Brazilian Feminism on the Rise:
A case study on Brazilian feminist cyberactivism

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ABSTRACT

The Women’s Spring movement started in 2015 in Brazil. It is a brand new phenomenon where Brazilian feminists are taking advantage of the potential of the Internet and social media to publicize sexism and demand respect. This thesis investigates this movement through a case study of #primeiroassedio and #meuamigosecreto, with the objective to discover who the cyberactivists are, how cyberactivism happens in that context and if it influences offline life.

**Key words:** Brazilian Feminism; cyberactivism; intersectionality; Women’s Spring

RESUMO

A Primavera das Mulheres começou em 2015 no Brasil. É um fenômeno novo, onde feministas brasileiras aproveitam o potencial da Internet e das mídias sociais para denunciar o machismo e exigir respeito. Essa tese investiga o movimento por meio de um estudo de caso das campanhas #primeiroassedio e #meuamigosecreto, com o objetivo de descobrir quem são os ciberativistas, como o ciberativismo se dá nesse contexto e se ele tem influência na vida offline.

**Palavras-chave:** Feminismo brasileiro; ciberativismo; interseccionalidade; Primavera das Mulheres
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Introduction

Women have united in Brazil for a cause. They are not going to be silenced anymore, creating what the second biggest magazine in the country called the most important political movement in Brazil today: Women’s Spring (Grillo et al, 2015). And they are doing so using the Internet.

According to Facebook, 80% of Brazilians are connected in the social networking site (Cruz, 2016). This, on its own, is a great indication of the social potential of social media websites.

Social media websites have been around for about a decade, the first book dedicated to digital activism was released in 2010 (Joyce, 2010), thus, research on activist potential is scarce, especially because the first big impact on the field was during the Arab Spring, in 2010 and 2011, being the only movement that researchers have studied greatly, for example, approaching the female role in the revolution and governments taking advantage of social media for repression. This means that other academic views on cyberactivism have been small. According to scholars, most research has been done in either totalitarian regimes or mature democracies (Valenzuela, 2013).

As such, I saw an opportunity to study a completely new phenomenon in Brazilian society: the appropriation of the online public forum by women who demand respect, freedom, call out sexist attitudes and create safe spaces to help each other.

I was intrigued as to who these women were and why they participated in these movements. I also wondered how cyberactivism happens in the Brazilian feminist context and if it had any impact outside social media or if, as many critics have pointed out, cyberactivism was doomed to be slacktivism: comfortable and pointless (Rotman et al., 2011; Hennefer, 2013. Glenn, 2015).

To do so, I decided to perform a case study on two campaigns that happened in 2015: #primeiroassedio and #meuamigosecreto. These campaigns were the biggest throughout the year. On this case study, I conducted a questionnaire, with the intent of ascertaining an identity of the Brazilian feminist cyberactivists, and investigating their participation more thoroughly. I also performed a document analysis of online news articles, Twitter and Facebooks posts, and blog posts.
With this in mind, this thesis assumes an exploratory lens, attempting to make the first step in understanding this new time for Brazilian Feminism, and how it can work as an instrument of change in what I believe to be such a patriarchal and conservative society.
Feminism in Brazil

A brief history of Brazilian feminism

The Brazilian Feminist movement, like feminist movements around the world, has evolved greatly from its early roots in the 19th century, after all, the demands and questions discussed have changed and so have the way feminists approach them (Costa, 2005).

In 1832, Nísia Floresta published the book *Women’s rights and Men's injustice*, which was the first Brazilian book to defend the right of education and labour for women. In 1888, the newspaper *A Família* (The Family) was created and it defended female education as an emancipatory tool for women (Bandeira and de Mello, 2010). In Brazil, the feminine press was the main way to communicate feminist ideas (Costa, 2005).

According to da Silva and Campos (2014), the first wave of Brazilian Feminism was for the right of vote. In 1910, the Female Republican Party was formed and in 1917, it organized a march for the right of female suffrage (Bandeira and de Mello, 2010). In 1932, Getúlio Vargas, then president, signed the new Electoral Code, granting the right of vote to women who were over 18 and alphabetized (Costa, 2005; Bandeira and de Mello, 2010; da Silva and Campos, 2014).

In 1934, the Constituent Assembly assured the equal rights of the sexes, the female right of vote and the regulation of female labour and equal pay (Bandeira and de Mello, 2010). It is important to note that, despite having laws assuring such equality, it doesn’t necessarily mean that it is a fact in society. For example, the right to vote was only actively exercised after the Constitution in 1946 (da Silva and Campos, 2014). After the accomplishment of the suffragist movement, the feminist movement became disarticulate (Costa, 2005).

Also a part of the first wave of Brazilian feminism was the female working class movement, demanding equal salary and questioning the double journey they were asked to perform, working at the factories and taking care of the household. Da Silva and Campos (2014) point out that these organizations were the first not associated with the elite and educated women in Brazil.

During the 1950’s, the feminist movement fought against a law that considered married women incapable, such as people underage, meaning that they required their husbands authorization for everything. In 1962, due to the efforts of the feminist movement, this law was revoked.
In 1964, the military dictatorship was installed in Brazil, which silenced most of the social movements, including the feminist movement. The second wave of feminism, then, corresponds to the women’s resistance to the authoritarian nature of the regime (Costa, 2005; da Silva and Campos, 2014).

After the redemocratization, in 1985, the feminist movement reorganized and amplified the demands, reaching domestic and sexual violence, in an effort to increase the civil rights of women (da Silva and Campos, 2014).

In 1985, the first specialized police station for women victims of violence was created (Bandeira and de Mello, 2010). These specialized police stations have spread across Brazil since 1985, however they are no indication that the system is capable of handling victims of violence. It doesn’t open on weekends, most of the detectives and police officers there are men who do not treat women with empathy and, at times, try to convince the woman not to report (Averbuck, 2015).

Also in 1985, the National Council for Women’s Rights was created. This Council was very important during the process of the Constituent Assembly, creating the campaign “For the Constituent to be worth, it has to have a woman’s word”. In the following year, it organized the National Encounter for Women, to elaborate the female demands for the Constituent Assembly (Bandeira and de Mello, 2010).

In 1992, one year after the UN release, the feminist movement in Brazil started the campaign of 16 days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, which has been done annually since then (Bandeira and de Mello, 2010).

In 2000, two feminist marches were organized. One came from the international feminist movement, the World March of Women, articulating with international organizations and breaching national barriers. The second march is specific to Brazil, Marcha das Margaridas (Margaridas’ March), in memory of the murder of rural worker Margarida Alves, where rural working women ask for better labour conditions (Bandeira and de Mello, 2010; da Silva and Campos, 2014).

In 2006, the hotline for Women’s services, created in the previous year, started working, to help women, who have suffered from violence, be informed of their rights. That same year, a very important law was passed, called Maria da Penha, named after a woman who suffered from domestic violence, which was sanctioned with the objective of reducing domestic violence, with harsher and stricter punishment (Bandeira and de Mello, 2010).
After the 2000’s, a new form of articulation of the movement started, using the potential of the Internet to better discuss and process demands for the social movements (da Silva and Campos, 2014).
Me, myself and Feminism

In this thesis I will discuss Brazilian feminism and feminist cyberactivism. Considering the theme for this thesis, I deemed important to share my personal history with feminism since I am an active participant of feminist cyberactivism, making me an object of study as well as the researcher.

I was born in Brazil to a white upper middle class family. This is important to share because Brazil used slavery as a form of labour, officially, from the year 1530 to the year of 1888. Slaves were from indigenous origin or African origin and even after the end of slavery, there was no real effort to integrate former slaves into society effectively, causing those groups to suffer social and economic injustices until today. As a white girl in an upper middle class family, I had privilege, which I didn’t acknowledge until a few years ago. It is quite easy to not know about the privileges you have, it’s comfortable. I studied only in private schools, with most of my basic education at a top 10 school. I attended a top 5 public University, with only 2 or 3 black people in my class of 40, even though the black population in Brazil is 54% (UOL Economia, 2015). I didn’t suffer greatly from sexism. I didn’t suffer from racism at all. Feminism might have just passed me by, as it did for many of my friends.

In 2013, I got out of a bad relationship. He was my first boyfriend and I didn’t really understand that it was a bad relationship until I got out. All the warning signs were there and I just didn’t see them. He prevented me from dancing ballroom because he “trusted me but didn’t trust them”, but he went dancing and that was fine. He was extremely jealous. I stopped talking to my closest friends. I distanced myself from my family. Unfortunately, I didn’t know much about feminism then. Fortunately, I do now.

I had a Facebook friend who started posting things about feminism, discussions, debates. And every time she posted, things started clicking. It was as if a whole world had opened before me. And I started reading things from other people. I looked for Facebook posts, pages, blog posts. I was deepening my knowledge every time I read something.

I was more of a voyeur when it comes to social media, but I slowly began liking posts. I then began sharing posts, writing comments and interacting with the feminist arena on social networking sites.

This all came together with an evolution inside my own feminism, as well. It wasn’t easy recognizing my privileges as a white, somewhat inside the beauty norm, upper middle class woman.
If it hadn’t been for social media, I might not be writing this thesis right now, since my interest in gender studies was sparked almost three years ago through Facebook posts. So this thesis is more than purely academical interest, I am personally involved with how the Internet can create change in society and individuals through cyberactivism.
Primavera das Mulheres – Women’s Spring

In 2015, a revolution began in Brazilian feminism. The subject occupied the streets, pub talks, the Internet and it was the theme for the essay portion of the national university entrance examination. The Women’s Spring was even the cover story of Revista Época, the second largest weekly magazine, with nearly 400 thousand issues circulating every week (Aner.org.br, 2016).

The Internet proved to be a key element for the discussion, organization and spreading of the feminist movement. Social media helped people talk about it, organize events and interact with them, create groups for safety and assistance. With the help of Facebook, Twitter and YouTube¹, 2015 was a year of battle for Brazilian feminists.

According to data by Think Olga (2015c), a feminist think tank, there were over half a million social media interactions about feminist topics and events over the year of 2015. Between January 2014 and October 2015, Google searches, in Portuguese, for “feminism” and “female empowerment” grew by 86.7% and 354.5%, respectively.

Think Olga (2015c) also made a timeline for the year of 2015, gathering data around twitter hashtags until December 18th. It is important to note that while Facebook has implemented hashtags, there are no effective accessible tools to analyse them, as well as old hashtags in general.

The first important event of the year was when Congress passed a law, in February, stating that feminicide would be classified as a heinous crime, with one of the consequences being giving people convicted of this crime a longer sentence by as much as 18 years.

In late February, Jout Jout, a youtuber, posted a video on her channel called “Não Tira O Batom Vermelho” (2015a) (Don’t Take Your Red Lipstick Off), where she talks about abusive relationships, how to recognize one and how to get out of one. The video has over two million views and over three thousand comments. The name of the video is in reference to a popular belief in Brazil that red lipsticks are for whores, dividing women between good women and bad women, making a lot of boyfriends tell their girlfriends not to use the red colour in an effort to control her and her moral standards.

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¹ Facebook is a social media website used for networking, which can be used for connecting with friends, used to market companies and ideas and create virtual communities for discussion. Twitter is a social media website used for microblogging, using 140 characters at a time to communicate, which is called a tweet, when you share that tweet, you retweet it. Twitter uses hashtags (#) to facilitate communication and discovering topics. YouTube is a platform for posting videos, be they self-made or not, as long as they respect copyright.
In July, Babi Souza, a journalist, created the Facebook Page “Vamos Juntas?” (Let’s go together?), which has over 300 thousand likes. The objective of the page is to encourage women to help each other in dangerous situations, for example: if two girls are walking home alone at night, they should walk together. The page created region specific groups, it posts stories of girls who help another girl or that were helped by someone else. In April of 2016, Babi Souza also published a book about this movement and a guide to sorority.

In August, there was the fifth edition of the Marcha das Margaridas (Margaridas’ March), where rural workers march to demand better working conditions, gender equality in the rural parts of the country. It gathered around 70 thousand women in Brasilia, with about 26 thousand tweets (Think Olga, 2015c).

In September, Viola Davis was the first black woman to receive an Emmy for a leading role. Though this is a global event, her speech was mentioned over 7 thousand times in Brazil alone, which shows that it made a large impact on a country with such a big black population.

In October, some men made sexual comments about a 12 year old girl who was participating in the junior edition of Master Chef. This triggered a hashtag movement where women would share their stories about the first time they were harassed. In less than a week, there were 82 thousand tweets. This event will be further analysed in this thesis. In the same month, the national university entry examination took place. There was a question regarding Simone de Beauvoir and the essay theme was the perpetuation of violence against women in Brazil. There were over 100 thousand posts on this topic.

In early November, women united online and on the streets to protest Eduardo Cunha, head of Congress and author of a law that would make access to legal abortion more difficult. In Brazil today, women can abort in cases of rape, anencephaly and when the mother is in risk for her life. There were protests in Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Belo Horizonte, Curitiba, Brasília, Salvador and Joinville (Conversa Afiada, 2015). The hashtag #mulherescontraCunha (women against Cunha) was mentioned over 40 thousand times.

Around the same time, the campaign “Agora é que são elas” (Now it’s their turn) started. Male columnists were giving their spaces in big newspapers and online portals to women so they could talk about feminism. It later became an online column at Folha de São Paulo, the biggest newspaper in Brazil.

In mid-November, there were two events. Clarice Falcão (2015), a singer/actress, re-recorded Destiny’s Child’s Survivor and released a music video with over 66 women and girls, using a red lipstick to paint themselves the way they pleased in an act of empowerment. The
video has over three million views. On November 18th, in Brasilia, around 10 thousand people gathered in the Marcha das Mulheres Negras (Black Women’s March), to call out the racism and sexism that they experience. There were over 33 thousand tweets.

In late November, there was the last big feminist movement, a hashtag campaign called #meuamigosecreto (My Secret Friend, in a literal translation, with the reference being to the Secret Santa game played during Christmas time). This movement wanted to call out small routine forms of sexism that can go by unnoticed. There were over 170 thousand twitter hashtags.

From this timeline of major events, it is clear to see why 2015 was an important year for Brazilian feminism and female empowerment, and why it has received the name Women’s Spring, in a reference to the revolution and power of the movement.
Objectives and Questions

This thesis has the main objective to investigate cyberactivism and its reach in the Brazilian Feminist context. I want to look closely at the year 2015 for the Brazilian feminist movement and use it as a catapult to discuss how the Internet and social media can act as an instrument of change. The debate surrounding cyberactivism is fairly recent, considering access to the Internet has seen a boom only after the popularization of smartphones. The Women’s Spring in Brazil started in 2015 and as such, there isn’t much academical production concerning it.

My research will answer these questions: How does cyberactivism happen in the feminist Brazilian context? Did the cyberactivism in 2015 influence outside social media or offline? Who are the social actors participating in this cyberactivism, what are their intersections and reasons for participation?

Methodology, Data and Theoretical Approach

For this research, I will use a mixed method approach, having the basis of a case study, considering that I want to analyse one particular moment in the feminist activist history of Brazil, that dates back to the end of the 19th century (Costa, 2005).

According to Denscombe (2003), using a case study approach is beneficial when one intends to research a subject in depth, going into detail by choosing to focus on one or two instances, and provides a chance for the researcher to go into detail and discover complexities of a given situation. Using the case study as a research procedure also calls for a mixed method approach. Yin (2009) states that the case study proves to be the most relevant when you desire to discover “why or how some social phenomenon works” (2009: 4).

In order to go in depth into the Women’s Spring movement, I chose two specific events, on which to conduct the case study, that were of the utmost importance to the year as a whole, considering the number of interactions they presented: #primeiroassedio and #meuamigosecreto.

To answer the first two research questions, I used document analysis, in order to analyse the content found on the data gathered through Internet research, compiling documents from Facebook, Twitter and news outlets regarding Women’s Spring, #primeiroassedio and #meuamigosecreto. Bowen (2009) states that “[as] a research method, document analysis is
particularly applicable to qualitative case studies; intensive studies producing rich descriptions of a single phenomenon, event, organisation, or program” (2009:29). The process of document analysis is skimming, reading and interpretation. As part of the interpretation process, a researcher can use thematic analysis, identifying themes within the data to create categories for analysis (Bowen, 2009).

As such, this analysis was done using a four stage model based on the one Sandoval-Almazan and Gil-Garcia (2014) developed in order to analyse the “development cycle of protests using social media technologies” (2014: 369). “The stages are: (1) Triggering event, (2) media response, (3) viral organization\(^2\), and (4) physical response”. (Ibid) This model does not fit perfectly with the Brazilian cyberactivism, therefore I used this model as a basis to develop one that fits with this specific context and use it for the analysis of the events chosen for the thesis. For the Brazilian cyberactivism context the developed model is as follows: (1) Triggering event, (2) online reaction, (3) online media response, and (4) offline response.

To answer the question of who the social actors were in these two movements and their reasons for participation, I developed a questionnaire, which can be found in the Appendix section, in the original language of distribution, Portuguese. In the questionnaire analysis section of this thesis, I elaborate on the questions in the same order.

In the development of the questionnaire, I focused on two separate fronts: their intersections and their participations in the two campaigns. The questions to determine the identity of the social actors were related to their age, gender, sexuality, religion, class, and education. The questions to determine their participation involved if they participated in the campaigns, how they participated in terms of active or passive participation (Hennefer 2013), why they participated and the level of importance they give for each campaign. There was also a free comments section, so that participants could share something they felt was missing on the questions. It is important to note that, on the literature review, there was no profound analysis on the reasons for participation, with the focus of the previous research being elsewhere. As such, the reasons for participation included in the questionnaire came from my own experience as a feminist cyberactivist.

It was conducted online, since my intended audience for questioning is the one that inhabits and occupies these media, through the promotion of the questionnaire on different feminist Facebook groups and also my own timeline, as well as my connections’ timelines.

\(^2\) Viral organization means that a group will create a mass reaction, building an online community, with an identity, discourse and a message. It becomes viral when other groups replicate the model of communication. (Sandoval-Almazan and Gil-Garcia, 2014)
For the first front, discovering the identity of the social actors, it was important to create an image based on intersectionality, observing the different sociocultural categorizations that constitute a person’s identity, looking into their sexuality, race, class, gender, etc., (Lykke, 2010) and how they may connect, since this means that people might react to and interact with social phenomena differently because of their background, for instance, the feminist movement and the campaigns analysed in this thesis. An intersectional approach could provide clues as to who identifies with the movement and what possible changes can be made for it to be more inclusive.

When analysing the questionnaire, I used both quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative was used throughout the analysis of the first front, numerically analysing the identity of the social actors. For the second front, I utilized both quantitative and qualitative methods, observing the participation on a nominal scale, however, also focusing on basic statistics to determine active vs passive participation. The percentages were calculated on two decimal places.
Literature Review
Communication’s role in activism

According to Manuel Castells (2009), “[c]ommunication is the sharing of meaning through the exchange of information” (2009: 54). This means that the process of communication is affected by the technology used, the cultural codes of the senders and receivers, and as such, the meaning produced can only be understood in a specific context of social relationships.

Traditionally, mass communication was primarily one directional, with very limited feedback prospects, when the audience would write a letter or call (Castells, 2009). With the spread of technology and the Internet, it was possible to observe a new type of interactive communication happening, “characterized by the capacity of sending messages from many to many, in real time or chosen time, and with the possibility of using point-to-point communication, narrowcasting or broadcasting” (2009: 55). This new form of communication was named mass self-communication by Castells (2009), because it can reach a global audience and the content is self-produced by the users, who also define who are going to be the receivers, which have the ability to decide what they are going to consume.

Mentioning researches by other scholars, Castells (2009) states that social actors are taking advantage of this new potential of communication to defend their interest and that “they have become increasingly aware of the crucial role of the new multimedia system and its regulatory institutions in the culture and politics of society” (2009: 57).

In his book Networks of Outrage and Hope, Castells (2013) says that the battle for construction of meaning in people’s minds is the ultimate battle of power and that to society, socialized communication is the main process of production of meaning. In that sense, in order to change the social constructed meaning of something, social actors must change how that thing is going to be socially communicated. This relates to Communication Power (2009), where he states that to produce social change, social actors must reprogramme the cultural codes of the communication networks and that by using horizontal communication, such as the one made possible by the Internet, the chances of enacting social changes are increased.

Segurado (2015) also points out the importance of information and communication technologies in amplifying spaces for debates, providing an opportunity for individuals who don’t have loads of resources to participate and bring forth new issues to be discussed.

Taking into consideration Castells views on communication, power and social change, it is possible to determine communication’s important role in activism. Activists interact and
intra-act with society in the hopes of constructing new meaning on a subject, that will lead to cultural change and, therefore, institutional change.

Cyberactivism

Sandoval-Almazan and Gil-Garcia (2014) define activism as “political activities that embrace a goal: elections, rights claims, protests, etc.” (2014: 366). Cyberactivism can, thus, be defined, as the utilization of the Internet to do activism, in other words, using the web to enact social change and advance in political causes (El-Nawawy, Khamis 2012; Amin 2010).

There is no consensus on what term to utilize, as Joyce (2010) explains on the preface of the book Digital Activism Decoded, the first book dedicated to the subject. Each term has its own problems and specific contexts for usage. Digital activism, which was chosen to be used in the book, refers to using digital mechanisms to practice activism. Cyberactivism, or online activism, would refer to activism on the Internet. E-activism, which is an early term, came from the digital campaign practices that used e-mails to promote causes. Because this thesis talks about activism done online, using Internet and social media, the term cyberactivism will be used.

Cyberactivism 1.0 and 2.0

Early forms of cyberactivism were limited due to the economic context that was necessary in order to have access to computers and Internet (Shah, Sivitanides and Mehta, 2013; Joyce, 2010; Valenzuela, 2013). The technology available was also very different from today, with what has been defined as cyberactivism 1.0 consisting of mostly using webpages and mailing lists to practice activism (Sandoval-Almazan and Gil-Garcia, 2014).

With the development of technology and the arrival of what is known as web 2.0, new types of activism emerged. Web 2.0 is considered the second generation of web, where applications and services that are focused on the user aim to promote connectivity, sharing of media and information, self-created content and interactivity between individuals and organizations. Social media are, in that context, applications that use the foundations and ideas of Web 2.0, creating a space for the interchange of self-generated content (Sandoval-Almazan and Gil-Garcia, 2014).

The usage of Web 2.0 and its applications brought forth cyberactivism 2.0, with decentralized movements, horizontal communication, creating a space that can breach barriers
of nations, incorporate new subjects to the political participation. These new participants did not have the possibility of engaging without this medium, providing a forum for minorities to transmit their ideas. This means that activism done using these mechanisms have the potential to enhance democracy, generating a new public sphere, where one can participate more freely and with more opportunities (Amin, 2010; Joyce, 2010; Landorf, 2014; Sandoval-Almazan and Gil-Garcia, 2014; Segurado, 2015).

Another difference between cyberactivism 1.0 and 2.0 is the possibility of observing the actions that are happening, and only then decide if one wants to participate. This also correlates to the fact that people are more likely to read messages from whom they know and trust, enhancing the chances of participation (Joyce, 2010; Sandoval-Almazan and Gil-Garcia, 2014).

In terms of technology, Joyce (2010) wrote that computers provided a wider array of activism applications, allowing users to connect with any applications online, while the mobile phone was more limited. However, she also stated that with the release of tablets and the rise of smartphones, the lines between these two hardware was becoming blurred. Today, it is possible to affirm that there is no difference between the possibilities that a computer offers versus what a smartphone can offer in terms of activism. In fact, since 2010, the number of smartphone users in the USA alone, has grown by over 130 million (Statista, 2016). This means that the popularization of smartphones rose the potential for cyberactivism.

It is important to note that scholars affirm that most research done on cyberactivism has been on either mature democracies or places with an authoritarian regime (Valenzuela, 2013), meaning there is a gap of knowledge production on young democracies, such as Brazil, which was redemocratized after the military dictatorship only in 1985.

**Slacktivism**

There are a number of different critiques to cyberactivism, which are translated into the terms “Slacktivism” and “Clicktivism”. Slacktivism is a combination of the words “slacker” and “activism”, to demonstrate a certain laziness when it comes to cyberactivism. The term clicktivism combines “click” and “activism”, referring to the act of simply clicking on something on the web, such as liking something on Facebook, and hoping for fruitful results (Hennefer, 2013; Rotman et al., 2011; Glenn, 2015).

Although many people may view activism through social media as a waste of time and as not real activism, it provides “a way to facilitate awareness of issues at a much larger scale which may translate into further action.” (Rotman et al., 2011: 3), serving as a first step to reach
more political discussion and engagement. In addition, using the term “real world activism” to refer to traditional forms of activism, implies that cyberactivism doesn’t occur in the domain of issues outside the web (Hennefer, 2013). However, these terms can show a tendency towards a more passive participation in activism.

**Active vs passive participation**

In terms of activist participation in social media, it is possible to create two categories: an active and a passive form. This division can have two, simultaneous or not, meanings. One is the creation of extra content, adding information, responses, opinions etc., as opposed to simply demonstrating consent, an example being commenting on a Facebook post as opposed to just liking it. Another meaning derives from the risk taken with the interaction, one being a high risk, confrontational situation as opposed to a low risk, safe action (Hennefer, 2013).

When it comes to active or passive participation, there is a disagreement in the benefits that a passive approach can bring, however, I believe that every type of participation is valid, since it can bring awareness, create bigger debates and reach people that would not have heard of a specific event, otherwise.

When analysing the questionnaire, I will come back to active vs passive participation, and if the participation on the campaigns in question were a form of slacktivism, based on the activity or passivity of the respondents.
The Two Campaigns

#primeiroassedio - #firstharassment

On October 20th 2015, the television show Master Chef Junior had its premiere episode. In Brazil, this show became known for its interaction with the audience through social media, particularly Twitter. The junior version in Brazil had contestants from ages nine through 13. On the first episode, some Twitter users commented things about Valentina, a 12 year old girl. The comments were of sexual nature and were a naturalization of sexual behaviour by young girls, considering them to be already women, when it comes to sexuality.

Some of the comments were: “About Valentina: if there is consent, is it pedophilia?”; “What is the name of the cute one, I think I already have a crush.”; “You can lose Master Chef but you just won a boyfriend.”; “God forgive me, but this Valentina. I’ll be quiet so I don’t go to jail.”; “Pedophilia exists because these kids are hot.”; “This Valentina girl at 14 will be a secretary in a porno” (Catraca Livre, 2015b).

This triggered a response from Think Olga’s creator, Juliana de Faria, when she shared on Twitter, on October 21st, the first time she was harassed at the age 11, using the hashtag #primeiroassedio, and other of her harassment stories. She invited her followers and Think Olga readers to do the same. The movement soon expanded, girls were sharing their stories on Twitter and on Facebook. In 4 days, the hashtag was used 82 thousand times on Twitter alone. Various mainstream media outlets, such as BrasilPost (Huffington Post franchise), Revista Época, Revista Fórum and Revista Exame, wrote articles talking about either the episode of harassment on Valentina, about the #primeiroassedio campaign or both (Anjos, 2015; Caruso, 2015; Martinelli, 2015a; Martins, 2015).

Jout Jout, the same youtuber who made the video about abusive relationships, made one about harassment called Vamos Fazer um Escândalo (2015b) (Let’s make a scene). The video, with over a million and a half views and over 6 thousand comments, talks about how being harassed in Brazil is not news, since it is routine to most women. She also reads some of the #primeiroassedio stories, to show people that sexual harassment is not the same as rape, but it is still very problematic. She asks women to stop taking these harassments in silence and stop blaming themselves or thinking they made up the harassment, calling women to start making a scene.
(1) Triggering event

As described above, the campaign #primeiroassedio started as a response to sexual comments made on Twitter by a few male viewers of the TV show MasterChef Junior, broadcasted by Rede Bandeirantes, one of the largest networks in Brazil. The comments were made during the premiere, which was the third most watched show during that timeslot (F5, 2015). However, public participation via Twitter is one of the main aspects of the show, with interactions reaching hundreds of thousands tweets (F5, 2016).

After reading these comments, Juliana de Faria, journalist and Think Olga creator, decided to make her first harassment public and shared it on Twitter, encouraging her followers to do the same.

(2) Online reaction

Women all over Brazil delivered, with over 82 thousand tweets in just four days (Think Olga, 2015c). At its peak, the movement had over seven thousand tweets an hour (Kenski, 2015). Soon, the campaign reached Facebook, where people were not only sharing their stories but also sharing articles and blog posts regarding the subject. Videos were posted on YouTube, one with over a million views, others with around 30 thousand views.

Many government profiles on social media posted about the campaign, encouraging people to report both the online and offline cases of harassment, especially those done to children.

This movement breached the national barrier and reached international communities, with American, British, Chilean, Dutch and Portuguese women sharing their experience using the hashtag #firstharassment (GGN, 2015), proving that this scenario was not exclusive to Brazil.

Another online reaction was a campaign done by men in response, called #meaculpa, which is an expression in Latin that is used when one acknowledges one’s fault in a subject. This campaign was harshly criticized by feminists because, to them, it showed that men had to bring the attention back to themselves and they couldn’t simply listen and acknowledge this situation. Many even said that if they were really feeling guilty about harassment situations they should turn themselves over to the police. (O Popular, 2015)
(3) Online media response

The media response circulating the campaign was enormous, with several news outlets writing about it, both nationally and internationally. In Brazil, some of the biggest news portals wrote articles regarding #primeiroassaiedio, such as O Globo, BrasilPost, Revista Época and Revista Fórum, it was also published on Brazilian versions of international websites, such as BBC Brasil (BBC Brasil, 2015; BBC News, 2015; Martins, 2015; Moreno, 2015). The latter published an interview with the Director of UN Women about violence against women and one of the questions was about #primeiroassaiedio, about which she had heard (Schreiber, 2015).

The articles ranged from a compilation of the posts and analysis done on the campaign and its context, many of them had instructions on how to report abuse. One of the approaches was a piece by BBC Brasil commenting on the taboo of violence against boys and how not a lot of men shared their experience (Mendonça, 2015). Another interesting publication was the fact that Leonardo Sakamoto, one of the biggest columnists in Brazil, gave his space to two women to talk about violence against women on the web (Faria and Bello, 2015).

Another journalist, Rafael Kenski, published a data analysis of the campaign as well as other elements, such as google searches for “pedofilia” (pedophilia in Portuguese) and the term “novinha” (loosely translated to young girl, the most searched term at Pornhub, by Brazilian users). He discovered that the average age for the first harassment in Brazil was 9.7 years. This means that on average, girls in Brazil are harassed sexually before they hit puberty (Kenski, 2015).

(4) Offline response

The offline response of this campaign reached government institutions and media outlets. Juliana de Faria, the woman who first posted her story of harassment, was invited to the National Chamber of Congress to debate sexual crimes against children at the Parliamentary Investigation Committee (Alvim, 2015). State Congresswoman Miriam Marroni spoke at the Rio Grande do Sul state legislative chamber about rape and abuse culture. Xuxa, a renowned TV presenter, spoke about the campaign during her programme sharing her story and asking her guest, Luana Piovanni, a famous actress, to share hers as well (Veja.com, 2015).

These were big offline responses. However, the biggest, and most important was that, because of this campaign and others of the kind, the number of phone calls and reports to the
hotline of Violence against Women increased by 40% in comparison to 2014, according to the annual report released on November 30th (Portal Fórum, 2015).
### #meuamigosecreto - #mysecretfriend

In Brazil, we have a holiday tradition to get together with groups of friends, family or co-workers to play what we call Amigo Secreto, an equivalent to the game Secret Santa. We draw names, buy gifts and get together to exchange these gifts. In those gatherings, we tell people about our amigo secreto, what they are like, what they do, in order for them to guess who that person is so they can receive their gift. These events start happening in late November and early December.

On November 23rd, the Feminist collective Não Me Khalo³ posted on Twitter the following post: “My secret friend says that abortion is murder but asked his girlfriend to get one when she got pregnant.” The page posted a few others with the same idea and women all around Brazil started doing the same. It was, by no coincidence, happening during the 25th of November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and using the 16 days of activism against gender-based violence campaign. The movement wanted to make visible small acts of sexism that may go by unnoticed and that are routine, acts of violence against women that may not be seen as violence at all.

Just like it happened with #primeiroassedia, #meuamigosecreto wasn’t exclusively on Twitter, migrating to Facebook, as well, where we can post more than just 140 characters. And again, similar to its sister movement, it didn’t stay confined in social media, being discussed in articles by many important news publications such as Brasil Post, El País and Revista Época (Martinelli, 2015b; Moraes, 2015; Visconti, 2015).

#### (1) Triggering event

Inspired by the upcoming International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, the feminist collective Não Me Kahlo started posting on Twitter ironic messages about men and the routine acts of violence, especially psychological violence, to which women are subjected. As opposed to #primeiroassedia, the triggering event for #meuamigosecreto was entirely online, starting from a feminist collective and reaching a bigger audience over the following days.

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³ The name makes a wordplay between Frida Kahlo and the verb calar, which in Portuguese means “to shut up”. Literally translated and removing the wordplay, the Facebook page would be named I will not shut up
(2) Online reaction

The participation of the activists started on Twitter, with over 170 thousand mentions. It quickly spread to Facebook, where it gained the contribution of big names in politics, like Luciana Genro, who ran for president in 2014, Jandira Feghali and Maria do Rosário, federal congresswomen. These politicians shared stories of violence within politics and also in everyday life (Martinelli, 2015c).

Many posts were created by government institutions, such as municipal government, state government and a federal department called Humaniza Redes, that exists to promote safety and human rights online, which all created situations based on real life scenarios to encourage people to report violence and abuse against women and providing the number for people to call (Governo de Pernambuco, 2015; Humaniza Redes, 2015; Prefeitura de Curitiba, 2015).

During this campaign, it was very noticeable how much more it bothered men because the acts of violence were much less clear than the ones divulged during #primeiroassedio. Because of this, many man started showing their dissatisfaction on this indirect way of complaining, not realizing that the acts were much more general than focused on one specific person.

Since the violence committed in the acts reported were more subtle, the counter reaction that came from men was to criticize feminists using the female version of the same hashtag, #minhaamigasecreta. This movement, however, was much smaller than the one the women carried out.

(3) Online media response

The national media response was very big, with articles from Brazilian portals and Brazilian versions of international portals, such as El País, BrasilPost, Revista Galileu and Revista Forum (Martinelli, 2015b; Moraes, 2015; Moreira, 2015; Padrão, 2015; Silva, 2015). The international response was, however, much smaller, with only one article located by Dazed Magazine (Belinky, 2015). This could be because the acts of violence are much more subtle and may be specific to the Brazilian context.

The articles were either compilations of posts or analysis of the context, explaining how much these small acts of violence can influence women’s lives around the country. Many of them talked about how powerful the feminist movement was online, with both #primeiroassedio and #meuamigosecreto.
(4) Offline response

Because of the campaign, women who studied at the Universidade de Brasília (University of Brasilia), in Brazil’s capital, discovered that a professor’s behaviour of harassment was common and frequent, and so the University started an investigation on sexual harassment and abuse (Correio Braziliense, 2015).

After reading each other’s posts, three women found out they dated the same man at the same time. They became friends and decided to confront said man. This story was discussed during a TV show called Encontro com Fátima Bernardes, broadcast by the largest network in Brazil. They also discussed the campaign and its context (Catraca Livre, 2015).

The students from the Theatre programme at Universidade de São Paulo (University of São Paulo, the biggest University in Brazil), decided to make posters divulging the situations specific to their environment using the hashtag #meuamigosecreto and putting them up at their school. This was discovered through the open comments section on the questionnaire done for this thesis.

The biggest offline consequence of this campaign was, along with #primeiroassedio, the rise in calls to the Violence Against Women hotline, according to a report released on November 30th, increasing it by 40% in relation to the year 2014 (Portal Fórum, 2015).

Although this was not an immediate response to the movement, in May 2016, the feminist collective Não Me Kahlo released their first book #MeuAmigoSecreto: Feminism beyond the web (#MySecretFriend: Feminism Beyond the Web), of which they intend to make a series called Hashtag Series, with articles that begin with the hashtag exploring sexism in the Brazilian society through an intersectional lens (Aun, 2016).
Questionnaire

The questionnaire was developed using the website Typeform and was distributed online, through Facebook, between April 22nd and May 10th of 2016, having 389 unique clicks and 289 responses, with a completion rate of 74%. It is important to note that I removed 6 answers from people who had not participated in either of the campaigns, making the previous total of responses 295, for that would modify the results that focused on forming an identity of the social actors. I also left an open space available for comments that the respondents could fill out as desired, to communicate something they felt was important and that the survey might have missed.

As described in the literature review, smartphones have increased access to online content. Out of 389 unique visits, 207 were made from a smartphone, as opposed to 176 from a desktop computer or laptop, and 6 from tablets. As to answers, out of 289, 5 were from tablets and the other 284 were evenly divided between smartphones and computers, with 142 each.

Identity

In order to discover who the social actors of #primeiroassedio and #meuamigosecreto were, I included in the questionnaire 11 questions, to investigate their identity, taking into account aspects of intersectionality, such as race, class, religion, education and gender.

One of the questions was “What State do you live in?” because Brazil is divided in 27 states, with flagrant development differences between them, which could show if the social actors were evenly spread or if they remained in Brazil’s most developed areas. However, the answers provided quickly indicated that this questions should be better addressed in future research, since it did not provide means to reach a conclusion in terms of developed vs undeveloped areas. For this reason, I didn’t analyse it here and have, instead, provided options for future research. One possible change could be asking from what region the respondents are, since the 27 states are divided into 5 regions; a second option would be to ask the respondents if they live in a capital city, a metropolitan area, a favela or a rural area, to investigate what type of access to information and services they have.

The first question was related to the participant’s age (Figure 1). The cyberactivists in the two campaigns are, in their vast majority, youth. Over 90% of the social actors are below the age of 30. I believe this to be very important, since there are critiques on the passivity and
inactivity of youth when it comes to political participation (Noronha and Kielberman, 2010), and this sample proves that, in fact, young people have a desire to change the status quo.

For questions two and three, I asked participants about their gender. As expected, over 90% of them are female, as it can be observed in Figure 2. An interesting aspect of these questions, however, is that, while 74 people answered that they did not identify with either female and male genders, only 5 of them answered that they were trans. I specified that “Trans” was being used as an umbrella term for transgender, transsexual, transvestite, and non-binary. This leaves the question of what it is that they consider trans, since 7 was expected to be the minimum response in this question. One possible explanation would be people who are radical feminists, thus don’t believe in genders and, as such, don’t identify with either male nor female, and also don’t identify with the trans term.

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4 I analysed this aspect in absolute numbers since it was easier to identify this difference in value this way, as opposed to the percentage values.
As to sexual orientation, as it can be observed in Figure 3, the majority of respondents are heterosexual. The number of bisexual respondents far surpassed the number of homosexual respondents, and the number of pansexual respondents was not irrelevant, like the number of asexual respondents. This can be seen as a testament to how the generation of young people today are more open to their sexuality as experimentation than as fixed binaries. The numbers presented in this sample stand out from a research done on people between the ages of 18-34, in Brazil. The percentage of heterosexual people are 72.1%; of homosexual people are 16.1%; and of bisexual people are 11.8% and they do not separate pansexual or asexual individuals (FAMECOS, 2013). This means that, while the participants are mostly heterosexual, the amount of bisexual participants far surpasses the amount of that public in the Brazilian young population, meaning that bissexuals also have a strong participation in the movements.
The results on race⁵ (Figure 4) did not present an accurate picture of Brazil as a country. 73.36% of respondents were white, while only 25.95% were either multiracial or black. This lack of participation of black and multiracial people can happen because the demands do not match theirs. Another possibility is the difficulty of access to the Internet due to financial reasons, considering the black community in Brazil is the one with lower economical consumer power.

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⁵ Race is the official term used by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics, with the following options: White, Black, Multiracial, Asian origin and Indigenous (IBGE, n.d.).
As to class, this topic was analysed through monthly family income, measured by minimum wage, which is R$880, the equivalent to around €220. Figure 5 shows that, apart from the two extremes of “Up to 1 minimum wage” and “Over 20 minimum wages”, all the other incomes are balanced, which indicates that class is not a relevant factor when it comes to intersectional analysis of the social actors.

![Figure 5: Participants’ income](image)

Education, however, proved to be a relevant factor. Figure 6 demonstrates that most participants are pursuing university level studies. And 39.1% of them have already graduated from University. Only 7.61% have only High School level education. From this sample, it is possible to affirm that the cyberactivists who participated in the two campaigns are highly educated individuals, with access to information and knowledge formation environments.
When it comes to religion, most of the respondents are either Atheist or Agnostic, making up around 50%. This is consistent to a trend around the world, where youth does not consider religion an important aspect of life. However, the percentage of Atheist, Agnostic and people without religion among Brazilians between the ages of 18-34 is 32.14% (FAMECOS, 2013). This means that the percentage of Atheist, Agnostic and people without religion in this sample is considerably larger than the percentage in Brazil, which indicates that the feminist cyberactivists tend not to care about religion and faith.
To investigate the participants’ ties to feminism and the feminist movement, I asked two questions: do they identify as feminists, pro-feminism or anti-feminist; and if they participate in feminist movements. Though a respondent participated in the feminist campaign #primeiroassedio, he considered himself antifeminist. Since he was the only anti-feminist respondent, I considered this answer to be a normal deviation, especially since the campaign in which he participated involved children being harassed, which could be the reason he participated.

An interesting perspective on the first question about feminism is that almost 25% of the respondents don’t consider themselves to be feminist. Even if all the men who participated in the survey answered they were pro-feminists that still leaves around 19% of the respondents identifying as pro-feminists instead of feminists. I believe this to be due to a fear caused by the word feminism and it could be interesting to further investigate the reluctance of identifying oneself as feminist.

When it comes to participation in Feminist Movements, 73.84% of respondents answered they do not participate in any type of movement. This indicates that the majority of these cyberactivists don’t take the discussions to an offline activist movement. Around 11% of the respondents have some form of participation other than the biggest feminist movements in Brazil. Their answers range from university feminist collectives, to discussion and study groups, and female occupations.

Figure 8: Participants’ stance on Feminism

6 In the questionnaire, I defined Feminist as someone who fights for equality of genders; Pro-Feminist as someone who supports it but does not fight; and Anti-Feminist as someone who is against Feminism.
Figure 9: Participation in Feminist Movements
Participation

On #primeiroassedio, the participation rate of this sample was 95.15%, while on #meuamigosecreto, the participation rate was 100%. This could mean that, while #primeiroassedio deals with a more obvious problem in society, it is a more difficult topic to discuss and approach. Also, because #meuamigosecreto was about making indirect remarks, people felt more comfortable participating, since it didn’t necessarily mean having to divulge intimacy.

Reasons for Participation

To investigate the reasons for participation in the two campaigns, I designed a multiple choice question where the respondent could freely pick more than one option, being able to mark as many reasons as they wished. The answers can be observed on Table 1 and Table 2. On both questions, only around 3% of respondents chose the option Other, which shows that the pre-determined reasons resonated well with the intended audience.

Also a commonality between both questions, is the percentage of respondents who participated in the campaigns because they believed it to be their duty as feminist. Around 46% see the participation as a part of their role as feminists. If this information is cross-checked with the data on feminism, there is a gap of over 25%, which means that, while the vast majority of the cyberactivists are feminists, they don’t necessarily view this aspect of their identity as a requirement for participation on the online movements.

The top reasons for participation are, then, related to the triggering events that caused the campaigns to begin. The motives were related to publicizing normalized behaviour, questioning the status quo and taking a stand for what participants deem to be inadmissible behaviour from now on.
Table 1. Reasons for participation on #primeiroassedio

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons for Participation</th>
<th>Number of Answers (275 total)</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The precocious sexualisation of Brazilian children is serious and must be questioned</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>73.45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I thought it was important to publicize this topic</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>70.18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I thought it was absurd what was done to the contestant</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>52.72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe it is my duty as a feminist</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>46.18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeing other stories gave me courage to share mine</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>25.09%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Reasons for participation on #meuamigosecreto

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons for Participation</th>
<th>Number of Answers (289 total)</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>These acts must be made public</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>73.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I became empowered about these acts and wanted to participate</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>62.62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt free to demand respect</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>47.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe it is my duty as a feminist</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>45.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I saw an opportunity to say something that bothers me without the person knowing it was about them</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>41.17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3.46%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Type of Participation

From the data retrieved on the questionnaire, it is possible to note that, on both campaigns, respondents participated more on Facebook than on Twitter. Facebook, because of its format and its tools, is more prone to participation, since it’s a network for connecting people, as opposed to Twitter which serves the function of a microblog.

On Table 3 and Table 4, it is possible to observe the type of participation the respondents had in each campaign. The option Other includes discussing the campaigns on private chats, Facebook groups, WhatsApp conversations. It is noteworthy how, on both campaigns, the order of type of participation, from highest to lowest, is the same.

Table 3. Type of participation on #primeiroassedio

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Participation</th>
<th>Number of Respondents (278 total)</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Liked Posts</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>83.12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commented on Posts</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>59.35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared Posts</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>51.43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posted</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>32.01%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retweeted</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>26.61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liked Tweets</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>22.66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tweeted</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>18.34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Answered on Twitter</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>12.23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.51%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4. Type of participation on #meuamigosecreto

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Participation</th>
<th>Number of Respondents (289 total)</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Liked Posts</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>84.42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commented on Posts</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>67.47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared Posts</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>59.86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posted</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>57.09%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retweeted</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>28.02%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liked Tweets</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>23.87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tweeted</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>20.41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Answered on Twitter</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>13.49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.07%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As described in the literature review portion of this thesis, participation in cyberactivism can be divided into active and passive participation (Hennefer, 2013). To analyse whether the participation on the campaigns was passive or active, I separated the types of participation in those two categories as follows: Passive participations are liking a post on Facebook and liking
a Tweet. Active participations are commenting posts, answering Tweets, posting, tweeting, and all the forms of interactions present on the Other category, since they include discussions and dialogue. Sharing posts and Retweeting could be put in either category and I have decided to consider them as active and confrontational (Hennefer, 2013) since, on both websites, that action opens a possibility of dialogue on one’s own profile, making oneself vulnerable to public scrutiny. The results of this compilation can be observed on Table 5 and Table 6.

Table 5. Active vs Passive participation on #primeiroassedio

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of participation</th>
<th>Number of answers (859 total)</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Active</td>
<td>563</td>
<td>65.54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passive</td>
<td>296</td>
<td>34.46%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6. Active vs Passive participation on #meuamigosecreto

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of participation</th>
<th>Number of answers (1031 total)</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Active</td>
<td>718</td>
<td>69.64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passive</td>
<td>313</td>
<td>30.36%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On both campaigns, respondents participated in an active manner, with similar percentage values. This shows that the Brazilian feminist cyberactivism does not fall under the category of slacktivism or clicktivism, with cyberactivists behaving in a confrontational way, where other people who might not agree can discuss the topic with them. It is also interesting to note that the total number of actions on #meuamigosecreto was 120% of the total number of actions on #primeiroassedio. This can be justified due to the intimate nature of the stories, causing many people to not feel safe disclosing such narratives on a public forum.

**Importance of the campaigns**

It was also asked that the respondents rate the two campaigns when it comes to importance, on a Likert scale from zero to ten, zero being no importance at all and ten being utmost importance. I gathered the data collected in three categories, low importance (from zero to three), medium importance (from four to seven), and high importance (from eight to ten). The results can be observed on Table 5 and Table 6.
Table 7. Importance of #primeiroassedio

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rate of Importance</th>
<th>Number of Answers</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low Importance</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium Importance</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>12.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Importance</td>
<td>252</td>
<td>87.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8. Importance of #meuamigosecreto

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rate of Importance</th>
<th>Number of Answers</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low Importance</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium Importance</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>8.65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Importance</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Though the percentage of respondents who believe the two campaigns were highly important is considerably bigger than the ones who didn’t, it is still important to note that around 10% of respondents felt it was only of medium importance. There is not a unique trait to these participants, they do not stand out from the other participants. They are spread among different ages, sexualities, religions, education. The single common trait is that, the people who answered medium importance to one campaign tended to do the same to the other one.

Some of the respondents who scored the importance on a medium level commented, at the end of the questionnaire, that while the campaigns caused some movements online, they need to do more, and move offline. As I understand, then, the medium marks come from a disbelief on cyberactivism as an instrument for change.
Concluding Remarks

Social media is becoming more and more an intrinsic part of our daily lives. It is no surprise, then, that it is also being used for political and social movements, to amplify discussions, reach more people, to dynamise organizations and articulations, and to give voice to people who have none on regular media channels.

This thesis had the objective of investigating Brazilian feminist cyberactivism and it has done so by conducting an in depth case study on the campaigns #primeiroassedio and #meuamigosecreto. After performing a document analysis of online news articles, Facebook and Twitter posts, and blog posts, and analysing data from 289 respondents of an online questionnaire, some elements stand out in answering the following research questions: How does cyberactivism happen in the feminist Brazilian context? Did the cyberactivism in 2015 influence outside social media or offline? Who are the social actors participating in this cyberactivism, what are their intersections and reasons for participation?

On both campaigns analysed, men created counter campaigns, meaning that the online mobilization bothered them enough for them to create a side movement. It also points to a need of turning the subject back on to a male-centric view. This male “high-jacking” could bring forth a good topic for future research. How are masculinities built in Brazil and how do these men view feminism?

From the document analysis performed, it became transparent that the campaigns far surpassed social media and the Internet, such as reaching governmental institutions, daytime television programmes, smaller movements at universities, affecting the number of reports on the violence against women hotline, and with feminist collectives publishing books.

The data gathered through the survey suggests that the Brazilian feminist cyberactivism is a youth centred movement, with mostly non-religious, heterosexual, white and well educated women in its core. This means that this movement is closer, in terms of identity, to the suffragist movement as opposed to the working class movements that have since dominated Brazilian feminism, when it comes to race and education.

While cyberactivism has democratised access to feminism and feminist movements, this leaves the question as to what is preventing black and uneducated women from joining the movement. Is it the demands and campaigns that do not match peripheral women? Is it the access to Internet and devices that is more difficult in those communities?

Though it is also clear that the movement is feminist in its majority, a quarter of participants does not refer to themselves as feminist, but only pro-feminists. This seems to be
an evocative picture, and I believe it could be an interesting subject to approach: What problems surrounding the words “feminism” and “feminist” prevent people from identifying with the cause?

Though three quarters of the cyberactivists don’t participate in feminist movements offline, it is not possible to affirm that their participation online is exclusively passive and non-confrontational, meaning that the Brazilian feminist cyberactivists do not resort to slacktivism or clicktivism in their campaigns, notwithstanding that there were respondents who are concerned with that fact. The participants also don’t view feminism as their main reason for participation, with it actually being making sexism more visible in society.

Considering the findings of this thesis, it is incontestable why the Women’s Spring movement in Brazil has become so important, both online and offline. Utilizing social media and its tools, feminists are producing hundreds of thousands of original content that are reaching millions of people around Brazil and the world, breaching national barriers, which wouldn’t have been possible without the power of mass self-communication. It is, then, obvious that the Internet can be used as an instrument of change.
References


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Olá! Meu nome é Débora Martini e sou mestrandia em Estudos de Gênero na Universidade de Linköping, na Suécia. Como parte do meu programa, estou desenvolvendo uma tese sobre o ativismo online nas campanhas #primeiroassédio e #meuamigosecreto, que aconteceram no ano de 2015: quem foram os atores sociais e quais suas razões de participação.

Gostaria de saber sua opinião!

Essa pesquisa tem 23 perguntas e duração média de 10 minutos.

Todos os seus dados permanecerão anônimos e serão utilizados somente para o propósito de produção acadêmica.

Vamos começar?
1 Aceita participar? *

Você aceita, voluntariamente, participar dessa pesquisa, sabendo que seus dados permanecerão anônimos e somente serão utilizados com o propósito de produção acadêmica?

- Aceito
- Não aceito

2 Quantos anos você tem? *

- Menos de 18
- 18-24
- 25-30
- 31-35
- Acima de 35

3 Onde você mora? *

Se morar no exterior, clique em Outro e escreva o país.

- Acre
- Alagoas
- Amapá
- Amazonas
- Bahia
- Ceará
- Distrito Federal
- Espírito Santo
- Goiás
- Maranhão
- Mato Grosso
- Mato Grosso do Sul
- Minas Gerais
- Pará
- Paraíba
- Pernambuco
- Piauí
- Rio de Janeiro
- Rio Grande do Norte
- Rio Grande do Sul
- Rondônia
- Roraima
- Santa Catarina
- São Paulo
- Sergipe
- Tocantins
- Outro

4 Com qual gênero você se identifica? *

- Feminino
- Masculino
- Nenhum
- Outro
5 Você é uma pessoa trans? *

Trans está sendo utilizado como um termo abrangente para identificar pessoas que não se identificam com o gênero com o qual foram designadas ao nascer. Abrange travesti, transsexual, transgênero e não-binário.
- Sim
- Não

6 Qual sua orientação sexual? *

- Homossexual
- Heterossexual
- Panssexual
- Assexual
- Bissexual

7 E sua raça? Como você se identifica? *

- Outro
- Parda
- Branca
- Indígena
- Negra
- Amarela

8 Qual a sua renda familiar mensal aproximada? *

- até 1 salário mínimo (R$880)
- de 1 a 3 (até R$2.640)
- de 3 a 5 (até R$4.440)
- de 5 a 7 (até R$6.160)
9 Qual a sua escolaridade? *

- Fundamental Incompleto
- Fundamental Completo
- Médio Incompleto
- Médio Completo
- Superior Incompleto
- Superior Completo
- Pós-Graduação

10 Você se considera uma pessoa de religião: *

- Outro
- Evangélica
- Espírita
- Praticante de religião de matriz africana
- Agnóstica
- Católica
- Ateista
- Judaica
- Budista

11 Quando o assunto é feminismo, você: *

- Sou feminista (sou a favor do feminismo e luto pela equidade de gêneros)
- Sou pró-feminismo (sou a favor do feminismo e apoio as lutas, mas não faço parte delas)
- Sou anti-feminista (sou contra o feminismo)
- Outro

12 Você participa ativamente de algum Movimento Feminista? Se sim, qual? *

- Não participo
- Marcha das Vadias
- Marcha Mundial das Mulheres
- Marcha das Mulheres Negras
- Outro

13 Você ficou sabendo da campanha #primeiroassedio? *

- Sim
- Não
A campanha #primeiroassedio surgiu depois de comentários de teor sexual terem sido feitos sobre uma participante de 12 anos do Master Chef Junior, da Band. Mulheres e homens compartilharam nas redes sociais as histórias de seus primeiros assédios.

14 Você participou (publicou, curtiu, compartilhou, retweetou, favoritou, respondeu ou interagiu de outra forma) da campanha #primeiroassedio? *

- Sim
- Não

15 Se sim, por que você participou?

- Outro
- Pensei ser importante visibilizar esse assunto
- Ver os depoimentos me deu coragem para dividir minha história
- Acredito que seja meu dever como feminista
- A sexualização precoce das crianças brasileiras é grave e deve ser questionada
- Achei um absurdo o que foi feito com a participante

16 Como você participou da campanha?

- Outro
- Retweetei
- Compartilhei no Facebook
- Postei no Facebook
- Favoritei no Twitter
- Curti posts no Facebook
- Comentei no Facebook
- Respondi no Twitter
- Tweetei

Para você, qual foi a importância do movimento #primeiroassedio? (0 sendo importância nula e 10 sendo extrema importância) *

18 Você ficou sabendo da campanha #meuamigosecreto? *

https://deboramartini.typeform.com/to/pHM-4H5a/fallback
A campanha #meuamigosecreto teve como objetivo denunciar e visibilizar atos de violência contra a mulher que são cotidianos e podem passar despercebidos. Por exemplo: "#MeuAmigoSecreto não quer usar camisinha porque 'não dá pra sentir nada'". Aconteceu na época do Dia Internacional da Não-Violência contra a Mulher.

19 Você participou (publicou, curtiu, compartilhou, favoritou, retweetou, respondeu ou interagiu de outra forma) da campanha #meuamigosecreto? *

Sim  Não

20 Se sim, por que você participou?

- Outro  - Me senti livre para reivindicar respeito  - Esses atos merecem ser publicizados
- Me empoderei sobre essas violências cotidianas e desejei participar
- Acredito que seja meu dever como feminista
- Vi uma oportunidade para falar algo que me incomoda sem que a pessoa soubesse que era direcionado a ela

21 Como você participou da campanha?

- Outro  - Curti posts no Facebook  - Retweetei  - Compartilhei no Facebook
- Favoritei no Twitter  - Postei no Facebook  - Tweetei  - Respondi no Twitter
- Comentei no Facebook

Para você, qual foi a importância da campanha #meuamigosecreto? (sendo 0 importância nula e 10 extrema importância) *

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

23 Tem algum comentário que não foi abordado na pesquisa, mas quer me contar? Deixe aqui:

https://deboramartini.typeform.com/to/pM-HsG/fallback
Muito obrigada por sua participação!
Se desejar entrar em contato comigo, envie um e-mail para
debma412@student.liu.se

Enviar

Nunca submeta palavras-passe - Reportar abuso