Network-Actor Critical Media Literacy and Political Activism in the Era of the Fiscal Oversight Board in Puerto Rico[1]

Actores-red, lectura crítica de medios y activismo político en la era de la Junta de Supervisión Fiscal en Puerto Rico[2]

Atores-rede, leitura crítica da mídia e ativismo político na era do Conselho de Supervisão Fiscal em Porto Rico

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Abstract: The great proliferation of social networks on digital platforms within the media ecosystem has led some authors to believe that these have become significant spaces for political mobilization among young people (Bennett, 2008; Kaun et al., 2016; Rubio, 2010; Sorj & Fausto 2016). However, others question the effectiveness of these mobilizations as acts of political agency (Torres Nabel, 2011). Meanwhile, many educators argue that mastering critical media literacy skills is necessary for truly effective social and political activism (Ashley et al., 2017; Mihailidis, 2009). This article discusses the results of a survey conducted in Puerto Rico between October and December 2018 on the relationship between critical media literacy skills and other characteristics of a group of 155 university students (aged 21 to 30) who use digital networks, conceptualized as network-actors according to Bruno Latour's (2005) framework, and their levels of political activism during the initial period of the implementation of a Fiscal Oversight Board by the U.S. Congress on the island. The data were subjected to a binary logistic regression test. The findings suggest that although a significant positive relationship was found between media literacy and a type of political activism known as slacktivism (Morosov, 2009), the statistical

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probability of predicting whether another student with the same skill set will also exhibit the same type of activism is only moderate.

Keywords:

Media literacy, critical media literacy, digital social networks, network-actor, citizenship, political activism, slacktivism, Puerto Rico, Fiscal Oversight Board

Resumen: La gran proliferación de redes sociales en las plataformas digitales del ecosistema mediático ha llevado a algunos autores a pensar que aquellas se han vuelto espacios forjadores de importantes movilizaciones políticas entre los jóvenes (Bennett, 2008; Kaun et al., 2016; Rubio, 2010; Sorj & Fausto, 2016). Sin embargo, otros cuestionan la efectividad que dichas movilizaciones puedan tener como actos de agencia política (Torres Nabel, 2011). Mientras tanto muchos educadores argumentan que hace falta el dominio de las destrezas de lectura crítica de medios para un activismo social y político verdaderamente efectivo (Ashley et al., 2017; Mihailidis, 2009). En este artículo se discuten los resultados de una encuesta realizada en Puerto Rico entre octubre y diciembre de 2018 sobre la relación entre el dominio de las destrezas de lectura crítica de medios y otras características de un grupo de 155 estudiantes universitarios (de 21 a 30 años de edad), usuarios de redes digitales conceptualizados como actores-red según el esquema de Bruno Latour (2005), y sus niveles de activismo político durante el periodo inicial de implantación en la isla de una Junta de Supervisión Fiscal por parte del Congreso de los Estados Unidos. Los datos se sometieron a una prueba de regresión logística binaria. Los hallazgos sugieren que, aunque se constató una relación positiva significativa entre el dominio de la lectura crítica y un tipo de activismo político conocido como *slackactivismo* (Morosov, 2009), la probabilidad estadística de predecir si otro estudiante que muestre el mismo dominio de destrezas tenderá también a exhibir el mismo tipo de activismo, es solo moderada.

Palabras-clave:

Media literacy, lectura crítica de medios, redes sociales digitales, actor-red, ciudadanía, activismo político, *slacktivismo*, Puerto Rico, Junta de Supervisión Fiscal

Resumo: A grande proliferação das redes sociais nas plataformas digitais do ecossistema mediático levou alguns autores a pensar que essas se tornaram espaços formadores de importantes mobilizações políticas entre os jovens (Bennett, 2008; Kaun et al., 2016; Rubio, 2010; Sorj & Fausto, 2016). No entanto, outros questionam a efetividade que tais mobilizações podem ter como atos de agência política (Torres Nabel, 2011). Enquanto isso, muitos educadores argumentam que é necessário o domínio das habilidades de leitura crítica dos meios para um ativismo social e político verdadeiramente eficaz (Ashley et al., 2017; Mihailidis, 2009). Este artigo discute os resultados de uma pesquisa realizada em Porto Rico entre outubro e dezembro de 2018 sobre a relação entre o domínio das habilidades de leitura crítica dos meios e outras características de um grupo de 155 estudantes universitários (de 21 a 30 anos), usuários de redes digitais, conceitualizados como atores-rede segundo o esquema de Bruno Latour (2005), e seus níveis de ativismo político durante o período inicial de implantação na ilha de uma Junta de Supervisão Fiscal pelo Congresso dos Estados Unidos. Os dados foram submetidos a um teste de regressão logística binária. As descobertas sugerem que, embora tenha sido constatada uma relação positiva significativa entre o domínio da leitura crítica e um tipo de ativismo político conhecido como slacktivismo (Morosov, 2009), a probabilidade estatística de prever se outro estudante que mostre o mesmo domínio de habilidades tenderá também a exibir o mesmo tipo de ativismo é apenas moderada.

Palavras-chaves:
Media literacy, leitura crítica dos meios, redes sociais digitais, ator-rede, cidadania, ativismo político, slacktivismo, Porto Rico, Junta de Supervisão Fiscal

1. Introducción

The multiplication of social networks on digital platforms and the constant interaction between people and between people and information technologies in the media ecosystem of Puerto Rico (Ingerman, 2022) project the same force and visibility of networked social relations described in other more developed contemporary societies (Canavilhas, 2011). This occurs despite the relative lag in some essential aspects of the ecosystem due to the economic-political context and the impact of recent natural phenomena (Vick Saurí, 2023). In this context, it is

assumed that Puerto Ricans have adopted the new subjectivity of network-actors inherent to modern media ecosystems described by Bruno Latour (2005).

The exuberance of digital networks and the complexity of networked social relations in the global media ecosystem have led some authors to believe that these have also become significant spaces for political mobilization among young people (Bennett, 2008; Kaun et al., 2016; Rubio, 2010; Sorj & Fausto, 2016). However, not everyone agrees on the impact of these mobilizations as acts of political agency (Torres Nabel, 2011). Increasingly, educators argue that being active in media interactions is not enough to influence public life matters effectively and that mastering critical media literacy skills is necessary for effective activism (Ashley et al., 2017; Mihailidis, 2009).

In the summer of 2016, a historical event related to Puerto Rico had significant repercussions in the media ecosystem, allowing exploration of how media users on the island as network-actors interacted with information technologies and responded to the event and how this behavior relates to a series of personal characteristics, including their mastery of critical media literacy skills.

Below, the theoretical concepts of research addressing these issues are discussed. Methodological aspects and the results obtained in the study are also presented. The authors had already addressed the theoretical conceptualization in the first issue of the journal *Intersecciones* (Estrada Fernández & Maymí Hernández, 2018). It addresses the relationship between the mastery of critical media literacy skills and other characteristics of a group of university students who use digital networks and their levels of political activism in response to the historical event reported by the media in June 2016.

2. The Reported Historical Event: A Fiscal Oversight Board

On June 30, 2016, the media in Puerto Rico reported that U.S. President Barack Obama had signed Law 114-187 from 2016, better known as PROMESA, which Congress had passed to supervise and manage the island's finances and debt repayment for a minimum of five years. This event, as we will see, imposes conditions on the people of Puerto Rico that affect their sovereignty and is potentially considered to generate some political activism.

In the same month of June 2016, before the Law's approval, the newspaper El Nuevo Día published the results of a survey sponsored by them on the opinion of a sample of voters about

the creation of a fiscal oversight board proposed by PROMESA (ElNuevoDia.com, 2016). According to the news, 54% of the 500 participants opposed the Board, and 53% believed it would not be beneficial. Meanwhile, 84% knew little or nothing about it. In August, the newspaper published the results of a new survey among registered voters (López Alicea, 2016). Although these latest results showed an increase in favorable sentiment towards the Board (62%) and a decrease in the percentage of those who knew little or nothing about it (75%), that percentage of ignorance remained high.

With the approval of PROMESA on June 30, 2016, the United States established a Fiscal Oversight and Management Board as an entity within the government of Puerto Rico that, without being a department, agency, establishment, or instrumentality of the federal government, consists of seven members recommended by the congressional leadership and selected and appointed by the president. The Law requires the government of Puerto Rico to have a funding source for all Board expenses, which can use its powers to ensure such funding. Neither the governor nor the legislature of Puerto Rico can exercise any control, supervision, or review over the Board or its activities, nor can they enact, implement, or enforce statutes, resolutions, policies, or regulations that impair the purposes of this Law (Colón Colón y Emmanuelli Jiménez, 2016).

3. Media Ecosystem and Network-Actors

The contemporary media ecosystem is a metaphorical space where all old and modern information and communication technologies converge and combine with humans in constant interaction dynamics (Canavilhas, 2011). It is said that a new subjectivity called the network-actor has emerged from the Internet and its complex network structures that constitute this ecosystem (Latour, 2005).

The network-actor is a new communicative phenomenon conceived by Bruno Latour (2005) after the Internet's creation when the network structuring phenomenon gained strength and visibility, and the media ceased to be developed as instruments of dissemination and massification (Pérez Tornero, 2015). In this conception, according to José Manuel Pérez Tornero, network communication, the generation of structures and holistic sets, the inseparability of human and non-human action, the growing role of technological artifacts and derived infrastructures, programming languages, norms, codes, social rules, and even the social semiotics

of discourses come into play. In that author's words, it is the new social agent, a hybrid of relationships and substances between humans, machines, languages, semiotics, and programs. Hence, the network-actor is not a concrete and individual element but the set of relationships among all elements within a context that generates a network-like structure.

The entities that make up the network are not the determined entities known as subjects (e.g., social network users) and objects (e.g., cell phones and applications) but a position between them that translates and becomes another that could approach either the subject (quasi-subject) or the object (quasi-object) depending on the moment it is described (Correa Moreira, 2012). This resulting heterogeneous network, the network-actor, is an indeterminate entity.

Latour (2001) explains the notion of translating positions between subjects and objects that transform into a new indeterminate position in Pandora's Hope. His concept of translation refers to a kind of "displacement, drift, invention, or mediation: the creation of a link that did not exist before and that to some extent modifies both initial entities" (p. 214). The notion of translation here is the set of procedures that explain the coupling of heterogeneous entities and the constitution of what Latour calls the network-actor.

Latour (2001) clarifies that he abandons the traditional notions of agent, subject, and object and adopts that of actants, an idea he takes from the semiotics and linguistics of the Russian-French Algirdas Julien Greimas. Actants are indeterminate beings of a hybrid composition, equivalent discursive objects that can designate a person, an animal, or a machine. They can produce an action and quickly move from one status to another, marking their indeterminacy. Any entity results from empirical relationships among actants that act and relate in collectives of human and non-human actants.

The significant contribution of Latour's actor-network theory is precisely its construction of a necessary conceptual model in contemporary network communication theory (Pérez Tornero, 2015) to help understand the dynamics of these complex structures. This model makes sense of our intuitions regarding the dynamics of the communication processes of the students we have conversed with. Pérez Tornero confirms our suspicion of the need for a model to describe and explain how contemporary media organize social action and human relationships in which we all participate. The model allows a conceptualization of our students not as subjects constructed and determined by technologies nor as isolated individuals acting independently of

the technological context but as actors interacting with technologies within a media and mediating ecosystem.

4. The Notion of Agency in Latour

One of the most controversial proposals of actor-network theory has been revising the concept of agency to refer to the capacity for action of "non-humans" such as artifacts, machines, files, and buildings (Vaccari, 2008). For Andrés Vaccari, the theory proposes a relativist ontology in which natural, human, non-human, technological, and material-semiotic entities do not have substantial or essential properties beyond their role in networks. No preexisting order is assumed beyond the continuous functioning of the dynamic assembly that constantly reformulates relationships among the "enrolled" entities. The assembly also has no defined boundaries but a precarious individuality.

We start from this notion of agency to analyze the activism actions of our students. The political agency acts of our students do not result from an essence in them as subjects that makes them activate or act but from the dynamics of their network relationships. Therefore, their political actions were operationalized as political activism inside and outside the media ecosystem in favor or against implementing the Fiscal Oversight Board in Puerto Rico.

5. Social Networks and Political Activism

The significant expansion of social networks on digital platforms within the media ecosystem has led, as we have said, some authors to believe that these have become important spaces for political mobilization among young people (Bennett, 2008; Kaun et al., 2016; Rubio, 2010; Sorj & Fausto, 2016).

For example, Bennett (2008) asserts that the significant advance of media platforms and software programs has triggered unprecedented production and distribution of ideas, public deliberations, and networked organizations. Although he acknowledges that effective civic participation is a great challenge and that is the focus of his article, he also recognizes that the media ecosystem is a space for youth activism, many of whom, according to him, have shown interest in contributing to society. Kaun et al. (2016), editors of the 4th volume of Media and Communication dedicated to the topic of political agency in the digital age, for their part, highlight the need to reconceptualize social networks and other digital media as part of the

social, economic, and technological ecology that enables the expression of political agency in certain forms. However, they also acknowledge that, as a problem, personalized politics occurs on networks, an expression of individualistic politics that leads to neoliberalism. They conclude that the publications in the volume they edited demonstrate that political agency has flourished in the digital age, even if it is to reject the same digital media. Rubio (2010), on the other hand, concludes in his article on youth networking and social change that youth have not only manifested as a hegemonic group that identifies and constructs its reality through the Internet but also taking the direction and initiative of social change. Similarly, Sorj & Fausto (2016), in their book on the transformations of political activism, the use of new communication media, and the state of democracy in Latin America, assert that new technologies are a tool for mobilization and opinion gathering with democratic potential and can be essential tools for democratizing and strengthening political parties.

Citizen civic and political activism is defined as performing socio-political activities through free, voluntary, conscious, and autonomous conduct to achieve specific goals in the immediate community or society (Jvoschev, 2010). Researchers such as Vincenzo Memoli and Francesca Vassallo (2016) observe that political activism has evolved and transformed the nexus between citizens and the political system while highlighting patterns of citizen action. According to them, activism has followed three types of behavior: participation through voting, protest, and digital activism. Hence, they see the need to redefine the concept of citizen participation since they observe a continuous expansion of modes of action, commitment, and participation that persist as crucial components of the definition of political activism.

The various forms of activism have been classified through several notions. For example, Morosov (2009) uses the term slacktivism to show support for a cause on social networks. Still, it usually has no real impact beyond being beneficial for the ego of the person participating. The act requires minimal effort, little commitment, and lower risk. Bakardjieva (2009) proposes the term subactivism to describe the type of political activism that develops at the level of subjective experience, immersed in the flow of everyday life, consisting of small-scale, often individual decisions and actions that have a political or ethical (or both) frame of reference and are difficult to capture using traditional tools for measuring political participation. Beck (1997), for his part, discusses the term subpolitics, which refers to political activism that occurs beyond state institutions to anticipate catastrophes announced by risk generation. It is intended to create a

decoupling between government and politics where non-governmental organizations, business groups, and members of civil society participate in generating direct political proposals for the common good. Global subpolitics enables the formation of communities beyond national borders without necessarily presenting a depoliticization that eventually leads to anarchy. This allows the transformation of society from below, articulating it in favor of common goals both inside and outside states. Finally, Mouffe (2005) talks about activism as politics regarding a set of practices and institutions that create a specific order to organize coexistence within the dimension of antagonisms inherent to human societies. These practices attempt to establish order in a context of contingency and are linked to acts of hegemonic institutions. They are sedimented and conceal the original acts of their contingent political institution; they are taken for granted as if they were self-funded. They express a particular structure of an order of power relations. This hegemonic order is susceptible to being challenged by forms of political activism.

For this research, we collected the concepts of slacktivism, subactivism, subpolitics, and politics discussed above to construct the typification scheme that would allow us to classify the type of activism of the participating students.

6. Limited Effectiveness of Mobilizations

The impact of the Internet on political participation has also been a highly debated topic among experts. One angle of the debate criticizes online activities typified as slacktivism for considering them a type of activism too loose to achieve much beyond increasing the sense of gratification of digital network users (Verhulst, 2013).

Luis César Torres Nabel (2011) explores this issue in his doctoral thesis on the political impact of blogs, social networks, and internet devices in Mexico. He finds that the citizen-turned-digital network user experiences a robust uprooting because their adhesion to chains of claim, protest, or political proposal through the simplicity of a retweet, an add, a "like," or a simple click is disaggregated and alienated from its consequences. Almost all public acts disseminated in viral processes that can be very contagious are equally ephemeral. He also discovered in his research in the Mexican context that political issues that accelerate and grow on social network applications also simplify, and the criticism and debate that occurs do not necessarily enrich the deliberative process of democracy. As Torres Nabel (2011) says, in the end, it seems that social networks on the Internet only provoke a series of echoes and

reverberations since the original opinions often become absurd deformations, leaving a fragmented and irregular opinion in the end.

Henrik Serup Christensen (2011), for his part, examined whether this accusation is valid. He focused on the context of established democracies because he believes that the discussion about the Internet cannot be limited to specific geographical regions and because that is where most existing data has been collected. He studied two aspects of internet campaigns: whether they affect real-life political decisions and whether internet activism replaces traditional forms of participation outside digital networks, concluding that although it is impossible to determine whether the impact of campaigns on real life is a consistent phenomenon, there is no evidence that this type of activism, slacktivism, has replaced traditional forms of activism, and adds that if anything can be said, the Internet has positively impacted real-life mobilizations.

7. Critical Media Literacy and Activism

Critical media literacy is the knowledge and skills that subjects possess to receive, analyze, and evaluate media messages and to produce messages that can be disseminated by the media (Aufderheide, 1993).

Increasingly, educators argue that a good mastery of critical media literacy skills is fundamental for effective activism and that it is not enough to be active in media interactions to achieve an effective influence on public life matters (Mihailidis 2009; Mihailidis & Thevenin 2013). In several publications, Paul Mihailidis insists on considering the movement for critical media literacy as a guarantor of responsible participation and civil rights protection. He asserts that such a movement can help empower young people to take advantage of the opportunities provided by new technologies to increase their participation and inclusion in civic life.

Zafar Abbas and Allah Nawaz (2014) confirmed through research with university students in the context of Pakistan the hypothesis that mastery of digital technologies predicts their political participation in terms of mobilization and participation in elections. They found that digital literacy, the knowledge and effective management of digital communication artifacts, had a statistically significant relationship with political involvement, activism, and voting behavior in elections.

8. Research Questions

The research sought to answer whether there was a relationship between students' mastery of critical media literacy skills and their type of political activism, the predominant type of activism among them, and the probability that students would exhibit a specific type of activism as a function of their skill mastery.

9. Methodology

The research was conducted between October and December 2018. The unit of analysis was a group of adult students aged 21 to 30, considered network-actors, from a university in the metropolitan area of San Juan. The data were collected through a questionnaire approved by an IRB on May 3, 2018. A binary logistic regression test was used to analyze the data because the interest was to understand the influence of a series of predictor variables (gender, income, political ideology, reported and measured knowledge, news exposure, and mastery of critical media literacy skills) on a response variable (political activism), all operationalized as qualitative dichotomous variables.

The variable of critical media literacy skills mastery was operationalized considering the principles of Len Masterman (1985; 1989) and the skills derived from these principles. Political activism was operationalized using our typification scheme based on the concepts of slacktivism (Morosov, 2009), subactivism (Bakardjieva, 2009), subpolitics (Beck 1997), and politics (Mouffe 2005).

The variable "mastery of critical media literacy skills" was operationalized by considering the principles of Masterman (1985; 1989) and the skills derived from these principles. An index of high or low mastery of critical literacy was created. It captured the student's demonstrated knowledge of the principles and the essential activities they performed when exposed to media messages. We operationalized political activism through three questions included in the questionnaire, based on our typification scheme related to the concepts of slacktivism (Morosov, 2009), subactivism (Bakardjieva, 2009), subpolitics (Beck, 1997), and political activism (Mouffe, 2005). The responses to the questions were coded in a way that could be translated to high or low activism in an activism index. The index reflected high activism when the students stated they were politically active, identified a cause they were active in,

selected at least one reason for its protection, struggle, or defense, and identified activities they carried out. It reflected low activism when they answered no to all or two of the questions.

10. Results and Discussion

Figure 1 shows the data related to the relationship between students' mastery of critical media literacy skills and political activism.
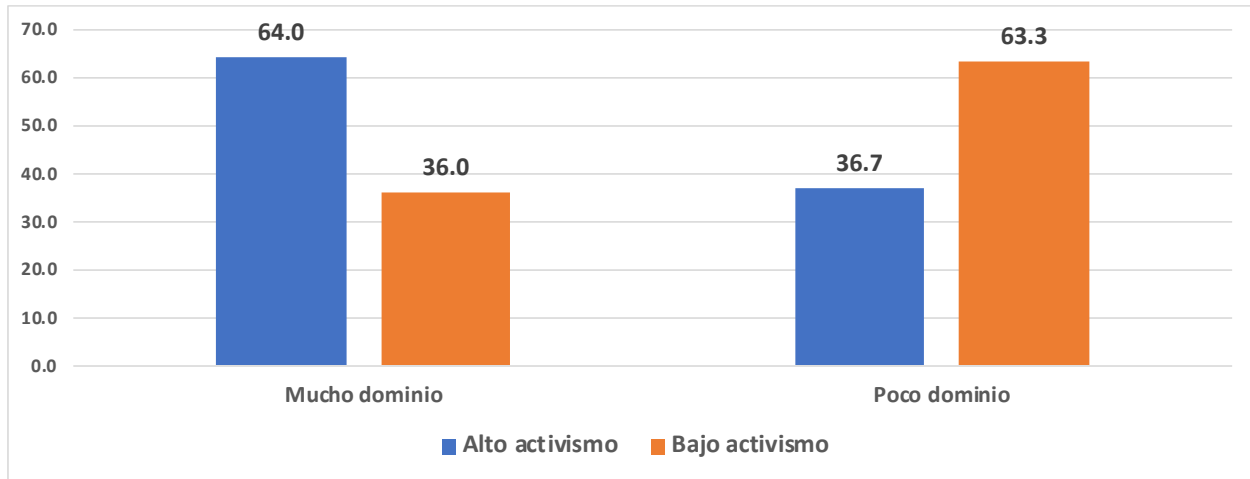

Figure 1. Percentage of Civic Activism by Mastery of Critical Media Literacy Skills. (Source: Own elaboration)

Among the students with high mastery of critical media literacy skills, the majority (64%) demonstrated a high level of activism. Conversely, in the case of those with low skill mastery, the majority (63.3%) reflected a low level of activism, showing a relationship between skill mastery and activism.

A Chi-square test confirmed that the relationship is statistically significant $\chi^2(1 N=155) = 9877 p = .002$. This can be seen in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Chi-square Test of the Relationship between Critical Skills Mastery and Activism. (Source: Own elaboration)

Table 1 presents the data related to the question about students' predominant type of activism.

Causas:	Slacktivista	Subactivista	Subpolítica	Política
1. Protección ambiental	20	24	10	13
2. Protección animales	26	19	6	4
3. Protección niños maltratados	31	9	4	1
4. Protección mujeres maltratadas	38	8	8	3
5. Protección consumidores	32	6	2	1
6. Lucha contra enfermedades	28	8	7	1
7. Lucha contra JSF	27	8	3	3
8. Lucha por un buen gobierno	32	9	0	3
9. Lucha por auditoría deuda pública	33	7	1	1
10. Lucha por acceso a salud	32	8	4	2
11. Defensa derechos civiles/hum	31	12	5	1
12. Defensa derechos laborales	30	9	4	1
13. Defensa de educación pública	28	9	5	2
14. Defensa de derechos inmigrantes	33	6	1	3
15. Defensa de una ideología política	30	4	1	0

Table 1. Frequency of Students by Type of Activism. (Source: Own elaboration)

The table shows that among the surveyed students, the slacktivist type of activism discussed by Morosov (2009) obtained the highest frequencies in almost all causes except environmental protection. In that case, subactivism was more frequent, as Beck (1997) described. It is worth noting that in the case of the fight against the Fiscal Oversight Board, student activism was mainly of the slacktivist type. The imposition of a board by the U.S. Congress is a historical event that, due to its colonial nature of control over Puerto Rico's economy and finances, is strictly political. Therefore, we thought it would provoke greater political activism as conceptualized by Mouffe (2005). However, the cause of environmental protection obtained the highest frequency of this type of activism.

The probability that students would exhibit a specific type of activism as a function of their mastery of critical media literacy skills was examined using a binary logistic regression test. Figure 3 shows the results.
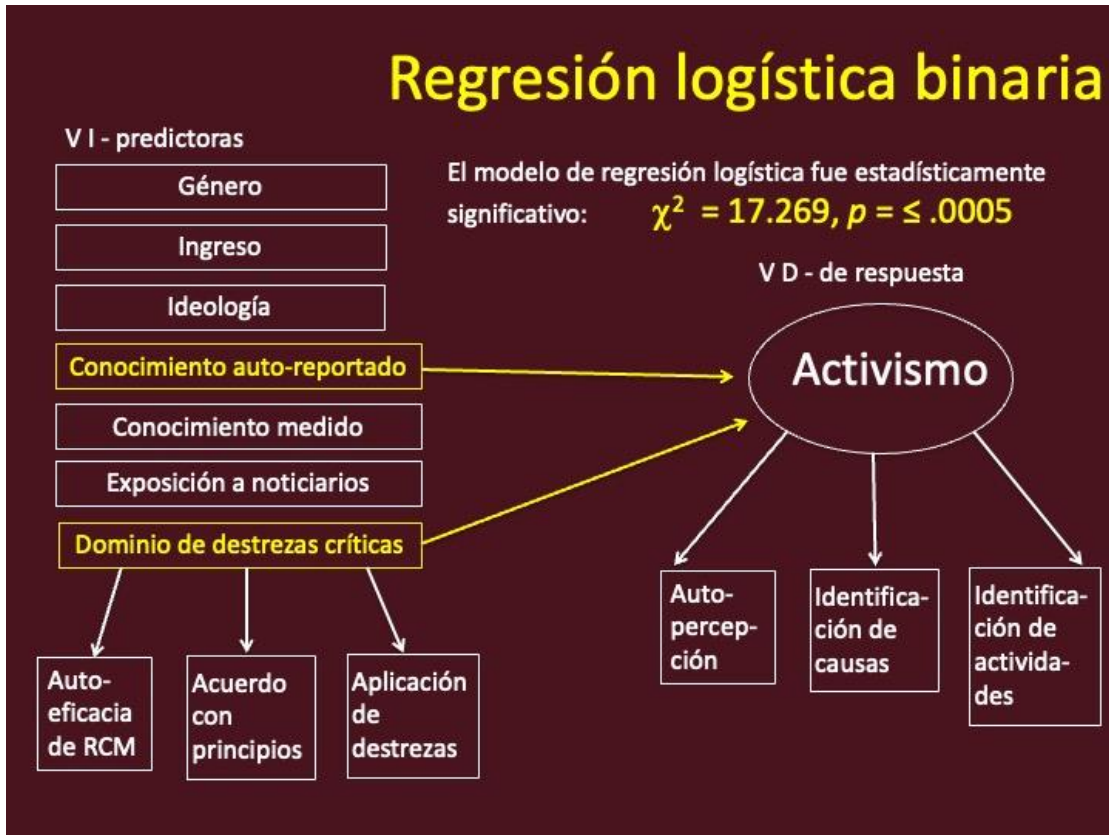
Figure 3. Binary Logistic Regression Test of the Influence of Seven Predictor Variables on the Response Variable Activism. (Source: Own elaboration)

The logistic regression analysis was conducted to predict whether students who master critical media literacy skills would also tend to exhibit some activism. The following predictor variables were used: gender, income, ideology, knowledge (self-reported and measured), news exposure, and critical skills mastery. Table 2 shows the results of a complete model test against a constant-only model, which was statistically significant only for the variables of critical skills mastery and self-reported knowledge.

Variables en la ecuación									
			Error estándar	Wald	gl	p	Exp(B)	95% IC.para EXP(B)	
		B						Inferior	Superior
Paso 1ª	Ingreso familiar	.049	.366	.018	1	.894	1.050	.512	2.151
	Conocimiento auto-reportado	-1.122	.521	4.635	1	.031	.326	.117	.904
	Conocimiento medido	.497	.437	1.292	1	.256	1.643	.698	3.868
	Exposición a noticieros	-,506	.381	1.764	1	.184	.603	.286	1.272
	Dominio lectura crítica	-.818	.405	4.082	1	.043	.441	.200	.976
	Constante	1.166	.468	6.205	1	.013	3.210		
a. Variables introducidas en el paso 1: ingreso familiar, conocimiento auto-reportado, conocimiento medido, exposición a noticieros, dominio de lectura crítica									

Table 2. Logistic Regression Analysis of Five Factors and Activism. (Source: Own elaboration)

Table 3 presents data on the probabilities that mastery of critical skills and self-reported knowledge predict activism. The analysis suggests that students with high mastery of critical media literacy skills have a 0.223 times greater risk of high activism than students with low mastery. Students with high self-reported knowledge of the Fiscal Oversight Board have a 0.127 times greater risk of high activism than students with low self-reported understanding of the Board. The probability ratio for critical skills mastery is OR=0.454 [95% CI 0.223-0.922] p=0.029 and for self-reported knowledge is OR=0.320 [95% CI 0.127-0.811] p=0.016.

Variables en la ecuación									
		B	Error estándar	Wald	gl	p	Exp(B)	95% IC para EXP(B)	
								Inferior	Superior
	Conocimiento auto-reportado	-1.138	.474	5.774	1	.016	.320	.127	.811
	Dominio lectura crítica	-.790	.362	4.766	1	.029	.454	.223	.922
	Constante	-1.138	.474	5.774	1	.016	.320	.127	.811

a. Variables introducidas en el último paso: conocimiento auto-reportado y dominio de lectura crítica

Table 3. Logistic Regression Analysis of Critical Skills Mastery and Self-reported Knowledge and Activism Variables in the Equation. (Source: Own elaboration)

Critical media literacy and knowledge reliably predict students who would show some activism and students who would not (χ2(1 N=147) = 17.27 p=0.0005). The other variables did not help predict any activism among students. A Nagelkerke R2 of 0.162 in Step 1 indicates a weak relationship of 16.2% between prediction and grouping. Students with high mastery of critical skills have a 0.223 times greater risk of high activism than students with low critical media literacy. Students with high self-reported knowledge of the Fiscal Oversight Board have a 0.127 times greater risk of high activism than students with low self-reported understanding of the Board. None of the other factors contributed to predicting intent.

11. Conclusions

The study results support the idea that activism on digital platforms is mostly slacktivist among the sample students, as argued by Morosov (2009) and Bakardjieva (2009). They suggest that although a significant positive relationship was found between critical media literacy and the type of political activism known as slacktivism, the statistical probability of predicting whether another student with the same skill set will exhibit the same kind of activism is only moderate. Meanwhile, educators who argue that mastering critical media literacy skills is necessary for effective social and political activism are right (Ashley et al., 2017; Mihailidis, 2009).

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