriarchal structures of the offline society are duplicated in cyberspace. For example, Judy Wajcman (2000), one of the main authors who criticizes cyberfeminism, argues that technology does not guarantee a genuine change in eradicating social injustices but it can have a variety of consequences. For this reason, Wajcman (2000) queries the technological determinism of cyberfeminism. Previous studies conclude that the digital sphere is not conquered by the feminist groups (Sánchez-Duarte, 2015). Also, they said that cyberspace may not be useful in dismantling the patriarchy and sexism despite it being a good space to spread feminist ideas (Giraldo-Luque et al., 2018). In conclusion, the possibilities that the digital sphere offers to women are in dispute (Zafra, 2011).

2.2. Feminism on social networks

For Catherine Rottenberg (2014) and Rosalind Gill (2007), the popularization of feminism and influencers on social networks constitutes an individualistic feminism of neoliberal consumer culture, which is characterized by the visibility of messages concerning self-making, self-love and self-care. These kinds of messages are also found in the advertising campaigns of major companies and are aimed at white, privileged women. Furthermore, these messages are related to the neoliberal culture of self-employment and DIY culture among young women who self-identify as feminists (Banet-Weiser and Portwood-Stacer, 2017).

From this perspective, two terms have been coined. The first is 'Commodity Feminism' which defines the relationship between feminism and consumerism in a symbolic and commercial approach to the digital sphere (Banet-Weiser and Portwood-Stacer, 2017). The second is 'Accidental Feminist' by Rose Maloney (2017). In her research, Maloney explores the Kardashian family and she concludes that they have become role models for women because of their unapologetic sex and body positivity and their support for the transsexual movement in spite of never having dedicated their life to gender equality explicitly.

Some authors consider that these kinds of feminism have a negative effect on the real fight for equality. In particular, Banet-Weiser and Portwood-Stacer (2017) state that the rise of individualistic feminist neoliberal consumer culture is only for privileged women to gain visibility and reward in the market, at the expense of converting feminism into a commodity. This reinforces neoliberal individualism and white supremacy, while the millions of women who belong to a different race, sexual identity and or class continue to be oppressed.

Alternatively, Caro-Castaño (2015) raises some challenges for feminism on social networks. Initially, the author claims that feminism on these digital platforms is light and far from radical, and therefore considers that a more inclusive and radical method is necessary. Secondly, the author points out the obligation in overcoming the individualistic neoliberal commercial heteronormativity. In addition, social media are also public spaces where misogynistic messages and attacks are common, especially for users defending feminist discourses (Jane, 2016). This makes safe participation on these platforms difficult for users who openly define themselves as feminists and hinders productive discussion within the movement.

3. Method

Taking under consideration the theoretical and empirical preceding works, the main objective of this paper is the identification and analysis of the digital influencers related to feminism in Spain. In this research paper, a social media influencer is classed as a feminist if other users consider them to be, whether self-identified as a feminist or not. With this premise, the specific objectives of this paper are:

1. To describe the sociodemographic and professional profile of the Spanish feminist digital influencers.
2. To discover if the topics published by the influencers correlate to the interests of Spanish social media users and the agenda of traditional media.

3. To analyse whether the social networks (Facebook, Twitter or Instagram) determines the topics published by the Spanish feminist influencers.

To address these objectives a preliminary online survey has firstly been used to detect the main Spanish feminist digital influencers and the topics Spaniards are interested in regarding gender inequality. Second, a cross-platform content analysis of the posts by the feminist referents on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram has been used to detect their activity on each platform in relation to gender perspective and whether there is a relationship between the results by the respondents in the survey.

3.1. Survey

A total of 743 valid responses from citizens across the country were received using the online survey distributed by Google forms, 448 women and 295 men (users who were not Spanish were excluded). All valid responses were analysed with the open source programming software *R Studio*. Respondents were predominantly aged between 18 and 35 years old and needing to be recurrent users of Facebook, Twitter or Instagram, with the latter being the most used by 41.28% of the respondents. The answers of by participants not fulfilling these requirements were not considered. The survey was spread across social media platforms and was answered through an online form during the month of October, 2018.

The participants were firstly asked about their sociodemographic characteristics (gender, age, residence and level of studies). In the second section, participants were asked if they considered themselves as feminists. In the cases which answered positively, two main aspects were further investigated: the themes they were interested in relating to feminism or gender inequality and mentioning a maximum of three Spanish feminist influencers. The topics regarding gender inequality included in the survey were grouped from a selected range of precedent feminist literature, including theoretical works and research relating to feminism and popular culture (Baer, 2015; Banet-Weiser and Portwood-Stacer, 2017; Dixon, 2014; Jane, 2016; McRobbie, 2009; Munroe, 2013). They are the following: a) roles and gender inequalities (from an educational and divulgation approach), b) news related to gender inequalities, c) history and knowledge about feminism, d) cultural recommendations, e) questioning of beauty standards, f) information on the inequalities of lesbian, bisexual and transgender women, information on the inequalities of racialized women, g) female sexuality and h) new dynamics in romantic relationships.

3.2. Cross-platform social media content analysis

After analysing the survey, the results were used to create a ranking of the top 12 digital feminist influencers. Once these were selected, their sociodemographic profile and their professional activities were analysed. For this analysis, information was sought through their description on their social networks and their appearance in the media. Furthermore, a cross-platform analysis of their posts was carried out using a quantitative content analysis. The sample included all of their entries posted on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram during November 2018 with a total of 3670 units of analysis compiled. Posts were firstly divided between those including a gender point of view and those without. The first were further classified according to their topic, using the same categories as for those presented in the survey, and the subtopic. The subtopics were filled using an inductive approach based on the main feminist events in Spain during

the period analysed.

The intercoder reliability test, conducted by two coders from a subsample of 367 posts (10% of the sample), was measured for each variable by Krippendorff's (2004) alpha. All variables reached the Krippendorff's standards of unconditionally reliability. The coefficients for gender perspective posts and topic were 0.89 and 0.93. In the survey results, to verify statistical significance relationships in the contingency tables, chi-square was used, considering 0.05 as the mean value of significance.

4. Results

4.1. Feminist influencers by social media users

The analysis of the responses to the survey shows that a significant number of the survey respondents consider themselves to be feminists (84.93%, n=631), however, this percentage is statistically higher in the case of women (88.20%, n=395) than in the responses from men (80%, n=236, p-value = 0.003277). Therefore, from the results of our survey, Spanish women are more likely to view themselves as feminists than men do.

From a gender perspective, the respondents reported that the main topics they are interested in on social media are the role and inequality of genders, news related to gender inequality and the history and knowledge of feminism. In addition, it is interesting to point out that men and women agree on their interest in these issues. However, men show greater interest in the inequality of lesbian, bisexual and transgender women and in the information related to the new dynamics of romantic relationships than women, while women show greater interest in female sexuality and the questioning of beauty standards (Table 1).

Table 1. Topics interested in on social media related to with a gender perspective

Topics	Women	Men	Total
Roles and gender inequalities (wage gap, sexism in the media, etc)	24.92%	25.75%	25.21%
News related to gender inequalities	17.44%	20.51%	18.50%
History and knowledge about feminism	11.70%	10.63%	11.33%
Cultural recommendations with a gender perspective (TV series, movies, books, conferences, etc)	11.31%	7.78%	10.08%
Questioning of beauty standards	9.79%	8.23%	9.25%
Information on inequalities of lesbian, bisexual and transgender women	7.01%	8.98%	7.69%
Information on inequalities of racialized women	6.21%	6.89%	6.44%
Female sexuality	6.93%	4.79%	6.19%
New dynamics in romantic relationships	4.70%	6.44%	5.31%

Based on the answers by the respondents, a ranking of the 12 most popular Spanish feminist influencers on social media has been created (Table 2). In general, there is

a firm consensus on the first two influencers on the list by a significant number of participants. The following 10 influencers were mentioned a similar amount of times. However, major differences are observed between men and women. Firstly, among men there is less consensus about their feminist influencers since no names occurred predominantly. The influencer that most appeared in their responses, Amaia from a music reality show, was only referenced by 4,75% of the male participants in the survey. In contrast, women agreed more on their feminist influencers.

Table 2. Ranking of Spanish feminist referents on social media

	Women	Men	Total
Leticia Dolera	19.42%	2.37%	12.65%
Barbijaputa	11.16%	3.73%	8.21%
La vecina rubia	3.79%	3.73%	3.77%
Amaia Romero	2.46%	4.75%	3.36%
Moderna de Pueblo	4.46%	1.02%	3.10%
Srta Bebi	3.79%	1.69%	2.96%
Ana Isabel Bernal Triviño	3.13%	0.00%	1.88%
Devermut	2.23%	1.36%	1.88%
Irantzu Varela	2.90%	0.34%	1.88%
Cristina Fallarás	2.23%	1.36%	1.88%
Lola Vendetta	2.46%	0.68%	1.75%
Amarna Miller	0.67%	2.71%	1.48%

4.2. Profile of Spanish Feminist influencers

The analysis of the 12 Spanish digital influencers reveals that the users considered to be feminist influencers have similar sociodemographic and economic backgrounds. Firstly, all are white, belong to a similar social class and the vast majority are heterosexual. Also, all of them are cis women and only two mention having female partners on their posts (Irantzu Varela y Devermut). In addition, another similarity is that all of their work is related to the media and cultural industry, and is recognized in their professional field. Specifically, seven of these influencers started to gain popularity due to their activity on social networks (Barbijaputa, La vecina rubia, Moderna de Pueblo, Srta. Bebi, Devermut, Irantzu Valera, and Lola Vendetta) although all of them have developed part of their profession outside the digital platforms. The remaining five were already popular for their professional work before joining social media (Leticia Dolera, Amaia Romero, Ana Isabel Bernal Triviño, Cristina Fallarás and Amarna Miller).

Regarding their professions, two are journalists working on digital newspapers (Cristina Fallarás and Ana Isabel Bernal Triviño), two actresses and writer-actress, (Leticia Dolera and Amarna Miller), two illustrators (Moderna de Pueblo and Lola Vendetta), one a singer that participated in a hit television talent show (Amaia Romero), two are activists that have a relationship with offline and online media (Barbijaputa and Irantzu Valera) and three have their main professional activity on social media platforms (La vecina rubia, Srta. Bebi and Devermut).

Within this analysis of their profiles, it is important to highlight that only half reveal their real identity on social networks, some use a pseudonym on their profiles and three hide all data on their real identity. All of the profiles correspond to only one person except Devermut, which has two people using this profile. In addition, only three define themselves as feminists on their social network profile.

4.3. Spanish feminist influencers on social media

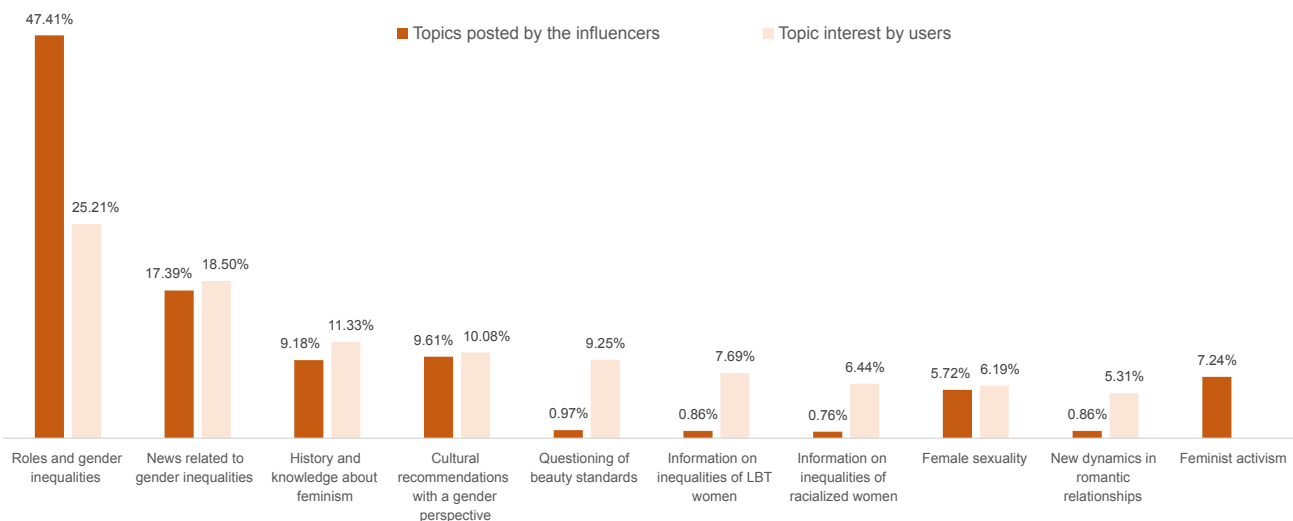
Strikingly, all 12 of the influencers are present on Instagram, Twitter and Facebook. This order is the same for the number of followers on each social network with Instagram having the most, followed by Twitter and finally Facebook. The social network most used by the influencers analysed is Twitter, since it is the network where they post the most publications, followed by Facebook, and finally Instagram, with the fewest publications (Table 3). If we look at the publications with a gender perspective, Facebook is proportionally where the most publications are found, since a little more than 30% of publications are linked to feminism, followed by Instagram and finally by Twitter. However, in absolute terms, the largest number of publications with a gender perspective can be found on Twitter.

Table 3. Posts with gender perspective topics by social network

	Gender perspective topics		Others		Total	
Facebook	102	30.27%	235	69.73%	337	9.18%
Instagram	70	28.23%	178	71.77%	248	6.76%
Twitter	754	24.44%	2331	75.56%	3085	84.06%
Total	926	25.23%	2744	74.77%	3670	100.00%

Posts with a gender perspective are linked to two main topics: first, roles and gender inequality and, second, news with a gender perspective, as can be seen in Figure 1. The topics addressed less often are: information on the inequalities of racialized, lesbians, transsexuals and bisexuals and the new dynamic in romantic relationships. Also, posts related to feminist activism account for 7.24%. This category was added during the codification process to group all posts that were calls for offline mobilisation.

Figure 1. Topics of gender perspective posts



The more common subtopics are gender-based violence, patriarchy justice and prostitution. Each one of these subtopics represents over 10% of the total of gender perspective posts, especially the first, since 22.24% of the posts are related to gender-based violence. The subtopics with a greater frequency are also related to violence toward women: feminicides, sexual harassment and allegations of sexism, all slightly above 3%. The subtopics pornography, surrogate mothers, sexism in the media and women and politics are also present, at slightly more than 2%. Otherwise, the subtopics less represented are female poverty, commodification of the female body and humour limits, which have less than 0.3%.

Finally, during our analysis we detected posts with a gender perspective linked to media events that took place during the sample period. They were mainly related with the 25th of November, the day against gender violence, cases of patriarchal justice and feminicides. Other media controversies were found. Such as, the case of Leticia Dolera, director of a television series who was publicly questioned when she fired a pregnant actress. As well as surrogacy and the legislation against unionised prostitution in Spain.

5. Discussion

In recent years, issues relating to feminism have grown strongly in the media and social debate. In this context, the present research seeks to discover who the most relevant feminist influencers on social networks are and what their discourses are since they have tremendous popularity. Results have to be explored considering the sociocultural, economic and political context of 2018 when the survey was implemented since both feminism and social media evolve rapidly.

The 12 feminist influencers identified have several common characteristics since they are all white, mostly heterosexual (except for two) cis women and are recognized within their professional field. Also all of them are professionally linked to the culture and media sector. This result is related to the postulates of Banet-Weiser and Portwood-Stacer (2017) and Rottenberg (2014) who assert that the most popular feminism found on social networks is led by privileged white women who manage to gain greater visibility thanks to their activity on those social networks. However, according to the results, they can be further classified into three groups based on their professional activity and the type of publications with a gender perspective posted.

In the first group are those who have an explicit feminist activity on their social networks, inasmuch as they dedicate a major part of their posts to aspects related to a wide gender perspective and openly claim to be feminists. Barbijaputa, Iranztu Valera, Cristina Fallarás, Leticia Dolera, Devermut and Ana I. Bernal Triviño are found in our sample. Furthermore, all of them carry out a professional activity that is not linked to social networks but they do use their accounts to further their fight against sexism.

The second group is formed by those whose professional activity is based on their activity on social networks and do not have an activity directly related to the defence of feminist issues. On the contrary, all of them publish posts related to women, but they do not explicitly define themselves as feminists. This is the case of La vecina rubia, Moderna de Pueblo and Srta. Bebi. These influencers match the concept of "accidental feminism" by Maloney (2017). Additionally, these influencers may be connected with the ideas suggested by Rottenberg (2014) and Banet-Weiser and Portwood-Stacer (2017) about individualistic feminism and commodity feminism, since they are users who tie

their commercial and professional activity to feminist discourses on social networks or, at least, content that the participants of the survey perceive as feminist.

Finally, there is one profile, Amaia Romero, that is considered to be feminist by social media users in the survey performed because of her activity in other spaces but is barely active on the social networks analysed. This point shows the importance of other media beyond social networks and its ability to influence a topic, in this case, feminism. As Fotopoulou (2016) and Van Dijck (2011) point out, social networks play a major part in creating cultural imaginaries, but they do not act alone. Future studies must explore the relationship between all kinds of media to construct feminist discourses on social media.

Another interesting finding is the use of pseudonyms by half of the digital influencers. This leads to two thoughts: the first is how a user without a real identity can become an influencer of authority on social networks, and the second is related to how hiding one's identity may be a protection mechanism against hate on digital networks, specifically towards women who defend feminist ideas (Jane, 2016).

The results of the content analysis on posts with a gender perspective show a strong consensus on the condemnation of gender violence: feminicides, sexual harassment or patriarchal justice. As Menéndez Menéndez (2014) has pointed out, sexist violence is one of the topics that is of most concern to society and greatly influences the setting of the agenda. The relationship between digital gender perspective discourses and the agenda setting of traditional media is also observed because the second topic is news related to gender inequalities. Therefore, this result may support the positions of López-García, Cano-Orón and Argilés-Martínez (2016) and Van Dijck (2011) who affirm that media setting transfers into the digital sphere. Alternatively, the potential for social networks to promote offline political mobilisation is reflected in this research since posts related to offline feminist activism are often found. Also, this result may be explained by the rise of the feminist struggle in Spain. However, posts analysed for a gender perspective do not discuss racial or the non-mainstream sexual identities of women.

Therefore, the media agenda has a great influence on the online feminist discourse identified. On one hand, the analysed influencers use news and media events in their publications to speak about feminism and gender perspective issues. Consequently, influencers repeat the topics from traditional media on their social media profiles. On the other hand, the topics mostly addressed by influencers match the main gender perspective topics in traditional media agenda: issues related to sexist violence (Casero-Ripollés, 2010). This fact also has been pointed out by Fernández-Rovira & Villegas-Simón (2019), who highlight the relationship between Twitter and the media agenda, since most tweets with gender perspective published by Spanish politicians are related to news events and feminicides.

In addition, the topics in which the survey respondents show the greatest interest coincide with the topics most discussed by influencers on social networks. The sample highlights a greater interest in topics with regard to gender roles in the media and public sphere, especially those which concern income differences between men and women, sexism in the media, cases of gender violence or media controversy around feminism, while they show less interest in aspects related to minority groups within feminism (such as racism, transsexuals, lesbianism, etc.) and the personal sphere (such

as romantic relationships or beauty standards). This result suggests two main ideas. The first is that the interests of the sample as well as the topics most covered in social networks by the influencers analysed coincide with a light (Caro-Castaño, 2015) and liberal feminism (Banet-Weiser and Portwood-Stacer, 2017; Rottenberg, 2014), based on the defence of women in public and the most visible issues of feminism (gender violence and visibility of women). The second is that it is a biased feminism focused on white and privileged women (McRobbie, 2009). It is important to note that the sample used is homogeneous in terms of the educational level, economic level and sexual orientation of the participants. Therefore, future studies should observe more heterogeneous samples and identify differences in the choice of topics of interest and digital profiles based on more varied sociodemographic categories, such as sexual orientation, ethnicity or educational level.

This research also reveals how the nature and structure of each social network influences the type of posts and activity on each platform. Despite the fact that Twitter is the social network with the largest number of posts, those related to feminism and gender perspective represent the smallest percentage. This digital platform has been explored as an instrument for social movements, but authors have pointed out its limited capacity to cause real social change (Anduiza et al., 2014; Castells, 2012; Giraldo-Luque, 2015; Fuchs, 2014). Instagram is the social network in which the selected influencers have the greatest numbers of followers and it is the most used platform by the participants of the survey. This has been central to the consolidation of digital influencers (Hogsnes and Steenbjerg Hansen, 2018). Notwithstanding, Instagram has the fewest number of posts, which can be explained by the visual nature that characterises this particular social network (Thelwall et al., 2015). However the percentage of posts about gender perspective is slightly greater than those found on Twitter.

These results may link to more critical discourses related to the relationship between the feminist struggle and social networks. On one hand, the low number of messages on gender perspective on the most popular social network is not favourable for the diffusion of feminist ideas. In addition, the prominence of images can lead to a simplification of the feminist discourse in the digital sphere. Both effects have been stated by authors such as Banet-Weiser and Portwood-Stacer (2017) or McRobbie (2009), who consider that feminism can dissolve on social media and be harmful to gender equality.

6. Conclusion

This paper contributes to the understanding of digital feminism and the role of influencers in building and influencing the popular feminist discourses. With our results it can be concluded that while feminism is present at high levels in the Spanish digital public sphere and a large number of people consider themselves to be feminists, the influencers considered as feminist referents have a very homogenous sociodemographic profile. Nevertheless, with our analysis, we can conclude that there are three types of influencers on social media: the ones that focus their professional work on the movement and are mainly from the journalism and media sectors, those that due to their work have become accidental feminists whose presence is mainly online, and the third group that are known for their presence on other platforms but rarely use social media.

Furthermore, this analysis also concludes that while Instagram is the social network mostly used and where the feminist influencers have most followers, it is rarely used to debate these issues. Therefore, the most viewed posts created by feminist influencers do not have a gender perspective. The popularity of Instagram, an image-oriented platform, may simplify the feminist ideas on social media.

In conclusion, there is a homogenization in the topics related to gender inequalities which are addressed by Spanish feminist digital influencers. It may be stated that they replicate the hegemonic discourse of the agenda setting of traditional media focused on gender violence and discourse while the realities of women's minority groups and topics related to the private sphere are left out. However, it needs to be highlighted that some of the aforementioned influencers have lost popularity since 2018 (for example, Leticia Dolera or Devermut) and others have increased (such as Bernal Triviño). In addition, feminist topics on both social media and in the mass media have evolved rapidly. This highlights the need to further study the topic at different periods and in socioeconomic contexts to understand the role and evolution of feminist influencers.

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