

Media success variables of social movements. The 15-M and the PAH in Spain

Variables de éxito mediático de los movimientos sociales.
El 15-M y la PAH en España

Variáveis de sucesso da mídia dos movimentos sociais. O 15-M e a PAH na Espanha

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ABSTRACT | The aim of this article is to compare the mainstream news media treatment of two Spanish social movements: the 15-M (or *Indignados*) and the Platform of People Affected by Mortgages (PAH, by its Spanish acronym). The media portrayal of the 15-M has been the subject of several studies. However, the comparative perspective has been quite absent, despite its possibilities in offering relevant information on variables that may affect how media portray social movements. With this objective, we applied a quantitative content analysis to a sample of news items published in the digital editions of the most relevant Spanish mass media. The results question the protest paradigm, given the mostly positive or neutral media treatment received by both social movements. Nevertheless, the portrayal of the PAH is significantly more favorable, which is derived from the combination of both disruptive (to attract the media) and institutional (to get positive treatment) tactics. This combination is reinforced through the PAH's communication strategy.

KEYWORDS: social movements; news media; protest paradigm; 15-M; PAH.

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RESUMEN | *El objetivo de este artículo es comparar el tratamiento mediático de dos movimientos sociales españoles: el 15-M (o Indignados) y la Plataforma de Afectados por la Hipoteca (PAH). La cobertura periodística del 15-M ha sido objeto de muchos estudios. Sin embargo, el análisis comparativo ha sido muy poco utilizado, a pesar de sus posibilidades para ofrecer información relevante sobre las variables que pueden influir en cómo los medios retratan los movimientos sociales. Con este propósito, se ha aplicado un análisis de contenido cuantitativo a una muestra de noticias publicadas en las ediciones digitales de los medios de comunicación más relevantes de España. Los resultados cuestionan el paradigma de la protesta, dado el trato mediático mayoritariamente positivo o neutral recibido por ambos movimientos sociales. No obstante, la representación de la PAH es significativamente más favorable, lo que se deriva de la combinación de tácticas disruptivas (para atraer a los medios) e institucionales (para obtener un trato positivo). Esta combinación se refuerza mediante la estrategia comunicativa de la PAH.*

PALABRAS CLAVE: *movimientos sociales; medios informativos; paradigma de la protesta; 15-M; PAH.*

RESUMO | *O objetivo deste artigo é comparar o tratamento mediático de dois movimentos sociais espanhóis: o 15-M (ou Indignados) e a Plataforma de Afetados pela Hipoteca (PAH, pela sigla em espanhol). A cobertura jornalística do 15-M tem sido objeto de muitos estudos. No entanto, a análise comparativa tem sido muito pouco utilizada, apesar de suas possibilidades de oferecer informações relevantes sobre as variáveis que podem influenciar a forma como a mídia retrata os movimentos sociais. Para tanto, aplicou-se uma análise quantitativa de conteúdo a uma amostra de notícias publicadas nas edições digitais dos meios de comunicação mais relevantes da Espanha. Os resultados questionam o paradigma de protesto, dado o tratamento midiático predominantemente positivo ou neutro recebido por ambos movimentos sociais. No entanto, a representação da PAH é significativamente mais favorável, o que decorre da combinação de táticas disruptivas (para atrair a mídia) e institucionais (para obter tratamento positivo). Essa combinação é reforçada por meio da estratégia de comunicação da PAH.*

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *movimentos sociais; mídia de informação; paradigma de protesto; 15-M; PAH.*

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this research is to deepen into the factors that can explain a more positive media coverage of social movements. To achieve this objective, we analyzed a sample of news items on two Spanish social movements, the 15-M (or *Indignados*) and the Platform of People Affected by Mortgages (PAH, by its Spanish acronym). Several studies have addressed the journalistic coverage of these movements, although to a lesser extent for the PAH. However, the comparative perspective on both cases has been generally absent from the scholarly attention. This paper aims to fill this gap in the literature.

Social movements in the news media

Although current research usually places the Internet and, specifically, the social media platforms (Hunt & Gruszczynski, 2021; Jost et al., 2018; Mundt et al., 2018) as a fundamental resource for citizens and social movements (Castells, 2012), many studies also highlight the essential role that mainstream media still play (Amenta et al., 2017; Funke & Wolfson, 2014) both in their traditional version (paper, television, and radio) and in their foray into the digital realm (Cottle, 2008; Mattoni & Treré, 2014). Thus, mainstream news media continue to be relevant information sources for a large part of the population, which gives them a predominant influence in the process of selecting and framing the issues that will be part of the public agenda (Entman, 1993; McCombs & Shaw, 1972).

In general, social movements have a limited capacity in influencing the media agenda (Vliegenthart & Walgrave, 2012), as well as to influence the interpretative frame that will prevail when covering protest events (Smith et al., 2001). In fact, social movements must compete with other actors in the definition of the specific frames that will become dominant (Albizu, 2016). In such a competition, they not only aim to receive broad coverage (standing) (Amenta et al., 2009) and to convey their own approach to the issue (preferred framing), but also, as Gamson and Wolfsfeld (1993) affirm, to receive positive coverage (sympathy). Sympathy thus refers to the tone with which the social movement and its actors are covered.

Most of the research on the mainstream news media's portrayal of social movements totally or partially supports the so-called protest paradigm because protests and social movements are usually covered in a negative way. Among the characteristics of this media treatment, McLeod and Detenber (1999) highlight the following: use of narrative structures that emphasize violence, reliance on official sources and official definitions, representation of activists as minority groups, and the use of other techniques that involve the marginalization of activists. However, the media coverage of social movements does not always fit within the protest paradigm. That is, "the mainstream media are (...) not always exclusively negative

towards protest movements” (Cammaerts, 2012, p. 124). This raises the question of why a social movement, or an act of protest, may receive a more favorable media treatment. In the quest for an explanation, different movements and protests have been analyzed and comparative research has been promoted, without getting a consensus on the causes (Andrews & Caren, 2010; Boyle et al., 2012; De Cillia & McCurdy, 2020; Di Cicco, 2010; Evans, 2015; Kilgo & Harlow, 2019; Rohlinger & Brown, 2013; Veneti et al., 2012; Weaver & Scacco, 2013).

Among the variables that can influence media treatment, researchers highlight the strategies used by the movements (Rohlinger, 2002) and, above all, the differentiation between confrontational or outsider tactics and institutional or insider tactics (Taylor & Van Dyke, 2004). Andrews and Caren (2010) differentiate both categories as follows: “Outsider tactics rely on confrontation, disruption, and counter-institutional and symbolic challenges to existing practices and meanings. By contrast, insider tactics operate within prevailing institutional rules and are less confrontational” (pp. 845-846). In general, disruptive and confrontational actions are more likely to receive media attention. However, their coverage will probably be more negative (Evans, 2015). Conversely, when movements make use of institutional tactics, they are more likely to receive favorable treatment, even though it is more difficult to get media attention.

Another relevant factor refers to the concept of reputation: the more reputation, the greater media attention and of better quality. According to Rohlinger and Brown (2013), for the mainstream media, the reputation of a social movement organization is based on at least four aspects: 1) media orientation of the organization; 2) prominence of accredited spokespersons; 3) scope of the organization’s objectives, and 4) cultural resonance of the values deployed by the organization. In this regard, related to the concept of resonance, there is also the possibility of receiving a better media treatment if the movement adequately uses the opportunity structures. Firstly, political opportunities refer to the political context in which protests develop (McCurdy, 2012). Secondly, media opportunity structures (Cammaerts, 2012; Wong & Wright, 2020) may facilitate, in certain circumstances, access of activists to mainstream media. Finally, it is also possible to differentiate a discursive opportunity structure, defined as the aspects of the public discourse that determine the likelihood of a message to be disseminated within the public sphere (Alonso & Casero, 2016; Rohlinger, 2002). An appropriate use of the available opportunity structures could explain the increased presence of and social support to different movements in recent years, both in Spain and in other countries. These movements are acting in a context marked by the deterioration of living conditions of a large part of the population and by a loss of support and perceived legitimacy of traditional political institutions and parties.

Spanish social movements: the 15-M and the PAH

In May 2011, thousands of Spanish people took to the streets and squares in different cities demanding a more participatory democracy, and giving rise to what came to be known as the *Indignados* movement or the 15-M (Hughes, 2011). The 15-M was part of the heated protests that spread all over the world in 2011 as a sign of the discontent with the political and economic systems dominated by a powerful minority. In Spain, the *Indignados* mobilizations had a great public impact, considerable support in the streets and a broad positive evaluation of their arguments and strategies according to public opinion polls (Sampedro & Lobera, 2014). Today, researchers agree on the relevant repercussions of this social movement, which has invigorated Spanish civil society in different public and private spheres (Fuster, 2012; Robles et al., 2015).

Due to this relevance, there is a great deal of research on the 15-M, which has analyzed various aspects but has focused above all on communication issues. Both the movement's communicative strategies (especially regarding social media), and the mainstream media's portrayal have been researched (Anduiza et al., 2013; Fernández-Planells et al., 2013; García-Arranz, 2014; Micó & Casero, 2014). Regarding this second area, existing studies have noted the predominance of a neutral media treatment of the 15-M, even though differences between media have been detected according to ideological lines (Godoy et al., 2016; Gutiérrez Marín, 2016; Robles et al., 2015). The broad success experienced by the 15-M in attaining its own inclusion in the list of topics of media interest (Gutiérrez Marín, 2016), as well as in highlighting key concerns related to its activity (Casas et al., 2016; Feenstra & Casero-Ripollés, 2012; Feenstra et al., 2017) is also worth noting. This article aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of the media treatment given to this movement from a comparative perspective. To this end, this research examines the main differences in how the news media portray the 15-M and another social movement with prominent public presence over recent years, the Platform of People Affected by Mortgages (PAH, by its Spanish acronym).

The PAH was created in 2009, based on three fundamental objectives: to implement the acceptance of payment in kind¹, to stop evictions, and to facilitate a systematic conversion of mortgaged homes into social rentals (Colau & Alemany, 2012).

1. Spanish mortgage law does not contemplate the possibility of cancelling the debt with the repossession of the mortgaged property by the bank (*datio in solutum*), not even in the case of habitual residence or for economic reasons not attributable to the debtor (for example, unemployment). The bank can repossess the house and people must keep paying even after they have been evicted.

Mangot (2013) states that the PAH has become the most powerful movement in recent years in terms of impact on political and economic structures as well as of presence in mass media. However, despite its media and public prominence and even though some authors have emphasized its social and communicative success (Nos et al., 2014), the PAH has been the object of much less research than the 15-M. The existing literature has generally highlighted the fact that the media coverage has been favorable, and that the PAH has managed to influence the media agenda as well as the treatment given to its topics of interest (Albizu, 2016; Alonso, 2016; Alonso & Casero, 2016; Feenstra & Casero, 2012; Iranzo & Seguí-Cosme, 2015).

The two movements have different characteristics: the PAH is a social movement organization that defends the right to housing, while the 15-M is a far more complex phenomenon that has not focused on a specific demand; in fact, it became to be known as a movement of movements (Barranquero, 2012). Nevertheless, there are several reasons that justify the comparison. First, they both accomplish Tilly's definition of social movement (1999) and had both a simultaneous and great impact on Spanish society. Secondly, the 15-M defended a radical democracy (Mena et al. 2018) that suits with the insurgent practices (García-Lamarca, 2017) used by the PAH. Moreover, the fact that they are intertwined movements (García-Lamarca, 2017; Mena et al., 2018) is also a key point to consider, since it shows their closeness. The differences between them do not obstacle research, but enrich the analysis by offering more complex results and conclusions.

Based on this review of the literature, two research questions are proposed:

RQ1. What tone was used to cover the 15-M and the PAH in the mainstream Spanish media?

RQ2. Which are the factors that are linked to a more positive media treatment?

As a starting point and following the results of previous research (Alonso & Casero, 2016; Evans, 2015; Feenstra & Casero, 2012; Rohlinger & Brown, 2013), two hypotheses were established:

H1. News media treatment of the PAH is significantly more positive (sympathetic) than that of the 15-M.

H2. A more positive media treatment correlates with references to the movement as the source of the information, to institutional tactics, and to specific objectives. All these factors are more often present in the news referred to the PAH compared to the news related to the 15-M.

METHODOLOGY

We applied a quantitative content analysis on a sample of news pieces to study the news media coverage of the 15-M and the PAH. This research method has been used widely in similar papers (De Cillia & McCurdy, 2020; Kilgo & Harlow, 2019; Xu, 2013).

Sample

As the objective was to investigate the mainstream portrayal of the two movements, the attention was focused on media from a broad scope of activity (radio, television, and newspapers) with the largest audience in Spain. Audience data and the finally collected pieces of news were all obtained from the websites of the selected media, which are a fundamental source of information and offer additional advantages such as accessibility, costs, and manageability. Finally, five websites were selected:

- The two nationwide general information newspapers with the largest audience in their digital editions (Promotora de Informaciones, S.A. [PRISA], n.d.): *El País* (www.elpais.com) and *El Mundo* (www.elmundo.es).
- The radio station with the largest online audience (PRISA, n.d.): *Cadena SER* (<http://cadenaser.com/>).
- The TV channel with the largest number of online visits (Mediaset Spain, n.d.): *Telecinco* (www.telecinco.es).
- The website of the national public service broadcaster: *RTVE* (www.rtve.es)

During the analyzed period (2011-2013), the selected media were –and continue to be– predominant beyond the online media sphere. *El País* and *El Mundo* are the nationwide general information newspapers with the highest circulation average, *Cadena SER* is the most popular radio station, and *Telecinco* leads television news programs ratings. *RTVE*, which includes radio, television, and online services, despite its decreasing ratings, still plays a prominent role as the nationwide public service broadcaster.

The words PAH, *Plataforma de Afectados por la Hipoteca*, 15M, 15-M and *Indignados* were searched within the media websites in the period from May 2011 (when the 15-M started) to December 2013 (approximately in the middle of the electoral cycle that initiated in May 2011). This relatively long interval facilitated an in-depth analysis in the period when both movements attracted more news media attention; it also avoided possible media bias interferences due to any imminent elections. As a strategy for getting a non-intentional sample, we selected the first news piece published each month in the five websites regarding each movement.

The items had to mention PAH or 15-M within the title, subtitle or the two first paragraphs, as the aim was to select news focused or mainly focused on the movements, and not secondarily referring to them. A final sample of 275 news items was obtained: 47.6% of the news corresponds to the PAH and 52.4%, to the 15-M. Although the sample size is larger than that of other articles that have applied a similar methodology (Xu, 2013), the results should be interpreted considering the non-probabilistic nature of the sample.

Coding

To assist in the coding process, a codebook was drawn up. It included a total of 27 variables, with indications on how each variable had to be interpreted. Aside from the variables of instrumental control (date of publication, web link, etc.) and analytical control (social movement and media), the rest of the variables referred to formal characteristics, journalistic proceedings, and news contents. Among the latter, the variable that involves a general evaluation of the journalistic treatment of the movements is essential for this article. The objective of this variable was to classify the news according to the treatment given to each movement. The categories were designated as positive, neutral, and negative. Two levels of analysis were involved in the process of codification: factual and axiological. At the factual level, we focused directly on the reported events to assess the positive (e.g., reinforcing the quality of democracy) or negative (e.g., encouraging violent riots) effects that each piece of news ascribes to the existence and actions of the movement. The second level examined how the media evaluated the movements and their actions. At this point, we carried out an interpretative analysis of subjective and axiological elements. By including the neutral category in this process, we were able to classify pieces of news where it was impossible to clearly detect either a positive or negative evaluation. Finally, a third step that served as a codification control enabled the coders to deal with cases where it was difficult to identify the treatment given to the movements. In such cases, the coders reached a consensus as to where the unit of analysis should be placed in the overall categorization. These three strategies were applied in a hierarchical manner so that an easily categorized unit according to the first level would not have to be treated at the subsequent classification strategies.

Considering the concepts of protest paradigm and social movements' reputation, we designed a series of additional variables that, a priori, could help to explain the differences in the news media portrayals. These refer, on the one hand, to the use of the movements as direct sources of information, and, on the other, to their explicit or implicit association with a series of traits: use of confrontational or institutional tactics, specific objectives and acts of violence. Table 1 shows the main variables and categories used in this article.

	Variables	Categories
Dependent variable	Media treatment	1. Positive 2. Neutral 3. Negative
	The movement as the direct source of information.	1. Yes, with or without quotes. 2. No
Independent variables	Association of the movement with violence/pacifism.	1. Direct association with violent actions. 2. Explicit reference to pacifism. 3. Other cases (no mention to violent actions or pacifism at all).
	Association of the movements with relatively narrow objectives.	1. Yes 2. No
	Nature of the reported events.	1. Confrontational actions promoted by the movements. 2. Institutional actions promoted by the movements. 3. Events not directly provoked by the movements.

Table 1. Main dependent and independent variables

Source: Own elaboration.

To assess intercoder reliability, the two authors analyzed an overlapping 10% of the sampled news. An acceptable level of reliability (based on percentage of agreement) of 0.86 was obtained. The processing of the data was performed using the SPSS statistical program and fundamentally consisted of a bivariate analysis, seeking to detect the main differences in the media treatment of the two movements.

RESULTS

Out of the three possible categories (positive, neutral, and negative), the positive treatment is assigned to 47.3% of the pieces, and the neutral one to 38.9%. Thus, only 13.8% of the news items can be related to a negative treatment. There are no significant differences between the two movements regarding the probability of receiving a negative treatment. However, differences are statistically significant for the other two categories. 67.2% of the PAH pieces contain a favorable treatment, compared to 29.2% of the 15-M items. The gap is also significant in the neutral category: 54.9% of the 15-M pieces get this tag, far from the 21.4% of the PAH items. To sum up, the PAH receives a positive journalistic treatment in a significantly higher percentage of news pieces, while the 15-M items are more frequently tagged as neutral.

Results also show significant differences in the mention of each social movement as source of information: the 15-M is cited as source in 58.3% of the items related to this movement, while the PAH appears in the same role in 81.7% of the related pieces. Not only the quantity, but also differences in quality are relevant: 66.4% of the total PAH news items include information from this organization in direct speech, far away from the 49.3% in the 15-M sample. A deeper analysis gives a more precise approach: 39.7% of the PAH items quote a spokesperson in the piece. In fact, the PAH news pieces repeatedly refer to a small number of people as a source of information, with Ada Colau (the national spokeswoman of this movement) as the most cited one. On the contrary, only 4 items from the 15-M include information attributed by the media to a spokesperson.

The relationship between journalistic treatment and mentioning the movement as the source of information offers another interesting perspective (table 2). For both movements, treatment is more favorable when they are quoted as the source of the information. However, even when the PAH is not directly cited, this organization obtains a higher proportion of positive evaluations than the 15-M when acting as informant. In brief, the PAH shows the best performance (in the sense of positive journalistic treatment) compared to the 15-M in both possible scenarios: when the news pieces quote a source from the movement and when they do not. In this regard, Chi-Square tests show a statistically significant association between being the source of the information and media treatment for the 15-M (value 6.304; significance level: 0.043) but not for the PAH (Chi-square value 3.955; significance level: 0.138).

Another variable included in the analysis points to the nature of the events reported in the news. For both the PAH and the 15-M, the news pieces have their origin in confrontational actions promoted by the movements in a similar proportion (35.4% for the 15-M and 39.7% for the PAH). Nevertheless, there are significant differences related to the other two plausible causes of news (institutional actions promoted by the movements and events not directly provoked by them). The pieces of news in the PAH sample were more likely to have their origin in institutional actions (35.1% compared to 20.8% in the 15-M sample), while nearly half of the 15-M items arise from an event not directly promoted by this movement (compared to 25.2% of the PAH items).

If the journalistic treatment is included in the analysis (table 3), the results show that items originating in a confrontational action depict a more positive treatment for both movements than those originating in an institutional one. Moreover, the pieces of news derived from a tactic (either disruptive or institutional) portray a more positive evaluation (58.1%) than pieces reporting other events (27.1%).

		The movement as source			
		Yes	No	Total	
15-M	Treatment	Positive	32.2	25	29.1
		Neutral	58.3	50	54.9
		Negative	9.5	25	16
	Total	100	100	100	
PAH	Treatment	Positive	71	50	67.1
		Neutral	18.7	33.3	21.4
		Negative	10.3	16.7	11.5
	Total	100	100	100	

Table 2. Social movements as source of information and media treatment (%)

Source: Own elaboration.

		News event				
		Confrontational	Institutional	Other	Total	
15-M	Treatment	Positive	39.2	33.4	19	29.1
		Neutral	49	63.3	55.6	54.9
		Negative	11.8	3.3	25.4	16
	Total	100	100	100	100	
PAH	Treatment	Positive	76.9	73.9	42.4	67.1
		Neutral	7.7	19.6	45.5	21.4
		Negative	15.4	6.5	12.1	11.5
	Total	100	100	100	100	

Table 3. News event and journalistic coverage (%)

Source: Own elaboration.

Conversely, when the movements have not caused the news event, negative treatment is higher (20.8%) than when any tactic has been used (10.1%). This relationship between the nature of the events reported in the news and the media treatment is statistically significant according to Chi-square tests for both the 15-M (value: 11.940; significance level: 0.018) and the PAH (value: 19.325; significance level: 0.001). However, compared with the PAH, the 15-M receives a much less positive and more neutral treatment, both for pieces of news originating in confrontational action or in those originating in an institutional one.

			Focalization		
			Yes	No	Total
15-M	Treatment	Positive	60	19.2	29.1
		Neutral	37.1	60.6	54.9
		Negative	2.9	20.2	16
	Total	100	100	100	
PAH	Treatment	Positive	73.4	57.7	67.1
		Neutral	19	25	21.4
		Negative	7.6	17.3	11.5
	Total	100	100	100	

Table 4. Focalization and journalistic coverage (%)

Source: Own elaboration.

According to the concept of reputation, another factor that could lead to communicative success or media sympathy is the focalization on relatively narrow objectives. This is present in 41.5% of the news items, with significant differences between the PAH and the 15-M: 60.3% in the PAH sample compared to 24.3% in the 15-M related pieces of news. In this regard, media reflect PAH’s intention to focus its work on a limited number of housing demands. The relationship between the presence of the focalization factor and media sympathy is depicted in table 4. This table shows that the treatment is better for both movements when they are linked to specific objectives. However, the associated Chi-square test is only statistically significant in the case of the 15-M (22.697; significance level: 0.000) and not so much of the PAH (4.268; significance level: 0.118).

Regarding violence, the news pieces in the sample have been classified into three categories: direct association with violent actions, explicit reference to pacifism, and other cases, mainly meaning that there is no mention of violent actions or pacifism at all. This third category represents a major part of the news items (93.1% of the PAH news and 72.9% of the 15-M pieces). Violent actions are more frequently linked to the 15-M movement than to the PAH: the presence of violence increases to 19.4% when only the 15-M pieces are considered and drops to 1.5% within the PAH sample. In the case of the 15-M, the journalistic evaluation of these pieces is overwhelmingly negative: 20 out of the 28 pieces that link the movement to acts of violence have been tagged as negative. Thirteen of these items do not include any source from the movement, and, in the other ones, the presence of the 15-M as a source of information has very poor quality (data is obtained from webs, manifestos, etc.).

On the contrary, the only news piece that linked the 15-M to acts of violence and has been tagged as positive includes statements from activists from all over the world. Although the PAH also performs disruptive actions, it manages to avoid them to be classified as violent.

DISCUSSION

In general, the results question the basic premises of the protest paradigm, given the mostly positive or neutral treatment received by both movements. Even so, the PAH receives a significantly more favorable journalistic coverage (sympathy, according to the terminology used by Gamson & Wolfsfeld, 1993) than the 15-M. The PAH's positive treatment is consistent with the results of previous studies (Alonso & Casero, 2016) and allows to approach the analysis of possible factors that may explain its different media portrayal with respect to the 15-M.

One of these factors is the PAH's ability to combine confrontational (demonstrations, blockades for stopping evictions, occupation of bank premises, demonstrations in front of politician's homes, squatting) and institutional (negotiations with banks, legislative initiatives, contact with mass media, collection of signatures) tactics. For both movements, but more for the PAH, our results pose a paradox: the news originating in a disruptive tactic promoted by the movement receive a more favorable journalistic treatment than news stemming from an institutional action. This rupture of the paradigm of protest can be related, in the case of the PAH, to two processes. First, protest actions are often shown as means to achieve specific goals through institutional paths (mainly, through negotiation). For example, blockades to avoid evictions are intended to force dialogue with the justice system or the banks. Thus, it can be considered that the PAH combines, in its actions, the advantages of using confrontational tactics (to attract the media) with those of institutional ones (to achieve positive coverage). Second, confrontational actions are usually accompanied by a spokesperson or an official statement explaining the reasons for the protest and presenting the organization as an advocate for people in vulnerable situations. In fact, there are many pieces of news in which journalists reproduce the PAH vocabulary and assume its social justice frame. These results are in line with those obtained by Albizu (2016), who confirms that the argumentative frameworks used by this movement gain greater legitimacy in the media than those proposed by elites.

The communication task that the PAH carried out proved to be decisive in assuring that its protest actions were perceived as legitimate means in the pursuit of a just cause, instead of being labelled as violent acts. Not to be ignored is the fact that media treatment tends to be more positive when the sources of the information are the movements themselves, which happens more frequently in the case of

the PAH subsamples than among the 15-M pieces. These results agree with Evans (2015), who emphasizes the enhanced control over the “deployment of frames” (p. 44) when social movements are cited by the news media.

In this regard, Rohlinger & Brown (2013), when explaining the criteria that may affect the reputation of a social movement, emphasize the importance of having a proper media structure and an accredited spokesperson. Thus, it is possible to think that the more sympathetic portrayal of the PAH with respect to the 15-M can be based, to a considerable extent, in its orientation towards the media, especially in the fact of having recognized spokespersons. The figure of the spokesperson is relevant since it is usually someone qualified to send the appropriate message to the media. In fact, his/her presence implies the prior design of a communication strategy that establishes not only who has to speak on behalf of the organization, but what must be said and when. Moreover, the characteristics of the specific person who exercises that function are also important. Ada Colau, national PAH spokeswoman during the analyzed period, is mentioned in 22% of the pieces related to this movement. Over the last years, Colau has achieved a great prestige as an activist, which led her to be elected mayor of Barcelona in 2015. It is possible to think that the prestige and relevance acquired by Colau have been transferred to the PAH (and vice versa).

As far as the 15-M is concerned, its disruptive tactics are basically demonstrations and street protests. In these cases, the positive or neutral journalistic treatment can be linked, to a great extent, to the testimonies collected from demonstrators (not to the presence of an official spokesperson) and to the absence of any incidents. There are also some news items in which the 15-M benefits from the fact that they participate in a collective protest or in a disruptive action (like an eviction blocking) in which the PAH assumes the leading communicative role. Nevertheless, the key question referred to the 15-M is the fact that this movement does not control the origin of most of the news items, which hindered the transfer of its preferred frame to the media, whereas the PAH succeeded in controlling its own frames. This does not imply that the 15-M lacked a communication strategy; instead, its strategy did not comply with the principles and parameters expected by the mass media. However, the 15-M developed broad and intensive communicative activity on the Internet, and more so in social networks (Cristancho & Anduiza, 2016; Romanos & Sádaba, 2016). The different communicative approach of the PAH and the 15-M, partly motivated by the dissimilar nature of the movements, explains, at least partially, the uneven coverage given by news media.

The results are also consistent with the work developed by Rohlinger and Brown (2013), when they place among the factors that can increase the reputation of a movement the fact of expressing less ambitious objectives.

In this regard, the identification of the PAH with specific objectives is greater than that of the 15-M. The fact that the PAH concentrates its activities on issues related to housing access favors its association with specific objectives. On the contrary, the 15-M did not start out from an advantageous position due to its cross-cutting nature (Casas et al., 2016). However, the media-oriented work is also key and allows the PAH to repeatedly insist, through its spokespersons, on the relevance of just three main demands.

Nevertheless, the communication strategy can hardly be the only factor that explains why the PAH receives a more favorable journalistic treatment than the 15-M or why the 15-M, despite its limited use of mainstream media-oriented communication resources, obtains a mostly neutral (and not negative) media coverage. For a global explanation, it is essential to consider not only the internal aspects of each movement but also the context in which both emerge and develop (Amenta et al., 2010). In this regard, it can be argued that the 2008 financial crisis opened a window of political opportunity (Gamson & Meyer, 1996; McCurdy, 2012) that favored the emergence of social movements. In summary, the initial context prevented both movements from being demonized by the media, but the PAH, thanks to its orientation to the press and the ability to combine both disruptive and institutional tactics, has managed to make the most of this favorable starting situation.

CONCLUSION

The analysis confirms the first hypothesis: the journalistic portrayal of the PAH is significantly more favorable than that of the 15-M. In both cases, the news pieces coded as negative are a minority. However, most of the items related to the PAH have been evaluated as positive, whereas most of the 15-M sample have been considered as neutral. These results call into question the protest paradigm, especially, and notoriously, in the case of the PAH: this movement prevents their actions to be labelled as violent, although some of them have a highly contentious component. Meanwhile, the 15-M, despite having received a mostly neutral journalistic treatment, cannot avoid being linked with violence in a significant number of pieces, in which the movement and its actions receive a negative media treatment.

The second hypothesis advanced three factors that could explain this difference in media portrayal: the representation of the movement in the news as a source of information, the use of institutional tactics, and references to specific objectives. The importance of the first and the third factors has been accredited in the research. The consistency with which both factors appear in the PAH communication suggests

the existence of a communication strategy by this social movement. This apparent strategy is reflected in the intensive use of spokespersons facilitating the task of the media and increasing the probability of the organization being cited as a source of information. This same strategy would also insist on the transmission of clear messages as, for example, the specific objectives of the organization (obviously, the fact that the PAH is a single-issue organization also facilitates this focalizing work). The key seems to be, therefore, the ability to control the message to the point that disruptive actions (and not only institutional ones) can receive positive coverage.

In this regard, the apparent rejection of the second factor included in the hypothesis (the use of institutional tactics), which was supported by previous literature, has strengthened the need for a more complex analytical approach. In fact, the supposed PAH's communication strategy allows the movement to benefit from the advantages of confrontational actions (attracting media) without receiving the usual negative journalistic treatment given to these events. Moreover, disruptive strategies can even be represented as means for accessing institutional processes (negotiations with political parties, institutions, and banks).

To sum up, the combination of both disruptive and institutional tactics and the clear media orientation explain the more positive journalistic treatment received by the PAH in comparison with the 15-M, despite their same starting point: the window of political opportunity that opens with the financial crisis of 2008. The PAH's orientation towards the media and the way of presenting itself as an advocate for victims of unjust situations have facilitated the internalization of its goals, and even its terminology, by journalists, as well as the application of a positive frame to refer to the movement. Nevertheless, it will be necessary to continue this line of research with the direct analysis of journalistic routines in relation to news about social movements and the perspective of communication professionals to shed more light on the conditions that can explain the success or otherwise of competing frames.

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