

Activism or Slacktivism? A Content-Framing Analysis of the 2020 #ChallengeAccepted Campaign Against Femi(ni)cides in Turkey

Dr. Giuseppina Scotto di Carlo
Università di Napoli 'L'Orientale, Italy

Abstract

Online activism can be expressed through many forms. While advocates claim that it is a fully-fledged form of activism, opponents state that it is no more than vain ‘slacktivism’. Against this background, this work will analyse the ‘#ChallengeAccepted’ movement, which went ‘viral’ in July 2020 to raise awareness about femi(ni)cides in Turkey, in the aftermath of the murder of the student Pinar Gültekin. Focusing on the use of the hashtag via Twitter, the work embraces the perspective of online activism as a “continuum of participation”, composed of several levels of participation. It combines content and framing analysis to investigate how the hashtag has led to cognitive and civic engagement, but also to slacktivism, when appropriated by users who slightly or radically repurposed it. The overall results show how hashtag activism can work as a means of knowledge dissemination and action, if used properly. Moreover, also slacktivism contributes to activism, thanks to the “oxygen of amplification” effect, making users inform and get informed, criticise and refocus the campaign towards its original purpose when it digressed, and distribute the movement’s message even if some posts had left out the background information about the movement.

Keywords: Online activism; #ChallengeAccepted; Turkey; femi(ni)cide; content analysis; framing analysis; slacktivism