"ONLINE FEMINIST GLOBAL ACTIONS. POTENTIALS AND PITFALLS OF THE #MEETOO CAMPAIGN"

Reporting

Project Information

FEMONMETOO

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Universitat de Girona
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Periodic Reporting for period 1 - FEMONMETOO (ONLINE FEMINIST GLOBAL ACTIONS. POTENTIALS AND PITFALLS OF THE #MEETOO CAMPAIGN)

Reporting period: 2021-01-01 to 2022-12-31

Summary of the context and overall objectives of the project

FEMONMETOO analyzes digital campaigns against gender violence, it focuses on how hashtags like #MeToo spread around the world through digital networks, as part of a feminist global wave of mobilizations. At the same time, it explores the transnational influence of activism implemented by
women participating in digital campaigns. FEMONMETOO contributes to Europe in a changing world H2020 with new reflections and analysis on feminist digital activism. The action has enabled pathways for understanding how social media are used to fight femicide and sexual violence, addressing pitfalls and societal challenges raised by the digital era. During this fellowship, I developed my analytical perspective on affective activism, as well as the use of hashtags as a toolbox for feminist connected crowds. The study has achieved an interdisciplinary approach, exploring the paradigm interplay between communication, collective action theory, network analysis and feminist studies. The result clarifies the tensions between personal grievances, structural conditions of gender, and activists’ responses within the use of digital tools at a transnational level; with a methodology that combines qualitative methods and quantitative visualizations of digital interaction.

FEMONMETOO proves that activism today is simultaneously and inextricably online and offline. This contemporary trend pushes the theorization of feminism and social movements in new directions, emphasizing the importance of intersectional resistance and digital communication by analyzing the potentialities and pitfalls of feminist hashtag campaigns.

Work performed from the beginning of the project to the end of the period covered by the report and main results achieved so far

My achievements have been many: I have published three articles in three peer-reviewed academic journals. One in the journal Social Movement Studies analyzes the feminist activism and the affective labor that fueled the Mexican #MeToo campaign; the second (in Acta Psychologica) is about the transnational influence of three feminist hashtags that trended in the Spanish-speaking area: #CuentaLo (the Spanish version of #MeToo), #NiUnaMas and #MiUnaMenos (against femicides). A third article (in Teknokultura) is based on how #MeToo activists became angry mobs in the streets: from digital to physical direct action in Mexico. A fourth article, in the process of being published, analyzes #MeToo’s French campaign #BalanceTonPorc on Twitter and Instagram, through songs, books and new networked organizations. For a broader view of the general impact of #MeToo in the world, I have written a monographic book as an interpretative essay (to be published in 2023). I have also published 2 chapters in academic books about digital feminism and connected crowds. I have organized an international conference on the subject, entitled Feminist Constellations, at the University of Girona, the result of which will be a book compiled by me, with the chapters of 12 researchers (to be published in 2023).

Progress beyond the state of the art and expected potential impact (including the socio-economic impact and the wider societal implications of the project so far)

This research advances knowledge and understanding in the field of collective action and social media. Instead of following one of the two big paradigms of social movements theory (agency and structure), the research proposes a paradigm interplay between individual connective actions and the collective logic of feminism. FEMONMETOO deals with the tensions between personal grievances and political responses through the use of digital tools; with a methodology that combines qualitative methods with data sets and network analysis. The project can have an impact on European science, being especially relevant for Gender Studies, New Media Studies, and Political Science. It responds to the societal challenges linked with inclusion, democratic participation, women empowerment, and
avoidance of sexism. It shows how interaction in digital networks can favor more participatory and critical citizenship. The MeToo campaign exhibits the lack of gender justice in most countries and the long-term damage that rape and sexual abuse causes to girls and women. It puts also on scene the backlash of cyber misogyny, for which specific regulations and politics must be designed. It also shows the ambiguities of public ‘blaming and shaming’.

The action will enable public authorities to develop pathways for addressing the societal challenges raised by activists and should contribute to better regulation (e.g. labeling, evaluation of ICT educational tools, protection of online users) and to a safer and more beneficial use of digital technologies. The study opened new research opportunities, with new proposals on inclusive, innovative and reflective societies, improving public debates and decision-making on gender equality and digital platforms regulations. For all these reasons it opens an innovative area for future career goals, and also can inspire other researchers, enabling us to build networks for interdisciplinary work and commitment to social justice.
The Mexican #MeToo campaign

#BalanceTonPorc

Instagram

France

2019-2020
From #MeToo to direct action in México

2019-2020

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