Brazilian Scientific Production on Cyberactivism in the Communication area from 2002 to 2012: a preliminary mapping

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Abstract

This study aims at presenting a preliminary mapping of articles produced in the Communication area in Brazil from 2002 to 2012. The Annals of fifteen research agencies affiliated with Socicom (Brazilian Federation of Scientific and Academic Communication Association) have been analyzed as well as the Brazilian Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations (BDTD) and the Annals of the Brazilian Association of Communication and Politics Researchers (Compolítica). The following key words have been chosen for exclusive use: **Cyberactivism; Activism on the Internet; Netactivism; Hacktivism and Slacktivism.** The article has identified: a) the most used media; b) the most discussed subjects; c) the most used platforms; d) definitions of Cyberactivism. The subject Cyberactivism and related topics are in the process of being developed in Brazil, where there are many activities and objects to be analyzed. This is a preliminary mapping, which is part of a more extensive research on Cyberactivism. The study identified **4082** papers of which **32 articles/works** present the key words chosen in their main parts of the text: title, key words, abstract.

Keywords: Cyberactivism; Activism on the Internet; Netactivism, Hacktivism, Slacktivism.

1. Introduction

This study aims at presenting a preliminary mapping of articles produced in the Communication area on Cyberactivism in Brazil, and published from 2002 to 2012. The Annals of fifteen research agencies affiliated with Socicom (Brazilian Federation of Scientific and Academic Association on Communication) have been analyzed as well as the Brazilian Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations (BDTD) and the Annals of the Brazilian Association of Communication and Politics Researchers (Compolítica) from 2002 to 2012; the following key words were chosen for exclusive use: **Cyberactivism; Activism on the Internet; Netactivism; Hacktivism and Slacktivism**, which should be part of at least one of these parts of the text: title, and/or abstract, and/or key words. Words such as *politics* and/or *Internet* have not been considered because one of the aim of this article is to identify to what extent the term ***Cyberactivism*** has already been consolidated in the Communication area as element/object of research, which requires being present at least at one of the following parts of the text: title, key words, abstract. A total of **4082 works have been identified** of which **32 articles** have been selected for dealing with the subject on the Communication area itself, which corresponds to **0,78%** of the research universe.

The research has been conducted exclusively through the Internet, and has taken into account only data made available by the research agencies mentioned above. After mapping the papers, the article has outlined four aspects as preliminary objects: 1) the most used media; 2) the most discussed subjects; 3) the most used platforms; and 4) definitions of Cyberactivism. A total of 4082 texts/articles have been identified of which **32 articles** are about the main subject of this study, corresponding to 0,78% of the material researched. From the methodological point of view, this study has been inspired by the works of Hoppen, Moreau and Lapointe (1997). This is a descriptive article in accordance with Malhotra (2001).

Research agencies affiliated with Socicom have been chosen due to the fact that it gathers most Brazilian scientific agencies in the Communication area. Regarding the Brazilian Association of Communication and Politics Researchers – Compolítica, it is a Brazilian scientific agency that

maintains a significant presence on institutional academic setting, not to mention that it gathers studies and researches on Communication and Politics, even though it is not affiliated with Socicom[1].

At first, each of the articles selected by a search for key words – **cyberactivitism, activism on the Internet, netactivism, activism, cyberdigital, hacktivism** and **slacktivism** – have been analyzed; also, in order to narrow the research universe, it has been decided that at least one of these words should necessarily appear: a) in the title, b) in the key words and/or c) in the abstract; this criterion has been the fundamental premise to conduct the research which aims at identifying to what extent the term cyberactivism has been considered a research term. Related topics on selected texts have not been taken into account. Articles with the terminology *hacktivism* in the title, abstract, and/or key words have been found. As for the term *Slacktivism*, any article has been found in accordance with the criterion previously established; however, this term has been used in English – *Slacktivism* – throughout the text of just one article.

The articles have been analyzed according to the methodology in content analysis, a technique for studying documents, which can be applied to many discourses as well as different kinds of communication, no matter the nature of support. Godoy (1995) states that, even though content analysis has focused on oral and written communication, it does not exclude other means of communication. Thus, any set of meaningful sentences sent by a sender to a receiver may, at first, be decoded by techniques of content analysis.

A relevant study has been carried out by Sampaio, Bragatto and Nicolás, (2012, p. 3-4), which has shown that a wide production concerning online activism and the use of the terms *politics* and *Internet* already exists in Brazil, especially when an interdisciplinary approach is adopted as premise, which is not the case of the present study once the focus is essentially on the production

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[1] The fifteen research agencies affiliated with Socicom that have been object of research in this study are listed on page 8, Table 1, under their corresponding abbreviations, as well as on page 9, under the full name of the research agencies.

in the Communication area. According to these authors, many studies can be found, among the most significant are: Braga et al (2009) Gomes (2011); Aggio (2010); Albuquerque; Martins (2010); Penteado et al (2009); Sampaio et al (2010); Maia (2011); Moraes et al (2009), to mention just a few. In the same study, there is a list of authors that deal with politics and are considered pioneer researchers on the topic: Coleman (1999); Chadwick, (2011); Gomes, (2011); Marques, (2010); Medaglia, (2012); Sæbø et al, (2008). It is worth mentioning what these researchers state:

> However, even though a wide range of references may be available, initiatives for mapping Brazilian researches aiming at gathering data on academic production are still rare. With the exception of the effort expended by Amaral and Montardo (2011), Araújo (2011), and Bragatto and Nicolás (2011), any other attempt that could ensure a systematic methodology in the field has been identified, that is, main universities, authors, approaches, subjects and objects that have been researched in the field. (Sampaio, Bragatto and Nicolás, 2012, p. 3)

Taking into account the few studies on the topic, the main reason for this study is the need for mapping and knowing the phenomenon of Cyberactivism, which emerges from a process of fast insertion of digital technologies in people´s daily lives, resulting in different uses, consumption habits and subjectivities that are present in many levels of today´s life.

2. Activism and Cyberactivism: characteristics and definitions

In History, it is all part of a process. Social life is constantly being produced and reproduced, unceasingly emerging from the time-space issue. According to Foucault (1967):

> The present epoch will perhaps be above all the epoch of space. We are in the epoch of simultaneity: we are in the epoch of juxtaposition, the epoch of the near and far, of the side-by-side, of the dispersed. I believe that we belong to an epoch when our experience of the world is similar to a network that connects points and intersects with its own skein; more than an experience that gets more relevant as time goes by. One could perhaps say

that certain ideological conflicts animating present-day polemics oppose the pious descendents of time and the determined inhabitants of space. (Foucault, 1967).[2]

From that point of view, social movements are historical processes and organized in many different ways. According to Scherer-Warren (1999):

"Social movements are types of collective and reactive actions to socio-historic contexts they belong to. These reactions may occur in the form of: reports, protests, disclosure of conflicts, organized opposition; cooperation, partnership for solving social problems, solidarity actions; and building of an utopia of transformation, with the development of alternative projects and proposal for a change. However, the same movement may develop three dimensions simultaneously – antagonist, solidaristic, and propositive – according to the civilizatory project which includes opposition to the *status quo* and building of a social identity toward a better society." (Scherer-Warren, 1999, p. 14 and 15).

Another characteristic of social movements is activism, objection to *status quo*, which is a kind of multifaceted actions in search for transformation. Jordan (2002), one of the authors who defines activism as a type of transgression, states that "it is essential to activism because a collective action does not have a political dimension unless it makes any of change among the parts involved" (Jordan, 2002, p. 11-12).

Studies conducted by Theré (2012) show that there is a consensus among specialists in the field that part of the studies on communication have always been connected to social movements. Based on the review of literature, the author states that Communication plays an inextricably role in creating networks, establishing collective identities, mobilization, protest and any other actions that are taken in the core of contemporary social context: Castells (2007, 2009, 2012), Loader (2008), Tilly & Wood (2009).

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[2] Conference by Michel Foucault at Cercle d'Études Architecturales, on March 14, 1967. Text published on Architecture, Movement, Continuité, 5, 1984.

Another consensus among authors is the fact that movements related to information technology and communication, called activist movements, have emerged recently, especially in the 1990s, when the term "activist" became popular in the media, mostly in the United States and Europe (Joy, 2000, Bennett, 2003, Castells 2007, 2009, 2012, Della Porta And Mosca, 2005, Diani, Loader, 2008, Lievrouw, 2011). Nevertheless, there is no consensus on the reason for such popularization. Some authors believe this is due to the need for detachment from the pejorative meaning of words such as "revolutionary" and "extreme", the first used for describing someone who reaches for weapons and seeks for power, and the second referring to an institutional, political actor who does things out of the standards established by society; also the lower semantic load of the word "militant", which describes people who fight for a cause, such as political ideals, but do not take action (ASSIS, 2006, p.13). Some actions are significant to this process, such as the uprising of the Zapatista Army of National Liberation in Mexico in 1994, protests against economic and political powers of the World Trade Organization gathered in Seatle, USA (1999), Genova (2001), and London (2004). All these actions are historically connected to the phenomenon of Cyberactivism.

Cyberactivists' actions take over the cyberspace and present a variety of political motivations, which includes feminism, environment issues, fight against unstoppable consumption, solidarity with climate refugees, persecution due to wars all over the world. From the point of view of traditional political milestones, cyberactivists do not have a defined ideological belief. Sandor Vegh (2003), noted cyberactivism scholar, has devised a classification approach from the use of the Internet. According to Vegh, at present there are three categories: raise awareness to/promote a cause (information sent); organization/mobilization (message received) and action/reaction (reaction to a certain situation). (Vegh, 2003 and Amadeu, 2009).

Vegh (2003) uses the term hacktivism, the combination of activism and hacker (*apud* AMADEUS, 2009). According to the *Cult of the Dead Cow*, a group of hacktivists, hacktivism is "a policy of hacking, phreaking or creating technology to achieve a political or social goal". Alexandra Whitney Samuel, in her doctoral thesis, states that hacktivism is "the nonviolent use of illegal or legally ambiguous digital tools in pursuit of political ends" (Samuel, 2004, p.2).

According to Lemos, the term cyberactivism is closely related to the activism created and organized in the network informative architectures in order to spread ideas, disclose information, promote group discussion and propose mobilization and actions through participative channels (Lemos, 2003). Cyberactivism makes use of social networks and the Internet with the main purpose of overturning the monopoly of media and institutional and organizational power. Overall, it aims at multiplying the power of communication and promoting participation in order to influence through cyberspace spatially scattered people.

De Felice (2009) calls it netactivism, and states that once the space is digitally reproduced, it is reset in the form of an informative habitat, post-architectural and post-geographical, resulting in multiple meanings and interactive practices with the surroundings, which lead us to inhabit different environments and worlds in which we virtually move (De Felice, 2009, p. 22).

According to Moraes (2001), multiple areas of interest emerge from the Net: human and labor rights, minorities and ethnics, education, health, citizenship, consumer defense, environment, ecology, sustainable development, cooperativism, housing, grassroots economy, agrarian reform, Aids, sexuality, children and teenagers, religions, fight against hunger, employment, communication and information, art and culture. Ultimately, multiple voices in the cyberspace reverberate over the Net, which represent groups engaged in common causes and commitments, with methods of action (autonomous movements or networks), strategic horizons (short, medium and long terms) and areas of coverage (international, national, regional, or local). These variables often intertwine bringing together operative ways and activities (Moraes, 2001, p.1)

According to McCafeartty (2012), there is no doubt among scholars that the efforts of "online activists" tend to draw more attention to their causes; however, opinions diverge when it comes to determine if these efforts make significant, lasting impacts. McCafeartty deals with the relation between activism and *slacktivism* and states that this term refers to people who only "enjoy" the message of a certain cause, mas hardly ever make a commitment to it. He says:

The conversation here is essentially positioned as a debate over activism versus slacktivism. The latter term refers to people who are happy to click a "like" button about a cause and may make other nominal, supportive gestures. But they're hardly inspired with the kind of emotional fire that forces a shift in public perception. A telling, supportive anecdote: A popular technique of organizers on all sides of the political spectrum is an online letterwriting campaign in which supporters are encouraged to simply copy and paste from a template form of the letter. Participants aren't asked to come up with their own words. It's not even clear if they read the entire content of the letters they send. Does a simple "copy/paste/send" act constitute activism at its finest? (Mccafertty, 2012. p. 17).

Given these characteristics, McCafertty (2012, p. 18) concludes that people involved with activism or individuals that constantly use the Internet and social networks for activism agree that it is not possible yet to measure how technology has inspired people "to do something", "to fight for a cause".

According to Lemos (2003), cyberactivism is reflected in "citizen networks that create arenas until then handled by the State or organizations, in order to express their own ideas and values, to take action on the concrete space of cities or to unsettle virtual institution through cyberspace attacks (hacktivism)". In fact, cyberactivism is characterized by massive use of cyberspace technologies to support the fight against hegemony. Lemos (2003) presents three large categories of cyberactivism: a) Awareness and information, such as the campaigns promoted by Amnesty International, Greenpeace, or Human Rights Telematic Network; b) Organization and mobilization, across the Internet, to support a specific action (an invitation to real actions in the cities); and c) Initiative known as "hacktivism", network actions involving many types of electronic acts, such as mass sending of e-mails, list of supporters and petitions, defacing and access blocking such as DoS (Denial of Service) (Lemos 2003).

Another point of view is presented by Maia (2011) and Gomes (2007, 2011), who define activism over the Internet from an essentially political perspective, showing that there are content pillars, which can be: *social* or *institutional*. In this context, online social activists would always

try to reach the public sphere by proposing civic engagement, political deliberation and relation to social capital. The social pillar is a type of activism in the cyberspace that aims to educate and raise citizens' political skills. According to Sampaio, Bragatto and Nicolás (2012), the purpose of this type of activism would be the use of the Internet in order to encourage local people to express preferences, strengthen the bound among groups of interest, organize social demands, and mature political and ideological positions (Sampaio, Bragatto And Nicolás 2012, p. 5). According to Gomes (2007), the institutional content pillar would involve:

> a) digital conformation of democratic institutions in the strict sense (digital cities and governments, online parliaments) or in the broad sense (online political parties); b) institutional initiatives deriving from the State towards citizens (online public services and electronic government); c) institutional initiatives deriving from citizens to the State (people have the opportunity to participate or offer input through voting, taking a poll, making decisions or giving suggestions on budget, registering and giving opinion in electronic forums, etc). (Gomes, 2007, p. 11).

The discussion does not end with these authors; however, taking into account that this study aims at identifying the Brazilian production on Cyberactivism in the Communication area, any further theoretical discussion would not be in accordance with the preliminary scope of the descriptive research, which has not considered a review of literature. In Table 1, it can be seen the number of findings in each event researched, listed according to the year of publication of annals / database:

Table 1: *Articles on Cyberactivism from 2002 to 2011 analyzed.* Source**:** authors, annals of Conferences and database of BDTD/IBCT 2002-2012, available on the Internet

Annals of National Conferences / Database	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002	Total
Intercom	2	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	7
Compós	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Abciber	6	1	5	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	17
Bdtd/ibct	0	1	0	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	5
Politicom	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Compolítica	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
FNPJ	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ulepicc	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Alcar	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Abrapcorp	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Abpp	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Forcine	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Abjc	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Abes	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SBPJor	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Folkcom	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Socine	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	**9**	**4**	**5**	**10**	**0**	**1**	**2**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**32**

Table 1 shows that Abciber has the largest number of articles about Cyberactivism; in the *corpus* researched, Abciber is the only agency with a research group named *Politics, Digital Inclusion and **Cyberactivism***. A total of seventeen articles have been found in Abciber: six published in 2012, one in 2011, five in 2010, and five in 2009. This may be explained by the purpose of the agency, which gathers researches on Cyberculture conducted in Brazil. However, due to a poor

website and insufficient search-domain settings, a researcher looking for data on the Internet could only access articles published in Annals and Conferences of the Brazilian Association of Cyberculture Researchers from the year 2008 on. Due to the methodology applied, articles published from 2009 on have been listed. The search has been limited to the core subject: Biopolitics, Surveillance and Cyberactivism (2009, 2010 and 2012) – in 2011 under the name Governmental and Non-Governmental Political Dialogues in the Cyberspace.

When it comes to Intercom, more than four thousand papers have been presented in national conferences as well as about five hundred to one thousand papers in regional conferences (such as Southeast Intercom 2012); in order to narrow the research, only papers presented in national conferences and published by two Research Groups have been selected: Communication and Information Technologies (2002-2007), which in 2008 was renamed Multimedia and divided into the following subgroups: Digital Contents and Cyberculture. The studied period ranged from 2002 to 2012 and seven articles in total have been listed. It is believed that such delimitations in the preliminary phase have helped determine the research universe.

Regarding the Annals of Compós, search has been narrowed to the work of the Research Group Communication and Cyberculture, of which 90 articles produced in 2002 and from 2005 to 2012 have been analyzed; however, any significant work has been found. As for Politicom (Brazilian Association of Political Communication and Political Marketing Researchers and Professionals), only one article out of 127 published between 2011 and 2012 has met the criterion previously established. In the case of Compolítica, the search has been narrowed to the Research Group Internet and Politics, of which 70 articles produced from 2006 to 2009 have been analyzed; two articles produced in 2009 and 2011, respectively, have been selected.

As for the research agencies affiliated with Socicom, all articles available on its website have been analyzed, but none has met the research criterion. Such agencies are: Brazilian Association of Organizational Communication and Public Relations Researchers (Abrapcorp), Brazilian Association of Media History Researchers (Alcar), Brazilian Association of Journalism Researchers

(SBPJor), Brazilian Association of Advertising Researchers (ABP2), Latin Union of Information, Communication and Culture Politics Economy – Chapter Brazil (ULEPICC – Brazil) and National Forum of Journalism Professors (FNPJ). Websites of the other agencies do not make annals of conferences available, which is why they are not part of the research analysis. These agencies are: Brazilian Association of Scientific Journalism (ABJC), Brazilian Association for Semiotic Studies (ABES), Folkcommunication (Folkcom), Brazilian Forum for Cinema and Audiovisual Education (Forcine), and Brazilian Society for Cinema and Audiovisual Studies (Socine).

In the BDTD/IBCT database, ten papers have been found in the period ranged from 2002 to 2012; it is worth mentioning that neither dissertations nor theses have been found from 2007 to 2008. Among the researches available in the BDTC/IBCT database, nine dissertations and one thesis have been found. Five dissertations in the Communication area, of which one on Audiovisual and Media Culture and another on Communication and Semiotics; the other four dissertations belong to the areas of Business Administration, Institutional and Social Psychology, Geography, and Education; the thesis belong to the area of Sociology. Considering that the research focuses on Communication, only five dissertations have been selected. Based on the data collected on the Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations, it can be said that the Academy has been following the development of the subject with different approaches and diverse points of view; however, from 2009 on, the subject has been dealt with in a doctoral thesis in Sociology, not Communication, as the search criterion for this study has shown. In the period ranged from 2002 and 2012 any doctoral thesis in Communication has been found.

Having the data shown in Table 1 as a starting point, this study has focused on analyzing the articles selected and identifying the following aspects: the most used media and the most discussed subjects. Preliminary results have shown six most used media and six most discussed subjects, as shown in Charts 1 and 2 below:

Chart 1. *Cyberactivism: the most used media from 2002 to 2012.* Source**:** authors, from Annals of Conferences and database of BDTD/IBCT 2002-2012, available on the Internet.

Media
1º) *Peer-to-peer* networks
2º) Blogs
3º) Mobile Devices
4º) Alternative Media
5º) Social Networks
6º) Games

Chart 2. *Cyberactivism: the most discussed subjects from 2002 to 201.* Source: authors, from Annals of Conferences and database of BDTD/IBCT 2002-2012, available on the Internet.

Subjects
1º) Environment and Sustainability
2º) Social Minorities: cyberfeminism, racial prejudice, identity, education for people with special needs; indigenous people in Brazil
3º) Ciberactivism; Free Media; Partnership; Resistance; Hacktivism; Game-activism
4º) Digital Narratives, Crossmedia, Hypermedia and Infographics
5º) Politics, Biopolitics, Biopower: elections, corruption, candidates, government, in Brazil. Conflicts, popular manifestations and elections in the Middle East.
6º) Space reorganization of cities

Chart 3 summarizes the main topics related to Cyberactivism that have been found in the literature revised and presented in the articles.

Chart 3. *– Ciberactivism – Definitions Found.* Source: authors, from Annals of Conferences and database of BDTD/IBCT 2002-2012, available on the Internet.

Definitions	Author
Cyberactivism refers to social practices related to Internet use for politically motivated movements aiming at reaching new and traditional goals. It can be divided into three categories: 1) awareness and information; 2) organization and mobilization, across the Internet, to support a specific action (an invitation to real actions in the cities); and c) *Hacktivism*.	Lemos, (2003).
Communication shared through collective interface (peer-to-peer) give a new focus on the past and what really matters before taking action. Predictive statistics of stratigraphic images give way to ordinary projects of collective communication. The issue is no longer to get rid of threat but to build or create what	Antoun, Lemos & Pecini, (2007).

we are concerned about.	
Cyberactivism is about how the Internet can support global movements and local causes by using network informative architectures in order to disclose information, promote group discussion and propose actions through participative channels.	De Felice, (2008).
According to the way the Internet is used, cyberactivism is classified into three categories: raise awareness to/promote a cause (information sent); organization/mobilization (message received) and action/reaction (reaction to a certain situation).	Vegh, (2003), Amadeu, (2009).
Cyberactivism is defined as a sociopolitical activity, in which social agents are Internet users-user-voter and use interactive networks as a strategy to monitor political parties. Also, it can be understood as political, cultural and propagandist militancy over the Internet.	Paiva, (2009); Fonseca (2009).
Netactivism is the combination of *Network* and *Acitivism* and refer to electronic democracy and citizen networks of political participation, which maximize not only connection among communities, their social bound, but also promote autonomy, surveillance and monitoring of those who belong to the movement. The author has redefined the term in order to transcend the analysis on the use of the Internet related to Cyberactivism.	Pereira, (2010).
Cyberactivism is a type of activism that makes use of the Internet and its tools, and offers users an alternative to public opinion control by conventional means of communication, which results in freedom, more impact on people and more social mobilization towards the same goal.	Inocencio, Dantas, (2010).
Cyberactivism is defined as any strategy that focus on public agenda shift, the inclusion of a new theme in the social discussion by spreading a specific message over means of communication and publishing it on personal networks.	Ugarte, (2006).
Cyberactivism is characterized by people from different parts of the world and with different political points of view, who get together to fight for a common cause; its main features are: hybrid and flexible activist networks, multiple goals, no unified political aspirations, political will to confront problems. Lack of formal leadership is common factor for most mobilizations over the cyberspace.	Medeiros, (2011).
Cyberactivism or Netactivism is the use of the Internet as a support for organizing, promoting and financing mobilizations. It also concerns about cyberspace issues, such as birth and development. Among other claims, it gives priority to autonomy on Cyberspace through public and free broadband Internet access scheme as well as copyright laws.	Almeida, (2012).

All the features that describe Cyberactivism and mentioned by the authors above LEMOS, (2003); VEGH, (2003); UGARTE, (2006); ANTOUN, LEMOS & PECINI, (2007); DE FELICE, (2008); PAIVA, (2009); FONSECA (2009); AMADEU, (2009); INOCENCIO, DANTAS, (2010); PEREIRA, (2010); MEDEIROS, (2011); ALMEIDA, (2012) have been frequently found in the articles published from 2002 and 2012 and listed in Table 1, which is the preliminary quantitative report: **32 articles/papers** with the terms **Cyberactivism; Activism on the Internet; Netactivism, Hacktivism** and **Slacktivism** in the title, key words and/or abstracts.

When it comes to contextualizing the phenomenon of digital society and cyberculture, the other authors have become reference on the topic, which is why their works are found in articles, dissertations and theses on Cyberspace. These authors are: Lemos (2001, 2003, 2006, 2007, 2009), Vegh, (2003), Lévy (1995,1999), Castells (2003, 2006) and Recuero (2006), Santaella (2007), Machado (2007).

Other forms of Cyberactivism have been identified along the research: *Hacktivism*, three occurrences; *Slacktivism*, one occurrence in English; and *Cyberpunk*, two occurrences, as described in Chart 4:

Chart 4 – *Other forms of Cyberactivism – Definitions.* Source**:** authors, from Annals of Conferences and database of BDTD/IBCT 2002-2012, available on the Internet.

Definition	Author
Hacktivism – Combination of the words hacker and activism to express legal or illegal action of those who create digital tools and technologies for political, cultural or social ends.	AMADEU, (2009); LEMOS, (2003); VEGH, (2003)
Slacktivism – Combination of the words slack and activism, meaning Lazy Activism; used to describe people who take part in the digital activism, but do not do anything else in real life.	SANTOS, BIZELLI, (2012)

Cyberpunks – People who have great technical knowledge about network and are ideologically and politically engaged in favor of the democratization of the web and free Internet access.	LEMOS, (2001); SCHWINGEL, (2003)

Chart 5 shows the main social networks that serve as platforms for Cyberactivism and the main authors found in the articles analyzed that define such platforms:

Chart 5 – *Main Platforms.* Source**:** authors, from Annals of Conferences and database of BDTD/IBCT 2002-2012, available on the Internet.

Platforms	
Weblogs – They are tools for publishing webpages; its characteristics include small sets of texts organized chronologically. Weblogs are ways to communicate and represent oneself, sharing information and creating areas of interaction. They are tools for spreading ideas through communication, which allows development.	Recuero, (2006)
Facebook – Social network created by Mark Zuckerberg, Dustin Moskovitz, Eduardo Savarin and Chris Hughes in 2004 for students of Harvard University, USA. It was only in 2006 that the social network was made available for the world and at present (2012) it has more than 1 billion users.	Recuero, (2009)
Orkut – It consists of profiles and communities. Profiles are created by people who register and select their friends; communities are created by individuals and may gather groups, and can be used as a forum with topics (new subject folder) and messages (inside the subject folder)	Primo, (2003)
Twitter – It is a tool for sending short messages; it was released in October, 2006 and has grown really fast worldwide, including Brazil; users are invited to answer the question "What are you doing?" in no more than 140 characters. A Twitter user can build a page, choose people to "follow" and "be followed" by others. The tool is called "microblog", but also "micromessenger", which is different from a blog.	Casaes, Garcia, (2009); Zago, (2008); Ramaldes, (2009).
Fotolog – It is a tool for publishing fotos on the Web; it was created in 2002 by Scott Heiferman and Adam Seifer.	Recuero, (2006)
Smart Mobs or Smart Crowds – They are groups of people with the ability to do things orderly by using wireless mobile devices connected to the Internet or other collaborative networks. The members are self-organized people and work cooperatively, especially by sending messages (SMS) in mass. Besides cell phones, other mobile devices are used to organize the collective action, such as PC pockets and notebooks with Wi-Fi technology.	Rheingol, (2002)

From the point of view of the research methodology, it was found that most papers have a qualitative approach, mainly essays and theoretical papers based on the review of literature. As for the types of research, the most common have been taken into account: exploratory, experimental, and descriptive, with some case studies.

3. Final Considerations

This paper aimed at presenting a preliminary mapping of articles on Cyberactivism produced in Brazil from 2002 to 2012, and published in the Annals of fifteen research agencies affiliated with Socicom (Brazilian Federation of Scientific and Academic Communication Association) as well as the Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations (BDTD) and the Annals of the Brazilian Association of Communication and Politics Researchers (Compolítica). The goal has been successfully reached, resulting in a total of **32 papers found** in the database researched, of which can be concluded that:

- papers focusing on theoretical description are more frequent than empirical ones;

- scientific foundation aims at describing objects, but also defining the phenomenon of *Cyberactivism*, which is understandable given the fact that it is an emerging issue that gets wider and more complex each day, with a long path to be discovered;

- Cyberactivism and its related topics are undergoing a process of construction, which can be observed by the multiple activities and objects to be analyzed and many others that constantly appear.

- the number of papers on Cyberactivism produced in Brazil in the Communication area may be considered small; 4082 articles/papers have been identified and only 32 show the terms at least once in the main parts of the text: title, key words and abstract. Such number represents 0,78% of the research universe in a period of ten years (2002-2012).

- Cyberactivism is a term rarely used as a theoretical concept in the Brazilian scientific production in the Communication area; other terms appear more frequently: online activism, network activism, activism on the cyberspace and even politics

on the Internet; however, these terms have not been selected as key words for the present research.

At last, taking into account the methodology previously established for conducting this study, it is considered that this brief overview is just a bird´s-eye view on the Brazilian scientific production on *Cyberactivism* over the past ten years. Based on the results, it can be concluded that there is a vast area of research and new investigations as well as a scenario of possibilities for new theoretical studies aiming at conceptualizing multiple activities and objects that might be part of the phenomenon of *Cyberactivism*. Finally, it is expected that this study may encourage those who are interested in the subject, open up new horizons and take on the challenge of future researches.

In face of this unprecedented scenario that is unfolded every day, thinking about the changes involving the digitalization process of life means focus on the phenomenon and analyze both quantitative and qualitative data, which may reveal new patterns regarding social interaction and consumption, political and social disputes, areas where reality inexorably imposes itself.

4. References

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