

ARTICLE

INDIGENOUS MOVEMENTS OF ECUADOR:

between collective action and connective action



ALEX HERNÁN MULLO LÓPEZ^I

Universidad Técnica de Cotopaxi, Latacunga – Cotopaxi – Ecuador
ORCID: 0000-0001-9876-9210

JOHANA MARIBEL BALSECA MERA^{II}

Universidad Técnica de Ambato, Ambato – Tungurahua – Ecuador
ORCID: 0000-0002-3535-9262

RICARDO FRANCISO UREÑA LÓPEZ^{III}

Universidad Técnica de Cotopaxi, Latacunga – Cotopaxi – Ecuador
ORCID: 0000-0001-5525-5981

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ABSTRACT – This article analyzes the impact of the connective action of indigenous movements by studying the content generated in the web 2.0 of organizations and the press in Ecuador during the social protest of October 2019, as a consequence of the economic measures implemented by the government of President Lenin Moreno. For this purpose, qualitative research techniques such as observation sheets, interviews, KhosraviNik's textual analysis, and (axiological) content analysis were used. It is concluded that connective action decolonizes the dominant opinion of the hegemonic media and generates discursive solidarity that reinforces collective action.

Key words: Cybermovements. Connective action. Collective action. Indigenous people. Social movements.

I Universidad Técnica de Cotopaxi, Latacunga – Cotopaxi – Ecuador. Email: alex.mullo@utc.edu.ec

II Universidad Técnica de Ambato, Ambato – Tungurahua – Ecuador. Email: jm.balseca@uta.edu.ec

III Universidad Técnica de Cotopaxi, Latacunga – Cotopaxi – Ecuador. Email: ricardo.urena@utc.edu.ec

MOVIMENTOS INDÍGENAS DO EQUADOR: entre a ação coletiva e a ação conjuntiva

RESUMO – Este artigo analisa o impacto da ação conetiva dos movimentos indígenas através do estudo do conteúdo gerado na web 2.0 das organizações e da imprensa do Equador durante o protesto social de outubro de 2019, como consequência das medidas econômicas implementadas pelo governo do presidente Lenin Moreno. Ela utiliza técnicas de pesquisa qualitativa, tais como fichas de observação, entrevistas, análise textual de KhosraviNik e a análise (axiológica) do conteúdo. Se chega à conclusão que a ação conjuntiva descoloniza a opinião dominante da mídia hegemônica e gera uma solidariedade discursiva que reforça a ação coletiva.

Palavras-chave: Cibermovimentos. Ação conectiva. Ação coletiva. Povos indígenas. Movimentos sociais.

MOVIMIENTOS INDÍGENAS DEL ECUADOR: entre la acción colectiva y la acción conectiva

RESUMEN – Este artículo analiza el impacto de la acción conectiva de los movimientos indígenas mediante el estudio de los contenidos generados en la web 2.0 de las organizaciones y la prensa de Ecuador durante la protesta social de octubre 2019, consecuencia de las medidas económicas implementadas por el gobierno del presidente Lenín Moreno. Para ello utiliza técnicas de investigación cualitativa como fichas de observación, entrevistas, el análisis textual de KhosraviNik y el análisis de contenido (axiológico). Se concluye que la acción conectiva descoloniza la opinión dominante de los medios hegemónicos y genera solidaridad discursiva que refuerza la acción colectiva.

Palabras claves: Cibermovimientos. Acción conectiva. Acción colectiva. Indígenas. Movimientos sociales.

1 Introduction

Social movements originate as an act of resistance against the actions of political institutions when social actors consider them unjust or illegitimate (Castells, 2009), reaffirming popular sovereignty (Tilly & Wood, 2009).

Tarrow (1997) identifies three types of collective action: violence, disruption and convention. The violence, reinforced by the repressive action of the state, is used by small groups ready to cause harm and suffer repression. On the other hand, disruption refers to the movement's ability to surprise and mislead elites. The peaceful demonstrations, the routines that the population knows and that elites accept are framed in the convention. According to Tarrow, in the nineties, movements faced the problem of how to coordinate the disorganized, autonomous populations for common action.

McCarthy and Zald (1977) highlight the importance of resource availability and sources of support. Hence, public space and the media are essential in the search for sources of support that allow positioning the message of anger and hope to achieve a structural change in institutionalized values (Castells, 2009). However, the movements depend, to a great extent, on the agenda established in the media, since their initiatives and proposals do not always have adequate media coverage (Pleyers & Álvarez, 2019). In this context, movements have been involved in struggles for democracy under difficulties of media visibility, caused mainly by the traditionalist monopoly of communication.

For this reason, organizations have sought alternatives for the dissemination of their objectives, such as the New Information and Communication Technologies (NICTs) (Sierra & Gravante, 2016). NICTs “become tools for the achievement of purposes and not elements that determine the action of subjects” (Maldonado, 2013, p.149). The computer network then generates “a new landscape of social and political change, through a process of disintermediation of government and corporate control over communication” (Castells, 2013, p.149). However, technologies can be used for both oppression and liberation. The inclusion or exclusion of a message depends on the programs and the configuration generated by the business and financial networks that exert meanings in the human mind through multimedia networks (Castells, 2009). Thus, both the dynamics of domination and those of counter-power, resistance and social change are based on the formation of attack and defense strategies in search of persuading the mind of the citizen (Castells, 2012).

In this digital ecosystem, movements have generated their agenda in communication using social networks as dissemination instruments (Subirats, 2015), with an inverse process of media agenda-setting that captures the attention of the media from the incidence generated by their communication (López & Gonzalez, 2019). But “social networks, without the articulation of civil society and the dissemination of new media, would lose part of their potential as catalysts of the public sphere” (Sánchez et al., 2015, p.489).

Hence the importance of the “prosumer” citizen to viralize the social message, recognizing and becoming aware of collective projects (Sierra, 2018). The Arab Spring and the 15-M movement in Spain are clear examples of the use of digital media to inform, organize and coordinate protest actions (Theocharis et al., 2015),

enabling the internal social struggle that becomes perceptible to the world via the network. This is because personal data have a triple nature on the web: they refer to the individual, they support the construction of public policies and they are also the essence of the intrusion economy (Silveira, 2017). As a consequence of these strategies on the web, some groups have received the denomination of social cyber movements, who, anchored to techno-politics, recover autonomous projects, affirm identities and claim local intercultural dialogue (Maldonado et al., 2019).

Therefore, communication is fundamental in the life and action of the movement, but such contacts not only take place through social networks or media but also through other forms that range from the interpersonal to the public (Ortiz Galindo, 2016). With these premises, the persistent issues of authority and power must be addressed to the broadest possible panorama, better defined as a civilization or, specifically, an information civilization (Zuboff, 2015).

In the case of Latin America, indigenous social movements are key to the ethnic inclusion of peoples historically excluded from political decisions that affect the common welfare (Vogt, 2016). These have allowed them to go from the “claim (often passive) for more resources and material infrastructure (lands, roads), to the active call to build a society that is recognized as indigenous in its cultural, linguistic, artistic and intellectual specificity” (Salazar, 2002, p.63). Most of the scientific literature analyzes indigenous movements from their conception of the fight and coordinated action of the physical mobilization of the protest, but not, based on their communication strategies considering the beginning of the interaction and participation in the new digital ecosystem. Hence the need to address the following research question: does the connective action of indigenous movements promote social objectives in the digital media scene and generate solidarity collective actions in the public sphere?

To respond to the current question, the research focuses on the indigenous movement of Ecuador and its participation in the demonstrations of October 2019 against decree 883 (<https://bit.ly/2UOVsds>). This decree was issued by the government of President Lenin Moreno and established the elimination of fuel subsidies. That is, the Agency for the Regulation and Control of Hydrocarbons, based on the weighted average cost plus the cost of transportation and other taxes, would determine the prices of fuels for the automotive

sector. This measure would cause a rise in the prices of basic needs as a consequence of the increase in the costs of transportation and operation due to the increase in the prices of fuel. Within this research scenario, the following objectives are proposed to answer the research question:

- Identifying the management of the social networks of the indigenous movement to position communication strategies and social objectives in the public sphere during the October 2019 demonstrations.

- Determining how the Ecuadorian press represents the indigenous movement and its social objectives in the journalistic notes published on *Facebook* during the demonstrations against Decree 883.

- Examining, from the axiology, the response of the social audience to the media agenda on the events of October 2019 presented by the media and social movements on the web.

2 Social cyber movements between connective and collective action

The social web has become the space where social movements raise their positions and demands. It allows “to promote the exchange of ideas, consolidate human bonds and, especially, channel the energies of confrontation and dissent, redirecting them towards gestures of solidarity, political action and the construction of the common” (Aguilar-Forero, 2017, p.144).

Regarding digital activism, the term cyber movement is not the only one that defines the social action of movements on the internet, since other nomenclatures have emerged, such as electronic protest (e-protest), cyberactivism, online activism and hacktivism (Prados, 2012). Literature shows how cyber movements are made up of collective actors that promote physical mobilization and also use communication strategies on the web to sensitize the community about social problems and achieve change by promoting collective action (Ortiz Galindo, 2016).

Consequently, cyber movements create national or international alliances or solidarity networks for causes of general interest, such as the protection of the environment and the promotion of human rights (Aguilar-Forero, 2017). To create an impact, the communication established by the movement must propose creative

messages of counterinformation to those presented by private and public media marked by traditional biases. It also must consider the multimedia that the network requires to promote and viralize the message of the social movement through “prosumer” participation and engagement (Sandoval & Gil, 2014).

For example, the audiovisual serves as a motivational and evidence tool for the protest (Cmeciu & Coman, 2016). Moreover, it is necessary to understand that for the “prosumer” to be involved in the social struggle, he must go through a tree-level trajectory. This trajectory begins with indignation, then it continues with hope and it ends with action, which manifests itself in acts, such as sharing a publication or link (Cmeciu & Coman, 2016). This is how social media allows users to not only emit and receive information but also communicate and collaborate online (Glezos, 2016) with local and non-local actors of the movement. In this way, the visibility of their common interests and objectives on a global scale is achieved (Lindgren & Cocq, 2017).

Nevertheless, the literature proposes terminologies that help to differentiate the action of social movements in the network from the one in physical settings. Bennett and Segerberg (2012) refer to two action logics that may be at stake in the positioning of the movement’s objectives in society: the first, and already the traditional one, is linked to collective action; while the second, the less known logic, to the connective action.

Connective action uses web 2.0 as a platform for a set of individualized processes without the requirement of an identity and organization framework for collective action (Bennett & Segerberg, 2012). This can lead to loss of control of the speech because the message can be fragmented in the free interactions of activists (Casas et al., 2016), allowing anyone to be an influencer. However, the link between technology and participation has managed to reduce costs in the promotion of collective identity and the creation of virtual communities (Garrett, 2006). This has given way to large mobilizations of connective actions such as the Occupy Wall Street in the United States, in 2011, or the protests about the price of public transport in Brazil, in 2013 (Casas et al., 2016).

3 Communication of the indigenous communities and NICTs

Civil organizations are redesigning to survive in the context of new resources, characterized by complex intermediation structures (Pereira da Silva, 2018). This has given way for indigenous communities of Ecuador to participate in collective actions to stop government decisions that may affect the general public. Thus, indigenous populations have used interpersonal communication strategies through mingas of thought (minga in Quechua means a collective action for the common good) to open up to dialogue and debate around the actions of the government in power (Calderón et al., 2018).

However, these communication strategies only covered the indigenous populations and nationalities, so that there were limited possibilities of influencing political decisions. Therefore, the need to position the discourse of struggle of the indigenous movement beyond their communities, in national and international discourses, was raised (Lindgren & Cocq, 2017). For this reason, ancestral populations have used the community or the alternative media to disseminate their political thinking, mainly on territorial claims and on the need to establish spaces for intercultural dialogue that allow the preservation and legitimation of language and culture (Calderón et al., 2018).

Social networks are means of participation and global activism that go beyond being simple instruments of communication (García et al., 2014) or data villages that allow access to education. Thus, organizations fight to exercise their right to communicate through social media, which allows members of a community to have a voice at a lower cost (Leong et al., 2019). From the paradigm of indigenous social movements, new technologies are an opportunity to forge and viralize forms of collective identity and solidarity to resist various structures of domination and colonization of political and economic powers (Carthy, 2010). As an example, the #NoPLAD movement developed from social networks can be cited, which used visual resources, memes and satires from the indigenous perspective to stop the passage of an oil pipeline under rivers and native territories (Hinzo & Clark, 2019).

Thereby, social networks can be tools for decoloniality, counter-informational elements that make visible and contextualize the social struggle to face manipulation and media repression. For

example, indigenous organizations have requested the collaboration of their citizens to position their fighting objectives on social media as a form of pressure in situations of injustice or social need (García et al., 2014). The result has been a popular mobilization on digital platforms, which Bennett and Segerberg (2012) refer to as connective action.

In this way, a combination is established between interpersonal communication in a close and natural relationship with the community developed in the mingas, and information strategies in the digital environment that enhance the message and objectives of the social movement towards the collectivity (Salazar, 2017). Thus, it becomes “alternative sources of values and political assets, both at the level of internal solidarity mobilization bases and forms of trans-communal communication and pan-indigenous, including governments and international non-governmental organizations” (Salazar, 2002, p.66).

4 Methodology

Aiming to answer the research question and achieving the proposed objectives, a qualitative and quantitative methodology was applied since interviews and observation sheets were carried out to understand “the data not as physical events but as symbolic phenomena” (Ramos et al., 2019, p.289). Further, discourse analysis (DA) was used from a quantitative approach logic that when analyzing language also requires a qualitative interpretation of data (Salinas & Cárdenas, 2009).

The study was conducted from September 23 to October 14, 2019. Within this period, two-time frames were analyzed. The first one, from September 23 to October 1, when the indigenous movement had published in social networks its opposition to the agreement between the Ecuadorian Government and the International Monetary Fund. The agreement included the application of economic measures, which were intended to be implemented with Decree 883. And the second one, which runs from October 2 to 14, 2019, when the indigenous movement participated in collective and connective actions that contributed to the repeal of said decree.

For the research, the following study variables were analyzed:

- The management of the social networks of the indigenous movement to position communication strategies and social objectives.

- The representation of the indigenous movement and its social objectives in journalistic notes published on *Facebook*.

- The social audience reaction to the content shared on digital platforms by indigenous movements and the media.

To determine which social networks of the indigenous movement are the ideal ones for the current research, first and second-degree organizations were taken as a reference, including the affiliated associations of the indigenous sectors. These organizations are the following:

- The Confederation of the Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE);

- The Council of Evangelical Indigenous Populations and Organizations of Ecuador (FEINE);

- The National Confederation of Farmers, Indigenous and Black Organizations (FENOCIN);

- Coordinator of the Indigenous Organizations of the Amazon Basin (COICA);

- The Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of the Ecuadorian Amazon (CONFENIAE);

- Ecuador Runakunapak Rikcharimuy (ECUARUNARI) in Kichwa, meaning The Movement of Indigenous People of Ecuador, also known as The Confederation of Peoples of the Kichwa Nationality of Ecuador;

- The Indigenous and Farmers Movement of Cotopaxi (MICC);

- The Indigenous Movement of Tungurahua (MIT);

- The Indigenous Movement of Guayas (MIG, Movimiento del Guayas).

While for the selection of the media companies analyzed in this research, stratified random sampling was applied, based on the following elements:

- Media companies with national impact.

- Private, public or community media companies.

- Media companies that published information and covered the news on the social demonstrations of October 2019.

- The number of followers on the *Facebook* fan page.

According to the results of the mentioned elements, six media companies have been chosen for the analysis: El Comercio and Teleamazonas, as private media companies; El Telégrafo and EcuadorTV, as public media companies; and, finally, two community media companies, El Churo Comunicaciones and the digital media company Wambra.

Semi-structured interviews have been carried out with leaders, presidents, coordinators, directors, secretaries, and those in charge of managing the digital platforms of the indigenous movements. The objective of these interviews was to identify the communication strategies and social objectives that community managers position on the network. Subsequently, the technique of the individual, simple and direct observation was used to determine what type of content had been published by these organizations and if there was any feedback from the indigenous movement to the comments or concerns that had been generated on their *Facebook* pages.

Additionally, a three-level analytical framework (actors, actions and argumentation) was established, articulated by two questions ('what?' and 'who?'). The analytical framework was developed through the analysis of the discourse on the representation of social groups from the textual analysis of Khosravini (2010). Its objective is to define how the Ecuadorian press represents the indigenous social movement on *Facebook* fan pages. The DA was also used to identify, from the axiology, the response of the social audience to the media agenda and publications on the events of October 2019 presented by the media and social movements on the web. Thus, comments are classified into three typologies: positive, negative and neutral. The positive ones include solidarity actions in favor of the indigenous community. The negative comments present rejection of the social struggle or disagreement with the objectives of the indigenous organizations. And, finally, the neutral comments do not present a position for or against the social movement.

5 Results

5.1 Management of the social networks of the indigenous movement to position communication strategies and social objectives

From the semi-structured interviews conducted with the content managers of the digital platforms, it was identified that, in eight of the ten indigenous movements, the role of content manager was adopted by the presidents, directors or secretaries of these entities. In two organizations the content is managed by Diego Vaca Herrera, graduate in Communication, and Andrés Tapia, biologist by profession, who practice communication from empiricism.

Regarding the social objectives positioned by the organizations in their social networks, it was identified that these have originated from the need to inform about socio-cultural activities and influence political decisions that contribute to the constant struggle to claim the common welfare, respect for human rights and mother nature. “We are not protesters opposed to the Government as most believe, we try to ensure that the protection of nature prevails to prevent further exploitation and expropriation of Oriente” (Calapucha, 2020).

As the interview progresses, those in charge of spreading the messages to the public, external to the movement, share the diffusion process used in communicational strategies of connective action. Table 1 presents these strategies:

Table 1 – Connective action strategies

Strategy	Objective	Scope
Presence on web 2.0 platforms	Positioning ideological thinking among members of the movement and the social collective through platforms: <i>Facebook, Twitter, Instagram</i> , web pages, <i>WhatsApp</i> .	1. Platforms for dissemination to society in general: <i>Facebook, Twitter, Instagram</i> . 2. Platform for internal communication: <i>WhatsApp</i> .
Newsletter Publishing	Informing about the ideological position on a political, social or economic issue.	Movement leaders decide what, how and when is published.
Live broadcasts on <i>Facebook</i>	Communicating from the movements the actions and position they maintain on issues of common interest, without the mediation of the media.	Since the protests of October 2019, it has allowed them to make the movement’s political thinking visible in the public sphere.
Dissemination of information in native languages	Disseminating the actions of each organization on conjunctural issues to the members of the movement.	Key actions to prevent misinformation among the members of the movement, preserve the indigenous language, symbol of identity and culture. And likewise to coordinate protest actions in strategic and historical places within the social struggle.

Community radios	Massifying the official perspective of the indigenous movement within their community.	They complement the connective action strategy by replicating the information to members of communities that do not have access to the internet.
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Source: authors' elaboration

According to the arguments raised by those in charge of the communication in the indigenous movements, *Facebook* is the most important social network for the dissemination of ideological thinking to the social collective. This is the platform on which most of the strategies have been implemented. However, *Twitter* is not neglected either. Vaca (2020) mentions that they use it to position a political trend, to debate, contradict, confront or claim political issues. Meanwhile, Andrés Tapia (2020), communication coordinator at CONAIE, states that social networks are used for more than just convening members of organizations to participate in meetings. Rather, events are well attended because the communities convene themselves in reaction to some local or national event by which they feel or may feel affected.

As regards keeping the virtual information channels active, Tapia questions himself regarding the interaction with the audience. At this point, he finds the existence of two perspectives on response action in social networks. On the one hand, the one that refers to the management of racist and/or controversial comments, those that they prefer not to respond due to the lack of time, authority and responsibility to issue a rebuttal. On the other hand, he considers that giving a response to the comments is necessary and indispensable. He adds that taking care in writing spelling and syntax is important for avoiding erroneous and involuntary interpretations of the response.

In general, it is concluded that eight of the ten indigenous movements do not respond to the comments generated by the audience on their social accounts. CONAIE and Juventud CONAIE are the organizations that interact the most with their followers. Juventud CONAIE is a second-degree organization that manages the same strategy as CONAIE, but with different managers.

Guzman (2020) affirms that the publications on digital platforms mostly include topics related to mining and agriculture, the

dissemination of photographs, forums, workshops and meetings held by the leaders and members of the organizations. These publications are intended to raise awareness among the Ecuadorian population.

Regarding the use of multimedia resources, photography and text prevail in publications. However, in most cases, they do not add identifying resources of the movement (logo, colors, typography), labels and hashtag to the image.

5.2 Representation of the indigenous social movement and its social objectives in journalistic notes published on Facebook

To establish the representation of indigenous movements in journalistic notes published on Facebook fan pages by the private, community and public media, 265 news items from September 23 to October 14, 2019, were analyzed. The discourse analysis technique on the representation of social groups of KhosraviNik (2010) was used, considering its three levels: actors, action and argumentation. With this approach, it is interesting to investigate how the members of indigenous movements are called and characterized in the construction of information. On the other hand, actions and argumentation facilitate the understanding of which is the verbal action in which the actors are involved. The analysis shows that the indigenous movement was called 160 times as indigenous and 40 times by the name of the most representative association of the sector (CONAIE). The rest of the items include identifications, such as indigenous groups or movements, directors, leaders' names, peoples or organization, as it is illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2 – Appellation

Appellation	# Appellation in all news	% Total
Indigenous	160	43.80%
CONAIE	40	10.90%
Indigenous Movements	31	8.80%
Names	31	8.80%
Protesters	26	7.20%
Directors	22	6.30%

Peoples	10	3.00%
Organizations	9	2.90%
Indigenous Women	4	1.80%
Indigenous Women of Oriente	3	1.36%
Groups	2	0.70%
Farmers	2	0.70%
Commoners	2	0.70%
Men	2	0.70%
Adolescents	1	0.26%
Persons	1	0.26%
Daughters	1	0.26%
Wives	1	0.26%
Mothers	1	0.26%
Representative	1	0.26%
Indigenous Protest	1	0.26%
Companions	1	0.26%
Pachacutik	1	0.26%
Overall total	353	100%

Source: authors' elaboration

5.3 Characterization

Indigenous movements are characterized positively and negatively. In certain notes, the journalistic treatment identifies them as violent protesters, aggressors and opponents who do not wish to dialogue. In contrast, there is a positive characterization, which presents them as heroes, defenders of the social struggles, peasants, farmers, young students in solidarity with the needs of the people, who have been persecuted by the State, suffering the violent repression of the public force. Table 3 illustrates this characterization.

Table 3 – Characterization

Characterization	# Characterization in all news	% Total
Demonstrators, protesters	52	18.33%
Belligerents, violent, aggressors	44	15.49%
Fighters, courageous, heroes, defenders, guardians, resistant	43	15.14%
Peasants, natives, community members	26	9.15%
Collaborators, supportive, pacifists, organized, self-advocates	25	8.80%
Persecuted, victims of violence, repressed, victims, vulnerable	19	6.69%
For his profession (students, farmers)	11	3.87%
Rebels	10	3.52%
Physical state (hungry, thirsty, in cold)	6	2.12%
Anti-democratic, opponents of dialogue	5	1.76%
Mood (sad, happy, angry)	4	1.41%
Arrested, kidnapped, persecuted	4	1.42%
Kidnappers, suspects	3	1.06%
Relatives (siblings, fathers, mothers)	3	1.06%
By age	3	1.06%
Citizens, humans	3	1.06%
Murdered	3	1.06%
Innocent	3	1.06%
Grateful, supported	2	0.70%
Armed	2	0.70%
Blockers	2	0.70%
Looters, blockers	2	0.70%
Liars	2	0.70%
Evaders	1	0.35%

Unemployed	1	0.35%
Ecuadorian brothers	1	0,35%
Male chauvinist	1	0.35%
Diligent	1	0.35%
Wild, strong, of pure essence	1	0.35%
Invaders	1	0.35%
Overall total	284	100%

Source: authors' elaboration

5.4 Verbal action

Verbal actions, in which actors are involved, go hand in hand with the positive and negative characterization of the indigenous movement. It can be observed that the actors demand their rights and protest the economic measures. Within this scenario, they have suffered attacks by the national police and some of their members had lost their lives. On the other side, there is the verbal action that involves them in the paralysis of the streets, in violent acts against media, and kidnappings of policemen, servicemen and journalists. However, after the dialogues with government authorities, verbal conciliation actions are presented, when the Ecuadorian State recognizes the will of the indigenous sectors to dialogue and to return to their homes. In the months after the protests, it can be identified that the aftermath of the protest remains. The indigenous movement accuses the Ecuadorian State of alleged abuses during the protests. Thus, they ask for reparation to the victims of the protests, and the release of relatives, arrested during the demonstrations. Table 4 identifies the verbal actions.

Table 4 – Verbal action

Verbal action	# Verbal actions in the news	% Total
They held marches and protests, demanded their rights, fought against economic measures	43	15.87%
They are willing to dialogue with the Government	34	12.55%
They were against the Government, the public force, broke laws and regulations	28	10.30%
They carried out acts of violence against the media, caused chaos and riots	20	7.38%
They suffered attacks by the National Police, their rights were not respected	16	5.90%
Indigenous people lost their lives	15	5.54%
They paralyzed activities, blocked streets	13	4.80%
They demand that the Government repeal the Decree 883	11	4.05%
They announce and declare measures to be taken on the national protest	9	3.32%
They settled in Quito to protest, they sleep in camps and parks	9	3.32%
They reject the formation of subversive groups.	9	3.32%
They kidnapped policemen, servicemen and journalists	9	3.32%
Vargas proclaimed himself second president of Ecuador and mentioned the creation of an army	8	2.95%
CONAIE makes statements to the Government	6	2.21%
They were investigated and accused of violent actions during the protest	5	1.85%
They lost control of the mobilization	5	1.85%
They cleaned the facilities of the university and the Cultural Center, they thank the indigenous movement	5	1.85%
The indigenous movement is united more strongly, they resist losing their cultural identity	4	1.48%

They testify before the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights (IACHR) about alleged abuses during the protests, ask for reparation to victims of the protest, the release of relatives	4	1.8%
The government recognized the will of indigenous sectors to remain peaceful	3	1.11%
Media hide information about the repression of indigenous people	3	1.11%
The end of the demonstrations	2	0.74%
They tried to enter the Assembly	2	0.74%
They returned to their homes	1	0.37%
They have not left their communities	1	0.37%
They stopped working	1	0.37%
They are outraged by what is happening in the country	1	0.37%
They created a point of peace	1	0.37%
They establish roadmaps for actions of the movement in 2020	1	0.37%
They will organize street protests.	1	0.37%
They apologize for racist acts	1	0.37%
Overall total	271	100%

Source: authors' elaboration

5.5 Social audience response to contents shared on digital platforms of indigenous movements

The response of the social audience to the media agenda around the October 2019 manifestation shared on the digital platforms of the indigenous movement was analyzed from the axiology. Only comments from real profiles were used in the analyses, which were verified through the review of status updates, friendships, photography and general information. In total, 42.502 profiles were analyzed, of which only 41.874 correspond to real people. The comments are mostly positive, they include congratulations, blessings and wishes of success for the organization. In October, phrases such as, "Thank you for defending our Ecuador!", "The true owners of the land are indigenous!", "Keep going!", "Justice for our brothers!", "Good companions!", "Stay strong!", "We are with you!", were the most repeated.

On the other hand, negative comments with racist expressions are presented on a lower percentage in the context of the events that occurred in 2019: “Fix the damage you did”, “You do not even know what you are doing”, “You play the victims by passing videos only in their favor”, “And what are they up to now”. In the same way, comments directed at the movement leaders are shared, qualifying them as “liars and profiteers”, “What a shame”, “Go plow the land”.

Likewise, neutral comments that do not reflect a position in favor or against the movement, but rather a claim by citizens and indigenous sectors towards the neglect of the State: “We want water”, “We need support”, “We need roads”. Therefore, they ask the government for works for the welfare of the community. Quantitative results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5 – Quantitative results of comment analysis

ORGANIZATION	POSITIVES	%	NEGATIVES	%	NEUTRAL	%
COICA	68	0.20%	5	0.10%	17	0.98%
CONAIE	30.253	86.63%	3.532	72.05%	1.225	70.47%
CONFENIAE	440	1.27%	147	2.99%	148	8.51%
ECUARUNARI	563	1.62%	149	3.03%	11	0.63%
FEINE	1020	2.93%	52	1.06%	126	7.24%
FENOCIN	75	0.22%	10	0.20%	17	0.97%
JUVENTUD CONAIE	1.822	5.24%	957	19.51%	124	7.13%
MICC	507	1.46%	52	1.06%	66	3.79%
MIT	15	0.43%	0	0,00%	5	0.28%
MOVIMIENTO DEL GUAYAS	2	0.0%	0	0,00%	0	0
Overall total	34.765	100%	4.904	100%	1.739	100%

Source: authors' elaboration

5.6 Social audience response to the contents shared on digital platforms of the media companies

The response of the social audience to the media agenda around the October 2019 demonstration, shared by the media companies, was also analyzed from the axiology. In this manner, 165.582 profiles were analyzed, of which only 156.426 correspond to real people. The positive comments stem from the support of the social audience for the actions of indigenous movements, qualifying them as saviors and heroes of the nation. Instead, negative comments are presented with racist messages against indigenous nationalities, accusing them of vandalism, and destroyers of material heritage. Finally, the neutral comments refer to opinions against the economic policies implemented by the government of President Lenin Moreno and the police repression exercised during the marches of social movements. There are also neutral comments in opposition to the public and private media companies, accusing them of not informing with the truth. Table 6 below illustrates the quantitative results.

Table 6 – Comments from the social audience on actions of the indigenous movement

Media	Negatives	% of total negatives	Neutral	% of total neutral	Positive	% of total positives
El Comercio	1.5074	91.00%	56.393	80.87%	87192	96.38%
Teleamazonas	1.309	7.93%	10.700	15.34%	2.177	2.41%
Ecuador TV	54	0.63%	1.967	2.83%	625	0.69%
Wambra medio digital comunitario	20	0.12%	473	0.68%	66	0.07%
El Telégrafo	26	0.16%	129	0.18%	189	0.20%
Corape Satelital	26	0.16%	73	0.10%	222	0.25%
Overall total	16.509	100%	69.735	100%	90.471	100%

Source: authors' elaboration

6 Discussion

The internal collective action of indigenous organizations, such as meetings, mingas of thought and face-to-face dialogue spaces for political decision-making (Calderón et al., 2018) has been complemented with strategies of connective action. These strategies are aimed at gaining followers to position their social objectives and disseminate their activities and the reality of their communities. Thus, they try to politically influence the constant struggle to claim the well-being linked to the defense and respect of human rights and mother nature. For this purpose, they mostly use platforms, such as *Facebook* and *WhatsApp*; without neglecting the management of publications on other platforms, such as *Twitter*, YouTube and *Instagram*.

However, the use of these platforms has been limited to the dissemination of reports. And, like the Chilean student movement during the 2013 electoral campaign (Bacallao-Piño, 2016) and the Movement for Peace with Justice and Dignity in Mexico, the platforms are managed to disseminated information while offering very few possibilities for interaction (Treré & Cargnelutti, 2014). Furthermore, the audiovisual resources necessary to attract the attention of the “prosumer” in a digital environment are not used by indigenous organizations. Though, other movements, such as the online protests against Chevron in Romania, have preferred to use visual resources in 60% of the publications on *Facebook* for the fight for nature (Cmeciu & Coman, 2016). Hence they must build content adapted to the digital ecosystem around local representations and local paradigms that promote intercultural dialogue in the public sphere (Sirnivasan, 2006).

It is clear then that new technologies are tools that facilitate the dissemination of the ideological thinking of social movements worldwide, drawing the attention of the media and political agenda (López & González, 2019). In the case of the October protests in Ecuador, this can be observed in the large number of news reports published by the public, private and community media that revealed the action of social struggle for the economic measures. However, the research identified that public and private media, in some informative notes, tried to make the social objective of the movement invisible by reducing its scope. Rather, they have positioned the need for economic adjustment and in this way

have located the paradigm that indigenous movements were causing chaos and violence in the country. This is evidenced in the negative and, in certain cases, a racist response from the audience through the comments on the digital platforms of the media and the indigenous movements.

Despite this, collective solidarity stands out concerning the total number of comments. Thus, the use of digital platforms by indigenous movements immediately infected *Facebook* users and encouraged them to continue with the social struggle. This has also happened with the Spanish Revolution or 15-M movement and Democracia Real Ya (DRY, Real Democracy Now) in Spain (Piñeiro & Costa, 2012). This digital support was even transformed into a face-to-face action since a part of the society collaborated with the provision of food and food preparation so that organizations continue with the physical mobilization of the protest. Another clear example of the support of the connective action was presented when the users of social networks alerted indigenous groups of the arrival of police groups to places where they spend the night and their wounded were treated. This immediately provoked the reaction of young doctors who exposed their physical integrity to prevent the public force to enter the place.

Finally, it would be important for future research to investigate whether the connective action strategies annihilate the existence and influence of classical collective action leaderships, or if on the contrary, they would strengthen them (Tsatsou, 2018). Since, traditionally, the success of indigenous movements has always been based on the collective action strategies of their organizations. The impact of protests of actions of social struggle must also be investigated in the medium and long term, since the empathy of the social audience towards the organization may be reversed in the future (Aguilar & Romanos, 2019).

7 Conclusions

Collective action has always been the fundamental axis of indigenous organizations to achieve social objectives with physical and face-to-face mobilization of their members. This action is now complemented by the connective action as a motivational tactic that generates collective solidarity.

On the other hand, the collective action of the protests of October 19 in Ecuador allowed them to be also present in the media agenda. However, media has not always supported their purposes, but in some cases, the criminalization of the social struggle was evidenced. Hence the importance of reinforcing the message from the movements' platforms, to decolonize opinion and expand the discourse of the organization in the public sphere. Despite this, citizen participation in digital platforms, both in the media and on the pages of the organizations, incited and motivated to continue with the protests, reinforcing the social objective. It has also allowed the emergence of collective solidarity actions that solved the food and medical care needs of indigenous peoples. Another element that must be highlighted is the use of community radio stations, which complement the information in the native language and reinforces the paradigm of the movement within their nationalities.

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ALEX HERNÁN MULLO LÓPEZ. Communication Degree and research professor at Universidad Técnica de Cotopaxi. Master's degree in Institutional and Business Journalistic Communication. Email: alex.mullo@utc.edu.ec
Collaboration in this article: development of the theoretical discussion; data collection and analysis; research design; manuscript editing.

JOHANA MARIBEL BALSECA MERA. Research professor at Universidad Técnica de Ambato. Master's degree in Communication and Corporate Identity. Member of the Research and Development Operative Unit of the Faculty of Jurisprudence and Social Sciences-UTA. Email: jm.balseca@uta.edu.ec
Collaboration in this article: application of instruments for data collection, qualitative transcription of findings; support in the revision of the manuscript.

RICARDO FRANCISCO UREÑA LÓPEZ. Research professor of Communication and Social Work degrees. Dean of the Faculty of Human Sciences and Education at the Universidad Técnica de Cotopaxi. Email: ricardo.urena@utc.edu.ec
Collaboration in this article: data collection and support in the revision of the manuscript.

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