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Feminist cyberactivism in Chile. The experience of the Observatory Against Street Harassment

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Abstract. This article addresses the issue of feminist cyberactivism, focusing on the experience of the Observatory Against Street Harassment (OCAC) in Chile between 2014 and 2017. Based on an analysis of the organization's digital strategy, the study explores this strategy's effects in three areas: the organization of the collective, identity, and OCAC's ability to place the issue of gender violence on the public agenda by promoting the proposed law entitled "Respeto Callejero" ("Respect on the Streets"). Three methodologies were used: interviews with movement participants, analysis of Facebook metrics, and keyword analysis of traditional and digital media. One of the most important findings is that before this organization was created, there was no media coverage of street harassment in Chile and therefore OCAC's digital positioning strategy and call to action brought about gradual change, inserting the topic of gender violence into public spaces.

Keywords: feminist cyberactivism, street harassment, gender violence, Chile, OCAC, Observatory against Street harassment

1. Introduction

Digital platforms and their multiple derivatives have not only been changing the stage on which processes of human communication occur but have also effected social change (González-Bailón, Borge-Holthoefer, Rivero, & Moreno, 2011). According to Bart Cammaerts (2015), studies on social media cyberactivism have found that such activism plays a role within organizations, by recruiting and constructing links; mobilizing and coordinating direct action; framing the debate regardless of prevailing trends; discussing, debating, deliberating, and deciding; attacking ideological enemies; watching the watchmen, and preserving the artefacts of protest. Understood in this way, digital activism contributes to citizen empowerment by generating those counterpublic spaces to which Nancy Fraser (1990) refers in her classic study on rethinking public space. This is probably why Danica Minić (2014) defines feminist media activism in terms of the counterpublic of communication. The specialized literature on activism around issues of gender violence emphasizes, with great interest, the role of new technologies and the internet as tools in the fight against gender violence. For example, Diana Fernández (2011) argues that "the defense of the rights of the woman and the denunciation of situations of injustice, inequality or violence against women, habitual spheres of work and struggle by traditional feminism, take on new nuances as they move to the internet"[1] (p. 68).

The Observatory Against Street Harassment (Observatorio contra el Acoso Callejero, OCAC) is just such a recent successful experience in digital activism in Chile. Its activities are primarily digital and it uses the instruments that new information technologies offer to disseminate information, create an agenda, and persuade the public of the importance of regulating systematic violence against women in public spaces. This study describes OCAC's forms of organization, its use of digital mechanisms to disseminate its message, and the way it relates to the information and social media in Chile. The OCAC is a feminist movement built principally by women. It carries out its campaigns primarily through social media such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. At the beginning, OCAC posted brief testimonies by women who had suffered some form of street harassment. Using its digital platforms, it created a space for denunciations. This initiative was so successful that OCAC, with the support of parliamentary deputies, drew up a draft law entitled "Street Respect" (Respeto Callejero), presented to the Chilean Congress in 2015. This draft law seeks to sanction all those

1 All translations from Spanish are by *Apuntes*.

who engage in acts of physical or verbal violence in public spaces with jail sentences and monetary fines.

One of the particularities of OCAC is its explicit interest in influencing public policies through legal measures. The passage of the "Street Respect" law is testimony to the strength of social movements in Chile as well as to a certain maturity of activism, which functions with a logic of identity as well as with collective logic. Fundamentally, OCAC represents a form of feminist cyberactivism that coincides and dialogues with various developments related to feminism on the international level.

This study examines the OCAC's digital strategy, which is primarily aimed at positioning the concept of street harassment—a concept that, as we will see below, was unknown in Chile before this organization appeared on the scene. The results help us understand how a feminist collective was able to generate public interest and had a forceful impact not only in the digital sphere but also on the public agenda, since it compelled major media outlets to cover the issue and took advantage of the internet without neglecting street activism.

Antecedents

According to data from the Subsecretariat for the Prevention of Crime (Subsecretaría de la Prevención del Delito), there were 93,545 complaints of domestic violence in Chile in 2016, 70% of which were filed by women. Meanwhile, the Woman's National Service (Servicio Nacional de la Mujer, SERNAM) reports that more than 40 women died in Chile during that year in crimes classified as feminicide. Finally, a report prepared by the Subsecretary for the Prevention of Crime, Óscar Carrasco, in March 2017 indicates that 80% of those who suffered domestic violence were women and that there are four times more cases of domestic violence than automobile robberies.

The OCAC bases its work tackling street harassment in Chile on the aforementioned data since there is little research on gender violence in public spaces—there is only information about violence in private spaces. The OCAC collective was created by María Francisca Valenzuela, Paula Bell, Patricia Iglesias, and Tamara González after they got together to celebrate the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women on November 25, 2014. They started by creating a profile on Facebook, which got more than a thousand followers in less than two months. Then, they created a web page: respetocallejero.cl, which features testimonies of women and men who have experienced some type of aggression or harassment on the streets of Chile.

In addition, the collective defined various types of actions that it considered to constitute street harassment. These are actions that have a sexual connotation that are committed by an individual who the victim does not know and which make the victim uncomfortable. The following actions are considered as harassment: leering, light or aggressive catcalling, whistling, kissing noises, horn honking, heavy breathing, obscene gestures, nonconsensual photographing or filming, unwanted touching, following and cornering, masturbation, and flashing. OCAC carried out its first virtual survey on February 18–28, 2014. It revealed that nine out of ten Chileans (84.2% of those surveyed) thought that street harassment (as described above) should be punished by law. In addition, 76% of the women surveyed said they had suffered some form of harassment during the previous 12 months.

This survey, as well as the accompanying Twitter and Facebook campaigns with the hashtag #RespectoCallejero ("StreetRespect"), prompted 10 deputies—including Camila Vallejo and Karol Cariola (PC), Karla Rubilar (Amplitud), Gabriel Boric (independent), Giorgio Jackson (independent), and Marcela Sabat (RN)[2]—to present a draft law entitled "Respeto Callejero" in March 2014, with the support of the European Union, UN Women, and the Chilean Ministry of Women.

The law was presented to the congress on March 17, 2015. On January 20, 2016, the First Commission Report on the law was presented. At that time, Deputy Karol Cariola (PC) provided information about countries in which there was existing legislation on sexual harassment in the streets. She cited Peru, Belgium, Argentina, Paraguay, and Uruguay. At the same time, the president of OCAC, María Francisca Valenzuela, provided data that outlined the urgency of passing legislation on street harassment in Chile. On January 20, 2016, the then-minister for SERNAM, Claudia Pascual Grau, stated that "this initiative recognizes the incidents that we have no way of punishing today and we should be appreciative that these types of violence, which perhaps existed beforehand or previously, are being visibilized." The commission approved the principle of legislating on the matter, though it stressed the importance of correctly defining "public space" and defining how "catcalling" and other verbal expressions should be sanctioned. On April 12, 2016, by a unanimous vote of 113 votes in favor (with no nays or abstentions), the legislation was sent to Senate. The law is now in force. Fines have been set at 0.5 to 20 monthly tax units (UTM) in addition to ordinary imprisonment for a minimum term of 61 to 540 days.

2 Translator's note: PC = Partido Comunista; RN = Renovación Nacional.

Conceptual framework

Feminist cyberactivism

In the area of gender or feminist cyberactivism, the Spanish experience demonstrates that activism in this sphere contributes to debate and to innovative political action by organizations as well as to creating a more interactive and social-constructive model of activism (Núñez, Fernández, & Vásquez, 2017). Among these new forms of collective action, "Hashtag Activism" stands out (Kangere, Kemitare, & Michau, 2017, p.17). In Latin America, Argentina provides the example closest to OCAC's. In 2015, the #NiUnaMenos ("NotOne[woman]Less") march brought together more than 300,000 people in Buenos Aires. The marchers had five demands: the implementation of a national plan to combat violence against women, access to justice for victims, the creation of a single official register of victims of violence against women, expansion of sexual education, and protection for victims (Chenou & Cepeda-Másmela, 2019).

In the case of feminist networks, Spain provides a relevant example. Efforts by organizations—both digital and in-person—succeeded in pressuring the government to pass the kind of legislation they demanded. Fernández (2011) notes that in 2002, nine feminist associations created the State Network of Feminist Organizations Against Gender Violence (Red Estatal de Organizaciones Feministas Contra la Violencia de Género). They applied pressure to the government through the webpage redfeminista.org, which joined the already existing Mujeres en Red ("Networked Women"):

> The Mujeres en Red website is a pioneering Spanish initiative in the sphere of cyberactivism that takes an alternative approach to the use of new technologies; from the beginning, they opted for hacktivism and for social cyberfeminism. Originally, its purpose was to bring together women's initiatives from around the world and to serve as a channel for promulgating different sensibilities and projects, in addition to promoting digital literacy and combating the digital gender divided. Later, a portal was created specifically for combatting gender violence: Mujeres en Red Violencia. (Fernández, 2011, p. 77)

Fernández (2013) recounts that after the creation of Mujeres en Red Violencia, the Red Feminista set up different websites where women could denounce cases of violence and where they had a space to debate and talk about these issues. However, their most important accomplishment was the creation of a register of women who reported having suffered violence at some point in their lives. These antecedents are reaffirmed by Victoria

Ferrer and Esperanza Bosch (2006) who mention that through an agreement between the Consejo General de Poder Judicial (General Council of the Judiciary) and the Spanish ministries of Justice and of Labor and Social Affairs, the Observatorio de Violencia Doméstic (called, as of July 2003, the Observatorio contra la Violencia [Observatory Against Violence]) was created. The authors point out that there had previously been another organization that used the internet as a visibilization tool: Red Estatal de Organizaciones Feministas Contra la Violencia de Género (State Network of Feminist Organizations Against Gender Violence). Ferrer and Bosch (2006) agree that the historical milestone that marked increased participation by feminist movements in Spain was the Ley Orgánica de Medidas de Protección Integral contra la Violencia de Género (Organic Law of Measures of Comprehensive Protection Against Gender Violence), promulgated at the end of 2004, but which came into effect from 2005, following pressure from different angles. Sonia Núñez Puente (2011) adds that Spain constitutes a powerful example of effective online women's alliances. In addition, she notes that the websites of both the Red Feminista and Mujeres en Red are successful examples of how it is possible to use online mobilization to secure the passage of legislation on issues that had previously been relegated. She emphasizes that without the role of online feminist movements, such an impact would never have been achieved:

> The work being carried out by the Spanish government on the topic of eradication of violence against women is currently very intensive. Nevertheless, this work would not have taken place without feminist activism online and offline by a variety of women's organizations that transformed themselves into a collective network and implemented measures to exert pressure. (Puente, 2011, p. 89)

Nine Spanish feminist organization united to finally bring about the refinement of a law that protects them: Asociación de Mujeres Juristas Themis (Association of Women Jurists Themis), Fundación Mujeres (Women Foundation), Comisión para la Investigación de los Malos Tratos (Commission for the Investigation of Abuse), Enclave Feminista (Feminist Enclave), Federación de Mujeres Progresistas (Federation of Progressive Women), Federación de Mujeres Separadas y Divorciadas (Federation of Separated and Divorced Women), Mujeres Vecinales (Neighborhood Women), Asociación de Asistencia a Víctimas de Agresiones Sexuales (Association for Assistance to Victims of Sexual Abuse), and the Asociación de Mujeres Profesionales de los Medios de Comunicación (Association of Professional Women in the Media).

> The campaign that culminated in the approval of the law can be considered a clear example of cyberactivism engaged in by a recently formed networked collective that was able to achieve—through an intense campaign of online activism—the passage of a law that plays a fundamental role in the process of combatting violence against women in Spain. The Organic Law 1/2004, Measures of Integral Protection Against Gender Violence, has improved the measures implemented in Spain in recent years. (Puente, 2011, p. 89)

Turning to Latin America, it is important highlight the impact of the rape and murder in 2016 of two Argentine women: María José Coni, 22 years old, and Marina Menegazzo, 21 years old. The two young women had traveled to the Ecuadorian town of Montañita and were never seen alive again. They were raped and killed by a group of men who had offered them a place to stay. This controversial case straddled international borders and became an iconic case for activism through social media. As Teresa Piñeiro-Otero and Xabier Martínez-Rolán (2016) note:

> The origin of #ViajoSola [#TravelAlone] and the contents disseminated should be situated within the media treatment and public opinion related to the case, which re-opened the debate about the limitations faced by women in society. The 2.0 platforms served as a wake-up call for the security services to act and for the social mobilization that followed. (p. 10)

During the entire month of March, activity on social media continued along with the use of the hashtag #ViajoSolo as a form of protest, not only by Spanish speakers but also people around the world. Piñeiro-Otero and Martínez-Rolán (2016) note that the movement reached its peak interaction with social media on March 12, 2016, the very day that the Mexican collective Plumas Atómicas ("Atomic Feathers") put out a video on the importance of women being able to travel alone without fear and not needing to be accompanied by a man in order to feel safe. This video motivated many women around the world to publish photos of trips in which they appeared alone and used the hashtag #ViajoSola.

Finally, another Argentine case is notable for the use of social media as a form of digital protest. On July 16, 2016, in Buenos Aires, a woman was breastfeeding her son in a public plaza. Two police officers tried to stop her, claiming that it was illegal to breastfeed in public. Because of this police pressure the woman decided to leave, but she also filed a complaint at the nearest police station. Legally, the matter became bogged down, but indignation was soon expressed on social media:

> In solidarity with the cause, another woman organized a "tetada,"[3] the following Saturday in the same plaza. This was promoted using a pink banner with the slogan "Breastfeeding is a right and is natural." The initiative rapidly went viral on the internet, especially on Facebook and Twitter, platforms that are used extensively in Argentina. As a result, activists, mothers, and relatives gathered at more than 100 public plazas throughout the country. (Magallanes & Bard, 2017, p. 198)

At that time, two feminist collectives started to use social media to call women to march on the streets: Women for the Latin American *Matria* (Mujeres por la Matria[4] Latinoamericana, MuMalá) and the Argentine Milk League (Liga de la Leche Argentina, LLLA). According to Mariana Magallanes and Gabriela Bard (2017), the objective of the mobilization was to get across two powerful messages: first, to inform the public that there was no law or ordinance that prohibited breastfeeding in public; and second, to insert women's place in society into the public debate, keeping in mind that women's breasts are used in many publicity campaigns to attract the public. Thus, the march denounced the evident hypocrisy in the way these issues were treated in the media:

> A set of debates regarding the place of the woman and her body in the hetero-patriarchal capitalist system, which feminist movements around the world had engaged in for decades, reemerged. One such debate that stands out is the denunciation of the hypocrisy that underlies the consumption of women's breasts in the media, especially in entertainment, and their commercial use for erotization. (Magallanes & Bard, 2017, p. 199)

In this campaign, Twitter also became an important tool for denunciation. Magallanes and Bard (2017) note that this platform began to be used to publicize the following phrase: "La única teta que molesta es la que no vende" (The only breast that offends is the one that doesn't sell), which became a worldwide trending hashtag on Twitter. Thus, the so-called #Piquetetazo[5] became famous, largely because of social media.

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3 Translator's note: from the word *teta*, a colloquial term for breast in Spanish.

4 Translator's note: *matria* has no direct translation in English; the term has been taken up by some feminists as a counterpoint to the concept of *patria* (homeland). For an explanation in Spanish see: https://www.elperiodico.com/es/politica/20210719/son-intelectuales-han-usado-matria-11921961

5 Translator's note: the word *piquete* means a public demonstration, while *teta* is a colloquial term for a woman's breast.

Street harassment in Chile and around the world

This study uses the example of OCAC in Chile to examine digital activism because street harassment is a topic that has been rarely studied in the literature on gender violence. Patricia Calandín states emphatically that "in our society gender relations are constituted as relations of power and domination when they are established on the basis of inequality, invisibilization, submission, and abuse" (2016, p. 1). In addition, the author also argues that this leads to social problems that directly affect women, violating and nullifying their essential rights. In this vein, the term "street harassment" was coined to refer to a demonstration of power and control, and even disguised discrimination. According to Calandín, street harassment is often interpreted as courtesy, a joke, or only a small bother that women have to put up with just because they are women:

> In reality, it constitutes a limitation on the freedom of movement of women in public spaces; in this sense, it is one more expression of gender violence and, therefore, an obstacle to the genuine exercise of rights and accessibility in the city. (Calandín, 2016, p. 25)

According to Marco Billi, Maria José Guerrero, Liliette Meniconi, Mónica Molina, and Felipe Torrealba (2014), while there is concern for violence against women, street harassment specifically is not a concern. The main problem is that this type of violence takes place in spaces that are public and open to the community, while it is private space that draws the attention of authorities when it comes to legislating. Kimberley Fairchild and Laurie Rudman (2008) confirm the existence of this phenomenon and criticize the lack of studies on street harassment. They go on to state that since this type of aggression can be inflicted by totally unknown people rather than co-workers or family members, legislating on these issues is a more complex process. From the point of view of Manuel Zambrano (2015), the first discussion on street harassment in Latin America took place in Peru, in 2011, through an initiative called Paremos el Acoso Callejero ("Let's Stop Street Harassment"), which in 2013 became a digital platform that recorded cases of women who denounced such harassment. Later, in 2014, the first Latin American Week against Street Harassment was organized, and at that time the Observatorios Contra el Acoso Callejero (Observatories Against Street Harassment) of Colombia and Chile were created. That same year, the Colombian government established an undercover police unit to protect women in the streets of Bogota. More than 121 individuals were detained by this unit for engaging in street harassment

Ecuador provides one of the most important cases in the fight against street harassment. Zambrano (2015) describes two initiatives that garnered broad participation in Quito and Guayaquil. The first took place in 2015 and was called Yo Cambio Por Ellas ("I'm Changing for Them"). The aim was for women to lose their fear of using public transportation and the initiative was targeted exclusively at men. The second was called Cuéntame ("Tell Me") and consisted of collecting denunciations of street harassment on public transportation. To this end, *cabinas cerradas*[6] were set up in certain parts of the city. They provided spaces where women felt comfortable making a complaint. Other countries went even further:

> In 2014, Belgium approved an anti-catcalling law (*Antiseksismewet*) in an effort to put an end to street harassment. Curiously, at the beginning of the 20th century, the [Spanish] dictator Primo de Rievera also undertook a similar measure. He prohibited catcalling because he considered this to be too vulgar. The Penal Code of 1928 was intended to "eradicate vicious customs" such as, for example, "vulgar or lewd gestures, mannerisms, or comments" (Rodemann, 2015, p. 153).

Finally, Elizabeth Vallejo Rivera (2018) provides a clear description of the way that that the concept of street harassment was developed in Peru. According to her, the first approximation took place in 2011 in Lima, with a march called Marcha de las Putas ("March of the Whores"). Nevertheless, it wasn't until 2012, and as a result of the work of the collective Paremos el Acoso Callejero ("Let's Stop Street Harassment"), that the term "street harassment" entered the public vocabulary. Finally, in 2015, after an extensive debate in Peruvian society, bolstered through the use of social media as a form of mobilization, that Law No. 30.314, the Law to Prevent and Sanction Sexual Harassment in Public Spaces (Ley para Prevenir y Sancionar el Acoso Sexual en Espacios Públicos), was enacted.

Methodology

This study employed three methodological tools. To analyze the impact of OCAC's digital strategy, a series of structured interviews were carried out with two types of active participants in the organization. The first were OCAC volunteers (3), who were also in charge of preparing and designing the digital content and as well as managing the collective's relationship with

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6 Translator's note: *Cabinas cerradas* are enclosed spaces set up in public areas where victims of street harassment can speak with a paralegal or psychologist, i.e., safe spaces where they can recount their experiences.

the media. The second were OCAC'S most active followers on Twitter (2). The purpose of the latter interviews was to understand what OCAC means to these followers and if what they perceive is in line with what the organization wishes to project. The questions focused on three main themes. In the case of the volunteers, these were:

1. Questions about the individual
2. Questions about the campaign
3. Questions about the law and cultural changes

In the second stage, OCAC's messages were analyzed along with the types of interaction it had with its followers on social networks. This part of the research centered on Facebook activity since this is the social media platform where the organization started its activities. In this way, it was possible to assess the organization's posted messages and graphics as well as users' reactions. We accessed material from 2014 to November 26, 2017, using Netvizz 1.6 software. This program was used to carry out complete mapping, providing the date and content of each post, and the number of reactions by followers. This made it possible to obtain a complete guide to everything posted on Facebook during each year. Once the database was ready, the information was classified by year of posting, the number of posts, the posts most often viewed and commented on, recurring themes in the posts, and the sources (other media) whose posts were most often shared.

The third and last stage was to look for news items that mentioned the theme of street harassment. This exhaustive search was carried out using two keywords: street harassment (as a phenomenon) and OCAC (as an organization). Two traditional Chilean print media outlets were searched (though both have websites, their print versions have a larger readership): *La Tercera* and *La Cuarta*, and two online-only media platforms: *El Dínamo* and *El Mostrador*. For the period 2014–2017, 166 references to these two subjects were examined according to the medium where they appeared and the type of reference (legislative activity or cultural change; headline; summary of content; and type of content, whether a news item, report, letter to the editor, or op-ed) and the type of reference to OCAC (mentioned as a source, organization, or only cited).

When searching for the term "street harassment," we focused on two different sub-themes that made it possible to understand what was being referred to when the media mentioned street harassment. One theme was legislative activity and the other, references to the concept of street harassment as cultural change. The term "legislative activity" here is understood as the legal process; that is, news that refers to the draft law on street harass-

ment, its content, and possible legal sanctions. "Cultural change" refers to transformations in the perceptions of Chilean society and/or public opinion in relation to gender issues and is linked to a process of change in customs and attitudes. In this way, we attempt to estimate the degree to which the content published by OCAC were picked up by the Chilean media.

Results and discussion

Analysis of structured interviews

When volunteers were asked about their main reason for being a part of OCAC, all three noted the importance of being activists and feminists, and of finding a space that represented them and from which they could fight for what they considered to be just (Table 1). They described OCAC as a feminist organization whose central objective is to create awareness and educate the Chilean population about street harassment.

Table 1
What motivated you to become a part of the Observatory Against Street Harassment?

Volunteer	Motivation
Journalist (in charge of content)	"OCAC seemed to me to be a friendly space, transversal, where it doesn't matter how much or how little you know about feminism; we were all welcomed to join this cause. I found out about OCAC's work through social networks when they were gathering signatures in support of the draft law."
Graphic designer	"Arelis Uribe, who went to college with me, wrote to me inviting me to participate. At that time, I was a mother, a worker, and I needed to be an activist in something that I believed in, and OCAC covered all my needs to fight for something."
Press officer	"First, I saw them on the news and later on I looked for the organization on social networks and started to follow it. I had social and also political concerns that I didn't know how to act on. So I started to follow OCAC's work and to learn about feminist issues."

Source: compiled by authors.

The volunteers who have stayed with the organization over the years report that they organize through digital platforms and meet once a month. The rest of the work is through online planning. The journalist in charge of content notes that tasks are assigned by area of responsibility and stresses that the professionalization of the movement is one of its greatest strengths. Each

member is a professional and contributes their specific expertise, including lawyers, journalists, and graphic designers.

> OCAC is divided into different teams according to various areas of work: Legal, Communications, International, Intervention, Studies and Administration. Each team has a coordinator and/or director in addition to volunteers.

Even though social media platforms can be viewed as allies of OCAC, they also present challenges—above all, because this is an organization that seeks to create awareness. Social media attract not only supporters but also trolls. Their identities are often unknown and their only goal is to trash ideas or discussions. This is confirmed by the person in charge of content when she notes that "beyond 'which media to favor', we have had discussions about what type of comments and/or questions we should answer and how."

Organizations that become well known to the public constantly interact with the communications media. Thus, when asked about OCAC's relationship with media of any kind, the interviewees agreed that the two forms of media with which the collective interacts the most are digital media and radio. The graphic designer notes that:

> *El Desconcierto* covered our cause very well. The daily LUN [*Las Últimas Noticias*] also worked on this and there are others that clearly are less amenable. It is not easy to prise the *machista* hand from the pens of Chilean journalism.

This is confirmed by the person in charge of content, who notes that:

> In general, the digital media are the ones who are more interested in publicizing us. Media such as *El Dínamo*, for example, that are interested in and committed to social activism, feminism in this case. Media like *La Tercera*, for example, especially the section "Tendencias," are always interested in covering gender issues.

As mentioned above, OCAC became an advocacy organization for the draft law, which was unprecedented in Chile, and even in Latin America. According to the press officer, they took charge of the issue and were intent on positioning it on the public agenda in Chile:

> The teamwork that we engage in on a daily basis is reflected in that fact that people are starting to talk about this subject as something bad. And we achieved this. The law on Respect on the Streets is ours; we created it. All the dissemination we do day after day, and in a coordinated way, by teams, leads to these issues being discussed.

The journalist, who oversees content, notes:

> Our achievement is of course also having been able to visibilize the issue and create awareness of its importance, to have gone to congress to talk about it, to carry out studies providing clear, real, and concrete data on how harassment often affects our lives over time, starting at infancy.

The graphic designer stresses that:

> We work on a type of *machista* violence that occurs daily and is one of the roots of various problems that develop in the future. Our purpose is to start by educating in order to criminalize street harassment and to achieve a more respectful and much more just society.

When they are asked if they think that a cultural change has taken place in Chilean society that makes it possible to bring attention to an issue such as street harassment, they answered that they think there has indeed been a significant change in Chile since 2011. From the point of view of the person in charge of content, it is important to clarify that "in tandem with social movements from 2011 onwards, there has been greater interest in these types of issues, more open-mindedness and reflection on issues that affect us as a society." The graphic designer stresses this has to do with both the work carried out by social organizations and a change in the mentality of Chileans.

The interviewees' responses about how they define themselves as an organization reveal clear indications of what they hope to construct socially (Table 2). They all define themselves as feminists who are inclusive of multiple genders and see their main function as educating and creating awareness of street harassment among the public.

Table 2
Definition of the Observatory Against Street Harassment

Volunteer	How does the Observatory define itself?
Journalist (in charge of content)	"As a feminist and leftist organization that seeks to combat sexual street harassment in society, which is perhaps one of the most tangible and naturalized expressions of gender violence that affects us daily."
Graphic designer	"A women's organization that works with love, strength, voluntarism, and responsibility to take on street harassment and to say loud and clear that this is not part of our culture, that harassment is violence."
Press officer	"We are a feminist and leftist organization that exists thanks to the drive of volunteers who donate their labor and their talent to make Chile a less violent place for everyone."

Source: compiled by authors.

An association, of whatever type, cannot grow without its members. This is even more true when it develops digitally, since it is the users that give life to any official or fan site. For follower 1, OCAC's campaign is positive and raises awareness:

> I really feel that their work is central. I finally feel that we are being listened to and that we are important. OCAC creates a safe environment for everyone because we feel that we are not alone in this. I think the graphics are very attractive, very professional.

According to follower 2, the campaign "is well done by the organization and totally necessary. I like the graphics very much. I think there is a lot of graphic talent in the organization." In relation to the contribution of OCAC to making street harassment an issue that is recognized by Chilean society, both interviewees emphasize that it has become the most representative organization on issues of violence against women and not only street harassment (Table 3). They add that the very fact that OCAC exists indicates that Chileans have undergone an important cultural change.

Table 3
Contributions of the Observatory Against Street Harassment

Follower	Contribution
Follower 1	"Five years ago, no one talked about this and harassment was called, or miscalled, flirtation. Today Chileans are coming to understand that there are new battles and that these are battles for justice and that they affect everyone. Maybe we are more empathic, I don't know, but we are definitely changing. This is due in great part to the work of OCAC."
Follower 2	"We are going through slow but sure change. We still live in a *machista* country (and world). And people are opening their eyes. OCAC has transformed itself into an organization that talks not only about street harassment but also about all kinds of gender violence. That's how I see it."

Source: compiled by authors.

Analysis of Facebook metrics

OCAC is active on three social media platforms in addition to its website: Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. It joined Twitter towards the end of 2013, with its first post on November 8, 2013:

> We welcome everyone participating in the formation of this community! We will begin our activities very soon and your support and help are essential. Because your catcalling doesn't make me feel better, your respect does. Let's get to work! Questions, suggestions, etc. should be sent using Messenger or sent to ocacchile@gmail.com.

For two months towards the end of 2013, the fan site concentrated on providing educational information. That is, it worked to gain acceptance for the concept of street harassment through explanatory videos or posts aimed at encouraging users to recount their experiences of street harassment. The tables below summarize the organization's activities during 2016 and 2017, a period when OCAC consolidated its presence on social media.

Table 4
**Summary of posts in 2016

Most liked posts	Most commented posts	Subjects of the posts
04/12/2016: "Joy! The Chamber of Deputies approved the draft law #RespetoCallejero and it will go to the Senate. We're making progress!" (5000 likes)	07/19/2016: "We want activities that do not promote aesthetic stereotypes that are forced on women nor those that promote inequality between girls and boys." Link to La Batalla.[1] (156 comments)	1. Denunciation of street harassment 2. Approval of the draft law 3. Different issues related to violence against women

[1] La Batalla: https://www.labatalla.cl/las-criticas-al-spa-para-ninas-organizado-por-la-municipalidad-de-maipu/?fbclid=IwAR3nHhR0_hamz2bjfkcJmGRmIcsGn3AQTou8xzuGKIGvND2ErPoMiEfie7A
Source: compiled by authors.

Table 5
Summary of posts in 2017

Most liked posts	Most commented posts	Subjects of posts
03/24/2017: "Share this message and let's fill Facebook with sisterhood for all the Nabilas[7] of Chile, above all those who were not only victims of sexual violence but also were re-victimized by those who are supposed to protect them and to guarantee they got justice." #AmigaYoTeCreo #NiUnaMenos. (1362 likes)	02/10/2017: "I am sorry, Joane, for not receiving you with dignity. Joane[8] died because she came to a country that still discriminates by skin color, by the money you have, for being a woman. Nothing worked in this case. And these were not accidental events. If someone had stopped to listen, to talk, to understand, Joane would still be alive. Chilean society has a long way to go on migrant rights." (500 commentaries)	1. Nabila Rifo and other cases. 2. Calls for women's unity 3. Importance of the female vote in presidential elections

Source: compiled by authors.

7 Translator's note: Nabila Rifo is a woman who was severely beaten and had her eyes gauged out by her partner on May 14, 2016, in Coyhaique, Chile. Her case was highly publicized in Chile and her attacker was later tried and convicted.

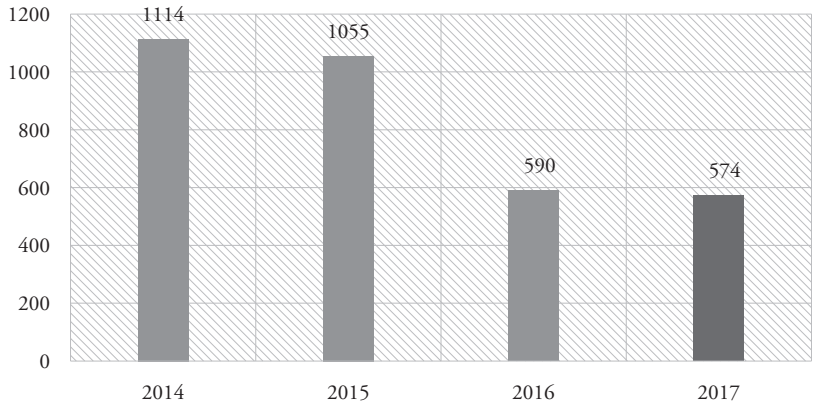
8 Translator's note: Joane Florvil was a Haitian migrant to Chile who did not speak Spanish. She arrived in 2016 and after being arrested and mistreated by Chilean police, died of liver problems on September 30, 2017.

As of October 2017, the organization had posted 574 times on its fan site. While during 2016 they posted about other subjects, in 2017 they concentrated more on publishing their opinion on two emblematic cases: that of Nabila Rifo and of Joane, a Haitian immigrant who died after being arrest and mistreated by the Chilean police. Both these cases took them far from the subject of street harassment, but they were similar in that they concerned mistreatment of women. In addition, during that year they posted photographs of famous people and used the hashtag #RespetoCallejeroEsTareaDeTodos ("StreetRespectIsEverybody'sTask").

The year with the largest number of posts was 2014. This was the year the fan site was set up and thus required greater effort to disseminate its content. OCAC's mission was to inform people about their cause and the best way to do this was through Facebook. During this period, the organization positioned itself and recruited an audience. The number of posts declined in the following years, but the number of comments and likes increased. This could be due to the organization being better known by users by this point and thus having a captive audience (Figure 1).

The decline in posts over the years may have been related to the fact that OCAC had gained a space on social media and was only attempting to maintain its audience. In addition, OCAC members began to use other platforms and found other ways of disseminating information about their organization, such as media interviews and reports or, simply, by presenting their vision/opinions on a variety of subjects. Thus, given its characteristics, Facebook started out as the basic tool for OCAC to publicize its agenda, but this platform is now less and less important for the organization.

Figure 1
Number of posts per year (2014–2017)

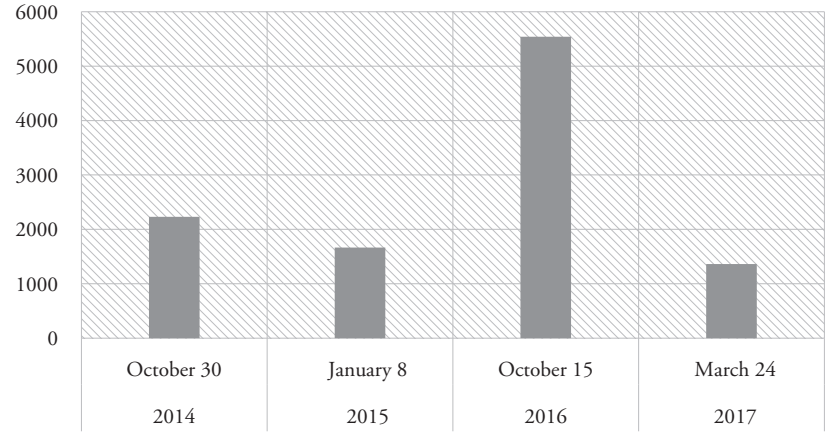


Source: compiled by authors.

Figure 2 illustrates the periods of peak interaction with the organization's posts (likes, comments, replies, and shares). In 2014, for example, the post with the greatest impact was published on October 30 and had 2,231 likes. It was a cartoon accompanied with the following text: "Good morning dear community: An image is worth more than a thousand words" (Figure 3). The cartoon illustrates that while street harassment is not considered a crime, a man singing and playing an instrument in the streets is.

Nevertheless, during the period studied (2014–2017), the most popular post by OCAC was on October 15, 2016. It received 5,542 likes and was an image first published by *El Desconcierto* (Figure 4) illustrating the denunciation of Chilean author Francisca Solar regarding her experience of street harassment.

Figure 2
Interactions with OCAC posts, 2014 -2017



Source: compiled by authors.

Figure 3
OCAC's most popular post in 2014

Translator's note: Free translation of the text: first frame: Sexy baby; second frame: Come here, sweetheart. You'll get the good stuff right here; third frame: You're so pretty, I'm not going to steal your bag, baby.
Source: image taken from the OCAC'S Facebook page.

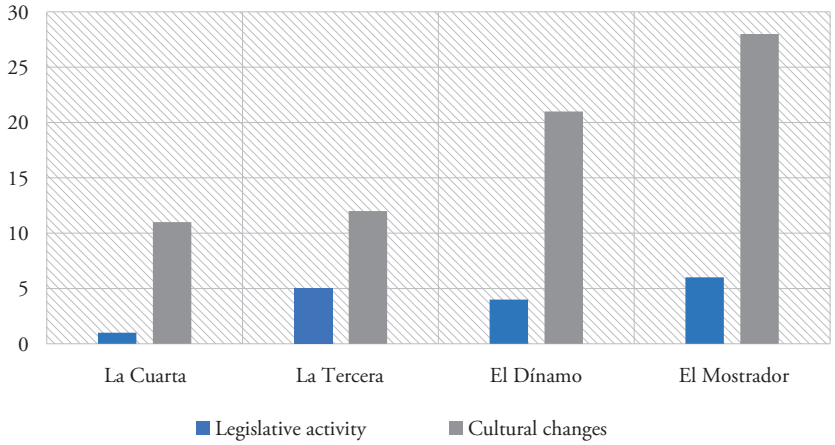
Figure 4
Most successful post, 2016

Translator's note: Free translation of the text: The Chilean author denounces street sexual harassment: "Those who don't believe this happens can go to hell!" *Conchasumadre* is a very strong swear word in Spanish, literally meaning "your mother's vagina."
Source: image taken from the OCAC'S Facebook page.

Comparative analysis of traditional and digital media

First, it should be said that neither the traditional nor the digital media mentioned street harassment until 2014, just as OCAC was starting its digital campaign. For the purposes of this study, we looked at two traditional outlets: *La Tercera* and *La Cuarta*, and two digital outlets: *El Dínamo* and *El Mostrador*. In the period studied, these sources provided relatively little information on legislative matters related to this issue: only a total of 16 news items were found. On the other hand, these outlets showed greater interest in understanding street harassment as cultural change—a total of 73 such references were found (Figure 5).

Figure 5
News about street harassment by subject (November 2014–October 2017)



Source: compiled by authors.

When referring to legal issues related to street harassment, both types of media limited their coverage to announcing that the Chamber of Deputies had approved the draft law. However, there was no follow-up on the law or efforts to create awareness of the urgency of legislating on street harassment. This meant that there was no information on the ongoing status of the legislation. The only exception was an article in *El Mostrador* on March 17, 2017, with the title: "#LeydeRespetoCallejero ['StreetRespectLaw'] has been asleep for two years while an estimated 30 cases of harassment occurred in this period in Metropolitan Santiago alone."

In the traditional media, there were few mentions of the draft "Street Respect" law. *La Cuarta* did not publish anything about it while *La Tercera* only published one article (on March 17, 2015) entitled: "Keys to the draft law intended to penalize street sexual harassment."

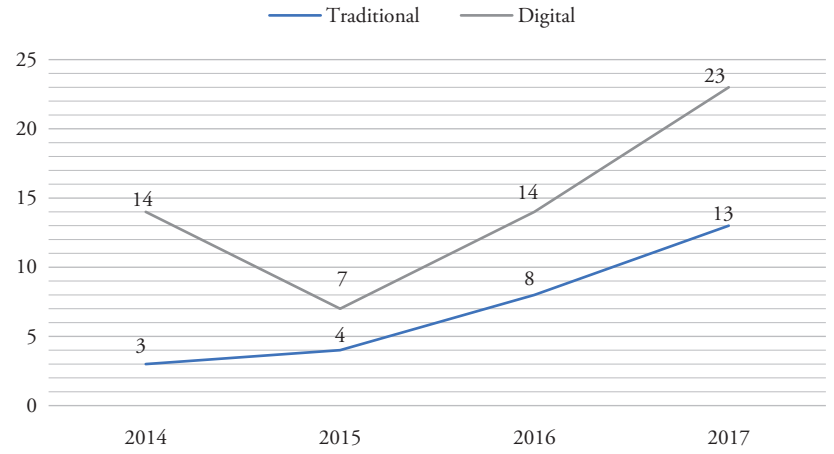
The digital media outlets showed more concern about explaining the draft law to their readers and telling them why it was important. For example, *El Mostrador* published two articles on the subject on different dates but with similar titles: an opinion piece headlined "Why do we need to legislate on street harassment?" was published on December 22, 2014; while a news item entitled "Why do we need a law on street harassment," was published on April 1, 2015.

The digital media published opinion pieces more often than the traditional media. These included opinion columns, letters to the editor, and interviews. The traditional media only had two opinion pieces, while the digital media published 15.

Dividing the information by year of publication, it is possible reach the following conclusions (Figure 6):

The appearance of news about street harassment—in both traditional and digital media—coincides with the foundation of OCAC (2014). Before then, there was no mention of this subject. Afterwards, however, there was an increase in the number of news items published on street harassment in the traditional media. In contrast, the digital media immediately understood that this was a germane subject for their target audience. Nevertheless, the number of news items fell in 2015 though there were a significant number the following year, coinciding with the promulgation of the "Street Respect" law.

Figure 6
News items on street harassment by year



Source: compiled by authors.

When it comes to mentions of OCAC, a comparison by media type analyzed shows that there was a total of 57 mentions of OCAC in the digital media while the traditional media only mentioned the organization 21 times during the period studied (Table 6).

Table 6
Mentions of OCAC by media outlet (2014–2017)

Media	Mentions
La Cuarta	7
La Tercera	14
El Mostrador	30
El Dínamo	27

Source: compiled by authors.

For both the digital and the traditional media, OCAC became the go-to source for issues related to violence against women in general. It was seen as a trustworthy and authoritative source for information on these issues. The data obtained in this study were divided into three categories to analyze the types of mentions that the collective received: OCAC as a source on issues of violence against women (not only street harassment); references to studies carried out by OCAC; and general references to the organization (Table 7).

Table 7
Types of mentions of OCAC (2014 – 2017)

Year	As a news source	References to OCAC's studies	Mentions of OCAC
2014	3	0	2
2015	2	1	3
2016	13	2	13
2017	16	4	25

Source: compiled by authors.

Finally, it should be noted that OCAC shares news stories from the following Chilean and international media: *El Desconcierto*, *OCAC.cl*, *El Mostrador*, *La Tercera*, *La Hora*, YouTube, *24.cl*, *El Ciudadano*, *Cooperativa*, *Belelu.com*, *El Definido*, *El Dínamo*, ADN radio, *Publimetro*, *LUN*, *The Clinic*, *Página 7*, *Glamorama, Bio Bio Chile, La Nación, Educación 2020, MQLTV, El Quinto Poder*, *Chilevisión, UPSO.cl, La Cuarta, Mega, El País, Radio La Clave, Paula, La Red, The Guardian*, and others.

We can therefore conclude that OCAC currently plays a social, oversight, and educational role in Chile. One important finding of this study is that the organization is perceived as an end in itself. On the one hand, the media's level of openness to the social media messages posted by OCAC is surprising. This leads us to conclude that the organization's strategy—above and beyond the public policy results—succeeded in positioning the issue of gender violence in public spaces, in dialogue with other demands that emerged from feminist movements in Chile and abroad. On the other hand, it appears that professionalizing the movement led to high competencies among the participants: each member works on what they know best.

When it comes to the media, there slow, but ongoing change had taken place. This is confirmed in part by the way the media outlets treat these issues and how they transmit the message. On the one hand, legislative activity seems not to have been of great interest for either the traditional or digital media. On the other, news related to street harassment as a phenomenon were of greater interest. While it is true that more attention is

paid to street harassment in the media as the years go by, feelings on this issue are more constant.

There is no doubt that it is the digital media—which don't have publishers and are independent—that focus most on the issue, and that the traditional media still lag behind. In addition, the data in this study indicates that there are few opinion pieces on street harassment in the traditional media; that is, they create few opportunities for people to denounce or debate these issues. The fact that OCAC posts cite websites such as *El Desconcierto*, *El Mostrador*, *El Dínamo*, and *El Definido* reveals the empathy that digital media have for issues related to violence against women. They constitute strategic allies for the dissemination of information. It is possible that without this coalition, OCAC would not have been able to position itself as a reliable source. Finally, through its work, OCAC understood that by informing about gender violence it could assertively establish the new concept of street harassment, which transformed it into the Chilean standard-bearer on violence against women.

Altogether, OCAC's strategy took various forms. First, it appropriated the concept of street harassment. It went on to gain a space in the public consciousness through the dissemination of content and convened participation with the objective of finally making a concrete impact through the promulgation of the "Street Respect" Law. Without a doubt, OCAC is one of the most consequential organizations in Chile and has become a benchmark for feminist cyberactivism.

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